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Enoch O. Aboh and Thom Westveer

# On reflexives with an object in French, German, and Gungbe

## 1 Introduction

A common property of human languages is to allow reflexive constructions in which an apparently transitive verb licenses two participants which refer to the same referent also functioning as subject of the clause, as illustrated here in (1a) and (1b) in French and German, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. *Il se lave.* [French]  
He REFL.3SG wash.3SG  
b. *Er wäscht sich.* [German]  
He wash.3SG REFL.3SG.ACC  
'He washes himself.'

The apparent transitive nature of the verb in such constructions raises the question whether these reflexive sentences should be analyzed as involving transitive structures in which the reflexive pronoun represents an argument of the verb or rather as instances of intransitive structures, in which the reflexive pronoun is not an argument but serves a functional purpose (Reinhart and Siloni 2005).

At first sight, it seems reasonable to assume a transitive structure for these sentences, since the French example (1a) can be compared to example (2a) from which one can derive the clitic alternative in (2b). Notwithstanding language specificities, a comparable scenario could be imagined for German.

- (2) a. *Jean lave la voiture.*  
John wash.3SG DET car  
'John washes/is washing the car.'

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<sup>1</sup> In writing this paper, one thing was clear to us: comparison of typologically and genetically unrelated languages always leads to new observations. This rewarding feeling is one of the many things that Liliame Hageman made us discover (as her student for one of us and as the student of her student for the other). We are grateful to her for showing us the way. We are also grateful to two anonymous reviewers whose comments helped improve the paper significantly. All remaining errors are obviously ours.

- b. *Jean la lave*      *lɑ̃.*  
 John 3SG wash.3SG 3SG  
 ‘John washes/is washing it.’

If one were to maintain the comparison to transitive verbs, the next question to answer would be how to account for the reflexive meaning. How to analyze the French or German reflexive pronouns *se* and *sich*, respectively?

There have been various proposals in the literature, but the one we adopt in this paper is Reinhart and Siloni (2005). In their account for reflexives cross-linguistically, these authors argue that the reflexive pronoun (e.g., French *se* or German *sich* in (1a–b)) is not an argument of the verb, but a grammatical element that licenses case. Therefore, reflexivization allows manipulation of the argument structure of the verb such that the two thematic roles of a transitive verb are bound to one position only. This arity operation, they show, may take place in the lexicon or in syntax, hence the distinction between lexicon and syntax languages.

We refer the reader to Reinhart and Siloni (2005) for a detailed discussion and the theoretical and typological implications of the analysis. In this paper, we focus on a related construction which Reinhart and Siloni (2005) did not discuss specifically but which we account for by adapting their analysis. Beside the reflexive constructions in (1a–b), in which the reflexive pronoun bears accusative case, French and German also have a reflexive construction that contains an additional direct object marked with accusative case, while the reflexive pronoun takes dative case (3–4). The case shift is visible in German with first or second person pronouns, as in (4b):

- (3) a. *Il se lave les mains.*  
 He REFL.3SG wash.3SG the.PL hand.PL  
 b. *Er wäscht sich die Hände.*  
 He wash.3SG REFL.3SG the.PL hand.PL  
 ‘He washes his hands.’
- (4) a. *Je me lave les mains.*  
 I REFL.1SG wash.1SG the.PL hand.PL  
 b. *Ich wasche mir die Hände.*  
 I wash.1SG REFL.1SG.DAT the.PL hand.PL  
 ‘I wash my hands.’

This paper extends Reinhart and Siloni’s (2005) theory to these examples. Building on our findings, we propose an analysis of Gungbe (Kwa) seemingly unrelated constructions (5) in which the constituent that represents the additional object in French and German is present, but there is no reflexive pronoun even though the sentence has a reflexive meaning only.

- (5) *Sùrù klɔ̀ àlɔ̀.*  
 Suru wash hand  
 ‘Suru washed his hand(s).’

We address the following questions (i) What licenses the presence of both a direct object and a reflexive pronoun in these reflexive sentences? (ii) How to account for case distribution in these reflexives? (iii) How to account for the Gungbe sentences?

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 briefly presents Reinhart and Siloni’s (2005) analysis of reflexive constructions. In section 3, we take a closer look at the reflexive construction with an additional argument in French and German, and motivate the analysis elaborated in section 4. Section 5 extends the analysis to the Gungbe data. We argue that this language involves a similar structure as German and French even though the reflexive element is silent. Section 6 concludes the paper.

## 2 Reinhart and Siloni’s analysis of reflexives

Reinhart and Siloni’s (2005) analysis is motivated by the observation that the reflexive pronoun does not behave like a typical internal argument. Some of the empirical facts that led to this conclusion are reproduced below. For the sake of the discussion we mainly use French data to illustrate the authors’ line of argumentation, but the reader is referred to the paper for a detailed discussion on French, German and typologically different languages.

### 2.1 The reflexive pronoun is not an argument of the verb

Focusing on the distribution of the French reflexive clitic *se*, the authors show that this element does not exhibit typical properties of internal arguments but seems to be required in the reflexive construction to license Case. Building on Kayne (1975), who showed that French *se* differs from object clitics with regard to both its reflexive meaning and structural behavior, Reinhart and Siloni (2005) argue that French reflexive sentences pattern with intransitive rather than with transitive sentences.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Reinhart & Siloni (2005) also discuss expletive insertion in intransitives and reflexives as indication of the parallels between the two structures, but see Koenen & Neeleman (2001) for an alternative on expletive insertion in German.

