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Capeverdean reflexives: the importance of a silent Voice

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Abstract

In Capeverdean, a Portuguese-based Creole language, many reflexive contexts do not show any overt reflexive expression. This is the case of transitive verbs like *bisti* 'dress' in simple clauses: *Ana bisti* 'Ana has dressed herself'. This is a perplexing fact, given that there is an anaphor of the SELF-type available in the language: *(si) kabesa* — literally 'his/her head' —, meaning 'himself/herself', which participates in reflexive clauses with other verbs. The current paper explores this puzzle, ending with a proposal supported empirically and also by recent studies for other languages. This novel analysis goes as follows: all Capeverdean finite sentences, except unaccusatives, have a Voice head, responsible for assigning external theta-roles. This also includes middles, passives and this type of reflexives. It is this Voice head that, in spite of being silent, attracts the internal argument to a preverbal position and provides the interpretation for an implicit external argument, which is syntactically active.

Keywords

Capeverdean, reflexives, passive constructions, Voice projection, implicit arguments

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Os reflexivos en caboverdiano: a importancia dunha *Voice* silenciosa

Resumo

En caboverdiano, unha lingua crioula de base léxica portuguesa, moitos contextos reflexivos non presentan unha marca reflexiva explícita. É o caso de verbos transitivos como *bisti* 'vestir' en oracións simples: *Ana bisti* 'Ana vestiuse'. É este un feito inesperado, dado que a dita lingua presenta tamén unha anáfora do tipo SELF: *(si) kabesa* — literalmente 'a súa cabeza' —, co significado 'del mesmo / dela mesma', que participa en construcións reflexivas con outros verbos. O presente artigo analiza este problema e remata cunha proposta apoiada empiricamente e sustentada tamén por estudos recentemente realizados para outras linguas. De acordo con esta nova análise, todas as oracións finitas en caboverdiano, agás as inacusativas, teñen un núcleo *Voice*, responsable da atribución de roles temáticos externos. Quedan aquí incluídas tamén as pasivas medias, as pasivas e as reflexivas arriba mencionadas. É este núcleo *Voice* o que, malia ser silencioso, atrae o argumento interno cara a unha posición preverbal e garante unha interpretación para o argumento externo implícito, que está sintacticamente activo.

Palabras chave

Caboverdiano, reflexivos, construcións pasivas, proxección Voice, argumentos implícitos

Sumario

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1. Introduction

In the Santiago Island variety of Capeverdean, a Portuguese-based Creole language[1], many transitive verbs participate in clauses that, although semantically reflexive, do not exhibit any morphological marker for reflexivity. This is illustrated in (1) with the verb *pentia* 'comb': in (1a) we have a typical transitive construction, with an Agent subject and an overt internal argument, *kel buneka-la* 'that doll', which has a Theme theta-role; in (1b), where no internal argument is phonologically realized, we have a reflexive reading.

(1) a. Irina pentia kel buneka-la[2]
Irina comb that doll-LOC
'Irina has combed that doll'[3]
b. Irina pentia.
Irina comb
'Irina has combed herself'

Note that a reflexive interpretation is also available, under similar circumstances, for a limited set of verbs in English, as exemplified in (2):

(2) Peter washed (himself).

This is not the case, however, in European Portuguese, the lexifier of Capeverdean[4]. Just like other Romance languages, European Portuguese marks these reflexive contexts morphologically, with a clitic pronoun that assumes a specific form in the third person: *se*[5].

(3) a. A Irina penteou-*se*
the Irina comb:PST.3SG-SE
b. O Pedro lavou-*se*
the Pedro wash:PST.3SG-SE

This small list of facts triggers a number of important questions, which will be addressed in this paper under a generative approach. Namely:

(i) Which Capeverdean properties provide a reflexive reading in the absence of a reflexive expression (1b)?
(ii) In which way are these reflexive verbs related to their transitive counterparts?
(iii) Is there any connection between this strategy and the functional heads available in the language?
(iv) Where do anaphoric expressions of the SELF-type fit?

[1] Capeverdean Creole is spoken by the half a million inhabitants of the Cape Verde Republic. This archipelago, to the west coast of Senegal, was a Portuguese colony until 1975. The substrate languages are mainly from the Mande and Atlantic families, spoken by the slaves from the Guinea Rivers area that were taken to Santiago Island in the 15th century (Carreira 1982). The language is also the mother tongue of virtually all the estimated 1 million Capeverdeans in the diaspora (Portugal, The Netherlands, Switzerland, USA, etc.).

For research on other oral data from Cape Verde, visit the database http://cvwords.org/

[2] List of abbreviations: 1SG/1PL - 1st person singular/plural; COMP - complementizer; DEM - demonstrative; LOC - locative; NEG - negation; PASS - passive; PFT - perfect; POSS - possessive; PREP - preposition; PROG - progressive; PST - past; TMA - temporal morpheme (used in some cases for preverbal *ta*, which has a complex modal function).

[3] The Capeverdean bare form of most verbs has a complex tense and aspect interpretation that is correspondent to certain readings of the English Present Perfect (cf. Pratas 2010, 2012, for an overview of all the temporal morphemes and interpretations available in the language).

