

Reflexivity and Intensification in Irish English and Other New Englishes

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Considerable attention has been directed at the complex interaction between reflexivity and intensification in English and other languages; following the initial analysis of *self*-forms proposed by König and Siemund (1998, 2000 a, b), a large number of studies have explored the syntax and semantics of *self*-forms and related expressions and have established parameters of variation on the basis of wide-ranging crosslinguistic observations. Those uses of *self*-forms in Irish English (IrE) that are unexpected from a standard British English viewpoint have already received detailed treatment (cf. Odlin 1997; Filppula 1999; Siemund 2002). However, the question whether unexpected *self*-forms in Irish English are a matter of substrate or superstrate influence is still largely unaccounted for.

Arguments in favour of substrate influence naturally draw on the structural properties of Irish and try to find parallel constructions. Arguments in favour of superstrate influence typically evoke the presence of a particular construction in earlier stages of the language, which was then retained. Another line of reasoning is concerned with establishing areal typological influence: it has repeatedly been pointed out (cf. Haspelmath 2001; Siemund 2002, 2003) that English together with Finnish and Celtic is exceptional among the European languages in that the reflexive and the intensifier are formally identical. Yet another possibility was raised by Andrea Sand at the third *Celtic Englishes* Colloquium. She suggested to look for “a universal trend in contact varieties of English” (Sand 2003: 428).

In this paper, I would like to reconsider some of the well-known treatments of *self*-forms against the background of data from Indian English (IndE).¹ The motivation for bringing Indian English into the picture is similar to Sand’s who

¹ I would like to thank all participants at the CE IV Colloquium for their stimulating response to my paper. Special thanks go to Prof. H.L.C. Tristram, Dr. Clemens Fritz and particularly Prof. Andrea Sand for detailed comments. Prof. Sand’s suggestions and additional examples from a range of ICE-corpora feature prominently in section 2 of this paper.

noted the remarkable similarity between Indian English and Irish English in the area of definiteness/article usage; the same holds for the domain of reflexivity and intensification. To my knowledge, there is no detailed treatment of this topic for Indian English, which may partly be due to the fact that a comprehensive reference grammar of Indian English has yet to be written. My paper will not attempt to close this gap; I will focus mainly on two constructions: *x-self* in subject position (cf. Filppula 1999 on ‘unbound reflexives’) and some uses of *itself* (corresponding to ‘even’) noted by Wales (1996) and Siemund (2002). The outline of this paper is as follows: I will first give a brief typological survey, summarizing the main hypotheses and arguments in favour of ‘Celtic syntax’ in English or even a *Sprachbund* comprising insular Celtic and English. I will then move on to an overview of the distribution and development of *self*-forms in Middle English. This is crucial to evaluate the retention-hypothesis (cf. Harris 1991), the assumption that certain features derive from earlier stages and mainly nonstandard varieties of the superstrate. Data from Indian English will then serve to illustrate the striking parallels in usage, a fact that clearly defies any straightforward substrate account. Finally, I will try to arrive at an explanation, or at least at spelling out the empirical preconditions for a satisfactory explanation.

1. Celtic Syntax in English and the European Sprachbund

Haspelmath draws on “a dozen grammatical features that are characteristic of the core European languages and that together define the SAE [Standard Average European] *Sprachbund*” (Haspelmath 2001: 1493). Two of these features are relevant in the present context: the distribution of external possessors and the distribution of separate forms for intensifiers and reflexives across European languages.

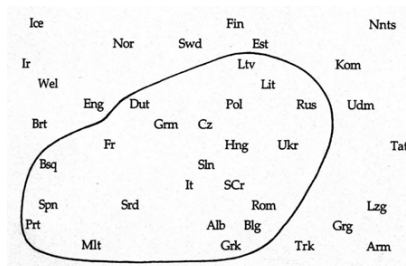


Fig. 1: Dative external possessors (Haspelmath 2001: 1498)

König's definition captures the relevant properties of external possessor constructions:

External possessor constructions are constructions in which a semantic possessor-possessum relation is expressed (i) by coding the possessor as a core grammatical relation of the verb and (ii) in a constituent separate from that which contains the possessum. ... In European languages which have such constructions, external possessors are invariably expressed by a dative phrase or an 'indirect object.' (König 2001: 971f.)

A German example may serve as illustration: in *ich habe mir den Arm gebrochen* (literally 'I broke me the arm'), the pronoun *mir* has dative case, does not belong to the argument frame of the verb and is not a part of the possessed NP; a literal translation is impossible because English marks possession only with NP-internal possessive pronouns ('I broke [my arm]_{NP}'). Old English was more like German in this respect, e.g.:

- (1) *him on bearme læg mādma mænigo* (him on lap lay many treasures) 'on his lap lay many treasures' (Beowulf 40f.)

This construction survives only with some isolated instances into Middle English before dying out. Similarly, early Middle English witnessed the replacement of the old intensifier *self* by a fused form pronoun + *self*; when plain pronouns ceased to be used reflexively and the compound form became obligatory as the reflexive marker in Early Modern English, the modern pattern of formal identity between intensifier and reflexive pronoun was established (cf. König and Siemund 2000 a, b; Lange 2005).