Causative constructions instantiate this behavior: In French, a *faire*-causative construction involving a transitive verb requires the preposition *à*, which introduces the external argument/Agent of the embedded verb as in (6a). Example (6b) is ungrammatical because the preposition is missing.

- (6) a. *Je ferai laver Max à Paul.*  
 I make.FUT wash.INF Max to Paul  
 b. \**Je ferai laver Max Paul.*  
 I make.FUT wash.INF Max Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul wash Max.’

With an intransitive verb, however, the pattern is reversed: the external argument/Agent must not be introduced by the preposition hence (7a) is ungrammatical unlike (7b).

- (7) a. \**Je ferai courir à Paul.*  
 I make.FUT run.INF to Paul  
 b. *Je ferai courir Paul.*  
 I make.FUT run.INF Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul run.’

Reflexive *faire*-causatives line up with intransitive sentences in precluding the preposition *à*.

- (8) a. \**Je ferai se laver à Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL wash.INF to Paul  
 b. *Je ferai se laver Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL wash.INF Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul wash himself.’

Finally, reflexive *faire*-causatives are different from transitive sentences with a clitic pronoun, since the latter occurs in a higher position than the reflexive, and the construction must involve the preposition *à* (9b).

- (9) a. \**Je le ferai laver Paul.*  
 I 3SG make.FUT wash.INF Paul  
 b. *Je le ferai laver à Paul.*  
 I 3SG make.FUT wash.INF to Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul wash him.’

That reflexives pattern with intransitives could be interpreted as indication that reflexive verbs are unaccusatives. The following section shows that this is not the case.

## 2.2 Reflexives are not unaccusatives

Reinhart and Siloni show convincingly that French reflexives should not be analyzed as unaccusatives, but rather as unergatives. If reflexives were unaccusatives, this would mean that the subject function is occupied by the internal argument. This predicts that reflexives and unaccusatives should pattern similarly with regard to defining properties of the internal argument. French *en*-cliticization represents an effective tool to test internal argumenthood. As the examples in (10) show, unaccusative verbs allow expletive insertion doubled with *en*-cliticization.

- (10) a. *Il est arrivé trois filles.*  
 There is arrived three girls.PL  
 ‘There arrived three girls.’
- b. *Il en est arrivé trois.*  
 There of.them is arrived three  
 ‘There arrived three of them.’

Even if an unaccusative sentence contains the reflexive pronoun *se*, as for instance in middles, *en*-cliticization is still possible. This is illustrated in (11):

- (11) a. *Il s’ est cassé beaucoup de verres.*  
 There REFL is broken many of glass.PL  
 ‘There broke many glasses.’
- b. *Il s’ en est cassé beaucoup.*  
 There REFL of.them is broken many  
 ‘There broke many of them.’

However, when the sentence expresses a genuine reflexive meaning, *en*-cliticization is disallowed, as indicated by (12b):

- (12) a. *?Il s’ est lavé beaucoup de touristes.*  
 There REFL is washed many of tourist.PL  
 ‘There washed themselves many tourists.’
- b. *\*Il s’ en est lavé beaucoup.*  
 There REFL of.them is washed many  
 ‘There washed themselves many of them.’

The fact that *en*-cliticization is not possible with reflexives shows that the subject of a reflexive verb is the external argument. This led Reinhart and Siloni

to conclude that French reflexives should be analyzed as unergatives rather than as unaccusatives.<sup>3</sup>

Summarizing therefore, French reflexives show distributive properties which distinguish them from transitive and unaccusative verbs formally. With this in mind, the next question to answer is how to account for the reflexive pronoun in such a construction.

### 2.3 Reflexivization as arity operation

A conclusion that arises from the discussion in the previous paragraphs is that the subject of reflexives is the external argument. The apparent reflexive pronoun is not an argument of the verb: it is a grammatical device. In terms of their analysis, Reinhart and Siloni (2005) argue that reflexivization consists of two operations:

- (i) Bundling: this operation bundles any non-assigned thematic role to the external theta-role. The operation happens upon merger of the external theta-role.
- (ii) Case reduction: absorbs the case of the argument whose theta-role is targeted by bundling.

In French, case reduction is achieved thanks to the reflexive pronoun *se*, taking place in syntax. In terms of Reinhart and Siloni (2005), reflexives instantiate reduction of the internal argument. Such an arity operation takes place in syntax or in the lexicon depending on the language, a cross-linguistic variation that the authors account for on the basis of the Lexicon-Syntax parameter. In languages like French and German, the operation occurs in syntax, and correlates with specific constructions which allow bundling and case reduction. Other syntax languages include Romance languages in general, Czech,

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<sup>3</sup> This conclusion is not uncontroversial since reflexivization triggers a change of the auxiliary from *avoir* to *être*, a hallmark of unaccusative verbs.

(i) *J' ai lavé ma main.*  
 I have washed my hand  
 'I washed my hand.'

(ii) *Je me suis lavé la main.*  
 I REFL be.1SG washed the hand  
 'I washed my hand.'

In this regard, we refer the reader to de Alencar and Kelling (2005), Labelle (2008), Oya (2010), and references therein for arguing that reflexive constructions involve transitive verbs.

Serbo-Croatian, and Greek. In lexicon languages, however (e.g. Hebrew, Dutch, English, Hungarian, Russian) reflexive constructions generally exhibit specific morphologies that can be seen as evidence of the availability of arity operations within the lexicon. Reinhart and Siloni further show that cross-linguistic differences that distinguish syntax languages from lexicon languages are not limited to reflexive constructions only. We refer the reader to their paper for further discussion. The following section discusses French and German reflexives containing an additional argument.

