

In my paper I analyze a special type of Russian reciprocal derivatives with the prefix *vzaimo-* ‘mutually’ (these derivatives have rarely been an object of linguistic analysis) and posit a question whether these derivatives can be regarded as unaccusatives. In Russian, reciprocity is primarily marked with the free pronoun *drug druga* which does not change the inflection type of the verb or with a generalized detransitivizer *-sja*. However, sometimes the marker *vzaimo-* is used. In finite verb forms, it cannot be the sole marker of reciprocity: the detransitivizer *-sja* must also be used. For instance, in (1) the variant without *-sja* is ungrammatical:

- (1) Častic-y                      vzaimo-uničtožaj-ut-\*(sja).  
 particle-NOM.PL              VZAIMO-annihilate-3SG.PRS-REC  
 ‘The particles annihilate each other.’ (in physics)

What is important, the reciprocal meaning can sometimes be coded with *-sja* alone, but only inside the class of ‘inherent reciprocals’, in terms of (Kemmer 1993) (*celovat* ‘kiss’ – *celovat*-*sja* ‘kiss each other’). In verbs like *uničtožat* ‘annihilate’ *-sja* alone cannot mark reciprocity. If we remove *vzaimo-*, as in (2), the verb has the passive meaning only:

- (2) Častic-y                      uničtožaj-ut-sja.  
 particle-NOM.PL              annihilate-3SG.PRS-PASS  
 i. ‘The particles are annihilated.’              ii. \*‘The particles annihilate each other.’

This situation is highly reminiscent to one described by Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (2004) and Embick (2004). These authors show that a similar type of system exists in Greek, Fula (West Atlantic) and Tolkapaya (a dialect, of Yavapai, Yuman), but within the reflexive, and not reciprocal domain. For instance, in Greek reflexivity can be marked with the non-active voice alone, if the verb belongs to the class of ‘inherent reflexives’ (see (3). However, for other verb classes the prefix *afto-* ‘self’ is needed in addition to the non-active voice endings, as in (4).

Greek:

- (3) I                      Maria                      xtenizete                      kathe mera.  
 the.NOM              Maria                      comb.NACT.3SG.PRS              every day  
 ‘Maria combs herself every day.’

- (4) O                      Yanis                      afto-katastrafike.  
 the.NOM              Yanis                      self-destroy.NACT.3SG.PST  
 ‘Yanis destroyed himself.’ (Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou 2004: 118; Embick 2004: 144).

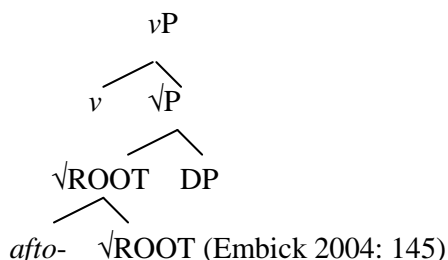
Without *afto-* the verb bears the passive or anticausative, not reflexive reading:

- (5) O              Yanis      katastrafike.  
 The      Yanis      destroy.NACT.3SG.PST  
 ‘Yanis was destroyed.’

In Tolkapaya and Fula, we observe roughly the same situation.

This reflexive/passive/anticausative polysemy when the same set of endings can have different meanings depending on the verb class and presence / absence of special prefix forces Embick (2004) to consider reflexives to be unaccusatives – he proposes the following structure of ‘afto-reflexives’:

- (6) the structure of afto-reflexives



In the structure there is only one argument (the DP complement), the verb has the reflexive interpretation, but, as in passive configurations, the  $\nu$  licensing agentive interpretation is present. Thus, the literal meaning would be something like ‘Yanis is self-destroyed’ (reflexive passive).