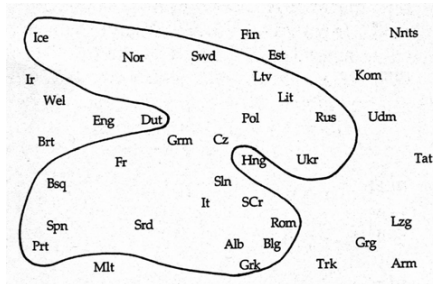


Fig. 2: Intensifier-reflexive differentiation (Haspelmath 2001: 1501)

As Fig. 2 indicates, "England stands somewhere apart from the European nucleus" (Haspelmath 2001: 1505) which comprises German and French; English patterns with the Celtic languages with respect to those two features. These figures are highly suggestive of a *Sprachbund* formed by English and the Celtic languages arising out of language contact, and it is precisely this suggestion that Vennemann (2002) has made to account for the loss of the external possessor construction in Middle English. Vezzosi (2005, fc. 2006) has recently stipulated

that contact with Welsh is responsible for the somewhat unexpected fusion of a pronoun with the intensifier *self*. Tristram (1999: 27ff.) has explored the possibilities and consequences of Celtic-English language contact further and suggested that many, if not all of the developments which set English aside from the other West Germanic languages, may be due to contact with insular Celtic. She points out that “most of the morphosyntactic parallels between Welsh and English ... only surfaced *in writing* in the 12th or 13th century, a time lag of some 500 or 600 years” after the original “rapid language shift of the indigenous population.” The rise of the compound form pronoun + *self* in Middle English texts from exactly that time will be discussed below.

2. Unpredictable *Self*-forms across Varieties of English

As mentioned above, many accounts have dealt with the phenomenon of ‘untriggered,’ ‘unbound,’ ‘locally free,’ ‘headless’ or simply ‘unexpected reflexive’ *self*-forms (König and Gast 2002; Siemund 2002; Hole 2002, to name just a few), which show up in positions where according to Binding Theory plain pronouns should occur. The following examples from *Harry Potter* (taken from Hole 2002: 285f.) illustrate the phenomenon:

- (2) *This was exactly what Harry had been hoping for. He slipped his wand back into his robes, waited until Cedric’s friends had disappeared into their classroom, and hurried up the corridor, which was now empty of everyone except himself and Cedric.* (HP 4: 298)
- (3) *Even Muggles like yourself should be celebrating, this happy, happy day!* (HP 1: 10)
- (4) *Harry and Ron exchanged panic-stricken looks, they threw the Invisibility Cloak back over themselves and retreated into a corner.* (HP 2: 193)

Several scholars have provided taxonomies for all the contexts which act as triggers for unexpected *self*-forms (Wales 1996; Keenan 2002; Hole 2002); the following distinctions are typically made:

- ‘Group’ constructions: *like/as well as/but/except himself* (cf. examples (2) and (3))²
- Coordination: *myself and John*
- Comparatives: *taller than myself*
- Prepositional phrases: *wrapping the cloak around himself*³

As mentioned above, studies by Odlin (1997), Filppula (1999), and Siemund (2002, 2003) have focussed on such uses of *self*-forms in IrE and Hebridean English. Odlin provides relevant examples from bilingual speakers of Hebridean English (HebE) and stresses the structural similarity to parallel constructions

² Hole (2002) makes a further distinction between “coreference with otherwise disfavoured antecedents” (*ibid.*, 9), e.g. ‘nobody except/but themselves,’ and attributive-like phrases, e.g. ‘even Muggles like yourself.’

³ These contexts have acquired the label ‘snake sentences’ following the widely quoted example *John saw a snake near him/himself*. Hole (2002) proposes the terms ‘logophors’ and ‘somatophors;’ for details see his paper.

found in the substrate language, “reflections of a system found widely in Ireland and the Hebrides, a system owing a great deal to the language contact that has taken place for centuries in those regions” (Odlin 1997: 45). Filppula is less sure about the issue of substrate versus superstrate influence: he notes that Hiberno-English unbound reflexives “reflect input from both earlier English and the Irish substratum” (1999: 87). Siemund (2003) is mainly concerned with showing that unexpected *self*-forms “are frequently in harmony with cross-linguistic findings, generalisations and widely attested paths of development, and find their natural position in the great underlying groundplan” (*ibid.*, 502). Siemund is certainly right in stating that from a typological and historical perspective, few uses of *self*-forms are really unexpected, but the fact that some use of *self* has parallels somewhere in some period, taken out of context, has little explanatory value. In the following, I will focus upon possible source constructions in the earlier stages of English in order to make a more substantial evaluation of the retentionist view possible.

Self-forms in the contexts mentioned above are not restricted to regional varieties of English, but are found in the standard spoken and written language as well. All these contexts were already available in Middle English, as the following examples demonstrate:⁴

2.1.1. ‘Group’ Constructions

ME:

- (5) *He stablist hym lord of hys hous and prince of alle hys habbynge, þat he lered hys prynces as hym self and tauzt hys elde quaintyse.*

‘He established him as lord of his house and prince of all his possessions, so that he could teach his princes like himself and teach his eldermen wisdom.’
(CMEARLPS, 128.5591).⁵

BrE:

- (6) *What shall I say a well worn gardener like myself aren't you Sir.* (ICE-GB S1B-025-162)

IrE:

- (7) *Now, there's at least four men up there in the same predicament as meself, heart trouble.* (quoted from Filppula 1999: 83)

⁴ Again, many thanks to Prof. Sand who lent support to my hypothesis by providing additional corpus examples. I owe all the examples from the British English (ICE-GB), New Zealand English (ICE-NZ), Jamaican English (ICE-JAM), and Kenyan English (ICE-EA(K)) corpora to her.

⁵ All texts prefixed *CM-* come from the *PPCME2* (Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Second Edition), available online at <www.ling.upenn.edu/midengl/>. See the references for the editions used.

