

Reflexives and Anticausatives

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Overview

Cross linguistically, reflexive and anticausative markers are often homophonous.

Haspelmath 1993

Two possible (families of) analyses:

- Surface identity = underlying identity
- Surface identity \neq underlying identity

Kissock 1995; Lidz 2001; Sundaesan 2012

Balusu 2019

Today

- In Telugu, the reflexive and anticausative markers are syncretic.
- Balusu was right in his conclusion, but there is reason to doubt his premises

The two uses & Balusu's argument

Reflexive

- (1) akhil (tana-ni-tanu) poguḍu- **kun** -aa-ḍu
akhil (3SG-ACC-3SG) praise-KUN-PST-3MS
'Akhil praised himself'
- (2) akhil pogiḍ- **eesu** - **kun** -aa-ḍu (3) akhil poguḍ- **kun** - **eesu** -aa-ḍu
akhil praise-THROW-KUN-PST-3MS akhil praise-KUN-THROW-PST-3MS
'Akhil praised himself' 'Akhil praised himself'

Anticausative

- (4) talupu moosu- **kun** -in-di
door close-KUN-PST-3NS
'The door closed'
- (5) talupu moosu- **kun** - **poo** -in-di
door close-KUN-FALL-PST-3NS
'The door closed'

Difference 1: Nominal anaphors

Reflexive: Anaphor is optional

- (6) akhil (tana-ni-tanu) poguḍu- **kun** -aa-ḍu
akhil (3SG-ACC-3SG) praise-KUN-PST-3MS
'Akhil praised himself'

Anticausative: Anaphor is banned

- (7) talupu (*dan-ni adi) moosu- **kun** -in-di
door 3NS-ACC 3NS close-KUN-PST-3NS
'The door closed (*itself)'

NB: The string in (6) is okay — the door needs agency for it to be felicitous

Difference 2: Agent orientation

Reflexive: Agent oriented

- (8) fatima tana-ni tanu maraci-poo-(* kun)-in-di
fatima 3SG-ACC 3SG forget-go-KUN-PST-3FS
'Fatima forgot herself'
- (9) # bombu (dan-ni adi) pel-ču- kun -in-di
bomb (3NS-ACC 3NS) burst-CAUS-KUN-PST-3NS
'The bomb exploded itself'

Anticausative: No agency

- (10) # addam jaagrattagaa virugu-(kun)-in-di
window carefully break-KUN-PST-3NS
Intended: 'The window broke carefully'
- (11) # addam kaṭṭa-to virugu-(kun)-in-di
window stick-WITH break-KUN-PST-3NS
Intended: 'The window broke with a stick'
- (12) toofanu-valla, addam virugu-(# kun)-in-di
toofan-BECAUSE window break-KUN-PST-3NS
'The window broke because of the storm'

Difference 3: *break* class

- (13) amit addam viri-č-ææ-ɖu
amit window break-CAUS-PST-3MS
'Amit broke the window'

Reflexive: only with the CAUS morpheme

- (14) addam viru-ču-kun-in-di
window break-CAUS-KUN-PST-3NS
'The window broke itself'

window has agency

Anticausative: simply 'remove' CAUS; *kun* optional

- (15) addam virug-(kun)-in-di
window break-KUN-PST-3NS
'The window broke'

Four Voices

The two *kuns* have different properties. Their surface identity must be just that.

Suggestion: They are two of four different Voice heads in Telugu.

Phonology		Voice		Semantics
/kun/	←	[-A, +R]	⇒	$\lambda P \lambda e : \neg \exists x : \text{initiator } x e. P e$
		[+A, +R]	⇒	$\lambda x \lambda e. \text{agent } x e \wedge \exists R \in \Theta : R x e$
∅	←	[+A, -R]	⇒	$\lambda x \lambda e. \text{agent } x e$
		[-A, -R]	⇒	$\lambda a. a$

Table: Voices, and their interpretation at the interfaces

Presupposition

$$\llbracket \text{kun} \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda e : \underbrace{\neg \exists x : \text{initiator } x e}_{\text{'No agent/cause' presupposition}} . P e$$

- (16) a. addam virug- **kun** -in-di
window break-KUN-PST-3NS
'The window broke'
- b. Hey, wait a minute! I didn't know windows could **break by themselves!**
- (17) a. addam virig-in-di
window break-PST-3NS
'The window broke'
- b. # Hey, wait a minute! I didn't know windows could **break by themselves!**

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Complementarity with *open*

In addition to the *break* class, there are two other classes. For one of them (*open/close*), **kun** is necessary for anticausativization.

With *open*, the two meanings are in complementary distribution:

- (18) talupu teru-ču- **kun** -in-di
door open-CAUS-KUN-PST-3NS
'The door opened'
- (19) talupu teru-ču- **kun** -in-di
door open-CAUS-KUN-PST-3FS
'(pro) opened the door for herself'

For the other — the *boil* class — *kun* is banned.