### 3 Reflexives with an internal argument

If reflexives are unergatives, it is unexpected that they would involve an internal argument as in the examples under (3) repeated below for convenience.

- (13) a. *Je me lave les mains.*  
 I REFL.1SG wash the.PL hand.PL  
 b. *Ich wasche mir die Hände.*  
 I wash REFL.1SG.DAT the.PL hand.PL  
 ‘I wash my hands.’

#### 3.1 Distinguishing between two sentence types

Let us first take a closer look at these constructions. Beside the sentences in (13), French and German also display the possessive constructions in (14), which involve a transitive verb and a possessive noun phrase functioning as object.

- (14) a. *Jean lave ses cheveux.*  
 John wash.3SG his.PL hair.PL  
 b. *Jan wäscht seine Haare.*  
 John wash.3SG his.PL.ACC hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’

These constructions, however, are ambiguous between the reflexive meaning in (13) (i.e., John is washing his own hair) and a situation in which *John* is washing someone else’s hair. The ambiguity arises with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun only but it is sufficient to illustrate the difference between these possessive constructions



and the reflexive ones under study in this paper. Compare, for instance, the following examples from French:

- (15) a. *Jean lave les/ses cheveux à lui.*<sup>4</sup>  
 John wash.3SG the.PL/his.PL hair.PL to him  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*à lui* > (i) *Jean* / (ii) someone else)
- b. *Jean lave ses cheveux.*  
 John wash.3SG his.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*ses* > (i) *Jean* / (ii) someone else)
- c. *Jean se lave les cheveux.*  
 John REFL wash.3SG the.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*se* > *Jean*)
- d. *Jean lui lave les cheveux.*  
 John to.him wash.3SG the.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*lui* > someone else)

These examples show that the constructions involving a third person possessive argument are ambiguous (15a–b), unlike the reflexive sentence with additional object in (15c). Example (15d) indicates that constructions involving clitic pronouns should be treated differently (see also example 9).

These observations hold for the relevant German examples too:

- (16) a. *Jan wäscht die/seine Haare für ihn.*  
 John wash.3SG the.PL/his.PL hair.PL for him  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*ihn* > someone else)
- b. *Jan wäscht seine Haare.*  
 John wash.3SG his.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*seine* > (i) *Jan* / (ii) someone else)
- c. *Jan wäscht sich die Haare.*  
 John wash.3SG REFL the.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*sich* > *Jan*)
- d. *Jan wäscht ihm die Haare.*  
 John wash.3SG to.him the.PL hair.PL  
 ‘John washes his hair.’ (*ihm* > someone else)

French and German largely overlap, as can be concluded from the comparison between examples (15) and (16). Though the German example (16a) is not ambiguous, unlike the French equivalent (15a), the sentences with a possessive phrase (i.e., 15b, 16b) are ambiguous in both languages.

<sup>4</sup> It is possible to add – *même* to the pronoun *lui* (creating *lui-même*) to disambiguate this sentence.

In German, case morphology distinguishes between simple reflexives and a reflexive with an additional object: a simple reflexive as in (17a) requires accusative case on the reflexive pronoun, while a reflexive construction with an additional object involves a reflexive pronoun with dative case (17b).

- (17) a. *Ich wasche mich.*  
 I wash.1SG REFL.1SG.ACC  
 'I wash myself.'
- b. *Ich wasche mir die Hände.*  
 I wash.1SG REFL.1SG.DAT the.PL hand.PL  
 'I wash my hands.'

This contrast suggests that the additional argument is associated with a benefactive theta-role. This is compatible with the fact that German benefactives are usually marked with dative case.

- (18) a. *Ich helfe ihm.*  
 I help.1SG him.DAT  
 'I help him.'
- b. *Er gibt ihr ein Buch.*  
 He give.3SG her.DAT a.ACC book  
 'He gives her a book.'

In French, the reflexive pronoun does not show case morphology and thus behaves like weak or clitic pronouns according to the typology of Cardinaletti and Starke (1996). We take this to be evidence that the reflexive pronoun is a clitic in French, and a full pronoun in German.

### 3.2 The structural make-up of the reflexive pronoun

Following the literature on clitic pronouns in Romance (e.g., Kayne 1975, Cardinaletti and Starke 1996, Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002), we assume that clitics, weak pronouns, and strong pronouns involve different structural properties: clitics are heads, weak pronouns are reduced (or deficient) DPs, while strong pronouns are full DPs. This would mean that the French reflexive pronoun is a head that realizes a functional head position within the spine of the clause. With regard to German *sich*, Cardinaletti & Starke (1996) argue that it is a strong pronoun expressing a full DP structure. Similarly to full DPs, it can be coordinated with the object pronoun *mich*, as in (19a). This is not possible with the French reflexive *se* (19b). As a full DP, *sich* must be licensed in a specifier position.

- (19) a. *Er sieht sich und mich.*  
 He see.3SG REFL and me.ACC  
 b. *\*Il se et me voit.*  
 He REFL and me see.3SG  
 ‘He sees himself and me.’

Summarizing therefore, we assume *se* to be a clitic that spells out a head position within the clause, while *sich* realizes a specifier position. Under Reinhart and Siloni’s (2005) approach, both elements fulfill the same function as case absorbers. In extending their analysis to these specific cases, we propose that *se* and *sich* are realizations of the same functional projection: French reflexive *se* spells out the head of the functional projection whose specifier hosts *sich* in German.