It may seem that the situation in Russian is identical to that in Greek, Tolkapaya and Fula. The Russian *-sja*, just as voice markers in these languages, has many meanings related to unaccusativity and transitivity decrease: passive (*stroit* ‘build’ – *stroit*-*sja* ‘be built’); anticausative / unaccusative (*razbit* ‘break (transitive)’ – *razbit*-*sja* ‘break (intransitive)’); reflexive (*myt* ‘wash’ – *myt*-*sja* ‘wash (oneself)’). Thus, we could in principle say that *-sja* in (1) does not reciprocalize anything, instead, it “signals unaccusative

‘The particles are annihilated by each other’), parallel to Embick’s ‘passive reflexives’.

However, some facts prove that Russian is not entirely similar to the one in Greek, Fula and Tolkapaya. First of all, the free pronoun *drug druga* can be used with *vzaimo*-derivatives instead of *-sja*:

- (7) Et-i kul'tur-y vzaimo-obogaščaj-ut drug druga  
 this-NOM.PL culture-NOM.PL VZAIMO-enrich-3PL.PRS each.other-ACC

‘These cultures mutually enrich each other.’

In this example, the relative order of derivations is opaque. However, it is clear that the unaccusative analysis is hardly plausible. *Drug druga* is a free pronoun in terms of (Reinhart, Siloni 2004) – thus, it can hardly make a transitive verb unaccusative. In (7) *drug druga* occupies the object position of the main verb. Therefore, the structure of (7) must be ‘These cultures mutually enrich each other’, rather than ‘These cultures are mutually enriched by each other’.

Then, with **participles** the prefix under analysis can be the sole reciprocal marker.

- (8) **vzaimo**-dopoln'aj-ušč-ije metod-y  
 VZAIMO-supplement-PART.PRS-NOM.PL method-NOM.PL

‘(Mutually) complementary methods’;

- (9) **vzaimo**.uničtožaj-ušč-ije častic-y  
 VZAIMO-annihilate-PART.PRS-NOM.PL particle-NOM.PL

‘(Mutually) annihilating particles.’ (in physics).

Alexiadou (2001) and Embick (2004: 145) notice that *afto-* can be the sole marker of reflexivity in nominalizations, as opposed to finite verb forms (*afto-katastrof-i* ‘self-destruction’) but they do not speak of any difference between finite verb forms and participles.

These differences between Russian, on the one hand, and Greek, Fula and Tolkopaya, on the other hand, make us propose an alternative analysis for *vzaimo*-reciprocals, which is within the framework of (Reinhart, Siloni 2004). We suppose that *vzaimo-* is an adjunct which bears the reciprocal interpretation. However, *-sja* in (1) is not a marker of unaccusativity, but rather a marker of reduction of the internal argument (see Reinhart, Siloni 2004: 177). The literal interpretation is ‘The particles mutually annihilate + SJA’ (object reduction), thus, *-sja* does not mark here any type of unaccusative passive configuration. I think that it rather marks an objectless configuration of the type *John eats*. Therefore, the function of *-sja* in (1) is very similar to that of *drug druga* in (7): in (7) *drug druga* occupies the object position, whereas in (1) *-sja* marks object reduction<sup>1</sup>.

This analysis is supported by the fact that many of Russian participles admit object deletion / ellipsis, as in (10) (the verb *razrušat* ‘destroy’ in finite forms does not admit it):

- (10) *razrušaj-ušč-ije vozdejsvij-e*  
 destroy-PART.PRS-NOM.PL impact-NOM.SG  
 ‘destructive impact’ (literally ‘destroying Ø impact’)

If the detransitivizer *-sja* marks an objectless configuration in *vzaimo*-forms (1) than it is not surprising that participles on *vzaimo-* in (8) and (9) do not have *-sja*: Russian participles, including those having the prefix *vzaimo-* can form an objectless configuration without any marker.

### References

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<sup>1</sup> There are two differences: first, *-sja* is a morphological marker, whereas *drug druga* is a free pronoun which does not make the verb intransitive – it simply occupies the object position. Second, *drug druga* marks reciprocity in (7), because it always marks reciprocity, whereas *-sja* marks objectless configuration in (1) – there are no reasons to claim that it has the reciprocal meaning in forms like this.