IndE:

- (8) *I mean the curd <,> and as I told you ghee but it should not be used too much but in spite of that uh <,> it is <w> one's </w> liking they will use it <,> <O> laughs </O> And as far as myself I will have cup of tea in the morning.* (ICE-IND:S1A-072#206:1:A)⁶

NZE:

- (9) *I've got no support for that from either colleagues except for yourself or panel members.* (ICE-NZ S1B-072)

JamE:

- (10) *For students like myself ...* . (ICE-JAM W1A-005)

KenE:

- (11) *We are happy to offer selective Corporate or Group discounts for reservations made by reputable organizations as yourselves.* (ICE-EA(K) business letters1)

2.1.2. Coordinate NPs

ME:

- (12) *himself and al his hoste / Were for defalte of drinke almost / Distruid.*
 'Himself and all his host were almost destroyed for lack of drink.'
 (Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, 178, 413f.)
- (13) *but Kyng Goffar was discomfyted & al his folk, & hym-self fledde in-to ffraunce to seche help & socour,*
 'but king Goffar was defeated and all his people and (he) himself fled to France to seek help.'
 (CMBRUT3, 9.218)

BrE:

- (14) *And more than once Bobby Moore and myself from our eagle's eyrie high above the pitch winced as the challenges came in ...* . (ICE-GB S2A-017)

IrE:

- (15) *His brother was a shoe-maker. And himself and his brother was up in the Orkney Isles ...* . (quoted from Filppula 1999: 85)

IndE:

- (16) A: *Do you meet everyday <,> ?*
 B: *Myself <,> and <@> Rajan </@> <,> used to meet everyday* (ICE-IND: S1B-068#263:1:B)
- (17) *Both my cousin and myself <,> are always used to sound sleep <,> in the night <,> immaterial of the time <,> place etcetera <,>* (ICE-IND: S2B-036#20:1:A)

⁶ See the appendix for the markup symbols used in the transcription of spoken texts.

NZE:

- (18) *And constable Christiansen and yourself had a conversation with constable Williams didn't you.* (ICE-NZ S1B-061)

JamE:

- (19) *Her brother and myself went to K C.* (ICE-JAM S1A-098)

KenE:

- (20) *He had to write back to the Othoya Secretary to explain about himself and Mathenge.* (ICE-EA(K) creative1)

2.1.3. Comparatives⁷

ME:

- (21) *and he þat spekes ay þe gode, and haldes ilk a man better þan hymselfe, he schewes wele þat he es stabel in godenes in hys hert, and ful of charite til God and til his neighbor,*

‘and he who speaks always good, and holds each man better than himself, he shows well that he is stable in goodness in his heart, and full of charity towards God and towards his neighbour.’
(CMROLLEP, 74.165)

BrE:

- (22) *A woman who is conspicuously generous to others less fortunate than herself* (ICE-GB W2B-010)

IndE:

- (23) *<quote> “Let me tell you that if I love in this world anybody more than even myself, my daughter, son or brothers, it is my grandson.* (ICE-IND: W2A-006#64:1)
- (24) *</> Yes in your </> </> your department <w> you're </w> the student of this department you know much better than <,> myself <O> cough </O>* (ICE-IND: S1A-004#114:1:A)

NZE:

- (25) *And if it's any good who <.>b<./> who better to try it than myself.* (ICE-NZ S2A-051)

JamE:

- (26) *It felt only awkward that a boy two years older than myself was responsible for my laundry.* (ICE-JAM W2F-013)

KenE:

- (27) *Mr Kirema Thahu is holding the same rank as myself.* (ICE-EA(K) creative writing1)

⁷ There was no relevant example for IrE in the literature, but there is no reason to assume that the construction does not exist in IrE.

2.1.4. Prepositional Phrases

ME:

- (28) *For many a man wenyth to put hys enemy to a rebuke, and ofte hit fallith on hymselfff,*
 ‘For many a man thinks to rebuke his enemy, and often it falls on himself.’
 (CMMALORY, 51.1694)
- (29) *‘Alas!’ seyde the dwarff, ‘thou hast done grete damage unto thyself.’*
 ‘‘Alas!’ said the dwarf, ‘you have done great damage to yourself.’’
 (CMMALORY, 53.1768)

BrE:

- (30) *We could formalise our arrangement with Tokyo via yourself, ...* . (ICE-GB W1B-019-19)

IrE:

- (31) *... when Cromwell came over here ... he was s'posed to say, he'd drive the Irish to hell or to Connacht ... The Irish used to say ... the Irish went to Connacht and left hell for himself.* (quoted from Filppula 1999: 78)

IndE:

- (32) *Kuku has well adjusted himself to this ship. He keeps both of us busy alongwith himself with his infinite energy, sometimes driving us crazy.* (ICE-IND: W1B-010#145:1)
- (33) *Mr Narayana Rao gave you <.,> an introduction about myself. He said many nice things he said so many nice things that I thought he was describing somebody else <.,> <O> laughter </O>* (ICE-IND: S2A-048#9:1:A)

NZE:

- (34) *Pakeha people worrying about the overall effect on on (sic!) themselves* (ICE-NZ S1B-049)

JamE:

- (35) *...; religion has to take on for itself a new role.* (ICE-JAM W1A-018)

KenE:

- (36) *..., any Kenyan who thinks that tribalistic jingoism can redress past real or imaginary ills, is merely wishing destruction upon himself, ...* (ICE-EA(K) press column)

The evidence accumulated so far suggests that we are dealing with a superstrate phenomenon: intensifying pronoun + *self* was created in early Middle English in precisely those syntactic contexts which are ‘unexpected’ from the perspective of Binding Theory; these *self*-forms have been a stable feature of English in its regional varieties from Middle English onwards, and there is no reason to refer to Celtic syntax for an explanation. The case for substrate influence can only be made for one specific use, namely pronoun + *self* as the only

