

Topics in Comparative Scandinavian and Germanic Syntax

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1b. 'Override' Reflexives in Danish and English

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1. Introduction (≈ Abstract)

It is somewhat surprising that English allows (1a,b) (where underlining indicates co-reference):

- (1) En. a. Peter's behaviour only hurts himself.
b. Peter doesn't realise that such behaviour only hurts himself.

even though *himself* does not refer to the subject of the same clause (which is *Peter's behaviour* and *such behaviour* respectively). This is surprising because far from all clauses allow *himself* to refer to something else than the subject of the same clause:

- (2) En. a. * Peter's sister only criticised himself.
b. * Peter does not realise that Jill only criticised himself.

Therefore *himself* in (1a,b) is called an 'override reflexive' (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1495), an 'untriggered reflexive' (Parker et al. 1990, 50), an 'exempt reflexive' (Pollard and Sag 1992, 263; Charnavel 2021, 132), ...

Our analysis is that 'override' reflexives are the result of the combination of the non-reflexive pronoun *him* with the intensifier *himself*, and that this combination is subsequently 'shortened' from *him himself* to *himself*. This analysis is also completely compatible with the data from Danish, where the combination of the corresponding pronoun *ham* with the corresponding intensifier *selv* is not subject to 'shortening', and the result is therefore *ham selv*:

- (3) Da. a. Peters opførsel skader bare ham selv. ≈ (1a)
b. Peter indser slet ikke at sådan en opførsel bare skader ham selv. ≈ (1b)

This talk will try to show how the fact that Danish has two versions of *ham selv* and that English has two versions of *himself* fits into the general reflexive systems of the two languages. The analyses will be held up against data from three large and publically accessible corpora (Danish: *KorpusDK*, n.d.; English: *BNC*, n.d.; and *COCA* = Davies, n.d.).

2. A brief introduction to the Danish reflexive system

In Vikner (1985), Ehlers and Vikner (2017) and Vikner and Ehlers (2017) (and hand-out 1a of this course), we have argued that the Danish reflexive system contains two different kinds of conditions:

- (4) a. **$\pm$ selv** depends on whether the element must have an antecedent inside the smallest clause
(**$+$ selv**: *mig selv*, *sig selv*, *hende selv* 'me self/REFL self/her self')
or
cannot have an antecedent inside the smallest clause
(**$-$ selv**: *mig*, *sig*, *hende* 'me/REFL/her-ACC').
- b. **$\pm$ sig** depends on whether the element must have an antecedent which is a subject inside the smallest finite clause (**$+$ sig**: *sig*, *sig selv*, *sin* 'REFL/REFL self/REFL's'),
or
cannot have an antecedent which is a subject inside the smallest clause
(**$-$ sig**: *hende*, *hende selv*, *hendes* 'her-ACC/her self/her-POSS').

The **$\pm$ selv**-distinction is the difference between different columns in (5).

The **$\pm$ sig**-distinction is the difference between different rows in (5).

Both distinctions can be "switched off":

$\pm$ selv plays no role for the possessive pronouns (i.e. for *sin*, *hendes*), and

$\pm$ sig plays no role outside the third person (i.e. for *mig*, *mig selv*, *dig*, *dig selv*, *os*, *os selv*, *jer*, *jer selv*), nor for the third person plural possessive *deres* – though the latter is currently changing, see §3.3 in hand-out 1a as well as Ehlers (2020, 2023).

(5)	$+$selv must have an antecedent inside the same clause	$-$selv cannot have an antecedent inside the same clause	No $\pm$selv-distinction (possessives)
$+$sig must have a subject as antecedent inside the same finite clause	a. <i>sig selv</i> 'REFL self'	b. <i>sig</i> 'REFL'	c. <i>sin</i> 'REFL's'
$-$sig cannot have a subject as antecedent inside the same clause	d. <i>ham selv</i> , <i>hende selv</i> , <i>den selv</i> , <i>det selv</i> , <i>dem selv</i> 'him self, her self it self, it self, them self'	e. <i>ham</i> , <i>hende</i> , <i>den</i> , <i>det</i> , <i>dem</i> 'him, her it, it, them'	f. <i>hans</i> , <i>hendes</i> , <i>dens</i> , <i>dets</i> 'his, her its, its'
No $\pm$sig-distinction (1st & 2nd person & <i>deres</i>)	g. <i>mig selv</i> , <i>dig selv</i> , <i>os selv</i> , <i>jer selv</i> 'me self, you self (sg.) us self, you self (pl.)'	h. <i>mig</i> , <i>dig</i> , <i>os</i> , <i>jer</i> 'me, you (sg.) us, you (pl.)'	i. <i>min</i> , <i>din</i> , <i>vores</i> , <i>jeres</i> , <i>deres</i> 'my/mine, your/s (sg.) our/s, your/s (pl.), their/s'

- There is symmetry concerning **±selv**, and therefore there is **no** optionality *sig/sig selv* (as long as *sig/sig selv* is an argument in the clause, cf. Ehlers and Vikner 2017, 94–104)
- There is asymmetry concerning **±sig**, and therefore there may be **optionality** *sig/hende* in non-finite clauses.

In this talk (which started off as a paper in Danish: Sørensen et al. 2020), we will focus on a single cell, viz. (5)d, the one containing *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv*.

We have examined all occurrences in *KorpusDK* (n.d.) of *ham selv* 'him self' (there were **871** examples), *hende selv* 'her self' (**352**), and *dem selv* 'them selves' (**584**, i.e. a total of **1807** examples).

We did not examine *den selv* and *det selv*, both 'it self', as these can be both nominative and accusative, whereas *ham selv*, *hende selv* and *dem selv* are clearly accusative. We have also left out all repeated occurrences and all cases with a comma or a dash between *ham/hende/dem* and *selv* (**180** i alt), as well as all cases of polite *Dem* 'you' (**121**).

