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From reflexive clitic to marker of human impersonal subjects: the Resian reflexive *sa*

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Abstract: Like standard Slovenian, Polish, and several Romance languages, the Slovenian dialect of Resia forms impersonal clauses by combining transitive and intransitive verbs with reflexive clitics. Due to their syntactic and semantic properties, these reflexive impersonals have been analyzed as involving a subject with an arbitrary human referent realized by the reflexive clitic. Based on data from a recent translation of *The little prince* and other Resian resources, this paper brings forward hitherto unnoticed empirical evidence supporting this analysis. Unlike other Slavic languages, Resian has developed a set of subject clitics whose position in the clause differs from that of object clitics. Interestingly, when forming impersonal constructions, reflexive clitics are placed like subject clitics and not like object clitics as they are in other contexts. Furthermore, the distribution of the reflexive clitic variants *se* and *sa* in *The little prince* suggests that the latter is becoming the sole impersonal marker while the former is used to express all other reflexive meanings. This implies that *sa* is developing into a separate subject clitic. The general significance of these findings lies in the fact that they demonstrate a link between impersonal reflexives and subjects which does not depend on the assumption of a specific theoretical framework.

Keywords: reflexive impersonals; arbitrary subjects; pronominal clitics; clitic placement; Slavic; Slovenian dialect of Resia

1 Introduction

The Slovenian dialect spoken in the Resia valley located in the Venezia-Friuli Giulia region in northern Italy has developed several curious features that are unique within Slavic. Most of these features are explained as resulting from long-lasting contact with Romance languages, most notably with Friulian (Benacchio 2002; Skubic 1997). However, there are also exceptional phenomena which have their

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origin in genuine Slavic or Resian developments. One such phenomenon seems to be the hitherto unnoticed evolution of the reflexive clitic *sa* into an impersonal subject pronoun similar to English *one* or German *man*. Originally, *sa* constituted a phonetic variant of the accusative reflexive *se* (Steenwijk 1992: 119), but the data analyzed in this paper suggest that it has been confined – or rather is on its way to becoming confined – to constructions with an arbitrary human subject. The latter construction, within Slavic, is not limited to Resian and hence, there is no reason for interpreting it as adopted from Romance, even though it is typical for several members of this language family as well. Moreover, there is no separate variant of the reflexive marker for forming this type of construction in Romance, at least not in the Romance languages and dialects spoken in northern Italy.

Another reason why Resian is interesting with regard to the study of reflexive impersonals consists in the fact that it provides empirical evidence for analyzing impersonal reflexives as subject clitics. In short, when comparing the clitic placement rules of reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions with those of other pronominal clitics, they group with subject clitics rather than object clitics. The association of impersonal reflexives with subject clitics can in turn be held responsible for the option of forming reflexive impersonals from reflexive verbs without the deletion of one of the two reflexive clitics. This pattern is, again, unique within Slavic. Finally, Resian has developed a curious way of expressing optative by means of the particle *da* and the imperative. Reflexive impersonals formed from these optatives potentially also support the subject analysis of impersonal reflexives.

The article is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a discussion of those properties of Slavic impersonal constructions which in earlier studies have been interpreted as evidence for analyzing the reflexive clitics in these constructions as subject clitics. Since there are at present no separate studies dealing with reflexive impersonals in Resian, the data discussed in this section mainly comes from standard Slovenian and to a lesser degree Polish. Section 3 is then dedicated to Resian. First, the Resian reflexive pronoun is introduced in Section 3.1. Evidence for the Resian reflexive impersonals having the same syntactic and semantic properties as those in standard Slovenian is presented in Section 3.1. In Sections 3.2 and 3.3, I show that in Resian, we find two additional reflexive impersonal constructions compared to standard Slovenian. Section 3.4 discusses the position of reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions against the background of the general clitic placement rules in Resian. Based on the data discussed in the previous sections, Section 3.5 asks whether the reflexive clitic *sa* is developing into a subject clitic with an arbitrary human referent. Aspects of language contact that could have influenced the development of reflexive impersonals in Resian are addressed in Section 3.6. The paper's conclusions are presented in Section 4.

2 Reflexive impersonals in Slavic

The purpose of this section is to introduce the type of impersonal construction constituting the topic of the article. This is done mainly based on data from standard Slovenian and in some cases also from Polish. Reflexive impersonals, in these languages, have been studied to great extent while there is no separate study on impersonals in Resian. Therefore, the Resian data will be presented against the background of standard Slovenian and Polish data in the subsequent sections (Sections 3.2 and 3.3). In the survey of the Slovenian and Polish constructions, I mostly refer to Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003). On the one hand, this study provides the most comprehensive discussion of the diagnostics applied in the syntactic analysis of Slavic reflexive impersonals that I am aware of. On the other hand, their analysis leads the authors to a conclusion that is also suggested by the Resian data discussed in the subsequent sections. However, while Rivero and Sheppard's analysis is rooted in the generative tradition, the present article is meant to make a framework-neutral contribution.

Apart from expressing reflexive/reciprocal (Example 1a), middle/passive (Example 1b), or anticausative (Example 1c) meaning or being an inherent part of the verb (Example 1d), in Slavic, descendants of the accusative form of the reflexive clitic (Common Slavic **se*) can be used to express actions performed by an unspecified human subject (Example 1e). The latter constructions are those of interest for the present paper.

- (1) a. Janez se oblači.
Janez.NOM REFL dress.PRS.3SG
'John dresses himself' (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2001: 137)
- b. Ta knjiga se lahko bere.
this.NOM.SG.F book.NOM.SG.F REFL easily read.PRS.3SG
'This book reads easily.'
- c. Veja se je zlomila.
branch.NOM.SG.F REFL be.PRS.3SG break.PST.PTCP.SG.F
'The branch broke.'
- d. Marija se boji Janeza.
Mary.NOM REFL fear.PRS.3SG John.ACC
'Mary fears John.'
- e. Tukaj se veliko dela.
here REFL a.lot work.PRS.3SG
'Here people work a lot.'

Unlike any of the other reflexive constructions cited in 1, impersonal constructions lack an overtly expressed subject (cf. Example 1e). In fact, they cannot contain an

overt phrase in the nominative and neither do they allow for the expression of an agent by means of a *by*-phrase.¹ When translating these constructions into English, one either has to add ‘people’ or the pronoun ‘one’ to convey the Slavic meaning (cf. also German *man* and French *on*). As for verbal agreement, the finite verb of impersonal reflexive clauses takes 3rd-person singular endings and participles have neuter singular endings (e.g., Example 2). Hence, the form of the finite verb is often analyzed as an invariant default form without agreement (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 93).²

In the majority of Slavic languages, reflexive impersonals³ can be formed only from intransitive verbs as in Example 1e. However, Polish, Slovenian, as well as Čakavian and Kajkavian dialects of Croatian derive them also from transitive verbs.⁴ Thus, in Example 2, *starši* ‘parents’ acts as the direct object of the clause which means that in non-negated clauses it appears in the accusative *starše* (2a) and in negated clauses in the genitive *staršev* (2c).⁵ For more examples from Polish the reader is referred to Siewierska (1988), Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2001), Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003), Kibort (2008), Krzek (2010).

- (2) a. *Starše se uboga.* (Slovenian)
 parents.ACC.PL REFL obey.PRS.3SG
 ‘One obeys parents.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2001: 138)
- b. *Starše se je ubogalo.*
 parents.ACC.PL REFL be.PRS.3SG obey.PST.PTCP.SG.N
 ‘One has obeyed parents.’

¹ Note that in Ukrainian reflexive impersonals can occur with *by*-phrases (Franks 1995: 345).

² An anonymous reviewer suggests that, following Frasson (2024), one could also argue that the clitic realizing the subject is specified for neuter and that we are accordingly dealing with a case of full verbal agreement. While this is an interesting idea, one would first have to clarify the agreement pattern in predicative constructions where, in Slovenian, adjectives seem to be accepted in both the masculine and neuter forms by some speakers (see below in this section). In any case, this issue would require a separate study.

³ In this paper, I refer to the constructions as “impersonal” because cross-linguistically this seems to be the most widely used term. However, it should be noted that they are sometimes addressed as “indeterminate-personal constructions” (e.g., Padučeva 2012, Švedova 1980) or as *arbs* (“constructions with an arbitrary reading”) (e.g., Malamud 2013: 22, Bunčić 2018). An overview of the different types of constructions that have been subsumed under these notions can be found, for instance, in Siewierska (2008) and Bunčić (2018).

⁴ Note that reflexive impersonals have also been reported from colloquial Croatian (Katičić 2002: 159).

⁵ Since Resian is a Slovenian dialect, in the following survey, I will provide examples from standard Slovenian whenever a construction is present in this language.

- c. Staršev se ne uboga.
 parents.GEN.PL REFL NEG obey.PRS.3SG
 ‘One does not obey parents.’

From a general Slavic perspective, this is curious since reflexive verbs are intransitive otherwise. This is, because the marker Sln, BCS, Blg, Mac, Cz, LSo *se*, Slk *sa*, Pol *się*, USo *so*, Ukr, BRU, Ru *s'a* goes back to the accusative form of the reflexive pronoun (cf. CSL ACC **se*).⁶ Since Slavic languages show alignment according to the nominative-accusative type, the direct object position would thus already be filled by the reflexive pronoun. This raises the question about the function of the reflexive marker in impersonal clauses.

Considering that impersonal reflexives do not allow for the realization of a nominative argument while they nevertheless can be formed from transitive verbs, it has been argued that the reflexive clitic acts as the nominative argument in impersonal constructions.⁷ For instance, Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003) suggest that in Polish and Slovenian impersonal reflexives are defective pronouns lacking gender, number, and person.⁸ Several characteristics of reflexive impersonals have been interpreted as indicative of the NOM-feature encoded in the reflexive clitic. The first concerns the already mentioned fact that reflexive impersonals occur with a direct object in the accusative (in affirmative clauses) or genitive (in negative clauses) (cf. Example 2). Direct objects, in these constructions, do not have to be realized by nouns but can also be object clitics as in Example 3.

- (3) Če je baterija izrabljena, se jo
 if be.PRS.3SG battery.NOM.SG.F dead.PST.PTCP.PASS.NOM.SG.F REFL she.OC.ACC
 zamenja.
 change.PRS.3SG
 ‘If a battery is dead, one changes it.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003:
 103)

6 Note that some of the Slavic languages which have retained pronominal clitics have two additional forms of the reflexive clitic whose functions are, however, almost exclusively limited to the expression of case. The genitive form is identical to the accusative form. It is used with verbs requiring a genitive object or in negated clauses. The dative reflexive is *si*. It is obligatory with a limited number of verbs and is otherwise used to express a reflexive indirect object. Since genitive and dative forms are not involved in expressing impersonal reflexives, they are not of immediate relevance for this paper. For the paradigm of Resian reflexive clitics see Table 2.