NP in subject position, an environment that is excluded from standard English but apparent in New Englishes, e.g.:

IrE:

- (37) *And by God, he said, it would = he'd be the devil, if himself wouldn't make him laugh.* (quoted from Filppula 1999: 78)

IndE:⁸

- (38) B: *Sir <,> may I know your name <,>*
 A: *Uh myself uh Prof D A Joshi <,> <{> <[> welcome <,> I come from Umerkhed* (ICE-IND: S1A-067# 4:1f.)
- (39) B: *I will tell you in detail <,> myself from Shahada <,> district Dhulia <,>* (ICE-IND: S1A-067#18:1)
- (40) *Myself Dr Padmaja Patil <,>* (ICE-IND:S1A-088#5:1:B)
- (41) A: *What course you are doing <,>*
 B: *Myself?* (ICE-IND: S1A-049#47:1)

Singapore English:

- (42) A: *Normally what would be who would be supervising this group leader this assistant production.*
 B: *Myself is the supervisor.* (ICE-SIN: S1B-066#61:1)

I will now give a brief account of how the compound intensifier emerged in Middle English before I return to this issue.

2.2. The Development of himself

I have shown elsewhere (Lange 2006) that from early ME onwards, the fused form pronoun + *self* appears in two environments: either as adjunct, forming a constituent with a subject, or as argument in subject position. In the contexts where pronoun + *self* occurs as adjunct to a subject, the pronoun can be interpreted as resumptive, as a pronominal copy of its focus:

- (43) [*godd him-seolf*]_{SUBJ} *seið þurh þe prophete*
 'God himself says through the prophet'
 (CMHALI 140.185)

The claim that the pronoun in pronoun + *self* is "a disjunctive pronominal reinforcement," a repetition of the subject, had already been made by Farr (1905: 42). Put differently, the pronoun is a resumptive element introduced into the clause so that a kind of left dislocation structure is created; accordingly, the example above should be read with an intonational break after the subject NP and with stress on *self*:

- (44) *godd // him-SEOLF seið þurh þe prophete*

⁸ The examples are all drawn from the text category S1A (spoken dialogue).

This construction is familiar from OE, but the case of the resumptive pronoun was then determined by the syntactic slot of the NP it was repeating: we would expect *he self* rather than *him self*. However, in ME the oblique pronoun was also used independently “in apposition with a noun ... as part of subject” (MED vol. 4/2: 782), e.g.:

- (45) *And Carich king him isah þat he ouercume wæs*
 ‘And king Carich, he saw that he was defeated.’
 (LayBrut, 29311) (MED)

For subject *him + self*, several source patterns emerge: topicalised *himself*, (*he*) with omission of the subject pronoun or *himself* simply as variant of *he self*:

- (46) *him-seolf he nom from Humbre./ þat lond into Lundene.* (Lay (Caligula) 10190)
and him-seolf nam fram Humbre þat lond into Londene. (Lay (Otho) 10190)
 ‘himself, (he) took the land from the Humber to London’
- (47) *he seolf draf him forð.* (Lay (Caligula) 9214)
and him-seolf drof heom forþ. (Lay (Otho) 9214)
 ‘and he himself drove them forth’

I would argue that the formation of the new form is linked to conceptually spoken expressive strategies: the pronominal part in pronoun + *self* can be traced to two source contexts, both of them emphatic: either as stressed variant of a subject pronoun or as resumptive pronoun, a copy of its focus. The case of the pronoun has a discourse-pragmatic rather than syntactic function and indicates stress, an observation already made by Visser (1963), who noted

the tendency which English had in common with other Germanic languages ... for the personal pronoun morpheme to develop two allomorphs: (a) the unstressed, mostly proclitic ones (*I, he, she* etc.) and (b) the stressed (oblique) ones (*me, him, her* etc.). ... The use of the oblique allomorphs as subject ... may be due to a desire to give the subject more prominence than the use of the non-oblique allomorphs would have done. (Visser 1963/I: 244ff.)

The “‘instability’ of the subjective/objective case system” (Wales 1996: 19) in varieties of English is well-known to scholars who have investigated English dialects; Wales concludes: “It would appear that all object forms can function as subjects in some dialect of English around the world” (*ibid.*), testifying to the fact that up to the present day case within the pronoun paradigm is driven by the speakers’ discourse-pragmatic strategies to indicate stress.

The domain of reflexivity is not affected by this development and displays more or less the same patterns as in OE: reflexivity continues to be marked by the plain pronoun, *self* could optionally be added for intensification (cf. Peitsara 1997). The development of the compound reflexive is clearly semantically and pragmatically driven and well represented in all texts throughout all periods (differences in frequency between individual genres notwithstanding). Its main effect, disambiguation or establishment of unambiguous reference, is a typical

universal feature of textualisation, and it is therefore not really surprising that the compound form ultimately ousted the simple reflexive when the vernacular language underwent standardisation. A communicative strategy that had been there all along was generalised to all texts and contexts once the original intensifying meaning of *self* (in that particular construction) was sufficiently bleached. The emergence of the compound intensifier, on the other hand, is a different matter. Its initial formation owes much to typical oral modes of expression, such as topicalisation and left-dislocation, which only became apparent in the written language after the breakdown of the OE standard. It is an innovation that gained momentum in quite different discourse traditions and became established quite rapidly. The compound intensifier is then a combination of a syntactic and a semantic device for indicating emphasis or foregrounding salient topics. It is tempting to assume that the new form was inspired by the parallel construction in Welsh and surfaced in early ME when wide-ranging variation took over from the former standard, as Vezzosi has recently argued (Vezzosi 2005, *fc.* 2006). She states:

