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Rethinking the relation
between SELF-intensifiers and
reflexives

SELF-intensifiers vs. reflexives

English

(1) *Intensifier*

[The dean **himself**] opened the meeting.

(2) *Reflexive*

He [despises **himself**].



German

(3) *Intensifier*

[Der Dekan **selbst**] eröffnete die Versammlung.

(4) *Reflexive*

Er [verachtet **sich**].



Adnominal vs. actor-oriented intensifiers

(5) *Adnominal intensifier*

Yesterday I talked to [the dean himself].

(6) *Actor-oriented intensifier*

A gardener should [mow his lawn himself].

(7) ??A gardener himself should mow the lawn.

(8) John didn't mow his lawn himself.

(9) John himself didn't mow his lawn.

Adnominal vs. actor-oriented intensifiers (II)

Mitla Zapotec

(10) *Adnominal intensifier*

gižee xiääd [**lagahk**/***ensilaani** presidente]
tomorrow comes INT.ADN INT.AO president
'The president himself will come tomorrow.'

(11) *Actor-oriented intensifier*

Presidente [**ensilaani**/***lagahk** behn rolihdzni]
President INT.AO INT.ADN made his house]
'The president built his house himself.'

A three-way distinction

	INT ACT-OR	INT ADNOM	REFL
English	<i>-self</i>		
German	<i>selbst</i>		<i>sich</i>
Zapotec	<i>ensilaani</i>	<i>lagahk</i>	