7 Franks (1995: 348), on the other hand, argues that the reflexive marker absorbs the nominative.

8 The Romance counterpart to the Slavic reflexive impersonal has been interpreted as a subject or nominative clitic, for instance, by Burzio (1986: 43–46), Chierchia (1995), Dobrovie-Sorin (1988), and Russi (2008: 52).

Another characteristic concerns Polish modal constructions. As can be seen in Example 4, impersonal reflexives occur with modals that can have a nominative argument. Accordingly, in Example 4a the modal expression *powinien być* ‘should’ occurs with *premier* ‘prime minister’ as its subject while the same expression occurs as a reflexive impersonal in Example 4b. On the other hand, if a modal does not allow the realization of a nominative argument, it cannot form reflexive impersonals. This is shown in Examples 4c–4e where the modal *trzeba* ‘it is necessary’ cannot occur with a nominative-subject (Example 4d) and thus cannot form a reflexive impersonal (Example 4e). The argument then is that the reflexive clitic shares properties with nominative subjects and that these properties disallow its realization in Example 4e.

- (4) a. Premier powinien być łysy. (Polish)
 prime.minister.NOM.SG.M should.MOD.M be.INF bald.NOM.SG.M
 ‘The prime minister should be bald.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 103)
- b. Powinno się być łysym.
 should.MOD.N REFL be.INF bald.INS.SG
 ‘People should be bald.’
- c. Trzeba pracować.
 must.MOD.PRS.3SG work.INF
 ‘One must work.’
- d. *Maria trzeba pracować.
 Mary.NOM must.MOD.PRS.3SG work.INF
 ‘Mary must work.’
- e. *Trzeba się pracować.
 must.MOD.PRS.3SG REFL work.INF
 ‘One must work.’

Slovenian modal constructions, according to Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 103), are less symptomatic because they all take nominative subjects and appear in reflexive impersonal constructions. However, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, this is true only for modal verbs. Examples with Slovenian modal *treba* ‘must’ corresponding to the Polish sentence in 4e are equally unacceptable.

Similar evidence for the nominative character of Slavic impersonal reflexives derives from a comparison of so-called *Tough*-constructions in Romance and Slavic. The argument concerning these constructions evolves along the same lines as that with modals (see above) which is why I will not discuss it in detail here. In a nutshell, while Romance *Tough*-constructions have nominative subjects and can also form reflexive impersonals, neither of this holds true for the same constructions in Polish

and Slovenian. Accordingly, it is again argued that impersonal reflexives can only appear in contexts that allow for nominative.⁹

A nominative-feature of Slovenian *se* and Polish *się* in impersonal constructions is also derived from the fact that they can antecede reflexives and reflexive possessives. In Example 5a, the tonic reflexive pronoun LOC *sebe* is used which implies the presence of a subject, which is usually marked as nominative, in the clause. The same would accordingly be true for Example 5b which contains the reflexive possessive GEN.PL.M *svojih* (cf. also Siewierska 1988: 264). Example 5c, moreover, shows that the use of the reflexive possessive occurs also in clauses subordinate to a reflexive impersonal.

- (5) a. Sedaj **se** misli samo na sebe. (Slovenian)
 Now REFL think.PRS.3SG only of themselves.LOC
 ‘Now people only think of themselves.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 106–107)
- b. Svojih prijatelj **se** tako ne tretira.
REFL.POSS.ACC.PL friend.ACC.PL.M REFL so NEG treat.PRS.3SG
 ‘One does not treat one’s friends like this.’
- c. Verjame **se**, da so svoje napake
believe.PRS.3SG REFL COMPL be.PRS.3PL POSS.REFL.NOM.PL.F mistakes.NOM.PL.F
 bolj upravične kot napake drugih.
more justified.NOM.PL.F than mistakes.NOM.PL.F other.GEN.PL
 ‘People believe that their own mistakes are more justified than the mistakes of others.’

In Slovenian, reflexive impersonals also appear with the reciprocal expression *drug drugemu* ‘one another, each other’ (cf. Example 6). This is again interpreted as indicative of the presence of a nominative-subject in the clause.

- (6) Drug drugemu **se** preveč gleda v lonec. (Slovenian)
each.NOM other.DAT REFL too.much look.PRS.3SG in pot.ACC.SG.M
 ‘People poke their noses into each other’s private affairs too often.’
 (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 108)

The final syntactic feature which, according to Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 109–110), speaks for interpreting impersonal reflexives as nominative-arguments consists in their ability to control passive complements. Following Jaeggli 1986’s (1986) analysis of passive-complement controllers as explicit arguments, the authors

⁹ For more details on reflexive impersonals derived from *Tough*-constructions the reader is referred to Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 104). A discussion of the general properties of these constructions can be found, for instance, in Hicks (2009).

claim that examples such as 7 provide evidence for the presence of an explicit nominative argument in the matrix clause. The latter is then identified with the reflexive clitic.

- (7) Vedno **se** želi biti občudovan. (Slovenian)
 always REFL want.PRS.3SG be.INF admire.PST.PASS.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘People always want to be admired.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 110)

While syntactic properties indicate that impersonal reflexives are subject clitics, semantic properties suggest that they constitute indefinite pronouns denoting humans or personified beings. Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 110) demonstrate this by means of the two sentences in 8.

- (8) a. Veter je pihal. (Slovenian)
 wind.NOM.SG.M be.PRS.3SG blow.PST.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘The wind was blowing.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 110)
 b. Pihalo **se** je od jeze.
 blow.PST.PTCP.SG.N REFL be.PRS.3SG from rage.GEN.SG.F
 ‘People were fuming/seething with rage.’

While in Example 8a the verb denotes a meteorological event, the reference must be to people when it combines with REFL *se*. Moreover, there is some variability in the semantics of the reflexive. It may either refer to people in general or denote ‘many people’ as in Example 9. Hence, the quantificational force of the pronoun varies (cf. Chierchia 1995 on the Italian counterpart *si*).

- (9) Jeśli **się** gra źle, zazwyczaj **się** przegrywa. (Polish)
 if REFL play.PRS.3SG badly usually REFL lose.PRS.3SG
 ‘If one plays poorly, one usually loses.’ = ‘Many people who play poorly lose.’
 (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 93)

The default [+human] reading can only be overridden by providing a different referent in the context. Kibort (2008: 273) gives the Polish example in 10.

- (10) Gdy **się** jest bocianem, gniazdo buduje **się**
 when REFL be.PRS.3SG stork.INS.SG.M nest.NOM.SG.N build.PRS.3SG REFL
 wysoko.
 high
 ‘When one is a stork, one builds the nest high up.’ (Kibort 2008: 272)

Example 10, moreover, shows that in Polish, reflexive impersonals can be formed even from the copula *być* ‘be’. Unlike the participle used to form past tense (e.g., Example 2b), adjectives in impersonal predicative constructions, according to Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 113), in this case, take the masculine instrumental form as in Example 11. (Nominative is impossible in this case.) However, considering that the singular masculine and neuter forms of the instrumental are homonymous in Polish, an interpretation as a neuter form seems possible as well.

- (11) Kiedy **się** było młodym, **się** było
 when REFL be.PST.PTCP.SG.N young.INS.SG.M/N REFL be.PST.PTCP.SG.N
 szczęśliwym. (Polish)
 happy.INS.SG.M/N
 ‘When one was young, one was happy.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 112)

For Slovenian, Rivero and Milojević Sheppard (2003: 112) report deviating native speaker judgements of reflexive impersonals derived from the copula. According to them, these constructions are often considered ungrammatical or at least marginal. As for the gender of predicative adjectives, it does not seem to be clear whether Slovenian speakers prefer masculine or neuter forms. The authors give the two examples in 12 which seem to have been accepted by some native speakers of Slovenian.

- (12) a. ?Nikoli **se** ni srečen. (Slovenian)
 never REFL NEG.be.PRS.3SG happy.NOM.SG.M
 ‘People are never happy.’ (Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 112)
 b. ?Kadar **se** je bilo sprejeto pri
 when REFL be.PRS.3SG be.PST.PTCP.SG.N receive.PST.PASS.PTCP.SG.N at
 županu, je bilo treba nositi bele
 mayor.LOC.SG.M be.PRS.3SG be.PST.PTCP.SG.N must carry.INF white.ACC.PL.F
 rukavice.
 gloves.ACC.SG.F
 ‘When people were received by the mayor, they had to wear white gloves.’

As regards the placement of the reflexive clitic in impersonal constructions, no differences compared to reflexive clitics with other functions are reported in the literature (Franks and King 2000, Golden 2003, Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003). In all their functions, reflexive clitics occupy the same position in the clitic cluster. This is not the case in every language that exhibits reflexive impersonals. For instance, in Italian, impersonal *si* occupies a different position in the clitic cluster than the homonymous and etymologically identical reflexive clitic (e.g., Monachesi

Table 1: The Italian clitic cluster reproduced from Monachesi (1996: 122).

Position	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
	mi	ci	si (REFL)	lo	si (IMPERS)	se
	ti			la		
	gli			li		
	le			le (ACC)		
	ci					
	vi					

1996: 125, Monachesi 2008: 91, Russi 2008: 225). Table 1 shows the different slots of impersonal and reflexive *si* in Italian.

One of the objectives of this paper is to show that Resian differs from other Slavic languages in this regard. Reflexive clitics acting as markers of impersonal constructions are placed in a different slot than reflexives with other functions (cf. Section 3.1).

3 Reflexive impersonals in Resian

Like standard Slovenian, the Resian dialect exhibits an impersonal construction involving the reflexive marker. In this section, I first introduce the Resian reflexive pronoun (Section 3.1) and then provide evidence that Resian reflexive impersonals not only have the same syntactic and semantic properties as those in standard Slovenian and Polish (Section 3.2), but also contribute additional evidence supporting the subject-analysis of impersonal reflexives (Section 3.3).

