

## Reflexive markers in Latvian from typological perspective

Traditionally, it is considered that reflexive markers in the Latvian language are the final *-s* of verbs (*mazgāties-s* ‘wash oneself’) and in dialects there are also mentioned the elements of prefix that stand between a verb prefix and root (e.g., Couronian subdialects of the Middle Dialect *sa-sa-runāt* (Standard Latvian *sarunātie-s*) ‘talk’).

If the system of the Latvian language reflexive markers is viewed from the angle of typology, it should be acknowledged that the system goes beyond the light or the affixation markers of reflexivity i.e. the reflexive final affix *-s*. The Latvian language possesses the heavy or lexical markers (pronouns *sevi* ‘oneself’, *sev* ‘for oneself’) and also the super heavy or double lexical marker (pronoun *pats,-i* ‘self’ and pronoun *sevi* ‘oneself’ (or *sev* ‘for oneself’)). In addition, each of these marker types displays several variations. According to Haiman (1983), Kemmer (1993), Enger & Nessel (1999) the following system of reflexive markers in Latvian can be proposed (each of these marker types displays several variations; on their semantics see also Geniušienė (1987)):

### 1) light markers

- a) post-positive reflexive affix *-s* (irrespective of the presence or lack of the prefix)

(1) *mazgātie-s* ‘wash oneself’

*apsietie-s priekšautu* ‘to put an apron round oneself’

- b) prepositive reflexive affix *-sa-* (*-si-*, *-s-*) between prefix and root (in Latvian is used only in the Middle Dialect, Couronian subdialects and the High Latvian Dialect)

(2) *nuo-sa-mazgāju* ‘washed myself’ (Standard Latvian *nomazgāju-s*)

*pa-sa-vērt* ‘to look at’ (Standard Latvian *pavēro-s*)

- c) the combination of two affixes – prepositional and post positional – *-sa-* (*-si-*, *-s-*) ... *-s* (is used in Latvian only in the Couronian subdialects of the Middle Dialect and in the High Latvian Dialect)

- (3) *pa-sa-priecātie-s* ‘enjoy oneself a bit/have some fun’ (Standard Latvian *papriecājo-s*)  
*ap-sa-rauduotī-s* ‘break into tears’ (Standard Latvian *apraudājo-s*)

## 2) heavy markers

a) the combination of the verb and the reflexive pronoun *sevi* (direct object)

- (4) *Es pazīstu sevi*  
 I know.PRS.1 **myself.ACC**  
 ‘I know myself’

b) the combination of the verb and the reflexive pronoun *sev* (indirect object)

- (5) *Es ticu sev*  
 I believe.PRS.1 **myself.DAT**  
 ‘I believe in myself’

## 3) superheavy markers

a) uncorrelated reflexive markers

a<sub>1</sub>) the combination of the verb, the pronoun *pats,-i* and the reflexive pronoun *sevi*  
 (direct object)

- (6) *Es pazīstu pats sevi*  
 I know.PRS.1 **self.NOM.M** **myself.ACC**  
 ‘I know myself’

a<sub>2</sub>) the combination of the verb, the pronoun *pats,-i* and the reflexive pronoun *sev*  
 (indirect object)

- (7) *Es ticu pats sev*  
 I believe.PRS.1 **self.NOM.M** **myself.DAT**  
 ‘I believe myself’

b) correlated reflexive markers

b<sub>1</sub>) verb + reflexive pronoun *sevi* + pronoun *pašu* (both in accusative; direct object)

- (8) *Es pazīstu sevi pašu*

I know.PRS.1 **myself.ACC** **self.ACC**  
'I know myself'

b<sub>2</sub>) verb + pronoun *pašam* (M), *pašai* (F) + reflexive pronoun *sev* (both in dative; indirect object)

(9) *Es ticu pašam sev*  
I believe.PRS.1 **self.DAT.M** **myself.DAT**  
'I believe myself'

In the examples (6)-(7), the pronoun *pats/pati* 'self' agrees with the subject in gender and number. In Latvian the definite pronoun *pats/pati* 'self' may also agree with the (direct or indirect) object taking the accusative or dative case and shifting the word order to the pronouns (examples (8)-(9)) (Kalnača & Lokmane 2012).

Light (examples (1)-(3)) and heavy (examples (4)-(5)) reflexive markers are cognate in Latvian as they are etymologically related. Super heavy markers (examples (6)-(9)) are non-cognated and can also be in an agreement with the heavy reflexivity marker in accusative (example (8)) or dative (example (9)) case. Heavy and superheavy reflexive markers represent reflexivization strategies of a minor grammatical importance.

The proposed typological description of reflexive markers in Latvian can be considered as a linguistic novelty.

## References

- Enger, H.-O. & Nessel, T. (1999). The value of cognitive grammar in typological studies: the case of Norwegian and Russian Passive, Middle and Reflexive. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics*, 22., 27–60.
- Faltz, L. M. (1985). *Reflexivization: A Study in Universal Syntax*. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Geniušienė, E. (1987). *The Typology of Reflexives*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Haiman, J. (1983). Iconic and economic motivation. *Language*. Vol. 59., 781–819.
- Kalnača, A. & Lokmane, I. (2012). Semantics and Distribution of Latvian Reflexive Verbs. *Multiple Perspectives in Linguistic Research on Baltic Languages*. Usonienė, A., Nau, N. & Dabašinskienė, I. (Eds.) Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 231–259.
- Kemmer, S. (1993). *The Middle Voice*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- König, E. & Siemund, P. (with Töpfer, S.). (2008). Intensifiers and Reflexive Pronouns. In: Haspelmath, M., Dryer, M. S., Gil, D. & Comrie, B. (Eds.) *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*. Munich: Max Planck Digital Library, chapter 47. <http://wals.info/feature/47> [Accessed on 2011-02-13]

Schladt, M. (2000). The typology and grammaticalization of reflexives. *Reflexives. Forms and Functions*. Frajzyngier, Z. & Curl, T. S. (Eds.) Amsterdam – Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 103–124.