Passives of Reflexive Verbs

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1. Introduction

- **Passives of reflexive and reciprocal verbs (PoRs) in German**[1]

(1) a. Hier haben die   Römer **sich**   gewaschen   (active)
         Here have   the$_{NOM}$ Romans REFL$_{ACC}$ washed
         'The Romans washed here'
     b. Hier wurde **sich**   (von den Römern) gewaschen   (passive/**PoR**)
         Here was   REFL$_{CASE?}$ (by the Romans)   washed

(2) a. Zuerst küssen sie   **sich**,   später dann heiraten sie   (active)
         first   kiss   they$_{NOM}$ REFL$_{ACC}$, later then   marry   they
         'First they kiss each other, later on they marry'
     b. Zuerst wird   **sich**   geküsst, später dann geheiratet   (passive/**PoR**)
         first   becomes REFL$_{CASE?}$ kissed, later   then married

(i) **As in ordinary passives**, the lexical verb appears as the **passive participle** and the **passive auxiliary** *werden* (become) is used.

(ii) **The external argument disappears** (it can re-appear in a by-phrase – see below).

(iii) The above examples lack a (overt) nominative DP; most (though not all)[2] **PoRs are, therefore, instances of '*impersonal passives*'**.

(iv) **The reflexive pronoun** (a SE-anaphor in the terminology of Reinhart & Reuland 1993) does not change its shape. Clearly, it does not shift to nominative as referential objects would. Instead, it **seems to keep structural accusative case** (see Icelandic below).

- **PoRs are rare, cross-linguistically**. To my knowledge, they are reported for three languages: **German**, **Icelandic** and Lithuanian (I will not discuss Lithuanian here; see Geniušienė 1987, Wiemer 2006).[3]

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[1] The most detailed discussions of German PoRs can be found in Plank (1993), Vater (1995), Ágel (1997) and Hundt (2002). Shorter discussions can be found in Abraham (1986), Fanselow (1987, 1991), Sells et al. (1987), Grewendorf (1988), Frey (1993) or Müller & Sternefeld (1993) among others.

[2] German, Icelandic and Lithuanian have PoRs which are not impersonal and which are unproblematic for Case Theory but not for Binding Theory (cf. German (ia, b)). I leave these rare cases aside (but see the appendix).
(i) a. *Da   wurde wieder viel Unsinn   von sich   gegeben*
         there was   again   many nonsense$_{NOM}$ from oneself given
         'People gave away from themselves (i.e. uttered) lots of nonsense again'
     b. *Anschließend wurde sich   ein   Hamburger gekauft*
         Afterwards   was   REFL$_{DAT}$ a$_{NOM}$ hamburger bought
         'Later on, one bought a hamburger for oneself'

[3] Examples like (i) are sometimes cited as cases of English PoRs (Baker et al. 1989, Collins 2005). Clearly, the phenomenon is much more restricted in English than in German and Icelandic. Furthermore, the reflexive in examples like (i) is probably not an anaphor but an intensified pronoun (Baker 1995, Reed 2011). Note also that the anaphor in Icelandic PoRs does not qualify as a logophor and that German lacks logophors altogether.
(i)   *Such privileges should be kept to oneself*

- **Icelandic PoRs** are first mentioned by Sigurðsson (1989:355, fn. 60); he judges (3b) and (4b) as slightly marked. Eythórsson (2008) judges the b-examples below as totally acceptable and adds that most speakers he consulted agreed with him.[4]

(3) a. Börnin   leika **sér**   allan daginn   (active)
        the.children$_{NOM}$ play REFL$_{DAT}$ all   the.day
        'The children are playing all day'
     b. Það var leikið **sér**   allan daginn   (passive)
        expl. was played REFL$_{DAT}$ all   the.day

(4) a. Fólkið   baðaði **sig**   á laugardögum   (active)
        the.people$_{NOM}$ bathed REFL$_{ACC}$ on saturdays
        'The people took a bath on saturdays.'
     b. Það var baðað **sig**   á   laugardögum   (passive)
        expl was bathed REFL$_{ACC}$ on saturdays

Note: Icelandic reflexive pronouns have a case-inflected paradigm (*sig*.ACC, *sér*.DAT, *sín*.GEN). It proves that **structural accusative remains on the reflexive pronoun under passivization** (4b).[5]

- **Other (Germanic) languages lack PoRs**. This is so even if these languages have impersonal passives and SE-reflexives quite similar to German *sich* and Icelandic *sig*.

  - **Dutch PoRs** are typically judged as ungrammatical (p.c. Martin Everaert).

(5) *Er   werd zich gewassen   (Reinhart & Siloni 2004)
      There was REFL washed

  - **Norwegian PoRs** are typically judged as ungrammatical (p.c. Kristi Kroch Christensen, Terje Lohndal, Torgrim Solstad)

(6) a. *Det ble hygget seg   (Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir 2002)
        It   was amused REFL
     b. *det ble låst   seg (selv) inne i fabrikken
        It   was locked REFL (self) inside in the.fatory
     c. *Det ble lyttet   til hverandre på møtet
        It   was listened to one.another at the.meeting

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[4] **Side remark on the relation between Icelandic PoRs and the so called 'new passive/new construction'**: Icelandic PoRs are typically discussed in the context of the 'new passive'. Most of the recent literature concluded that the new passive is a real passive in that the external argument is absorbed although the (even definite) internal argument remains in situ and keeps accusative (Eyþórsson 2008, Jónsson 2009, Sigurðsson 2011), not an active impersonal (Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir 2002). While there is arguably a relation between the new passive and PoRs (in that the latter might have grounded the way for the development of the former), the recent literature concluded that PoRs are NOT genuine instances of the new passive. Eythórsson (2008:189) mentions that the PoR "seems to be an innovation of Modern Icelandic which is increasingly gaining ground and is accepted by many speakers who do not accept the NC [New Construction, i.e. the new passive] with non-reflexive verbs". The latter conclusion can also be drawn from the questionnaire study by Maling & Sigur-jónsdóttir (2002): PoRs receive much more acceptance than new passives with referential internal argument.
[5] It can be shown that the Icelandic reflexive pronoun is incompatible with nominative positions independently of Principle A (i.e. locality) considerations (Maling (1984), Everaert (1990); see Woolford (1999) on this *anaphor agreement effect* in other languages).