The table in (6) summarises the number of occurrences of the different types in *KorpusDK* (n.d.), and it also lists in which § of this talk the various types will be discussed:

(6)	<i>ham selv</i>		<i>hende selv</i>		<i>dem selv</i>		all three	
Regular reflexive, §3	4	0.5 %	7	2.0 %	8	1.4 %	19	1.1%
VP-adverbial (medial), §4	15	1.7 %	11	3.1 %	25	4.3 %	51	2.8 %
VP-adverbial (final), §4	30	3.4 %	13	3.7 %	90	15.4 %	131	7.2 %
DP-adverbial ('override'), §5	781	89.7 %	308	87.5 %	384	65.8 %	1473	81.5 %
Copula verbs, §5	14	1.6 %	4	1.1 %	0	0.0 %	18	1.0 %
Should have been <i>sig selv</i> , §8	10	1.1 %	8	2.3 %	75	12.8 %	93	5.1 %
Problem cases, §8	17	2.0 %	1	0.3 %	2	0.3 %	20	1.1 %
Total	871	100 %	352	100 %	584	100 %	1807	100 %
Left out: repeated occurrences or with a comma/dash	72		44		64		180	
Left out: polite <i>Dem</i>	0		0		121		121	

3. Regular reflexive *ham selv/hende selv* - obeying the rules in (5)

The expressions in the cell (5)d, the one that contains *ham selv/hende selv* 'him self/her self', have in common with *sig selv* and *mig selv* 'REFL self/me self' that they must have an antecedent inside the same clause (this is the **+selv**-condition), and they have in common with *ham/hende/...* and *hans/hendes/...* 'him/ her-ACC/..., his/her-POSS/...' that they cannot have an antecedent which is the subject of the same clause (this is the **-sig**-condition). In other words: They must have an antecedent which is inside the same clause, and which is not a subject.

Additionally, there is a condition that applies to all antecedents and which also applies here, namely that an antecedent must **c-command** the expression that it is the antecedent of, i.e. if *Peter* is the antecedent of *ham selv*, then *ham selv* has to be **part of the sister constituent of Peter**.

See e.g. Vikner and Jørgensen (2017, 154–58) on c-command in Danish. A co-referent expression which does **not** c-command the pronoun will thus never observe the conditions for being an antecedent, and this is why the following examples are not possible with the indicated co-reference (underlined expressions are to be interpreted as co-referent), i.e. if *sig selv* or *sin* refers to *Marie* or *Emil*:

- (7) Da. a. * [Maries ph.d.-studerende] er godt tilfredse med **sig selv/sin** vejledning.
Marie's PhD students are happy with REFL self / REFL's supervision
 b. * [Vejlederen af Emils ph.d.-projekt] var imponeret over **sig selv/sin** indsats.
The supervisor of Emil's PhD project was impressed with REFL self/REFL's performance

ham selv/hende selv/dem selv thus require an antecedent which c-commands them, but which is not a subject, and that is asking a lot. Therefore KorpusDK (n.d.) only contains **4** examples of this type with *ham selv* (0.2 %), **7** with *hende selv* (0.4 %), and **8** with *dem selv* (0.4 %):

- (8) Da. a. Hvis man stillede ham et spørgsmål om [_{DP} **ham selv**], ...
If one asked him a question about [him self] ...
 b. ... han havde givet ham mange gaver med, både til kong Akastos og til [_{DP} **ham selv**].
... he had given him many presents along, both to king Akastos and to [him self]
 c. Det mindede hende om [_{DP} **hende selv**] for år tilbage.
It reminded her of [her self] from years back
 d. Lige før jeg skulle tilbage ..., spurgte jeg miss O'Brien ud om [_{DP} **hende selv**].
Just before I had to leave ..., I asked miss O'Brien PRT about [her self]
 e. Har han fået lært dem nok om [_{DP} **dem selv**]?
Has he taught them enough about [them selves]?
 f. Det er svært at lave en lov, der beskytter folk imod [_{DP} **dem selv**].
It is difficult to make a law that protects people against [them selves]
 g. ... at Thomsen var stukket til søs og havde overladt sin kone og børn til [_{DP} **dem selv**].
... that Thomsen had run away to sea and had left his wife and children to [them selves]
 (Also here, underlined expressions should be interpreted as co-referent.)

- (9) DP The cases of *selv* in (8) are thus part of the pronouns *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv*, and therefore entirely parallel to the *selv* that Jensen (2010, 50) calls part of the reflexive pronoun *sig selv*, and that Vogel (2014, 137) calls grammaticalised, i.e. it has the structure shown in (9).
 |
 D°
ham selv

Just as both Jensen (2010, 50) and we consider the reflexive *sig*, (5)b, and the reflexive *sig selv*, (5)a, to be two different pronouns, we thus also consider *ham* vs. the *ham selv* found in (8) to be two different pronouns, i.e. (5)e vs. (5)d.

Now we have accounted for **19** of the **1807** KorpusDK cases of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* – we are not quite done yet ...

4. *selv* as a modifier of VP

selv may be an adverbial which modifies a VP, i.e. this *selv* is not part of the reflexive pronoun and therefore what e.g. Vogel (2014, 137) would call "not grammaticalised", and so are the cases in the following sections.

This VP-modifying *selv* can occur in two positions (if not more):

- **medial** (i.e. left-adjoined to VP = **a** in Diderichsen 1946) and
- **final** (i.e. right-adjoined to VP = **A** in Diderichsen 1946).

