Her, Hers, Herself and *Her Own*: Deriving Reflexive Possessive Pronouns in English[1]

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Abstract

Taking *her*, *hers*, *herself* and *her own* as an example, this short article analyzes the internal syntactic structure of English personal pronouns in connection with their morphological properties within the framework of Distributed Morphology. The core proposal is that *her own* is a reflexive possessive complex pronoun that is functionally equivalent to the unlexicalized form *herself's*. The supporting arguments are as follows. First, empirically, the purported "lexical reflexive" use of *her* leaves unexplained the syntactic and morphological peculiarity of *her* and the form-meaning mismatch triggered by the morphological poverty of it as a reflexive indexical. Second, theoretically, the morphological compactness of English pronouns and their syntactic functions blur head-phrase distinction. Third, theoretically again, pronouns are syntactically distributed on multiple nodes in their derivation but morphologically clustered as words, with phi-features, the reflexive feature and the possessive feature entering into the derivation separately but united later on before vocabulary insertion.

Keywords: personal pronoun, anaphor, reflexive, possessive, syntax, morphology

1. Introduction

It has been claimed that the personal pronoun in English has two possessive forms (dependent and independent) and one reflexive form (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 426, for example) and that the possessive *her* is lexically ambiguous between a plain pronoun and a reflexive pronoun (Truswell 2014: 226). This short article, in contrast, claims that the personal pronoun in English has a third possessive form, namely the reflexive possessive (or possessive reflexive) form,[2] as

[1] This work was supported by NFFSC [No. 21XYY018].
[2] Studies such as Burzio (1991: 100-101), Safir (1995: 570ff) and König and Vezzosi (2007) note the anaphoric properties of *own*. They, however, do not characterize *one's own* as a reflexive possessive pronoun.

given in (1), and denies that *her* is lexically anaphoric/reflexive.

(1) A third form of English possessive pronouns

Dependent possessive	Independent possessive	Reflexive	Reflexive possessive
my, our	*mine, ours*	*myself, ourselves*	*my own, our own*
your	*yours*	*yourself, yourselves*	*your own*
her, his, its, their	*hers, his, its, theirs*	*herself, himself, itself, themselves*	*her own, his own, its own, their own*

Empirical and theoretical reasoning are provided for this claim. The purported "lexical reflexive" use of *her* makes it peculiar in that it is asymmetrical to the true reflexive *herself* with regard to their morpho-syntactic properties. If *her* is assumed to have lexical denotation of reflexivity and treated the same as *herself*, it leaves open the questions as to why there is a form-meaning mismatch triggered by the morphological poverty of *her* as a reflexive indexical and why there is absence of *self's*, which leads to a lexical gap for possessive reflexive pronouns. These issues are readily solved by identifying *her own* as a possessive reflexive pronoun alternative to the unlexicalized form *herself's*, where lexicalization of *self's* is blocked by *own*.

From the formal perspective, it is argued that *her*, *hers*, *herself* and *her own* are derived in the same fashion in syntax but differ with regard to which of the functional determiner heads such as possessive D, reflexive D and personal D plus a silent nominal are spelled out by them after being assembled by syntax.

2. *Her* and *Herself*

It is well known that the pronoun *SHE* is subject to morphological marking for case, possessivity and reflexivity. However, when it is a possessor, *SHE* may be unmarked for reflexivity, leading to a poverty of reflexive morphology. The poverty of morphology is significant when the possessive *her* as an indexical is contrasted with other indexicals such as the non-possessive *her* and *herself*. The contrast is observed in at least two ways.

First, the possessive *her* is subject to local binding (2), while the non-possessive *her* is not (3). This is mysterious given that they occur in the identical syntactic environments, in which they both are c-commanded by a local subject, which is a condition for deriving reflexivity

under the Government and Binding theory (Chomsky 1981, 1986).

(2) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_i$ pictures.

(3) *Heidi$_i$ loves her$_i$.

Reinhart and Reuland (1993) propose an alternative way of deriving reflexivity and binding, without appealing to c-command.

