

"REFLEXIVES" IN GUUGU YIMIDHIRR AND TZOTZIL:  
SYNTAX AND PRAGMATICS

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**Analogue vs. digital models of grammar**

There seem to be two prevailing styles for conceiving the structure of language. One view treats linguistic units--taken as composite mappings between lexical, functional, constituent structure, and semantic representations--as the product of a complex (though hopefully formalizable) interaction between different levels.<sup>1</sup> Each level is formally, and largely conceptually, distinct from its neighbors (if, indeed, they *are* neighbors): each has its own repertoire of elements, its own internal principles of organization. Working out whether and how a particular unit--a clause, say--is grammatical is a matter of (possibly massive) parallel computation. The *calculability* of the various required representational levels is the final test of both well-formedness and meaningfulness. Thus one is able to dispense with multiple strata, mutually interfeeding transformations, and final last-gasp filters, in favor of a widely distributed device which manages a kind of generative magic each time its well-oiled and coordinated parts spew out a linguistic rabbit.

This is the **digital**--one might even say PDP--model of language. It seems deliberately to *privilege* no single level of representations, to give no special status to any of the interacting mechanisms which conspire to produce well-formedness. Ever mindful of its Oedipal pedigree, such a theory certainly does *not* privilege constituent-structure, which is relegated to the last and (structurally) least interesting realm of all: language as it, finally, emerges from speakers' mouths. This is the level of caprice. The surface forms of morphology, word-order, constituency, prosody, and so on, are necessary to be sure, but ultimately accidental or epiphenomenal. The really interesting stuff is to be found in other modules.<sup>2</sup>

Such a digital model contrasts with a technologically less sophisticated **analogue** model of language. Here there are no interacting calculating engines, but rather laminated functional icons, or collections of jigsaw pieces, some beautifully machined, others rather rough-hewn, trying to fit together. Coming from anthropology, I confess that I would rather think of *utterances* under such a metaphor, but I acknowledge that this may not take us very far in the study of *sentences*. It has been suggested that the surface constructions of language, their iconic and, in John Haiman's words, *ecological*<sup>3</sup> properties, may reflect the suitability of linguistic units to the purposes for which we keep them around. Such a view is congenial to Goffman's notion that language is designed for use in "situations" (in

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<sup>1</sup> A representative and also self-consciously argued example of this approach, as applied specifically to reflexive constructions, is Sells, Zaenen, and Zec 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, in fact, the lexicon and its rules, and the level of semantic representation where meanings dwell, still do retain a certain privileged status, even on this view: this is where things that matter seem to go on.

<sup>3</sup> Haiman 1985.

action) and that, as such, language is simply part of a wider system of what he called "functional gestures."<sup>4</sup>

Here there *is* a privileging of surface structure, not merely in terms of constituency, but also of prosody, morphology, "bulk" and, presumably, even *proximity*. There is also an explicitly pragmatic level of indexical anchoring, both presupposed and entailing<sup>5</sup>, that draws upon and manipulates surface structure for its own purposes. On this analogue model, the superficial raw material of linguistic form is available to the iconically analogic engine of a community of speakers: for reinterpretation, reworking, reapplication, and recycling. And such re-doings are taken to be typically *motivated*.

Working in what I take to be this spirit, and arguing for more general principles of motivation, John Haiman has recently suggested that

"[r]eflexive pronouns tend to denote an entity conceived of as in some way *distinct* from the antecedent; reflexive affixes, like incorporated objects generally, do not refer, and do not denote such a distinct entity" (Haiman 1985:143).

Working in a clearly digital spirit, Sells et al. argue, on the other hand, that it is impossible to predict lexical transitivity (the underlying syntactic argument structure of a verb) and semantic openness (roughly, the availability of an interpretably *distinct* argument of the kind Haiman has in mind) from surface form and constituency alone.

". . .the mapping between the phrasal and lexical structure is, strictly speaking, many-many. That is, lexically intransitive and lexically transitive reflexives alike, allow a range of morpho-syntactic realizations, including both affixes and free-standing morphemes" (Sells et al. 1987:196).

Paradoxically, analogue and digital approaches may **both** be right. Componential outcomes may (at least sometimes) violate iconic tendencies, and it is clear that, for example, superficial coincidence of form often obscures important differences in function, meaning, or structure. Stranger things have happened.

The two models set me to thinking about a couple of languages I have worked on, in both of which one encounters reflexive mysteries. Briefly, I make the following argument: despite Sells et al.'s convincing demonstration that the lexical and semantic properties of reflexives cannot be predicted from the phrasal structure (roughly, either morpho-syntactically transitive or intransitive) alone, there seem to be motivated analogic consequences for the *uses* of reflexive morphology that derive from a pattern of syntactic marking. That is, we may expect speakers to exploit an asymmetry between canonically transitive and canonically intransitive sentence forms, and reflexives may be expected to fall within one camp or the other.

### The semantics and pragmatics of reflexives

The basic facts about reflexives are well known.

(1) Reflexives seem to come in two surface flavors: roughly, transitive ones in which the underlying patient is coreferential with the agent, and a distinct reflexive nominal acts as syntactic Object (as in English, 'I hit *myself*'); and intransitive ones, in which there is some sort of intransitivizing reflexive morphology on an otherwise transitive verb, suppressing other aspects of transitive morphology (for example, case marking) and emphasizing, if not

<sup>4</sup> Goffman 1964. See Goffman 1983 for the developed view.

<sup>5</sup> See Silverstein 1986, 1976.

coreferentiality, at least the non-distinctness of logical agent and patient.<sup>6</sup> Some languages (Russian, for example, and Finnish) have both sorts.

English uses transitive reflexes, and, for example, Wasco-Wishram has the intransitive kind<sup>7</sup>. A useful example from the latter language is the formally mediopassive-reflexive "metapragmatic framing verb" [*]*<sub>2</sub>-x-√*lulxa-it* [*]*<sub>3</sub> 'think,' (with the thinker cross-indexed by an Absolutive-reflexive prefix<sub>3</sub>) which functions in text with a meaning something like "say to oneself." The thinker's thought is coded as "inner speech" (Silverstein 1986:151), apparently, from the morphology<sup>8</sup>, by the speaker to him/herself. Silverstein has demonstrated with great elegance that the pragmatic properties of such framing verbs help structure (or perhaps respond to the preexisting structure of) the participant frame of a narrative. We shall see that the device is not limited to Chinookan.

To anticipate, morpho-syntactically Guugu Yimidhirr (GY) reflexives are intransitive, those of Tzotzil (TZ) transitive.

(2) There is a frequent extension of reflexive morphology to reciprocal meaning, and a similarly well-known affinity between passives and reciprocals. Langacker and Munro 1975 trace these connections to a common underlying structure in which an *unspecified* argument in a transitive construction may be assimilated to a co-referential (non-distinct) interpretation of the A and O arguments, either one capable of surviving in the resulting surface form (as the Guugu Yimidhirr material will show). Haiman's generalization, quoted above, was in part designed to motivate the otherwise inexplicable observation that

"in languages where both independent and incorporated reflexives are found, *only incorporated reflexives can express the passive voice*" (Haiman 1985:144).<sup>9</sup>

(3) Many authors have noted the different sorts of things that may be understood as "coreferentiality" between A and O<sup>10</sup> or their logical incumbents: complete co-referentiality (where both denote one and the same thing--i.e., there *is* only a single participant, perhaps realized as a single S); non-distinctness; "non-externality" of O to A; a relationship between two participants "interpreted as the mind and body, or perhaps as the two halves of the divided self, of the agent" (Haiman 1985:144); or perhaps in terms of a "split ego, an identity that is apart from" (Kuno 1987:263) the antecedent. In the last case, Kuno suggests that Russian reflexive pronouns provide the locus for a distinct "empathy perspective" even within a co-referential reflexive. Clearly there are different creatures hiding in the same morphological cave here.

The digital separation of grammar into distinct levels allows us to see that different issues are at stake. There is the question of the lexical argument structure of verbs (in which we may wish to distinguish, say, ditransitives from transitives from intransitives, and, within the latter, unaccusatives from unergatives), and the perturbations inflicted on these structures by processes of reflexivization, passive, and the like. There is also the question of semantic representation, where Sells et al.'s distinction between open and closed predicates (roughly, the difference between F(x,y) and F(x,x), with different

<sup>6</sup> There is alternative terminology here. Sells et al. distinguish, in phrasal structure, between "analytic" and "synthetic" constructions (1987:172-3); see also Faltz 1977 for the parallel distinction between "NP-reflexives" and "verbal reflexives."

<sup>7</sup> See Silverstein 1984 for some morphological details. I am grateful to David French for inspiring me to puzzle through some of the contortions here.

<sup>8</sup> The verbal root apparently means 'hurl at.'

<sup>9</sup> Sells et al. 1987:178-179 note, but have no account for, the same sort of asymmetry between free-standing and intransitive (incorporated) reflexives in Finnish.