My main resource for Resian is a recent translation of *The little prince* (de Saint-Exupéry 2021). It was prepared by Silvane Paletti, a native speaker of the Resian dialect of Varcota, and Malinka Pila, a linguist specialized in the Resian dialect. This text contains 370 reflexive constructions of which 93 present reflexive impersonals. Examples stemming from the *The little prince*, in the following, are given without explicit references. Merely the page numbers referring to the corresponding passages in the Resian translation are given. Additionally, in my analysis, I use examples from Steenwijk (1992) and from the fieldwork data published therein. However, it should be noted that this resource has not been analyzed systematically. Finally, Malinka Pila was so kind as to help me with obtaining native-speaker judgments on two examples (Examples 20 and 22). Regarding the data analyzed in this paper, it should therefore be kept in mind that they mostly stem from a single speaker. Accordingly, it should be treated as a doculect in the sense of Cysouw and Good (2013) (cf. also Bowern 2015). The advantage of this data selection consists in the

fact that it allows drawing examples from a coherent resource which exceeds most of the available Resian texts in length. On the downside, it is not suitable for studying inter-dialectal or inter-speaker variation.

3.1 Reflexive clitics in Resian

The Resian system of pronominal clitics is largely identical to that in standard Slovenian. However, there is one curious difference that is of great relevance for the analysis of reflexives in impersonal constructions. It concerns the accusative form of the reflexive clitic where we find two variants: *REFL se/sa* (Steenwijk 1992: 118–119). The entire paradigm of the Resian reflexive pronoun is given in Table 2.

Although the variation in the accusative form of the personal pronouns – it is characteristic also for 1st-person pronominal clitic: *me/ma* ‘1.ACC’ (Steenwijk 1992: 118–119) – has already been noticed by Baudouin de Courtenay (1875: 52–54), its origin is still unclear. In Common Slavic, the accusative ending consisted of the nasal vowel **ę* (probably [ɛ̃] or [æ̃] in IPA notation). This vowel, according to Baudouin de Courtenay (1875: 54), has various reflexes in Resian, among them *e* and *a*. In more recent descriptions of Resian historical phonology, authors either mention only *e* as the reflex of Common Slavic **ę* or at least do not provide a discussion of other variants (e.g., Vermeer 1987: 246, Šekli 2015: 204–205). Therefore, it seems that the origin of the variation in the accusative form cannot be determined with certainty. The most likely scenario is that the outcome of the Common Slavic nasal vowel differed depending on the phonological environment. This is a plausible explanation because Resian has undergone a number of complex vowel changes as a result of which the quality of a vowel is to some extent depending on the quality of the vowel in the subsequent syllable.¹⁰ Considering that in Slavic, clitics together with their host

Table 2: Resian reflexive pronoun (Steenwijk 2023: 72).

	tonic	clitic
NOM		
GEN	sabe	NA
DAT	sabě	si
ACC	sabe	sa/se
INS	sabo	
LOC	sabě	

10 Baudouin de Courtenay (1875) refers to these changes as vowel harmony while Steenwijk (1992) speaks of regressive vowel assimilation.

formed a phonological word,¹¹ it is reasonable to assume that clitic personal pronouns (including the reflexive) were affected by various of these assimilation processes. Due to the significant changes affecting the rules determining clitic placement in Resian, the original distribution of *sa* and *se* would, however, have become opaque (Steenwijk 2023: 72).

Be this as it may, the distribution of the two reflexive variants in the main resource investigated in this study suggests that they have received a new function. As is shown in Section 3.5, the variant *sa* seems to have developed into a subject marker with an arbitrary human referent. Before this issue as well as the rules governing the placement of the reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions (Section 3.4) are addressed in detail, it will first be shown that Resian reflexive impersonals exhibit the same properties as the corresponding constructions in standard Slovenian and Polish (Sections 3.2 and 3.3).

3.2 Reflexive impersonal constructions shared with standard Slovenian

Like standard Slovenian, Resian allows the formation of reflexive impersonals from both transitive and intransitive verbs. Regarding verbal agreement, the characteristics of these constructions do not differ in the present tense. We always find the finite verb in the 3rd person singular. However, in the past participle I have come across agreement patterns deviating from those observed in standard Slovenian. In Example 13a taken from *The little prince*, the participle *počarnjali* ‘blush’ in the second of the two coordinated reflexive-impersonal clauses unexpectedly takes the plural ending and not the ending of the neuter singular (cf. Section 2). If this is not simply an error, it could be interpreted in at least two ways. First, we could be dealing with an instance of agreement *ad sensum*. As has been pointed out in Section 2, depending on their environment (e.g., verb semantics, presence of adverbs), reflexive impersonals can have the reading of a subject with the meaning ‘many/few people’ (cf. Rivero and Milojević Sheppard 2003: 123–131 based on Chierchia 1995). Therefore, one could argue that it is these quantifying semantics that trigger agreement according to sense, i.e., agreement in the plural. An instance of agreement *ad sensum* with a quantifier can be found in *The little prince*. In Example 13b, the plural subject clitic *ni* ‘they’ doubles the quantifier phrase *malö njyh* ‘few of them’ where the quantifier *malö* is neuter singular (cf. Wandl Forthcoming). A parallel phenomenon could be invoked to explain the plural form in Example 13a.

¹¹ Cf. for instance the involvement of clitics in several prosodic changes discussed in Wandl (2023).

- (13) a. An nĩ mej rišpundawal, ko sa ga
he_{SC} NEG.be.PRS.3SG never reply.PST.PTCP.SG.M when REFL he.OC.ACC
barjüwalö, ma ko sa počarnjali, to pridě
ask.PST.PTCP.SG.N but when REFL blush.PST.PTCP.PL then come.PRS.3SG
rićyt, da ġo! (Resian)
say.INF COMPL yes
'He never answered, when somebody asked him, but when somebody
blushed, it means "yes".' (82)
- b. Ma malö njyh ni se spomänjajo.
but few they.GEN.PL they.SC REFL remember.PRS.3PL
'But few of them remember.' (5)

As an alternative, influence from Italian could be considered. In Italian, reflexive impersonals show curious agreement patterns (cf. Maiden and Robustelli 2013: 125–126). When introducing predicative adjectives, indefinite reflexives require the copula verb to take 3rd-person singular endings while the adjective appears in the masculine plural (cf. 14a). Moreover, past participles of intransitive verbs take plural endings if they appear with the auxiliary *essere* ‘be’ also outside reflexive impersonals.¹² On the other hand, if an intransitive verb normally has *avere* ‘have’ as its auxiliary, the past participle appears in the masculine singular form. This can be seen in Examples 14b and 14c where *arrivati* and *dormito* appear in the masculine plural and singular forms, respectively. With transitive verbs, the patterns are even more complex (Maiden and Robustelli 2013: 125–126). However, since they involve the same forms of the predicative adjectives and participles, it is not necessary to discuss them separately here. What is important is that the plural agreement in *počarnjali* (Example 13a) could be interpreted as the result of language contact with Italian.

- (14) a. **Si** è **contenti**. (Italian)
REFL is.PRS.3SG happy.NOM.PL.M
'One is happy.'
(Maiden and Robustelli 2013: 125)
- b. Se **si** è **arrivati** **tardi** **si** è
if REFL be.PRS.3SG arrive.PST.PTCP.PL.M late REFL be.PRS.3SG
perso **il diritto** **al posto** **a**
lose.PST.PTCP.SG.M DEF right.SG.M to place.SG.M for
sedere.
sit.INF
'If one has arrived late one has lost the right to a seat.'

12 Reflexive impersonals always have *essere* ‘be’ as their auxiliary (Maiden and Robustelli 2013: 125).

- c. Non **si** è dormito bene.
 NEG REFL be.PRS.3SG sleep.PST.PTCP.SG.M good
 ‘One hasn’t slept well.’

With regard to Example 13a, it is further interesting to note that in Slovenian, verbs like Resian *počarnjati* ‘blush’ are identified as unaccusative by Ilc and Marvin (2016: 149–150). This type of intransitives is not acceptable in reflexive impersonal constructions unlike a generic or habitual character of the expressed event is implied by the sentence or indicated by an adverbial (e.g., Ilc and Marvin 2016: 154 and Lenardič 2020). In Example 13a, the causal construction (*ko... to*) or perhaps the adverb *mej* ‘never’ even though it appears in a different clause could be interpreted as indicative of a habitual character. Accordingly, it must remain unclear whether Resian allows forming reflexive impersonals from unaccusative verbs at this point.

The second type of a deviating agreement pattern in Resian comes from Steenwijk’s (1992: 187) fieldwork data. In Example 15 (repeated as Example 31d below), the past participle has masculine endings instead of the expected neuter ones (cf. also Example 41 which is, however, ambiguous). Here, it is not possible to invoke agreement *ad sensum* as a possible explanation considering that a *maškira*, according to Steenwijk (1992: 279), is a ‘certain female dress for Carneval’. One possibility to account for this form is to refer to predicative constructions. As will be shown further below in this section, predicative adjectives, participles, and pronouns usually take the masculine rather than the neuter form in Resian reflexive impersonals. Therefore, one could argue that the masculine ending in Example 15 results from analogical adaptation to predicative adjectives. On the other hand, one could again argue that the masculine form is the result of influence from Italian (cf. Example 14c).

- (15) **sa** se ublikal w maškiri. (Resian)
 REFL REFL dress.PST.PTCP.SG.M in maškira.LOC.SG.F
 ‘one dressed in a maškira (a certain female dress for Carneval)’
 (Steenwijk 1992: 187)

Finally, it should be kept in mind that differences in the agreement patterns between Steenwijk’s (1992) data and the data extracted from *The little prince* could also reflect inter-dialectal or even inter-speaker variation. Clarifying this, would be possible only based on a sufficiently large corpus of spoken Resian including data from different speakers. Unfortunately, such a resource does not currently exist.

As mentioned in Section 2, reflexive impersonals derived from intransitive verbs occur in all Slavic languages. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that we also find them in Resian. Examples 16a and 16b contain two unergative verbs (*sednut* ‘sit down, take a seat’ and *jtyt* ‘go, walk’). In the latter case, the verb is embedded into a

modal construction. Example 16c contains a *verbum sentiendi* with a complement clause containing a modal construction. The latter example is further interesting because it shows that in coordinated clauses with reflexive impersonals the reflexive clitic is repeated.

