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Reflexives and Intensifiers in Avar and Bezhta

The regular formal coincidence of elements denoting reflexives and intensifiers in human language has been a long debated puzzle (Edmondson and Plank 1978; König 1991; Siemund 2000; Ljutikova 2002; Gast and Siemund 2006; König and Gast 2007; Gast 2006; Constantinou 2014, a.o.), cf. the WALS map of languages with identical and differentiated forms (<http://wals.info/feature/47A#2/21.0/148.2>); on East Caucasian cf. (Ljutikova 2002; Creissels 2007; Ganenkov Majsak and Merdanova 2009). In this paper, I attempt to clarify the relationship between both classes of pronouns in two East Caucasian languages: Avar (Avar-Andic group) and Bezhta (Tsezic group)¹.

1. Classes of Pronouns

Like many other languages of the East Caucasian family, Standard Avar and Bezhta employ three classes of reflexive pronouns (Uslar 1889: 97–98; Čikobava and Cercvaze 1962: 213–215; Charachidzé 1981: 174; Magomedov 2001; Forker unsp. on Avar; Comrie, Khalilov and Khalilova 2015: 310–311 on Bezhta):

1) **Long-distance (LD-)reflexives**. In Avar, in Absolutive they consist of the reflexive root *ži(n)*-² and the class/number suffix that agrees with the antecedent:

(1)

Class\Number	Singular	Plural
1	<i>ži-w</i>	<i>ž-al</i>
2	<i>ži-j</i>	
3	<i>ži-b</i>	

Oblique case forms do not inflect for class:

(2)

Case\Number	Singular	Plural
Oblique stem	<i>žin-(di)-</i>	<i>ži-de-</i>
Ergative	<i>žin-c:a</i>	<i>ži-de-c:a</i>
Genitive	<i>žin-di-r</i>	<i>ži-de-r</i>
Dative	<i>žin-di-je</i>	<i>ži-de-je</i>
Superessive, or general Locative	<i>žin-d-a</i>	<i>ži-de-da</i>
Subessive	<i>žin-di-ž:</i>	<i>ži-de-ž:</i>
...		

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² The root is common East Caucasian: Proto-Avar-Andi **ži-*, Proto-Tsez **ž:V*, Proto-Lezgian **-iž* ‘self’ (Giginejšvili 1977: 114; Alekseev 1985: 73–74; Nikolayev, Starostin 1994: 1102).

In Bezhta, LD-reflexives do not inflect for class:

(2)

Case\Number	Singular	Plural
Absolutive	<i>žü</i>	<i>žü-wōl</i>
Oblique stem	<i>hini-</i>	<i>hi-de-</i>
Ergative	<i>hini</i>	<i>hide</i>
Genitive 1	<i>hini-s</i>	<i>hi-de-s</i>
Dative	<i>hini-l</i>	<i>hi-de-l</i>
Superessive	<i>hin-ža</i>	<i>hi-de-ža</i>
Subessive	<i>hini-ž</i>	<i>hi-de-ž</i>
...		

The typical context for the LD-reflexives is the subordinate clause embedded under a matrix verb denoting speech, thought or perception (3), although they may occur in other types of subordinate clauses (4) or oriented toward a discourse logophoric center (5), cf. (Ganenkov, Majsak and Merdanova 2009):

Avar:

(3) *rasuli-da la-le-b b-uḱ-un b-ugo he-s: žindi-r haq:al:uḷ:*
 Rasul-LOC know-PRT-3 3-be-GER 3-be he-ERG self-GEN about

ṭex: dande ha-b-ule-b b-uḱ-in
 book together make-3-PRT-3 3-be-MSD

‘Rasul_i knew that he_i was making a book about him_i.’ [www.radioerkenli.com/a/several-writers-awarded-in-dagestan/25058810.html]

Bezhta:

(4) *ožö žü iḷe-j-a suḱo-doj hicak-ijo*
 boy self call-PRT-OBL man-LOC approach-PST
 ‘The boy_i approached the man who called him_i.’

Bezhta:

(5) *hini-l j-iḱe-š öž-di abo-s okko j-uḱo-l-lo-li*
 self-DAT 4-know-PRS boy-ERG father-GEN1 money 4-perish-CAUS-PST-MSD
 ‘(He) himself_i knows that the boy_j spent (his) father_k’s money.’

