

ANAPHORS IN URHOB0

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INTRODUCTION

- Anaphors are subtypes of noun phrases (NPs); they have received a great deal of attention in the study of the syntax of languages the world over. Attempts made to study the Urhobo anaphors as evident in Ken Safir and Naga Selvanathan (2016), Eric Reuland and Dagmar Schadler (2011) and Rose Oro Aziza and Ken Safir (2006) attest to this. However, such studies (except Aziza and Safir) have not given detailed descriptions of anaphors in Urhobo as a district language.

- Ken Safir and Naga Selvanathan's (2016) list Urhobo as one of the many languages of Africa that have transitive reciprocal polysemy – that is, ambiguous between reciprocal and reflexive readings.
- Aziza and Safir (2006) came up with similar generalizations about anaphora in Urhobo which include a claim that the anaphoric strategies identified in their work achieve both reflexive and reciprocal interpretations.

- AIM OF THE PRESENT STUDY:
- The present study aims to give a detailed investigation of Anaphors in Urhobo with particular focus on their properties.
- OBJECTIVES:
- To show that reciprocals and reflexives in Urhobo have distinct forms which are not interchangeable.
- Identify the properties of anaphors in Urhobo

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Binding Principles:
- A: Anaphors must be bound in their local domains
- B: Pronominals must be free in their domains
- C: R-expressions must be free
- Adapted from Yusuf (1998:145)
- The aspect of the binding theory that is relevant to our discussion is Principle A which regulates the interaction / interpretation of Anaphors and their antecedents.

- The distribution of anaphors according to Chomsky(1981:188) ‘is said to be governed by the following binding condition (that is, Principle A): that anaphor is bound in its governing category.’ this means that an anaphor and it’s antecedent must be in the same clause because anaphors depend on antecedent for their existence. The data collected for this study show that Urhobo anaphors and their antecedents occur in the same clause, therefore, the binding theory is relevant for our analysis; to show that Urhobo codes reciprocals and reflexives differently.

STRATEGY A OR *OMA* X

- 1a) Ìgbèyán mé ívè dùvwún òmàráyèn
 - Friends my two stab+pst bodythem
 - ‘My two friends stabbed themselves’
-
- 1b) Ìgbèyán mé ívè dùvwún òhwóhwó
 - Friends my two stab+pst personperson
 - ‘My two friends stabbed each other’

- In example (1a) above the *oma* X data expressing reflexive reading contrasts with example (1b) which expresses reciprocal reading. Observe that a change from the *oma* X form to *ohwohwo* form led to a radical change in the interpretation associated with each form. This contradicts the earlier claim by Aziza and Safir that the *Oma* X form achieves both reflexive and reciprocal interpretations.

STRATEGY B OR *OMAROBO* X

- 2a) Me kparhe omobome
- I raise bodyhandmy
- ‘I lifted up myself’

- 2b) Èfè kparhe omoboroyen
- Efe raise bodyhandhis
- ‘Efe lifted up himself’

- 2c) Avware kparhe omoboravware
- we raise bodyhandhis
- ‘We lifted up ourselves’

- In the examples (2a-c) the *oma* which appears as *omo*, due to elision of segments, does not yield reciprocal reading in Urhobo.
- Strategy C or *Oma oma X*
- 3a) Avware chá ómómàrávware úkó
- We support bodybodyyour back
- ‘We assist ourselves’
- 3b) Avware chá òhwóhwó úkó
- We support personperosn back
- ‘We assist one another’

- 4a) Ihworiprishĩ yono ómómàráyén
- People preach+hab teach bodythem
- ‘Jehovah’s witnesses teach themselves’
- b) Ihworiprishĩ yono òhwóhwó
- People preach+hab teach personperson
- ‘Jehovah’s witnesses teach one another’
- The examples clearly reveal that the reduplicated, *Oma Oma* X forms express reflexive notion in Urhobo. What then is the function of reduplication in this form of the reflexive? Let us consider the examples below:

- 5a) Ihworiprishìí yono òmàráyèn
 - People preach pres/hab teach bodythem
 - ‘Jehovah’s witnesses teach themselves’
-
- 5b) Ihworiprishìí yono ómómàráyèn
 - People preach pres/hab teach bodythem
 - ‘Jehovah’s witnesses teach themselves’
 - The *Oma* X form seems to involve a large group while the *Oma Oma* X, form involves a small group within a larger group(e.g. among other Christians).