<sup>10</sup> I adopt, for convenience, Dixon's notational convention in which A stands for transitive subject, O for transitive object, and S for intransitive subject.



binding mechanisms [e.g., in the first case,  $x = y$ ]) catches only the roughest set-theoretic levels of coreferentiality. There is also the phrasal mold into which such distinctions are cast, where the diagnostic tests may show what I have called superficial transitivity or intransitivity. (In the two languages I examine here, these tests involve patterns of case marking or verbal cross-indexes.)

However, rather than binary (or n-ary) dichotomies, it may be analogic *continua*, sliding scales between poles, that best allow us to represent the sorts of argument and semantic structures apparent in different sorts of utterances. (The superficial syntactic options, of course, *will* typically be n-ary, although there may be unclear cases, as we shall see below for GY.)

(4) Finally, there is the nature of what I call the "snapshot" of an event. Here I do not mean only Kuno's "camera angle" but something that also involves framing, perspective, the selective eye of an utterance, and the creative invocation of an indexical surround, complete with implicated participant structures. In Guugu Yimidhurr, as Dixon 1977 argues for Yidiny, we shall see that there is a "canonical model of transitive action" which corresponds to an *unmarked* transitive construction. Departures from the canon produce special syntactic *marking*. Notice, nonetheless, that an event can *always* be described in more than one way; we can take different snapshots.

To take a standard example, Berk-Seligson 1983 has demonstrated that Costa Rican Spanish speakers are aware of the strategic consequences of choosing between different syntactic options in describing events, especially when they reckon they run the risk of being blamed. After giving some schoolchildren pictures of various possibly accidental mishaps (knocking over a flower-pot and unwittingly dropping a coin out of one's pocket), she elicited imagined dialogues between the unfortunate victims and their parents. The miniature dramas implicitly contrast reflexives with full transitive constructions, apparently in terms of the corresponding "snapshots of responsibility." Example (0) is a representative fragment<sup>11</sup>:

- (0)  
 M: ¡Qué hiciste!  
 "What did you do?"  
 D: *Se cayó* el florero.  
 "The flower-pot fell."  
 M: ¡Se cayó! *Lo botaste*, que es diferente.  
 "It 'fell'! You knocked it over, which is different."

The point, obviously, is that the guilty party represents the mishap as an accident, using a reflexive form that either eliminates or downplays the responsibility of an Agent. The exact details (and the scales of blameworthiness) here are less important than the general point that syntactic frames, like Silverstein's Chinookan metapragmatic framing verbs, may constrain the snapshots of an event that a speaker will entertain (or at least admit to). Much as an evidential may evoke an illocutionary frame different from the one at hand (suggesting that, appearances aside, *I* am not really telling you this, but only relaying it from someone else's putative telling<sup>12</sup>), reflexives also carry their characteristic snapshots. They are compatible with only certain implicated (narrated) participant structures, and are thus prime vehicles for conversational strategy.

Let me turn, now, to GY and TZ, to see how far this yarn can be spun out. I will confine myself largely to syntactic and morphological facts, but I hope that the strategic (discursive) morals will not be hard to reconstruct.

<sup>11</sup> From Berk-Seligson 1983:152-154.

<sup>12</sup> See Haviland 1987a.

### Guugu Yimidhirr: Intransitive Reflexives

GY is a Pama-Nyungan language spoken in the southeastern part of the Cape York Peninsula, in north Queensland<sup>13</sup>. Like most of its neighbors, GY shows the now familiar pattern of nominative/accusative case on personal pronouns but ergative/absolute morphology on all other nominals. Moreover, since animate nominals frequently cooccur with their corresponding pronouns, case morphology alone usually lays bare the exact organization of thematic roles in a clause, despite the fact that GY, like most of its Australian relatives permits promiscuous word-scrambling<sup>14</sup>. Here are two representative transitive sentences, one from a myth and another from a biographical narrative:

(1) {Milbi, 2}<sup>15</sup>

ngaanaa dhana dyidyirr bidha-gurr-nda diingaalngal nhayun  
 what+ABS 3plNOM bird small-PL-ERG laugh+REDUP that+ABS  
*What (there) are those little birds laughing at?*

(2) {bplab:439+}

bama ngayu nhangu dhumbuurggu nhaadhi  
 man+ABS 1sNOM 3sACC straight saw  
*I saw the man clearly.*

In (1) the A role in the clause is composed of two elements (one of which is complex): the nominative 3PL pronoun *dhana* 'they' and the expression *dyidyirr bidha-gurr-nda* 'small birds (ERG)'. The O also has two discontinuous pieces, the interrogative *ngaanaa* 'what (ABS)' and the deictic *nhayun* 'that, there.' Note that *dyidyirr* 'bird,' is unmarked for case (and thus is linked necessarily here with the following ergatively-marked adjective), but that it could itself bear ERG(ative) inflection, as, say, *dyidyirrnda*; under such circumstances the sentence could be scrambled into virtually any order.

(3) Dhana nhayun diingaalngal bidhagurrnda ngaanaa dyidyirrnda?

In (2), the O is also discontinuous, consisting of the absolute noun *bama* 'man,' and the accusative 3rd-singular pronoun *nhangu*. By contrast, the Agent role is signaled by nominative case marking on the 1st singular pronoun *ngayu*.

Subjects of intransitive verbs are unmarked; that is, they show nominative for pronouns and absolute for other nominals. As before, different nominal elements, all contributing to the subject role, can stack up in a sentence.

(4) {TG, 7}

Bula nhayun yaba gaarga gaday.  
 3duNOM that+ABS >-brother+ABS <-brother+ABS came  
*That (pair of older/younger) brothers came.*

As I mentioned, GY speakers often accompany an animate nominal argument with the corresponding pleonastic pronoun.<sup>16</sup> As a result, in most sentences case-marking patterns give clear diagnostics for both transitivity (distinguishing transitive from intransitive verbs according to the cases possible for their arguments) and thematic role, as shown in (5).

(5)	Pronoun	Noun, Adj. etc.
S	NOM	ABS {Intransitive}

<sup>13</sup>I have attempted a general sketch of the grammar in Haviland 1979c, where this analysis of reflexives, based on elicited examples, is first outlined.

<sup>14</sup>At least within the limited domain of the single clause; see Austin 1987.

<sup>15</sup>I identify examples drawn from conversational transcripts and texts by the name of the source text and its line number, enclosed in curly-brackets.

<sup>16</sup>Indeed, often a specific noun is accompanied by a personal pronoun, a deictic (inflected like a noun), and a generic noun (like *bama* 'man').

A	NOM	ERG	{Transitive}
O	ACC	ABS	

### Reflexive/reciprocal uses

In GY, reflexive meaning is conveyed with a clearly *intransitive* verbal form derived typically from an active transitive stem combined with the intransitivizing suffix *-:dhi*.<sup>17</sup> Contrast the forms of the transitive stem *ngaara-l* 'spread out (e.g., in sun, to dry)' in the two following sentences:

(6) {t842a.nec : 54}  
 and then dhana wanggamun blankut gana ngaara-y  
                   3pNOM on top blanket alright spread-PAST  
*They spread the blanket on top.*

(7) {bplab: 439}  
 Bama nyulu Banjo galmba yugu-wi stove-bi ngaaraala-dhi  
 man+ABS 3sNOM B.+ABS also fire-LOC stove-LOC stretch+REDUP-REFL  
*Banjo was also stretching himself by the fire, by the stove.*

The verb *ngaara-l* is transitive. Here, in the reflexive form, it means 'stretch oneself out'; and the verb is clearly intransitive, judging by the nominative and absolutive forms displayed.

Similarly, with the transitive *wagi-l* 'cut,' one can form both active and reflexive imperatives<sup>18</sup>, with contrasting case patterns:

(8)  
 bama-al guuna minha wagi-la  
 man-ERG let (DESID) meat+ABS cut-IMP  
*Let some person cut the meat!*

(9)  
 walaa bama gaari wagi-iyi  
 look out! man not cut-REFL+IMP  
*Watch out, don't let anyone cut himself!*

Reflexive morphology also can suggest a reciprocal meaning, especially when non-singular subjects are involved.

(10) {t847a:202}  
 dhana daamaalma-dhi gurra  
 3plNOM spear+REDUP-REFL also  
 daamaa-dhi daamaadhi yii ganaa-gala  
*Then they started spearing one another.*

Similarly, there is a challenge to reciprocal activity embodied in the reflexive purposive verb *bagaa-dhi-nhu* 'poke-REFL-PURP' in (11):

<sup>17</sup>Some complications of morphology are ignored here. The colon here indicates that the suffix engenders "lengthening" on the preceding stem. The relation between an active form and its corresponding reflexive can also be obscured by certain conjugational changes, with altered stem vowels. See Haviland 1979c, pp. 95ff. The derivational suffix is evidently cognate with Yidiny *-:dyi-n* (Dixon 1977: 273-293), as well as with suffixes having a similar range of uses, in neighboring languages. See also Dixon 1980: 433-457. A few Australian languages express reflexivity through clearly transitive constructions, with bound pronominal clitics and similar devices.