The ME unverbated and not unverbated *himself* formally and functionally reminds more of MW [Middle Welsh] *e hun* than OE *self*. In Old English *self* is just occasionally added to the simple pronoun with the function of co-reference marker, and normally is an intensifier in both adnominal and adverbial (inclusive and exclusive) use. On the other hand, the ME *self*-form consistently expresses co-reference both in concrete and abstract other-directed situations; it is used as an adverbial intensifier, but only exclusively, and as an adjunct to noun phrases to pick out the most central and salient discourse topic, like MW *e hun*. ... If compared with the OE intensifier *self*, ME *himself* seems to have lost some functional properties, namely the adverbial inclusive meaning, and acquired a new one, namely co-reference marking. (Vezzosi 2005: 239)

The starting point for Vezzosi's hypothesis is the striking parallelism between Middle Welsh, Middle Breton and Middle English intensifiers: "In Middle Welsh (MW) and Middle Breton (MB), the intensifier is represented by a complex form (prefixed pronoun + *hun/hunan*) ... *Hun-hunan* corresponds to the numeral 'one'" (*ibid.*, 236). This parallelism in form is matched by a parallelism in function, as the quote above indicates. Still, I would hesitate to jump to conclusions. Some of the arguments she puts forward in support of her hypothesis are not as unambiguous as presented. One piece of evidence concerns the alleged loss of adverbial-inclusive *x-self* in ME, which supposedly happened due to Neobrittonic contact: examples which display the adverbial-inclusive use of *x-self* in ME are readily available, e.g.:

- (48) *Than seyð owr Lord Ihesu Crist to hys creatur, Be þes tokenys mayst þu wel wetyn þat I loue þe, for þu art to me a very modir & to al þe world for þat gret charite þat is in þe, & zet I am cawse of þat charite my-self,*

'Then said our Lord Jesus Christ to his creation: 'By the tokens you may well know that I love you, for you are to me a true mother and to all the world for that great charity that is in you, and yet I am the cause of that charity myself.'

(CMKEMPE, 91.2066-68)

- (49) *Ther ben many that complayne on othor and ben in the defeaute them self.*

‘There were many who complain about others and were wrong themselves.’
(CMREYNAR, 54.380)

A second point is related to the emergence of the compound form *x-self* as the new reflexive pronoun: as is apparent from the quote above, Vezzosi claims that the new compound form was widely used in ME to express coreference. This is indeed the case, but is it only *after* the ME period that this use becomes grammaticalised: “until the 16th century, there was no real need for a separate reflexive pronoun, except for particular markedness ... a separate set of reflexive pronouns was rapidly grammaticalized around 1500” (Peitsara 1997: 351). If the breakdown of the OE standard for writing facilitated the intrusion of a Neobrittonic use pattern, then this process should have happened much earlier.

Finally, a more general point can be made with reference to McWhorter (2002). In his study, McWhorter discusses a selection of structural properties that make English quite unusual from a typological perspective. Interestingly, he also looks at two features named at the beginning of this paper, namely external possessor marking and reflexivity, more specifically what he calls “inherent reflexivity” (McWhorter 2002: 220). Under his analysis, it is the contact situation with Scandinavian that is most likely to have contributed to the typological ‘oddy’ of English in many respects; he is very doubtful about the “Celtic” contact (*ibid.*, 252f.). Clearly, much more research is needed to clarify this issue; for the problem under discussion, I think that any study of *self*-forms in all their uses requires a close scrutiny of texts in their contexts in order not to miss the subtle differences in meaning that may ultimately be responsible for different grammaticalisation paths.

To return to Irish English: so far, all the evidence in the domain of reflexivity and intensification clearly points to superstrate influence: unexpected reflexives are pretty common and not restricted to IrE. This picture changes when we consider the notorious cases of subject pronoun + *self* in IrE. Here the case for substrate or superstrate influence is less clear. Pronoun + *self* as the sole subject is impossible in standard English, and relevant examples from ME are few and typically found only within specific discourse traditions:⁹

- (50) *Orpheo most of any thing / Lovede the gle of harpyng / Syker was every gode harpure / Of hym to have moche honour. / Himself loved for-to harpe / And layde theron his wittes scharpe*

‘Orfeo, more than anything else, loved the glee of harping; every good harper was sure to receive much honour from him. Himself [he] loved to harp and thereto devoted his sharp wit.’
(*Sir Orfeo*, line 25ff.)

⁹ For the notion of ‘discourse traditions’ and their significance for language change see Oesterreicher (2001).

- (51) *His hert he has set al bydene / Whare himself dar nocht be sene.*
 ‘He has altogether set his heart where (he) himself dare not be seen.’
 (*Ywain and Gawain*, line 875)
- (52) *Hymself drank water of the wel / As did the knyght sire Percywell.*
 ‘(He) himself drank water from the well, as the knight Sir Percival did.’
 (Chaucer, *Tale of Sir Topas*, 915)
- (53) *This is to seyn myself have been the whippe*
 ‘That is to say, (I) myself have been the whip’
 (Chaucer, *Wife of Bath, Prologue*, 175)

Examples (50) and (51) occur in romances, while (52), the most frequently quoted example, comes from Chaucer and occurs within a parody of the romance genre. Instances of subject pronoun + *self* in late ME are isolated, only two texts within the Helsinki Corpus have any examples at all, namely *The Book of Margery Kempe* (54) and Richard Fitzjames’ *Sermo die Lune* (55):