(4) a. A reflexive-marked syntactic predicate is reflexive.
b. A reflexive semantic predicate is reflexive-marked. (Reinhart and Reuland 1993)

The gist of Reinhart and Reuland's (1993) claim is that reflexivity must be licensed by reflexive-marking.[3] However, in sentences such as (2), reflexivity is neither overtly marked on the pronoun, instantiating the poverty of reflexive morphology, nor intrinsically marked by the predicate, since verbs such as *love*, with its subject being an experiencer, not an agent, are excluded from predicates that take an argument of the type "DP (λx (V_{tran} x, x))".[4]

Second, *her* is contrasted to *herself*. While the possessive phrase *NP of her* can be paraphrased by *her NP*, with indexing in the clause unchanged, *NP of herself* cannot be paraphrased by *herself's NP* because *herself's* is not a legitimate form in English. Instead, *NP of herself* is paraphrased by *her NP*, in which *her* is reflexive, instantiating the poverty of morphology again. This renders *her* asymmetrical to *herself*.

(5) Heidi$_i$ loves pictures of her$_{i/j}$.

(6) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_{i/j}$ pictures.

(7) Heidi$_i$ loves pictures of herself$_i$.

(8) *Heidi$_i$ loves herself$_i$'s pictures.

Stated in terms of distribution, *her* and *herself* in their reflexive use are not in complementary distribution. A further observation confirms that the asymmetry and non-complementary distribution between *her* and *herself* are attributed to the poverty of morphology of *her* in its reflexive use. The possessive reflexive function is performed by four distinct forms, where there

[3] Reuland characterizes reflexivity as a dependency involving two semantic roles of the same predicate borne by one semantic argument (Volkova and Reuland 2014: 591).
[4] See Reuland (2018) for formal treatment of reflexivity.

is always a dedicated marker of possessivity, while there is not always one of reflexivity. In (9), *self* is employed as a reflexive marker and in (10) and (11), *own* is employed. The fact that when *own* is present, *her* is obligatorily coreferential with the subject indicates that *own* is a true reflexive marker.[5] In contrast, in (11), there is no formal indication of reflexivity, the poverty of reflexive morphology shown again for *her*.

(9) Heidi$_i$ loves pictures of herself$_i$.

(10) Heidi$_i$ loves pictures of her$_i$ own.

(11) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_i$ own$_i$ pictures.

(12) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_i$ pictures.

In sum, *her* witnesses a poverty of reflexive morphology, triggering a sort of form-meaning mismatch, in contrast with *herself*, which involves the reflexive marker *self*. Truswell (2014: 226) and many others capture this asymmetry between *her* and *herself* and that between possessive and the non-possessive *her* by claiming that possessive pronouns such as *her* in English are lexically ambiguous between plain pronouns and reflexive pronouns. According to such a claim, reflexivity is intrinsic to possessive *her*, which functions as the genitive form of the unlexicalized reflexive item *SHE-self*, while this is not true of the non-possessive *her*, which is exclusively non-reflexive. However, to regard the possessive *her* as lexically reflexive leaves open the question as to why this asymmetry is sensitive to possessivity, or why intrinsic reflexivity is restricted to possessive pronouns such as *her*, given that reflexivity and possessivity are not inherently dependent on each other.

(13) Heidi$_i$ loves herself$_i$. (reflexivity, not possessivity, obtained)

(14) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_j$ pictures. (possessivity, not reflexivity, obtained)

Therefore, the problems triggered by the morphological poverty of *her* as a reflexive indexical cannot be explained neatly by an approach that takes reflexivity as lexically encoded by possessive pronouns. An approach such as Reinhart and Reuland (1993), who regard reflexivity as a property of predicates, cannot account for them, either, as noted in our earlier discussion.

[5] See Burzio (1991: 100-101), Safir (1995: 570ff) and König and Vezzosi (2007) for further discussion of the anaphoric/reflexive properties of *own*.

All this leads us to, on the one hand, the expectation that *herself's* should exist as a possessive reflexive pronoun, contra the fact. On the other hand, it leads us to the question of why the monomorphemic *her* is able to act as a *prima facie* anaphor. In light of these, it is predicted that there in fact exists an alternative form that performs the function that the hypothesized *herself's* would perform. I argue that that alternative is *her own*. That is, when *her* occurs alone and refers back to a local subject, the constellation of *her* and a hidden *own*, but not *her* alone, acts as an anaphor. In this sense, *her* is not a simplex anaphor, or it is not even an anaphor, with reflexivity encoded by *own*, explicit or hidden. We thus obtain two distinct structures in (16) and (17) for (6), repeated as (15).

(15) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_{i/j}$ pictures.