<sup>18</sup>GY imperatives, whose reflexive form takes the suffix *-:yi*, can be used in any person.



(11) {hv846b: 144}

ma gad-ii nganhdhaan baga-:dhi-nhu  
 alright! come-IMP 1plNOM poke-REFL-PURP  
*OK, come on, let's stick each other.*

But sometimes clear reflexives emerge even with plural subjects, suggesting that the distinction is not a *syntactic* matter in the first place in GY.

(12) {wurey2: 100}

r; nha-gala dhana .. gamaay-nda gurra dhuulngga-adhi  
 that 3plNOM clay-INST also smear-REFL  
*Then they started painting themselves with clay.*

Here we understand that the bereaved people each started painting *themselves* up with the white clay of mourning.<sup>19</sup>

### Additional arguments in the clause

Example (12) shows a further complication of the case marking system I outlined as applied to reflexive sentences. Since INSTRUMENTAL inflection is homonymous with ERGative, on *gamaaynda* 'with clay,' formally only the facts that *gamaay* is inanimate, and thus an unlikely Agent (so that the inflection must be interpreted as INST and not ERG), and that the subject pronoun *dhana* appears in NOMinative case, preclude a transitive interpretation of the sentence (something like "The clay smeared them"). Generally, GY intransitive clauses--including reflexives--do allow nominal arguments in INST and other oblique cases. In a moment, when I turn to the use of reflexive form to suggest the accidental nature of an action, it will be clear that things may not always work out so neatly.

### Reflexive in illocutionary framing verbs: intransitives and transitives

Notably, among those verbs which appear in reflexive and reciprocal forms are several illocutionary framing verbs--verbs of speaking--whose use illustrates the sense in which certain pragmatic contexts, notably structures of indexed participants, are presupposed or entailed by syntactic and semantic frames.<sup>20</sup> Consider the intransitive

<sup>19</sup>Note that an emphatic enclitic -:gu sometimes attaches to a subject nominal to strengthen the reflexive/reciprocal reading:

(13)  
 ngayu-ugu gunda-:dhi  
 1sgNOM-EMPH hit-REFL+PAST  
*I hit myself.*

(14) {revgest: 180}  
 dhana-agu miil nhaa-dhaadhi gurra  
 3sgNOM-EMPH eye+ABS see-REFL+PAST also  
*They looked each other in the eye then.*

garrba-adhi gurra  
 grab-REFL+PAST also  
*They grabbed each other.*

<sup>20</sup>See Silverstein 1986,1987 for detailed treatment of corresponding devices in Wasco-Wishram.

*yirrga-a* 'speak, talk' (often used with the LOC/DAT form of a language name to mean 'speak such-and-such language').

(15) {bplab: 439}

ngali yirrgaalga-y yirrgaalga-y yi  
 lduNOM speak+REDUP-PAST speak+REDUP-PAST this

*We two kept talking and talking for a long time.*

Whereas the regular intransitive form of *yirrga-a* means 'speak' or even 'talk together' (with a vaguely reciprocal sense), with reflexive inflection the verb suggests a kind of internal speech: 'make up one's mind, decide.' It also occurs with the word *mala* 'guilty one, culprit, actor' in the following idiomatic construction which also has the more actively reflexive meaning 'own up, confess, say oneself to be the culprit.' Notice that in these latter reflexives cases, the "direct discourse" utterance itself appears explicitly.

(16) {t827a2.nec: 218}

marrbugan mala yirrga-adhi ngayu buda-y  
 cave+ABS guilty speak-REFL+PAST lsgNOM eat-PAST

*Marrbugan confessed, "I ate it."*

The fact that even an intransitive stem like *yirrga-a* can occur in "reflexive" form --an issue to which I will return--was one of the puzzles that first led me to explore this aspect of GY verbal morphology in detail.

## Accidents

GY speakers apply the same morphology productively to describe "actions that are accidental, unintentional results of purposive action, or results set in motion by inanimate entities (which are not capable of intention in the first place)" (Haviland 1979c:123). The intersection of Abs/Erg and Nom/Acc case inflections allows considerable subtlety of expression.

Consider the following examples<sup>21</sup>:

(17)

ngayu minha wagi naaybu-unh  
 lsgNOM meat+ABS cut-PAST knife-INST

*I cut the meat with a knife.*

(18)

nganhi wagi-idhi naaybu-unh  
 lsgACC cut-REFL+PAST knife-INST

*I cut myself (by accident) with a knife.*

(19)

ngayu wagi-idhi naaybu-unh  
 lsgNOM cut-REFL+PAST knife-INST

*I cut myself (intentionally?) with a knife.*

The first example, (17), is a normal transitive sentence, appropriately case-marked, denoting a canonical intentional transitive action (of cutting meat). The next sentence (18) suggests that something has gone wrong: I have cut myself by accident (perhaps the knife slipped). Finally, (19) is again a true reflexive, implying that I took up the knife and deliberately slashed myself.

<sup>21</sup> From Haviland 1979c:123; note that examples not marked by origin are elicited.

Wherever possible, I eschew such examples in favor of conversational, or at least, textual utterances.



The only difference between the accident and the reflexive sentences is the case of the 1sg pronoun: ACC in the case of the accident, and NOM in the case of the intentional self-wounding. Sentence (18), seen only in terms of the case patterning of its arguments, is indistinguishable from a full transitive sentence with an ACC pronominal O and a seemingly Erg nominal A; but since reflexive-forms (like all GY intransitive stems) cannot accept an A argument, *naaybu-unh* must be understood merely as an INST and not an ERG. We are left with a curious sentence that seems to have no notional "subject." (18) also contrasts with

(20)  
 nganhi wagi (naaybuunh)  
 1sgACC cut-PAST knife-INST  
*Somebody cut me with a knife.*

The verb in (20) is active and transitive. With the A argument completely elided, the sentence would be a normal GY way to express an *indefinite* Agent: "Someone cut me." With the inanimate *naaybu-unh*, the sentence could also suggest, for example, "that a knife that had been balanced on the edge of a table fell and"--somehow unerringly--"struck my foot . . . I have, as it were, attributed some sort of activity (if not malice) to the knife" (Haviland 1979c:124-5).

While an instrument can appear in a reflexive sentence, bearing ERG/INST inflection, an unwitting animate accomplice to such unintentional or accidental activity is encoded not with ERG, but rather by an ADEssive adjunct.<sup>22</sup>

(21)  
 ngadhun.gal waan        nubuun    nharri-idhi  
 1sgADES        crab+ABS one+ABS step on-REFL+PAST  
*I stepped on a crab by mistake.*

The exact sense in which an action encoded by reflexive morphology is an "accident" needs to be specified more fully. Partly this is a matter of *impossible* intentionality, as in the case of an inanimate A--the knife in our example (which can only with a certain interpretive license be taken as having acted *as if* volitionally). In other examples, the emphasis is rather on *blamelessness*, with the initiator of an action which has an unintentional result demoted to an ADEssive adjunct.

The presence of reflexive morphology also may inspire more complex readings, and again the interaction of case-marking patterns provides subtle expressive resources. Consider the following fragment of a story about a man who was out hunting when a government boat raided the camp and hauled everyone away to a relocation settlement. On

<sup>22</sup> See

bidha        gaanga-adhi ngaliin-gal guuugu-unh  
 child+ABS poke-REFL 1du-ADES        word-INST  
 We woke the child with our talk.

ADE adjuncts routinely accompany other intransitives in a similar meaning: unwitting complicity without full responsibility.

minha        gundil    buli nhanu ngadhun.gal  
 food+ABS egg+ABS fell 2sGEN 1s-ADES  
 I dropped your egg.

Notably, even ACC pronouns can occur as notional subjects to "unaccusative" intransitive verbs like *yaadyi-l* 'burn' in constructions like the following:

nhina yaadyi ngadhun.gal  
 2sACC burned 1s-ADES  
 I burned you (accidentally).

return to camp he found everyone gone, and then spent more than a year living entirely on his own.

(22) {t844: 248}

ngamu Wudhurru he musta been somewhere else  
old man Wudhurru

and then when he came back and everybody was gone  
might be you know  
I dunno where he was

nyulu gurriir dubiidhi  
3sNOM behind leave-REFL  
*He got left behind.*

The pronoun *nyulu* is 3sNOM. The old man was not *intentionally* left behind of his own accord (the reflexive 'he left himself' seems odd), and yet he was to some extent involved as a volitional actor. Getting left behind seems to be something he did.

Somewhat similarly, in the following cry of pain, the speaker does not cast himself into the ACCusative, perhaps because he is asserting his positive concern for his own state, not just his own passive role as victim:

(23)

ngayu nharri-idhi nhanun.gal walaa  
1sgNOM step on-REFL+PAST 2sgADESS look out!  
*You're treading on me, get off!*

Contrast the following sort of "accident," in which a mythical Fog spears his son-in-law Thunder, using an especially hard spear that not only skewers Thunder's leg but follows through to spear a tree standing alongside, thus suspending the unhappy fellow by his knees, hanging upside-down from two trees.