- (54) *& answyrd not, as hymself had comawndyd hir to do.*
 ‘and [she] did not answer, as he himself had commanded her to do.’
 (CMKEMPE, 63.1420)
- (55) *by reason of his laudable wysdom left behynde hym in wrytyng in the boke of wysdom callyd Ecclesiasticus. whyche boke. hymself fyrste made and wrote in Hebrewe tonge. and after translatyd the same in to Grekes tonge*
 ‘because of his praiseworthy wisdom left behind (him) in writing in the book of wisdom called Ecclesiasticus, a book which (he) himself first made and wrote in Hebrew, and afterwards translated the same into Greek.’
 (CMFITZJA, B2R.126)

Apparently, subject *x-self* is genre-specific; appearing relatively frequently in narrative poetry while being less frequent in narrative prose and totally absent from ‘official’ expository prose as for example Chancery texts. Those examples of subject *x-self* which are still found in EModE are again associated with poetic (or dramatic) contexts:

- (56) *Myself hath often heard them say, / When I have walked like a private man / That Lucius’ banishment was wrongfully, / And they have wished that Lucius were their emperor.* (Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* IV, iv)

To sum up: with one exception, all contexts for unexpected *self*-forms emerge in ME and are well represented throughout different periods and genres; they are an integral part of the language in all its varieties. The one exception concerns pronoun + *self* as a ‘plain’ subject, that is, outside of constructions such as the group subjects listed above. Parallel examples from ME are few and highly restricted, so that a straightforward retentionist view is not feasible.

If we exclude superstrate influence and claim substrate influence for this particular construction with pronoun + *self*, how do we account for similar examples from IndE and Singaporean English? Filppula (1999: 87) quotes an example from Irish to make a point for substrate influence:

É féin a rinne an obair
 'It was himself who did the work' ...

The Irish pattern ... seems the most likely model especially for those HE uses in which the reflexive is on its own in subject position. *É féin* has the same structure as *himself*, which – like all reflexives – was earlier understood and also written as two words.

It is highly unlikely that speakers of Irish were responsible for the diffusion of this pattern in both India and Singapore. It is difficult at this point to come to a convincing explanation; first and foremost, there is not enough data available. The Indian corpus has only a few more examples like the ones I listed above, the Singaporean example is actually the only one in the whole corpus, and the Irish corpus is not yet available.¹⁰ My tentative hypothesis is that contact languages make use of similar lexical devices from their donor languages to replace morphosyntactic or especially intonational features of the background languages. Irish, as all the other insular Celtic languages, relies on clefting to express focusing because intonation is not available for this purpose. Asian languages similarly are either tone languages (e.g. Chinese as substrate language in Singapore) or have morphosyntactic means of indicating focus, such as the Hindi focus marker *-bhi* that can be attached to its focus and indicates emphasis (cf. McGregor 1972: 27). I will develop this hypothesis further in the next section on some uses of *itself* that are totally unrelated to standard English.

2.3. *Itself in Irish and Indian English*

The examples below illustrate the typical use of IndE *itself* in locative and temporal expressions in both the spoken and the written language. *Itself* in these contexts invariably appears right-adjacent to its focus and takes scope only over the focus NP:

- (57) A: *Do you think you have any simple exercises for people who do a lot of driving?*
 C: *Yeah sure <,>*
 A: *Could you please show us some ?*
 C: *Yes <w> I'll </w> show here itself <,>* (ICE-IND: S2A-056#111:2)
- (58) *I think you <{> <[> should start <[/> going to the gym from now itself (<ICE-IND: S1A-061#86:1:B)*

¹⁰ Prof. Sand observed in her response to this section: “the Indian examples all occur in the context of personal introductions or one-word answers. Since Indian English has a lot of text-type specific formulaic language for such situations, I would hesitate to interpret these as genuine examples of bare reflexives as subjects.” She further pointed out that she found no relevant examples for IrE in the Potsdam Corpus of Northern Irish English (PNIE) or in other ICE-corpora.

- (59) *Last year also uh <,> I did one refresher course <,> in the month of June itself <,> and uh the duration of that was was <,> <,> <{> <[> actually <,> twenty-four days* (<ICE-IND: S1A-075#167:1:A)
- (60) [...] *Ambegaon, Manchar, Kondhwal and neighbouring villages have been facing acute water shortage from December itself.* (Times of India, Pune edition, 5.3.2004: 2)

Nihalani, et al. (1979) have already commented on *itself* in such contexts and provided a tentative explanation:

This use of the reflexive pronoun ‘itself’ for the purpose of emphasizing the word or phrase (usually indicating time, but sometimes place) which precedes it is characteristic of the IVE [Indian Variant(s) of English] variety of English. BS [British Standard] speakers would probably provide the emphasis in all four instances by means of intonation. (Nihalani, et al. 1979: 105)

This use of *itself* is specific to IndE and seems to belong to a domain of focus marking in IndE which is markedly different from other varieties of English and includes the use of *only* as focus particle: “*Only* is widely used for emphasis: *They live like that only* (‘That is how they live’); *He is working there only* (‘He really only works there’)” (McArthur 2003: 322). The precise relationship of *itself* and *only* as intensifiers is not quite clear; in Nihalani et al.’s description the two expressions seem to be interchangeable:

‘He came here today only.’
‘Now only he’s done it.’