- (10) Da. a. De har [_{VP} selv [_{VP} lavet det meste af restaureringen]].
They have self done most of the restoration.
 b. De har [_{VP} [_{VP} lavet det meste af restaureringen] selv]. (KorpusDK)
They have done most of the restoration self

It is thus to be expected that some of the KorpusDK (n.d.) cases of the string *ham/hende/dem* + *selv* may be due to either *ham/hende/dem* immediately preceding a *selv* in the medial position¹:

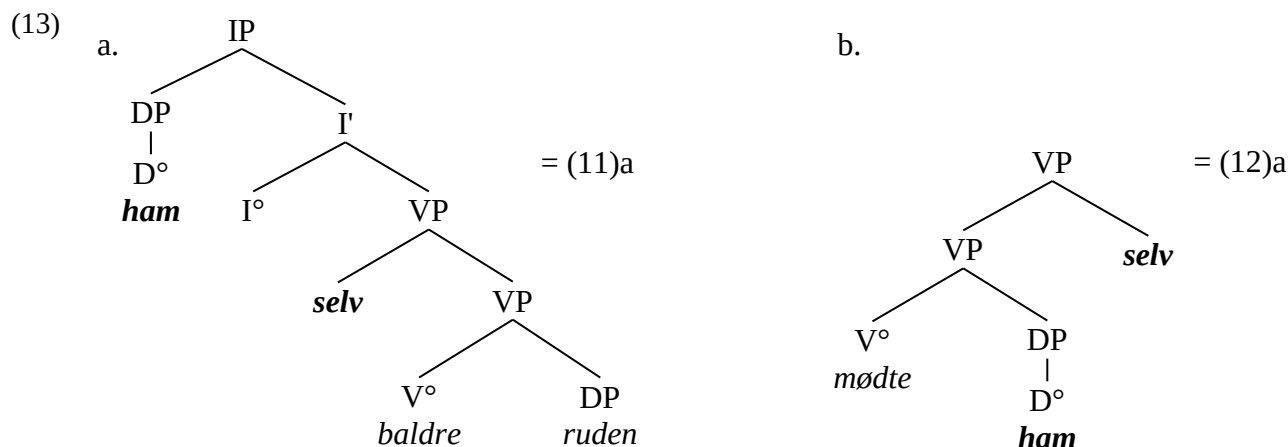
- (11) Da. a. Folk så ham [_{VP} selv [_{VP} baldre ruden og stikke rekylgeværet ud ...]]
People saw him [self [smash the window and put the rifle out ...]]
 b. Det lykkedes ham [_{VP} selv [_{VP} at komme op]], ...
It succeeded him [self [to get up]], ...
 c. Hans naturlige beskedenhed forbyder ham [_{VP} selv [_{VP} at sige det]].
His natural modesty forbids him [self [to say it]]
 d. Men nu vil jeg lade ham [_{VP} selv [_{VP} fortælle: ...]]
But now will I let him [self [tell (you the story): ...]]
 e. Marianne bad hende [_{VP} selv [_{VP} hente en kaffekop, ...]]
Marianne asked her [self [get a coffee cup]]
 f. ... og det endte med, at redaktøren foreslog hende [_{VP} selv [_{VP} at tegne vittigheder.]]
... and the end was that the editor suggested her [self [to draw cartoons]]
 g. De to har værsø at tage bussen, til en af dem [_{VP} selv [_{VP} har sparet op til en bil, de kan ødelægge!]]
The two have PRT to take the bus, until one of them [self [has saved up to a car they can destroy]]
 (Underlining still indicates co-reference.)

... or to *ham/hende/dem* immediately preceding a *selv* in the final position:

- (12) Da. a. Som da han ved den eneste lejlighed, hvor jeg [_{VP} [_{VP} mødte ham] selv], forkyndte: ...
As when he at the only occasion where I [[met him] self] announced: ...
 b. Hun kunne bare have [_{VP} [_{VP} spurgt ham] selv].
She could just have [[asked him] self]
 c. Vi kan vel ikke uden videre [_{VP} [_{VP} begrave ham] selv].
We can not without any further ado [[bury him] self]
 d. Godt, at hun ikke mere skulle [_{VP} [_{VP} undervise ham] selv], ...
Good thing that she no longer should [[teach him] self]
 e. "... Jeg anbefalede [_{VP} [_{VP} ham] selv] ", siger Kaspar Rostrup.
I recommended [[him] self], says Kaspar Rostrup
 f. Vi vil nu [_{VP} [_{VP} passe hende] selv]. Hun skal ikke i børnehave.
We will actually [[look-after her] self]. She is not going to kindergarden.

¹ (11) includes both ECM cases as in (11)a/(13)a and object control cases as in (11)b, cf. Vikner (2014a).

- g. Og da vi ikke [_{VP} [_{VP} havde **dem**] **selv**], lånte vi dem af hollænderne, ...
 And as we did not [[have them] self], we borrowed them from the Dutch ...
- h. Ja, vi strikker [_{VP} [_{VP} **dem**] **selv**].
 Yes, we knit [[them] self]



Because this VP-adverbial *selv* modifies a VP, it must refer to the subject of the VP. This is why in English such VP-adverbial intensifiers would have to show agreement with the subject, i.e. instead of the *self* in the glosses of (12)a-h, in idiomatic translations we would find *I met him **myself***, *she asked him **herself***, *we can't bury him **ourselves***, *she did not have to teach him **herself***, *I recommended him **myself***, *we will look after her **ourselves***, *we didn't have them **ourselves***, and *we knit them **ourselves*** (cf. also that what we here call VP-adverbial *selv*, is what Jensen 2010, 61 calls a *subjektsfokusator* “subject focussing element”). This explains why there is co-reference between *ham/hende/dem* and *selv* in (11)a-f (as *ham/hende/dem* here is the subject of the following VP) but not in (12) (as *ham/hende/dem* here is part of the preceding VP, and therefore cannot be the subject of the VP or part of the subject of the VP).

Most, if not all of these cases of VP-adverbial *selv* are what Spathas, Alexiadou and Schäfer (2015, 1299) call anti-assistive intensifiers, i.e. they signal that the subject was directly involved, without assistance from anyone and without delegating any part of the task/action to anyone else.

