Reflexive Voice


Labelle’s analysis for French

1. a. Reflexive
   Luc se lave.
   Luc SE wash-PRES-3S
   ‘Luc is washing (himself).’
   b. Reciprocal
   Luc et Pierre se regardent.
   Luc and Pierre SE look-at-PRES-3P
   ‘Luc and Pierre look at each other.’

The core idea: Reflexive is a special Voice head. It takes a VP complement with an object variable, introduces an external argument in its specifier position (similarly to many other Voice-type heads) and defines the object variable via the reference of the external argument (x = y, or x = f(y) for those languages where proxy readings are available).

Proxy reading: similar but not the same.

2. a. Lady Gaga saw herself in a museum.
   herself = a statue of herself
   b. In a dream I saw myself. I came to myself and I hugged myself.

Question: Why can’t we introduce Reflexive Voice everywhere? → an analysis in terms of Voice is suitable only for subject-oriented reflexives.

+ Do not forget the discussion of Reinhart and Siloni’s paper: lexical vs syntactic reflexivization.

Kaqchikel case

(3) Reflexives in Kaqchikel
   a. Rïn x-at-in-tz’ët rat  b. Rïn x-in-tz’ët w-i’
   1S PST-ABS.2S-ERG.1S-see 2S 1S PST-ERG.1S-see 1S-REFL
   ‘I saw you.’ ‘I saw myself (in a mirror).’
   (4) Röj x-qa-tz’ët q-i’ (chi qa-kojöl).
   2P PST-ERG.1P-see 1P-REFL between POSS.1P-REL
   (a) ‘We saw ourselves.’ (b) ‘We saw each other.’

Properties of reflexives in Kaqchikel

- Reflexivized predicates remain syntactically and semantically transitive: an ERG marker is present, reciprocal and proxy interpretations are available.
- -i’ reflexives differ from referential DP-arguments (even though it looks very similar to English self reflexives: a possessive marker + a stem)
  - reflexives resist A/A’ movement

(5) Focus constructions
   a. *Ja r-i’ x-u-ch’äy ri Pedro.
      FOC 3S-REFL PST-ERG.3S-hit DET Pedro
      {Who did Pedro hit?} ‘Pedro hit HIMSELF.’
   b. Ja ri Juan x-Ø-u-ch’äy ri Pedro.
      FOC DET Juan PST-ABS.3S-ERG.3S-hit DET Pedro
A reflexive head agrees with the object, resulting in an overt person-number marked -i’ clitic. The object becomes invisible for further cliticization and its agreement with the I head fails resulting in the absence of an absolutive clitic (Preminger 2009).
Reflexive Voice and nominal predicates

The puzzle: In Kaqchikel both relational nouns (similar to English friend) and non-relational ones (doctor) can be used as predicates, however only the former allow an embedded reflexive (for example, ‘I am my own friend’ but not ‘I am my own doctor’) and in this case a usually required ABS agreement is prohibited.

(13) a. Rat at(-nu-)tijoxel.  
   2S ABS.2S-POSS.1S-student  
   ‘You are (my) student.’

b. Rïn in-aw-achib’il  
   1S ABS.1S-POSS.2S-friend  2S  
   ‘I am your friend.’

c. Rat at-aq’omanel.  
   2S ABS.2S-doctor  
   ‘You are a doctor.’

(14) a. *Rat aw-aq’omanel aw-i’.  
   2S POSS.2S-doctor 2S-REFL  
   Intended: ‘You are your doctor.’

b. Rat aw-achib’il aw-i’.  
   2S ERG.2S-friend 2S-REFL  
   ‘You are your (own) friend.’

c. Rat aw-aq’omaj aw-i’.  
   2S ERG.2S-cure 2S-REFL  
   ‘You cure yourself.’

(15) a. Röj (*oj-)q-achib’il q-i’.  
   1P ABS.1P-POSS.1P-friend 1P-REFL  1P ABS.1P-POSS.2S-friend 2S  
   ‘We are friends (of each other).’

b. Röj *(oj-)aw-achib’il  
   1P ABS.1P-POSS.1P-friend 1P-REFL  1P ABS.1P-POSS.2S-friend 2S  
   ‘We are your friends.’

ReflV* analysis: The reflexive functional head can select not only a VP predicate but also an NP predicate, introducing an external argument and linking it with an internal one. (Vergnaud and Zubizarreta 1992), (Alexiadou 2003): only possessors of relational nouns are base-generated as complements. (14b) is syntactically transitive and the subject agreement is manifested via an ERG prefix.

(16) }
Byron Ahn’s version of the Reflexive Voice analysis

**Basic Proposal**

(3)

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SUBJ -> VoiceP  
   ANAPH  
   REFLEX IDENT(x,y)  
   Θ-Domain

... SUBJ ANAPH ...
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*What’s the difference from Labelle?*

(9a) hari tann-annu hoDe-du-koND-a

Hari self -ACC hit -PP-LSOR-3SM

‘Hari hit himself’

- Recall that -koND is the LSOR suffix, and tann is the LSOR anaphor, which must be bound by Hari

**The derivation proceeds as follows:**

(13) SubjectP

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Phase^0

PredP: λe(x). IDENT([himself]_y, [Hari]) & [Θ-Domain](e)

Hari VoiceP: λy(x). IDENT([himself]_y, [Hari]) & [Θ-Domain](e)

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tann Voice: λx(y).λy(x).λe(x). IDENT(x,y) & [Θ-Domain](e)

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koND REFLEX[SUBJ]

λP(x,y).λe(x).λy(x).λe(x). IDENT(x,y) & P(e)

Θ-Domain: λe(x).AGENT([Hari],e) & THEME([himself]_y,e) & HIT(e)

Hari tann hoDe

* Ahn’s Voice0 is not the external-argument-introducer Voice0, as in Kratzer (1996), Alexiadou et al. (2006), etc. His Voice0 is a set of instructions which (partially) derives surface constituency. It is a vP that introduces the external argument below Voice0. Ahn assumes that there is an EPP for [+reflexive] on Voice0 and a separate EPP on a higher predicate projection that attracts the highest available argument (the subject).