(16) [$_{CP}$ Heidi$_i$ loves [$_{DP}$ her$_j$ [$_{NP}$ pictures]]]

(17) [$_{CP}$ Heidi$_i$ loves [$_{DP}$ her$_i$ [$_{DP}$ *own*$_i$ [$_{NP}$ pictures]]]][6]

This means that the structure such as (18), in which *her* is coreferential with the subject, is not available.

(18) *[$_{CP}$ Heidi$_i$ loves [$_{DP}$ her$_i$ [$_{NP}$ pictures]]]

Consequently, (15) and (2), with the structure (17), is subject to Principle A, not to Principle B. This accounts for why such sentences give rise to the *prima facie* violation of Principle B.

3. *Her Own*

The above discussion suggests that *her own* is a possessive reflexive pronoun, contra the previous claim (Büring 2005: 53; Truswell 2014: 226) that English does not have a possessive reflexive pronoun. It then turns out that what does not exist in English as previously claimed is *herself's* and what does exist as a possessive reflexive pronoun is *her own*.

Her own displays properties of both possessivity and reflexivity. Possessivity is its inherent property, as indicated by the above examples and its diachronic origin as a possessive verb or an adjective.[7] On the other hand, the fact that *own* must be coreferential with *her* and the subject

[6] The categorial status of *own* is discussed in section 5 in detail.

[7] Historically intensifiers are often currently reflexive markers in various languages (Reuland 2018: 93). *OED* reports *own* in Old English as an adjective used to emphasize possession or ownership. In Present-Day English, too, *own* receives the label "adjective" among others. However, it differs from adjectives in that it, when preceded

indicates its reflexivity, as illustrated in (19). That *her* and *own* must always be coreferential indicates that *her own* is in fact a single indexical,[8] as illustrated in (20).

(19) Heidi$_i$ loves her$_{i/*j}$ own$_{i/*j/*k}$ pictures.

(20) Heidi$_i$ loves [her own]$_{i/*j}$ pictures.

Functionally, *own* is equivalent to *self's*, an unlexicalized structure in Present-Day English.[9] *Self* is a reflexive determiner (Ghomeshi and Ritter 1996: 95ff, for example) and *-'s* is a marker of possessivity. Possessive reflexive pronouns observed cross-linguistically also suggest a compositional structure for *own*. In Chinese, the reflexive pronoun *ziji* 'self', when combined with the possessive marker *de*, expresses reflexive possession. As exemplified in (21), when co-occurring with *ziji-de* 'self's, own', the personal pronoun *ta* 'she' must be coreferential with the local subject (Huang et al. 2009: Ch.9), much as in (19). Therefore, the complex *ta-ziji-de* is equivalent to *her own*.

(21) a. Xiao Hong$_i$ xi huan ziji$_{i/*j}$ -de zhao pian.
b. Xiao Hong$_i$ xi huan [ta-ziji]$_{i/*j}$ -de zhao pian.
Xiao Hong-NOM love she-self -GEN picture
'Xiao Hong loves her (own) pictures.'

In Japanese, the complex item formed of the reflexive pronoun *zibun*/*zibun-zisin* and the genitive marker *no* expresses possessivity. *Zibun-zisin-no* 'self-self's', not *zibun-no* 'self's',[10] is closer to *own* functionally because *zibun* 'self', known as a long-distance reflexive, may not be locally bound, while *zibun-zisin* 'self-self' must be locally bound (Tsujimura 2014: 259). *Kanozyo-zisin* 'she-self' is locally bound, and when combined with *no*, it is functionally equivalent to *her own*.

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by a personal possessive pronoun, functions as an independent pronoun, e.g., *Heidi did it on her own*. See König and Vezzosi (2008) for detailed discussion on crucial differences between *own* and stacked adjectives, and on its pronoun/determiner-like properties.

[8] Quirk et al. (1985: 363) notes that *own*, when preceded by a personal pronoun such as *her own*, finds the closest subject as its antecedent.

[9] Siemund (2002: 3) reports that the genitive form of *self* occurs in the function of Present-Day English *own*. See also König and Vezzosi (2006) and Vezzosi (2006) for relevant discussion.

(i) æt his *selfes* ham [Beo 1147]
'at his own home.' (Siemund 2002: 3)

However, this use of *self* does not survive into Present-Day English because it, I presume, is blocked by the availability of its morphologically unrelated alternative *own*.