As these cases of *ham/hende/dem* and *selv* do not together form a pronoun, they do **not** fall under our analysis of the pronouns *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in (5)d. Instead, the pronouns *ham/hende/dem* in these examples will behave exactly as expected (of *ham/hende/dem*) in (5)e. This is also why *selv* can be left out both here and in § 5 below.

Of the type (11) with medial *selv*, we found in KorpusDK (n.d.) **15** cases (0.8 %) with *ham + selv*, **11** (0.6 %) with *hende + selv*, and **25** (1.4 %) with *dem + selv*. Of the type (12) with final *selv*, we found **30** cases (1.7 %) with *ham + selv*, **13** (0.7 %) with *hende + selv*, and **90** (5.0 %) with *dem + selv*.

Now we have accounted for **201** of the **1807** cases of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in the Danish KorpusDK (= 11.1 %) – at least things are moving in the right direction.

5. *selv* as a modifier of the pronoun *ham/hende/dem*

In § 3, we saw that *selv* can be (grammaticalised as) part of a pronoun and in § 4 that *selv* may modify a VP (i.e. be adjoined to a VP). Now we shall see a situation sort of in-between these two, namely one where *selv* modifies not a VP but a DP (both examples are from *KorpusDK*, n.d.):

- (14) Da. a. Både Sonny og [DP [DP **forfatteren**] **selv**] opnåede stor berømmelse, da ...
Both Sonny and [[the author] self] reached great fame, when ...
 b. [DP [DP **Forfatteren**] **selv**] er i højt humør efter den flot modtagne debut, ...
[[The author] self] is in a great mood after the well-received debut, ...

If a DP like *forfatteren* 'author-the' may be modified by *selv*, then this should also be possible for a DP consisting exclusively of *ham/hende/dem* (for the details of such an analysis of the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* as a DP, see Vikner 2014b). In such cases, *selv* is right-adjoined to the DP *ham/hende/dem*. These are thus not cases of the pronoun *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv*, as in § 3, but cases of the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* (admittedly modified by *selv*), and therefore there are many more cases in *KorpusDK* (n.d.) than was the case in § 3, viz. **781** examples (43.2 %) with *[[ham] selv]*, **308** (17.0%) with *[[hende] selv]*, and **384** (21.3 %) with *[[dem] selv]*. The conditions for *ham/hende/dem* in (5)e are not nearly as difficult to observe as the ones for *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in (5)d:

ham/hende/dem 'him/her-ACC/them' have in common with *sig* and *mig* 'REFL/me' that they cannot have an antecedent inside the same clause (this is the **-selv**-condition), and they have in common with *ham selv/hende selv/...* and *hans/hendes/...* 'him self/her self/..., his/her-POSS/...' that they cannot have an antecedent which is the subject of the same clause (this is the **-sig**-condition). In other words, *ham/hende/dem* cannot have a (c-commanding) antecedent inside the same clause:

- (15) Da. a. I aften kommer turen til [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**].
Tonight the turn comes to [[him] self] (= it is the turn of him self)
 b. På den måde straffer Aukens facon først og fremmest [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**].
In this way, Aukens's manner punishes first and foremost [[him] self]
 c. Hvis Mogens Pedersen efterlades alene i Bagdad, bliver det op til [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**]
 at finde muligheder for beskyttelse, hvis bomberne rammer Bagdad.
*If Mogens Pedersen is left alone in Bagdad, it will be up to [[him] self]
 to find possibilities of protection, if the bombs hit Bagdad*
 d. Her sidder Laurits Jensen med en sangskjuler, der forestiller [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**], da
 han var posekræmmer.
*Here sits Laurits Jensen with a container for songs, which shows [[him] self], when
 he was a travelling salesman*
 e. Ikke mindst i de tre år, der er gået siden Bakers tragiske død i Amsterdam,
 er der udgivet adskillige bøger om [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**] og hans musik, ...
*Not least in the three years that have gone since Baker's tragic death in Amsterdam
 has there been published several books about [[him] self] and his music, ...*
 f. Han rækker triumferende armene i vejret som en fodboldspiller, der noget
 overraskende - ikke mindst for [DP [DP **ham**] **selv**] - har scoret helt ude fra midtbanen.
*Triumphantly he stretches his arms into the air like a football player who somewhat
 unexpectedly – not least to [[him] self] - has scored a goal all the way from midfield*
 g. I modsætning til [DP [DP **hende**] **selv**] er Madonnas affald ubevogtet ...
As opposed to [[her] self], Madonna's trash is unguarded ...
 h. Det er jo kun ham og [DP [DP **hende**] **selv**] der har nøgler til lejligheden.
It is indeed only him and [[her] self] who have keys to the apartment
 i. I dag kommer hun sammen med en mand, der er 25 år yngre end [DP [DP **hende**] **selv**].
Today she is dating a man who is 25 years younger than [[her] self]

- j. Men de er bange for, at naboen skal blive rigere end [DP [DP dem] selv],...
But they are afraid of the neighbour getting richer than [[them] selves]
- k. Hvad disse mænd mangler mest, er i det store hele en gåde for [DP [DP dem] selv].
What these men lack the most is by and large a mystery to [[them] selves]
- l. ZZ Top tiltrækker tilsyneladende kun mænd, der ser ud som [DP [DP dem] selv], ...
ZZ Top apparently only attract men who look like [[them] selves]

This *selv* is the one that Jensen (2010, 48) refers to as an enclitic focus particle. It causes the DP that it modifies to be in focus - just as in English: *This was approved by the prime minister herself*, cf. e.g. Eckardt (2001), Hole (2006), Howell (2012) and many others.