2. A semantic/conceptual restriction on the formation of PoRs

2.1 Three classes of reflexive verbs

- Languages with a two-form reflexive system (e.g. Dutch) make a **morpho-syntactic distinction between three classes of reflexive verbs**. **The morphological distinction reflects a semantic/conceptual difference** (see Kemmer (1993) and the references there).

A: **Inherently reflexive verbs:** The reflexive pronoun cannot be replaced by a referential DP. Only the simple reflexive is allowed:

(7) Jan schaamt zich/*zichzelf/*Marie
      John shames REFL/REFL-SELF/Mary
      'John is ashamed'

B: **Naturally reflexive verbs** (and naturally reciprocal verbs): The reflexive pronoun can be replaced by a referential DP. Out of the blue, the simple reflexive is strongly preferred. The complex reflexive becomes possible in the case of strong focus.

(8) a. Jan waste zich/??zichzelf/Marie   b. Jan scheerde zich/??zichzelf/Peter
        John washed REFL/ REFL.SELF/Mary   John shaved REFL/REFL.SELF/Peter
        'John washed (Mary)'   'John shaves (Peter)'

   Naturally reflexive verbs come from a number of semantic subclasses which all represent events which **carry**

   "inherent in their meaning [..] the lack of expectation that the two semantic roles they make reference to will refer to distinct entities" **(Kemmer 1993:58).**

   So called "grooming verbs" such as '*shave*', '*wash*' and '*dress*' form one main subgroup of naturally reflexive verbs.

C: **"Naturally disjoint verbs"** (also called "*other directed verbs*"; e.g. König & Vezzosi 2004): The reflexive pronoun can be replaced by a referential DP. The complex reflexive is strongly preferred. **These verbs express events which carry the expectation that the two semantic roles they make reference to will refer to distinct entities**. (e.g. '*hate*', '*accuse*', '*kill*', …).

(9) Zij haat ??zich/zichzelf/Peter
      She hates REFL/REFL-SELF/Peter
      'John hates himself/Peter'

- **German does not make a morpho-syntactic difference between inherently/naturally reflexive verbs and naturally disjoint verbs.** The simple reflexive pronoun '*sich*' can be used in all three contexts. The addition of the intensifier '*selbst*' (self) is never obligatory.

(10) a. Hans hasst sich/Maria   (naturally disjoint)
          John hates REFL/Mary
      b. Hans wäscht sich/Maria   (naturally reflexive)
          John washes REFL/Mary
      c. Hans schämt sich/*Maria   (inherently reflexive)
          John shames REFL/Mary

2.2 A Verb Class Restriction on PoRs in German

Claim: The same semantic/conceptual restrictions that determine the distribution of simple and complex reflexives in Dutch determine the availability/acceptance of PoRs:
PoRs are mainly formed with *inherent* and *naturally reflexive verbs/predicates*; *naturally disjoint verbs* are very rarely found.[6/7]
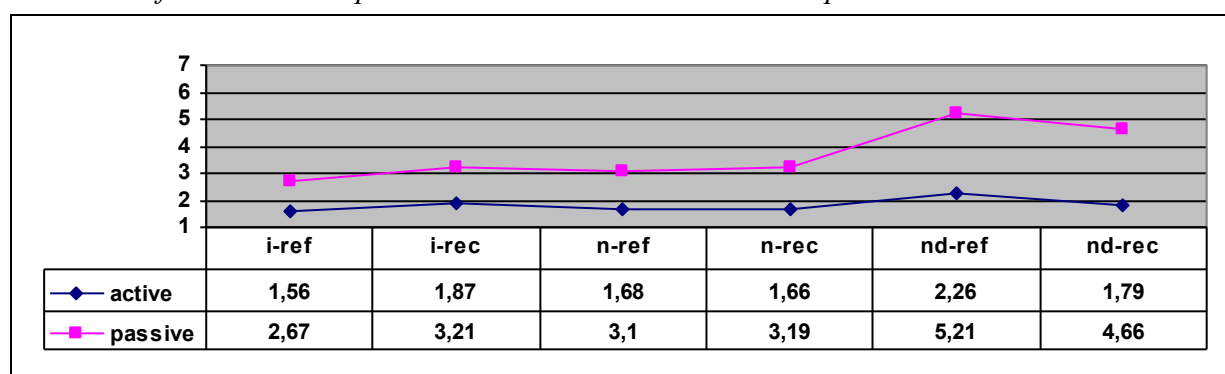
Experimental Validation 1: In order to test this claim, I carried out a **Google query**

- Kemmer (1993) divides naturally reflexive/reciprocal verbs into 13 semantic subclasses. For each of these subclasses, I selected one verb and checked whether it forms PoRs.
- The result was positive: Already the first verb that I selected lead to a number of matches.
- As a comparison, I checked for a number of naturally disjoint verbs whether they form PoRs. It turned out that these verbs hardly ever form PoRs.

Experimental Validation 2: In order to test this claim, I carried out a **questionnaire study**

- 48 Target sentences**:** judged on a scale from 1-7 (acceptable – not acceptable).
  - 4 inherently reflexive verbs + 4 inherently reciprocal verbs (active and passive)
  - 4 naturally reflexive verbs + 4 naturally reciprocal verbs (active and passive)
  - 4 naturally disjoint verbs in a reflexive use + 4 such verbs in a reciprocal use (a and p)

- The target sentences were arranged in two questionnaires a 24 sentences so that no verb was presented twice (i.e., each verb was read either in the active or in the passive).
- Both questionnaires were filled with the same 48 distractors.
- Each questionnaire was presented in two randomized orders.
- Each sentence was read by 24 speakers.

Table 1: Reflexive and reciprocal verbs in the active and in the passive[8]

	i-ref	i-rec	n-ref	n-rec	nd-ref	nd-rec
active	1,56	1,87	1,68	1,66	2,26	1,79
passive	2,67	3,21	3,1	3,19	5,21	4,66

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[6] Such a semantic restriction has already been suggested in Abraham (1986), Sells & al. (1987), Fanselow (1991), Kaufmann (2001) and especially Ágel (1997), but it was never experimentally corroborated.
[7] Hundt (2007) provides a list of 95 modern and 26 historical examples of PoRs. Seven of his examples involve verbs, which are probably naturally disjoint. Interestingly, such counterexamples to the above generalization very often contain the adverb *gegenseitig* (mutually) as in (i) (cf. fn. 10). Other counterexamples turn out to be from specialized communities or to involve irony ("as if the event were naturally reflexive").
(i) *Hier wird   sich   nicht gegenseitig umgebracht*
    Here becomes REFL not   mutually   killed
[8] The following abbreviations are used: i-ref = inherently reflexive, i-rec = inherently reciprocal, n-refl = naturally reflexive, n-rec = naturally reciprocal, nd-ref = naturally disjoint under a reflexive construal, nd-rec = naturally disjoint under a reciprocal construal.