- (16) a. **Sa** sednë ta-na dan küp piska. (Resian)
 REFL sit.down.PRS.3SG on INDEF.ACC.SG.M pile.ACC.SG.M sand.GEN.SG.M
 ‘One sits down on a pile of sand.’ (77)
- b. Rüdi drët **sa** ni mörë jtyt karjë dalëč...
 always straight REFL NEG can.PRS.3SG go.INF very far...
 ‘Always straight one cannot go very far...’ (18)
- c. [...] anō **sa** ni čüjë, da **sa** mā trëbë pyt
 [...] and REFL NEG feel.PRS.3SG COMPL REFL have.PRS.3SG need drink.INF
 ‘[...] and one does not feel, that one has the need to drink.’ (75)

Of greater interest for this paper are reflexive impersonals derived from transitive verbs. In *The little prince*, I found transitive reflexives with their objects expressed by nouns and/or object clitics. Example 17a contains the verb ‘see’ which has *wsake sjorte* ‘all kinds.ACC.PL’ specified by *riči* ‘things.GEN.PL’ as its direct object. In Example 17b, the direct object is expressed by the clitic *jo* ‘she.ACC’. Additionally, this example contains the object clitic *jīn* ‘they.DAT’. Examples 17c and 17d are interesting because they show that in Resian, relative pronouns can act as objects of reflexive impersonals. In both cases, the relative clause is introduced by the uninflected relative marker *ki* and contains the object clitic *jīn* ‘they.DAT’. However, the function of this clitic is different in the two clauses. In Example 17c, it represents an indirect object while the relative marker takes the role of the direct object; in Example 17d, on the other hand, *jīn* constitutes a resumptive pronoun in the dative plural which accompanies *ki* while *jīmë* ‘name.ACC.SG.N’ acts as the direct object of the clause.

- (17) a. [N]a Zimjy **sa** vīdi wsake sjorte riči. (Resian)
 on earth.LOC.SG.F REFL see.PRS.3SG all.ACC.PL.F kind.ACC.PL.F thing.GEN.PL.F
 ‘On earth, one sees all kinds of things.’ (68)
- b. anō cí **sa** jīn jo wzimë, ni jōčajo...
 and if REFL they.OCC.DAT she.OCC.ACC take.PRS.3SG they.SC cry.PRS.3PL
 ‘and if one takes it from them, they cry...’ (74)
- c. Ni spet viričëjo itō, ki **sa** jīn ričë...
 they.SC again say.PRS.3PL that.ACC.SG.N REL REFL they.DAT say.PRS.3SG
 ‘They repeat what one tells them...’ (64)

- d. ki sa jin dalö nö jümë
 REL REFL they.OC.DAT.PL give.PST.PTCP.SG.N INDEF.ACC.SG.N name.ACC.SG.N
 ‘to which we have given a name’ (18)

The final example I want to discuss with regard to argument structure is 18. It contains the only instance of a genitive of negation in a clause with a reflexive impersonal that I have come across. Strictly speaking, the form *saminče* ‘seeds’ is ambiguous because the ending *-e* expresses both the feminine genitive singular and accusative plural cases. Negation alone is insufficient to determine the case of the object because in Resian, the genitive of negation is not consequently realized (Steenwijk 1992: 181). However, Considering that *saminča* is a collective noun (cf. Steenwijk 2005: 121), one expects a singular form here.

- (18) Ma saminče sa je ni vidi. (Resian)
 but seed.GEN.SG REFL she.OC.GEN NEG see.PRS.3SG
 ‘But one cannot see the seeds.’ (22)

Example 18 is interesting for yet another reason. It shows that direct objects can be clitic-doubled in reflexive impersonals. Clitic doubling is a phenomenon that, within Slavic, is best known from Bulgarian, Macedonian, and the Torlak dialects of Serbian (cf., for instance, the contributions on Slavic languages in Kallulli and Tasmowski 2008; Escher 2021 on the Timok dialect of Torlak). However, it also occurs in Western Slovenian dialects (e.g., Krošelj 2013; Marušič and Rok 2013; Marušič and Žaucer 2009). In Example 18, the direct object *saminče* is doubled by the object clitic *je*.¹³

Like in standard Slovenian, the subject of reflexive impersonals can antecede reflexive pronouns. Nevertheless, in *The little prince*, I have come across only one instance which demonstrates this. Example 19 contains a verb phrase consisting of *rivāt* ‘finish’ and *se wmyt* ‘wash oneself’. The latter verb is a reflexive verb derived from *wmyt* ‘wash’ by adding *se* (cf. Example 1a). The addition of the tonic reflexive pronoun *sabe* is rather unexpected since it is not necessary to express reflexive meaning here. Neither can the appearance of both reflexive variants (clitic and tonic) be interpreted as an instance of clitic doubling since the clitic is not doubling the tonic pronoun, but rather the other way around. Therefore, I suggest that the function of the tonic variant is related to contrast. It is a characteristic of Slavic languages with pairs of tonic and clitic personal pronouns to express contrast or emphasis by means of the tonic variant (cf. Steenwijk 1992: 119 and Šekli 2010 on the function of the tonic personal pronouns in Resian). Therefore, the tonic pronoun *sabe*

¹³ Note that Resian together with a few other Slovenian dialects spoken in northern Italy is unique within Slavic in that it not only shows doubling of objects but also of subjects (e.g., Šekli 2010, Wandl Forthcoming).

in Example 19 could serve the purpose of contrasting the object of the subordinate clause ('oneself') with the object of the main clause ('planet').

- (19) Ko se rivanë se wmyt sabe pujütrë, sa
 when REFL finish.PRS.3SG REFL wash.INF REFL.ACC in.the.morning REFL
 ma löpö spücinat planët. (Resian)
 have.PRS.3SG carefully clean.INF planet.ACC.SG.M
 'When one has washed onself in the morning, one must carefully clean the planet.' (23)

Considering the special function of the reflexive in Example 19 as well as the fact that it occurs together with a reflexive verb, one may doubt whether it provides as clear evidence for the appearance of reflexive pronouns as antecedents of reflexive impersonals as 5a does for standard Slovenian. To verify whether reflexive impersonals can indeed antecede reflexive pronouns, I therefore construed a parallel sentence in Resian which was judged acceptable by a native speaker. The sentence is given in 20. Apart from the vocabulary, it differs from the standard Slovenian example in 5a in that the verb 'think' in the expression 'think of', in Resian, is formed with the dative reflexive clitic *si*.¹⁴ Moreover, it requires the preposition *za* + ACC instead of *na* + LOC. In the accusative, Slovenian personal pronouns have a specific form that is used with prepositions. It is usually referred to as "bound" and, in script, is written together with the preposition (e.g., Herrity 2016: 128–130). In the Resian orthography developed by Steenwijk, personal pronouns in the accusative are separated from prepositions by hyphens (Steenwijk 1994: 17), viz., Resian *za-se* 'for oneself'.

- (20) Injän sa si mšli köj za-se. (Resian)
 now REFL REFL.DAT think.PRS.3SG only for-REFL
 'Now people only think of themselves.'

Like in standard Slovenian, Resian impersonal reflexives can antecede reciprocal constructions. This is shown by Example 21, where the reciprocal construction 'one another / each other' is dependent upon the infinitive *ġat* 'put'. The latter is embedded into a modal construction with the verb 'have' (here: 'have to') modified by the particle *ba*, which, according to Steenwijk (1992: 186), has an attenuative meaning.

- (21) Sa ba mëlö je ġat dnogä wun na toga
 REFL ATT have.PST.PTCP.SG.N they.OC.ACC put.INF one up on DEF.ACC.SG.M
 drüzaga... (Resian)
 other.ACC.SG.M
 'One should put them onto one another.' (22)

¹⁴ Note that the use of *si* does not seem to be required in all contexts (Steenwijk 1992: 281).

Resian reflexive impersonals can also act as controllers of passive complements. Since *The little prince* does not contain an example proving this, I again, constructed a sentence corresponding to the standard Slovenian Example 7) and had it judged acceptable by a native speaker. The sentence is given in 22. Note that the modal verb *će* ‘want.PRS.3SG’ could also be replaced by the construction *ma wojo* ‘have.PRS.3SG will.ACC.SG.F’.

- (22) **Sa** *će* byt rüdi hwaljen. (Resian)
 REFL want.PRS.3SG be.INF always admire.PST.PASS.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘People always want to be admired.’

Finally, reflexive impersonals in Resian, can also be formed from copular constructions. Examples are given in 23. In the first two examples the predicative expressions are realized by adjectives (Examples 23a and 23b). Since adjectives in Resian (and Slavic generally) are targets of gender agreement, these examples are of special interest for determining the properties of subjects in reflexive impersonals. As mentioned in Section 2, native speakers of Slovenian seem to vary with regard to their acceptance of masculine and neuter adjective forms in impersonal predicative constructions. This variation seems to be characteristic for Resian, too. As can be seen, in Example 23a the adjective *tožan* appears in the masculine form while *risnō* in Example 23b is neuter.

Overall, the number of reflexive impersonals with adjectival predicates in *The little prince* is four. Of these, one example contains an indeclinable adjective (or passive participle) which makes it meaningless for determining number and gender features. Additionally, there are two examples with the masculine form of the pronoun *sam* ‘self; alone’ (cf. Example 23c). Of these six examples, only Example 23b contains a neuter adjective in the predicate. However, since in Slavic the most common way to form an adverb from an adjective is by simply adding the neuter nominative/accusative endings, the form *risnō* could perhaps be explained as an adverb. Be this as it may, the limited number of examples does not allow drawing any firm conclusions about the distribution of masculine and neuter forms in *The little prince*.

- (23) a. ko **sa** jē karjē tožan **sa** mā rādi gledat
 when REFL be.PRS.3SG very sad REFL have.PRS.3SG with.pleasure look.INF
 suncē, ki gre za göro... (Resian)
 sun.ACC.SG.N REL go.PRS.3SG behind mountain.ACC.SG.F
 ‘when one is very sad one must with pleasure look at the sun setting
 behind the mountain...’ (27)

- b. Ko sa čë no wöwco, to kaže, da
 when REFL want.PRS.3SG INDEF.ACC.SG.F sheep.ACC.SG.F it.SC show.PRS.3SG COMPL
 sa risnō jë
 REFL real.NOM.SG.N be.PRS.3SG
 ‘When one wants a sheep, it shows that one exists.’ (20)
- c. Sa jë sam pa ta-mi judmin.
 REFL be.PRS.3SG alone even among people.INS.PL
 ‘One is alone even among people.’ (60)

Example 24 shows that the complement in an impersonal predicative construction does not have to be a form that is target to agreement. Here, a phrase consisting of the preposition *za* ‘for’ and an infinitive appears in the predicate. This construction constitutes a structural loan of the Romance final construction represented by Italian *per* ‘for’ + INF.

