



Dative case with infinitives in Russian

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Dative Infinitive Construction (DIC) = DAT argument + infinitive

(1) *Ivanu* *∅/ bylo / budet ne postupit' v universitet.*

Ivan.DAT is /was /will.be NEG enter.INF into university

'It is / was / will be impossible for Ivan to enter the university.' (Tsedryk 2017)

'It's not in the cards for Ivan to enter the university' (Moore and Perlmutter 1999, 2000)

❖ 3 claims

✓ imperfective clauses are not true DICs

✓ DICs are

✓ i. monoclausal,

✓ ii. finite, and

✓ iii. tensed

✓ the infinitival dative is minimally different from nominative and can be accounted for as an unmarked case in the sense of Marantz (1991) and Baker (2015)

Not all “DAT + infinitive” combinations are DICs

- **Semantics is different: negated possibility vs. necessity (Tsedryk 2017)**

- **Imperfective sentences are grammatical with and without negation**

(2) *Mne (ne) vstavat' zavtra rano.*
I.DAT (NEG) get.up.IMPERF.INF tomorrow early
'I (don't) need / have to get up early tomorrow'

- **unlike their perfective counterparts**

(3) **Mne vstat' zavtra rano.*
I.DAT get.up.PERF.INF tomorrow early
Intended: 'It will be possible for me to get up tomorrow early'

- **Perfective sentences can be used with *bylo / budet* 'was/ will be' to refer to the past / future (1)**

- **Imperfective sentences have to be accompanied by *nado* 'need/have to'**

(4) *Mne (ne) *(nado) bylo vstavat' rano.*
I.DAT (NEG) need/have to was get.up.IMPERF.INF early
'I (didn't) need / have to get up early yesterday'

DICs are monoclausal

- ***Bylo / budet* cannot be a copular verb – the latter doesn't assign DAT**

(5) *Sasha/*Sashe* *byl* *myzykantom/*muzykantu.*
Sasha.NOM/*DAT was musician.INSTR/*DAT

'Sasha was a good musician'

- **or an auxiliary – *budet* is incompatible with perfective verbs**

(6) **Gruzoviki* *budut* *proexat'*
Trucks.NOM be.FUT.3PL go.through.PERF.INF

'The trucks will get through' (Fleischer 2006)

- ***Bylo / budet* in DICs cannot participate in *li*-inversion**

(7) **Bylo li Ivanu ne postupit' v universitet?*
Was Q Ivan.DAT NEG enter.PERF.INF into university

Intended: 'Was it impossible for Ivan to enter university?'

(8) *Byl li Sasha xorošim muzykantom?*
Was Q Sasha.NOM good.INSTR musician.INSTR

'Was Sasha a good musician?' (Tsedryk 2017)

- **Negation follows rather than precedes *bylo / budet* in DICs and can take scope over quantifiers (Tsedryk 2017)**

The structural position and NOM-DAT similarities

- Does not depend on the predicate
- Licenses arguments in passives, unaccusatives and anticausatives

(9) *Drugu ne obmanut' Vasju*
Friend.DAT NEG deceive.PERF.INF Vasja.ACC
'It's not (in the cards) for a friend to deceive Vasja.'

(10) *Vasje ne byt' obmanutym drugom*
Vasja.DAT NEG be.INF deceived.INST friend.INST
'It's not (in the cards) for Vasja to be deceived by a friend.'

- No NOM argument – no DIC

(11) *Mne ne xvataet deneg.*
I.DAT NEG be.enough.IMPERF.PRES.3SG money.GEN
'I don't have enough money'

(12) **Mne/den'gam ne xvatit' deneg/mne.*
I.DAT/Money.DAT NEG be.enough.PERF.INF money.GEN/I.DAT
'It is impossible for me to have enough money'

- Control into gerundial clauses

(13) [$PRO_{i/*j}$ *Čitaja gazetu*], *Ivanu_i ne najti Sashu.*
[$PRO_{i/*j}$ Read.GER newspaper], Ivan.DAT_i NEG find.PERF.INF Sasha.ACC
'While/By reading a newspaper, Ivan won't be able to find Sasha'

DICs are finite

- Can be matrix clauses
- Selected by *čto* ‘that’, which selects only finite clauses

(14) *Vasja skazal, [čto on ne vstanet rano].*
Vasja.NOM said, that he.NOM NEG get.up.PERF.FUT.3SG early
‘Vasja said that he won’t get up early’

(15) *Vasja skazal mne_i [(**čto*) PRO_i vstat’ rano].*
Vasja.NOM said I.DAT_i [(**that*) PRO_i get.up.PERF.INF early]
‘Vasja told me to get up early’

(16) *Vasja skazal, [čto emu ne vstat’ rano].*
Vasja.NOM said, [that he.DAT NEG get.up.PERF.INF early]
‘Vasja said that it’s impossible for him to get up early’

Interim conclusions

- DICs are tensed (following Greenberg and Franks (1991) and Tsedryk (2017))
 - *Bylo / budet* is the PF spell-out of the tense feature on T (unlike in Tsedryk (2017) – spell-out “Appl + T”) that hasn’t been assigned to/checked/valued on the verb (since the latter is an infinitive). Let’s call such a feature “non-discharged” (descriptively)
 - Explains the lack of *li*-inversion with *bylo / budet* in DICs: the latter appear only at PF, the tense feature does not move – no questions about the tense feature itself
- Minimally different:
 - the same position, [Spec, TP]
 - similar syntactic properties
 - complementary distribution
 - The differences
 - the presence of the infinitive
 - the tense feature has not been “discharged”
 - T as a case assigner is not enough
 - the same T, not a different “flavour”
 - the same tense feature

Proposed derivation

(17) *Ivanu bylo ne postupit' v universitet.*

Ivan.DAT was NEG enter.INF into university

'It was impossible for Ivan to enter university.'

(18) i. Merge {v, VP}, where VP = *postupit' v universitet*

Spell out VP

ii. Merge {NP *Ivan*, v'}; Merge {Neg, vP}; Merge {T[+past], NegP}

iii. Copy NP *Ivan*; Merge {NP *Ivan*, T'}

iv. Merge {C, TP} Spell out TP: assign DAT to NP *Ivan* – *Ivanu*;
spell out T[+past] as *bylo*.

Infinitival dative as an unmarked case

- *Case realization disjunctive hierarchy* (Marantz 1991, Baker 2015)
 - a. Lexically governed case
 - b. “Dependent” case (accusative and ergative)
 - c. Unmarked case (environment-sensitive)
 - d. Default case

- Unmarked case assignment rules

- a. If NP is m-commanded by T[~~tense~~] (discharged) and is not otherwise case-marked when TP is spelled out, assign it *nominative/absolutive*.

- b. If NP is m-commanded by T[tense] (not discharged) and is not otherwise case-marked when TP is spelled out, assign it *dative*.

(based on Baker 2015: 166)

Open questions and future work

- Why limited to very few languages (East Slavic, Polish)
- Crosslinguistic variation – are there any similarities?
 - (nominative) subjects with infinitives in Romance (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian)
- Finiteness
 - non-finite subjunctives in Greek and Albanian

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