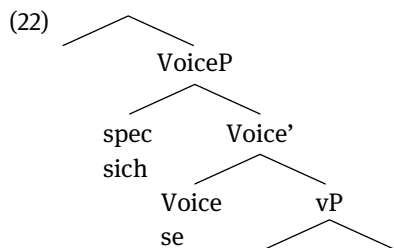
The question that now arises is the nature of this projection. Here, we adhere to Sportiche’s (2014) approach to French *se*, in which he proposed a unified account for *se* in reflexives as well as in other constructions with no reflexive meaning, such as, middles and inchoatives. The examples in (20) are taken from (Sportiche 2014: 115).

- (20) a. *Ces choses se savent.*  
 DEM.PL thing.PL REFL know.3PL  
 ‘People know these things.’  
 b. *Les habits se sont salis.*  
 The.PL cloth.PL REFL be.3PL dirtied  
 ‘The clothes got dirty.’

These examples indicate that *se* can occur in a variety of constructions in French, which do not all require a reflexive reading. While these data further support Reinhart and Siloni’s (2005) view that *se*, and also German *sich*, should not be analyzed as ‘reflexivizing morphemes or pronouns’, they are further evidence for Kayne (2000), as cited in Sportiche (2014: 115), that there is a unique *se* in French, which has the following properties:

- (21) a. *se* is composed of a morpheme *s-* and an epenthetic *-e* (in front of consonants)  
 b. the *s-* morpheme parallels first and second person morphemes *m-* and *t-* in combining with a variety of other endings yielding *moi/toi/soi*, *mien/tien/sien*, *mon/ton/son*, *mes/tes/ses*.  
 c. *s-* is incompatible with gender, unmarked for number and unspecified for person (unlike third object person clitics *le/la/les/lui/leur*).  
 d. *s-* is \*not\* intrinsically anaphoric in the *sense needed for reflexivity* (although its lack of person specification may be a precondition for anaphoricity) as shown by the nonanaphoric character of, for example, *sien/son*.

Given these characterizations of *se*, Sportiche (2014) argues that *se* spells out the head of a Voice phrase, and must be bound by the closest DP because of its lack of person specifications. This proposal is compatible with the fact that French *se* is excluded from passives in which Voice hosts a distinct passive morpheme. Combined with our view that French *se* and German *sich* realize the same functional projection as case absorbers, our interpretation of Sportiche's view can be partially represented as in (22).<sup>5</sup>



With these ingredients in place, let us now return to the main concern of this paper: how to account for reflexives with an apparent internal argument as illustrated again in (23).

- (23) a. *Pierre se rase la barbe.*  
 Peter REFL shave.3SG the beard  
 b. *Peter rasiert sich den Bart.*  
 Peter shave.3SG REFL the.ACC beard  
 'Peter shaves his beard.'

## 4 The proposed analysis

Recall from Reinhart and Siloni's (2005) analysis that even though reflexive constructions do not involve an internal argument, the transitive verb does have a Theme role to assign. Accordingly, the authors propose that an example like *John washes*, in a lexicon language such as English, is described as follows (Reinhart and Siloni 2005: 401):

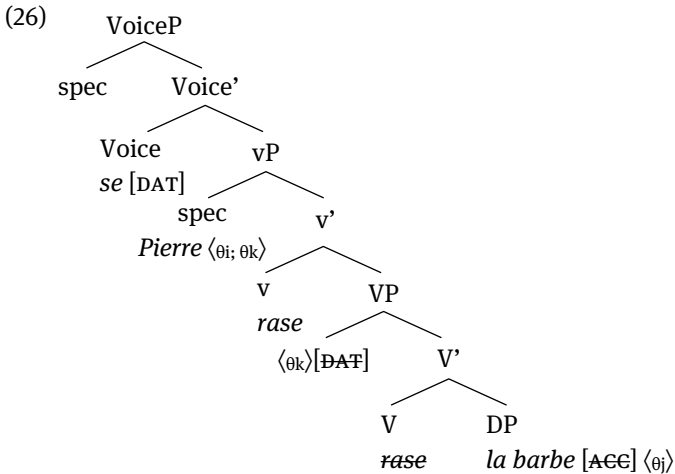
- (24) a. Verb entry: wash<sub>acc</sub>[Agent][Theme]  
 b. Reflexivization output: wash[Agent-Theme]  
 c. Syntactic output: Max<sub>[Agent-Theme]</sub> washed.

<sup>5</sup> Unlike Sportiche (2014) we claim that *se* (as well as *sich*) are base-generated in Voice and [Spec VoiceP], respectively.

In a syntax language, the same operation happens in syntax with languages developing various strategies (e.g., *se* vs. *sich*) to absorb the accusative case. With this view in mind, we propose that reflexives with an internal argument are types of dative constructions in which the verb has three thematic roles to assign: agent, theme, and benefactive. The verb selects for both an external and internal argument to which it assigns the roles agent and theme, respectively. We further claim that such reflexives arise from the fact that there is no benefactive argument to receive the benefactive role. Bundling targets the agent and benefactive roles which are mapped onto the subject position. What appears to be the reflexive pronoun, on the other hand, absorbs the unlicensed dative case.<sup>6</sup> Adopting Reinhart and Siloni's (2005) conventions, reflexivization in this case results in bundling of the benefactive and agent roles as described in (25) for example (23a).

