Towards a Typology of Reflexivity

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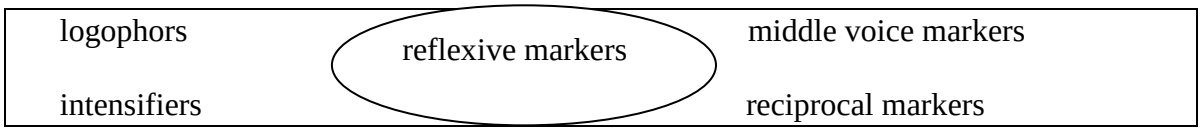
1. Introduction: Some elementary observations

- point of departure: a prototypical case based on our current knowledge of implicational generalization and on ease of elicitation: e.g. *John pinched himself* **vs.** *John pinched his neighbour***.**
- remarkable co-reference; grooming situations are unsuitable; 1st person and 2nd person not suitable; intentionality and control;
- dedicated formal markers indicating binding of a co-argument by a syntactic antecedent (co-reference of co-arguments) and extensions of basic use;
- If a language has two markers (Dutch *zich* vs. *zichself*; Polish *się* vs. *siebie*/*sobie*/*sobą*) can we assume that the contrast is the same? Certainly not, but there may still be the possibility of drawing generalizations.
- format of typological generalizations: implications (A → B), correlations (A ↔ B); chains of implicational connections/hierarchies (A > B > C > D > E); falsifiability;
- additional task: **explanation** of cross-linguistic generalizations
- delimitation of domain:



- delimitation of the field of inquiry : typical problems that arise: **headless intensifiers or reflexive markers in subject position** (Hungarian, Irish English, etc.)

MANDARIN

(i) tā ba piào gěi le biéren (tā) zìjǐ mei qù. (really reflexive ?)
3rsSg BA ticket give Perf someone else he SELF NEG go
'He gave the ticket to someone else. He himself did not go.'

(ii) zìjǐ duì zìjǐ yǒu xìnxīn (reflexive all right, but where is the binder?)
SELF regarding SELF have confidence
'One should have confidence in oneself.'

(iia) Zhangsan$_i$ manyuan Lisi chang pīpíng ziji$_i$. (long-distance binding)
Zh. complain L. often criticize SELF
'Zhansang complained that Lisi often criticized him.'

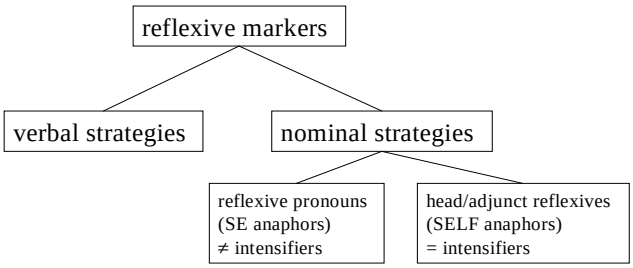
ENGLISH

(iii) It is himself is going to speak today. (Irish English, 'reflexive' in subject position)

(iv) John likes to have interesting people around him. (co-reference without a self-form)

- Faltz (1977, 1981): Pioneering study: **four** basic types, based on morphological status and complexity; binding properties of nominal markers vary along **two dimensions**: (a) the nature of the **antecedent**,

(b) the **domain** in which they must be bound.



(adjunct reflexives: English *himself*; head refl.: Turkish *kendi*)

implicational generalizations: An NP reflexive is either a pronominal, SA, SC strategy or else a compound, non-SA, non-SC strategy;

- the generalization cannot be upheld; but the distinction between types is useful and can be refined;
- has drawn attention to the role of intensifiers

2. Parameters of variation

2.1. Form

(i) degree of formal complexity (grammaticalization): nominal strategies
(formal properties of reflexive markers)

affix > clitic > weak pronoun > strong pronoun > noun > NP (< adverbial)

(not an implicational scale)

(1)RUSSIAN
Ivan mo-et-sja. 'Ivan is washing.'
Ivan wash-3SG-REFL
(2)FRENCH
Jean se déteste. 'John hates himself.'
(3)DUTCH
D*e* mensen *moeten zich bewapenen.*
the people must REFL arm
'People have to arm themselves.'
(4) GERMAN
Sich (selbst) wollte er kritisieren.
Himself wanted he to criticize
'It was himself he wanted to criticize.'
(5)TURKISH
Ahmet kendin-i çok beğen-iyor-muş
Ahmet SELF-ACC very admire-PROG-rep.PAST
'(they say) Ahmet admires himself very much'
(6) GREEK (Anagnastopoulou & Everaert, 1995)
O eaftos tu tu aresi tu Petru
the:NOM SELF his:GEN 3SG:DAT like:3SG the:DAT Peter:DAT
'Peter pleases himself'

- First attempt at generalizing over properties of different forms

➔ **correlations**: inherent reflexivity and non-other directed situations (e.g. grooming) tend to have parsimonious encoding (affixes, pronouns);
decrease in number of morphological properties further to the left; increasing specification for the φ-features further to the right of the scale; (Burzio, 1991: lack of specification → referential dependence); increase in morphological complexity further to the right

