

Why I Would Relate Own, Emphatic Reflexives, and Intensive Pronouns, My Own Self

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This is a preliminary study intended to show some reasons why constructions with the emphatic element own, constructions with emphatic reflexives, and constructions with intensive pronouns should be considered transformationally related and to provide a possible means for expressing that relationship. Emphatic reflexives are reflexives bearing contrastive stress; they occur in the same environments as unstressed reflexives:

1. John washed Mary before he washed himself.
2. Mary always washed John before he washed himself.

Intensive pronouns have the same form as reflexive pronouns and always carry contrastive stress; they are usually regarded as a kind of "floating" appositive, being coreferential with some antecedent in the same structure:

3. John himself boiled the chocolate, the cook being absent.
4. John boiled the chocolate himself, the cook being absent.¹

Own typically occurs between a possessive and the NP following that possessive; it may carry strong contrastive stress, as in 5 and 6, or a reduced contrastive stress as in 7, where the following NP is the element in contrast between the two clauses:

5. John boiled his own chocolate, the cook being absent.
6. John drove his own car instead of Mary's.
7. John boiled his own chocolate but he didn't make his own tea.

In each of these three types of construction the contrastive stress guarantees that there are similar structures containing elements of like kind that are in contrast.

Before beginning a systematic examination of such constructions, let me first describe a dialect familiar to me in which emphatic reflexives and intensive pronouns (but not unstressed reflexives) take the form of a possessive pronoun + own + self as separate words. In this dialect example 1 would appear as in 8, 4 as in 9, etc.:

8. John washed Mary before he washed his own self.
9. John boiled the chocolate his own self, the cook being absent.

This dialect will be a key to relating sentences like 4, for instance, to those like 5, but first we must examine some particular facts:

When two possessive pronouns are in independent contrast, either both show contrastive stress or just one does and the other is followed by stressed own. It doesn't matter whether the other NP involved are in contrast or not:

10. John washed my back and then

(Mary)
{ he }
(I)

 washed

(his <u>own</u>)
{ his }
(<u>*his</u> own)

 (back).

11. My back amazed John and $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{his own} \\ \text{his} \\ (*\text{his own}) \end{array} \right)$ amazed $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{him, too} \\ \text{me} \\ \text{Mary} \end{array} \right)$.

If one of two NP in corresponding predicates is a reflexive in independent contrast,² the stress is on self; in the "own self" dialect the stress is on own with a distinct break after it rather like that in 10;

12. $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{Mary} \\ \text{I} \end{array} \right)$ washed John and then I washed $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{myself} \\ * \text{myself} \end{array} \right)$.
 13. $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{Mary} \\ \text{I} \end{array} \right)$ washed John and then I washed $\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{my own self} \\ * \text{my own self} \end{array} \right)$.

Just in case each of the pair washes his own back or his own self for a change, the stress will appear on the pronoun;

14. Mary washed her own back and John washed his own back!
 15. Mary washed her own self and John washed his own self!
 16. Mary washed herself and John washed himself!
 17. Mary washed her back and John washed his back!

The similarity in behavior between reflexives with own and those without on the one hand and possessives with own and those without on the other is already suggestive of a similar process. Yet if we were to say that 10 and 11 without own are the same as with it and 12 is the same as 13, we would have to account for two differences. His would properly have stress anyway, it seems, since Sue's and Bill's below, which do not imply own-ness, are stressed;

18. John washed Sue's back and then he washed Bill's.

Thus own in 10 and 11 cannot be stressed merely because it is own; rather, it is the suitable element in the constituent it is in to bear the stress for that constituent. There seem to be two differences marked—difference in identity and difference in reflexivity or "own-ness". If own is deleted, the stress moves left to the pronoun. And right there lies the second difference; if own is deleted from a stressed reflexive or intensive, the stress moves right to self, it seems. As a result either self has to be marked as a peculiar noun, different from back and all others, or some relationship between the two cases has not been uncovered. I propose that the latter is the case and that expressions like his own back have derived from those like his own self's back, e. g.:

19. Mary washed her own self's back before she washed John's.
 20. Mary washed the back belonging to her own self before she washed John's.

There's nothing wrong with either 19 or 20 semantically and seemingly not syntactically. Though 20 is at least unusual and 19 is implausible, neither is impossible. If this is the proper analysis then for languages with reflexive possessives they would be derivable from such a base. Further, the stress shift from own would be consistent. If own deleted from 19 first, the result would be 21; then deletion of self's would produce 22;³

21. Mary washed the back belonging to herself (*herself's back) before she washed John's.
22. Mary washed the back belonging to her (her back) before she washed John's.