- (25) a. VP: [SE  $\text{rase}_{\langle\theta_i\text{-Agent}; \theta_j\text{-Theme}; \theta_k\text{-Benefactive}\rangle}$ ]  
 b. IP: [Pierre $\langle\theta_i\text{-Agent}; \theta_k\text{-Benefactive}\rangle$  se  $\text{rase}_{\langle\theta_j\text{-Theme}\rangle}$ ]

This further implies that in syntax languages (e.g., French, German), the pronoun serves primarily to absorb dative case, but not to induce reflexivization, as partially represented below for this example.



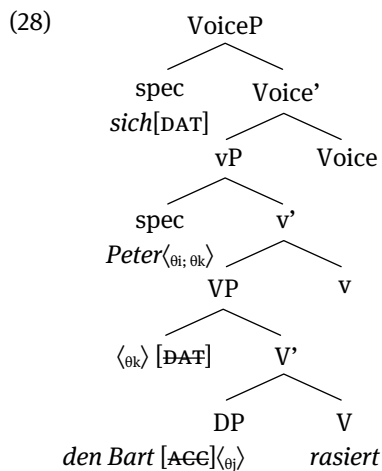
This structure builds on the analysis of simple reflexives, with the difference that the VP now contains an unlicensed benefactive theme that is bundled together with the Agent role mapped on the subject position. This analysis is compatible

<sup>6</sup> Reinhart and Siloni (2005: 411) already mention the possibility for *se* to absorb dative case: "It is a general Case reducer, not selective regarding the Case."

with the fact that reflexive constructions with an object require the preposition *à* in *faire*-causatives, unlike simple reflexives. In the sentences under (9) repeated here as (27a–b) we showed that in *faire*-causatives, the agent cannot be introduced by the preposition, contrary to transitive verbs. The sentences in (27c–d) show a reverse pattern. The benefactive reflexive construction requires the preposition *à* in *faire*-causatives.

- (27) a. *Je ferai se laver Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL wash.INF Paul  
 b. \**Je ferai se laver à Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL wash.INF to Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul wash himself.’  
 c. \**Je ferai se raser la barbe Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL shave.INF the beard Paul  
 d. *Je ferai se raser la barbe à Paul.*  
 I make.FUT REFL shave.INF the beard to Paul  
 ‘I will make Paul shavehis beard.’

We extend this analysis to the German example in (23b), taking into account the fact that this language exhibits SOV order in surface form.



Given this analysis, one may wonder which class of verbs allows these constructions in these languages. In French, for instance, the construction is particularly productive with self-grooming verbs typically involving body parts (29).

- (29) *Jean se brosse les dents.*  
 John REFL brush DET tooth-PL  
 ‘John brushes his teeth’

As discussed extensively by Junker and Martineau (1987) the English translation with a possessive phrase (*his teeth*) can make one think that these constructions are essentially possessive constructions, a view that has also been entertained for reflexive constructions (cf. Postma 1997). Junker and Martineau (1987), however, show that these constructions must be contrasted with the example in (30) which also translates into a possessive construction in English.

- (30) *Jean lève la tête.*  
 John REFL DET head  
 ‘John raised his head.’

The two constructions show similar behavior with regard to various syntactic tests: they do not allow passivization (similarly to reflexives).

- (31) a. \**La tête a été levée.*  
 DET head has been raised  
 b. *Les dents ont été brossées par Jean.*  
 DET tooth-PL have been brushed by John  
 ‘The teeth (of somebody else)’ have been brushed by John  
 \*‘The teeth (of John) have been brushed by himself.’

The two constructions exclude qualification of the body part with descriptive adjectives, while restrictive adjectives further distinguishing body parts are allowed. Consider the following contrast.

- (32) a. *Jean lève la jolie main.*  
 Jean raises DET nice hand  
 ‘\*John raises his nice hand’  
 ‘John raises the nice hand (of someone else).’  
 b. *Jean lève la main droite.*  
 Jean raises DET hand right  
 ‘John raises his right hand.’  
 ?‘John raises the right hand (of someone else).’

In these examples, the reflexive meaning disappears with addition of a descriptive adjective, but not with restrictive adjectives. The same holds of reflexive constructions with an additional object.

- (33) a. \**Jean se lave les jolies mains.*  
 Jean REFL wash DET nice hands  
 ‘\*John washes his nice hands’  
 b. *Jean se lave la main droite.*  
 Jean REFL wash DET hand right  
 ‘John washes his right hand’

Despite these similarities, Junker and Martineau (1987) argue convincingly that the two constructions should be distinguished syntactically. Due to space limitation, we cannot reproduce all their arguments here but refer the interested reader to the paper. We only summarize their ideas that prove relevant for discussing the Gungbe facts below.

According to these authors, the two constructions in (29) and (30) involve two classes of verbs: the first class illustrated by (30) results from an inclusion relation between the external and internal arguments (e.g., the raised hand is part of the body of John) and the fact that the internal argument (i.e., the hand) has the property of being ‘auto-V-able’.<sup>7</sup> Being ‘auto-V-able’ translates an intrinsic property of the internal argument, namely the body part, which is determined by the meaning of the verb. In this case, *John’s* hand is perceived as capable of performing an action initiated by the external argument *John*, that is, the hand is capable of performing actions instructed by the mind of the agent. Junker and Martineau (1987: 203) conclude that even though such structures are transitive in their underlying structure, the interpretation of the whole sentence gives the impression that it contains an intransitive predicate. According to these authors, if the internal argument cannot be described as ‘auto-V-able’ the reflexive or inalienable interpretation is impossible.