Conclusions: (i)   The verb classes do not differ in their active reflexive use.

                     (ii)   Reflexive and reciprocal interpretations never lead to a difference.

                     (iii) **Naturally disjoint verbs are clearly and strongly rejected in PoRs**.

2.3 A Verb Class Restriction on PoRs in Icelandic

- Clearly acceptable examples involve inherently (11a) or naturally reflexive (11b) verbs.

(11) a. Það var leikið sér   allan daginn   (inherently reflexive)
           expl. was played REFL.DAT all   the.day
      b. Það var baðað sig   á laugardögum   (naturally reflexive)
           expl was bathed REFL.ACC on saturdays

- The questionnaire study by Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) shows that **not all PoRs receive the same acceptance**. A closer look at their examples with reflexive pronoun suggests that **the same semantic/conceptual parameter is at work in Icelandic PoRs**.[9]

- <u>Examples with simple reflexives:</u>

(12) a. Svo var bara drifið sig   á ball
          Then was just hurried REFL to the.dance
                                          (Elsewhere 78% | Inner Rvík 67% | Adults 40%)
      b. Það var haldið sig   innan dyra út af óveðrinu
           it   was kept REFL in   doors due to bad.weather
                                          (Elsewhere 82% | Inner Rvík 65% | Adults 37%)
      c. Það var skoðað sig   um   á svæðinu
           it   was looked REFL around in the.area
                                          (Elsewhere 72% | Inner Rvík 43% | Adults 31%)

→ **(12a- c) involve inherently reflexive verbs**. These examples receive the best acceptance.

- <u>Examples with complex anaphor:</u>

(13) a. Það var horft á sjálfan sig   í peglinum
          it   was looked at SELF REFL in the.mirror
                                          (Elsewhere 58% | Inner Rvík 48% | Adults 34%)
      b. Það var bent   á sjálfan sig   á myndinni
          it   was pointed to SELF REFL in the.picture
                                          (Elsewhere 19% | Inner Rvík 11% | Adults 13%)

→ (13a, b) are syntactically identical; a (complex) reflexive pronoun is embedded in a PP.

→ (13a) is accepted by much more speakers than (13b).

→ The vP in **(13a) is naturally reflexive**. (In "*X looks at Y in the mirror*", there is a strong expectation that X=Y)

→ The vP in **(13b) is not naturally reflexive**. (In "*X points at Y in the picture*", there is no expectation that X=Y).

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[9] The examples below are followed by acceptance rates for three groups of Icelandic speakers (see Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) for explanation). I will not discuss any differences between the three groups of speakers (which clearly exist) but I will concentrate on the question whether or not the examples below show different acceptance rates across the three groups of speakers.

- Examples with possessive reflexives:

(14a-c) show some syntactic differences. The possessed NP in (14a) is embedded in a PP selected by the verb, the possessed NP in (14b) is the internal argument of the verb and the possessed NP in (14c) is embedded in a PP modifying the internal argument of the verb.

(14) a. Það var   haldið með sínu   liði
       It   was held   with SELF's team
       'People supported their own team'

                                                (Elsewhere 63% | Inner Rvík 49% | Adults 36%)

   b. Í   morgun var hrint   systur sinni   af hjólinu
      this morning was pushed sister   SELF's off the.bike

                                                (Elsewhere 13% | Inner Rvík 7% | Adults 2%)

   c. Það var   klippt hárið   á dúkkunni sinni
      it   was cut   the.hair on doll   SELF's

                                                (Elsewhere 5% | Inner Rvík 2% | Adults 2%)

→ (14a) is accepted by much more speakers than (14b, c).

→ The vP in (14a) is naturally reflexive (In "*X supports Y's team*", there is a strong expectation that X=Y).

→ The vPs in (14b, c) are not naturally reflexive. (In "*X pushes Y's sister from the bike*", there is no expectation that X=Y).

Conclusion about Icelandic PoRs:

The semantic/conceptual restriction identified for German seems to hold in Icelandic, too.

Conclusion about 'Natural Reflexivity':

Examples like (14a) suggest that **'natural reflexivity' cannot (always) be determined within the co-argument domain of a verb**. More concretely, since possessors are not part of lexical representations, **'natural reflexivity' cannot** (always) **be established in the lexicon** but **must** (sometimes) **be computed at a conceptual level following syntactic computation**.[10]

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[10] See also Marantz (2009). A very similar conclusion has been reached for (anti-)causative formation (AAS 2006, Schaefer 2008a, b, Rappaport Hovav 2010): Whether a verb forms an anticausative depends on conceptual reasoning on the basis of the verb's lexical core, its specific object argument and further modifiers of the event.

3. Theoretical Evaluation

- **PoRs raise four theoretical questions**

Q1: Binding Theory: How is Principle A of the Binding Theory satisfied in PoRs, i.e. what is the antecedent of the reflexive pronoun?

Q2: Case Theory: How is the accusative case on the reflexive pronoun licensed in PoRs? (This accusative is in contradiction to *Burzio's Generalization*)

Q3: Verb Class Restriction: Why are PoRs acceptable only with inherently/naturally reflexive verbs but not with naturally disjoint verbs? (In the active, the three verb classes behave the same!)

Q4: Language Restriction: Why don't we find PoRs in other (Germanic) languages, especially, if they have impersonal passives and SE-anaphors?

3.1 Evaluation of theoretical options and frameworks

♦ **add Q1 (Binding Theory)**:

- One could suggest that PoRs are **hidden transitives** with a covert external argument (Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir 2002 for Icelandic). This would solve Q1 and Q2.

- One could suggest that the **implicit argument of passives can antecede the reflexive** (Fanselow 1987, Barðdal & Molnár 2003, Sternefeld 2006, Sigurðsson to appear). This would solve Q1.

← **Both proposals cannot answer Q3** (Verb Class Restriction). Once there is a clear antecedent (in the active), the verb classes do not differ.

← **The second one cannot answer Q4** (Language Restriction). The implicit argument of passives behaves, in all other respects, the same across languages.[11]

← **German provides a further counter-argument**: Impersonal passives easily combine with agentive by-phrases which can even introduce $1^{st}/2^{nd}$ person pronouns.