- (24) To jë bilō fys löpō mët dnogä
 it.SC be.PRS.3SG be.PST.PTCP.SG.N really nice.NOM.SG.N have.INF INDEF.ACC.SG.M
 amïga, pa ci sa jë za wmrît. (Resian)
 friend.ACC.SG.M even if REFL be.PRS.3SG for die.INF
 ‘I is nice to have had a friend, even if one has to die.’ (76)

To conclude, the investigated data provide clear evidence that in Resian, reflexive impersonals have the same properties as in standard Slovenian. They can be formed from both intransitive and transitive verbs. In case of the latter, they require the object to be in the accusative or when negated in the genitive. Moreover, the subject of reflexive impersonals can antecede reflexive (possessive) pronouns and reciprocal constructions, and it can control passive participles. Additionally, reflexive impersonals derived from the copular verb ‘be’ seem to occur in Resian while native speaker judgments on corresponding constructions in standard Slovenian vary (cf. Section 2). Therefore, the discussed data show that if the interpretation of the reflexive clitic as a subject pronoun is assumed for standard Slovenian, it would also have to be applied to Resian. However, Resian provides additional evidence potentially strengthening this analysis. This evidence will be presented in the following two sections (Section 3.3 and 3.4).

3.3 Reflexive impersonal constructions specific to Resian

Of interest for the analysis of the status of the reflexive *sa/se* in reflexive impersonals are further constructions with reflexive verbs and optative constructions with

- b. *a všude jsem₁ se₁ se₂ snažil₁ dozvědět₂ co
 and everywhere be.PRS.1SG REFL REFL try.PST.PTCP.SG.M find.out.INF what
 nejvíc.
 most
 ‘and everywhere, I tried to find out as much as possible’ (Junghanns 2002: 79)

However, while two identical clitics indeed cannot appear adjacent to each other, it is possible for one of them to simply be deleted.¹⁷ Instead of a sequence such as that in Example 27a we find sentences like the one in 27b where one of the two reflexive clitics is omitted (cf. Rosen 2014: 104 who argues that it is the reflexive of the matrix verb that is deleted).

- (27) a. *Děvče se₁ se₂ stydělo₁ převléknout₂. (Czech)
 girl REFL REFL be.ashamed.PTCP.SG.N change.INF
 b. Děvče se₁₊₂ stydělo₁ převléknout₂.
 girl.NOM.SG.N REFL be.ashamed.PST.PTCP.SG.N change.INF
 ‘The girl was ashamed to change (clothes).’ (Rosen 2014: 104)

As mentioned above, the constraint proposed by Junghanns (2002: 79–80) affects not only identical clitics but also clitics with a similar syntactic function. This can again be demonstrated by means of reflexive clitics. In the Croatian example in 28 taken from Kolaković et al. (2022: 269), it is possible for the reflexive clitics *se* and *si* to appear in the second position of their respective clauses (matrix and embedded) (Example 28a) while they cannot appear in the same clause as a result of clitic climbing (Example 28b). Whether clitic climbing with subsequent deletion of one of the two clitics is possible in this case seems to be unclear as indicated by the authors (Example 28c and 28d).

- (28) a. [...] prije nego se₁ odvažimo₁ priuštiti₂ si₂ zeru više života.
 before than REFL dare.PRS.1PL afford.INF REFL little more life.GEN.SG.M
 (Croatian)
 b. *[...] prije nego se₁ si₂ odvažimo₁ priuštiti₂ zeru više života.
 before than REFL REFL dare.PRS.1PL afford.INF little more life.GEN.SG.M
 c. ?[...] prije nego se₁₊₂ odvažimo₁ priuštiti₂ zeru više života.
 before than REFL dare.PRS.1PL afford.INF little more life.GEN.SG.M

¹⁷ Note that this deletion is not triggered by phonological factors since it is, for instance, possible for the reflexive *se* to immediately precede the homonymous preposition *se* in Czech (see Junghanns 2002: 80).

- d. ?[...] prije nego **si**₁₊₂ odvažimo₁ priuštiti₂ zeru više života.
 before than REFL dare.PRS.1SG afford.INF little more life.GEN.SG.M
 '[...] before we dare to allow ourselves to live life a little more fully'
 (Kolaković et al. 2022: 269)

Considering these constraints, it does not come as a surprise that we do not find two reflexives *se* realized in the standard Slovenian example cited in 25. The deletion of one of the two reflexives can be explained by the constraint on two identical clitics. In contrast to instances of clitic climbing, in reflexive impersonals the alternative of placing each of the two reflexive clitics in the domain of its own governor is not available because they have the same governor. This is also true for reflexive impersonals derived from reflexive verbs taking the dative reflexive *si*. Accordingly, the above constraint can also be invoked to explain the unacceptability of sentences like that in Example 29 in standard Slovenian.¹⁸

- (29) *Na vrhu hriba **si se** odpočije. (Slovenian)
 on top.LOC.SG.M mountain.ACC.SG.M REFL.DAT REFL rest.PRS.3SG
 'People rest on top of the mountain.'

Now, the reason why Resian is interesting with regard to the analysis of reflexive impersonals derived from reflexive verbs is that, unlike in other Slavic languages, the above described constraints do not apply. While in instances of clitic climbing haplogy of one of two reflexive clitics occurs also in Resian, both reflexive clitics are preserved in impersonal constructions involving reflexive verbs. An example of clitic climbing and haplogy can be found in 30. As can be seen, only one reflexive clitic is realized here even though, *spüstit se* in the meaning 'let oneself, allow oneself' and *smëjat se* 'laugh' both involve a reflexive clitic.

- (30) Möj amëg an **se** spüstil spet
 my.NOM.SG.M friend.NOM.SG.M he.SC REFL let.PST.PTCP.SG.M again
 smëjat. (Resian)
 laugh.INF
 'My friend burst into laughter.' (18)

On the contrary, in the four examples containing reflexive impersonal constructions formed from reflexive verbs given in 31, both reflexive clitics are realized. Example 31a is the only instance of this kind that I have found in *The little prince*. Here, the reflexive clitic *se* gives the transitive verb *kapyt* 'understand' reciprocal meaning ('understand each other'). The other three examples provided in 31 stem from

¹⁸ I'm grateful to Franc Marušič for providing me with this example. Cf. further Marušič and Žaucer (2006: 1133 fn. 30).

Steenwijk's (1992: 187) fieldwork data. Example 31b contains an inherently reflexive verb (*bat se* 'be afraid'), in Example 31c the clitic *se* forms an anticausative (*parit se* 'get burnt'), and in Example 31d (repeated from Example 15) the clitic conveys reflexive meaning.¹⁹ As can be seen, in all these examples both the impersonal reflexive clitic and the reflexive clitic either inherently belonging to the verb or modifying it occur in the same clause. What is more, they occur adjacent to each other without one of them being deleted. The fact that the examples in 31 include a variety of different reflexive constructions further suggests that the formation of reflexive impersonals is not limited to a specific type of reflexive verbs.

- (31) a. Kadā sa rumuni, ma **sa se** ni kapijë. (Resian)
 when REFL talk.PRS.3SG but REFL REFL NEG understand.PRS.3SG
 'When people speak, but do not understand each other.' (69)
- b. **sa se** rüdi buji
 REFL REFL always be.afraid.PRS.3SG
 'one is always afraid' (Steenwijk 1992: 187)
- c. **sa se** pari
 REFL REFL burn.PRS.3SG
 'one gets burnt'
- d. **sa se** ublikal w maškiri
 REFL REFL dress.PST.PTCP.SG.M in maškira.LOC.SG.F
 'one dressed in a maškira (a certain female dress for Carneval)'

Likewise, in Resian, it is possible to derive reflexive impersonals from reflexive verbs with the clitic *si*. Two examples are given in 32. The first stems from *The little prince*. It contains the inherently reflexive verb *mšlit si* 'think' (Example 32a). The second example comes from Steenwijk's (1992: 187) fieldwork data. Here, the reflexive clitic *si* acts as the indirect object of the transitive verb *wičit* 'wet'. Thus, also in the case of verbs with the reflexive clitic *si*, at least, two different types of reflexive verbs can be attested in impersonal constructions.

- (32) a. ko **sa si** mšlilö. (Resian)
 when REFL REFL.DAT think.PST.PTCP.SG.N
 'through thinking' (lit.: 'when one thought') (21)
- b. **se si** wīci nōge
 REFL REFL.DAT wet.PRS.3SG leg.ACC.PL
 'one's feet get wet' (lit.: 'one wet's one's feet') (Steenwijk 1992: 187)

If it is indeed true that the constraints formulated by Junghanns (2002: 79–80) are rooted in the unacceptability of two clitics with similar or identical functions in the

¹⁹ Cf. Section 3.2 for the masculine form of the participle in Example 31d.

same clause, the Resian examples cited in 31 and 32 imply that, in this variety, the difference between impersonal reflexives, on the one hand, and reflexive clitics in other functions, on the other hand, are sufficiently divergent for the constraint not to apply. The question arises how Resian impersonal reflexives differ from impersonal reflexives in standard Slovenian where corresponding structures are disallowed (cf. Examples 25 and 29). A possible explanation could be that, in Resian, impersonal reflexives have adopted additional properties that would make them more distinctive as subject pronouns. However, from the above presented material it is unclear what these properties should be. Apart from the fact that predicative constructions with reflexive impersonals could be more acceptable in Resian than in standard Slovenian, we have not observed any significant differences between the two languages. Therefore, I believe that the reason can be found in the different slots that are allotted to subject and object clitics in Resian. I will present the arguments for this assumption in Section 3.4, after having discussed optative constructions with the particle *da* and the imperative in Section 3.3.2.

3.3.2 Reflexive impersonals in optative constructions

In Resian, optative and final clauses can be formed by means of the particle *da* and an imperative. The latter, in contemporary Slavic, has a defective paradigm which usually comprises forms for the second person singular and plural, and in the case of Slovenian also the dual. Additionally, some languages have a distinct form for the first person plural. Now, Resian employs these forms to express clauses with modal semantics introduced by the particle *da*, which is identical with the complementizer *da*. According to Steenwijk (1992: 185–186), these constructions convey optative meaning when occurring in main clauses while they have final meaning in subordinate clauses. Additionally, the use of the morphological imperative seems to be obligatory after certain verbs and adverbs, in which case Steenwijk (1992: 186) speaks of a subjunctive.²⁰ Similarly, Ježovnik (2015) analyses the construction as a subjunctive expressing meanings such as hypotheticality, intentionality, desirability.

What is interesting for the purpose of the present paper is that in optative/final constructions, the imperative forms combine with subject clitics of all three persons to form finite clauses.²¹ This is exemplified with data from *The little prince* in 33. In Example 33a, the subject of the subordinate *da*-clause is expressed by the 1st-person singular subject clitic *ja* ‘I’ while *pokažej* ‘show’ has the ending of the

²⁰ Note that for the latter case Steenwijk (1992: 186) also cites an example with an imperative in the first person plural. I have not come across an example with this form in main or subordinate clauses with optative or final meaning.

²¹ Note that subjects, in these constructions, can also be expressed by noun phrases.