(24) {wurey6: 485}

guman yindu daama-y  
leg+ABS other+ABS spear-PAST  
*He speared the other leg.*

yindu yugu daama-adhi gurra  
other+ABS tree+ABS spear-REFL also  
*and he speared the other tree too.*

The act was not unintentional, since Fog did intend to spear his son-in-law and leave him dangling in just that way (having made a spear especially for that purpose). But although the mischievous father-in-law *spears* Thunder's legs, the tree on the far side simply *gets speared*, with reflexive inflection.

Now, notice what happens in a negative sentence. Again, the scene is a spearfight, where one man has an illegitimate grudge against another and, though he *tries*, luckily *does not manage to spear* his enemy.

(25) {t828b3: 124}  
 daama-y milga-mul-in daama-y  
 spear-PAST ear-PRIV-ERG spear-PAST  
*the disobedient one speared (him).*

but gaari daama-adhi galmba  
 not spear-REFL also  
*But he didn't actually spear him.*

miss-it gurraalay  
 do+REDUP-PAST  
*He missed (him).*

A related use of "accidental" reflexives (also in the negative) may be observed in the following description of tabooed behavior: the sort of physical *avoidance* that characterizes relations between certain affines<sup>23</sup>.

(26)  
 nyulu ngadhun.gal gaari ngarraa nhanma-adhi yarrba  
 3sNOM 1sgADES not skin+ABS hold-REFL this way  
*I couldn't touch his skin this way (or: he couldn't touch my skin).*

The sense in which these sentences depict a reduced agentivity on the part of the (logical) Agent, encoded by reflexive morphology which denies to the A ergative case, relates to a further set of passive and generalized uses for reflexives forms that I will turn to shortly.

### Body-part metaphors

An interesting series of complications to this picture of the use of reflexive morphology arises from what I call "body-part metaphors."<sup>24</sup> Body-part words are inalienably possessed in GY (which has elaborate genitive constructions for other sorts of "possessive" relationships), combining with their possessor in a part-whole relationship in which both nominals receive identical case inflection. (Of course, the two pieces, in keeping with the generally anarchic spirit of the language, can be widely discontinuous in a clause.) Body-part expressions are often figurative. Thus, for example,

(27)  
 bidha-gurr dhana warra mangal wanuwanu  
 child-PLU 3pNOM bad hand+NOM mischief  
*The children are very troublesome.*

If a reflexive action is, frequently, an action by someone on his or her own body, one should not be surprised that GY uses reflexive forms widely with body part expressions, both literal and metaphorical. There are seeming true reflexives:

(28) {boat2: 132}  
 and nyulu dhirranh-gurr mangal yarrba garrba-adhi ganaa  
 budhu  
 3sNOM old man-PLU+ABS hand+NOM this way grab-REFL+PAST alright  
 intensifier

*And that old man had his hands clasped together this way, OK.*

There are accidents, of various sorts:

<sup>23</sup> See Haviland 1979a, 1979b

<sup>24</sup> See Haviland n.d.a..



(29) {t846a1: 9}  
 if ngayu nhayun buli-nda nhayun nganhi guman bada dumbi-idhi-nda  
 1sgNOM that+ABS fall-COND that+ABS 1sgACC leg+ABS down break-REFL-COND

*If I had fallen then, my leg would have been broken.*

And there are cases with less predictable meanings, involving REFL inflection as an intransitivizing derivational process.

(30) {boat2: 275}  
 you know wawu balga-adhi-nhu  
 breath make-REFL-PURP  
*you know, (for us) to rest.*

Here there appears a structural hyper-exploitation of a certain "favorite construction"--in this case, the combination of parts with wholes for metaphorical purposes.

### Passive/antipassive

The last few examples show that reflexive morphology in GY appears in contexts where neither of the productive patterns--reflexive/reciprocal meaning, or emphasis on the accidental nature of an action--seems to apply. There are clearly other motivations for GY "reflexives."

Dixon argues that Yidiny reflexive forms mark sentences that deviate from a certain norm for transitive verbs.

(31)  
 "... the norm case ... is for a transitive verb to occur in a sentence which has a (deep) A NP that is  
 (i) distinct from the surface S/O NP, and  
 (ii) has volitional control over  
 (iii) a single completed or anticipated action.

Any sentence that deviates from this norm will have its verb(s) marked by the derivational affix *-:dji-n'* (1977:276).

The cases we have discussed involve conditions comparable to (i) and (ii). Reflexives have non-distinct A and O arguments (both being reduced in the resulting GY clause to a single S constituent, even though it may involve a whole and its parts, e.g., an actor and his or her body). In cases of reduced volitionality, as in accidents or results of the "actions" of inanimates, the logical A argument begins to fade away, much like Langacker and Munro's "unspecified" subject argument<sup>25</sup> in passives and reflexives. This is all familiar ground, and it will come as no surprise that in GY, as in Yidiny, reflexive morphology also extends to such syntactic effects as passives and anti-passives.

Here are three anti-passive-like examples (in which a logical A appears as an S with ABS/NOM inflection, and a logical O appears in an oblique LOC/DAT case):

(32)  
 ngaliinh dirrba-adhi mayi-wi  
 1duexclNOM abduct-REFL food-LOC  
*We two ran off with the food.*

As I have argued elsewhere, however, GY has no "compelling syntactic reasons" (Haviland 1979c:129) for an anti-passive, since virtually no sorts of embedding, topic-chaining, or control depend on sequences of coreferential NPs in surface S function.

<sup>25</sup> See Langacker and Munro 1975.

Instead, inter-clause linkages in GY seem to be most governed by the discursive need to keep a common referent clearly foregrounded throughout a chain of clauses. S, A, and O are all available for such discursive foregrounding.

Another way to view GY reflexives, instead, is to see them as devices to make both A and O available for discursive *backgrounding*. The appropriateness of a reflexive form to achieve this backgrounding varies from verb to verb, with the preceding example, and the following, being examples of an intransitive-reflexive stem that has an *unergative* flavor. That is, when the verb is put in reflexive form, the logical O argument recedes. Another case is

(33) {t843a: 185}  
 nganhdhaan miil yiwaarr-ngarra-adhi  
 1plNOM eye+ABS search-REFL-PAST  
*We looked all over the place.*

The logical agent is the surviving argument in the reflexive-intransitive (where *yiwaarr* is a transitive verb meaning 'search for').

More frequently, however, the intransitivizing effect of reflexives in GY has affinity with passive. Here the intransitive stem derived with reflexive morphology has a character typically like that of so-called *unaccusatives*. Consider the description of a supernatural earthquake:

(34) {t841a: 252}  
 bubu walnga-adhi  
 earth+ABS open-PAST+REFL  
*The earth opened.*

ngamu-gurraaygu nyuumbi gurra  
 all+ABS swallow+PAST also  
*And it swallowed the whole lot of them, too.*

duuga-dhi bada  
 bury-PAST down  
*They went right down in.*

Both reflexive verbs here have transitive counterparts: *walnga-l* 'open' and *duuga-l* 'bury.' When they reflexivize, the argument that has faded is the logical A. Or consider the following sentence with a reflexive form of *ngalbu-rr* 'close' and an inanimate subject.

(35) {t845a: 331}  
 there used to be really good track there before

nhila warra ngalbuurr-ngarraadhi  
 now bad close-REFL+PAST  
*Now it's no good, it's covered over.*

It is clearly not sensible to understand such a sentence as literally reflexive, but rather as an equivalent of the English intransitive (unaccusative) *close*.

### Generalized action

The passive pattern is widely productive in GY, whereas the antipassive construction--especially one in which the underlying object survives in some oblique case--is relatively rare. Moreover, as I have mentioned, there are no systematic reasons in GY syntax for an anti-passive construction (in marked contrast to the closely related Dyrirbal and Yidiny). Most frequently, when a verb with reflexive morphology leaves the logical agent argument intact (now as an ABS/NOM marked surface S), the logical patient is totally

elided in the resulting sentence. Part of the reason for such an "unergative" clause may be discursive. But often such reflexive forms in GY denote actions and situations that go beyond the typical denotata of the corresponding transitives. Consider the reflexive of *balga-l* 'make,' which in reflexive form conventionally means 'be born.'

(36) {t841b: 464}  
 dhuyu balga-adhi  
 dead+ABS make-REFL  
*It was born dead.*

Or, consider the difference between the transitive *ma-naa* 'take' and reflexive *ma-naa-dhi* 'be married.'

(37) {t842a: 99}  
 joe burns maana-aya nyulu vera maanaa  
 take-REFL+NONP 3sNOM get

*Joe Burns would get married, he'd marry Vera.*

Note that we have both reflexive and active forms in close proximity here, clearly indexing the discourse-participant structure.