(15) a. **Von mir** wurde nicht gelacht   b. weil **von dir** zu viel gelabert wird
      by me became not laughed   because by you too much babbled becomes

- 1st and 2nd person by-phrases are possible with PoRs, too. **In the active, subject and anaphor agree in Person/Number** (16a). Crucially and unequivocally, **no agreement between by-phrase and anaphor is possible in PoRs** (16b); instead, the 3rd person reflexive is obligatory (Plank 1993).

(16) a. Nur **wir** waschen **uns** / ***sich**   hier täglich   (active)
      only we wash   us.ACC / REFL here daily
    b. Nur von **uns** wird **sich** / ***uns**   hier täglich gewaschen   (passive)
      only by us is   REFL/ us.ACC here daily washed

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[11] Similarly, the 'smuggling approach' to passives (Collins 2005) cannot answer Q2, Q3 and Q4 above.

Conclusion: **The reflexive in PoRs does not have an antecedent in the syntax at all**.[12]
                  It gets default realization (3rd person).

♦ **The 'the unaccusativity analysis' of reflexive verbs**:

- Lexical version: The external theta role is absorbed/reduced/bundled in the lexicon; only the internal argument is projected to the syntax. (The reflexive morphology is a sign that the lexical operation has taken place).

- Syntactic version: (McGinnis 1998, 2000, 2004, Embick 2004): The reflexive pronoun is merged in the external argument position; the full DP is merged in the internal argument position. In order to fulfil Principle A of the Binding Theory, the internal argument A-moves to a position c-commanding the anaphor.

← **Both versions are untenable for languages with PoRs. Unaccusatives don't passivize**.

♦ **The "Bundling" approach to reflexive verbs (and other intransitivity approaches):**[13]

- Reinhart & Siloni (2005) assume that **all types of reflexive verbs are derived by a process bundling an internal with an external theta role** (this holds for *inherently reflexive verbs*, *naturally reflexive verbs* and *naturally disjoint verbs in a reflexive use*).

- As a result, only **one argument with a complex theta-role** is merged in the syntax.

- **The reflexive element is NOT an argument of the verb**. It is either merged as a sign that bundling has taken place or as a **case-reducer** absorbing structural object-case. Motivation for this theory comes from the well known tests (Kayne 1975, Grimshaw 1981) that (seem to) suggest that reflexive verbs are intransitive in French.

(17)   Bundling (Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 400):
       $[\theta_i]\ [\theta_j] \rightarrow [\theta_i - \theta_j]$, where θ_i is an external theta role.

→ **The account seems to answer Q1** (Binding Theory). If the reflexive is not an anaphor, it might not be subject to Principle A of the Binding Theory.

← **The account cannot answer Q2** (Case Theory). Since the accusative should be absorbed by the passive morphology, there should be no need to insert a case-reducer.

← **The account cannot answer Q3** (Verb Class Restriction). Bundling should derive all reflexive verb classes.

← **The account cannot answer Q4** (Language Restriction). All languages (with SE-anaphor) should involve Bundling.

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[12] An alternative, not implausible, idea is that the existentially bound implicit argument of passives is always 3rd person (or impersonal) and that *by*-phrases do not have to match the implicit argument in φ-features. But this would still leave it unexplained why naturally disjoint verbs do not form PoRs.

[13] E.g. Sells et al. (1987), Ágel (1997), Hundt (2006), Eythórsson (2008). Intransitvity approaches to reflexive verbs go back to Grimshaw (1981). Some of these approaches assume that reflexive verbs are unaccusative (see above).

- **Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2007) provide** a collection of **arguments** against the Bundling approach for so-called 'syntax-languages', and especially, **against the claim that reflexive verbs are intransitive** in these languages. Below I discuss one of their arguments, which is originally from Labelle (2008).

- **If the external and the internal θ-role are bundled and assigned to one DP**, **it should be impossible to focus only one of the two θ-roles**. This prediction is not fulfilled empirically; both arguments can be focused independently of the other:

(18) Jean-Pierre s'est   dénoncé lui-même
      Jean-Pierre REFL is denounced himself
      (i)   'Jean-Pierre denounced himself, it was not others who denounced him
      (ii)   'Jean-Pierre denounced himself, he did not denounce others

(19) Morgens   wäscht sie sich   immer/erst mal   SELBER
      at.morning washes she REFL always/first-of-all self
      (i) agent focus: She washes herself, no-one else washes her. (She is a disabled patient)
      (ii) theme focus: She washes herself, she washes no-one else. (She is a nurse)

♦ Lexical Reflexivization

- Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2007) argue that there are **two ways to build a reflexive verb**.

(i)   Via **syntactic binding** of an anaphor.

   - **The reflexive verb is transitive**
   - **SE is an anaphor** which is subject to Principle A of the Binding Theory

(ii) Via the **lexical operation of "Reflexivization" and "Reciprocalization"**

   - These operations **identify an internal θ-role with an external θ-role**.
   - **The reflexive verb is intransitive**/unergative and the sole argument has a complex/bundled theta role.
   - **SE is a lexical marker** of reflexivization.[14]

- Inherently reflexive verbs only have a lexical derivation.
- Naturally reflexive verbs have a lexical and a syntactic derivation (ambiguous).
- Naturally disjoint verbs only have a syntactic derivation.

→ **Their proposal seems to answer Q1** (Binding Theory): PoRs involve a marker of Reflexivization, not an anaphor.

→ **Their proposal seems to answer Q3** (Verb Class Restriction): Only reflexive verbs with a lexical derivation can form PoRs.

← Q2 (Case Theory) and Q4 (Language Restriction) remain open.

← Two further problems:

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[14] Doron & Rappaport Hovav (2007) explicitly claim that SE-reflexives are ambiguous, across languages, between an anaphor and a marker of reflexivization.

Problem 1: If PoRs could only be derived on top of a lexical derivation, **it should be impossible to focus the two θ-roles independently**. **This prediction is NOT borne out**. Exactly as its active counterpart in (19), the PoR in (20) allows focus on both, the implicit external argument as well as the internal argument.[15]

(20) Morgens   wird   sich   immer/erst mal   SELBER gewaschen   (PoR)
      at.morning becomes REFL   always/ first-of-all self   washed
      (√ agent focus, √ theme focus)

Problem 2: Doron & Rappaport-Hovav (2007) take Reflexivization to semantically identify the external with an internal θ-role of a verb. **But the domain of natural reflexivity (as well as inherent reflexivity) exceeds the verbal co-argument domain**.