[10] Nakamura (1989) claims that *zibun* exemplifies the *SE*-anaphor, as Reinhart and Reuland (1993) argue for Dutch *zich*, while *zisin* exemplifies the *SELF*-anaphor.

(22) a. Hanako$_i$ -wa zibun$_{i/*j}$ -no namae-o wasure-ta.
b. Hanako$_i$ -wa zibun-zisin$_{i/*j}$ -no namae-o wasure-ta.
c. Hanako$_i$ -wa [kanozyo-zisin]$_{i/*j}$ -no namae-o wasure-ta.
Hanako-NOM she self -GEN name-ACC forget-PST
'Hanako forgot her (own) name.'

In Mongolian, *öör-in*, the genitive form of the reflexive pronoun *öör*, with *-in* being a genitive marker, is known as a reflexive possessive pronoun.[11] Mongolian, however, differs from all Chinese, Japanese and English in that it allows omission of both the personal possessive pronoun *tüün-ne* and the reflexive possessive pronoun *öör-in* in expressing reflexive posssession. This is because in Mongolian there is a dedicated suffix *-aa* (and its allophonic variants *-ee*, *-oo* and *-öö*), which is obligatorily present for expressing reflexive posssession.[12]

(23) a. Badma$_i$ ner-ig-oo marta-v.
b. Badma$_i$ öör$_{i/*j}$ -in ner-ig-oo marta-v.
c. Badma$_i$ [tüün-ne[13] öör]$_{i/*j}$ -in ner-ig-oo marta-v.
Badma she-GEN self -GEN name-ACC-RX forget-PST
'Badma forgot her (own) name.'

Notice that just like *her own*, each of the reflexive possessive forms in these languages is a single indexical, which is coreferential with a local subject.

All this suggests that *own* is a reflexive pronoun[14] and is syntactically and semantically compositional, although it is not morphologically analytic.[15] I treat *her own* as a complex word

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[11] See Janhunen (2012: 141) for relevant discussion.

[12] *-Aa* is not a pronoun or determiner. However, it must be present when coreferentiality is assigned to the subject and the pronoun, which is the possessor of the entity denoted by the noun affixed by *-aa*. If coreferentiality is not assigned to the subject and the pronoun, *-aa* must not be present. Instead, another marker *-ni* or *-čin* is used for expressing the possessivity but not reflexivity. See Bai (2024) for discussion on the binding (Principle A) properties of this suffix.

[13] Two forms *-in* and *-ne* are used for marking the genitive in Mongolian, with a complementary distribution.

[14] *Own* is not exclusively reflexive. It displays properties with both anaphors and intensifiers, as discussed by König and Vezzosi (2007). Its intensive property licenses it in unbound position, as shown below.
(i) a. These are Mary's own children.
b. My own losses were much greater.
If *own* is interpreted as an anaphor in such sentences, logophoricity should be relevant, just as in the case of *self* anaphors.
(ii) Max$_i$ was afraid that Mary would hate no one but himself$_i$.

[15] *Own*, however, is different from Chinese *ziji-de*, Japanese *zibun-no/zibun-zisin-no* and Mongolian *öör-in* in that it is dependent on a personal possessive pronoun. *Ziji-de*, *zibun-no/zibun-zisin-no* and *öör-in*, in contrast, do not demand the presence of a personal possessive pronoun. In fact, the reflexive-alone case is encountered more often than the case in which a personal pronoun is present in Chinese, Japanese and Mongolian. Sometimes, the presence of a personal possessive pronoun with these items even lowers the acceptability of the sentence. That *her* is necessary for *own* is arguably attributed to the fact that English is not a zero-determiner language in contrast with

consisted of two free morphemes. *Her own* itself is not listed in the lexicon as a pronoun. Instead, it is a constellation of lexical items driven by a syntactic operation such as fusion, as we will see in §5. I take the view that reflexivity of event participants (or nominal arguments) is not a matter of the lexicon but rather an instantiation of a relation that is established configurationally, much as in the case of Binding. Reflexivity of event predicates such as *wash*, in contrast, may be lexical because it has to do with the thematic structure of the predicates.

4. *Hers*

Hers differs from *her*, *herself* and *her own* in two respects. First, *hers* does not select for NPs. Second, with reflexive meaning, *hers* alone can be a predicative following a copula, while the others cannot.

