The status of reciprocal *si* in Italian

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➢ Main issue: What is the status of reciprocal *si* in Italian, given the debate between Reinhart & Siloni versus Doron & Rappaport Hovav?

➢ Relevant references: Reinhart & Siloni (2005), Siloni (2008, 2012), Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2009).

➢ Literature focuses on reflexivity, this overview only covers reciprocity.

1. Two types of reciprocity

➢ Reciprocal *verbs* (V_{rec})

(1)	a.	They kissed.	(zero morphology)
	b.	hem hitnašku.	(hitpa'el template, Hebrew)
		they kissed(*rec*)	

➢ Reciprocal *pronouns* (V+REC)

(2)	a.	They kissed each other.	
	b.	hem niško ze et ze /exad et ha-šeni.	(Hebrew)
		they kissed this OM this/ one OM the-second	

2. Differences between V_{rec} and V+REC

➢ Productivity: V_{rec} is non-productive (only with a restricted number of verbs), V+REC is productive (with any transitive verb).

➢ ECM: V_{rec} cannot 'reciprocalize' an ECM subject, V+REC can.

(3)	a.	*Dan ve-Ron hitra'u racim.	(Hebrew)
		Dan and-Ron see(*rec*) run	
	b.	dan ve-Ron ra'u exad et ha-šeni racim.	
		'Dan and-Ron saw each other run'	
	c.	Dan ve-Ron hitra'u.	
		Dan and Ron see(*rec*)	
		'Dan and Ron met.'	

➢ V_{rec} can be nominalized, V+REC cannot.

(4)	hitnaškut bney ha-esre	(Hebrew)
	kissing(*rec*) the teenagers	
	'The teenagers' mutual kissing.'	

➢ V_{rec} cannot assign accusative case, V+REC can.

(5)   a.   Dan ve-Dina   hitlaxšu   (*milot ahava).   (Hebrew)
                  Dan and-Dina whispered(*rec*) (words of love)
      b.   Dan and Dina whispered words of love to each other.

➢ V+REC allows distribution over the matrix subject, V_{rec} does not.

(6)   a.   dan ve-ron   amru še-hem   katvu exad la-šeni.   (Hebrew)
                  Dan and-Ron said   that-they wrote one   to the other
                  i. Dan and Ron said that they corresponded.
                  ii. Dan said that he wrote to Ron and Ron said that he wrote to Dan.
      b.   dan ve-ron   amru še-hem   hitkatvu.
                  Dan and-Ron   said   that they wrote(*rec*)
                  i. Dan and Ron said that they corresponded.

➢ V_{rec} allows the 'discontinuous' reciprocal construction, V+REC does not.

(7)   a.   ha-yeladim hitnašku   im   ha-yeladot.   (Hebrew)
                  the boys   kissed(*rec*) with the-girls
      b.   The boys kissed with the girls.
      b'.   *The boys kissed each other with the girls.

➢ V_{rec} describes only symmetric events, V+REC also non-symmetric events.

(8)   a.   Dan ve-Ron   hitnašku xameš pe'amim.   (Hebrew)
                  Dan and-Ron   kissed   five   times
                  i. five symmetric kissing events.
      b.   Dan ve-Ron   nišku exad et ha-šeni   xameš   pe'amim.
                  Dan and-Ron kissed   each   other   five   times
                  i. five symmetric kissing events.
                  ii. ten non-symmetric kissing events.

➢ V+REC allows object comparison, V_{rec} does not.

(9)   a.   Dan ve-Ron   nišku   exad et ha-šeni yoter me'ašer yeladim   axerim.
                  Dan and-Ron kissed each   other   more than   children other
                  i. 'D. and R. kissed each other more than other children kissed each
                  other.'
                  ii. 'D. and R. kissed each other more than they kissed other children.'
      b.   Dan ve-Ron   hitnašku yoter me'ašer   yeladim   axerim.
                  Dan and-Ron kissedREC   more than   children   other
                  'Dan and Ron kissed more than other children kissed.'

3. The status of Italian *si*

➢ Italian (unlike English or Hebrew) does not have two distinct reciprocal forms: reciprocalization always involves the presence of the morpheme *si* before the verb.

➢ What is *si V*: a reciprocal verb (V_rec) or a verb with a reciprocal pronoun (V+REC)?

(10) a.　　Gianni e　Maria si sono consultati.
　　　　　　Gianni　and Maria　SI are　consulted
　　　　　　'Gianni e Maria consulted each other'

　　 b.　　Gianni e　　Maria si sono consultati.
　　　　　　Gianni　and Maria　SI are　consulted
　　　　　　'Gianni e Maria conferred'

➢ Point of divergence: can *si* can be treated as an anaphoric clitic object of the verb?