For me, belonging to herself is completely interchangeable with belonging to her, when the pronouns are given contrastive stress.

However sound this proposal seems now, it will appear more convincing as it is seen to apply to relating constructions with own, constructions with emphatic reflexives, and intensive pronouns to one another, all of which result from a variety of syntactical circumstances. First, take the following case: Two NP from corresponding predicates are referentially identical, though their possessive pronouns may differ in person with a change in speaker. In one clause the subject is a like-person antecedent of one of the possessive pronouns. In that clause the contrast may be shown by one of four ways: placing stressed own after the possessive, stressing a reflexive, adding an intensive pronoun, or stressing the subject. The sentences in 23 are all responses to Wash my back for me:

23. (a) (You'll have to) wash your own back.
- (b) (You'll have to) wash it for yourself.
- (c) (You'll have to) wash it for your own self.
- (d) (You'll have to) wash it yourself.
- (e) (You'll have to) wash it your own self.
- (f) You ('ll have to) wash it.

Where there are contrasting pronouns in the predicate referring to contrasting subjects, the matter is more complicated. The contrastive stress may mark off the predicate NP alone, or the subject alone, or both at once. The responses to Wash your face! then in 24, 25, and 26 are of three different kinds:

24. It is not I whose face should be washed;⁴
 - (a) Wash your+own face!⁵
 - (b) Wash your+own!
 - (c) Wash yours!
 - (d) Wash your face!
25. It is not I who should wash his face;
 - (a) Wash your own face!
 - (b) Wash your own!
 - (c) Wash your face yourself!
 - (d) Wash your face your own self!
26. It is not I whose face should be washed and (consequently) it is not I who should wash his face;
 - (a) You wash your own face!
 - (b) You wash your face!
 - (c) You wash your own!
 - (d) You wash yours!
 - (e) You wash your face yourself!
 - (f) You wash your face your own self!

In 26 you has a secondary contrastive stress (inescapable in this construction) whereas you in 23a-e does not.

The responses to Wash yourself! are similarly of three different kinds:

27. It is not I who should be washed;
- (a) Wash your+own self!
 - (b) Wash yourself!
28. It is not I who should wash himself;
- (a) Wash your own self!
 - (b) Wash yourself!
 - (c) Wash yourself yourself!
 - (d) Wash yourself your own self!
29. It is not I who should be washed and (consequently) it is not I who should wash himself;
- (a) You wash your+own self!
 - (b) You wash your self!
 - (c) You wash your own self!
 - (d) You wash yourself!
 - (e) You wash yourself yourself!
 - (f) You wash yourself your own self!

In general, emphatic stress is restricted to one element per contrast; for example, 30 is no response possible to Wash my face:

30. (a) *Wash your own face yourself!
 (b) *Wash your own face for yourself!
 (c) *Wash your face for yourself yourself!

It is this general rule that blocks reflexives from being intensified by an intensive pronoun; compare 31 with 32:

31. I might throw John's rhino off the plane but not John himself!
32. *I might throw my rhino off the plane but not myself myself!

If the reflexive is in contrast it is already stressed itself; if it is not in contrast, intensifying it wouldn't make sense.

Accordingly, to account for the synonymy of the responses within each of the groups 23-29, we must suppose in each case a common underlying structure in which there is one emphatic stress, but for each group a somewhat different structure. The difference among 24, 25, and 26 might be represented as shown below:

- 24.1 You your own self (rather than I) are the person of whose face it can be said that he should wash it.
- 25.1 You your own self (rather than I) are the person of whom it can be said that he should wash his face.
- 26.1 You your own self (rather than I) ^{wash} are the person of whose face it can be said that he should ^{wash} it and (consequently) you your own self (rather than I) are the person of whom it can be said that he should wash his face.

For simplicity in the exposition, however, I will use a base which is somewhat less complex; thus 24 will have the following base:⁶

- 24.2 You, your own self, are the person who Z face
 that person (necessarily, you) should wash -->
 24.3 You should wash your own self Z face

Deleting self+Z gives (a). Deleting self+Z+face gives (b). Deleting self+face gives (c). Deleting own+Z gives (d):

- 24.3(a) (You should) wash your own face!
 (b) (You should) wash your own!
 (c) (You should) wash yours!
 (d) (You should) wash your face!