(24) *Heidi loves hers pictures.

(25) Heidi$_i$ loves pictures of hers$_{i/j}$.

(26) Heidi$_i$ loves hers$_i$.

Given that a determiner involving a silent nominal cannot select for a noun as its complement but can stand as a predicative following a copula (e.g., **What I want is the* versus *What I want is this*), *hers* is a DP involving a silent nominal.

On the other hand, the two properties observed above can be explained by assuming that the possessive feature [poss] in *hers* is satisfied by the silent nominal inside it and therefore is not available for entering into another possessive relation. The morphological difference between *hers* and *her* in addition to their syntactic difference described above allows us to conclude that the morpheme *-s* in *hers* is the exponent of the silent nominal, which is selected for by *her*.

This *-s* finds its counterpart in Mongolian, in which the silent nominal is spelled out by *-h*. Similarly, *tüün-ne-h* 'hers' cannot select for a noun but can stand as a predicative. Chinese and Japanese lack such a morpheme. They express the same meaning using possessive pronouns that are functionally equivalent to *hers*.

(27) a. Zhe xie zhao pian shi ta-de. [Chinese]

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the other three languages.

b. Korera-no shasin wa kanozyo-no da. [Japanese]

c. Edgeer zurag-uud t üün-ne-h. [Mongolian]

these pictures TOP she-GEN-(h) PL

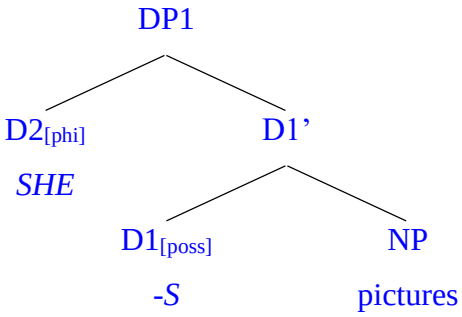
'These pictures are hers.'

5. From Syntax to Morphology

This section explicates the internal syntactic organization of *her*, *hers*, *herself* and *her own*. The basic argument is that these pronouns reflect the blurredness of the head-phrase distinction in their syntactic derivation. The derivation starts with merging heads and phrases/roots and ends up as complex/phrasal heads, followed by a morphological operation, vocabulary insertion (VI).

Davis (2023) proposes that possessive pronouns in English spell out the fused outcome of a possessive determiner $D_{[poss]}$ and the material in its Spec. Based on a *bare phrase structure* theory of labeling (Chomsky 1995a, b), in which non-projecting heads are equivalent to phrases, Davis (2023) assumes that a bare determiner D2 occupies Spec of D1. Applying this analysis to *her pictures*, we obtain (28), in which *SHE* and *-S* represent the content of D2 and D1, respectively.

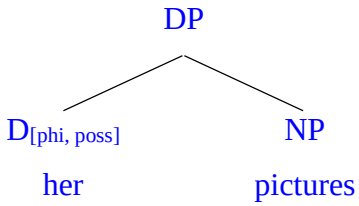
(28) Initial structure of *her pictures*



After (28) is built and before the VI rule is applied, D2 and D1 undergoes fusion,[16] thereby creating a single node, with their features [phi] and [poss] clustered on it. Next, the VI rule applies; as a result, a non-analytic morpheme *her* is inserted into the $D_{[phi, poss]}$, as in (29). Thus, two syntactic nodes end up as a complex head in a 'portmanteau' fashion, with a particular morpheme assigned to it.

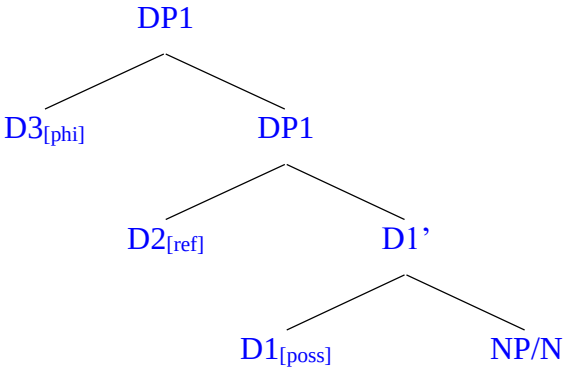
[16] *Fusion* here, a term of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993; Embick and Marantz 2008), refers to a syntactic operation that gets two (or more) nodes united into one before the application of the morphological operation VI.