2) **Simple reflexives**, among all reflexive pronouns, have the widest distribution in both languages. They formally differ from the LD-reflexives in that they add a contrastive identifying marker, *-go* in Avar and *-zu/-žü* in Bezhta (the distribution of allomorphs follows the umlaut alternation). The clitic, apart from its use in reflexives, covers a large array of meanings like ‘even’, ‘same’ and the like (Forker, unsp.):

(6) Avar: Absolutive *ži-w-go* ‘himself’, *ži-j-go* ‘herself’,... *ž-al-go* ‘themselves’, Ergative Singular *žin-c:a-go*, Superessive Plural *ži-de-da-go*... etc.;

(7) Bezhta: Absolutive *žü-žü* ‘self’, Ergative Singular *hini-zu*, Superessive Plural *hi-de-ža-zu*... etc.

Moreover, simple reflexives include the 1 and 2 person pronouns:

(8) Avar: *dun* ‘I’ vs. *dun-go* ‘myself’ Absolutive; *du-c:a* ‘you (sg.)’ vs. *du-c:a-go* ‘yourself’ (sg.) Ergative; *niže-r* ‘our (excl.)’ vs. *niže-r-go* ‘of ourselves (excl.)’ Genitive... etc.

(9) Bezhta: *do* ‘I’ vs. *do-zu* Absolutive and Ergative; *ilo-l* ‘we’ vs. *ilo-l-zu* ‘ourselves’ Dative; *dibo* ‘your (sg.)’ vs. *dibo-zu* ‘of yourself’ (sg.)... etc.

Simple reflexives are available in local and long-distance uses. The contrast between them and the LD-reflexives is found mostly under the “logophoric” matrix predicates:

Avar:

(10) a. *ins:u-c:a was-as:-da ab-una žindi-r kuč-dul ɕ:ale-jilan*
 father-ERG son-OBL-LOC say-PST self-GEN vers-PL recite.IMP-QUOT
 ‘Father_i asked his son_j to recite his_{i/*j} (father’s) verses.’

b. *ins:u-c:a was-as:-da ab-una žindi-r-go kuč-dul ɕ:ale-jilan*
 father-ERG son-OBL-LOC say-PST self-GEN-EMPH vers-PL recite.IMP-QUOT
 ‘Father_i asked his son_j to recite his_{j/*i} (son’s) verses.’

Bezhta:

(11) a. *muhamad-i-l j-iqe-š rasul-i hini-s jačo*
 Muhamad-OBL-DAT 4-know-PRS Rasul-ERG self-GEN1 heart

j-uRo-l-a?a-ca-s-li
 4-die-CAUS-NEG-PRS-PRT-MSD
 ‘Muhamad_i knows that Rasul will not offend him_i’

b. *muhamad-i-l j-iqe-š rasul-i hini-s-zu jačo*
 Muhamad-OBL-DAT 4-know-PRS Rasul-ERG self-GEN1-EMPH heart

j-uRo-l-a?a-ca-s-li
 4-die-CAUS-NEG-PRS-PRT-MSD
 ‘Muhamad knows that Rasul_i will not offend himself_i’

3) **Complex reflexives** form a construction that consists of two simple reflexives (Avar) or two simple or LD-reflexives (Bezhta). Its first component takes the case of the antecedent and the second component is marked with the target case:

Avar:

(12) *he-s: žin-c:a-go ži-w-go haq:iq:ija-w imam-lun rik:-a-nigi,*
 he-ERG self-ERG-EMPH self-1-EMPH true-1 imam-PRED believe-PST-CNC

šemeris:e-b xalq:-al: he-s:-da heres:i-imam-ilan guro-ni ab-ičo
 many-3 people-ERG he-OBL-LOC false-imam-QUOT not-CND say-PST.NEG

‘Although he regarded himself the true Imam, many people called him none other than a false Imam.’ [Гъамушиса Асадула МухIмаев, Муридизм ва царизмалде данде маIарулаз гъабураб кькеркьеялда гьелъул кIвар. МахI. 2009].

Complex reflexives are strictly local:

Avar:

- (13) *ʕali-c:a ab-una wac:-as: žin-c:a-go žindi-je-go mina b-os-an-ilan*
 Ali-ERG say-PST brother-ERG **self-ERG-EMPH self-DAT-EMPH** house 3-buy-PST-QUOT
 ‘Ali_i said that brother_j had bought a house for himself_{j/*i}’

Bezhta (Tladal dialect):

- (14) *is-ti-l r-aʔ-na-j abo-l hini-l žü çika-li-ʔ egäh-äl*
 brother-OBL-DAT 4-want-CNV-AUX father-DAT **self-DAT self** mirror-OBL-LOC see-INF
 ‘Brother wants father_i to see himself_i in the mirror.’

