

Complex Reflexives & the Principle A Problem

The English data in (1) illustrate that anaphors are sensitive to Principle A, Chomsky (1981). It is debatable whether Principle A should be expected to apply to the examples in (2). One could argue that in (2), *his pathetic self* is a noun phrase where *self* is a noun, therefore subject to Condition C; whereas in (1), *himself* is an anaphor and thus sensitive to Principle A.

- (1) a. John saw **himself** (in the mirror) *Sensitive to Principle A*
 b. * John knows that Maria saw **himself** (on the reality show)
- (2) a. John saw **his pathetic self** (in the mirror) *Not sensitive to Principle A*
 b. John knows that Maria saw **his pathetic self** (on the reality show)

In Greek and Kutchi Gujarati it is not immediately obvious that *self* is lexically ambiguous in the above sense. Both the unmodified *self* and the modified *self* forms look identical apart from the presence or absence of the adjective, shown in (3) and (4). Thus, it seems appealing to assume simply one, non-lexically ambiguous *self* (at least for Greek and Kutchi Gujarati).

- (3) a. O Costas_i vlepi [ton eaftos_i tu] *Greek*
 Costas_i sees det self_i.m.sg 3.m.sg
 “Costas_i sees himself_i”
- b. *O Costas_i xeri oti Maria vlepi [ton eaftos_i tu]
 Costas_i knows that Maria sees det self.m.sg 3.m.sg
 “Costas_i knows that Maria sees himself_i”
- c. [I mitera tu Janni_i] agapai [ton alithino eaftos_i tu]
 3.f.sg.nom mother Janni_i.gen loves 3.m.sg.acc true self_i 3.m.sg.gen
 “Jannis_i’s mother loves his true self_i”
- (4) a. John_i [e-na potha_i-ne] joyo *Kutchi Gujarati*
 John_i 3.sg.gen self_i-acc see.pfv.m.sg
 “John_i saw himself_i”
- b. *John_i kidthu ke Maria [e-na potha_i-ne] joyo
 John_i said that Maria 3.sg-gen self_i-acc see.pfv.m.sg
 “John_i said that Maria saw himself_i”
- c. Valji_i-ni ma [e-na sacho potha_i-ne] prem kare
 Valji_i-gen mother 3.sg-gen true self_i-acc love do
 “Valji_i’s mother loves his true self_i”

I argue that the meaning of *self* in these languages cannot be identity (i.e. conveying that the subject and object are identical), and propose a less conservative meaning, equivalent to a *part of* relation (i.e. the object is a part of the subject). I follow Anagnostopoulou and Everaert (1999) who claim (for Greek), that the anaphor (when unmodified) obligatorily incorporates into the matrix verb, giving rise to Principle A effects. The proposed syntactic and semantic analysis ultimately reduces Principle A to locality: *self*-incorporation of unmodified *self* yields a symmetric relation triggering Principle A effects; *self*-incorporation of modified *self* is blocked (by independent syntactic constraints), resulting in the absence of Principle A effects. This is the correct, and desired result.