This derivation, besides accounting for the reflexivity of this possessive and for the identity of sense in the four constructions, provides in (c) a natural source for the second possessive morpheme which has long been unexplained.⁷ Still, an alternative analysis is possible. If 23(a) were taken as basic instead of 24.3, your+own+NP could become your+NP or your+own and your+NP could become somehow your+Z.

However, such an alternative analysis would miss completely the relationships in 25, which may be analyzed as in 25.2:

- 25.2 You, your own self, are the person who should wash
 hi Z (necessarily, your) face -->

- 25.3 You should wash your own self face

Deleting self+Z gives (a). Deleting self+Z+face gives (b):

- 25.3(a) (You should) wash your own face!
 (b) (You should) wash your own!

To get (c) and (d), 25.2 may optionally be transformed into 25.4:

- 25.4 You should wash your face your own self
 (c) (You should) wash your face yourself! (by own del.)
 (d) (You should) wash your face your own self!

The reflexive case in 27 is somewhat different:

- 27.2 Your own self is the self that its possessor (necessarily you) should wash -->

- 27.3 You should wash your own self
 (a) (You should) wash your own self!
 (b) (You should) wash your self!

The base for 28 is quite like that for 25:

- 28.2 You your own self are the one who should wash
 hi Z (necessarily, your) self -->
 28.3 You should wash your own self Z self

Deleting self+Z gives (a). Deleting own+self+Z gives (b):

- 28.3 (a) (You should) wash your own self!
 (b) (You should) wash yourself!

An optional alternate transformation from 28.2 gives 28.4:

- 28.4 ¹ You ⁴ should ⁷ wash ⁸ your ² self your own self
 (c) (You should) wash yourself your own self!
 (d) (You should) wash yourself yourself!

Without working them out in detail, I assume that 26 and 29 can be derived by the same principle, the complication being an embedded sentence with contrastive stress, it seems.

But let us turn back to 23, where the agent is in contrast and coreferential with the predicate NP; the base is that in 23.2:

- 23.2 ¹ You ² your own self ³ are the one who ⁴ will have to wash
⁵ you ⁶ Z ⁷ back ⁸ for you ⁹ -->

- 23.3 ¹ You ⁴ will have to wash ² your own self ⁶ Z ⁷ back

Deleting self+Z gives (a):

- 23.3(a) (You'll have to) wash your own back.

A second possible transformation for 23.2 to undergo is this:

- 23.4 ¹ You ⁴ will have ⁵ to wash ⁶ you ⁷ Z ⁸ back ⁹ for your ² own self
 (b) (You'll have to) wash it for yourself. (Own del.)
 (c) (You'll have to) wash it for your own self.

A third possible transformation of 23.2 is this:

- 23.5 ¹ You ⁴ will have to wash ⁵ you ⁶ Z ⁷ back ² your own self
 (d) (You'll have to) wash it yourself. (Own del.)
 (e) (You'll have to) wash it your own self.

Apparently the deletion of your own self in 23.2 results in its stress being assigned to the remaining element in its construction, you, in a fourth possible transformation:

- 23.6 ¹ You ⁴ will have to wash ⁵ you ⁶ Z ⁷ back

This transformation is apparently necessary for deriving 26 and 29 as well, which have a secondary contrastive stress on you.

There are two special constraints on 23.2. If the pronoun in the construction labeled 2 is not identical with the one labeled 5, 23.3 is blocked; otherwise 23(a) would mean the same as 33:

33. (a) You'll have to wash John's back for yourself.
 (b) You'll have to wash John's back yourself.
 (c) You'll have to wash John's back.

However, if an NP replaces 7 in 23.2 that is distinguished by a relative clause rather than a possessive, 23.3 goes through:

All of the following are proper responses to Wash that man with the cigar; the responder replaces the relative clause with your:

34. (a) (You'll have to) wash your own man.
 (b) (You'll have to) wash your man for yourself.
 (c) (You'll have to) wash your man yourself.
 (d) You'll have to wash your man.

