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The expression of reflexivity in “French-based” Creoles

0. Introduction

- synchronic system of reflexivization
- "functional domains" of the elements involved in the reflexive constructions; focussing on *mem*

1. Reflexivity

- cases of "real" reflexivity
- Reflexive construction: intransitivization device or reflexive anaphors as arguments

(a)

Grimshaw 1982, 1990

$P_{\text{non-refl.}}(x(y))$

$P_{\text{refl.}}(x = y(y))$ or $P_{\text{refl.}}(x(y = x))$

(b)

Faltz 1985:14

$P(x,y) \rightarrow P(x,x) = P_R(x)$

(c)

Geniusiene 1987:58

Pers	
Ag	Pt
S	

or

Pers	
Ag	Pt
S	O

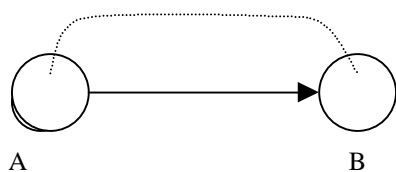
(d)

Mohanan/Mohanan 1998: 173

agent _i	goal	theme _i	(coindexing)
ARG	ARG	ARG/∅	(suppression)
agent _i	goal _i	theme	(coindexing)
ARG	ARG/∅	ARG	(suppression)

(e)

Kemmer 1994:207



2. Reflexivity in („French-based“) Creole Languages

(Carden/Stewart 1988, Corne 1988, 1989, Carden 1993, Déchaine/Manfredi 1994, Muysken/Smith 1995, Heine 2001)

- reflexive constructions have been arisen anew in Creole languages (marked option in grammar, LaPolla 1995)

- in the literature focus on historical studies

2.1 Construction types

(Heine 2001/Muysken/Smith 1995)

a) **Personal pronouns** used for all three persons (e.g. Seychelles)

Mauritian

(1)

sa	i	a	permet	dimoun	pour	zot	prepar	ZOT	pour	bann	diferan	aktivite
DEM	"it"	FUT	permit	people	for	they	prepare	3.Pl	for	PL	different	activities

“That will permit the people to prepare (themselves) for different activities”

b) **Personal pronouns** used for first and second person

Southern Haiti

(2)

mwe) blese MWE)

1.Sg hurt 1.Sg.

"I hurt myself"

(3)

Li blese li

3.Sg hurt 3.Sg

"He hurt him" (≠himself)

c) **bare noun** stem ("body-noun" word) (e.g. Kriyol)

Cape Verdian

(4)

el máta KABÉSA

3.Sg kill head

“He killed himself”

d) **personal pronoun** + "**intensifier**" (e.g. Nduyka)

Mauritian

(5)

to bizen fran ek TO MEM

2.Sg. must honest with 2.Sg. self

“You must be honest with yourself”

e) **possessive attribute + "intensifier"**(e.g. Ghana)

Papiamentu

(6)

Haime a laga SU MES kai

Haime ASP let 3.SG.POSS self fall

“Haime let himself fall”

f) **Possessive noun phrase** (possessive pronoun and "body-noun" word)(e.g. Haiti)

Haitian

(7)

Jan pale ak TÈT LI

John speak with head 3.Sg.

“John speaks with himself”

g) **Reflexive marker** exclusively used for the third person (e.g. Negerhollands)

h) **Personal pronoun + noun** (e.g. Saramaccan)

i) **Personal pronoun + intensifier + noun** (e.g. Saramaccan)

j) **zero marker/ inherent reflexivity**

French:

(8)

nous devons NOUS lever avant que le professeur entre

1. Pl. must 1. Pl. get up before DET teacher comes in

“We must stand up before the teacher comes in”

vs.

Mauritian

(9)

nu bizen leve avan profeser rantre

we must get up before professor come in

“We must stand up before the teacher comes in”

Some Examples from French-based Creoles: Mauritian Creole (Mau), Seychelles Creole (Sey), Haitian Creole (Hait), Guadeloupe Creole (Gua); where we find construction type a), b), d), f), j)

Hait:

(10) Ti-fi-a fin abiyé avèk vwal é âswit mwê abiyé-**m** "The girl finished dressing, with a veil, and then I dressed myself"

(11) Gê yô volè ki amizé **li** volé tou sa l-gêgnè lè li sòti "There was a thief who was amusing himself by stealing everything he had when he had gone out"

(12) Li di Lamlis li ba bézwê fatigé **kò li** "He told Malice he needn't tire himself out"

- (13) Mésié yo mâjé zé, yo mâjé zé jouk tâ yo blié **kò yo** "They ate eggs, they ate eggs until they forgot themselves"
 (14) Sa k-ap-viré **kò li** a-tè-a? "What's hat turning itself on the ground?"
 (15) Mwê di **â mwê-mêm** "I said to myself"
 (16) Mâmâ-m lévé **Ø** "my mom got up"
 (17) Li fyè de **tèt li** "She is proud of herself".
 (18) Pwogram lan detwi pwop **tèt li** "The program destroys itself."
 (19) Jafrikayiti dekri **tèt li** konsa... "J. describes himself in the following way..."