- (34) *Elle bouge les yeux/ mains/ \*cheveux.*  
 she moves DET eyes hands hair-PL  
 ‘She moves her eyes/hands/\*hair.’

Note that addition of the reflexive pronoun to constructions involving this class of verbs renders the sentence marginal. While most of our consultants (and one of the authors of this paper) find (35a) quite marginal, all judge (35b) as bad.

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<sup>7</sup> In absence of an inclusion relation the use of a reflexive pronoun with a self-grooming verb is ungrammatical:

- (i) *\*Il se lave la voiture.*  
 He REFL wash.3SG the car  
 ‘He washes his car.’

In a sentence without a self-grooming verb, the use of a reflexive pronoun is possible without an inclusion relation (iia). In such sentences, modification by means of a descriptive adjective is possible (iib), unlike in sentences with a self-grooming verb:

- (ii) a. *Il s’ achète la voiture.*  
 He REFL buy.3SG the car  
 ‘He buys himself the car.’  
 b. *Il s’ achète la voiture rouge.*  
 He REFL buy.3SG the car red  
 ‘He buys himself the red car.’



- (35) a. ??*Jean se lève la main.*  
           Jean REFL raises DET hand  
           ‘John raises his hand himself.’
- b. \**Jean se lève le doigt.*  
           Jean REFL raises DET finger  
           ‘John raises his finger himself.’

We take this to mean that adding the reflexive pronoun to these constructions produces ungrammatical structures even though speakers can accommodate them pragmatically. Because of the inclusion relation between the external and internal arguments as well as the ‘auto-V-able’ property assigned to the internal argument, verbs of this class form a smaller set and typically involve self-grooming verbs or verbs denoting body-oriented actions.

This is different for verbs of the second class which occur in constructions involving the reflexive pronoun and an additional object. For Junker and Martineau (1987), there is no inclusion relation between the external argument and internal arguments of these verbs. The reflexive pronoun is therefore required in these contexts to establish a relation between the external argument and the internal one. This is compatible with the bundling hypothesis argued for by Reinhart and Siloni (2005). In terms of this description, John’s teeth in (29) are not ‘auto-brushable’. An external agent is therefore needed to perform the act of brushing. This boils down to saying that constructions involving verbs of the second class are datives in which the external argument and the unrealized dative argument are coreferential as a result of bundling, and the reflexive pronoun absorbs the dative case as we argue for in this paper. According to Junker and Martineau (1987: 204) this also explains why this class is larger: the construction involves a syntactic operation that relies on the usage of the clitic *se* to link the two arguments. In the next section, we account for Gungbe facts using the insight from our analysis based on Reinhart and Siloni (2005) and on Junker and Martineau’s (1987) description.

## 5 Extending the analysis to Gungbe reflexives

Recall from the examples just discussed that French has the constructions in (36) both of which translate into a possessive construction in English.

- (36) a. *Jean lève la tête.*  
           Jean raises DET head  
           ‘John raises his head’
- b. *Jean se gratte la tête.*  
           Jean REFL scratch DET head  
           ‘John scratches his head.’

German is like French as indicated by the examples in (37) taken from Junker and Martineau (1987: 206).

- (37) a. *Johan schüttelt den Kopf.*  
 Jean shake.3SG DET head  
 ‘John shakes his head’
- b. *Johan wäscht sich die Hände.*  
 Jean wash.3SG REFL DET hand  
 ‘John washes his hands.’

The discussion of the French data further shows that these sentences have the same semantics but involve two classes of verbs that require two syntactic structures: (36a) is a transitive structure presumably including a possessive phrase, while (36b) is a dative construction in which *se* absorbs the dative case, and bundling merges the thematic role of the external argument and the missing benefactive argument. Given the contrast between French and German on one hand, and English on the other, one can conjecture that the two verb classes established by Junker and Martineau (1987) exist in English as well even though this does not translate into any specific surface structure or morphological specification on the verb and its arguments.

## 5.1 Gungbe reflexive constructions with a single internal argument

One can make the same conjecture about Gungbe. In this language, the French examples in (36) translate into an apparent transitive construction as in English (38). Unlike English, German, and French, however, the construction does not even involve a possessive or reflexive pronoun: the single internal argument is a bare noun. Based on their meaning, we refer to these constructions as *bare reflexive constructions*.

- (38) a. *Dótù zé àl̩.*  
 Dotu raise hand  
 ‘John raised his hand’
- b. *Dótù klú tà.*  
 Dotu scratch head  
 ‘John scratches his head’

In accounting for the reflexive meaning of these constructions, one could suggest that Gungbe displays body-oriented reflexives (cf. Osam 2002) in which the internal argument involves a hidden possessive phrase, whose possessor is bound by the subject, in a way superficially comparable to the English sentence *John<sub>i</sub> scratches his<sub>i</sub> head*.

Yet, we know from Junker and Martineau (1987) that such English examples could be misleading because the same ‘construction’ may hide two different structures. Indeed, Gungbe bare reflexives show similar properties as the French examples. The internal argument excludes a descriptive adjective, but not a restrictive one.

- (39) a. *Dótù zé àlò qàxó.*  
 Dotu raise hand big  
 \*‘Dotu raised his big hand.’  
 ‘Dotu raised someone else’s big hand.’
- b. *Dótù zé àlò qùsí.*  
 Dotu raise hand right  
 ‘Dotu raised his right hand.’  
 \*‘Dotu raised someone else’s right hand.’