Of course your man or your own man in these examples does not indicate possession in the ordinary sense of the word. Such use of a possessive to indicate the identifier of an NP who is other than the speaker occurs when the speaker is not accepting the identification himself, as in 35:

35. Your flying saucer is a figment of your imagination.

The rejection of the task in 34 may spill over to rejecting the identification: "I won't bother identifying the man for myself, because since I won't do the job I won't need to know who he is." Another (perhaps slightly different) way to put this is that the speaker regards the man as no concern of his but rather the concern of the addressee. This view is reinforced by sentences of this form:

36. You'll have to do your own back-washing.
 37. You'll have to do your washing of your back {for yourself}
 {yourself}.

In 36 and 37 the speaker uses your to identify the task as the addressee's responsibility. Note that these sentences are derivable in the same way as the earlier ones.

If 36 and 37 are synonymous with the sentences in 34 (except for where the peculiar your is attached perhaps), this fact supports the claim that active do takes sentential complements (Ross 1967, Bouton 1969, Cantrall 1970) and also the claim that structures of identification are associated with NP (Cantrall, to appear), as can be seen from the following sentences:

38. You'll have to do something which I identify as a task of yours: {wash your back
 {washing your back
 {the washing of your back}

It was claimed earlier that the contrastive stress signal is assigned to only one of several possible elements in a particular structure to which it might be assigned in any given case. So far I haven't been able to define that structure except by example, and clearly there are cases where such structures have structures of the same type embedded in them, including 26 and 29. In such cases the contrastive stress identifying the contrasts at different levels of embedding is distinctly different, the contrast prompting the present utterance being strongest. Suppose that you wished to take exception to the remark voiced in 39. You might do so by using any of the responses in 40:

39. John should mind his own business and let other people alone to mind theirs.

- 40.(a) You, your own self, are the one who'd better mind his own business!
- (b) You'd better mind your own business your own self!
 - (c) You'd better mind your own business yourself!
 - (d) You'd better mind your own own business!
 - (e) You'd better mind your own business!

In 40 underlined own is more strongly stressed than the one not underlined. Where the secondary own has been deleted, the distinction is still apparent. Now suppose that I decided that you were out of line in saying the remarks in 40, that you were meddling in affairs with which you had even less concern than the speaker of 39, I could use any of these, it seems:

- 41.(a) You, your OWN self, are the one who had better mind his own business his own self!!
- (b) You, your OWN self, are the one who had better mind his own own business!!
 - (c) You'd better mind your own business your OWN own self!!
 - (d) You'd better mind your OWN own own business!!
 - (e) You'd better mind your own own business yourSELF!!
 - (f) You'd better mind your own own business your OWN self!!

Then suppose another guy...ad nauseam rather than infinitum. Phonological discrimination is limited; secondary effects form a barrier to being taken seriously; syntactical complexity becomes painful and ridiculous. Compare 41(c) with the following, for instance:

42. John is what I'd call our TOP top top salesman.
(said after introducing Bill as one of our top salesmen and Frank as one of our top top salesmen, or any time)
43. Only Saturdays will only Mary only dance the Czardis.
44. What was Harry's own father's own father's OWN father's name?

At any rate, ugly as they may be, the sentences in 40 and 41 can be derived transformationally just like the earlier sentences.

Intensives are used rhetorically to point up "remarkability". For instance, the NP intensified may be noted for some special characteristic, as in 45, or for some general quality of social importance, as in 46; compare these with 47 and 48:⁸

45. The Pope himself would have cussed at that!
46. I snubbed Spiro Agnew himself yesterday! (Leskosky 1972)
47. The Pope himself is a Catholic!
48. I snubbed my paper boy himself yesterday! (Leskosky 1972)

This sets the stage for another point of importance. Leskosky (1972) points out that intensives can occur in any position except with "Possessives of the -'s type":

48. *I met Spiro Agnew's himself('s) daughter today.
49. *I met Spiro Agnew himself's daughter today.
50. I met the daughter of Spiro Agnew himself today.

He fails to note, however, that 51 can do the job 49 intends to do:

51. I met Spiro Agnew's own daughter today.

Besides being a ploy to register Spiro Agnew's remarkability, 51 could also be used to get across the daughter's also being remarkable, as in 52:

52. I met Spiro Agnew's own daughter herself!

This emphasizes a point already noted; deletion of the intensive is possible without change of meaning if the stress is transferred;⁹

53. The Pope would have cussed at that!

54. I met Spiro Agnew's daughter today!

A base structure for 51 and 54 on the order of those used earlier would look like that in 55:

55. Spiro¹ Agnew² his own self³ was the person who⁴ ⁵ ⁶ ⁷

daughter I met today -->

56. I met Spiro¹ Agnew² his own self³ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶ ⁷ daughter today

56 would become 49 by own deletion (notably I find 49 a great deal better than 48). 51 would result by deletion of self and the pronoun from 56, the possessive morpheme being attached to the preceding noun.

