Bathe, shave, and dress: How reflexive events are and aren't marked in the morphology

The typological description of reflexive markers in the world's languages is almost always approached from a formal and functional perspective (e.g. Geniušienė 1987; König & Gast 2008); that is, most researchers are interested in identifying which reflexive marker(s) exist in a particular language and subsequently exploring their various grammatical functions beyond semantic reflexivity (middle, passive, reciprocal, etc.). However, there is an alternative typological approach to the study of reflexivity, which includes more focus on the conceptual structure of reflexive events. As evidenced through the use of pronouns in English (XXX 2013), I assume that some human actions are canonically self-directed (events performed on the body or in the direction of the body) while other events and states are canonically other-directed. For example, in English, the former type, which I will call 'intrinsically reflexive' events, are often unmarked while the latter type, 'extrinsically reflexive' events, are obligatorily marked (*John shaved this morning* vs. *John was stabbing himself this morning*). Given this conceptual distinction, new typological questions arise around how languages do and don't overtly mark intrinsic vs. extrinsic reflexivity.

Based on a survey of over fifty languages, I posit four typological categories. In Type 1, intrinsic reflexivity isn't requisitely marked in the morphology or syntax but extrinsic reflexivity is. Azerbaijani, other Turkic languages, and English are of this type:[1]

Azerbaijani -intrinsic reflexive not marked

(1)	Ana	- Ø	jujun-ur	(Geniušienė 1987: 311)
	Mother-ABS	wash-PRES.3.SG.		
	'Mother washes herself'			

Azerbaijani -extrinsic reflexive marked with pronoun

(2)	Ana	- Ø	**özu**	-nu	sev -ir	(Geniušienė 1987: 311)
	Mother-ABS		**herself**	-ACC	wash-PRES.3.SG.	
	'Mother loves herself'					

In Type 2, both intrinsic and extrinsic reflexivity is marked syntactically, the former with a simple pronoun and the latter with a complex pronoun (-*self* form) as in most Germanic languages:

Dutch -intrinsic reflexive marked with simple pronoun

(3)	Jan heeft **zich** aangekleed	(Faltz 1977:50,52)
	'Jan has dressed himself'	

Dutch -extrinsic reflexive marked with complex pronoun

(4)	Jan zag **zichzelf**	(Faltz 1977:50,52)
	'Jan saw himself'	

Other languages obligatorily signal intrinsic reflexivity through lexical derivation -either with affixation or cliticization (arguably a lexical process (see Doron & Rappaport Hovav 2009)). These languages subdivide into two further typological groups. In Type 3, intrinsic and extrinsic reflexives are marked with the same form as in the Baltic (Geniušienė 1987) and Romance languages:

Lithuanian-intrinsic reflexive marked with affix

(5)	On −a	prausia **-si**		(Geniušienė 1987: 83)
	Ann-NOM	washes **-RM**		

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[1] In some of these languages, like English, the intrinsic/extrinsic dichotomy plays out within a complex pronominal system of multiple forms.

'Ann washes herself'

Lithuanian-extrinsic reflexive marked with affix

(6)   On –a   už **-si** -klojo   kɑilin -iɑis   (Geniušienė 1987: 76)
        Ann-NOM PERF-**RM** -covered fur-coat-INS.PL.
        'Ann covered herself with a fur-coat'

Spanish-intrinsic reflexive marked with clitic

(7)   Juan **se** bañó
        Juan **RM** bathe-3.SG.PERF
        'Juan bathed'

Spanish-extrinsic reflexive marked with clitic

(8)   Juan **se** metió   el   cuchillo.
        Juan **RM** PUT-IN-3.SG.PERF   the   knife
        'Juan stabbed himself'

In Type 4, intrinsic reflexivity is marked in the morphology (through a lexical process), but extrinsic reflexivity is marked through a syntactic process (with pronouns) as in some Uralic and Semitic languages:

Estonian (Uralic) -intrinsic reflexive marked in morphology

(9)   Ema   riiet **-u** -b   (Geniušienė 1987: 310)
        mother dress **-RM**-PRES.3.SG.
        'Mother dresses [herself].'

Estonian (Uralic) -extrinsic reflexive marked with pronoun

(10)   Ta   katti –s   **ennast**   teki -ga   (Geniušienė 1987: 310)
        She-NOM   cover-IMPF **herself-PART** blanket-COM
        'She covered herself with a blanket'

This last group should be of particular interest to morphologists. In Type 4, extrinsically reflexive events are marked syntactically and morphological marking applies to intrinsic reflexives only. This typological pattern suggests a functional decline of the marker itself. I argue this "bleaching" process is due to event simulation affecting the conceptual transparency of morphological affixation: the inherent, self-directed nature of the event masks the semantic job of the reflexive. If this hypothesis is true, then we should be able to make predictions about how reflexive marking will shift over time. For example, we might expect a paradigmatic division between the marking of the two event types, frozen marking of intrinsic reflexives, and a reinterpretation of intrinsic reflexive as being zero-marked. In fact, in some Type 4 languages, like Hebrew, marking for reflexivity, once very much a productive morphological process, is currently being replaced with pronominal reflexives (Junger 1987: 88). Hebrew now has a non-productive reflexive infix (the HITPAEL-reflexive (Junger 1987: 88)) used with intrinsically reflexive events as in *hit-labeš* 'dress' (Geniušienė 1987: 312) and *hit-konen* 'get ready' (Doron & Rappaport Hovav 2009:76) but extrinsic reflexives in Hebrew are marked with the pronoun, *acmo*, as in *habit be acmo* 'look at himself' (Doron & Rappaport Hovav 2009:77). And, almost always, the HITPAEL-reflexive can be replaced by the pronominal reflexive but the reverse isn't possible (Junger 1987: 88).

        The intrinsic and extrinsic dichotomy in the typology of reflexive morphology serves as a new lens through which we can probe the semantics-morphology interface. The patterns and explanation presented here also contribute to the discussion of wide-ranging topics in the study of morphology including affix ordering, the mental representations of multi-morphemic words, analogical models of word formation processes, and derivational morphology in general.

References

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