

## Māori Reflexivization – Possessive-reflexives and Intra-sentential Pronominalization

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Reflexivity in Māori is achieved by a pronoun in situ, this may be accompanied by a *support form*. The initial aim of the study was to account for the seemingly arbitrary presence of the *support form*. The examples of reflexivity, from Bauer (1993), included possessive noun-phrases. There have been relatively few grammatical analyses of Māori. As a Polynesian language, Māori has unique features which have yet to be adequately captured. In view of this, the functional model Role and Reference Grammar was applied to the reflexive. Role and Reference Grammar was created with the specific intent to be able to account for features within languages, without imposing characteristics that do not actually occur. In the Role and Reference Grammar model, Van Valin (2005: 162-167) outlines three conditions which govern the behaviour of co-reference reflexives within a simple clause. The Māori reflexive constructions were examined under these constraints listed in (1), (2) and (3).

- (1) Role hierarchy condition on reflexivization:  
The reflexive pronoun must not be higher on the Privileged Syntactic Argument Hierarchy (as applied to the selection of privileged syntactic arguments in the language) than it's antecedent
- (2) Superiority condition on Reflexivization:  
A bound variable may not be logical structure superior to its binder
- (3) Domain of obligatory reflexivization constraint:  
Within a simple clause, one of two co-referring NPs which are semantic co-arguments must be realized as a reflexive, while one of two co-referring NPs which are not semantic co-arguments may be realized as a reflexive.

Given Bauer's data (1993: 165-185), the analysis found that the *support form* occurs under specific circumstances. These circumstances are defined by the headedness of both the antecedent noun-phrase and the reflexive noun-phrase. Talmy (2001: 105) defines possessive-reflexives semantically as constructions in which "the subject is the possessor of the object". The presence or absence of the *support form*, in possessive constructions such as (4) and (5) respectively, changes the antecedent from a primary to a dependent constituent within a noun-phrase. This raises questions as to whether constructions like (4) and (5) should be correctly categorized as possessive-reflexives or as intra-sentential pronominalization. This phenomenon does not seem to be restricted to Māori. Dixon (1994: 138) supplies the translated example "John's mother hid himself". In Dixon's example, a pronoun *himself* co-references a dependent constituent *John* of a noun-phrase. The antecedent is the modifier of the subject. This is also seen in Māori, as in (5).

- (4) I hoatu te tama o Hone i te kai mā-na (anake)  
PST give the son P John ACC the food DAT-3SG SUPPORT.FORM  
"John's son<sub>i</sub> gave him<sub>i</sub> the food"
- (5) I hoatu te tama o Hone i te kai mā-na  
pst give the son p John acc the food dat-3sg  
"John<sub>i</sub>'s son gave him<sub>i</sub> the food"

The Māori reflexives highlight that reflexive binding theories do not adequately account for possessive-reflexives. They also beg the question as to whether possessive-reflexivity must have an obvious syntactic realization? Or should they be categorized solely semantically? This paper will outline these issues surrounding Māori possessive-reflexives.

<i>List of Abbreviations:</i> 3:third person, ACC:accusative, DAT:dative, P:preposition, PST:past, SG:singular
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### List of References

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