- Reinhart & Siloni: no, it cannot!
  → verbs with *se/si* are not transitive;
  → *si* is a syntactic operator both in (10a) and in (10b). It morphologically marks a thematic operation taking place in the syntax, but in the case of (10b) the reciprocal verb becomes lexicalized as such;
  → the *lex-syn parameter*:

(11) Universal Grammar allows thematic arity operations to apply in the lexicon or in the syntax.

　　　→ Italian is a 'syntax language', while English and Hebrew are 'lexicon languages'.

- Doron & Rappaport Hovav: yes, it can (and it must sometimes)!
  → verbs with *se/si* are transitive;
  → *si* is a reciprocal pronoun in (10a) and the marker of a reciprocal verb in (10b);
  → syncretism between reciprocal anaphors and reciprocal morphology.

➢ In other words:

(12) Reinhart & Siloni:
　　- *consultarsi* in (10a) is a reciprocal verb (V_rec), derived in the syntax;
　　- *consultarsi* in (10b) is a reciprocal verb (V_rec), derived in the syntax and then lexicalized.

(13) Doron & Rappaport Hovav:
　　- *consultarsi* in (10a) is V+REC;
　　- *consultarsi* in (10b) is a reciprocal verb (V_rec).

4. What they (seem to) agree about: *si V* as 'lexical' reciprocal verb

➢ In Romance, there is a class of ('lexical', 'inherently') reciprocal verbs (V_rec) marked with *se/si* that has similar properties to reciprocal verbs (V_rec) in English and Hebrew.

➢ Properties of these reciprocal verbs in Italian:

- Only a restricted set of verb roots is involved.

(14) *sposarsi* 'to marry', *vedersi* 'to date' (colloq.), *battersi* 'to fight', *lasciarsi* 'to break up', *consultarsi* 'to consult', etc.

- The *si* can (and must) be omitted in the causative construction.

(15) Ho   fatto (*si) consultare (*si) Gianni e   Maria.
Have.1sg made SI consult   SI Gianni and Maria
'I made Gianni and Maria consult.'
i. I made so that Gianni and Maria were consulted.   *passive*
ii. I made Gianni and Maria confer.   *reciprocal*

- Sometimes the transitive verbal base has a different meaning ('semantic drift').

(16) a.   *battere*: (i) to defeat, (ii) to hit   b.   *battersi*= to fight
(17) a.   *lasciare*: to leave   b.   *lasciarsi*= to break up
(18) a.   *vedere*: to see   b.   *vedersi*= (i) to see, (ii) to date

- They can occur in the 'discontinuous' reciprocal construction.

(19) Gianni si è consultato con Maria.
Gianni SI is consulted   with Maria
'Gianni consulted with Maria.'

- They have a symmetric interpretation.

(20) Gianni e   Maria si sono sposati   cinque volte.
Gianni and Maria SI are   married five   times
'Gianni and Maria got married five times.'
i. five symmetric marrying events
ii. #ten non-symmetric marrying events

  • complication:

(21) Gianni e   Maria si sono consultati cinque volte.
Gianni and Maria SI are   consulted five   times
'Gianni and Maria conferred/consulted each other five times.'
i. five symmetric consultation events
ii. ten non-symmetric consultation events

→ *si V* is ambiguous between a 'lexical' reciprocal reading and a 'non-lexical' reciprocal reading.

- Reciprocal verbs (V$_{rec}$) can be input to nominalization (without the *si*).

(22)   Gianni e   Maria si consultano.

Gianni and Maria SI consult
'Gianni and Maria confer/consult each other.'
nominalization: consultazione

- Not possible with ECM subjects, see (3).

5. What they also (seem to) agree about: *si V* as productive strategy

➢ There is a reciprocal construction with *si* that shares properties with pronominal reciprocity in English and Hebrew.

➢ Properties of this reciprocal construction in Italian:

- Productivity: it can be applied in principle to any transitive verb.

- Meaning predictable on the basis of the predicate.

(23) a. Gianni ringrazia Maria.
          Gianni thanks   Maria
          'Gianni thanks Maria'
      b. Gianni e   Maria si ringraziano.
          Gianni and Maria SI thank
          'Gianni and Maria thank each other.'

- Not allowed in the 'discontinuous' reciprocal construction.

(24) *Gianni si è ringraziato con Maria.
       Gianni SI is thanked   with Maria

- No symmetric interpretation necessary.