We have met the ubiquitous *gunda-l* 'hit, kill,' in reflexive, reciprocal, and even accidental uses, as for example

(38)  
 bigibigi-wi ngambaaygu gunda-:dhi gudaa ngadhun.gal  
 pig-LOC unintentionally hit-REFL+PAST dog+ABS 1sgADES  
*When pig hunting, I accidentally killed my dog.*

The reflexive form is also used routinely in the generalized meaning 'have a fight, get in a fight,' even with a singular subject.

(39) {t828b2: 99}  
 yaarrbaargu gunda-:dhi  
 completely hit-REFL+PAST  
*And he got into a terrible fight.*

One explanation is apparent for this "generalized" use of reflexive morphology, in terms of Dixon's paradigm of transitive action. In Yidiny, reflexive morphology is extended to "indicate a continuous (or repeated) action, extending into the past and future--something which cannot be viewed as a whole by looking in either direction from the vantage point of the present" (Dixon 1977:289). By contrast, this use of reflexive morphology in GY seems to "demote specific O NPs to the status of peripheral accessories to a generalized sort of action, in which underlying A NPs are now [simply] joint participants, in S function" (Haviland 1978c:133). Note that these data are consistent with Langacker and Munro's suggestion that the same grammatical construction may mark an "unspecified argument" in either Agent or Patient role, and is similarly compatible with the non-distinctness of such arguments typical of reflexive meaning. Note, however, the inversion of the logic: it is the unaccusative/unergative nature of the *verb* that governs whether passive or antipassive is the appropriate (available) sense for reflexive morphology: the result is the syntactic reflex of a lexical property.

### Lexical structure

To give you an idea of the sorts of specialized meanings that these "unergative" reflexives can have, I list a few typical examples in (40), showing first the transitive meaning, and then (after the colon) the derived meaning.

(40) *bida-l* 'harpoon': 'have a good hunt, have good luck in hunting or fishing'  
*dhaawi-l* 'call, summon': 'gather together, do something alone, call group together'



*baada-l* 'try, taste'; 'be ashamed or shy to try something; be alert, watchful, or suspicious; make an attempt'  
*buda-l* 'eat'; 'have a good feed, eat well'  
*yiwarr* 'search for'; 'get lost; be always pestering for something; search everywhere for something'  
*diinga-l* 'laugh at'; 'laugh'  
*gaani-l* 'smear, rub, or plaster with'; 'wallow (pig)'  
*nharri-l* 'step on'; 'feel with foot; spread out, go separate ways'

To this list may be added the verbs of saying, which include:

*gurra-l* 'tell'; 'make up one's mind';  
*jiju-rr* 'order, instruct'; 'come to an agreement, make arrangements';  
*milbi-l* 'promise (someone something)'; 'agree.'

Body-metaphors exploit the same lexical device, extending the meanings of transitive verbs by combining in a construction of the form:

(41) Pronoun Body-part Reflexive.

Thus

(42) *gambul budaadhi* 'stomach eat+REFL': be fed up or sick of something  
*wawu balgaadhi* 'breath make+REFL': rest  
*ngaabaay yirngaadhi* 'head turn+REFL': be distracted

### Reflexive morphology, reflexive-only verbs, and "reflexives" of intransitives

It is clear that the suffix *-dhi* and its relatives are important in GY syntax and frequent in GY morphology. I have already mentioned, in connection with the verb *yirrga-a* 'speak,' that even *intransitive* verbs accept the "reflexive" suffix to produce derived forms that, in clear ways, relate to the uses I have described, viz., (1) reflexive and reciprocal actions [non-distinct A and O]; (2) accidents [insufficiently agentive A]; and (3) unspecified arguments [passive for faded As, anti-passive for faded Os].

Here are some further representative intransitive examples:

(43) *barrbil* 'camp over night, sleep': 'sleep together illicitly.' [The standard Aboriginal translation is "get married in the bush."]  
*daabal* 'move about, wade': 'move or change position, make involuntary motion (e.g., inanimate object)'  
*gawal* 'sing out, call "gaw!": 'yell (in general), shout (hoping for someone to hear)'  
*nganggaa* 'be unable to do something, be confused about' (where the complement is usually in purposive inflection): 'not know how to do anything'  
*wuudhal* 'boil, be cooking': 'scald self'

Interestingly, all the different "reflexive" flavors are evident here.

By far the most common reflexive forms in conversation appear on verbs with reflexive-only morphology, verbs that simply have no non-reflexive forms. Of these the most frequent are shown in (44).

(44) Some reflexive-only verbs

*badha-adhi* 'finish'  
*daga-adhi* 'sit down' (cf *bunggu-rraga-adhi* 'kneel') (from *dagi-l* 'build?')  
*duuga-adhi* 'enter' (from *duuga-l* 'bury?')  
*madha-adhi, maba-adhi* 'climb'  
*minhdha-adhi* 'stick'  
*(milga-)nganda-adhi* 'forget' (*milga* 'ear')  
*banda-adhi* 'explode'

*buura-adhi* 'get sore, feel an ache'  
*ngunda-adhi* 'masturbate'  
*yiilba-adhi* 'share'

Again, the same general categories of meaning are recognizable here. Briefly, one can recognize

- (a) verbs which seem plausibly related to full-transitive verbs, but with a shift in the thematic vowel of the verb or in conjugation class. (For example, historically *daga-adhi* 'sit'--which has no non-reflexive forms [except for derived causatives]--may be related to *dagi-l* 'erect, build, put down.' These may be, diachronically, true reflexives.
- (b) verbs which require animate subjects and which (notionally) seem to imply that entity moving or manipulating its own body, or otherwise acting on itself. For example, *buura-adhi* 'get sore, feel an ache' seems to involve *inherent* reflexivity<sup>26</sup>. Another clear example is the vulgar *ngunda-adhi* 'masturbate.' Similarly, the reflexive-only *yiilba-adhi* 'share' suggests inherent reciprocity (and typically requires an animate, non-singular subject).
- (c) a third group of verbs which suggest events that happen to inanimate objects (or to the passive bodies of animate entities). Whereas it is possible to form causatives from such verbs, in the intransitive reflexive-form "each verb seems to denote something that happens to the object or objects in question, as it were, by itself, with no particular outside agency" (Haviland 1979c:127).

Consider two final examples here, one from a story, the other from a mother's chiding critique of a snacking child:

(45) {t827a2.nec: 234}

dhada-y guwa nganhdhaan-gal minhdha-adhi guwa  
 go-PAST West+LOC 1plADESS stick-REFL West+LOC  
*He went West, and he ran into us in the west.*

(46)

mayi gaari badhaadhi nyundu-ugu badhaay-mani  
 food+ABS not finish+PAST 2sNOM-EMPH finish-CAUS+PAST  
*They food didn't get finished, you yourself finished it off!*

In just the way that Spanish reflexives appear in attempts to escape attributions of responsibility (Berk-Seligson 1983), the GY reflexive-only verb contrasts with its active counterpart precisely by leaving unspecified the volitional agent hidden in the communicative fog behind an event.

### Semantic structure: evidence from Brother-in-law language

I have argued that GY incorporates an implicit theory of action into the grammaticalization and lexicalization of events, with reflexive morphology marking certain sorts of departures from a canonical model--or, rather, with reflexive morphology encapsulating only certain marked features of action into the verbalized snapshot captured in an utterance.

There is specially privileged (and serendipitous) evidence about the internal semantic analysis of the lexicon in the special respectful "Brother-in-law" (BIL) vocabulary.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Compare Haiman 1985: 169 on the *expected* or predictable coreference between subject and object in what he calls "introverted predicates."

<sup>27</sup> See Haviland 1979a, 1979b. Dixon 1971 and Hale 1971 describe similar and related phenomena, and further motivate the argument that such linguistic evidence speaks to underlying semantic analyses.

Essentially, the respectful vocabulary involves replacements for a large part of the ordinary everyday (EV) lexicon; it is also highly parsimonious, making do with a minimal number of words and collapsing a large number of everyday words onto a single BIL equivalent, sometimes supplementing it with further specification, using the lexical resources of the reduced respectful vocabulary, together with the full repertoire of syntactic and morphological devices of the language.

When I began work with GY, in 1971, the BIL language was unfortunately in sad disrepair, and I learned virtually all I know of the respect vocabulary from one man, who taught me in bits and pieces. I do not, therefore, have the same broad information about the language that Dixon uses to motivate his method of semantic description for Dyirbal verbs. Moreover, unlike Dyirbal, where virtually all EV words are replaced in the mother-in-law language, GY BIL only required substitutes for certain common EV words, whereas others could pass through into speech with tabooed relatives (so long as they were pronounced slowly and softly, as befitted such talk). Therefore, exhaustive analysis of verbal semantics, or even the semantics of voice, is impossible for GY using BIL data alone.

Nonetheless, one *can* compare the realization in BIL verbs of EV reflexives, transitives, and intransitives. The mapping is not one-to-one. First, it is notable that the inventory of BIL verbs (which in my corpus numbers no more than about 75) displays the same morpho-syntactic possibilities as the EV verbs: that is, stems are clearly transitive or intransitive; they fall into the same productive conjugational types; they make use of reflexive morphology<sup>28</sup>; and there are even some BIL verbs that are, in my data, reflexive-only.