The very frequent use of ‘only’ for the purpose of emphasizing the word or phrase (usually indicating time) which precedes it is characteristic of IVE. (Nihalani, et al. 1979: 132)

K.S. Yadurajan, on the other hand, comments from a prescriptive point of view. Judging from his account, *only* is not restricted to temporal phrases and is synonymous with the adnominal intensifier:

Surprisingly, we don’t seem to use the *-self* form for emphasis. We find people saying (and writing): *You only told me. He only did it.* This use of *only* with a noun/pronoun is incorrect. Its correct use is seen in sentences like: *Only he can do it. John alone knows the answer.* But where emphasis is needed the form is: *He himself did it.* (Yadurajan 2001: 104)

A more precise analysis of all meanings and contexts for *self*-forms in IndE is outside the scope of this paper, but there is one further use of *itself* which is relevant to our discussion and will be treated next.

2.3.1. Itself Meaning ‘Even’

One use of *self* so far not known outside Irish English, but familiar from German, is the use which can be paraphrased by ‘even.’ A detailed account of the focus particle *even* is given in König (1991); briefly, *even* belongs to the group of scalar additive particles and

induces an ordering for the values under consideration. The values included by this particle are characterised as ranking lower than the one given ... The values included by *even* are the more likely candidates for the variable of the relevant open sentence ... than the value given. As a consequence, the focus value is characterised as an unexpected or surprising one. (König 1991: 38)

Itself with this meaning either occurs adnominally, as in:

(61) *Death itself couldn't make me forget her.* (quoted from Siemund 2002: 266)¹¹

or in concessive and conditional clauses, e.g.:

(62) *He would look down into her eyes, though she was a tall young woman itself.* (quoted from Siemund 2002: 266)

Siemund refers to a similar polysemy in German, where prenominal *selbst* also means 'even;' he does not offer any more detailed explanations in terms of substrate or superstrate influence. Superstrate influence can definitely be ruled out, since 'even' has never been part of the meaning of *self* throughout the history of English, which leaves substrate influence. The latter is tacitly assumed by Wales (1996: 193) who provides an example from James Joyce's *Dubliners*:

(63) *'Is there any chance of a drink itself?' asked Mr O Connor.*

According to her, the *self*-form in this construction is a loan-translation from Gaelic *féin*, 'even.' This meaning of *féin* is attested for the early stages of Irish (*Dictionary of the Irish Language* (DIL), F 4.31-9.75, 'fadéin'). Ó hÚrdail (1997: 194) confirms that "*itself* often replaces *even*, e.g. *if I had that much itself.*" Filppula also briefly comments on this use of *itself*, but finds only one instance in his corpus "recorded from the oldest Wicklow informant" (Filppula 1999: 82).

(64) *I'm sure, it's about seventy-one years. Even if I'm wrong itself what matter.*

In Indian English, this meaning of *itself* is quite productive, as the examples show:

(65) *A World Zoroastrian Association could periodically collect and distribute reports to its member bodies, collect social and economic data of different Zoroastrian communities, keep a record of Zoroastrian studies all over the world and establish a centre itself for research into the religion.* (Kolhapur Corpus, text ED17, P89)¹²

¹¹ All of Siemund's examples are taken from a study of "Artistic Representations of Irish English" by Jiro Taniguchi (1972), a study that according to Kallen (1997: 5) belongs to "(a)n older linguistic tradition (... that) has taken literary material at face value, more or less treating it as if it were an accurate record of spoken IrE and basing any analysis on that assumption." Clearly more Irish data are needed to arrive at a more conclusive picture.

¹² The Kolhapur Corpus of Indian English is available from ICAME
<<http://www.hit.uib.no/icame.html>>.

- (66) *Later, like Gandhiji, he adopted service of the lowliest and the least itself as the pathway to God.* (Kolhapur Corpus, text EG04, P74)
- (67) *Different ragas evoke different sentiments, but sometimes one Raga itself evokes two different sentiments.* (Kolhapur Corpus, text EG46, P61)
- (68) *But even if the goal appears distant, it is well worth striving for because movement in this direction itself reduces the causes of conflict.* (Kolhapur Corpus, text EG58, P39)
- (69) *Sometimes when I sat alone beneath a tree I would feel a little lonely or lost. But as soon as my father joined me, the garden would become a happy place, the tree itself more friendly.* (ICE-IND: W2F-003#12:1)
- (70) *To the patients who were previously physically independent, stroke may turn out to be an illness worse than death itself.* (ICE-IND: W2D-010#78:1)

A similar use of *itself* is attested in Singapore English:

- (71) *It's selling more than a million copies per month so what and and it is primarily being uh uh available uh or being run on on a desktop environment itself.* (ICE-SIN: S2A-027#9:1:A)
- (72) *In fact it has been the number two uh in the computer book uh best selling list. In fact it outsell the famous book by Madonna itself.* (ICE-SIN: S2A-027#36:1:A)

I would like to suggest that in all the Englishes mentioned above, the frequent use of *itself* as intensifying marker serves the function carried by intonation in standard British English. A lexical item is appropriated to express emphasis, foregrounding, or focussing, discourse-pragmatic devices that are otherwise achieved by intonation. For IrE, Harris (1991) has summarised the well-known facts relating to clefting, but the basic strategy of not relying on intonation for focussing holds for other contexts as well:

In Irish, thematic markedness in speech is typically not achieved by intonational means, and clefting is virtually the only device available for achieving thematic fronting. It is not surprising, then, that the use of this construction in speech is much more common in Irish than in English. (Harris 1991: 198)