(25) Gianni e   Maria si sono ringraziati cinque volte.
      Gianni and Maria SI are   thanked   five   times
      'G and M thanked each other five times.'
      i. five symmetric 'thanking'events
      ii. ten non-symmetric 'thanking' events

- Possible with ECM subjects.

(26) Gianni e   Maria si sono visti nudi.
      Gianni and Maria SI are   seen naked
      i. 'Gianni and Maria saw each other naked.'
      ii. 'Gianni and Maria saw themselves naked.'

6. What they don't agree about

➢ Whether *se/si* is a pronominal object (Doron & Rappaport Hovav) or not (Reinhart & Siloni).

➤ Reinhart & Siloni: bundling of an internal theta-role with an external theta-role in the syntax;

➤ Doron & Rappaport Hovav: binding of a clitic anaphor.

➤ Both operations account for the crucial properties of productivity and non-locality, but in different ways.

➢ Why would Romance *se/si* **not** be a pronominal anaphoric clitic (according to R&S)?

One reason for R&S (p. 393, following Kayne, Grimshaw and others): because French *se* does not pattern with other object clitics in causative constructions (with respect to transitivity).

(27) a. Je ferai   laver Max *(à) Paul.   [transitive+object]
          I make(FUT) wash Max to Paul
          'I will make Paul wash Max.'
      b. Je ferai   courir Paul.   [intransitive]
          I make(FUT) run   Paul
          'I will make Paul run.'
(28) a. Je le   ferai   laver à Paul.   [transitive+object]
          I him$_{cl}$ make(FUT) wash to Paul
          'I will make Paul wash him.'
      b. Je ferai   se laver Paul.   [reflexive]
          I make(FUT) SE wash Paul
          'I will make Paul wash himself.'

But D&R (p. 99): "accusative Case is available to the causee argument which is coindexed with *se*" in (27b).

Another reason for R&S (p. 414): "locally bound anaphors tend to be complex elements of the *himself* type (Pica 1987, Reinhart and Reuland 1993) and not simplex elements [like *se*]."

But D&R (p. 100, quoting Haspelmath's generalization): "the local reflexive pronoun is at least as complex phonologically as the long-distance reflexive", allowing for simple reflexive pronouns in local contexts.

Another reason for Siloni (2012, p. 264): the missing "I reading" with French reciprocal *se*, which "follows straightforwardly from [...] an operation that eliminates a syntactic position in the complement domain, associating the corresponding θ-role with the subject argument" (p. 262).

(29) a. John and Paul said that they defeated each other in the final.
          (i)   John & Paul: 'we defeated each other'
          (ii) John 'I defeated Paul' & Paul: 'I defeated John'

b.   Pierre et Jean ont dit qu'ils se sont vaincus à la finale.
       (i)   Pierre & Jean: 'we defeated each other'
       (ii)   #Pierre: 'I defeated Jean' & Jean: 'I defeated Pierre'

But D&R (p. 88) point out that the following sentence is ambiguous, which Siloni (p. 288) sees as an effect of restructuring with certain infinitivals.

(30)   Jean et Pierre veulent se vaincre à la   finale.
       Jean and Paul   want   SE defeat in the final
       'Jean and Pierre want to defeat each other in the final."

➢ What are positive arguments for treating *se*/*si* as an anaphoric pronoun according to D&R?

1. "the fact that *se* may only be bound by a(n underlying) subject [...] is explained: only the subject is structurally high enough to bind a clitic attached to the inflectional head of the clause" (p. 81) > only subjects can bind *se*;
2. "parallelism between [*se*] and other pronominal elements which is not otherwise captured" (p. 82)**;**
3. "possibility of focusing the internal argument" (p. 83);
4. "The availability of the remnant reading of *Paul se trouvait drôle et sa soeur aussi* 'Paul considered himself funny, and he considered his sister funny too.' indicates that *se* can be interpreted as an argument" (p. 85);
5. " 'statue' or 'Mme. Tussaud' environments [...] in French we can use *se* in these environments" (p. 86);
6. "the non-mutual reading follows from *se* also being an anaphor" (p. 88);
7. "contrary to what is predicted by the reflexivization approach, it is possible to form a reflexive version of verbs from the appeal-type class" (p. 89);
8. "the discontinuous construction [**Marie s'est embrassée avec Jean* ...] is ungrammatical because the reciprocal clitic c-commands one of its antecedents" (p. 89).

➢ Our conclusion: the debate is still unsolved and to solve it we need a way to compare the semantics of pronominal anaphors versus arity reducing operations in a range of different constructions and a more systematic analysis of the constructions involved.

References

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