I have insufficient space to present the full analysis of the voice-correspondences between EV and BIL, but I summarize the results in (47).

(47)	RO	IV	TV	REFL
EV	21	75	155	90
BIL	8	11	49	19
BIL->	RO	IV	TV	REFL
EV v				
REFL	3	2		9
IV	10	11	2	9
TV	1	2	43	5

EV/BIL voice correspondences

The columns in (47) are labelled with the major categories of verbal roots: the reflexive-only roots, the intransitives, the transitives, and finally the transitive roots (also listed in column 3) that have attested special (non-productive) reflexive senses. The first two rows

<sup>28</sup> In EV, R-conjugation verbs (and a few others) cannot form reflexives directly, but instead combine a derived form of the verb stem with a dummy root, typically *-ngarra-l* or *ngadha-l* (perhaps cognate to another verbalizing suffix *nga-l*), which in turn accepts the normal *-:dhi* suffix and its relatives. Some BIL verbs also form reflexives with *-ngarra-l*, but at least one apparent R-conjugation BIL verb, *\*wan.guu-rr*, which normally appears as *wan.guurr-mal* 'break (transitive)', also has the apparent direct REFL form *wan.guudhi* 'explode, burst,' equivalent to EV *banda-adhi* (which is of the type reflexive-only). Similarly, as a BIL equivalent to EV *dhumuul* 'twig, stick, splinter, thorn' I was taught *gunhdhin* (= 'wood') *wanguudhi* 'stick that has (been) broken.'



show the rough count of roots in each class. The last three rows show, for each type of surface voice realized (reflexive, intransitive, or transitive) the number of attested examples of an EV verb rendered into BIL by each sort of BIL root. Thus, for example, the lone 1 in the lower left-hand corner means that a single transitive EV verb was given as its BIL "translation" or equivalent a BIL reflexive-only verb.<sup>29</sup>

(In this case, the example is EV *waarmba-l* 'turn over, turn around, turn'--a verb that almost always occurs in ordinary speech in reflexive form as *waarmba-adhi* 'return, go back.' As its equivalent in BIL I was taught *mada-adhi*, a reflexive-only root whose nuclear meaning appears to be 'come'. Note that in EV, the word for 'come' is *gada-a*, an ordinary intransitive root.)

It will be observed that there is considerable fluidity between reflexives and intransitives, but that, with a few exceptions, verbs do not translate across the transitivity line. That is, words that start out as reflexives in EV mostly turn up in BIL as reflexives of one sort or another; EV transitives are overwhelmingly rendered into the respectful language with transitives. But EV intransitive verbs seem just as likely, if not slightly more likely, to appear in BIL as reflexive forms rather than intransitives.

The only conclusion I wish to draw is something that might have been suspected at the outset: that GY reflexives have not only syntactic, but also semantic, affinities with intransitives. Relatively speaking there are rather few intransitive roots in BIL, and relatively heavy use is made of reflexive morphology to produce respectful equivalents for EV intransitives. Indeed, the reflexive-only verbs of the BIL vocabulary correspond in their nuclear meanings<sup>30</sup> to the most common EV intransitives:

(48)

BIL *gulngga-adhi* = EV *buli-i* 'fall down'

BIL *mada-adhi* = EV *gada-a* 'come'

BIL *nhaarrba-adhi* = EV *biini-i* 'die'

BIL *nyarrga-adhi* = EV *nhin.ga-l* 'sit, stay, exist'

BIL *wana-adhi* = EV *duda-a* 'run'

The principles of parsimony in BIL encouraged speakers of the language to push the structural resources of the language to the limit, exploiting principles of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic compatibility to simplify the BIL lexicon. The principle seems to be that the REFL derivational suffix has begun to act as a generalized intransitivizer, producing both unergative and unaccusative types of derived intransitives, depending on the meaning--a tendency in EV GY which BIL adopts whole-hog.

#### Tzotzil: transitive reflexives

Tzotzil, a Mayan language from highland Chiapas, Mexico<sup>31</sup>, forms reflexives of a clearly transitive sort, syntactically. Briefly, Tzotzil is a VOS language, with an **ergative/absolute** pattern of verbal cross-indexes, with absolute prefixes and

<sup>29</sup> In case anyone should be tempted to take these numbers too seriously, let me point out that I was not taught BIL equivalents for all of the EV verbs in my working dictionary, partly because my field methods were not that systematic, and partly because *ngadhu warra biiba*--my teacher--was unable to teach me all he hoped to before he died. I have since learned many new verbs, whose BIL equivalents no one now alive can recover.

<sup>30</sup> For the notion 'nuclear' see Dixon 1971.

<sup>31</sup> See Haviland 1981 and Aissen 1987.

suffixes cross-indexing intransitive S and O<sup>32</sup>, and ergative prefixes cross-indexing transitive subjects (As) and 'possessors' of various sorts. Since the two series of affixes are different, there is a clear test for syntactic transitivity: transitive verbs bear ergative cross-indexes, and intransitives do not.

Reflexives in Tzotzil are formed with a possessed form of *ba*, which as an independent noun means 'face, front, top', and which occupies roughly the position of the O<sup>33</sup>. The grammatical possessor agrees with the A argument (i.e., it is cross-indexed by a corresponding ERG prefix), and the main verb is marked as for a 3rd person O (that is with zero Absolutive marks).

(1) {vanjel: 66}

ay 0-s-poxta s-ba tol la ip-0 un  
 went (AUX) (3A+)3E-heal 3E-face too much QUOT sick(+3A) PT  
*he went to cure himself, he was, they say, too sick.*

(2) {pan: 31}

ja` tal j-tzob o j-ba-tik ja` tal k-a`i-tik  
 ! com(AUX) le-gather REL 1E-self-PL ! com(AUX) le-hear-PL  
*We have gathered together for this, we have come to hear*  
 k'usi xi x-i-kom-otik o  
 what thus ASP-la-stay-PL REL  
*how we're going to remain (i.e., resolve the matter).*

Unsurprisingly, this same reflexive syntax can have a **reciprocal** meaning as well, with a plural subject<sup>34</sup>.

(3) {kuxell:19}

batz'i ta s-k'an ti kajvaltik ta j-chi`in j-ba-tik  
 ya`ele  
 really INC 3E-want ART(remote) Our Lord INC le-accompany 1E-self-PL  
 it seems  
*Our Lord really wants us to accompany one another.*

Various other arguments can appear, in transitive sentences, in a limited set of oblique constructions: with an all-purpose preposition *ta* 'at, on, in, by, to, from, with' and in morphologically possessive constructions with relational nouns such as *u`un* 'agency, possession' or *chi`uk* 'accompaniment.' Such oblique arguments also can appear with reflexive sentences.

(4) {krins: 33}

ja` nox ke yu`un mu x-av-ak' av-ak' a-ba ta  
 k'exlal  
 ! only that because NEG AOR-2e-give COMP+2e-give 2E-self prep shame  
*It's just that you mustn't expose yourself to shame*

<sup>32</sup> In the glosses E stands for ergative, and A for absolutive. I have not always, in my glosses, bothered to show 3A (3rd person absolutive) affixes, which are always realized as zero.

<sup>33</sup> There are complications, as the possessed form of *ba*, unlike ordinary direct objects, has to follow tightly after the verb, with only certain "2nd position clitics" possibly intervening, and with no possibility of topical fronting. See Aissen 1987:78,114. There are also other reflexive constructions involving not verbal heads but nouns and adjectives (see Haviland 1981:318-321 and Ayres 1980); there are also nominalized reflexive verbs.

<sup>34</sup> Whether or not this plurality is explicitly marked morphologically.

(5) {petperes: 11}  
 porke ach' j'alajel i-x-chi'in s-ba-ik x-chi`uk li  
 y-ajnil-e  
 because new giver-of-birth COMP-3e-accompany 3E-self-PL 3e-with ART  
 3e-wife-CLIT  
*Because they accompanied each other (i.e., he slept) with his wife  
 when she had newly given birth.*

Note here the seemingly curious fact that the reciprocal/reflexive head *ba* is inflected as 3pl, despite the fact that the wife (presumably one of the reciprocators here) is separately depicted in an oblique argument.

Occasionally such an additional argument--"additional" because it is not cross-indexed on the main verb, where only two arguments can be explicitly marked--may have what seems "logical" thematic status, as in the "account of" reading of (6). (The conversational context suggests that the speaker is bragging about how he was able to induce his many friends to gather together, as it happens, to sell flowers.)

(6) {lol5: 528}  
 tzob s-ba ep li amiko k-u`un une  
 gather 3e-self many ART friend le-POSS pt  
*many friends got together for/on account of me.*

In "ditransitive" constructions, still only two arguments can be explicitly cross-referenced on the verb, ordinarily the logical agent and the logical beneficiary, with the logical patient syntactically stranded, in what relational grammar characterizes as *chomage*<sup>35</sup>. Such verbs receive an additional suffix *-be* (glossed here as BEN) to mark such ditransitivity. Reflexives can also occur in such contexts.

