

## 14

## Reflexives

## Notes

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## 14.1 Background Information and Observation

Reflexivization is a valency-changing strategy that diminishes the base verb's valency. In a prototypical reflexive construction, the base verb targeted by reflexivization is a transitive verb whose subject and object are the same entity, which simultaneously covers two grammatical roles (exactly, subject and object) and two thematic functions that may change according to the verb's semantics (agent and patient, experiencer and theme,...). Reflexives are conceptually very close to reciprocals (see Lesson 3). In fact, in a reciprocal construction, two participants equally act upon each other and, therefore, are both equally agent and patient (or other thematic functions). In other words, what brings reflexives and reciprocals together is the agent and patient's co-referentiality. For this reason, in many languages reflexives and reciprocals are expressed identically (Payne 1997, 198-203).

This is not the case of Ainu, where we find the prefix *u-* to mark the reciprocal but the two prefixes *yay-* (already introduced in Lesson 3) and *si-* to mark the reflexive (Tamura 2000, 204-5; Murasaki 1979, 37-41; Dal Corso 2021, 94-6). These reflexive prefixes are more commonly found on verbs, where they have linear precedence over personal agreement prefixes, but are also compatible with nouns. Examples (1) and (2) show two reflexive constructions with the prefix *yay-* in HA and SA, while examples (3) and (4) show non-reflexive constructions featuring the same verbs.

- (1) *Pinne seta-ne yay-kar-an.*  
be.male dog-as REFL-make-4S  
'I made myself (= transformed) into a male dog.' (Tamura 1985, 58)

- (2) *Ohkayo suy yay-e-sista an ike ...*  
young.man again REFL-DEI.up-3S.S/strike IPFV when  
'When the young man had struck himself on the head again ...' (Pilsudski 1912, 121)

- (3) *Nep a-kar ka somo ki*  
anything 4A-3S.O/make.NMLZ even NEG SLV/VO/do  
'I did not do anything.' (Tamura 1985, 22)

*Sarakup-hi 'e-sistaa manu.*  
3.PSR/tail-POSS DEI.up-3S.A/3S.O/strike REP  
'[The monster] struck his tail up.' (Dal Corso 2021, 395)

→ Consider this additional information...

There exists another prefix *si-* in the Ainu language, which expresses a circumscriptive (on nouns) or augmentative (on verbs) meaning. Therefore, if *askepet* may refer to any of one's hand's finger, *siaskepet* is 'the most important finger (i.e. the thumb)', or we may find verbs such as *sirupne* 'be extremely large' from *rupne* 'be large' (Tamura 2000, 208). Differently

from the reflexive *si-*, this circumscriptive/augmentative *si-* does not affect the base verb's valency.

→ *Dataset 1 – The choice between yay- and si-*

Consider the following examples featuring the reflexives *yay-* and *si-*. Non-reflexive examples for you to extrapolate the words' meaning are also included. Are the two reflexive prefixes interchangeable? What do you think is the verb's feature on which the choice between *yay-* and *si-* depends? Pay particular attention to the examples featuring a causative verb form.

### Set 1.1 (Hokkaidō Ainu)

#### 1. *Eyayreska.*

'You raised yourself (= grew up alone).' (Bugaeva 2004, 371)

#### 2. *Sinuye'an.*

'I wrote myself (= I got a tattoo).'

#### 3. *Ayuputari akasuy kus ne na!*

'I will help my brothers!' (Bugaeva 2004, 144)

#### 4. *Ekasine yaykar'an.*

'I turned myself (= transformed) into [the boy]'s grandfather.' (adapted from Bugaeva 2004, 208)

#### 5. *Tonoski sipuni.*

'The centre of the lake bubbled up.' (Tamura 1985, 12)

#### 6. *Nea ipirma kamuy isinukare.*

'The god that had warned me made himself visible to me.'

#### 7. *Akotanu un utar asikasuyre.*

'I had the people of my village help me.'