Both Englishes exploit lexical and morphosyntactic means that are connected to their substrate language(s) in order to express different focussing strategies: clefting of intensified pronouns as in the example above (*É féin a rinne an obair* 'It was himself who did the work,' quoted from Filppula (1999: 87)) produces syntactic contexts which are very similar to the ones I identified as source contexts for the emergence of the compound intensifier in early ME. In the case of *itself* in the sense of 'even,' the multifunctionality of the substrate form is carried over into the superstrate language: the invariant Irish expression *féin* is polysemous and can be used attributively ('own'), as intensifier ('self') and as focus particle ('even'); the latter use is simply extended to IrE. IndE, on the other hand, draws on its substrate language(s) in a different fashion: in Hindi and related languages, the reflexive marker and the focus marker parallel in meaning to 'even' are not related (cf. McGregor 1972), which probably gives rise to the intensifying uses of *only* and *itself* that are not altogether clear-cut. Hindi has two enclitic focus markers, the additive/inclusive particle *-bhi* that corresponds to 'even' or German *selbst*, and a restrictive/exclusive particle *-hi*

that is frequently translated as ‘only’ (*ibid.*, 27). It seems that at least for speakers of Hindi and related languages, *itself* and *only* are multifunctional focus markers that are used to recreate the morphosyntactic focussing strategies of their substrate languages in the superstrate language English.¹³

What IrE and IndE have in common is the need to find a replacement for meanings expressed by intonation in standard British English, which leads to remarkably similar results, at least within a specific domain. Platt, et al. (1984) have stressed that the most pronounced differences between ‘old’ and New Englishes concern intonation: if both IrE and IndE display structural similarities because of their diverging intonational patterns, then the original classification of what counts as a New English might have to be revised. Platt, et al.’s criteria are based on the distribution and range of functions/uses of English within a country; they explicitly exclude Pidgins and Creoles as well as “the newer Englishes of the British isles:”

In some of these areas the movement to English occurred before education was generally available and furthermore this change has taken place in areas relatively close to a large population of native speakers of English. (*ibid.*, 10)

Kallen (1997) explicitly stresses that despite the long-standing presence of English and English speakers in Ireland which dates back to the 12th century, the large-scale language shift from Irish to English occurred only in the 18th century. Thus, the proximity “to a large population of native speakers of English” does not play such a significant role in the case of Irish English. India, on the other hand, is a multilingual country, there is no pattern of language shift as in Ireland, and bi- or multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception, so it is slightly misleading to speak of ‘substrate influence.’ This point has been made repeatedly by Kachru (1986, 1992), but its significance for the development of New Englishes has not been fully explored. Further research on specific domains across a wider range of New Englishes is desperately needed to arrive at more precise generalisations.

3. Concluding Remarks

The preceding discussion leaves a rather messy impression: we do not end up with a neat rule, principle or constraint that accounts for either substrate influence, superstrate influence, or universal tendencies in the domain of reflexivity and intensification. There is undoubtedly good evidence for assuming “Celtic” influence for the loss of the external possessor construction and the formation of pronoun + *self* as intensifier. On the other hand, both Irish and Welsh use the same form to express attributive and adnominal/adverbial intensification just as

¹³ I was told by an Indian student whose first language belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family that he was quite surprised by the frequent use of ‘only’ by speakers of IndE with Hindi or Marathi as first languages.

OE did, but the possessive-attributive use of *self* quickly died out in early ME, at exactly that time where ‘Celtic syntax’ supposedly became apparent in the written language. If we imagine a situation of extended language contact and ultimately language shift, which typically accounts for syntactic influence on the superstrate language (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988), why should one part within the domain of intensification be exempt from shifting? This leads us to the question of constraints: what are the constraints on syntactic borrowing, what are likely scenarios for the transmission of structural properties in a situation of language shift, what exactly does the notion of ‘structural property’ include? For me, these are questions that are well worth pursuing even if easy answers are unlikely. In studies of (mainly syntactic) variation, IrE has been singled out as a “contact vernacular[s] for which a single substrate language can be unambiguously identified” (Harris 1991: 191); research has typically focused on specific constructions absent from standard English. Recent research on dialect syntax (cf. Kortmann 2002, 2004) is concerned with broadening the picture: the aim is to investigate patterns of variation within a specific domain across as many Englishes as possible to achieve “a unified account of intra- and cross-linguistic variation” (Kortmann 2004: 2). Applying this research program to the topic under discussion requires a comprehensive account of the whole domain of reflexivity and intensification; before we can hypothesise about the effects of transfer, interference, universal tendencies etc., we need to know exactly how the domain of reflexivity and intensification is structured and by which (lexical and/or morphosyntactic) means it is realised in all the available contact languages, both past and present. Eventually, we will arrive at much profounder and more general insights into the patterns of language contact and their linguistic consequences.

Appendix: Markup Symbols Used for ICE-India Texts

<\$A>, <\$B>, etc	Speaker identification
<I>...</I>	Subtext marker
<#>	Text unit marker. Marks the beginning of every “text unit,” which corresponds loosely to the orthographic sentence.
<O>...</O>	Untranscribed text, e.g., <O> speech by George Bush </O>
<?>...</?>	Uncertain transcription
<>...</>	Incomplete word(s)
< >...</ >	Overlapping string
<{>...</{>	Overlapping string set
<,>	Short pause
<,,>	Long pause
<X>...</X>	Extra-corpus text
<&>...</&>	Editorial comment
<@>...</@>	Changed name or word
<quote>...</quote>	Quotation
<mention>...</mention>	Mention, e.g., the word <mention> of </mention>
<foreign>...</foreign>	Foreign word(s)
<indig>...</indig>	Indigenous word(s)
<unclear>...</unclear>	Unclear word(s)

Source: ICE-India Manual (cf. also the *ICE Markup Manual for Spoken Texts*, available from <<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/manuals.htm>>)

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