(29) Ultimate structure of *her pictures*



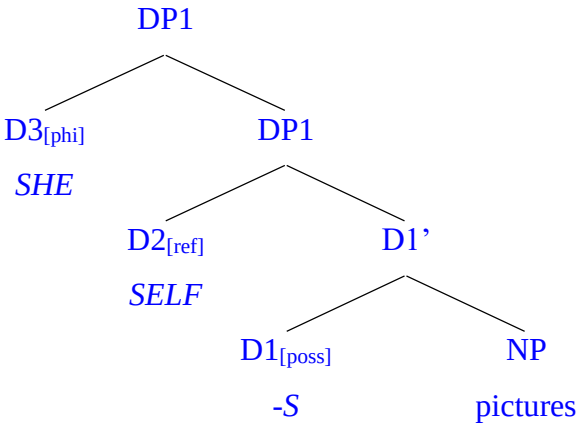
Adopting this fusion analysis of the monomorphemic pronoun *her*, I argue that the initial structure of anaphors maximally involves three distinct D heads, each encoded with phi-features [phi], a reflexive feature [ref] and a possessive feature [poss],[17] as shown below. The complement of D1 is either a full nominal or a silent one, which I assume to be a terminal nominal node.

(30) Initial structure of anaphors



Given this structure, the bimorphemic pronoun *her own* is syntactically distributed on multiple nodes as in (31) in their initial derivation.

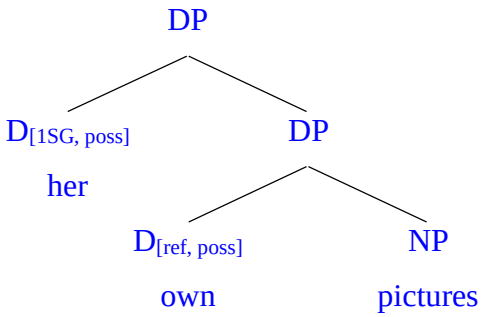
(31) Initial structure of *her own pictures*



[17] [phi], [ref] and [poss] enter into the derivation separately given anaphors, with [ref], are often deficient in phi-features (Reuland 2018: 2) and not all anaphors have [poss].

In (31), *SHE*, *SELF*[18] and *-S* represent the lexical contents of the possessive D head, $D1_{[poss]}$, the reflexive D head, $D2_{[ref]}$, and the personal pronominal D head, $D3_{[phi]}$, respectively. Unlike the case of *her* in (29), both fusion and VI apply twice in (31). When they apply to $D2_{[ref]}$ and $D1_{[poss]}$, *her* is assigned to their fused outcome, i.e., $D_{[ref, poss]}$, as in (32), and when they apply to $D3_{[ref]}$ and $D1_{[poss]}$, *own* is assigned to their fused outcome, i.e., $D_{[phi, poss]}$. Importantly, after the application of fusion, DP becomes a layered projection, containing two D heads. A higher D deals with personal possession, and a lower D deals with reflexive possession.

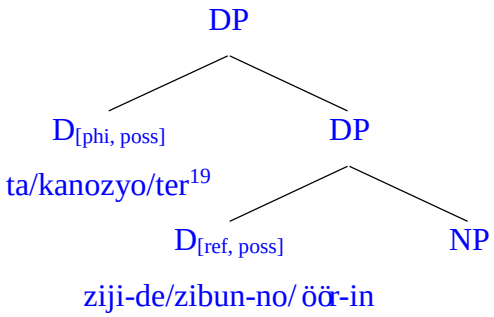
(32) Ultimate structure of *her own pictures*



Notice that the features [ref] and [poss] are bundled on the lower head D, which leads to the possessive reflexive property of *own*.

The same structure is assigned to Chinese *ziji-de*, Japanese *zibun-no* and Mongolian *öör-in*. Unlike English, the other languages may assign a bimorphemic form to a bundled head.