Gua:

- (20) ou ké maské'w dèyè gro pyé figuyé-la sa
 (21) yo mété **yo** a tab
 (22) sé pou nou abiyé **nou** é pengné **nou**
 (23) I fèmé **kó a-y** andidan chanm a-y
 (24) (Dyab) viré **kò a'y**
 (25) mwen ka touné **Ø** an légliz é mwen ké touné'w an labé

Mau:

- (26) nu n fer sa pur nu amiz **nu lekor**
 (27) Mo kontan mo finn donn **momem** enn kado pou mo laniverser.
 (28) Koz ar **limem**
 (29) Mo sir mo pou kapav defann **mo lekor** kont agresion Blob.
 (30) mo pou servi **moi** momem

Sey:

- (31) i dir da **li-mem**
 (32) en zen i gany loportinite devlop **li**
 (33) I n koriz **son lekor**
 (34) sa i a permet dimoun pour zot prepar **zot** pour bann diferan aktivite
 (35) sa ki nu n komanse, i n vrema miltipliy **son lekor**
 (36) I dir **a li-mem**

Table 1.

	Seychelles	Mauritius	Haiti			Guadeloupe	Louisiana
			W	S	N		
pronoun	x	X	-	x	X	X	x
pronoun + mem	(x)	X	-	-	-	-	X
"body-noun" + Poss	X	x	X	X	X	x	(x)
Ø-marker	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

X: main strategy (very few restrictions)

x: peripheral strategy (restrictions)

(x): very marginal

Variation and variability

- simple and complex constructions/strategies of reflexivity ↔ single, intransparent marker (no correspondences to French *se, soi* in basilectal Creole French)
- ambiguity of the marker (desambiguating context)

Open questions

- productivity of the singular patterns?
- distribution? Factors which account for the distribution of the different constructions have not been clarified yet, e.g. distribution of *mem* in Mau remains unclear (Corne 1988, 1989, Carden/Stewart 1988, 1989)

2.2 Distribution and Restrictions

- Semantic category

→ König/Siemund 2000

Table 2

Non-other-directed situations	Other directed situations
Grooming	Violent actions (killing, destroying)
Preparing, protecting	Emotions (love, hate)
Defending, liberating, preparing	Communicating
Be proud/shamed of	Be jealous of/angry with/pleased with

König/Siemund 2000:61

König 2001:62 "The more complex strategy tends to be used for the more remarkable (i.e. other-directed) situation; the less complex strategy tends to be used for inherently reflexive verbs and for non-other directed situations"

Table 3

Non-other-directed situations	Other-directed situations
Verbal strategy	Nominal strategy
PrepNo/optional anaphor	Obligatory anaphor
Simple/weak/SE anaphor	Complex/strong/SELF anaphor
Single intensifier	Double intensifier

König/Siemund 2000:63

least complex strategy < most complex strategy:

zero marker < personal pronoun < personal pronoun + *menm/* possessive pronoun + *tèt/kò*

our data: Most of the exceptions to these tendencies in our data can be explained, if one takes into account Kemmer's analysis:

→ Kemmer 1994: "body action middle" verbs tend to be "minimally" marked

- grooming actions (e.g. bath, dress, wash, shave)
- change in body posture actions (e.g. stand (up), sit (own) lie (down))
- nontranslational motion actions (e.g. stretch, turn shake)
- translational motion actions (e.g. fly, climb, walk, arrive)

(37)

Sey *i leve* "He got up", Fr. "Il se leva"

Sey: *i vire pu li ale* "He turned around in order to leave" Fr. "Il se retourna pour partir"

Sey: *Asiz la obor mwa* "Sit down right beside of me" Fr. "Assieds-toi là près de moi"

Guad: *I gadé, i bésé, i doubout, i touné, i viré* "He looked, bent down, got up again, turned and left"

→ **Hait**

Déchainé/Manfredi 1994: inherent reflexive verbs, like *blese, abiye, repose*, have a lexical constant "body" (=inalienably possessed incorporated constant) and can not have a literal/referential meaning with *kò l*, but only a nonreferential interpretation, e.g. *Jak benyen kò l* "Jak bathed [all by] himself";