- Recall that the Icelandic PoR with a possessive reflexive in (21) received very high acceptance. I suggested this to be so because '*to support X's team*' is naturally reflexive. But no lexical process can relate the subject of a verb with the possessor of the object.

(21) Það var haldið með sínu   liði   (21 = 14a)
      it   was held   with SELF's team
      'People supported their own team'

4. Towards an analysis of PoRs

4.1   The general idea

- **The reflexive element (SE-reflexive) in all types of reflexive predicates is an anaphor** (inherently reflexive, naturally reflexive and naturally disjoint predicates).

- **Inherent/natural reflexivity vs. natural disjointness is a post-syntactic phenomenon determined at the C-I interface**. It is computed on the basis of information within the vP.

- I claimed that **the anaphor in PoRs has no syntactic antecedent.** If the implicit agent of the passive would act as an antecedent, we could not explain the Verb Class Restriction (Q3). Furthermore, the following agreement facts would be problematic.

(22) a. Nur **wir** waschen **uns** / ***sich**   hier täglich   (active)
         only we   wash   us.ACC / REFL here daily
      b. Nur von **uns** wird **sich** / ***uns**   hier täglich gewaschen   (passive)
         only by   us   is   REFL/ us.ACC here daily   washed

→   The traditional version of **Principle A of the Binding Theory is not fulfilled in PoRs**.

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[15] See Hole (2006, 2008) on focusing the implicit argument of passives via the intensifier '*selber/selbst*' (self).

Proposal:

(i) Some languages can formally repair the violation of Principle A in PoRs (grey area)**.**

(ii) But the formally repaired structure is acceptable (i.e., easily interpretable) only if the underlying predicate/event is conceptualized as inherently or naturally reflexive (white area).

Table 2: The distribution of PoRs (≈ The availability of Repair for Principle A violations)

| (formally) ungrammatical | (formally) grammatical | (semantically) acceptable |
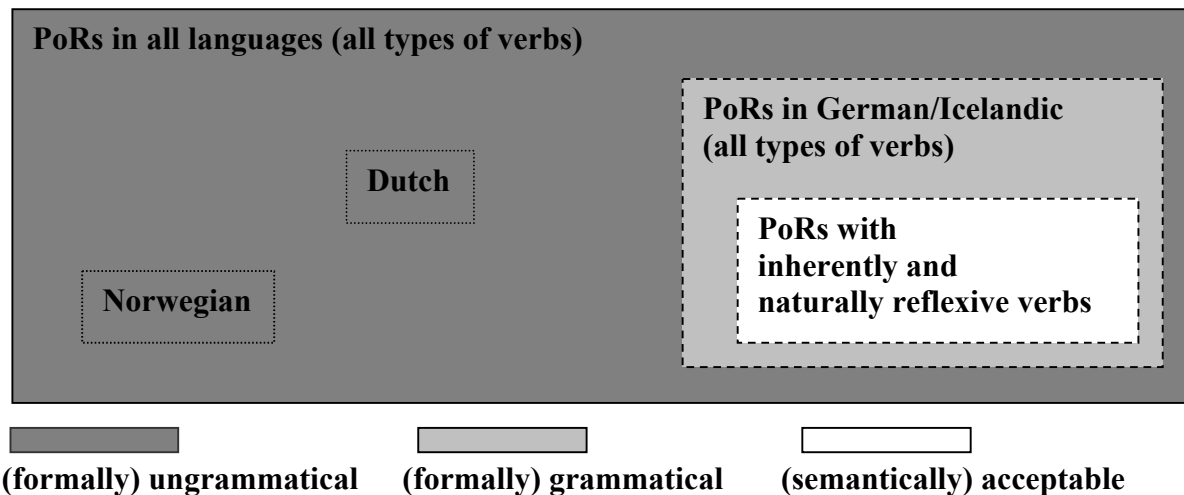
4.2 Basic assumptions on Binding, Case and Agreement (cf. Schäfer 2008a, to appear):

- **(Local) anaphoric binding is grounded in a syntactic Agree-relation between a DP-antecedent and a variable** (e.g. Burzio 1991, 1998, Fanselow 1991, Reuland 2001, 2005, Fischer 2004, 2006, Heinat 2006, Chomsky 2008, Kratzer 2009).

  - **A variable is totally underspecified with respect to φ-features**; **it is a set of a categorical D-feature and unvalued φ-features {D, uφ}**. Therefore, it is referentially defective.

  - A **variable needs an antecedent to value its features under Agree.** Agree is local. Without Agree, the derivation crashes at the interfaces (-> This replaces Principle A).

  - **A variable** is active due to its unvalued φ-features; it **acts as a probe, the antecedent acts as a goal.**

  - **Proposal**: **Variables probe upwards** (cf. Baker 2008, Wurmbrand 2010 or Zeijlstra 2010 for the option of upward-probing).

  - **At LF,** the **syntactic Agree-relation is evaluated semantically as a binding relation** (as expressed via coindexation in earlier stages of the theory, or λ-abstraction; see Reuland (2001, 2005) for a discussion that Violation of Inclusiveness is inevitable).

  - **At PF,** the **Agree relation is evaluated morpho-phonologically and the variable is spelt out** (Halle & Marantz 1993, Heinat 2006). The specific Spell Out as a SE-reflexive or as a (locally bound) pronoun depends on the φ-features of the antecedent

and language-dependent morpho-phonological economy conditions (Burzio 1998, Heinat 2006).

- Full-fledged **referential pronouns are** the combination of a D-feature and **a set of interpretable φ-features {D, φ}** and always spell out their inherent φ-features.[16]

- **Morphological case** and **verbal agreement are determined at PF** (Marantz (2000), McFadden (2004), Sigurðsson (2003, 2005, 2006, 2009). Yet, I propose that **PF evaluates syntactic Agree-relations to determine case and agreement.**

- **Structural case** is established on the basis of information computed inside TP (or alternatively, vP/VoiceP (Sigurðsson 1989, 2000, 2003, Schäfer 2008a, to appear)). T is equipped with unvalued phi-features and searches its c-command domain for the closest valued DP. This Agree-relation is used to determine structural case:

(23) a. **Dependent case** (ACC): A DP is realized at PF with dependent case if a different DP has valued local T via Agree.[17]
    b. **Default case** (NOM): A DP which is not realized with dependent case appears with default case.
    c. **Inherent/lexical case** takes precedence over default and dependent case.