The fact that 51 conveys rather than presupposes the information in 57 and 58 as well as that in 55 should be a reminder that what I have been using as base structures are simply the easiest ones to follow that allow the interrelationships of synonymous sentences to be traced, not some ultimate deep structure:

57. I met some person today.

58. The person I met was some person's daughter.

Similarly, such a base structure is not adequate to account for the fact that an indefinite noun can cooccur only with an "extra-posed" intensive, as noted by Moravcsik (1972):

58. An engineer should know this himself.

59. *An engineer himself should know this.

But another sort of sentence can demonstrate what must be accounting for the difference. 60 and 61 both make sense as conclusions from evidence, but 62 seems to fail in the same way that 59 does:

60. Somebody boiled his own chocolate (it seems).

61. Somebody boiled his chocolate himself (it seems).

62. *Somebody himself boiled his chocolate (it seems).

The failure of 62 seemingly can be associated with the failure of 63 and 64, and the two senses of 60 and 61 can be associated with 65 and 66. Note that all of these sentences presuppose or convey Somebody boiled chocolate for somebody:

63. *Some person himself was the person who boiled that person's chocolate, it seems.
 64. *Some person himself was the person who(m) that person boiled chocolate for.
 65. That person himself was the person who boiled some person's chocolate.
 66. That person himself was the person who(m) some person boiled chocolate for.

Finally, the kind of analysis proposed here provides a structure which will allow distinctions among the several meanings implied by an intensive pronoun to be spelled out; e.g.:

67. The judge didn't buy stock himself:
 (a) The judge himself wasn't the one of the judge's group who bought stock for the judge.
 (b) The judge himself wasn't the one of the judge's group who bought stock for himself.
 (c) The judge himself was the one of the judge's group who I most expected to buy stock (but) who didn't.
 (d) The judge himself was (the only) one of the judge's group who didn't buy stock.

If you don't like my analysis, (a) you can do one for yourself, (b) you can do your own, (c) you can do one yourself, (d) you can do one. However, I wouldn't try surface structure assignment of focus myself. (Chomsky 1972) For if it is correct that each sentence group under 23 through 29 shares a deep structure, as seems to be the case, the focus is fully predictable at that level. The presence of own determines where the stress will be: on own if it appears on the surface; on one of the elements in construction with it, as determined by rule, if it does not.

Footnotes:

¹ Examples 4 and 5 are variations on sentences in the good old OED.

² Independent contrast is opposed to the dependent contrast which occurs in "sloppy identity": John decided to wash himself while Mary was (washing herself). Only dependent contrast allows deletion "under identity": *John decided to wash himself while Mary was. John decided to wash himself while Mary was washing herself. Notably stressed own but not a stressed pronoun without own allows a sloppy identity interpretation: John washed his own back and so did Mary. John washed his back and so did Mary.

³ The reflexive possessive in Latin (agreeing in case with its noun) refers to the subject and like the English possessive may be either unemphatic or emphatic (suam caudam, his back, his back). It may also be followed by the intensive pronoun ipse (own self, self) in its genitive case form: suam ipsius caudam, his self's back, his own back.

⁴ For a second sense here and in later examples change not to not only.

- ⁵24a and 24b differ from 25a and 25b; the + indicates a closer tie to the pronoun. Only your+own equals stressed your.
- ⁶Here and in later examples the subject and predicate nominative might well be interchanged; you, your own self is "new"....For a second sense change the person to another person.
- ⁷Including the double possession in non-emphatic cases, e.g., How's that wife of yours? (vs. of Harry's), which should not be derived from How's your wife?, as some have done. The former always shows an intimacy that the latter need not. If that wife of yours derives from that wife of your self's by self deletion perhaps the intimacy as well as the added possessive morpheme are accounted for.
- ⁸The point is, the addressee must have knowledge of the referent's nature and deduce the obvious comparison from that knowledge and the circumstances eliciting the remark; uncovering the message for oneself has a more striking effect.
- ⁹With the proper intonation 53, like 45, is not a remark about the Pope; without the stress it would be: The Pope would have cussed at that (the old reprobate).

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