The different interpretations in (39) indicate that addition of a descriptive adjective obliterates the reflexive meaning suggesting that we are dealing with a different structure. The same holds of internal arguments which cannot be characterized as ‘auto-V-able’ in terms of Junker and Martineau (1987).

- (40) a. *Dótù gbò àlò qàxó.*  
 Dotu cut hand big  
 \*‘Dotu cut his big hand.’  
 ‘Dotu cut someone else’s big hand.’
- b. *Dótù gbò àlò qùsí.*  
 Dotu cut hand right  
 ‘Dotu cut his right hand.’  
 \*‘Dotu cut someone else’s right hand.’

The examples in (39) and (40) show that the reflexive meaning arises non-ambiguously only when the internal argument is bare in the sense of Aboh and DeGraff (2014): it cannot involve the specificity and/or number markers which are associated with the D-layer (Aboh 2004). Adding these markers cancels the reflexive meaning.

- (41) a. *Dótù zé àlò ló lé.*  
 Dotu raise hand DET PL  
 \*‘Dotu raised his hands.’  
 ‘Dotu raised the hands in question.’
- b. *Dótù gbò àlò ló lé.*  
 Dotu cut hand DET PL  
 \*‘Dotu cut his hands.’  
 ‘Dotu cut the hands in question.’

The fact that these Gungbe bare reflexives exclude descriptive adjectives as well as markers that express the D-layer suggests to us that the internal argument does not involve the relevant structure to host these elements. Note, for instance, that adding a possessive pronoun to these constructions destroys the non-ambiguous reflexive meaning and blurs the contrast in (39) and (40).

- (42) a. *Dótù zé àlḥ ðàxó/àḍùsí étɔ̀n.*  
 Dotu raise hand big/right 3SG-POSS  
 ‘Dotu raised his big/right hand.’  
 ‘Dotu raised someone else’s big/right hand.’
- b. *Dótù gbò àlḥ ðàxó/àḍùsí étɔ̀n.*  
 Dotu cut hand big/right 3SG-POSS  
 ‘Dotu cut his big/right hand.’  
 ‘Dotu cut someone else’s big/right hand.’

The examples in (42) are comparable to the French and German possessive examples in (15) and (16), respectively. As we showed in previous sections, such possessive constructions must be treated differently from the reflexive constructions with an additional object. Following the same line of argumentation, we argue that the Gungbe bare reflexive constructions must be distinguished from possessive constructions like those in (42) in which the internal argument involves a full DP including a possessive pronoun.

## 5.2 Distinguishing between possessives and bare reflexives

A property that distinguishes possessive constructions such as (42) from bare reflexives is that the former exclude an additional reflexive pronoun, while the latter do not, even though the resulting meaning is emphatic. Before getting on to this, however, let us first consider reflexive pronouns in Gungbe. These pronouns consist of a pronoun and a body part generally glossed as *self* or *body* in the literature (cf. Awóyalé 1986). Example (43) illustrates this.

- (43) a. *Dótù m̀n é-ḍé tò mèkpónú m̀.*  
 Dotu see 3SG-self PREP mirror IN  
 ‘Dotu saw himself in the mirror.’
- b. *Dótù hù é-ḍé ná wányínyí àsì étɔ̀n útù.*  
 Dotu kill 3SG-self PREP love wife his CAUSE  
 ‘Dotu killed himself for the love of his wife.’

The following table lists reflexive pronouns in Gungbe.

Tab. 1: Gungbe personal pronouns (adapted from Aboh 2004: 129)

Pers/Numb	Strong forms	Weak forms		Possessives	Reflexives
		Nominative	Accusative		
1SG	nyè	ùn	mì	cé	nyè-dé
2SG	jè	à	wè	tòwè	jè-dé
3SG	éy/úḍ	é	e (ɛ - i)	étòn	é-dé
1PL	mílé	mí	mí	mítòn	mí-dé-lé
2PL	mílé	mì	mì	mítòn	mì-dé-lé
3PL	yélé	yé	yé	yétòn	yé-dé-lé

As can be seen from this table, the reflexive pronouns derive from a combination of a strong pronoun and the morpheme *-dé*. As a result, strong pronouns and reflexive pronouns are bi- or tri-syllabic, unlike weak forms which are monosyllabic. We take these morphological properties to indicate that the reflexive pronouns are strong pronouns. This conclusion is compatible with the fact that these pronouns can be used as fragment answers (44a–b), or can be focused as indicated in example (44c) in which the reflexive pronoun is fronted to the left of the focus marker (cf. Aboh 2004).

- (44) a. *Ménù wè à xò kèké ná?*  
 who FOC 2SG buy bicycle PREP  
 ‘Who did you buy the bicycle for?’
- b. *Ná nyè-dé.*  
 who 1SG-sefl  
 ‘To myself.’
- c. *Nyè-dé wè ùn xò kèké ná.*  
 1SG-sefl FOC 1SG buy bicycle PREP  
 ‘I bought a bicycle to MYSELF.’

Putting these facts together, we propose that the Gungbe reflexive is, like the German pronoun, a strong pronoun that realizes a full DP.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> These reflexive pronouns agree in person and number with the antecedent. Note, however, that the plural forms are ambiguous between the reflexive and reciprocal meaning, as shown below. Such an overlap between reflexives and reciprocals is found in many languages including French and German.

(i) *Mí mḍn mí-dé-lé tò mèkpónú mè*  
 1PL see 1SG-self-PL PREP mirror IN  
 ‘We saw ourselves/each other in the mirror.’