- **A sample derivation involving a transitive verbs and subject-object binding:**

(24) a. daß   Hans   sich   mag
        that   John.NOM   REFL.ACC   likes
        'that John likes himself'

    b.
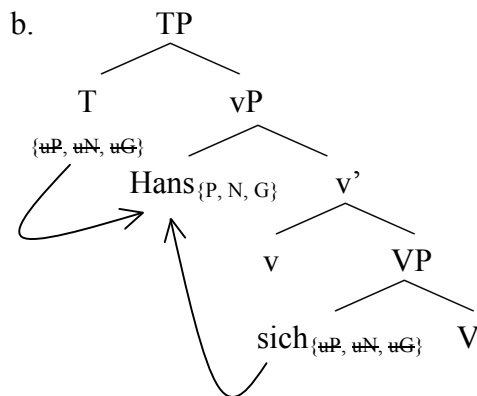
- T enters the derivation with unvalued φ-features. The variable enters the derivation with unvalued φ-features. The subject is merged with a full set of valued φ-features.

- T probes its c-command domain. The closest element with valued φ-features is the external argument in Spec,vP which therefore agrees with and values T.

---

[16] More has to be said about the technical aspects of this proposal. To make a binding relation and a Spell Out as a SE-anaphor possible, the information concerning which element valued the variable must be available at both interfaces. Furthermore, the variable has to "look different" from a referential pronoun that starts the derivation with valued φ-features.

[17] In Schäfer (2008a, to appear) I argue that this combination of an Agree-based with a dependent case approach is necessary to derive the ergative case-pattern of reflexive anticausatives and middles. I argue that reflexive anticausatives/middles involve a nominative theme in object position and an accusative reflexive pronoun in Spec,vP. Since the reflexive has unvalued φ-features, the theme values T (and, indirectly, the reflexive). Baker & Vinokurova (2010) also propose the combination of an Agree-based with a dependent case approach.
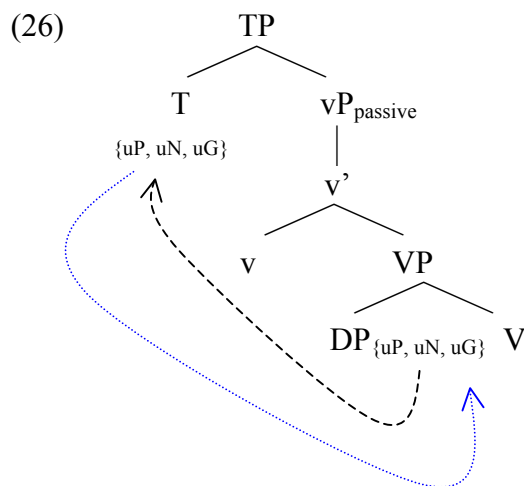
- The variable probes the tree upwards for an antecedent. The subject values the variable.

- These Agree-relations will be evaluated at the interfaces.

  - At PF, **the internal argument is marked with dependent ACC** because there is a different DP (the subject) within the same clause/phase which has valued the features on T via Agree (cf. 23a). **The subject gets default case** (cf. 23b).

  - At PF, **the variable is spelled out** according to the φ-features of its antecedent.

  - At LF, **the Agree-relation** between the subject and the variable **is interpreted as semantic binding**.

4.3 Deriving PoRs: a proposal

- **Recall:** I claimed that the anaphor in PoRs has no syntactic antecedent. Furthermore, PoRs (often) lack any DP with valued φ-features because they are impersonal constructions. According to the assumptions made in the last subsection, the derivation of (25) looks as follows:
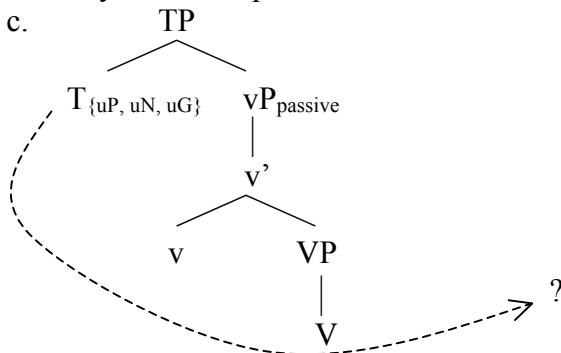
(25) als   sich   gewaschen wurde
      when REFL washed   became

- **The derivation of PoRs - I:**

(26)

- Both, the variable and T enter the derivation with unvalued φ-features. T probes its c-command domain. The variable probes the tree upwards.

- **T agrees with the variable** thereby forming the **unvalued two-member agreement chain < T – variable >, but no valuation can take place** (cf. Agree as 'feature sharing', Frampton & Gutmann 2000, Pesetsky & Torrego 2007).

- **Expectation**: A crash at the interfaces. This looks like the correct result for Dutch or Norwegian, but it isn't for German and Icelandic.

- Note that a **similar situation/problem arises with ordinary impersonal passives** (or other impersonal constructions like quirky intransitives in Icelandic).

(27) a. weil   (*es)   hier gestern   lange getanzt wurde   (German)
         because expl. here yesterday long danced was
     b. Í dag   hefur (*það) verið dansað   (Icelandic)
         today has   expl. been danced
     c.   TP

$T_{\{uP, uN, uG\}}$ $vP_{passive}$

                              v'

                        v   VP

                                   |
                                   V   ?
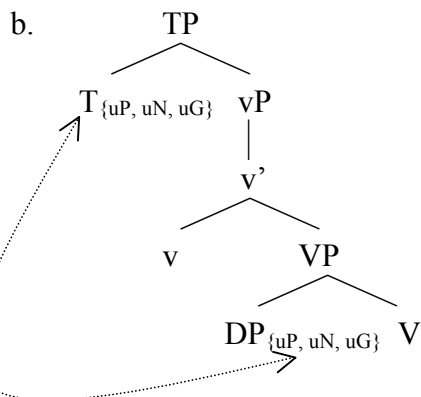
- There is no DP available to value T. We have an **unvalued one-member chain < T >** which should lead to a crash at the PF-interface, contrary to fact.

- **Impersonal passive strategies**:

  - **In some languages, a nominal expletive with φ-features can value T** and check the EPP on T (see Holmberg (2002) for discussion and exemplification).

  - **In some languages** that lack an appropriate (i.e. nominal) expletive (German Icelandic, Dutch, Norwegian) *default agreement* **values T** and saves the derivation of impersonal passives (cf. Ruys 2010).