(7) {ja:135}  
 ep i-s-tak-be s-ba vun li xune  
 many COMP-3e-send-BEN 3e-self paper ART John  
*John sent himself many letters.*

(7b) {lol6: 237}  
 ta xa ox j-poj-be j-ba-(ti)kotik  
 INC already at other time le-steal-BEN le-self-plexcl  
*we were going to steal it from each other*

The paradigmatic voice options in Tzotzil syntax are thus rather different from those of Guugu Yimidhrr. There are transitives and ditransitives at one pole, and there are ordinary intransitive sentences at the other, with reflexives syntactically closer to transitives than to intransitives. But we do not have to look far for puzzles that complicate the implied "snapshot of action" here. For one thing, there are reflexive constructions that seem to encode not reflexive meaning, but something naturally describable as "unergative" meaning.

<sup>35</sup> Aissen 1987: 106ff.



(8) {lol5: 459}  
i-0-laj xa molib-uk un  
PAST-3A-finish already get old-subj PT  
*He has gotten old now.*  
mu xa bu ch-0-bat  
NEG already where INC-3A-go  
*He doesn't go any longer.*  
i-y-ikta xa s-ba-ik  
comp-3e-abandon already 3E-self-PL  
*They have given it up.*

The "it" of the translation is "flower-selling," but there is no corresponding element in the Tzotzil sentence, which merely reads "they have abandoned themselves." (The transitive verb *ikta* means "leave"--whose object is something you can deliberately abandon, like a wife, or a job.) Two further common examples are in (9).

(9) {ss:313}  
ta j-kolta j-ba  
INC 1E-free 1e-self  
*I will help.*  
te ch-a-mala a-ba  
there inc-2e-wait 2E-self  
*You wait there.*

In these cases there are simply no corresponding intransitive unergative verb stems.

Similarly, many roots, particularly those traditionally called "positional" in Mayan grammar, produce intransitive stems meaning "be in such and such a position," but also allow a stem that can appear in a reflexive construction (but often *not* as a full transitive with an ordinary object), which suggests that the subject somehow takes more control of the resulting position/condition. The sentences in (10) involve the positional root *vax* 'calm, tame, well-behaved.'

(10) {ss:315}  
t-s-vaxan s-ba li ka`e  
inc-3e-calm 3e-self ART horse-cl  
*The horse will calm itself.*  
ch-0-vaxi li ka`e  
inc-3a-becalm ART horse-cl  
*the horse will be calm.*

Moreover, virtually all roots which can serve as transitive verb stems<sup>36</sup> can also be conjugated intransitively, as "mediopassives" or, in Aissen's analysis, "unaccusatives." There are also, productively, corresponding reflexives.

<sup>36</sup> In related languages, there is usually a stem difference between transitive and mediopassives, which are, in TZ, canonically of the form CVC.

(11) {ss:316}  
 i-j-chap            li k-ikatz-e  
 inc-le-prepare ART le-load-cl  
*I prepared my cargo.*  
 i-0-chap            li ikatzile  
 comp-3a-prepare ART load  
*The load was got ready.*  
 i-j-chap            j-ba  
 inc-le-prepare le-REFL  
*I got myself ready.*

In (12)-(17) I give some conversational examples. In (17), for example, the transitive verb *tok'* means 'pull out by the roots; drain, pump, or suck out (water),' but here is used mediopassively to describe how a truck (loaded with flowers) is emptied of its cargo on a city street.

(12) {chichon:200}  
 porke ch-0-muk            xa            x-k-al-tik  
 because INC-3A-be buried already AOR-1E-say-1pl  
*because it was (getting) buried (under ashes), as we might say (a car caught in volcanic ash).*

(13) {copoya:267}  
 mail ja` mu xch'am            tana  
 squash ! NEG 3<x-0-ch'am>AOR-3A-receive afterwards  
*No one will take (buy) the squash today (spoken by a despondent vendor).*

(14) {lol1:626}  
 pero mu x-0-kuch            k-u`un            li abtele  
 but NEG asp-3a-carry 1E-agency ART work  
*But I couldn't survive the work.*

(15) {lol3:483}  
 muk' bu x-0-vok'            ta traktor-e  
 NEG where asp-3a-break prep tractor-cl  
*Can't (the cornfield) be plowed by tractor?*

(16) {lol6:154}  
 tol ch-k-uch'            poxe komo muk' j-tzob            li j-tak'in-e  
 too much inc-le-drink liquor because NEG le-gather ART le-money-cl  
*I drink to much liquor, so I didn't save my money*  
 mu x-0-man            li karo  
 NEG asp-3a-buy ART truck  
*I couldn't buy the truck.*

(17) {lol6:334}  
 ja` tey x-0-tok'            li ikatzil  
 ! there asp-3a-suck out ART cargo  
*That's where the cargo got unloaded (from the truck).*

To complete the picture of the Tzotzil paradigm of voice, I must add that while there are rather restricted antipassives, there are quite productive passives, of which I give examples (for both transitive and ditransitive verbs) in (18).

(18) {proylan:35}  
 yu'un muk' x-'ik'-e  
 because NEG AOR-marry-PASS  
*Because she wasn't married (by him).*  
 yech x-'ak'-b-at y-ol-e  
 thus AOR-give-BEN-PASS 3e-child-CLIT  
*She was just given a child (without recompense).*

There is, therefore, a well delimited syntax of voice in Tzotzil that includes the range: Ditransitive-transitive-reflexive-(antipassive)-passive-intransitive. Within this range can be distinguished several subclasses (on semantic, morphological, and syntactic grounds).

### Patterns of use in Tzotzil reflexives: responsibility

Reflexive morphology, clearly, does more for Tzotzil speakers than let them doctor themselves and each other: more, that is, than express reflexive and reciprocal meanings. Close attention to the conversational and discursive contexts in which such forms appear suggests other sorts of motivations for their use. In a large class of cases, reflexives appear when a speaker seems to want to *emphasize* the responsibility of the actor in question for his or her own actions. (19), for example, is addressed, in a narrative, to a person who was inappropriately giving advice to his elders. He is urged to "take himself as large"--i.e., show some self-respect. And he is urged not merely, intransitively, to "go" but, reflexively, to "move himself aside."

(19) {tunem: 132}  
 ich'-o a-ba ta muk' kere  
 take-IMP 2E-self prep large boy  
*Show some respect, boy!*  
 bat-an te xa x-a-k'ej a-ba ech'el x-0-chi  
 mantal  
 go-IMP there already asp-2e-move aside 2E-self away(DIR) AOR-3A-say  
 order  
*Go, just move away, he was told.*

Similarly, (20) and (21) emphasize people's responsibility for their *involvements* (the verb *tik'* means 'insert'): first, when a man has contracted a nasty disease from too much involvement, and second, when another is criticized for too little, in an affair in which he has obligations.

(20) {petperes: 91}  
 porke buy-uk nox s-tik' s-ba ta antzetik  
 because where-subj only 3E-insert 3e-self prep women  
*Because he would just stick himself anywhere with women.*

(21) {lrnachi: 242}  
 yu'un mu s-k'an s-tik' s-ba un  
 because NEG 3E-want 3E-insert 3e-self PT  
*he doesn't want to get involved.*

The reflexive *na`ba* 'know self' in (22) suggests that, even in the case of a drunken man who has beaten his wife, there is an element of *will* in his being conscious or aware (or not) of his misdeeds.



(22) {compl: 42}  
 mi ali a-na`-oj to a-ba av-a`i ch-a`ilin une x-y-ut  
 la  
 Q uh 2E-know-STAT still 2E-self 2E-hear inc-2a-get angry pt ASP-  
 3E-scold QUOT  
 "Were you still aware, since, as you hear, you got angry?" he said to  
 him.

Unlike Guugu Yimidhirr where reflexive morphology is used--in contrast to canonical transitive constructions--to de-emphasize the Agent's voluntary or deliberate control over an action, holding constant the effects delivered to the object, in Tzotzil reflexive morphology carries with it the indirect *imputation* of will, deliberation, and responsibility characteristic of normal transitives; but Tzotzil applies this snapshot of willed action to situations which could be described intransitively (as events with a "single" participant). The Tzotzil facts support another observation by John Haiman 1985:144ff, who cites Jespersen's comment that English sentences with reflexive pronouns show "an element of volition or exertion"<sup>37</sup> absent in non-reflexive intransitive forms; Haiman goes on to adduce similar facts in languages that show a contrast between transitive and incorporated reflexives.<sup>38</sup>

### Metapragmatic framing verbs

The domain of verbs of speaking (and, here, also of thinking, feeling, and otherwise expressing), as in GY, is fertile ground for seeing how the implied indexical structure of such syntactic frames, morphologically encoded snapshots, emerges from an unfolding text, either as presupposed or created.