Finally the following examples (46a–b) indicate that the reflexive pronoun is necessary to express the reflexive meaning, unlike bare reflexive constructions discussed in previous paragraphs.

- (45) a. *Sésì nò d̂ xó gbígblé d̂ é-dé jí.*  
 Sesi HAB say word bad PREP 3SG-self on  
 ‘Sesi often says bad things about herself.’  
 b. *Sésì nò d̂ xó gbígblé.*  
 Sesi HAB say word bad  
 ‘Sesi often says bad things.’

With this description of reflexive pronouns in mind, let us now consider the contrast in (46) in which we add a reflexive pronoun to a possessive construction (46a) as opposed to a bare reflexive construction (46b).

- (46) a. \**Dótù gbò àl̂ ét̂n ná é-dé.*  
 Dotu cut hand 3SG-POSS PREP 3SG-self  
 ‘Dotu cut his hand for himself/by himself.’  
 b. *Dótù gbò àl̂ ná é-dé*  
 Dotu cut hand PREP 3SG-POSS  
 ‘Dotu cut his hand by himself.’

It appears from these examples that possessive constructions exclude the reflexive pronoun, unlike bare reflexive constructions: bare reflexive constructions allow further reflexivization.

Reinhart and Siloni (2005) already showed that reflexivization is very productive in syntax languages: “any transitive verb whose external argument is an agent, an experiencer, or even a cause can reflexivize” (p. 410). Their conclusion is compatible with Junker and Martineau’s (1987) analysis. These studies are relevant for Gungbe as well. In this language, almost all verbs allow bare reflexive constructions. In appropriate contexts, these constructions can be doubled with an additional reflexive pronoun as further indicated in (47).

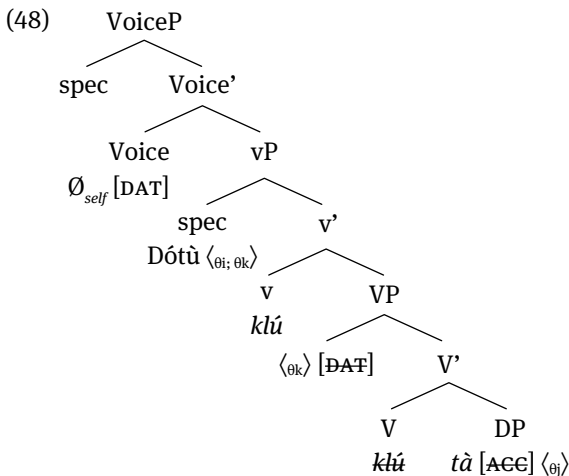
- (47) a. *Dótù xwlé àt̂n ná é-dé.*  
 Dotu shave beard PREP 3SG-self  
 ‘Dotu shaved (by himself).’  
 b. *Dótù fún nùkúmè ná é-dé.*  
 Dotu wash face PREP 3SG-self  
 ‘Dotu washed his face (by himself).’

The productive nature of bare reflexive constructions in Gungbe suggests that this is a syntax language in terms of Reinhart and Siloni (2005). We postulate that these constructions actually involve a silent reflexive pronoun. This view

corroborates with the fact that the sentences in (46b) and (47) include an additional reflexive pronoun which yields an emphatic meaning: there is some relevance in the fact that the agent carried out the action by herself on herself. The emphatic nature of these constructions suggests that they should be analyzed as instances of doubling (cf. Ghomeshi, Jackendoff, Rosen, and Russell 2004, Aboh and Dyakonova 2009, Aboh, Smith, and Zribi-Hertz 2012). Similar emphatic constructions are possible in French by adding the complex form *lui-même*.

### 5.3 Analyzing the Gungbe bare reflexives

Keeping to the rationale of our analysis for French and German, we propose that in Gungbe bare reflexives, the bare noun phrase realizes the internal argument and is licensed for accusative case. We further suggest that the reflexive meaning arises because these constructions involve a silent reflexive pronoun that merges in Voice, similarly to French *se*. This silent argument receives dative case. Bundling, on the other hand, targets the unassigned benefactive role and bundles it together with the agent, thus yielding the reflexive meaning. Accordingly, Gungbe bare reflexive constructions can be represented as in (48), which stands for the underlying structure of example (38b).



It appears from this analysis that French, German, and Gungbe share the same underlying structure even though these languages express this structure differently. While French and Gungbe realize Voice with the clitic *se* or null reflexive pronoun, respectively, German expresses [Spec VoiceP] which hosts the strong pronoun *sich*.

## 6 Conclusion

In this paper we propose an analysis that accounts for reflexives with an additional direct object in French and German, building on Reinhart and Siloni (2005) and Sportiche (2014). Our analysis considers the following main ideas: (i) A functional projection VoiceP is merged, which selects vP. The so-called reflexive pronoun is merged in this functional projection, as its head (the French clitic *se* or Gungbe null reflexive pronoun) or in its specifier (the German strong pronoun *sich*). (ii) Bundling targets the Agent and benefactive theta-roles. This complex theta-role is mapped onto the subject position. (iii) The reflexive pronoun absorbs the closest unlicensed case (left behind by the bundled internal argument). After these operations have taken place, further movement operations can proceed to derive the sentence's surface structure.

The proposed analysis extends to bare reflexive constructions in Gungbe. In terms of Reinhart and Siloni's (2005) Lexicon-Syntax Parameter, it can be concluded that Gungbe, which does not seem to have any morphological means to allow arity operations in the lexicon, should be considered a syntax language.

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