  - **In other languages** that lack both, an appropriate expletive and default agreement, **impersonal passives are ungrammatical** (e.g. English, cf. Ruys 2010).

(28) **Default agreement (DA)**:   In the absence of any appropriate nominal category, the φ-features on an unvalued probe undergo default valuation [typically 3rd person, singular] (cf. Ruys 2010).

→ DA is a last resort operation taking place before *Transfer*.

→ It avoids that a derivation crashes for purely formal reasons at the interfaces.

→ DA is a costly operation, and, therefore, not available in all languages.

→ **DA on T is a way to rescue impersonal constructions such as impersonal passives**.

The derivation of PoRs – II:

(29) a. als   sich   gewaschen wurde
         when REFL washed   became

   b.   TP
             _____/\
         T$_{\{uP, uN, uG\}}$ vP
                          |
                         v'
                    ___/___
                   v   VP
                        ___/___
                  DP$_{\{uP, uN, uG\}}$ V

- (29) involves an **unvalued two-member agreement chain $\langle T_0 - DP_{Variable}\rangle$**.

Ad Q1 (Binding Theory):

- **The anaphor** has no DP-antecedent; it **gets its φ-features valued by DA**.

- The derivation survives formally. (Our version of Principle A is not violated).

- BUT the derivation does not lead to a semantic Binding Relation at LF.

Ad Q4 (Language Restriction):

- DA is a costly operation.

- Unvalued agreement chains are of varied complexity. DA in (iii) is more costly than in (i).

(i) $\langle head_{\{u\varphi\}}\rangle$ (One member chain)
(ii) $\langle head_{\{u\varphi\}} - head_{\{u\varphi\}}\rangle$ (Two member chain involving heads)
(iii) $\langle head_{\{u\varphi\}} - DP_{\{D, u\varphi\}}\rangle$ (Two member chain involving head and DP)

- Some languages lack DA. (No impersonal passive/construction possible).

- Some languages allow DA only on (chains of) heads of the extended verbal domain (T, v, V). (Impersonal passives/constructions possible)

- Some languages allow DA even on non-homogeneous agreement-chains involving verbal heads and D-elements like anaphors (Impersonal passives and PoRs are possible).

Ad Q3 (Verb Class Restriction):

- DA formally avoids a crash at the interfaces.

- BUT a derivation involving DA on the variable does not lead to a semantic binding relation between two DPs at LF; i.e. the derivation provides no clue how to interpret the variable.

- **The output of the syntactic derivation is comprehensible at the CI-interface only if conceptual knowledge provides further information.**

- With <u>inherently reflexive predicates</u>, it is conceptually clear that no further referent besides the external argument can be involved.

- <u>Naturally reflexive events</u> carry the conceptual expectation that the argument position realized by the unbound reflexive denotes the same entity that acts as the external argument. That is, the semantic coindexation that usually is computed from syntactic binding/agree can be reconstructed on conceptual grounds beyond any doubt.

Ad Q2 (Case Theory):

- **There is no reason to assume that ACC on the variable is not ordinary structural accusative in PoRs**. However, "ordinary" passives do not assign accusative; but see fn 4.).

- There is no reason to assume that the case system active in PoRs is different from the general case system of the language. (That is, it does not make sense to stipulate that only PoRs but not other passives can assign structural object case).

→ **The availability of structural accusative in PoRs must be related to a formal property of anaphors/variables**: *φ-features deficiency*.

- In (23) I formulated a post-syntactic algorithm for object case (ACC). We need to update the mechanism that determines dependent case (30):

(30) **Dependent case** (ACC): A DP is realized at PF with dependent case if ~~a different DP~~ <u>something else</u> (e.g. DA) has valued T via <u>(default)</u> Agree.[18]

Conclusions

- PoRs exist in a subset of the languages with impersonal passive and SE-reflexive.

- They are restricted to inherently and naturally reflexive contexts.

- PoRs are syntactically intransitive but semantically transitive.

- The implicit argument is not the formal antecedent of the reflexive

- Their reflexive relation is not confined to the verbal co-argument domain.

- I proposed that:

  - Default Agreement (DA) formally rescues PoRs. It is a last resort operation.

  - The interpretation of PoRs is facilitated by conceptual knowledge about the event expressed by the vP.

  - Default Agreement triggers dependent accusative case.

---

[18] Note that DA applies before Transfer. Therefore, the case system, while post-syntactic, still operates on purely syntactic information.

Appendix: Some extensions, predictions and problems

♦ PoRs with nominative DP:

(31) a. Auf der Konferenz wurde viel   Unsinn   von sich   gegeben
          At the   conference was   many nonsense.$_{NOM}$ from REFL given
          'People uttered lots of nonsense at the conference'
      b. Anschließend wurde sich   ein   Hamburger gekauft
          Afterwards   was   REFL.$_{DAT}$ a.$_{NOM}$ hamburger bought
          'People bought themselves a hamburger'

- Upward probing must be allowed to pass an internal argument; otherwise we would get obligatory binding of the variable by an internal argument. We know from double object verbs that internal arguments are never obligatory antecedents (32).

(32) He$_k$ showed Mary$_i$ herself$_i$/himself$_k$ in the mirror

Prediction 1: The above example does not involve default agreement. The derivation is similar to reflexive anticausatives and middles (Schäfer 2008a, to appear) that we find in German, Icelandic but also in Dutch or Norwegian. T probes its c-command domain and agrees with the variable but no valuation takes place. T probes further and agrees with the theme. The theme values the chain < T – variable >. Since the variable is valued in the syntax, no repair strategy is necessary. The derivation should be available even in languages that lack Default Agreement for complex agreement chains.

Comment: There is very preliminary indication that such examples involving nominative DPs are judged better in Dutch and Norwegian.

Prediction 2: The variable should be realized with the φ-features of the nominative DP.

- This is in principle correct; but see the following data from Plank (1993):

(33) Firma A$_i$ will sich$_i$ Firma B   einverleiben
      company.$_{NOM}$ A wants REFL.$_{DAT}$ company.$_{ACC}$ B incorporate
      'Company A wants to incorporate/absorb company B'
(34)   The workers of company B say:
          So einfach verleibt   man   sich   uns   nicht ein
          So easily (in)corporates one.$_{NOM}$ REFL.$_{DAT}$ us.$_{ACC}$ not in
          'One does not absorb us so easily'

(35) a.   *So einfach   werden   sich   wir   nicht einverleibt[19]
           So easily   become.$_{PL}$ REFL.$_{DAT}$ we.$_{NOM}$ not   incorporated
      b.   *So einfach   werden   uns   wir   nicht einverleibt
           So easily   become.$_{PL}$ us.$_{DAT}$ we.$_{NOM}$ not   incorporated
      c.   ?So einfach   wird   sich   uns   nicht einverleibt
           So easily   become.$_{SG}$ REFL.$_{DAT}$ us.$_{ACC}$ not   incorporated
      d.   *So einfach   wird   uns   uns   nicht einverleibt
           So easily   become.$_{SG}$ us.$_{DAT}$ us.$_{NOM}$ not   incorporated

---

[19] The judgements remain the same if the order between the nominative and the dative pronoun is changed.