Due to their analysis those inherently reflexive verbs can chose freely between the following options:

Table 4

	null complement	object <i>li</i>	<i>kò li</i> (<i>≠tèt li</i>)
<i>blese, abiye, benyen, repose</i>	inherent	bound or free	(√)

our data: √

→ **Mau**

Kriegel 1996, Corne 1988: the possessive body(part) construction with *lekor* restricted to verbs referring to physical actions;

our data: *pandi, grat, amiz, zet, touy, kal, lev, nouri, tranp, defann, rann, relax*

→ event type

- **Syntactic class**

→ transitive, intransitive etc.

Sey

(38)

Transitive:

"*Mō apel u mō dalō akoz ozordi i mō laniverser ...*"

"I call you my friend because today is my birthday"

(39)

Intransitive ("passive", "ergative", inherent reflexive):

Alor ê zur ti ana ê zako ki ti apel Moje, e ê krokodil ki ti apel Bwaja.

"Once upon a time there was a monkey whose name was Monyet and a crocodile whose name was Buya"

(40)

Transitive: "*bonom i koste obor ros pu lev sō paje ...*"

"He approached the rock in order to take his basket..."

(41)

Intransitive ("passive", "ergative", inherent reflexive):

"Nu a lev traw-er bōmatê"

"We will get up at 3 o'clock a.m."

→ complex predicates

(42)

Hait: *Li fè lapwòpte **ak tèt li**, kreye mwayen ki pou pèmèt li pran swen **tèt li***

Gua: *mété'w an pozisyon pou mwen maré'w*

- **Syntactic arguments and semantic roles**

→ syntactic function of the reflexive marker? Semantic role?

(43)

Hait:

*You pèp ki pa ka bay **tèt li** manje pa ka fè demokrasi nonplis*

*Démokratia te vle di: pèp la pou gouvènè **tèt li**.*

→ syntactic function of the antecedent; correlation between antecedent properties, morphological form and domain properties (König/Siemund 2000:67f)?

→ semantic properties of the antecedent?, e.g. [\pm human], [\pm animate]

(44)

Hait:

*Pwogram lan detwi **tèt li pou kont li**, Pwogram lan detwi **pwop tèt li**, Pwogram lan detwi **kò l pou kò l***

"The program destroys itself"

→ **Mau**

Carden 1993:

lekor-reflexive primarily as "direct object", *mem*-reflexive primarily after preposition

our data: in our small corpus no example with preposition and *lekor*, many examples with *mem* without a preceding preposition (*envit, pandi, defann, servi, ferm, dir, trouv, apel, promet, donn, pran, remt, fors, zet*)

- Construction type and domain properties

→ complex reflexive construction vs simple reflexive construction: local binding vs. long-distance binding, further implications? (Faltz 1985, König/Siemund 2000, Carden/Stewart 1988, Déchaine/Manfredi 1994); e.g. Antecedent-Subject-Condition within the clause in which the Haitian reflexive marker *tèt li* appears (vgl. Carden/Stewart 1988 *tèt* reflexive: [+SC], [+CM])

(45)

Ti-mu}n-na sòti lakay a}na }ma}na}n_i}fin abiye tè-t-li_i

Emil_i pale (ak) Robè de tè-t-li_i vs. *Emil_i pale (ak) Robè_j de li_{i,j,k}*

→ Déchaine/Manfredi 1994: in Haitian creole no morphological distinction between anaphors and pronouns, hence no condition A/ no condition B;

(46)

Mariz_1 renmen l_{2(i)} "Mariz likes her(self)/him/it"

- Aspect

(47)

Sey: *Moje ti pe asize lo ê brās* French: "Monyet était assis sur une branche" "Monyet was sitting on a branch"

Sey: *I tom ater i asize i komnas fer sō rezō* French "Il se laissa tomber à terre, s'assit et commença réfléchir" "He let himself fall on the ground, he sat down and he starts to reflect" "

- Sentence type

- **Discourse prominence** (topic, focus)

- Register

→ Since the written register demands to a greater extent regularization, standardization and, has, in general, a more "grammar-like" status than the merely spoken register with its more "pragmatic-like" status (cf. Ludwig 1996), we expect the spoken register of each Creole language under investigation to show a lesser degree of variation or a rule-governed distribution, based on syntactic or semantic grounds. (cf. Carden/Stewart 1988:note35, but Kriegel 1996)

Guad:

informal oral data

(48)

-T: *ou pé jous mété-w toutouni osi* "you can go naked as well?"