I'm not sure why this should be the case, but many languages that have marked anticausatives have these three classes: obligatory, optional and banned.

Haspelmath 1993, Martin & Schäfer 2014, Alexiadou et al. 2015

Reflexive anaphors aren't agent oriented

(20) **Goal antecedent**

akhil ravi-ki tana-ni tana-ku paričayam čees-ææ-ɖu
akhil ravi-DAT 3SG-ACC 3SG-DAT introduce do-PST-3MS
'Akhil introduced Ravi_i to himself_i'

(21) **Experiencer antecedent**

amith-ki tana-miida tana-ku koopam vačč-in-di
amith-DAT 3SG-ON 3SG-DAT anger come-PST-3NS
'Akhil got angry at himself'

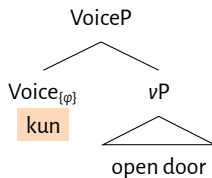
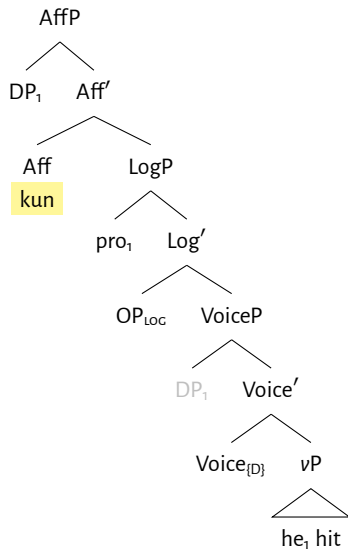
Non agentive causers

Non-agentive causers are incompatible with anticausative *kun*.

- (22) * toofanu addam virugu- **kun** -indi
toofan window break-KUN-PST-3NS
'The storm broke the window'
- (23) * toofanu talupu teru-ču- **kun** -indi
toofan door open-CAUS-KUN-PST-3NS
'The storm broke the window'

The second string is okay if the storm is a volitional agent. In this case, the sentence is interpreted as “the storm opened the door for its benefit” — **kun** rather than **kun**

Balusu's analysis



[[kun]] = $\lambda P.P$

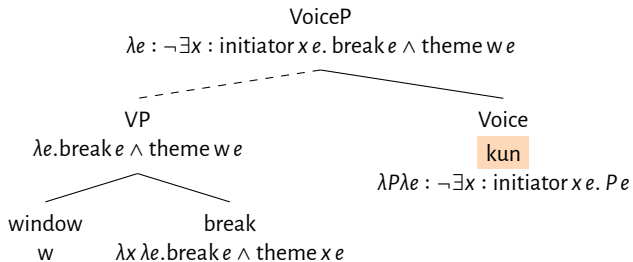
The “by itself” meaning is a scalar implicature due to competition with the causative counterpart.

Implicature?

Not cancellable:

- (24) talupu teru-ču- **kun** -indi
door open-CAUS-KUN-3NS
'The door opened'
- (25) # in fact, Amith terič-ææ-ðu
in fact, Amith open-CAUS-PST-3MS
'In fact, Amith opened it'

A tree



“There was a breaking of the window; no-one initiated the breaking”

Prediction 1: Presupposition Projection

Projects from P-family:

(26) addam virugu- **kun** -ind-aa
window break-KUN-3NS-Q
'Did the window break?'

(27) Hey, wait a minute! I didn't know windows could break by themselves!

Prediction 2: Presupposition Filtration

The presupposition of **kun** is also what “by itself” asserts.

Alexiadou et al. 2015

So, a “by itself” should filter the presupposition.

Karttunen 1973

It does:

(28) addam daan-anta-ku adi virugu- **kun** -indi
window 3NS-BY-DAT 3NS break-KUN-3NS
'The window broke by itself'

(29) **#** Hey, wait a minute! I didn't know windows could break by themselves!

Prediction 3: Anticausatives with and without **kun**

Naming an agent in a follow-up to **kun** -anticausative should be infelicitous. Not so for **kun** -less anticausative.

- (30) addam virugu- **kun** -in-di
window break-KUN-PST-3NS
'The window broke'
- (31) # in fact, Amith virič-ææ-ɖu
in fact, Amith break-CAUS-PST-3MS
'In fact, Amith broke it'
- (32) addam virug-in-di
window break-PST-3NS
'The window broke'
- (33) in fact, Amith virič-ææ-ɖu
in fact, Amith break-CAUS-PST-3MS
'In fact, Amith broke it'

Prediction 4: Reflexives fail HWAM

(34) akhil (tana-ni-tanu) poguđu- **kun** -aa-đu
akhil (3SG-ACC-3SG) praise-KUN-PST-3MS
'Akhil praised himself'

(35) # Hey, wait a minute! I didn't know people could praise by themselves! !?!?