(33) Ultimate structure of Chinese, Japanese and Mongolian counterparts of *her own*



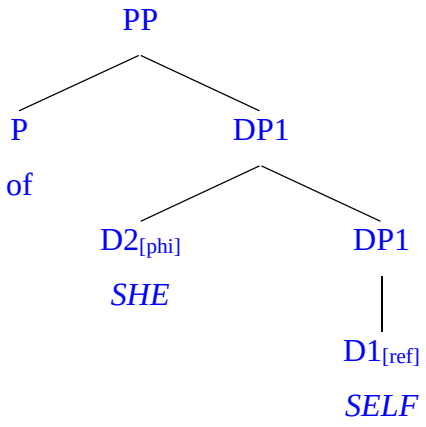
[18] Assuming that pronouns are determiners, *SHE* and *SELF* are both determiners. Following Ghomeshi and Ritter (1996: 95ff), *SELF* is a pronoun but lacks phi-features, unlike *SHE*. *SELF* also lacks a referential index, according to Ghomeshi and Ritter (1996). It, however, seems to me that *SELF* has a referential index that does not signify person. The lack of phi-features makes *SELF* dependent on personal pronuns. This means that $D_{[poss]}$ must be present with $D_{[phi]}$, whether $D_{[phi]}$ has a morpho-phonological realization or not. Given this *own*, analogous to *self's*, is an impersonal pronoun.

[19] The unreflected form of this pronoun is *ter* and in some colloquial dialects, especially those in Eastern Inner Mongolia, its genitive form is *ter-ne* not *tüün-ne*. However, *tüün-ne* is the standard genitive form of *ter* and its formation involves assimilation of consonant.

For anaphors in PPs, e.g., *pictures of herself*, (34) is the plausible structure under the proposed analysis. Assuming that non-projecting heads are equivalent to phrases under the *bare phrase structure* theory, $D1_{[ref]}$ does not take a complement but selects another non-projecting head $D2_{[phi]}$ in its Spec in the same way as (29). Since there is no possessive determiner head $D_{[poss]}$ present in this structure, the VI rule does not insert a possessive form, for example, *her* into $D2_{[phi]}$. Instead, the accusative form *her* is inserted because *HE* is assigned accusative case by *of*. The reflexive morpheme *self* is inserted into $D1_{[ref]}$. *Her* and *self* are combined to form *herself*. Notice that $D2_{[1SG]}$ and $D1_{[ref]}$ are not fused, unlike the case of *her* and *own*. This means that only the possessive determiner $D_{[poss]}$ is subject to fusion.

The feature [poss] must be valued by selecting for a nominal, whether full or silent. If it is not valued, the derivation is ruled out by Full Interpretation (Chomsky 1986, 2001). This explains why *her own* without selecting for a nominal is not allowed in the post-copula predicative position. In addition, this is the reason why *her* and other genitive pronouns such as *my* and *his* are not available as arguments or predicatives, e.g., **John loves her*$_{genitive}$ and *It's my*. The same holds true of Mongolian *tüün-ne (öör-in)* 'her (own)'. This means that Chinese *ta ziji-de* and Japanese *kanozyo zibun-no* as counterparts of *her own* are interpreted like *hers*, not *her own*, when they occur as arguments or predicatives.

(34) Initial structure of *(pictures) of herself*

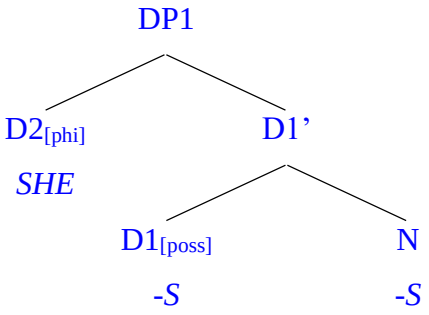


The same holds true of the case in which an anaphor is the object of the verb, e.g., *Heidi loves herself*. Importantly, *herself* cannot occur in prenominal position since $D_{[poss]}$ is absent from its derivation, rendering it unable to select for a nominal possessum. This also provides a theoretical explanation of why the purportedly possessive reflexive pronoun *herself's* does not exist.

Hers has an initial structure as in (35). $D1_{[poss]}$ and $D2_{[phi]}$ are fused into one node, which

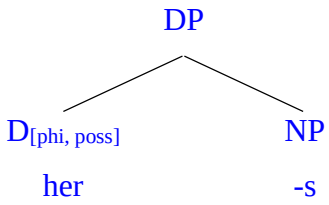
is assigned *her* by the VI rule, as in (36).