- light vs. heavy markers, mono-morphemic or simple forms tend to be subject oriented;
- correlation between form and interpretation (but: contrast between two forms in different languages could differ from case to case)
- grammatical ↔ lexical

This rough sketch must be refined in various ways (cf. Subbarao, to appear):

a. Languages may have both nominal **and** verbal reflexives (optional or obligatory → depending on syntactic conditions); verbal reflexive can sometimes occur alone; they typically subject-oriented and do not permit long-distance binding:

Manipuri (TB)

(i) Thombi-na mahak-na masa-bu u-(je)-i 'Thombi is looking at herself.'
Thombi-NOM she-NOM SELF-ACC see-REFL-PRES

b. Nominal reflexives in Dravidian and many Indic languages are reduplications of the simplex forms + case copying (parallel to complex reciprocal markers); these complex forms may be optional and they are obligatory under certain conditions (antecedent) in certain languages;

TELUGU (DR)

(ii) Kamala-∅ tana-ni tanu-∅ eppuDuu poguDu-kon-Tun-di
Kamala-NOM SELF-ACC SELF-NOM always praise-REFL-PROG-AGR
'Kamala always praises herself.'

HINDI-URDU (IE)

(iii) Radhikaa ne apne (aap) ko dekhaa 'Radhika looked at herself.'
Radhika ERG self ABS saw

(ii) **reflexives and intensifiers**: identity vs. differentiation (cf. WALS, p. 196f.)

(7) FINNISH (English, Mandarin, Indic, Japanese, Iranian, Austronesian)

a. Itse-e-nsä ei voi luottaa. 'One cannot trust oneself.'
SELF-ILL-3.POSS NEG can trust
b. Professori itse on tullut. 'The professor himself has come.'
professor SELF is come.PP

(8) ITALIAN (SAE, Ainu)

a. Gianni si è tagliato./ Gianni ha tagliato sè stesso. 'G. has injured himself.'
b. Gianni stesso è venuto. 'G. himself came.'

(8') EAST UVEAN

'e ina vā'i ia ia pē 'He me made a fool of himself.'
NPAST 3SG laugh ABS INT

➔**Correlations**: (scope of possible use)

(a) Int = Refl → ≠ MID (≠ inherent Refl.); Int ≠ Refl → ◇= MID (cf. also Heine, 2000; is correct for 66 out of 68 languages from Heine's ample)
(b) inflecting intensifiers → person distinctions
(c) **inherent reflexives** are only identified by markers not also used as intensifiers

(no inherent reflexives in Finnish, very few in English)

- **explanation**: refl. markers identical to intensifiers still have a relatively strong contrastive meaning; not grammaticalized to the same extent as pure pronominal reflexives;

ITALIAN

(9) a. Giovanni si volta a salutarla (non-translational motion)
'John turns to greet her'
b. Paolo si è inginocchiato. (change of body posture)
'Paul knelt down.'
c. La porta si apre. (anticausative)
'The door opens'
d. Questa camicia si lava bene (facilitative)
'This shirt washes well'
e. Si vendono macchine usate. (passive)
'Used cars for sale'
f. Russ. Eto korova badaetsja (generalized object, depatientive)
'This cow butts.'
g. RUSSIAN sevodnja mne rabotaetsja očin ploxo. 'Today I cannot work properly.'
Today 1SG.DAT work.3SG.REFL very badly (impersonal)
h. FRENCH Elle avança la main pour se saisir de l'objet. (antipassive)
she stretched out the hand in order to grab the object
'She stretched out her hand in order to grab the object.'

(9) auto-causative > anti-causative > facilitative > passive > depatientive > impersonal > anti-passive
(hypothesis to be tested)

(iii) interaction with person (cf. Faltz, 1985): if a language has a special reflexive marker for one value of the person hierarchy it will also have one for all values further to the left;
read from left to right (historical development: from left to right)

3 > 2 > 1	French/SAE - Pima - English/Russian

ENGLISH

(10) a. I'm gonna get me a gun.
b. I poured me/myself a cup of tea. He poured himself a cup of tea.
(11) a. He named his son after himself. – clear functional explanation
b. You named your son after yourself. – suitability of examples
c. I named my son after me. – rightmost positions are the marginal cases
GERMAN (extensions of use)
(11') a. Ich verachte mich. 'I despise myself.'
1.SG despise 1SG.ACC

- English: *myself, yourself, him-/herself*; Russ. *sebja*, Yiddish *zikh*; vs. Germ. *sich*, French *se*;

(i) Ich habe mich verletzt/ du hast dich verletzt/ er hat sich verletzt.. (German)
(ii) Mi guardo, ti guardi, si guarda (I am looking at myself...) (Spanish) Juan mi guarda.
(iii)I injured myself/ you injured yourself/ he injured himself/ she injured herself...
(English)

- English, Turkish: distinction for all persons;
- Russian, Yiddish, Mandarin: special reflexive marker for all persons, but same one;
- Huichol: distinction for second and third person

- German, Scandinavian, Romance: distinction for third person only

-explanation: there is usually only one speaker, there may be several hearers and there are always many others (i.e. non-speakers and non-hearers)

2.2. Distribution (of nominal reflexives)

(iv) **grammatical relation** of reflexive markers

DO > IO > OBL > GEN/POSS > SUBJ/ERG; argument > non-argument

ENGLISH

(12) John left his problems behind him.