As these cases of *ham/hende/dem* and *selv* do not together form a pronoun, they do **not** fall under our analysis of the pronouns *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in (5)d. Instead, the pronouns *ham/hende/dem* in these examples will behave exactly as expected in (5)e.

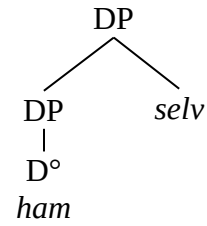
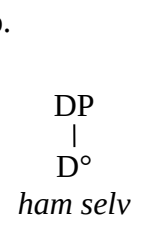
We thus think that there is a crucial difference between the pronoun *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* (§ 3) and the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* modified by *selv* (as discussed in this section). This is apparent e.g. from the fact that the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* that is modified by *selv* may be substituted by another DP (cf. also (14)):

- (16) Da. a. På den måde straffer Aukens facon først og fremmest [DP [DP ham] selv]. = (15)b
 b. På den måde straffer Aukens facon først og fremmest [DP [DP Auken] selv].
- (17) Da. a. I modsætning til [DP [DP hende] selv] er Madonnas affald ubevogtet ... = (15)g
 b. I modsætning til [DP [DP Madonna] selv] er Madonnas affald ubevogtet ...
- (18) Da. a. ZZ Top tiltrækker tilsyneladende kun mænd, der ser ud som [DP [DP dem] selv]. = (15)l
 b. ZZ Top tiltrækker tilsyneladende kun mænd, der ser ud som [DP [DP ZZ Top] selv].

If *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* on the other hand constitute a single pronoun, as in § 3, then the first half of this pronoun may **not** be replaced by any DP:

- (19) Da. a. Lige før jeg skulle tilbage ..., spurgte jeg miss O'Brien ud om [hende selv]. = (8)d
 b. * Lige før jeg skulle tilbage ..., spurgte jeg miss O'Brien ud om [miss O'Brien selv].
- (20) Da. a. Det er svært at lave en lov, der beskytter folk imod [dem selv]. = (8)f
 b. * Det er svært at lave en lov, der beskytter folk imod [folk selv].

The structural difference between the two types may be illustrated as follows:

- (21) a.  = (16)a/(17)a/(18)a
- b.  = (19)a/(20)a/§ 3

We think that *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in (21)b is the reflexive pronoun *ham selv* predicted by our analysis in (5)d. What we have in (21)a, on the other hand, is a version of the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* modified by *selv*, and it behaves exactly as expected (of *ham/hende/dem*) in (5)e.

Because it looks as if we have a case of the reflexive pronoun *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* i (21)a, (21)a seem to be a version of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* which violates the rules for *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in (5)d. In this way, *ham selv* in (21)a corresponds to the examples in (3) above and to the versions of *himself/herself/...* in English which are called 'override' ('untriggered'/'exempt') reflexives, cf. the examples in (1) above, which we will examine in the next section.

However, we would like to first add an additional small group of examples that also belong in this section concerning *selv* as a modifier of DPs, namely examples where *selv* modifies a complement of a copula. There is a total of **18** cases in connection with copula verbs – **14** (0.8 %) with *ham selv*, **4** (0.2 %) with *hende selv*, but **0** with *dem selv*:

- (22) Da. a. Hovedpersonen er selvfølgelig **ham selv**.
The main character is of course him self
 b. En af kandidaterne var **ham selv**.
One of the candidates was him self
 c. Den handler om en, der kunne være **ham selv**: ...
It is about someone who could be him self ...
 d. Som om der var to mennesker der trængtes i hendes hoved, og begge var **hende selv**.
As if there were two people squeezed into her head, and both were her self

Now we have accounted for **1694** of the **1807** cases of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in the Danish *KorpusDK* (= 93.75 %).

This is fairly satisfactory, and so now it is time to (re-)turn to English.

(The remaining **113** Danish cases (= 6.25 %) are more problematic, cf. appendix I in § 8.)

6. 'Override' reflexives in English

As also seen on p. 5 of hand-out 1a, the English reflexive system is much simpler than the Danish one: All there is is a $\pm$ *selv/self*-distinction, there is no $\pm$ *sig*-distinction.

(23)	<u>+self</u> must have an antecedent inside the same clause	<u>–self</u> cannot have an antecedent inside the same clause	<u>No $\pm$self distinction</u> (possessives)
	<i>myself, yourself himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves</i>	<i>me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them</i>	<i>my/mine, you/yours his, her/hers, its our/ours, your/yours their/theirs</i>

If the antecedent is outside the smallest clause containing the pronoun, the result is *him/her/them*...:

- (24) En. a. * The president hopes [that people will not criticise himself].
b. * The president hopes [that people will not criticise himself].
c. The president hopes [that people will not criticise him].
d. The president hopes [that people will not criticise him].

If the antecedent is inside the smallest clause, the result is *himself/herself/themselves*/...:

- (25) En. a. The prime minister never talks about herself.
b. * The prime minister never talks about herself.
c. * The prime minister never talks about her.
d. The prime minister never talks about her.

This is why it is unexpected that English allows

- (26) En. a. Peter doesn't realise [that such behaviour only hurts himself].
b. Peter's behaviour only hurts himself.

in that *himself* does not have an antecedent inside the same clause in (26)a,b. Even though *Peter* is inside the same clause as *himself* in (26)b, *Peter* should not be a possible antecedent because *Peter* does not c-command *himself*, i.e. because *himself* is not part of the sister constituent of *Peter* (cf. (7) above and the references cited there).

As was said in the intro, § 1, far from all clauses allow *himself/herself/themselves*/... if they do not have a (c-commanding) antecedent inside the same clause:

- (27) En. a. * Peter's sister only criticised himself.
b. * Peter does not realise [that Jill only criticised himself].

This is why *himself* in (26)a,b is often labelled an 'override' reflexive / an 'untriggered' reflexive / an 'exempt' reflexive.