Unlike with simple reflexives, their subject orientation may fail, cf. the similar facts recorded in (Kibrik 2003 [the data first published in 1980]; Ljutikova 2002), mostly in the Andic languages and Khvarshi, cf. also (Khalilova 2009: 431) and (Polinsky and Comrie 1999: 329) on Tsez:

Avar:

- (15) a. *ʕalχ-ul ħajwan-aʔ: žin-c:a-go ži-b-go x:ix:-ula*
 wilderness-GEN animal-ERG **self-ERG-EMPH self-3-EMPH** feed-GNR
 b. *ʕalχ-ul ħajwan žin-c:a-go ži-b-go x:ix:-ula*
 wilderness-GEN animal **self-ERG-EMPH self-3-EMPH** feed-GNR
 ‘The wild animal feeds itself.’

Bezhta:

- (16) a. *aminat-i-l surat-ba-ʕa hini-l žü j-iqe-ʔ-eš*
 Aminat-OBL-DAT photo-OBL-LOC **self-DAT self** 2-know-NEG-PST
 b. *hini-l žü aminat surat-ba-ʕa j-iqe-ʔ-eš*
self-DAT self Aminat photo-OBL-LOC 2-know-NEG-PST
 ‘Aminat did not recognize herself on the photo.’

Mismatches in number (17–18) and **case** (19) suggest that the coincidence in inflectional characteristics between a reflexive and its antecedent does not fall under the standard mechanism of agreement:

Avar, simple reflexive:

- (17) *he-w ži-de-r-go maç:-al-da ʕala-na*
 he-1 **self-PL-GEN-EMPH** language-OBL-LOC speak-PST
 ‘He_i spoke his_i (lit.: themselves’, i.e. his people’s) language.’

Bezhta, long-distance reflexive:

- (18) *hössidi-n-na j-iq-aʔ-s zuqo-jo žü-wōl ʕo.waba.ʕ-ō-li*
 nobody-DAT-ADD 4-know-NEG-PRT be-PST **self-PL** be.ill.PL-PST-MSD
 ‘Nobody_i knew that they_i were ill.’

Bezhta, complex reflexive:

- (19) *hok-co hini-s hini-l žü čäχ-ijo spisok-li-ʔ*
 he-ERG **self-GEN1 self-DAT** self write-PST list-OBL-LOC
 ‘He_i wrote down his_i name (lit.: himself) in the list.’

In (19), the case forms of the complex reflexive are invariable, the first part is in Genitive 1, and the second part is in Dative, irrespective of the context; on a similar phenomenon in Tsez cf. (Polinsky and Comrie 1999).

All classes of reflexives may serve as **bound variable** pronouns, but none of them, contrary to what is claimed in (Rudnev 2011), is restricted to that kind of use:

Avar:

- (20) *coho aminat-i-da la-na ži-j-go surat-al-da*
 only Aminat-OBL-LOC know-PST self-2-EMPH picture-OBL-LOC
 ‘Only Aminat recognized herself on the photo.’ (both strict and sloppy readings available):
 1) other persons did not recognize Aminat (strict)
 2) other persons did not recognize themselves (sloppy)

Bezhta (Tladal dialect):

- (21) *aminat hin-qä(-žü) gičeq-irö čiqa-li-?, betä do-na gičeq-i-rö*
 Aminat self-LOC(-EMPH) look.2-PST mirror-OBL-LOC then I-ADD look.2-PST
 ‘Aminat looked at herself in the mirror, and then I did’ (ambiguous):
 1)... look at Aminat’ (strict)
 2)... look at myself’ (sloppy)

2. Intensifiers : “Against the Expectation”

Simple reflexives and LD-reflexives can serve as intensifiers.

The view that has been long adopted by the researchers is that both reflexives and intensifiers’ use comes in conflict with the addressee’s expectations and corrects them: among coarguments, it is not expected that the subject coincide with any other argument of the same predicate, or an adjunct nominal — which is marked with the **reflexive**. Likewise, in a larger discourse, an unlikely role of the central protagonist is denoted by the **intensifier**:

Avar:

- (22) *do-w ži-w-go roq:-o-w w-at-ičo*
 he-1 self-1-EMPH house-LOC-1 1-find-PST.NEG
 ‘It turned out that he himself was not at home.’