L: *ou pé mété-w toutouni wi* "yes, you can go naked"

-yo *té ka abiyé-yo an pay* "they dressed with straw"

-yo *vlopé-yo konsa évé sa* "they wrapped themselves up with this"

→ strong tendency toward the acrolect in the written register (French-like constructions)

- Parameters/Subparameters → constraints which can be ranked?

3. Other functions of the reflexivity-marking elements

Heine 2001:32: "we also noted that we have found no creole where personal pronouns have been grammaticalized to the extent that they serve no purpose other than expressing reflexivity"

personal pronouns:

- non-reflexive personal pronoun meaning, possessive meaning

(49)

Guy: *mo di yé yé lésé mo wè si mo ka djéri mo kò pas sa simen-an mo byen. i di mo enben. lò to ké pi mal to ké vin koté mo. mo di non. m' pa ké vin koté to.*

-Reciprocal function when associated with plurals referents

(50)

Hait: *zot koz ar zotmem* "they talk to themselves", *zot koz ant zot de* "They talk to each other"; *Yo wè yo* "They saw them(selves)/ each other"; but very often zero marker (inherent reciprocal verb): *Se konsa de mesye yo te separe (Ø).*

body(part) nouns

- referential body-part meaning

(51)

Mau: *li grat so lekor ek so latet* "He scratches his body and his head"; *Ti ena plizier tablo ki montre lekor bann kreatir maskilin ni; So lekor pe tranble, so ledan klake, so fron kouver ar sier-froid.*

Hait: *Mete kò ou deyò* . vs. *Nan lakou "public" demokrasi, pèp sèl mèt tèt li apre Bondye.*

- emphatic meaning (cf. Carden/Stewart 1988:20)

(52)

Hait: *mwe made Mari ki mun te kraze plat-la. Li edike tèt-Emil.* "I asked Marie who broke the plate. She said it was Emil".

- reciprocal meaning

(53)

Hait: *Yo wè tèt yo* "They saw themselves/They saw their head/They saw the heads"; *Nou wè tèt nou* "We/you saw ourselves/themselves/each other"

Mem

- identifying function, e.g. *Ou we tout moun pa ka ni mem pense. Tout moun pa pense mem jean.*

- intensifying functions

(cf. Heine 2001, Faltz 1985, König 2001):

- a) present an unexpected participant ("even")
- b) present a participant in addition to the expected one ("also")
- c) exclude other possible participants ("only")
- d) express a contrast vis-à-vis other possible participants ("X rather than Y")
- e) express emphasis or discourse prominence

- König 2001:752: "If a language uses the same expression both as an intensifier and as a reflexive anaphor, this expression is not used as a marker of derived intransitivity or aspectual marker"

→ This generalization seems to hold for the "French" Creole languages

→ Hait: ≠ same marker for reflexivity and intensifier meaning, nevertheless no marking of derived intransitivity

König 2001:752: "In languages which draw a clear distinction between reflexive pronouns and intensifiers [...] intensifiers can be adjoined to both (referential) NPs and pronouns without restrictions, but they cannot occur in argument positions without an accompanying focus [...] Languages which lack a clear formal distinction between intensifiers and reflexive anaphors may also allow intensifiers in argument positions without accompanying pronouns" [e.g. i subject position]

→ This holds also for the French creoles where *mem* is used both within a reflexive construction and as an intensifier (e.g. in Mau); logophors[headless intensifiers]

- Sortal restrictions of *mem* ? Animacy hierarchy valid?

1,2 > 3 [human] > human proper noun > human common noun > animate common noun > inanimate common noun

(54)

Mau:

Li koz Za mem "Il a parlé de Jean lui-même"

Li bat sa lisje la mem "Il a battu ce chien là-même"

Li ti ule amrie ek bug mizer-mem "She wanted to marry a really poor man"

Misie Peter-mem pu don uu let "Mister Peter himself will give you your letter"

Li fin vini li-(m)em "He himself came"

Sa-mem mo'n dir u "That's exactly what I'm saying"

Hait:

<i>Mwen</i>	<i>menm,</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>janm</i>	<i>nan</i>	<i>rans</i>	<i>ak</i>	<i>moun</i>
1sg	same	1sg	Neg	never	in	joke	with	people

"As for me, I never joke with people"

Jak wè l li menm

Jak see 3sg 3sg same

"Jak saw him, himself/Jak saw her, herself/ Jak saw himself, himself"

4. Conclusions

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