SPANISH

(13) Compró un libro para sí/ él (mismo). (choice between Refl. and ProN)
Si compro un libro para él mismo.
'He bought a book for himself/him (himself).'

GERMAN

(14) Eine Stadt$_i$ vergewissert sich [ihrer$_j$ selbst]$_i$ (no genitive of reflexives; the gap is filled
'A town is taking stock of itself.' by combinations of pronoun + intensifier)

FRENCH

(15) Il ne parle qu'avec lui-même. (no reflexive clitics with prepositions)

OLD HIGH GERMAN

(16) nu scepfe er imo hiar brōt, ther hungar duit imo es nōt. (Brugmann 1911: 401)
'Now he may get himself bread here, he needs it for he is hungry.' (no dative refl.)

SWEDISH

(17) Lars tvättar sin/hans bil. (attributive reflexive in Scandinavian)
'Lars$_i$ washes his$_i$ own/his$_j$ car.'

OCEANIC

Reflexive marker (intensifier) follows argument with ergative case;

(v) combination with predicate type (generalization across languages)

other-directed > non-other directed

SWEDISH

(18)a. Han angrep sig själv. ('help', 'admire', 'hate', 'trust', 'replace', 'defeat', etc.)
'He attacked himself.'
b. Han försvarade sig (själv). (verbs of grooming, but also 'prepare', 'arm', 'hide',
'He defended himself.' 'protect','change', 'commit', etc.)

(19) a. He$_i$ defended his$_i$ views.
b. He$_i$ attacked [his$_j$ own]$_i$ views.

DUTCH

(20)a. Jan haat *zich/zichzelf/Antje.
'John hates himself.'
b. Jan bekeek zich/zichzelf/Antje.
'John watched himself.'

FRENCH

(21)a. Pierre est fier de lui. (refl. or disjoint reference)
b. Pierre est jaloux de lui. (disjoint reference only) vs. Jean est jaloux de lui-même.

(22) His attack was good. vs. His defense was good.

- other-directed predicates: earlier in historical development; tend to manifest reinforcement
- non-other-directed predicates:
  (a) tend to employ the most **parsimonious strategy criteria for identification**:
  (b) permit a reflexive interpretation of **event nominalizations** (22) and of personal pronouns (21)
  (c) tend to have **no *self*-compounds** (*self- indulgence*, *self-accusation*, *self-administration*, self-sufficiency) but: *self-defense*;

(vi) position in the sentence (Oceanic languages)

- argument and non-argument positions (refl. and intensifier can never be in argument positions alone, have to accompany a pronoun)

2.3. Referential Dependence (of nominal reflexives)

(vii) possible antecedents

SUBJ > DO > OBL > IO

- subjects seem to be the best antecedents; direct objects are possible antecedents in many languages; ('leave him to himself, Mary'); indirect object seem to be excluded in many cases;

(23) The referee$_i$ had to protect the player$_j$ from himself$_{i/j}$.
(24) Der Schiedsrichter musste den Spieler vor sich selbst schützen. (= (23))

(25) Wir$_i$ überließen die Kinder$_j$ sich selbst$_j$.
'We left the children to their own devices.'

- oblique antecedents are possible, but seem to be rarer; dative-marked objects seem to be bad antecedents:

(26) Mary talked to Bill about himself.

(viii) binding domain

local binding > long distance binding (non-finite) > long-distance binding (finite bd.)	

principle of **obviation (**co-arguments have disjoint reference); (adjunction of intensifier ⇒ narrows binding domain, etc.)
role of predicate meaning (Hellan, 1988; Kiparsky, 2002); protection from obviation; counterexamples;

(27) NORWEGIAN (Nynorsk)
a. Han$_i$ bad henne$_j$ hjelpe seg$_{i.}$
'He asked her to help him.'
b. Han$_i$ bad henne$_j$ hjelpe [seg sjølv]$_j$.
'He asked her to help herself.'

c. Han_i bad $henne_j$ forsvare $seg_{i/j}$.
'He asked her to defend him/herself.'
d. Han_i bad $henne_j$ sykle seg_i hem.
'He asked her to take him home (by bike).'

(28) SWEDISH
a. Lars fördrar sig *(själv). 'Lars prefers himself.' (Germ. 'L. bevorzugt sich selbst.'); not well-formed without accompanying intensifier;
b. $Generalen_i$ tvingade $översten_j$ att hjälpa sig_i.
'The general forced the colonel to help him.'

(29) They would talk of himself, he thought fondly.

- Long-distance binding is also found in Latin, Icelandic, Mandarin, Japanese,Turkish;

- tie-up between long-distance binding and logophoricity?

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