2nd-person singular imperative. The subject of the respective clause in Example 33b is realized by the subject clitic *na* ‘she’ while the verb *murěj* ‘can’ again, appears in the form of the 2nd-person singular imperative. An example in the plural can be found in 33c. Here, the subject clitic *ni* ‘they’ combines with the 2nd-person plural of the imperative. Hence, the category person in these examples is expressed solely by the subject clitic. Omission of subject clitics in optative/final constructions with the imperative has been found only in the 1st-person singular. Most probably, this is because the omission of the subject clitic does not lead to ambiguity here.

- (33) a. To māsa nō malē ta-par mlē, da ja ti
 it.SC very INDEF.ACC.SG.N small.ACC.SG.N for I.DAT COMPL I.SC you.OC.DAT.SG
 pokažej, kē se nalaža ma. (Resian)
 show.IMP.2SG where REFL locate.PRS.3SG my.NOM.SG.F
 ‘My place is too small for showing you where it is.’ (87)
- b. Ja ćon no wōwco, da na murěj živit
 I.SC be.FUT.1SG INDEF.ACC.SG.F sheep.ACC.SG.F COMPL she.SC can.IMP.2SG live.INF
 karjē.
 Long
 ‘I want a sheep that can live for a long time.’ (13)
- c. Ći ti wkažēš tvēn judin, da ni se
 if you.SC order.PRS.2SG POSS.DAT.2PL people.DAT.PL COMPL they.SC REFL
 vijejta nu-w murjē, jūdi ćejo naređit
 through.IMP.2PL in sea.ACC.SG.N people.NOM.PL be.FUT.3PL make.INF
 rivolucjun.
 revolution.ACC.SG.M
 ‘If you order your people to throw themselves into the sea, they will make a revolution.’ (40)

Interestingly, in *The little prince* we also find two instances of a reflexive impersonal with this type of modal construction. In Example 34a, the subordinate *da*-clause contains the 2nd-person imperative *špjagej* ‘explain’, the reflexive *sa*, and the indirect object clitic *jin* ‘they.DAT’. The subject of the main clause is expressed by the subject clitic *ni* ‘they’. Accordingly, the subject changes from main to subordinate clause, and *sa* realizes the impersonal subject of the subordinate clause.

The second example is given in 34b. Here, the main clause contains a phrase of the *mihi-placet*-type where the grammatical subject is expressed by the clitic expletive *to* ‘it’ while the logical subject is expressed by the clitic *mi* ‘I.DAT’. The *da*-clause is formed with the imperative *lajej* ‘read’ and the reflexive *se*. However, in this case two readings seem to be possible. According to the first, we are dealing with a reflexive impersonal formed from a transitive verb whose direct object is *mōj librin* ‘my book’. The second option is a passive interpretation. In this case, *mōj*

librin would represent the patient in a reflexive passive construction (cf. Example 1b). The correct translation would then be something like: ‘Because I don’t like my book being read lightly like that’. However, considering that the French original contains a phrase with the subject pronoun *on* ‘one’, the first reading is more likely.

- (34) a. Ni mājō rūdi trēbē, da sa jin špjagej. (Resian)
 they.SC have.PRS.3PL always need COMPL REFL they.OC.DAT explain.IMP2SG
 ‘They always need explanations.’ (Lit.: ‘They always need that one explains it to them.’) (10)
- b. Zawojo ka to mi ni plaža, da se lajej mōj
 because it.SC I.OC.DAT NEG like.PRS.3SG COMPL REFL read.IMP2SG my.ACC.SG.M
 librin itakō lehkō.
 book.ACC.SG.M like.that lightly
 ‘Because I don’t like people to read my book lightly like that.’ (20)

As regards the agreement pattern, the imperative seems to provide further evidence for the assumption that the verbal form appearing in reflexive impersonals is a default form. As in the present tense, the most general form, i.e., the second person singular, is found in this construction.

3.4 The place of impersonal reflexive clitics in the clause

In the previous sections I have first, provided evidence that in Resian, reflexive impersonals show the same syntactic properties as they do in standard Slovenian (Section 3.2), and second, discussed two constructions specific to Resian which also could be interpreted as supporting the analysis of impersonal reflexive pronouns as subject clitics (Section 3.3). This Section is now concerned with the placement of reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions.

While the standard Slovenian system of pronominal clitics consists of object clitics in the genitive, dative, and accusative cases (including the corresponding reflexive clitics), Resian has additionally developed a set of subject clitics (Benacchio 2002; Šekli 2010; Skubic 1997). Moreover, clitics in Resian are not placed after the first phrase in the clause as they usually are in standard Slovenian (cf. Franks and King 2000: 31–48; Golden 2003; Marušič 2008), but are proclitic to the verb (see below). However, most interesting for this paper is that in Resian, the domains of subject and object clitics differ from each other. This provides us with the unique opportunity (within Slavic) to investigate whether impersonal reflexives in their placement group together with subject clitics or with object clitics.

The Resian clitic system has yet to be properly described. In the literature, it is merely recognized that pronominal clitics are proclitic to the verb (Benacchio 2002; Skubic 1997). The exact slots that the individual clitics occupy in the clause as well as their order, so far, has not been studied in detail. Therefore, in the following I cite material from a separate study based on the same resources as the present article that I am currently preparing (Wandl Submitted).

As mentioned above, Resian clitics are oriented towards the verb. Subject clitics always precede the verb. The same is true for object clitics unless they appear in imperative clauses with morphological imperatives. In this case, they follow the verb. However, the verbal forms towards which subject and object clitics are oriented are different. Subject clitics always precede the finite verb in the clause regardless of whether it is a full verb or an auxiliary. Object clitics, on the other hand, precede their lexical head verb. Since in Resian finite verbal forms in unmarked word order precede non-finite forms, subject and object clitics do not occur adjacent to each other whenever a verbal complex contains more than one verb.²² Accordingly, subject and object clitics do not form a clitic cluster. Especially telling in this regard are periphrastic constructions with tonic auxiliaries because here it cannot be argued that subject and object clitics form a cluster together with the clitic auxiliary. Thus, in Example 35, the subject clitic *an* ‘he’ precedes the tonic negative auxiliary *nĩ* ‘not be’ whereas the object clitic *mi* ‘I.DAT’ precedes its lexical head verb which is realized as the past participle *rišpundäl* ‘answer’.

- (35) Ma **an** nĩ **mi** rišpundäl. (Resian)
 but he.SC NEG.be.PRS.3SG I.LOC.DAT answer.PST.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘But he did not respond to me.’ (77)

Etymologically, Slavic reflexive clitics are object clitics (cf. Section 3.1). Accordingly, we find them to be placed before their lexical head verb in Resian.²³ As can be seen in Example 36, subject clitics and reflexive clitics are placed according to the same pattern as in Example 35, irrespective of whether the auxiliary is tonic (cf. *bil* in Example 36a) or itself clitic (cf. *jě* in Example 36b).

- (36) a. anö **an** bil **se** karjě wtožil. (Resian)
 and he.SC be.PST.PTCP.SG.M REFL very be.unhappy.PST.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘and he had been very unhappy’ (33)

²² Note, however, that I have also observed instances of clitic climbing in Resian (e.g., Example 30).

²³ Note that reflexive clitics do show some peculiarities with regard to their placement in the clitic cluster in Slavic languages (e.g., Franks and King 2000: 208–210). However, this is not immediately relevant for the topic of the present paper.

- b. Na jë se wezala wököl člëna od
 she.SC be.PRS.3SG REFL wind.PST.PTCP.SG.F around angle.GEN.SG.M of
 toga malaga principa [...]
 DEF.GEN.SG.M little.GEN.SG.M prince.GEN.SG.M
 ‘She [the snake] wound around the the little prince’s ankle.’ (60)

If we now turn to the placement of reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions in Resian, we see that here the reflexives are placed like subject clitics and not like object clitics. In Example 37a taken from *The little prince*, the impersonal reflexive *sa* precedes the tonic auxiliary *nĩ* ‘not be’ exactly like the subject clitic *an* ‘he’ in Example 35. Example 37b comes from Steenwijk’s (1992: 187) fieldwork data. It shows that the clitic placement observed in the examples from *The little prince* cannot be attributed to influence of the French original. Again, *sa* precedes the finite verb *těšě*. The latter presents the 3rd-person imperfect form of the verb *tět* ‘want’. However, as can be seen in the translation provided by Steenwijk (1992: 187), the original meaning is significantly bleached so that the verbal form is at least approaching the function of an auxiliary expressing counterfactual meaning (cf. Steenwijk 1992: 182–183 and Pila 2023 on the semantics of the former imperfect in Resian). It is further interesting to note that *sa*, in this example, also precedes the attenuative particle *ba*. At least in *The little prince*, this position is otherwise only occupied by subject clitics and never by object clitics (cf. also Example 21). The placement of the object clitic *jin* ‘they.DAT’ in Example 37b again corresponds to the placement of the object clitic *mi* ‘I.DAT’ in Example 35.

- (37) a. ko sa nĩ provalö vić köj dizanjät no
 when REFL NEG.be.PRS.3SG try.PST.PTCP.SG.N more only draw.INF INDEF.ACC.SG.F
 kačo zağano anö woğano. (Resian)
 boa.ACC.SG.F closed.ACC.SG.F and open.ACC.SG.F
 ‘when one has not tried to draw anything except for boas from the outside
 and from the inside’ (21)
- b. sa ba těšě jin dat pa za jěst
 SA ATT want.IMPERF.3SG they.OC.DAT give.INF EMPH for eat.INF
 ‘one would also have given them to eat’ (Steenwijk 1992: 187)

However, it should be noted that the *The little prince* also contains two instances of the reflexive clitic preceding auxiliaries in other constructions. In Example 38a, *se* appears before the perfect auxiliary *jë* and in Example 38b before the future auxiliary *bo*. In both instances, the reflexive belongs to an inherently reflexive verb.

- (38) a. skod an se jë špartył... (Resian)
 from.where he.SC REFL be.PRS.3SG come.PST.PTCP.SG.M
 ‘from where he has come’ (60)
- b. Anö bö se bo bližnjila wora [...]
 and more REFL be.FUT.3SG approach.PST.PTCP.SG.F hour.NOM.SG.F
 ‘And the more the hour approaches [...]’ (70)

While this variation deserves further attention,²⁴ the fact that in the 39 other sentences which contain *se* and past- and future-tense auxiliaries (including two instances of the auxiliary *jë* ‘be.PRS.3SG’ and four instances of *nï* NEG.be.PRS.3SG) the former always follows the latter suggests that it is this order which constitutes the unmarked pattern in non-impersonal constructions. Further support for this assumption can be found in the placement of object clitics – the type of clitics that the reflexive clitic originally belongs to – which do not occur before auxiliaries when acting as verbal arguments.