Here is a series of further examples from Sørensen (2019, 21–25):

('override' reflexives as part of a subject or as object:)

- (28) En. a. [Both the local authority and myself] have gone to the minister.
(Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1494, (39i))
b. [Even Muggles like yourself] should be celebrating this happy, happy day!
(J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, cited in Hole 2002, 295, (21))
c. The fact that Paul had nominated myself for the position didn't please Frank.
(Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1495, (45i))
d. It was Kennett's flamboyant self-indulgence that allowed himself to become an election issue at the expense of his own achievements.
(Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1495, (45iii))

('override' reflexives with an antecedent outside the smallest clause, as in (26)a:)

- (29) En. a. She told him [he should marry a woman like herself].
(Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1494, (40iii))
b. John thinks [Mary is taller than himself]. (Baker 1995, 64, (4b))
c. I confess [that the novel is really about myself].
(Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1494, (42ii))

('override' reflexives with a co-referent expression inside the smallest clause, as in (26)b:)

- (30) En. a. Her intimate friends must be officious like **herself**.
 (1817, Jane Austen, *Sanditon*, cited in Liberman 2015)
 b. All Ann's novels are really about **herself**. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1494, (42iii))
 c. Sandra's friends would all be so much younger than **herself**. (BNC)
 d. ... the whole nature of the system is such that the worker's hands are directed by others than **himself**, and the product of his hands are taken away. (BNC)

('override'-reflexives without an antecedent or co-referent expression:)

- (31) En. a. He would be something nondescript, something in the background, like **herself**;
 perhaps he had become an interpreter. (Stern 2004, 271, (3a))
 b. The boss would like to hire more people like **yourselves**. (Baker 1995, 65, (i))
 c. The only one they didn't invite was **myself**. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 1494, (42i))
 d. The queen invited Tony and **myself** for a drink. (Haegeman and Guéron 1999, 476, (12))

We suggest analysing these 'override'(or 'untriggered'/'exempt') reflexives as more or less parallel to the cases of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv* in Danish which we analysed in § 5 as the pronoun *ham/hende/dem* modified by *selv*. In this, we follow König and Siemund (2000), who modify a suggestion in Baker (1995, 65), which itself is a modified version of an analysis going back to Ross (1970, 226–29). Bergeton (2004, 304) (and Bergeton and Pancheva 2011), who also discusses Danish, uses a very similar analysis.

The analysis is that the 'override' reflexives are a result of the combination of a normal pronoun *him/her/them/...* with an intensifying/modifying *himself/herself/themselves/...*, completely parallel to the analysis of $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{ham}] \textit{selv}]$ in § 5. However, there are two important differences between Danish and English:

First, English does not allow *self* on its own as a modifier. This was only possible before around the year 1200, but not any later, and therefore *himself/herself/themselves/...* have to be employed:

- (32) En. a. * They have $[_{VP} [_{VP} \textit{done most of the work}] \textit{self}]$.
 b. They have $[_{VP} [_{VP} \textit{done most of the work}] \textit{themselves}]$.

and thus $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{ham}] \textit{selv}]$ does not correspond to $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{self}]$ but rather to $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$.

Second, it is not that easy to modify accusative pronouns in English (the Danish examples are again from *KorpusDK*, n.d.):

- (33) a. Da. Jeg vil gerne give **ham den lille sprællemænd** en tryk opvækst.
 b. En. * I want to give **him the little jumping jack** a safe childhood.

- (34) a. Da. Her er julegaven til **hende der har alt**.
 b. En. * Here is the Christmas present for **her who has everything**.

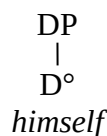
and this may be why $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{ham}] \textit{selv}]$ does not actually correspond to $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$ but rather to the 'shortened' version $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$ – used because $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$ is impossible for independent reasons.

This can also be seen from the very striking number of occurrences in the large corpora *BNC* (n.d.) and *COCA* (Davies, n.d.), as listed in this table from Sørensen (2019, 53)²:

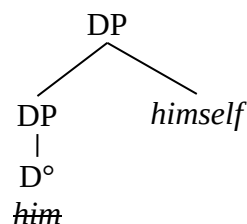
(35)	nominative	BNC	COCA
	<i>I myself</i>	191	1172
	<i>you yourself</i>	137	568
	<i>he himself</i>	724	2354
	<i>she herself</i>	365	1312
	<i>we ourselves</i>	100	376
	<i>they themselves</i>	295	1043
	accusative	BNC	COCA
	<i>me myself</i>	1	11
	<i>him himself</i>	1	8
	<i>her herself</i>	0	5
	<i>us ourselves</i>	0	1
	<i>them themselves</i>	2	4

Summing up the present section on English, § 6: The difference between the 'standard' reflexive pronoun and the override one is $[_{DP} \textit{himself}]$ vs. $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$, or in even more detail:

(36) a.



b.



Almost as in Danish, see (16)-(20) above, we can tell apart the two in that the pronoun in the override reflexive $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$ may be substituted by another DP, resulting e.g. in $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{Peter}] \textit{himself}]$, (37) and (38), whereas this is not at all possible in the case of the 'standard' *himself*, (39)c.

- (37) En. a. Peter's behaviour only hurts $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$.
 b. Peter's behaviour only hurts $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{Peter}] \textit{himself}]$.

- (38) En. a. Peter doesn't realise [that such behaviour only hurts $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{him}] \textit{himself}]$].
 b. Peter doesn't realise [that such behaviour only hurts $[_{DP} [_{DP} \textit{Peter}] \textit{himself}]$].

- (39) En. a. The prime minister never talks about herself.
 b. * The prime minister never talks about the prime minister.
 c. * The prime minister never talks about the prime minister herself.

