

Reflexivization in English

Shin Watanabe

In this study, we proposed LF-movement of reflexive pronouns in order to explain their distributional properties. Given that *-self* phrases move in a way, we argued, their distribution will be handled by the familiar subtheories of grammar; the E(mpty) C(ategory) P(rinciple) and the Binding Theory. As one of the consequences of this account, it was shown that the notion of accessible SUBJECT proposed in Chomsky (1981) can be eliminated. The main idea of our analysis originates in Belletti (1982), Lebeaux (1985), Chomsky (1986a), Pica (1987), among others.

First consider the following simple sentence in (1a) with its associated S-structure in (1b):

- (1) a. John_i likes himself_i.
b. [_{IP}John_i [_{VP} likes himself_i]]

We argued, essentially following Pica (1987), that an anaphor has no "referential features" at S-structure and it must be assigned such a feature by its antecedent under the grammatical relation of government at LF. If so, the movement of reflexive pronoun *himself* is motivated in (1b), since it cannot be governed by the antecedent *John* due to the existence of the intervening barrier VP. Assuming that the movement proceeds via adjunction, the SS-representation in (1b) should be related to the following logical form:

- (2) [_{IP}John_i [_{VP} himself_i [_{VP} likes t_i]]]

In (2), the reflexive can be successfully governed by its antecedent. Then the proposed feature assignment holds between them.

Now consider the following ill-formed sentences:

- (5) a. *John_i said that himself_i read the book.
b. *Mary_i believes where herself_i bought that book.

The ungrammaticality of these sentences has been one of the major topics in the discussion of anaphor binding. Chomsky (1981) argues that this fact can be explained by the S(pecified) S(ubject) C(ondition), if we assume that the AGR involved in a tensed Infl counts as a subject (SUBJECT). (For details, see Chomsky (1980), (1981), (1986a).)

In our LF-movement analysis, we can eliminate this artificial notion of SUBJECT. Given the movement of lexical anaphors, the fact can be related to the general prohibition against LF-extractions of subjects of embedded tensed clauses:

- (6) a. *Who thinks that who saw us?
 b. *Who wonders where who bought that book?

Here we can naturally assume that the LF-extraction of the embedded subjects in (6) violates the ECP. In the sentences in (5), the reflexive pronouns must move from subject positions of the embedded tensed clauses in order to fulfill the government requirement at LF. Therefore, we concluded that the sentences in (5) should be excluded, since the movement of the reflexives violates the ECP.

Our analysis also accounts for the fact that reflexives cannot appear in prenominal genitive positions:

- (7) *John_i loves himself_i's parents.

In our treatment, it is reasonable to consider that this phenomenon should be related to the following well-known fact:

- (8) *Whose_i did you see t_i mother?

We argued that adopting the revised DP Hypothesis proposed in Takano (1989), the ill-formedness of this example can be explained in terms of the ECP without recourse to the Uniformity Condition (Chomsky (1986a)). We extended this analysis to the sentence in (7) and claimed that LF-movement of the reflexive pronoun from the prenominal genitive position violates the ECP.