#### 8. *Ikor ka nuye.*

'I wrote (= carved) also the [sheath] of the sword.' (Bugaeva 2004, 161)

## Set 1.2 (Sakhalin Ainu)

1. *Kamuyne ka yaykara koh ...*

‘When she turned herself (= transformed) into a god ...’ (Dal Corso 2021, 353)

2. *Utara sinka.*

‘The people were tired.’ (Pilsudski 1912, 156)

3. *Otakata sante yaysista.*

‘She went down to the sea shore [and] hit herself.’ (Majewicz 1998, 330)

4. *Henke [...] mahpoho tura san teh sikomuyte.*

‘The old man [...] went down [to the beach] with his daughter and had her check him for lice.’ (Dal Corso 2021, 284)

5. *Mosinnoskehe sipuni.*

‘The middle of the island raised (itself) [due to the strength of the gods].’ (Pilsudski 1912, 228)

6. *Tani ‘ieyaysinkare.*

‘Eventually [the old man] exhausted himself because of me.’ (Dal Corso 2021, 380)

7. *Irukay ikomuyte!*

‘Check me for lice just a little!’ (Majewicz 1998, 294)

8. *Temana ‘ankara ike ‘aneyaykaamesu kusu ne.*

‘Doing how will I help myself against [the monster]?’ (Dal Corso 2021, 393)

9. *Tu aynu Taraykata tumi eyaycakasno.*

‘Two men in Tarayka taught themselves (= learned) how to fight.’ (Pilsudski 1912, 70)

10. *Pon monimahpo yayreske hawehe nee.*

‘It was the voice of the little girl raising herself (= growing up by herself).’ (Dal Corso 2021, 249)

11. *Sihnu utah tani ‘emuyke situsahci.*

‘All the people who had survived eventually cured themselves (= healed).’ (Dal Corso 2021, 337)

## 14.2 Research

Now look at this other dataset and also read the examples from other languages given after it, which you will need for the third and last activity of this lesson.

→ *Dataset 2 – Limitations of use and non-prototypical uses of reflexives*

Consider the following additional examples (\* marks ungrammatical examples). Are there uses of *yay-* and *si-* in this dataset that are at odds with your conclusions from the analysis of dataset 1? What are the limitations of use of the reflexive prefixes? Why do you think ungrammaticality arises? Are there behaviours of the Ainu reflexives that seem to go against the typological prototype presented at the beginning of this lesson?

### Set 2.1 (Hokkaidō Ainu)

1. *Anoka anak yaycisekohosipian na.*

‘As for me, I [will] return to my own house.’ (OS 1981, line 415)

2. *Nea sikehe ranke.*

‘He put down his (own) luggage.’ (Tamura 1985, 38)

3. \**Anoka anak sicisekohosipian na.*

‘As for me, I [will] return to my own house.’

4. *Tomari osmakta sirun menoko an.*

‘Behind the pond there was a poor young woman.’

5. *Siyetokun inkaran ayke ...*

‘As I looked in front of myself ...’ (Tamura 1985, 40)

6. \**Yayetokun inkaran ayke ...*

‘As I looked in front of myself ...’

7. *Ahawehe pirka.*

‘My voice was beautiful.’ (Bugaeva 2004, 155)

8. \**Nea yaysikehe ranke.*

‘He put down his own luggage.’

9. \**Anoka anak sicise akohosipi.*

‘As for me, I [will] return to my own house.’

10. *Anoka ka akor kotan akohosipi.*

‘I too return to my village.’ (OS 1981, line 428)

11. \**Anoka anak yaykor cise akohosipi.*

‘As for me, I [will] return to my own house.’

12. \**Nea sisikehe ranke.*

‘He put down his own luggage.’

13. *Yayhawesinaan.*

‘I hid my own voice (= I remained silent).’ (OS 1981 line 800)

14. \**Yayhawehe anu.*

‘I heard my own voice.’

15. *Siosmakun kuinkar.*

‘I looked behind myself.’ (Satō 1995, 9)

16. \**Yayosmakun kuinkar.*

‘I looked behind myself.’

17. \**Anoka anak yaycise akohosipi.*

‘As for me, I [will] return to my own house.’

18. *Pon nay etokta [...] pon to neno kane siran uske an.*

‘In front of a small river, [there was] a place like a small pond.’ (adapted from Tamura 1985, 4)

## Set 2.2 (Sakhalin Ainu)

1. *Onuman hekota sine mosiri aysetokonukara.*

‘Upon the evening, I saw one island in front of myself.’ (Pitsudski 1912, 18)

2. \**Ni [...] aneenke ike siimahsuh anekoyki.*

‘I sharpened a [piece of] wook [with the knife] and picked my own teeth with it.’

3. *Tu to pahno torianahci.*

‘I remained doing nothing for two days.’ (adapted from Pitsudski 1912, 241)

4. *Kotankes un nispa yayahkas yahka ...*

‘A noble man of Kotankes, even [when] he went for a walk [away from the village] ...’ (Pitsudski 1912, 76)

5. *Aynu anne kusu yaykisorokaraan.*

‘Because we are Ainu, we [can] have a [new] offspring of our own.’ (Pitsudski 1912, 46)

6. \**Neroh hekaciutara yaycise wekoro.*

‘Those young men had a house of their own together (= they shared a house).’

