

Elżbieta Tabakowska

The analysis presented below was inspired by, on the one hand, a theoretical account of Middle Voice in Kemmer (1993, MS), and on the other, a study of English, German, Russian and Bulgarian translations of *Emigranci* - an influential theatre play by the Polish playwright Sławomir Mrożek (Tabakowska & Schultze 2002). In the following account, the analysis is limited to a single item, traditionally classified as a reflexive pronoun, whose defective paradigm includes the Accusative form *się* (with the corresponding heavy form *siebie*), as in (1a) and (1b):

(1a) *Chłopiec widzi się w lustrze*

Boy sees *SIĘ* in mirror

"The boy sees himself in the mirror"

(1b) *Chłopiec widzi siebie na zdjęciu*

Boy sees *SIEBIE* in picture

"The boy sees himself in the mirror"

and the Dative form *sobie* (with the corresponding light form *se*, classified as substandard), as in (2a):

(2a) *Stoję sobie i myślę*

(I)stand *SOBIE* and think

"I am standing (quietly and for my own pleasure) and thinking"

(2b) * *Stoję se i myślę*

(I)stand *SE* and think

"I am standing (quietly and for my own pleasure) and thinking"

In the following discussion I will try to justify the claim that none of these descriptions either manages to capture the entire semantico-pragmatic complexity of the pronoun or allows for making important distinctions of a more general significance.