(35) Initial structure of *hers* (non-anaphoric)



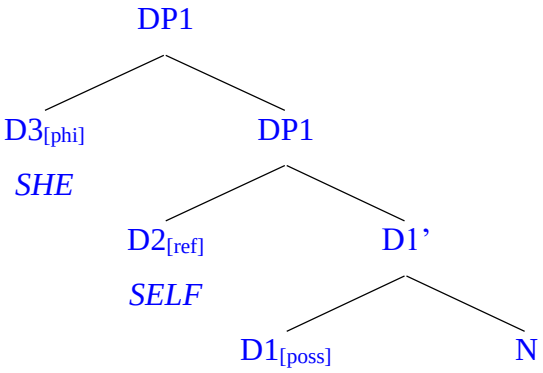
The silent nominal involved in *hers*, lacking [phi], is not a full nominal and therefore is realized not as a lexical word but as a suffix.[20] The VI rule selects *-s* for it. Ultimately, *hers* is formed by combining *her* and *-s*.

(36) Ultimate structure of *hers* (non-anaphoric)



With $D1_{[ref]}$ absent from (35), *hers* is not coreferential with the subject. In the case that corerentiality is assigned to *hers* and the subject, *hers*, functioning as an anaphor, has the following structure, in which $D1_{[poss]}$ fuses into $D3_{[phi]}$ and $D2_{[ref]}$ respectively, and the resulting complex heads are assigned morphemes *her* and *own*, as in (38).

(37) Initial structure of *hers* (anaphoric)

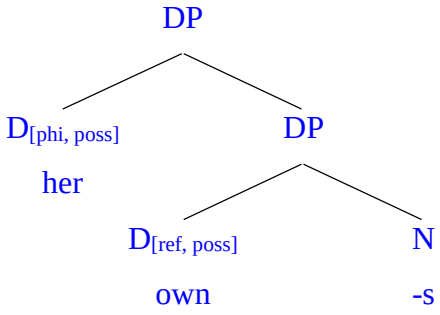


[20] The silent nominal lacks not only [phi] but also maximum lexical content. This means that it is some sort of indefinite pronoun given Baker's (2003: 95ff, 127ff) argument that nominals that have minimal lexical content and therefore don't have a substantive standard of identity/sameness are pronouns.

-S *-S*

The silent nominal is realized as a suffix. The VI rule selects *-s* for it. It is expected that *-s* is attached to *her own* to form *her owns*. However, *own* is subject to omission on the surface as in the case of *her own*. With *own* unpronounced but with [ref] present, the resulting form is *hers*, which is interpreted as a possessive reflexive pronoun involving a silent nominal.[21]

(38) Ultimate structure of *hers* (anaphoric)



Notice that *-s* in *hers* is not a realization of [poss] but of the silent nominal. However, *-s* in *his* and *John's* used as an argument or a predicative cannot be determined in the light of this. It might be either the genitive marker or the realization of the silent nominal. This means that haplology occurs with *his-s* and *John's-s*.

6. Conclusion

This short article has shown that *her*, *hers*, *herself* and *her own* as well as their variants in (1) are formed in the same manner. Following the Distributed Morphology spirit, syntactic nodes are generated and clustered in syntax and one or more of them are assigned a particular morpheme in a portmanteau fashion. Notable consequences of the proposed analysis are the following. First, in English, *one's own* exists as a possessive reflexive pronoun, as in many other languages. *Her* as well as other personal possessive pronouns such as *his* and *their* are not lexically ambiguous between a plain pronoun and a reflexive pronoun. The *prima facie* lexical ambiguity is in fact a structural ambiguity.[22] Second, the reflexive D is fused into the possessive

[21] *Her owns* and the other variables such as *his owns*, *your owns* and *their owns* are in fact attested, though sporadically, in *COCA*. This is compatible with the optionality of presence of *own*.

[22] It should be the case that only predicates can be lexically reflexive, e.g., English *wash* and Dutch *verdedigen* 'defend'; arguments of predicates are not lexically reflexive in the sense that reflexivity of arguments is configuration/context-dependent, that is, it is licensed in syntax. Reuland (2018) relates lexical reflexivity (of predicates) to bundling of theta-roles, indicating that lexical reflexivity is a matter of verbs, not of role-barers, i.e., arguments.

D and is assigned a monomorphemic *own*, which is more economic than *self's* in terms of PF spelling, thereby blocking the hypothesized possessive reflexive *herself's* (as an instance of *oneself's*). Third, a silent nominal is present in anaphors and it may or may not have a morpho-phonological realization according to different languages.

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