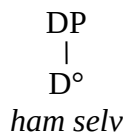
² Sørensen (2019, 53) points out that these figures only include cases where e.g. *him* and *himself* in *him himself* refer to the same entity. This means that the figures in (35) do not include the cases we classified as final adverbial *selv*, as in (12) og (13)b above, and as in the BNC example *They want to go out and get chips, they pay for them themselves*.

7. Conclusion

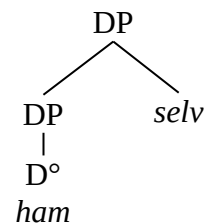
We³ have suggested that the following two are linked:

§§ 3-5: In Danish, we find many cases of e.g. *ham selv* which at first glimpse do not behave as we would expect, but which are still not a problem for our analysis in (5) above. This requires taking into consideration that *selv* may not just be a grammaticalised part of the reflexive/anaphoric pronouns *sig selv/ham selv/hende selv/dem selv/...*, as in (40)a, but it may also occur as an intensifier, i.e. as a modifier of different constituents, incl. VP (§ 4, (40)c,d) and DP (§ 5, (40)b).

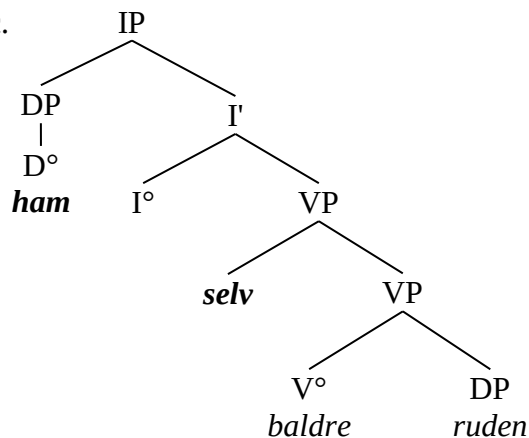
(40) a.



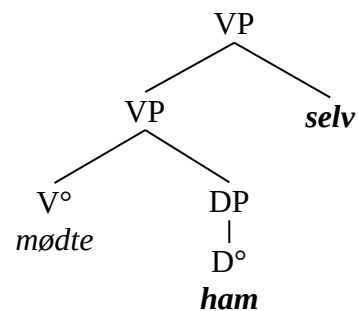
b.



c.

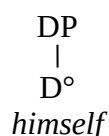


d.



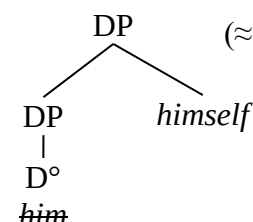
§ 6: The so-called 'override' reflexives in English are occurrences of the English reflexives (*himself/herself/themselves/...*) in contexts where a non-reflexive would be expected. They may be analysed in a parallel fashion to the cases of *ham selv/hende selv/dem selv/...* in Danish which we took to be the pronoun *ham/hende/dem/...* modified by *selv*, (40)b. In other words, we see English 'override' reflexives, (41)b, as a(n invisible!) pronoun *him/her/them/...* modified by *himself/herself/themselves/...*, as opposed to the normal English reflexive pronoun, (41)a, which since 1200 somewhat confusingly has had the same form as the modifier *himself/herself/themselves/...*:

(41) a.



(≈ (40)a)

b.



(≈ (40)b)

³ Sara Sørensen's part of this research was part of her MA dissertation (Sørensen 2019). Katrine Rosendal Ehlers' part of this research was part of her PhD project with the title "*Sig*" vs. "*dem*", "*sin*" vs. "*deres*" – *Number-sensitive reflexive pronouns and language change in Danish* (Ehlers 2017, 2020, and especially the dissertation 2023). Sten Vikner's part of this research was carried out as part of two research projects at Aarhus University financed by "Forskningsrådet for Kultur og Kommunikation" (Danish Research Council for Culture and Communication): *Object Positions – Comparative Syntax in a Cross-Theoretical Perspective* and *Similarities and Differences between Clauses and Nominals*.

We also hope to have shown how Danish may be used to gain more insight into English, given that Danish has many more distinctions in the reflexive system, allowing us to distinguish between reflexive pronouns like [*sig selv*] and modified non-reflexives like [_{DP} [_{DP} *ham*] *selv*], which then can be used in connection with the analysis of English.

We would still like to test in more detail whether the English 'override' reflexives and their Danish counterparts behave exactly alike and occur in the same contexts.

We would also like to give an answer to why *sig* or a constituent containing *sig* (including argument *sig* as in *han bad hende hjelpe sig* “he asked her to help REFL”, Ehlers and Vikner 2017), is never modified by *selv*.

This last assertion (that *sig* or a constituent containing *sig* is never modified by *selv*) may actually not be quite true.

(42)a is pronounced with a small break between *sig* and the anti-assistive/non-delegating *selv*, whereas there is no such break in (42)b:

- (42) Da. a. Mette overtalte kejseren til [PRO at hjælpe **sig selv**],
 i stedet for at få kammerherren til at gøre det.
M. persuaded emperor-the to help REFL self, in stead of to get chamberlain-the to do it.
 = ... help REFL himself ... = The emperor is persuaded to help Mette
 b. Mette overtalte kejseren til [PRO at hjælpe **sig selv**],
 i stedet for at få kammerherren til at gøre det.
M. persuaded emperor-the to help REFL self, in stead of to get chamberlain-the to do it.
 = ... help himself ... = The emperor is persuaded to help himself

(43)a is a real example, where *sig* and *selv* clearly are not one constituent, due to the object shift of *sig* to a position before the VP-adverbial *aldrig* 'never', which is left adjoined to VP. The verb here is one of the verbs that allow either an object with a thematic role or one without (i.e. *sig* 'REFL'), hand-out 1a, § 4.2.