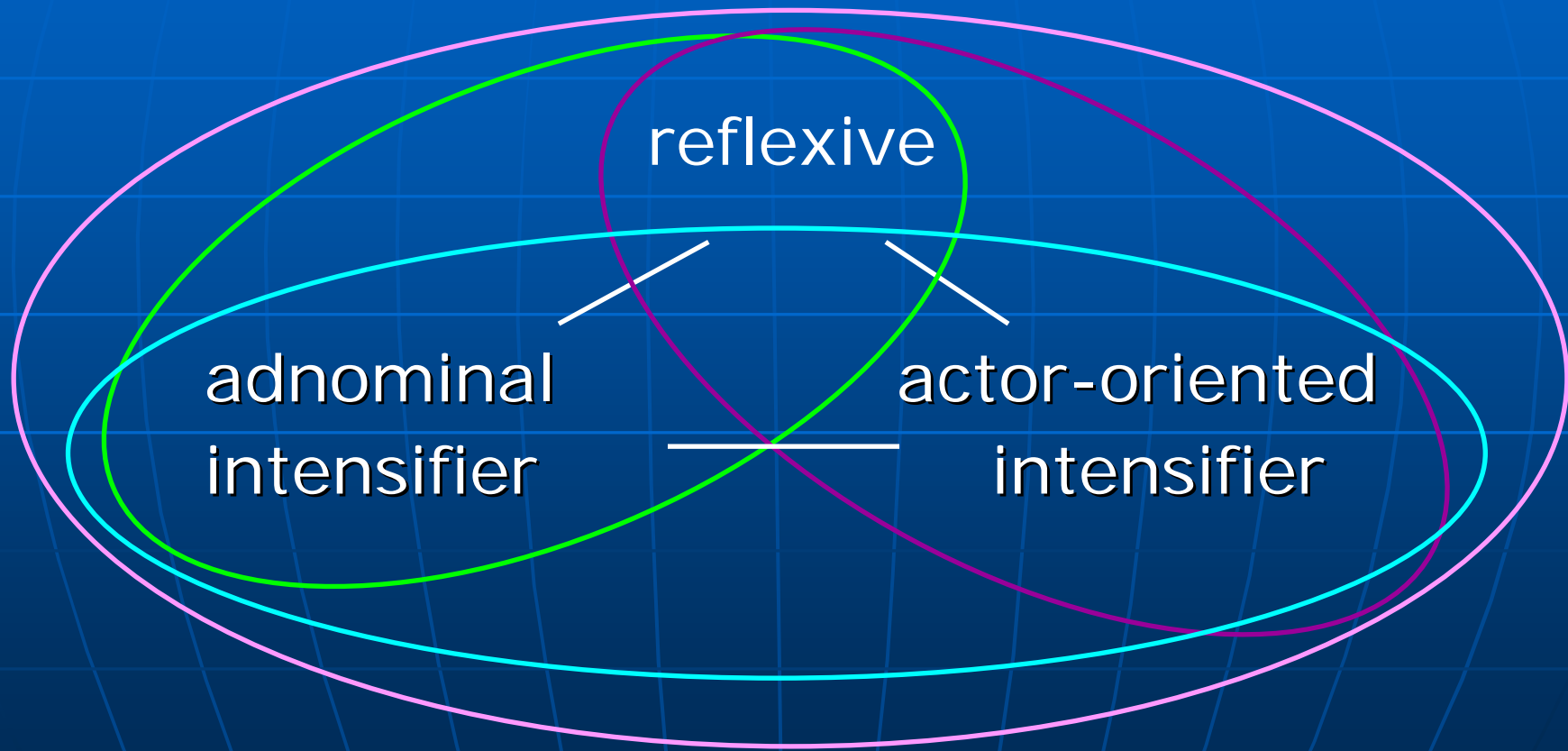
Patterns of formal relatedness

the 'traditional' view



Patterns of formal relatedness

the 'revised' view: a 'three-way relationship'