The reflexive in (23) suggests the deliberate mental exertion a tongue-tied speaker feels. (24) implies that poor Juan not only *thinks* he's tough, but tries to make himself out to be so. (25) uses the verb *ut* which can mean, transitively, both 'say to' and 'scold.' (26) demonstrates the canonical expression of dismissive disregard: "let him look out for (literally, hear) himself"--he's on his own.

(23) {antun: 68}  
 mu xa x-k-a`i j-ba k'u ta x-k-al un  
 NEG already AOR-le-hear le-self what prep aor-le-say PT  
 I can't think of what to say.

(24) {lol5: 159}  
 pukuj x-x-cha`le s-ba ti povre juane  
 devil asp-3e-treat 3e-self ART(remote) poor  
 Poor Juan considered himself (acted) quite tough.

(25) {lol6: 30}  
 porke ja` y-ut s-ba x-chi`uk komel li tonala  
 because ! 3e-inside 3e-self 3e-with staying(dir) ART  
 Because he had a fight with the Tonalá people when he left.

<sup>37</sup> Jespersen 1949:330.

<sup>38</sup> Haiman's explanation is ultimately phrased in terms of iconic motivation: the separate pronoun suggests an entity distinct from the subject, though, because of co-referentiality, not *physically* distinct but perhaps in the relation body:mind.

(26) {lol16: 237}

tey y-a`i s-ba x-i-chi  
 there 3E-hear 3e-self AOR-la\_say  
 "He can look out for himself," I said.

When one prays, in Tzotzil, one is conceived as speaking to certain saints, ancestral guardians, and other deities. But one uses neither the transitive *k'opon* 'speak to' with such addressees as objects, nor often the intransitive *k'opoj* 'speak': instead one uses a reflexive, as in (27). (In (29) I show the normal meanings of these verbal snapshots, as applied to a two participant event of speaking between the someone and Juan.)

(27) {pray2: 6}

la` to k'opon a-ba che`e kumpare la` to k'opon  
 a-ba-ik o  
 come+IMP still speak 2E-self then compadre come+IMP still speak+IMP  
 2E-self-PL REL  
 Come and pray, compadre, come and pray for (it).

And consider the idiom of cooperative relations in marriage, framed in parallel couplets<sup>39</sup> with reflexive verbs of speaking, in the admonition to a married couple by a village elder in (28).

(28) {anvaskis:46}

lek j-k'opon j-ba-tikotik un  
 good 1E-speak 1E-self-PL EXCL PT  
 We get along well together.  
 ko`ol lek x-av-al-be a-ba-ik  
 equal good ASP-2E-say-BEN 2E-self-PL  
 You should speak to each other equally pleasantly.  
 mu ta utel-uk x-a-tak'-be a-ba-ik  
 NEG prep scolding-NEG ASP-2E-answer-BEN 2E-self-PL  
 Don't talk back to each other with scolding.  
 mu ta utel-uk x-av-al-be a-ba-ik  
 NEG prep scolding-NEG ASP-2E-say-BEN 2E-self-PL  
 Don't say things to each other in scolding.  
 mu-ja`-uk o x-av-utilan-b-o a-ba-ik  
 neg-it is-subj REL asp-2e-scold-ben-imp 2E-self-PL  
 don't scold each other over it.  
 leklek me krixchano-oxuk x-a-pas a-ba-ik  
 good+REDUP DESID person-2A ASP-2E-do 2E-self-PL  
 Behave yourselves like the good people you are.

The normal meanings of these verbal snapshots, as applied to a two-participant event of speaking between Juan and the utterer, appear in (29).

<sup>39</sup> See Haviland 1987c.

(29) {ss:317}  
 ta j-k'opon li xune  
 INC 1E-speak ART John  
*I'll speak to John.*  
 ch-i-k'opoj j-chi`uk li xune  
 inc-la-talk 1E-with ART John  
*I will have a talk with John.*  
 ta j-k'opon j-ba j-chi`uk li xune  
 INC 1E-speak le-self 1E-with ART John  
*I will consult with Xun.*

### Action on one's body and its appurtenances

The view that reflexive *forms* of this sort represent the grammatical encoding not simply of coreferential A and O but of conceptually distinct entities, the first perhaps the mind housed in the second, a body, coincides well with the use of reflexives in TZ to express situations of some permanence, suggesting also deliberate effort. In (30) and (31), Lol, the flower-vendor in search of a good spot, doesn't merely sit; he quite deliberately seats himself on the street corner, for the duration, hoping for some business.

(30) {lol1: 919}  
 mo`oje a veses ba j-chotan j-ba ta eskina  
 no at times go(AUX) le-seat le-self prep corner  
*No, sometimes I would go set myself down on the corner*

(31) {lol6: 237}  
 tey xa ox ch-ba k-ak' j-ba  
 there already at other time INC-go(AUX) 1E-give le-self  
*So that's where I was going to place myself.*

In a related way, Tzotzil, like GY, makes use of a fascinating variety of body-part metaphors. Reflexive morphology, in such contexts, allows speakers to *personify* the parts of their bodies, to endow them with animacy and wills--often fickle--of their own. (32) shows a common expression for describing certain symptoms of illness.

(32) {rml:94}  
 s-tzob s-ba j-ch'ich'el-tik ya`el  
 3e-gather 3e-self le-blood-pl it seems  
*We seem to be weak (literally: our blood gathers itself).*

### Attribution of pseudo-animacy to inanimates

Naturally, such pseudo-animacy can also be attributed, morphologically, to inanimates (or, at least, to entities whose animacy is not always clearly demonstrated). In (33), the speaker is describing how to rig up a contraption to display his flowers (so that they will spread *themselves*); in (34) he describes a renegade group of carnations that seem to be trying to distinguish *themselves* by their color.

(33) {lol2: 241}  
 lek s-ji`-oj s-ba  
 good 3e-spread-stat 3e-self  
*They (the lilies) spread out nicely.*

(34) {lol3: 684}  
 ali ali unen morado x-0-cha`le s-ba  
 uh uh small purple ASP-3E-behave 3e-self  
*and the ones that look sort of purple.*



And, finally, the expression in (35) suggests that the house itself has decided to assume the form of an arch, so as to help the speaker identify the place he is trying to describe.

(35) {1016: 369}

ja` s-na          alvaro ch-av-a`i      yo`      alku s-pas-oj      s-ba  
!    3e-house                  INC-2E-hear where arch 3e-make-stat 3e-self  
*There at Alvaro's house, you know, where that sort of arch is.*

### Lexical structure in Tzotzil reflexives

The provenance, in different root classes, of verb stems that lend themselves to different voices is an interesting study in its own right, and I will close with some minimal observations. The notable fact, for my purposes,<sup>40</sup> is that there are some transitive stems that apparently *only* occur in reflexive constructions. That is, they cannot appear with a "non-coreferential" object. Aissen 1987:91 gives the example

(36) {JA:91}

ta x-0-je` s-ba  
inc asp-3a-ramify(??)  
*It puts forth branches.*

where the verb *ja`* 'ramify(?)' apparently cannot be used transitively to mean "ramify something."

There appear to be a large number of such examples, mostly again based on positional roots for which there is normally an intransitive stem meaning "be in such and such a position," no independent transitive stem, but with a reflexive that implies something like "put oneself into such-and-such a position." Applied, then, to inanimate objects, such a construction smacks of metaphor. Surveying Laughlin 1975, I compiled a list of such "metaphorical reflexives" and the sorts of things they can apply to. The list, in (37), is instructive, in terms of the sorts of snapshots that TZ speakers have at their disposition.

(37) Typical subjects of reflexive-only verbs  
human bodies (e.g., of drunkards, or loose women)  
diseases (and body parts afflicted with them, especially the skin and its maladies:  
sores, cracks, swellings, scars, goiters, rashes, growths, eruptions, etc.)  
trees, plants; also avalanches, rock piles, etc.  
groups of people, acting en masse  
work (as in: "my work accumulates itself")

I presume we can all recognize the feeling. Luckily I have come to the end.

### Some conclusions: snapshots, transitivity, and voice

This breathless survey of reflexive meanings and uses, matched against two rather different paradigms of syntactic realization in GY and TZ, has meant to demonstrate that "action" does not come pre-packaged. Speakers construct their snapshots of events, from the morphological resources at hand with an eye to their strategic (that is discursive or textual) goals and purposes.

Speakers must also be sensitive to the iconic resonances that the paradigmatic choices carry on their faces. I urged at the outset that we consider syntax and morphology as presenting continua in discontinuous guises. GY and TZ show two different trajectories in how speakers can use reflexives to modify the canons of transitivity and intransitivity to

<sup>40</sup> This observation is due to Aissen 1987:91.

accommodate the different situations they mean to express (and sometimes, to create). Whereas GY uses reflexive morphology to drag transitive action down into intransitivity, draining actors of their intention and volition, TZ bumps intransitive actions out of the world of single participants and into the realm of willful effort by borrowing the *form* of transitivity. There seem to be clear analogic principles at work here, even if they cannot be argued to be universal ones: the asymmetry in morpho-syntactic realization tends to motivate a corresponding asymmetry of usage and implicature.

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