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Specific Features of predicates and reciprocal constructions in old Romanian

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Summary

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ABSTRACT

The domain of research and the framework

This paper is a diachronic investigation of the reciprocal constructions. This work focuses on the most frequent ways of expressing reciprocity attested in old Romanian (the corpus includes texts of the 16th century ─ the first half of the 17th century). In this study are involved several linguistic fields: diachronic and theoretic syntax, linguistic typology and Romance linguistic.

Goal of research: Our purpose in this investigation has been to analyse reciprocal constructions of old Romanian from a diachronic perspective. We proposed to indicate the differences between Romanian and present- day Romanian in the domain of reciprocity. For a diachronic study, where we will point out a series of forms and uses of *reciprocity in old Romanian*, it is useful to make a comparison with the situation of the current language.

The structure of the research

This paper contains **three chapters**, *Introduction*, *Conclusions*, *Appendix* (with example from Corpus), *Sources* and *References*.

    The first chapter *Description and interpretation of reciprocity in specialized studies* is an overview on the reciprocal constructions. We presented the *reciprocity relation* according to specialist studies from the local, as well as foreign field of linguistics. We deal with important descriptive data on the syntax and semantics of reciprocity.

In this chapter we introduced the principal terms in which reciprocal constructions are described in the literature on reciprocals. We focused here on conceptual and terminological issue. The concepts like *symmetric*, *mutual*, *reciprocal* are explained in detail. We summarized some of the major known generalizations about reciprocals.

According Nedjalkov (2007: 7), the prototypical reciprocal meaning is defined as describing situations with at least two entities which are in the identical reverse relation to each other and perform two identical semantic roles   Agent and Pacient: *John hits Bill / Bill hits John → John*

and Bill hit each other. A similar proposal was made by Pasero / Sabatier / Stéfanini (2010: 118)

who discussed about this binary relation like a symmetric relation $\forall x \, \forall y \, [R \, (x,y) {\rightarrow} R \, (y,x)]$.

With regard to the English terminology of the most basic term, *reciprocal*, the specialized field of linguistic includes several lines of approach of the matter of *reciprocity*.

If Nedjalkov (2007: 7-115) use the term *reciprocal* for the *meaning* and *forms*, Haspelmath (2007: 2087-2089) proposes two terms: *mutual* for the *semantic plane*, reserving *reciprocal* for *forms*.

In Romanian, like in all European languages, symmetrical predications (aRb $\leftrightarrow$ bRa) are projected in syntax as reciprocal constructions.

According GALR, II (2008: 163), there are two main manners of expressing the reciprocal constructions: (i) the construction with the subject in the plural <u>*Ei se căsătoresc [They are getting married]*</u> / with multiple subject *Ion şi Maria se căsătoresc [John and Marry are getting married]*; (ii) construction with subject and a complement of the verb *Ion se căsătoreşte cu Maria [John is marrying Marry]*.

Our data from this part also include some of the *ways to express reciprocity* and *the main types of reciprocals*. As per Haspelmath, 2007: 2090, reciprocity markers come in two types: *grammatical* and *lexical* reciprocals. Nedjalkov, 2007 (231-334) mentions three main types of polysemy of reciprocal markers: *reflexive-reciprocal, sociative-reciprocal, iterative-reciprocal*.

The second chapter *Reciprocal markers in Romanian*, centers on means of marking reciprocity in Romanian. In *The Grammar of Romanian* (2013: 179-182), with regard to the trait [+ reciprocal], Andra Vasilescu analyzes five devices: (a) *the lexical*; (b) *the iconic verbal*; (c) *the reflexive clitic*; (d) *the reciprocal pronoun* şi (e) *redundancy, with both a reflexive clitic and a reciprocal pronoun.*

We examined an old Romanian Corpus to highlights the different semantics and syntactic properties of the reciprocal verbs. There are two types of reciprocal verbs: *symmetric* and *asymmetric*. The inventory of reciprocal predicates is richer in the old language as compared to

the current language. According to the analysis, the inventory of *reciprocal refexive verbs* is considerably larger than the inventory of reciprocal verbs [-reflexive].

The third chapter *Expressing the reciprocal complement in old Romanian* presents the results of my corpus study refering to the reciprocal complement, one of the most important structures of the reciprocity. We compared the old Romanian structures and the modern Romanian ones. In old Romanian, we have found the three main manners of expressing reciprocal complements, like in present-day Romanian: by *a prepositional group* (as can be seen from the inventory, the lower argument of a symmetric argument pair is often marked by *cu* 'with'), by *Dative constructions* (are more frequent in old Romanian) or *Realization 0* (when the reciprocal complement is not lexicalized). The present investigation indicate that just like in the current language, in the old one we have identified both implicit reciprocals: *Subject oriented reciprocals* and *Object oriented reciprocals* for all three structure types mentioned above.

Anothers phrases expressing the reciprocal complement are the reciprocal anaphor [*unul + Prep + altul] / unul altuia* 'one other'/ 'each other' and *the prepositional group între* 'between/ among' + Nominal.

According Giurgea, 2013 (294-308), in Romanian the most common reciprocal anaphora is the reciprocal anaphor [*unul + Prep + altul] / unul altuia* 'one other'/ 'each other'. Refering to the internal organisation or structure of that group, this is composed of the indefinite determiner *unul* 'one 'followed by the alternating counterpart *altul* 'other'/ *celălalt* 'the other'. The form of the indefinite pronouns reflected the gender and number of the nominals they referred to.

The indefinite substitutes *unul ... altul / celălalt* has many lexical and phonologic variants in old Romanian. The inventory of prepositions is considerably larger in the old language as opposed to the current one.

Reciprocal anaphors can appear as complements of adjectives (*devota i unul altuia* 'devoted to each other'), nouns (*rela iile noastre unul cu altul* 'our relations with each other'), but , for this stage of the analysis, we shall focus on the occurrence as complements of verbs (*să se cunoască unul pe altul* 'to get to know each other').

The inventory proves that the preferred strategy in old Romanian was based on the indefinite substitutes compound phrase. Today the language prefers reflexive clitic anaphors (Reciprocal structures with a plural subject and an accusative or a dative reflexive clitic) contextually disambiguated.

We presented also *The prepositional group* între *'between/ among' + Nominal.* As shown by Giurgea, 2013 (294-308), there are cases where reciprocity can also be marked by the group *între [between/among] + personal pronoun, plural.* The condition is that the former reference have more than two members and that the reciprocal anaphora be marked by a clitic.

The reciprocal structure was headed by the preposition: *între.* We have reviewed here only two situations of the pattern: the examples in which the prepositional group is a complement of verb or noun. In these cases, the complements of the prepositions were nouns, pronouns, mixed nominals. While in old Romanian, the preposition *între* was often repeated in front of each of the coordinated terms, it became rarely in present-day Romanian.

Then we analyzed two particular cases referring to the ambiguity of reciprocal constructions: *reciprocal complement* vs *comparative complement*; *reciprocal complement* vs *prepositional complement* based on the *principle of semantic identity.*

Corpus. We examined an Old Romanian Corpus which was edited for G. Pană Dindelegan (coord.), *The Grammar of old Romanian*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016 (to print). The corpus includes texts of the 16th century ─ the first half of 17th century.