Bezhta:

- (23) *žü gō-jo, qōwa m-oq’-eče*
 self come-PST children 3-bring-PST.NEG
 ‘([S]he) came him/herself, without bringing the children.’ (Comrie, Khalilov and Khalilova 2015: 310)

The structural relationship of an intensifier with its antecedent, unlike that of a reflexive, can vary, and very little, if any, restrictions are noticeable:

Avar:

- (24) *l:iqa-w či-jas:-da žindi-r-go ho-jal: hanč-ula-ro*
 good-1 man-OBL-LOC self-GEN-EMPH dog-ERG bite-GNR-NEG
 ‘His own_i dog does not bite a good man_i.’

- (25) *žin-c:a-go kuca-n b-uķ-ara-b ču-ja-l: he-w*
 self-ERG-EMPH tame-CNV 3-AUX-PST.PRT-3 horse-OBL-ERG he-1 down-LAT

Null elements cannot be **focused**, **negated** or **conjoined**, because these operations need overt (phonological) material. Whenever a participant that could otherwise be not expressed overtly undergoes these operations, it is expressed with an intensifier:

Interrogative focus, Avar:

- (31) a. *kala-le-w w-ug-e-w-ali, ġin-cin tam-ičo do-s:*
 speak-PRT-1 1-AUX-PRT-1-Q ear-even move-NEG.PST he-ERG
 ‘Spoken to or not, he didn’t pay attention.’
- b. *žin-da-jiš; ħox:o-da-jiš; kala-le-w w-ug-e-w-ali,*
 self-LOC-Q wooden.block-LOC-Q speak-PRT-1 1-AUX-PRT-1-Q
- ġin-cin tam-ičo do-s:*
 ear-even move-NEG.PST he-ERG
 ‘It was all the same speaking to him or to a wooden block, he didn’t pay attention.’

Coordination, Avar:

- (31) a. *was-as:-e b-oļ:-un b-ugo Ø zadača ha-b-ize*
 boy-OBL-DAT 3-want-CNV 3-AUX Ø problem solve-3-INF
 ‘The boy wanted to solve the problem.’
- b. *was-as:-e b-oļ:-un b-ugo zadača*
 boy-OBL-DAT 3-want-CNV 3-AUX problem
- musa-c:a-gi žin-c:a-go-gi ha-b-ize*
 Musa-ERG-ADD self-ERG-EMPH-ADD solve-3-INF
 ‘The boy wants that Musa and himself solve the problem.’

Coordination, Bezhta:

- (32) a. *ož-di-l j-aṭ-na gej Ø li-ʔ edok-al*
 boy-OBL-DAT 4-want-CNV AUX Ø water-LOC enter-INF
 ‘The boy wants to enter the water.’
- b. *ož-di-l j-aṭ-na gej žü-nä is-na li-ʔ edo.ba.k-al*
 boy-OBL-DAT 4-want-CNV AUX self-ADD brother-ADD water-LOC enter.PL-INF
 ‘The boy wants that himself and brother enter the water.’

Negation, Bezhta:

- (33) *rasul-i-l hini j-o-jče, ħok-co j-owa-l j-aṭ-na gej*
 Rasul-OBL-DAT self.ERG 4-do-NEG.CNV he-ERG 4-do-INF 4-want-CNV AUX
 ‘Rasul wants not himself, but someone else to do (this).’

LD-reflexives in this kind of intensifier function (including Avar): **resumptive** pronouns under **relativization**: whenever a gap created by relativization and bound by the relative operator is illicit, e.g. it is a possessor in a NP in an oblique case:

Bezhta:

- (34) **(hini-la)* *abo-l* *mi* *aḱ-ḷa* *gähijo* *öžö* *ōqo-jo*
self-GEN2 father-DAT you(sg.) mind-LOC be.PRT boy 1.come-PST
‘The boy came whose father (Dat.) remembers you.’

Avar:

- (35) **(žindi-r)* *sumka-jal:-u-b* *dir* *tex:* *b-uḱ-ara-j* *jas* *naq:e ana*
self-GEN bag-OBL-LOC-3 my book 3-be-PRT-2 girl away go.PST
‘The girl in whose bag my book was went away.’

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