7. *Riukaohta sapan teh sietoko inkaraan.*

‘I went down to the bridge and looked in front of myself.’ (adapted from Pitsudski 1912, 134)

8. \**Riukaohta sapan teh yayetoko inkaraan.*

‘I went down to the bridge and looked in front of myself.’

9. \**Ahkas ‘easkay ‘utah okore.*

‘All the people who could walk.’ (Dal Corso 2021, 332)

10. *Nea henke mahpoho kusa.*

‘The old man made his (own) daughter board [the boat].’ (Dal Corso 2021, 289)

11. \**Nea henke yaymahpoho kusa.*

‘The old man made his own daughter board [the boat].’

12. *Neroh hekaciutara weyaycisekoro.*

‘Those young men had a house of their own together (= they shared a house).’ (Majewicz 1998, 287)

13. *Ciseohta yaytori yan ua!*

‘Remain at home doing nothing [away from your duties], please!’ (Pitsudski 1912, 120)

14. *Tani nay etohta makapahci.*

‘Eventually they reached up to the front (= the source) of the river.’ (Dal Corso 2021, 313)

15. *Ni [...] aneenke ike anesiimahsuhkoyki.*

‘I sharpened a [piece of] wood [with the knife] and picked my own teeth with it.’  
(adapted from Pitsudski 1912, 181)

16. \**Nea henke simahpoho kusa.*

‘The old man made his own daughter board [the boat].’

### Examples from Other Languages...

Nivkh (Isolate/Amuric, Russia) (data from and adapted from Nedjalkov and Otaina 2013, 14, 51)

<i>ətək</i>	<i>p'-ōla</i>	<i>vi-gu-ḡ.</i>
father	<b>REFL-</b>	<b>go-CAUS-IND</b>
	child	

‘Father sent his (own) son.’

<i>if</i>	<i>i-ḡaḡo</i>	<i>ye-ḡ.</i>
S/he	<b>3SG-knife</b>	<b>take-IND.</b>

‘S/he took his/her (someone else’s) knife.’

Nivkh makes a clear formal distinction when it comes to the subject’s **co-referentiality** with a possessor or object in the same context. In the first example sentence, the personal/possessive reflexive *p'-/p'i-* is used because the subject is also the ‘owner’ of the verb’s object *ōla* ‘child’. On the contrary, in the second example sentence, the knife belongs to a different person than the subject and the lack of co-referentiality is marked by the personal/possessive prefix *i-*. The use of *p'-/p'i-* in Nivkh is not limited to third persons, but it also applies to first and second persons.

Sumerian (Isolate, Ancient Mesopotamia) (data from D’Agostino et al. 2016, 147-50)

<i>u<sub>4</sub> iri-ni-še<sub>3</sub> ba-ḡen-na.</i>
* <i>ud</i> <i>iri=ani=še</i> <i>ba-ḡen-Ø=a=a.</i>
day                      city=his=TER <b>MID(AND)-go-ABS=NMLZ=LOC</b>

‘When he went away to his city.’

<i>ša<sub>3</sub>-gal ur-ra-še<sub>3</sub> im-ši-ḡen-na.</i>
<i>šaggal</i> <i>ur=ak=še</i> <i>i-m-b-ši-ḡen-Ø=a.</i>
feeding dog=GEN=TER <b>FIN-VEN-3N.OO-TER-go-ABS=REL</b>

‘[He] who came for the dogs’ feeding’

In Sumerian, the prefix *ba-* marks middle voice and can be used to express both passive and reflexive. However, with some verbs, and provided a congruous context, its use cannot be recognized to be that of a **prototypical reflexive** or passive. Rather, *ba-* indicates that the event expressed by the verb is performed by the subject together with a **motion away** from the speaker and it also may imply that this is done to the subject’s benefit. Therefore, in such cases *ba-* has an **andative** (also **dislocative**) meaning – that is, it indicates motion away from the speaker or a centre of attention. With this function, *ba-* alternates with the prefix *m(u)-*, which indicated the opposite **motion towards** the speaker or a center of attention and as such has a **ventive** (also **cislocative**) meaning. In Sumerian these two prefixes are necessary to distinguish between ‘go’ and ‘come’ since the event of motion is not formally distinguished in the verb’s form, which is always *ḡen*.



### 14.3 Analysis and Description

In no less than 400 words describe the use of the Ainu reflexive prefixes *yay-* and *si-*, by referencing the data provided above. What is the criterion that rules the use of the two prefixes? Is it morphosyntactic or semantic? How would you explain the seeming non-prototypical uses of the prefixes?