- (43) Da. a. Dronning Margrethe har 110 ansatte - og sætter sig aldrig selv bag rattet.
Queen Margrethe has 110 employees – and sets REFL never self behind wheel-the
 (2018, weekly magazine *Se og Hør*,
<https://www.seoghoer.dk/kongelige/margrethes-vilde-forbrug-98000-kroner-om-dagen>)
- b. Selv hvis chaufføren er syg, sætter hun sig ikke selv bag rattet.
Even if driver-the is ill, sets she REFL not self behind wheel-the
- c. Hvis chaufføren er syg, så sætter hun sig selv bag rattet.
If driver-the is ill, then sets she REFL self behind wheel-the
- d. Hvis chaufføren er syg, sætter hun sig så selv bag rattet?
If driver-the is ill, sets she REFL then self behind wheel-the
- e. # Hvis chaufføren er syg, sætter hun så sig selv bag rattet?
If driver-the is ill, sets she then REFL self behind wheel-the

(43)b is parallel to (43)a, both have visible object shift of *sig*.

In (43)c, there is presumably also (string-vacuous) object shift of *sig*.

(43)d is parallel to (43)a-b, visible object shift of *sig*.

(43)e clearly does not have object shift of *sig*, resulting in the interpretation of *sig selv* as a complex reflexive, of type (5)a, which again must have a thematic role, which invites an invitation of someone operating a crane or a contraption of some sort which places her behind the wheel. This is NOT possible in (43)a-d.

A very similar set of examples, this time with the inherently reflexive verb *skamme* 'shame', cf. hand-out 1a, § 4.1:

- (44) Da. a. Hele Danmark skammer sig på deres vegne, men de skammer sig ikke selv.
Whole Denmark shames REFL on their behalf, but they shame REFL not self
- b. Hele Danmark skammer sig på deres vegne, men skammer de sig selv? Nej.
Whole Denmark shames REFL on their behalf, but shame they REFL self? No
- c. Hele Danmark skammer sig på deres vegne, men skammer de sig måske selv? Nej.
Whole Denmark shames REFL on their behalf, but shame they REFL self? No
- d. * Hele Danmark skammer sig på deres vegne, men skammer de måske sig selv? Nej.
Whole Denmark shames REFL on their behalf, but shame they REFL self? No

(44)a has visible object shift of *sig*.

(44)b presumably has (string-vacuous) object shift of *sig*.

(44)c is parallel to (44)a, visible object shift of *sig*.

(44)d clearly does not have object shift of *sig*, resulting in the interpretation of *sig selv* as a complex reflexive, of type (5)a, which is impossible with an inherently reflexive verb like *skamme* 'shame'.

Additive selv?

*Alle de andre elever havde bedt læreren om at hjælpe Dorte,
 men Dorte ville ikke bede læreren om [PRO at hjælpe sig] selv.
 = Alle de andre elever havde bedt læreren om at hjælpe Dorte,
 men Dorte ville ikke selv bede læreren om [PRO at hjælpe sig].
 All the other pupils had asked teacher-the to help Dorte,
 but Dorte would not (self) ask teacher-the to help REFL (self)*

But, why are there no case of adnominal *selv* after *sig*?

8. Appendix I: Problem cases with *ham/hende/dem* + *selv*

As admitted above, we still have some types of *ham/hende/dem* + *selv* which we do not quite understand, in total **113** cases (out of a total of 1807, i.e. 6.25 %).

There is a total of **93** cases of something we find completely impossible (i.e. where we would use *sig selv*) – **10** (0.6 %) with *ham selv*, **8** (0.4 %) with *hende selv*, and **75** (4.2 %) with *dem selv*:

- (45) Da. a. Inden det lykkedes for manden at forvandle kvinden, **ham selv** og virksomheden til et flammehav...
Before the man proved successful in transforming the woman, him self and the business to a sea of flame...
- b. På den måde kan han hurtigt orientere sig om dagsordener, bilag og breve til **ham selv** og de andre i byrådet.
In this way can he quickly keep informed concerning agendas, enclosures and letters for him self and the others on the town council.
- c. Han medbragte måske en lille en til kunderne, men ikke til **ham selv**.
He maybe brought along a wee dram for the customers, but not for him self
- d. Så tager hun tre valnødder - en til hver af musene og en til **hende selv**.
Then she takes three walnuts – one for each of the mice and one for her self
- e. Men hvordan har du tjent alle de der penge? De er kommet af **dem selv**!
But how have you made all that money? They have come by them selves
- f. Både Bodil Lous og Johnny O'Hagan lærer tydeligvis noget om **dem selv** ...
Both Bodil Lous and Johnny O'Hagan clearly learn something about them selves
- g. Da en universitetslærer bad de studerende om at skrive en stil om **dem selv**, blev hun chokeret ...
When a university teacher asked the students to write an essay about them selves, she was shocked ...

Finally we have a problem group with **20** cases (1.1 %) which we do not really have an analysis of.

9. Appendix II: Could all cases of *selv* be an intensifier?

Both Sæbø (2009) for Norwegian and Brandt (2001, 123) for Danish suggest that *selv* is **always** an intensifier/emphasiser, i.e. also in cases like *sig selv* 'REFL self' and *hende selv* 'her self'. Even though this would of course be more elegant, we still think that such cases of *selv* have to be seen not as intensifiers but as integral (grammaticalised) parts of the various pronouns in (5)a,d,g:

- If *selv* is always an intensifier, why can't *selv* be removed from e.g.

- (46) Da. a. Anna kritiserer sig selv hele tiden.
 b. * Anna kritiserer sig hele tiden.
Anna criticises REFL (self) all time-the

- If *selv* is always an intensifier, why does the reference change with the presence/absence of *selv* in e.g.

- (47) Da. a. Lukas fik politibetjenten til [at give sig en bøde.]
 b. Lukas fik politibetjenten til [at give sig selv en bøde.]
Lukas got police-officer-the to to give REFL (self) a fine

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