- Formally, we predict b) to be the grammatical version. But the result suggests that there is a semantic binding relation between dative (recipient) and accusative (theme) (*We incorporate ourself into ourself*). The reading makes sense and is a real competitor.

- We see a further repair strategy; default agreement for the chain <T – variable>. The internal argument gets accusative. (See Eyþórsson (2007) on a related effect in Icelandic: In PoRs of double object verbs, the non-reflexive theme (often) keeps accusative).

♦ **Languages having nominal expletives with phi-features**

- If the expletive could value the variable, no default agreement would be necessary and the PoR should be grammatical.

   ▪ Option 1: Passive v/Voice is a phase and the expletive is merged outside of the phase.

   ▪ Option 2: Since the expletive is fully nominal and c-commands the variable, the valued chain <nominal$_{expletive}$ – variable> is the input to semantic interpretation; since the expletive has no θ-role, no interpretation can be computed.

♦ **Overgeneration**

   - Hopefully, the theory involving DA on variables does not overgenerate. The system predicts unbound variables to survive syntactically under specific circumstances. At least some of these well-formed derivations can be filtered out on conceptual grounds.

   - Examples like: "suddenly REFL murdered the president" are filtered out as conceptually deviant (Alexiadou et al 2006, Schäfer 2008a, b). '*Murder*' is conceptually agentive but no agent can be identified as the reflexive has no semantic antecedent. (In Schäfer (2008a, to appear) I argue that reflexive anticausatives have exactly this structure but are conceptually acceptable because they are not conceptually agentive).

   - Examples like '*REFL sleeps*' suffer from empty predication since the reflexive has no semantic antecedent.

   ▪ In general, we must exclude nominative anaphors (Maling 1984, Everaert 1990, Rizzi 1990, Woolford 1999). Since variables are unvalued, they never trigger Agree; therefore, they will not qualify for NOM.

   ▪ However, at the moment **the system, as it stands, makes wrong predictions for Icelandic DAT-NOM-constructions**. If the DAT-subject binds the NOM-object, the system predicts that (i) the verb shows default agreement and (ii) the object becomes realized as accusative reflexive. But we get a nominative object pronoun and verbal agreement (e.g. Everaert 1990).

(36) a. *Honum finnst sig   veikur
          Him.dat finds   REFL.acc sick
      b. Honum finnst ?hann/hann sjalfur (vera) veikur
          Him.dat finds he.nom/he.nom self (be) sick

(37) a. *Maríu   leiðist   sig
         Maria.dat finds.boring REFL.acc
      b. Maríu   leiðist   hún sjálf
         Maria.dat finds.boring her.nom self

→ The system, as it stands, does not correctly implement the competition between reflexives and (locally bound and eventually intensified) pronouns.

← Note however, that **Italian DAT-NOM constructions fulfil the prediction of the system** (cf. Rizzi 1990). This leads of course to the question why a locally bound nominative object pronoun is out in (38a) and why Italian lacks PoRs.

(38) a.   *a loro   interessano   solo se stessi
           to them.dat interest.3.PL only themselves
      b.   (?)a loro   interessa   solo se stessi
           to them.dat interest.3.SG only themselves

♦ **Case on German anaphors**

• German **reflexives clearly carry ordinary Case** in the active.[20]

(39) a. Ich wasche mich   b. Du wäschst dich   c. Er wäscht sich
         I   wash me.ACC   you wash you.ACC   he washes REFL.ACC

(40) a. Hans   wäscht sich wie kein   anderer/wie keinen   anderen
         John.NOM washes REFL like no-one.nom other/   like no-one.ACC other
      b. Hans   hilft sich   wie kein   anderer/wie keinem   anderen
         John.NOM helps REFL like   no-one.NOM other/   like no-one.DAT other

→   The reflexives in the passive should have Case, too; there is no reason whatsoever to
     think that they are exempt from Case Theory just iff they are in the passive.[21]

• But the above tests do not really work in PoRs.

Claim: (41) is out for formal reasons (default agreement is 3. person).

Claim: (42b) - (45b) are marked for semantic reasons. While the nominative comparison opposes two reflexive uses of the predicates involved, the object comparison opposes a reflexive use and a disjoint use. The latter is incompatible with the observation discussed above that the events in PoRs are interpreted as inherently (43) or naturally reflexive (44-46).

(41)   *Es wurde mich/dich   gewaschen
            it   was   me.ACC/you.ACC washed

---

[20] Müller & Sternefeld (1993:359) propose that German reflexives are immune to Case-absorption simply because they "do not need Case in the first place". Since this claim is not tenable for the active (see (44)-(45)) it is a circular proposal for PoRs. (See Schäfer 2008a for argumentation that even the reflexives in middles and anticausatives have structural accusative).

[21] German 'sich' can occur only in accusative or dative positions; in genitive positions, a 3rd person pronoun is used. Once again, this suggests that 'sich' has case.

(42) a. ?Dann wurde wie ein   Profi   getanzt
        then   was   like a.$_{NOM}$ professional danced

(43) a. ?Es wurde sich   wie ein Gentleman   benommen
     b. *Es wurde sich   wie einen Gentleman benommen
         it   was   REFL like a.$_{NOM/ACC}$ gentleman behaved

(44) a. ?Es wurde sich   wie ein   Star gekleidet
     b. *Es wurde sich   wie einen   Star gekleidet
        it   was   REFL like a.$_{NOM/ACC}$ star dressed

(45) a. ??Dann wurde sich   wie ein   Star   rasiert
     b. *Dann wurde sich   wie einen   Star   rasiert
        then   was   REFL like a.$_{NOM/ACC}$ star   shaved

(46) a. ??Hier wird sich wie Freunde   geholfen
     b. ?*Hier wird sich wie Freunden   geholfen
         here was REFL like friends.$_{NOM/DAT}$ helped

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