Strategy D or *Ohwohwo*

- 6a) ìgbèyán mé ívè dùvwún òmàráyèn
- Friends my two stab +pst bodythem
- ‘My two friends stabbed themselves’
-
- b) ìgbèyán mé ívè dùvwún òhwóhwó
- Friends my two stab+pst personperson
- ‘My two friends stabbed each other’
-
- 7a) Avwaree phièn òmàrávware
- We+pres deceive bodyour
- ‘We deceive ourselves’
-
- b) Avwaree phièn òhwóhwó
- We+pres deceive person
- ‘We deceive one another / each other’

- In the examples (a) above the *oma* X data expressing reflexive reading contrast with (b) examples which express reciprocal reading. Observe that a change from the *oma* X form to *ohwohwo* form led to a radical change in the interpretation associated with each form.

- 10)*Òviè vé Èfèé yán nènè ómómàráyèn
 - Ovie and Efe+pres walk follow bodybodythem
 - ‘Ovie and Efe are following themselves’
-
- 11)Òviè vé Èfèé yán nènè òhwóhwó
 - Ovie and Efe+pres walk follow personperson
 - ‘Ovie and Efe are following each other’
-
- Example (10) is ill-formed when translated into English because of the verb *nene* ‘follow’ which can be interpreted as each participant is meant to follow himself/herself.

- If, for instance, we say *Tega* and *Ejiro* love each other, it means that *Tega* loves *Ejiro* and *Ejiro* loves *Tega*. But if we say *Tega* and *Ejiro* love themselves, it means that *Tega* loves *himself* and *Ejiro* loves *herself*. That is why sentence (10) is ill-formed because *Ovie* can neither follow himself nor can *Efe* follow herself. However, (11) is more acceptable because it captures the intended reciprocal reading which means that *Ovie* follows *Efe* and *Efe* follows *Ovie*. This is another argument in favour of the fact that there are distinct forms in Urhobo to express reflexive and reciprocal notions.

The Focus Test

- 12a) Mè ta ótà kẹ òmàmé
- I talk talk to bodymy
- 'I am talking to myself'
- b) Òmàmé òyèn mì tótà kẹ
- bodymy foc. I talk to
- 'It is myself that I am talking to'
- 13a) Èfè vé Éjíró ta ótà kẹ òhwóhwó
- Efe and Ejiro talk talk to personperson
- 'Efe and Ejiro are talking to each other'
- *b) òhwóhwó òyèn Èfè vé Éjíró tótà kẹ
- personperson foc. Efe and Ejiro talk to
- 'it is each other that Efe and Ejiro are talking to'

- In (12) we show that the reflexive can be focused in the language. Though (13a) is grammatical and acceptable in the language (13b) is not acceptable in the language. This is evidence to show that reflexives and reciprocals have distinct forms in Urhobo.

PROPERTIES OF ANAPHORS IN URHOBBO

- The reflexive marker *oma* in Urhobo is prefixed to the possessive pronoun unlike in English for instance, where self is suffixed to the possessive pronoun.
- It is a body part reflexive
- The reflexive marker in Urhobo can be reduplicated and then function as a means of emphasis
- The reflexive marker can be focused

- The language employs the reduplicated form of the word *ohwo* 'person' to express a reciprocal notion.
- *Ohwohwo* the reciprocal anaphor translates into each other or one another depending on the phi feature of the antecedent.
- There is no number distinction in Urhobo reciprocals
- The reciprocal marker can not be focused

CONCLUSION

- This paper argues that the two types of anaphors; reflexives and reciprocals do not have transitive reciprocal polysemy like the other African languages listed by Ken Safir and Naga Selvanathan, and Aziza and Safir, rather we have shown in this study that, there are two distinct forms to express reflexive and reciprocal notions in Urhobo. In other words, the identified forms; *oma X*, *oma oma X* are restricted to reflexive notions while *ohwohwo* is restricted to reciprocal notions; there were no instances of *ohwohwo* expressing reflexive reading.