

## Abstract

The topic of this thesis is the Czech reflexive agent-demoting construction in a diachronic perspective, i.e., a construction traditionally called reflexive passive (or reflexive impersonal) in which the verb occurs in the reflexive form and the agent is demoted from the subject position. The thesis consists of two parts: theoretical and analytical.

The aim of the theoretical part is to incorporate the existing knowledge about the Czech construction in question into the context of both the international literature on the issues of reflexivity or agent demotion and the theoretical linguistic literature in general. In Chapter II.2, I discuss some basic theoretical concepts (especially from the grammaticalization theory), showing how they can be applied to the area of Czech reflexivity and reflexive agent-demoting construction. In Chapter II.3, I deal with the issue of reflexivity: different approaches to the Czech reflexive marker *se* are compared and thereafter some comprehensive typological descriptions are summarized which allow us to demonstrate to what extent the situation in Czech corresponds to the functional distribution of reflexivity in a cross-linguistic perspective. Chapter II.4 addresses the question of agent demotion: different Czech constructions with the function of agent defocusing are presented, then I show how the coexistence of such constructions is treated in the international literature and also what differences can be identified between these cognate constructions across Slavic languages. Chapter II.5 focuses on the diachronic aspects of the construction in question, examining how reflexive agent-demoting constructions usually arise cross-linguistically, what is the chronology of this process in Czech and what questions are associated with the subsequent constructional development.

The analytical part of the thesis presents material research on the usage of the reflexive agent-demoting construction in the 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup>-century Czech. Chapter III.2 introduces the linguistic data on which the analysis is based, clarifies the way of their processing and outlines the basic classification of functions fulfilled by the reflexive marker *se* in its particular attestations. In Chapter III.3, an in-depth description of the features that characterize the uses of the reflexive agent-demoting construction is presented, including their possible development over time; I analyze both formal and semantic/pragmatic features of the verbs, verb forms, agents and patients as well as of the structures as a whole. Chapter III.4 describes several so-called situation types, which represent the contexts in which the reflexive agent-demoting construction was typically used; by means of these situation types, it is possible both to explain the documented distribution of features and to identify the reasons for the very usage of an agent-demoting construction. Finally, Chapter III.5 draws attention to the ambiguous uses that invite more interpretations than just the agent-demoting one; from the diachronic point of view, these uses are crucial because this type of ambiguity is supposed to have been characteristic of the contexts in which the reflexive agent-demoting construction originally arose.