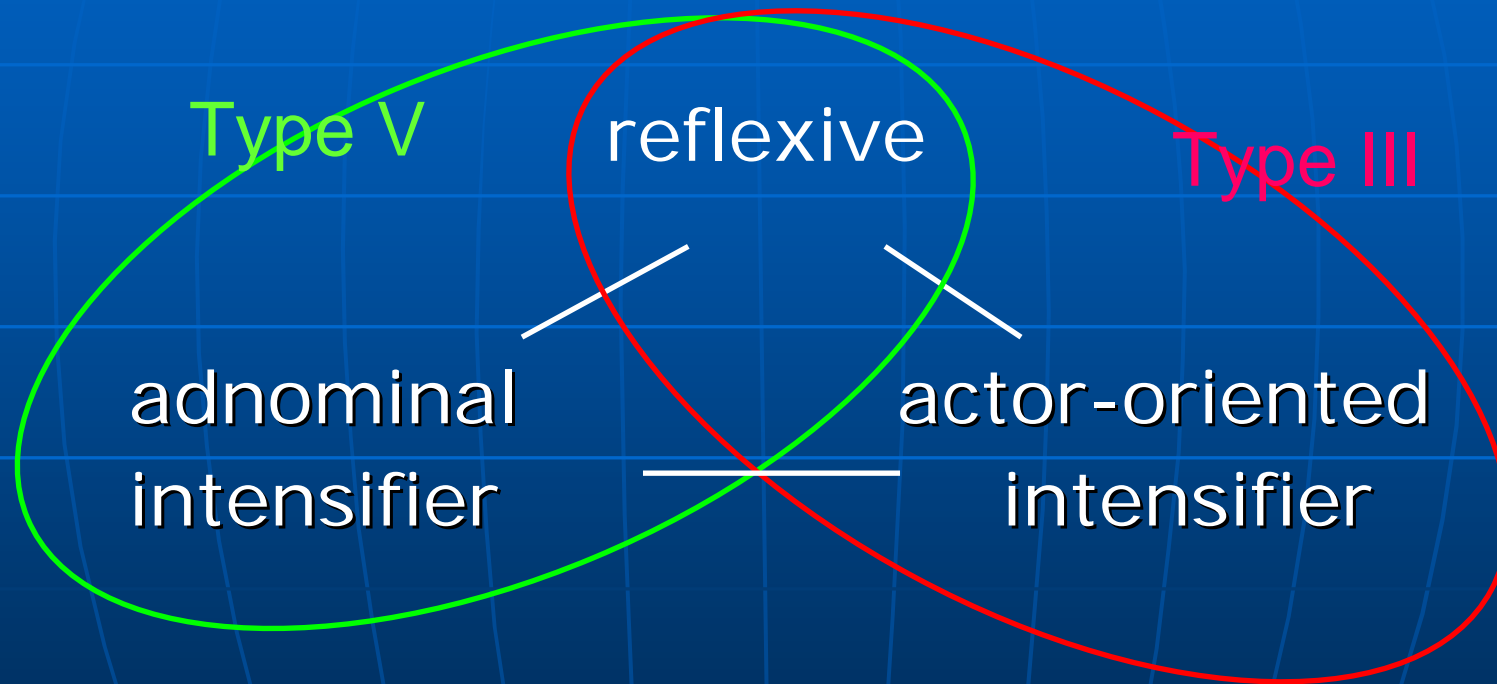


Patterns of formal relatedness

ADN AOI REFL n examples

I	♣			29	English, Chinese
II	♣	♠		26	German, Russian
III	♣	♠		10	Japanese, Otomí
IV	♣	♠	♦	4	T. Nahuatl, W. Songhay
V	♣	♠	♣	3	M. Zapotec, Amharic

Patterns of formal relatedness



An example of type III

Tarascan

(12) *Reflexive*

Juan eráti-**kui** ma espého
Juan saw-REFL in mirror
'Juan saw himself in the mirror.'

(13) *Actor-oriented intensifier*

Juan ú-**kuare**-sti kumánchikua
Juan make-INT.AO-TAP his.house
'Juan built his house himself.'

(14) *Adnominal intensifier*

uitsíndikua janústi jurámuti **mísimu**
yesterday came president INT.ADN
'The president himself came yesterday.'

An example of type V

Mitla Zapotec

(15) *Reflexive*

ruwiä **lagahk** loä neN giwahn
I saw REFL me in mirror
'I saw myself in the mirror.'

(16) *Adnominal intensifier*

xiädä **lagahk** president
will come INT.ADN president
'The president himself will come.'

(17) *Actor-oriented intensifier*

Juan **ensilaani** kayu?ni rolihdzni
Juan INT.AO built his house
'John built his house himself.'

How do these patterns arise?

Three types of historical developments

1. Adnominal intensifier → reflexive
2. Actor-oriented intensifiers → reflexive
3. Reflexive → actor-oriented intensifier

Adnominal intensifier → reflexive

Old English > Modern English

hine (self-) > himself

(18) he **hine** vnkuð makede
he him unknown made
'He made himself unknown.'

(19) he makede **him-seluen** muchel clond
he made him-INT.ADN much pain
'He made for himself much pain.'
van Gelderen (2001: 72/3)

Actor-oriented intensifier → reflexive

Mezquital Otomí

$n_{\text{-MID/REFL}} + \textit{sěhě}_{\text{INT.AO}} > (n\text{-...}) \textit{sěhě}_{\text{REFL}}$

- (20) Ra Šuwa bi **n**-hyó
DET John 3PAST MID-kill
'John killed himself/John was killed.'
- (21) Ra Šuwa bi **n**-hyó **sěhě**
DET John 3PAST MID-kill INT.AO
'John killed himself.'
- (22) Bi hyění **sěhě**
3PAST cut INT.AO/REFL
'He cut himself.'

Reflexive → Actor-oriented intensifier

Japanese

$jibun_{\text{REFL}} + \text{INSTR} > jibun-de_{\text{INT.AO}}$

(23) Taro-wa **jibun**-wo semeta
Taroo-TOP REFL-ACC criticized
'Taroo criticized himself.'

(24) Taro-wa **jibun-de** kuruma-wo arau
Taro-TOP REFL-INSTR car-ACC washes
'Taro washes the car himself.'

Conclusions

- three-way relationship between reflexives and the two types of intensifiers
- three different types of diachronic relationships between intensifiers and reflexives
- two of these developments link reflexives and actor-oriented intensifiers to one another
- role of actor-oriented intensifiers in the creation of reflexive markers has been underestimated

Selected references

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