Other examples that are instructive with regard to the placement of impersonal reflexives are those containing modal verbs. These are quite numerous in *The little prince*, which does not come as a surprise considering that generalizing expressions such as ‘one/people should/can/must etc.’ are rather common. The reason why modal constructions are interesting for the analysis of impersonal reflexives is due to the function of modal verbs. Because they merely modify the meaning of the embedded verbs, modal verbs share their subject with the latter. As with the periphrastic constructions in Example 37, one could, therefore, argue that there is no reason why the impersonal reflexive should not be placed before the lexical verb, i.e., in the slot assigned to object clitics, the type of clitics that reflexives belong to etymologically. Accordingly, it could be interpreted as indicative of the subject analysis of impersonal reflexives that *sa* always precedes the modal verbs in Example 39. The latter includes the modal verbs ‘can’ (Example 39a), ‘have to / must’ (Examples 39b and 39c), and ‘want’ (Example 39d). Examples 39a and 39b further show that object clitics are placed before the lexical verb, and Example 39c confirms the same slot for non-impersonal reflexives.

- (39) a. sa mörë je püstit. (Resian)
 REFL can.PRS.3SG they.OC.ACC let.INF
 ‘one can leave it’ (22)
- b. sa mä jo vidrit naprëd
 REFL have.PRS.3SG she.OC.ACC pull.out.INF soon
 ‘one has to pull it out soon’ (22)

²⁴ Note also the general peculiarities regarding the placement of the 3rd-person auxiliary clitics in Slav past tense constructions (Franks and King 2000: 211–215).

- c. **Sa** mä se šfarčät wsaki din za vidrit
 REFL have.PRS.3SG REFL force.INF every.ACC.SG.M day.ACC.SG.M for pull.out.INF
 te baobab
 DEF.ACC.PL baobab
 ‘One must force oneself every day to pull out the baobabs [...]’ (23)
- d. **Sa** ba tölö pa nu malö jökat, či sa
 REFL ATT want.PST.PTCP.SG.M even INDEF.ACC.SG.N little.ACC.SG.N cry.INF if REFL
 se zdila doměštikät...
 REFL make.PRS.3SG tame.INF
 ‘One would like to cry a little, if one lets oneself be tamed.’ (83)

Other multi-verb constructions are less suggestive with regard to the placement of impersonal reflexives. This is because here, it could be explained by reference to object clitics. Remember that object clitics, in Resian, are proclitic to their lexical head. If a matrix verb has a strong lexical meaning, it could be argued that the placement of the impersonal reflexive before the matrix verb is due to the fact that it is an object clitic. This argumentation seems impossible for periphrastic constructions with auxiliaries which merely have grammatical meaning (cf. especially Example 37a). Against the background of Resian clitic placement rules, the position of impersonal reflexives, therefore, suggests a relationship between these clitics and subject clitics.

3.5 An emerging subject pronoun with an arbitrary human referent

When introducing the paradigm of the reflexive pronoun in Section 3.1, it was pointed out that Resian has two phonologically different clitic variants ACC *sa/se*. It has further been said that these variants most probably originated as the result of a context-sensitive phonological change whose conditioning factors have been obscured. However, in *The little prince* we find a clear functional distribution of the two reflexive variants that seems indicative of the status of the reflexive clitic in impersonal constructions.

It has already been noticed by Steenwijk (1992: 187) that in reflexive impersonals with reflexive verbs the variant *sa* always precedes the variant *se*. The single example of this kind from *The little prince* confirms this observation (Example 31a). However, in this text the distribution of the two variants goes even further. As can be seen in Table 3 showing the distribution of *sa* and *se* across reflexive constructions of all types (cf. Section 2) in the Resian version of *The little prince*, the former almost

Table 3: Distribution of *sa* and *se* in *Te mali princip* (de Saint-Exupéry 2021).

	Impersonal	Other	Total
<i>sa</i>	91	2	93
<i>se</i>	2	275	277
Total	93	277	370

exclusively appears in impersonal constructions while the latter, apart from two exceptions, is limited to other reflexive constructions.

The distribution presented in Table 3 clearly speaks for a reinterpretation of *sa* as a marker of impersonal subjects that might, at present, still be an ongoing process. That the process is in fact not yet completed even in the dialect of the translator could be suggested by the four counterexamples. However, at least, three of these examples allow for alternative interpretations.

In the counterexample given in 40a, the reflexive *se* appears in an impersonal construction which is at odds with the overall distribution presented in Table 3. The relevant phrase consists of a phasal verb ‘finish’ and a reflexive verb ‘wash oneself’. Accordingly, it contains two reflexive clitics and one could argue that the use of *se* as a marker of an impersonal subject is related to the occurrence of the same clitic in the embedded infinitive. Similarly, the use of *sa* as a marker of reciprocity in Example 40b could be due to the fact that the following verb *samajat* begins with the identical letters.²⁵

- (40)

a.

Ko

se

rivanë

se

wmyt

sabe

pujütrë,

sa

when

REFL

finish.PRS.3SG

REFL

wash.INF

oneself.ACC

in.the.morning

REFL

ma

löpö

spücinat

planët.

(Resian)

have.PRS.3SG

carefully

clean.INF

planet.ACC.SG.M

‘When one is finished washing oneself in the morning, one must clean the planet.’ (23)
- b.

[...] itadij dzornade ba tële

sa

samajat

wse

[...]

then

day.NOM.PL

ATT

want.PST.PTCP.PL

REFL

resemble.INF

all.NOM.PL

‘[...] then all the days would resemble each other [...]’ (69)

As regards the third counterexample, no such explanation is available. Example 41 is, however, ambiguous. The combination *sa čül* could either be interpreted as a reflexive impersonal or as a reflexive passive. This is because the nominative and

25 Note that the verb *se samajat* ‘resemble something/sombody’ could also be inherently reflexive. In the glossary in Steenwijk (1992: 306) only the reflexive verb is given while the verb is absent from the Resian dictionary (Steenwijk 2005).

accusative forms of the noun phrase *dan drügi gärn* ‘another thunder’ are homonymous. The phrase could either be interpreted as the direct object of a reflexive impersonal or as the subject of a reflexive passive. If the first interpretation is correct, the variant *sa* would be expected while the masculine form of the past participle would be unusual (cf., however, Example 15). According to the second interpretation, the masculine participle would be expected while *se* would not. The French original does not help with resolving this ambiguity because it significantly differs from the translation. Therefore, the example does not present a clear counterexample to the pattern in Table 3. Perhaps, the above-described ambiguity has contributed to the deviating pattern.

- (41) Anö tu-w itin **sa** čül dan
 and in that.LOC.SG.N REFL feel.PST.PTCP.SG.M one.NOM/ACC.SG.M
 drügi gärn od trëtnjaga najvijanaga
 other.NOM/ thunder.NOM/ACC.SG.M of third.GEN.SG.M SPRL.fast.GEN.SG.M
 ACC.SG.M
 treno [...]. (Resian)
 train.GEN.SG.M
 ‘And in this moment one could hear the thunder of a third express train [...]’
 (74)

The fourth potential counterexample is 34b, repeated in 42 for the sake of convenience. Here, we find a *da* + imperative-construction with the reflexive *se*. The French original, in the respective position, contains an impersonal clause with the subject pronoun *on* ‘one’. Accordingly, we would expect to find an impersonal construction also in Resian. Although *se lajej* could also be interpreted as a passive construction (‘is read’) with *möj librin* constituting the subject of the clause, I therefore believe that we are rather dealing with an impersonal reflexive with the clitic *se*. Thus, the example goes against the overall pattern observed in Table 3.

- (42) Zawojo ka to mi ni plaža, da **se** lajej möj
 because it.SC I.LOC.DAT NEG like.PRS.3SG COMPL REFL read.IMP.2SG my.ACC.SG.M
 librin itakö lehkö. (Resian)
 book.ACC.SG.M like.that lightly
 ‘Because I don’t like people to read my book lightly like that.’ (20)

In conclusion, it can be said that it is possible to find alternative explanations for the four counterexamples, although, at least in one case (Example 42) the alternative account does not seem convincing. However, even if the alternative explanations are not accepted, the numbers in Table 3 clearly speak for a generalization of *sa* as a marker of impersonal clauses in this doculect, be it, as an ongoing process.

Now, the reason why the generalization of *sa* is so interesting consists in its implications for the analysis of impersonal reflexives. When an allomorph becomes associated with one specific meaning while the other allomorphs of the morpheme at hand become associated with the remaining meanings, the allomorph turns into a morpheme of its own. One would expect that this happens only – or is at least much more likely to happen – if the morpheme among its meanings and functions has one that is significantly different from the others. Otherwise, there would be no basis for developing an allomorph into a distinctive element. The difference would have to manifest itself at least in semantics, but differences in grammar would likely be favorable for the reanalysis.

Turning back to reflexive impersonals in Resian, this means that the difference between reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions, on the one hand, and reflexive clitics in all other formations, on the other hand, must have been significant enough for *sa* to be generalized to the former. And indeed, the syntactic and semantic properties of reflexive impersonals discussed in Sections 2, 3.2 and 3.3 set them off against other reflexive construction. As discussed further, these properties have been interpreted as indicative of the impersonal reflexive being a subject clitic. Accordingly, the restriction of *sa* to impersonals can be interpreted as a consequence of a reanalysis of the impersonal reflexive as a subject clitic.

Arguing that the reanalysis provides additional evidence for the subject-character of impersonal reflexives would, however, be circular. For this reason the evidence from the Resian clitic placement rules presented in Section 3.1 is so significant. The latter suggest that impersonal reflexives, with regard to their position in the clause, are associated with subject clitics. To my knowledge, this is the only evidence that directly associates impersonal reflexives with subject clitics from a Slavic language. This is important because the arguments presented in Section 2, as convincing as they may be, may to some extent be rooted in certain theoretical conceptions. For instance, the fact that the subject of reflexive impersonals can antecede reflexive and reciprocal pronouns (see Section 2) could also be explained by assuming that reflexives license null arbitrary subjects. The latter is often the case with 3rd-person plural forms (e.g., Siewierska and Papastathi 2011; Sifaki 2021; Mantovan 2022). Likewise, Rivero and Milojević Sheppard's (2003: 109–110) argument regarding the control of passive complements presented above (see Section 2) depends on Jaeggli's (1986) analysis of passive complements.²⁶ The evidence from the clitic placement rules, on the other hand, is independent of this type of abstract analysis.

The fact that in Resian two reflexive clitics can appear in the same clause (cf. Section 3.3.1), at first glance, seems to further corroborate the assumption of a

²⁶ Cf. also Lenardič (2024) for a criticism of Rivero and Milojević Sheppard's (2003: 109–110) account.

significant difference between impersonal reflexives and other reflexives. At least, according to Junghanns's (2002: 79–80) constraint, Slavic clitics are only allowed in the same clause if they do not have a similar function. However, the possibility to use two adjacent reflexive clitics in Resian impersonal constructions can also be understood as a consequence of different placement rules applying to them. Since the data discussed in Section 3.4 suggest that impersonal reflexives are placed like subject clitics while other reflexives are placed like object clitics, it is reasonable to assume that they do not occupy the same slot in the clause. Accordingly, the adjacent occurrence of reflexive clitics in impersonal constructions could also be explained with reference to their different domains. However, regardless of which explanation is preferred, reflexive impersonals derived from reflexive verbs provide evidence for a significant difference between the two involved reflexive clitics, be it with regard to their meaning or function, or to their behavior as clitics.

The use of impersonal reflexives in optative construction discussed in Section 3.3.2 is less suggestive with regard to the status of the reflexive clitic. If it could be shown that the realization of an overt subject – clitic or not – is obligatory in these constructions, one could argue that the reflexive must be the subject in cases like those in Example 34. However, as mentioned in Section 3.3.2, at least, for the 1st person singular, the investigated resource contains evidence for pro-drop. At present, we therefore have to limit ourselves to noticing that the evidence provided by the optative construction fits well with the analysis of impersonal reflexives as subject clitics. However, they do not contribute independent evidence to it at this point.

To sum up, the data extracted from *The little prince* point to a reanalysis of *sa* as a subject clitic with an arbitrary human referent in the investigated doculect. Of the few examples contradicting this analysis, a majority can be accounted for by alternative explanations. Nevertheless, at this point, it seems appropriate to speak of a change in progress. Once completed, there would be no reason why *sa* should be associated with the reflexive meaning. It would have developed into a separate subject pronoun having the syntactic and semantic properties described throughout this paper.

3.6 Aspects of language contact

At the beginning of this article (Section 1), it has been said that reflexive impersonals represent a genuine Resian phenomenon. And indeed, the fact that we find largely identical constructions in standard Slovenian, Polish, and Croatian dialects speaks for an origin rooted in Slavic. However, this does not exclude that Romance languages of the area had an influence on some properties of Resian impersonal

constructions. For instance, in Section 3.2 it has been suggested that certain unexpected agreement patterns in Resian reflexive impersonals could be due to contact with Italian. Another language which has had a significant influence on Resian is Friulian (Rhaeto-Romance) (Benacchio 2002; Šekli 2010; Skubic 1997; Steenwijk 1996).

In this section, I intend to point out two further aspects of the properties of Resian impersonal constructions that could be related to language contact: the association of impersonal reflexives with subject clitics and the possibility to derive reflexive impersonals from reflexive verbs without the deletion of reflexive clitics. Firm conclusions about whether contact was indeed involved here cannot be drawn at the moment. However, I believe that it is still important to identify aspects of language contact in the development of Resian impersonals, so as to provide a good basis for studying the diachronic development of this construction in the future.

The first topic concerns the association of impersonal reflexives with subject clitics in Friulian. The latter language, most probably, provided the example for introducing subject clitics into Resian and for remodelling the Resian clitic placement rules (Šekli 2010) as a whole. For this reason, it is interesting to note that, according to Haiman and Benincà (1992: 160–161), the Friulian reflexive *si* should be reckoned as a subject clitic in impersonal constructions, and that this is to some extent also reflected in its position in the clause. Like subject clitics, impersonal *si* either precedes object clitics preverbally (Example 43a) or “displaces” them into postverbal position (Example 43b).

- (43) a. **si** **lis** **pajave.** (Friulian)
 REFL they.OC.DAT pay.PST.3SG
 ‘People paid for them.’ (Haiman and Benincà 1992: 160)
- b. **si** **sintivi** **le**
 REFL hear.PST.3SG she.OC.DAT
 ‘People heard her.’

While this is not the exact same pattern as in Resian, where object clitics follow the verb only in imperatives, the association of impersonal reflexives with subject clitics via their place in the clause could have had an impact on Resian.

The second topic that seems noteworthy concerns the possibility to form reflexive impersonals from reflexive verbs. Unlike in Polish, where this is impossible, and unlike in standard Slovenian, where it can occur, but requires the deletion of one of the two reflexives (see Section 3.3.1), we do find reflexive impersonal constructions with two reflexive clitics in Friulian and in standard Italian. Of these two languages, Italian, with regard to this option, shows greater resemblance to Resian. As can be seen in the examples in 44, Italian employs two phonologically different reflexive clitics in these constructions. However, unlike in Resian, *ci* is not simply a variant of

si, but presents the accusative form of the 1st-person personal pronoun (Monachesi 1996: 134).²⁷

- (44) a. **ci si** veste pesanti. (Italian)
 REFL REFL see.PRS.3SG
 ‘one wears heavy clothes’ (Monachesi 1996: 44)
- b. **ci si** lava
 REFL REFL wash.PRS.3SG
 ‘one washes oneself’

In Friulian, the reflexive clitics do not occur adjacent to each other in the respective constructions. Rather, one of the two reflexives *si* moves to the postverbal position (cf. Example 45). Examples such as 43b, where the object clitic is enclitic to the verb, suggest that it is the non-impersonal reflexive that is targeted by the displacement in Example 45.²⁸

- (45) a. **s’** inacuarzisi. (Friulian)
 REFL perceive.PRS.3SG.REFL
 ‘one perceives’ (Gregor 1975: 114)
- b. **si** presentavisi
 REFL present.PRS.3SG.REFL
 ‘one presents oneself’

Especially the similarities between the Italian and Resian reflexive impersonal constructions with reflexive verbs are so striking that one would be tempted to assume an influence from the former language onto the latter. For instance, the Resian combination *sa se* could be interpreted as a structural loan of Italian *ci si*. Resian would then have utilized the phonological variant *sa* as the impersonal reflexive with reflexive verbs. From here, *sa* could then have been generalized as the impersonal reflexive. This scenario could find support in the fact that Steenwijk (1992: 187) recognized the use of *sa* with reflexive verbs, but, apparently, did not yet observe a distribution similar to that in Table 3.

To verify whether this is a possible scenario a detailed investigation of the diachrony of Resian reflexive impersonals would be needed. Unfortunately, the limited attestation of Resian casts doubt on whether such an endeavor could be successful. In any case, a diachronic study is beyond the scope of the present paper which is primarily concerned with a synchronic analysis of impersonals.

²⁷ Note that the Italian locative clitic is also *ci* (Maiden and Robustelli 2013: 96).

²⁸ Note that Haiman and Benincà (1992: 161) argue that the shift of the reflexive challenges the analysis of Friulian impersonal *si* as a subject clitic. According to them, the impersonal reflexive displaces the other reflexive because they both compete for the same syntactic slot.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that language contact may have played a role also in the development of Resian reflexive impersonals, even though the roots of this construction must be sought in Slavic itself (cf. Section 2).

4 Conclusions

In this article, I intended to show that the Slovenian dialect of Resia provides important evidence for analyzing impersonal reflexives as subject clitics. Not only do they occur in the same contexts as impersonal reflexives in standard Slovenian, Polish and in Croatian dialects (Section 2), but also in two additional constructions, i.e., in combination with reflexive verbs and in optative/final clauses formed with the particle *da* and the imperative (Section 3.3). The latter two constructions provide additional evidence relevant for the subject-analysis of impersonal reflexives. Most significantly for this interpretation, however, is evidence coming from clitic placement and from the distribution of the two reflexive clitic variants found in Resian. A comparison of the placement of impersonal reflexives in the clause with the general clitic placement rules in this language suggests that, with regard to their position in the clause, impersonal reflexives group with subject clitics rather than object clitics. This is significant evidence because it shows a direct association of impersonal reflexives and subject clitics and is thus independent of complex syntactic analyses which may be framework-driven. The existence of clitic placement rules in Resian, which are not only unique within Slavic but also differ from the neighboring Romance languages, proves to be a lucky coincidence in this regard.

The second important contribution that Resian makes to the study of reflexive impersonals concerns the differentiation between impersonal and other reflexives. The distribution of the two variants *sa* and *se* in the Resian translation of *The little prince* suggests that the former has been confined or is on its way of being confined to the function of the impersonal reflexive while *se* is used in all other reflexive constructions. This reanalysis implies a significant difference between the two functions since, otherwise, there would be no reason for differentiating them by turning an allomorph into a morpheme. The syntactic properties of impersonal reflexives as well as their behavior as clitics suggest that the decisive difference for this development is that between a subject clitic (*sa*), on the one hand, and a reflexive clitic (*se*), on the other hand. Accordingly, Resian again provides empirical evidence for interpreting impersonal reflexives as subject clitics. The semantics of this clitic correspond to that in standard Slovenian and Polish. Depending on the context it can have the meaning ‘one’, ‘people’, or ‘some/few people’. This implies that we are dealing with a subject clitic with an arbitrary human referent.

Summing up, this paper contributes to the study of reflexive impersonals by presenting hitherto unnoticed evidence indicating that reflexive clitics in these constructions are in fact subject clitics with an arbitrary human referent. As a case study, it further shows how a phonological variant of a pronoun can develop into a separate pronoun. While the roots of the just sketched developments must be sought in the history of Slavic, some aspects of the development could be related to language contact with Italian and Friulian. Establishing the diachrony of Resian reflexive impersonals must, however, remain the task for a future study, although, the lack of attestation may prove such endeavor impossible. Finally, the paper shows that, even in a comparatively well-studied language branch as Slavic, turning to smaller varieties, may reveal hitherto unnoticed phenomena which help shed light on questions of a general interest.

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Abbreviations

Languages

BCS	Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
Blg	Bulgarian
BRu	Belarusian
CSl	Common Slavic
Cz	Czech
LSo	Lower Sorbian
Mac	Macedonian
Pol	Polish
Ru	Russian
Slk	Slovak
Sln	Slovenian
Ukr	Ukrainian
USo	Upper Sorbian

Grammar

ATT	attenuative
COMPL	complementizer
DAT	dative
DEF	definite
F	feminine
FUT	future
IMP	imperative
IMPERS	impersonal
IMPERF	imperfect
INDEF	indefinite
INF	infinitive
INS	instrumental
LOC	locative
M	masculine
MOD	modal
NOM	nominative
OC	object clitic
PTCP	participle
POSS	possessive
PRS	present
PST	past
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
SC	subject clitic
SG	singular
SPRL	superlative

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