[4] One anonymous reviewer pointed out that in this paper "[t]here is an across the board concern with comparing Capeverdean with Portuguese and English. The motivation for this is unclear". Here is the clarification: (a) English has some apparently similar reflexive contexts, which have been accounted for in the literature with very interesting proposals within the same theoretical framework that is assumed here; it would not be very wise to ignore them (both the apparently similar sentences and the theoretical proposals); (b) European Portuguese is the lexifier of this Creole language, and some proposals discussed here are based on the lexical properties of the verbs under analysis.

[5] The Portuguese clitic *se* stands for third person singular or plural. The forms for first and second persons, singular and plural, do not differ from the ones that correspond to internal arguments in non-reflexive contexts: *me* 'me', *te* 'you.SG', *nos* 'us', *vos* 'you.PL'.

Taking these questions as key guidelines, this research has four main goals:

A) To present in greater detail the relevant reflexive contexts in Capeverdean (section 2).

B) To briefly review prior proposals and clarify why they do not account for this empirical puzzle (section 3).

C) To introduce a previously ignored point in the analysis of Capeverdean reflexives — Voice —, inspired by recent proposals for other languages, namely the one in Sailor and Ahn (2010, following Kratzer 1996). This is necessarily accompanied by some more data, which relate these constructions to passives, and the assumption that the reflexive verbs that are the core topic in this paper — as the ones illustrated in (1b) — are Naturally Reflexive Verbs (NRVs) (section 4).

D) To take a new, more efficient, approach to the problem under discussion (section 5): all Capeverdean finite sentences, except unaccusatives, have a Voice head, which is responsible for assigning external theta-roles. This also includes middles, passives and Naturally Reflexive Verbs. This Voice head displays different properties according to the lexical items in the sentence. In these reflexive constructions, this head is endowed with an EPP feature that attracts the reflexive arguments, similarly to what has been proposed in Ahn (2013) for English subject-oriented reflexives. Under this approach, all the other properties under discussion will be nicely accounted for.

Finally, some conclusions presented in section 6 will establish an anchor for future lines of inquiry, namely the aspectual properties of these constructions.

2. The empirical puzzle

The purpose of this section is to describe the empirical problem under study, introducing also some theoretical notions that are relevant for the rigorous description of the data. In subsection 2.2., I discuss a variety of Capeverdean sentences of the type Subject + Verb for which a reflexive reading is the only one available. Before that, however, it is important to present a contrasting reflexive clause where an overt anaphoric expression is required. This is the topic in 2.1.

2.1. The SELF-type anaphor

Certain Capeverdean transitive verbs do indeed mark reflexivity with an overt expression. In (4) we have an example for this: the reflexive reading is obtained through the anaphor of the SELF-type that consists of the word *kabesa* 'head', optionally preceded by a possessive determiner that is co-referent with the subject (4a). A clause with no internal argument phonologically realized is not even available in the language for this transitive verb (4b):

(4) a. Djon mata (si) kabesa
Djon kill POSS.3SG head
'Djon has killed himself'
b. *Djon mata
Djon kill

These cases are actually not very common, and in Pratas (2002) it has been argued that they are restricted to verbs whose reflexivity is improbable. They obey, however, the set of binding conditions formulated in Reinhart and Reuland (1993; henceforth R&R). This modified version of the Binding Theory (Chomsky 1981) presents two new binding conditions. As highlighted in Fox (1993), these are not conditions focused on the structural constraints for different types of anaphoric expressions, but rather non-structural conditions focused on the properties of predicates.

(5) Conditions in R&R (1993, their number (41))

- A: A reflexive-marked syntactic predicate is reflexive.
- B: A reflexive semantic predicate is reflexive-marked.

The only possible syntactic predicate is the verb (V). As for semantic predicates, they can be V as well, but also nouns (N) and Prepositions (P). This new formulation accounts for the possible reflexive marking in sentences like 'Lucie saw [a picture of herself]', in which the semantic predicate is N.

Thus, the sentence in (4a) obeys Condition A (we have a reflexive-marked syntactic predicate that is in fact reflexive) and Condition B (V is here a reflexive semantic predicate and it is reflexive-marked).

Note that, according to Reinhart (1996) and also to R&R, reflexive-marking may be obtained in two ways: (a) by combining the predicate with a reflexive expression of the SELF-type, or (b) intrinsically (in the lexicon). In the latter case, this reflexive-marking may assume four different forms, as follows.

(6) A lexical reflexive process can be marked (Reinhart 1996: 8)
- on the inflection system (Italian *si*)
- on the argument (Dutch *zich*)
- on the verb morphology (Hebrew)
- nowhere (English).

The Romance clitic of the type *si* (*se* in Portuguese) is, thus, not a SELF-type anaphor, but rather a way of marking a lexical reflexive process.

The same lexical marking is found, in the languages mentioned in (6), also with a number of unaccusatives (but see Reinhart 1996 and her arguments against the unaccusative analysis of these reflexives in Marantz 1984; Grimshaw 1990; Pesetsky 1995; among others).

Now, resuming the description of reflexive contexts in Capeverdean, there is another SELF-type expression: *el me / el propi*, probably derived from the Portuguese *ele mesmo / ele próprio* (Brüser and Santos 2002) — literally 'he same / he self'. In the Santiago variety of the language, however, this particular SELF-type expression is typically not bound by the subject and is available in non-canonical reflexive contexts, which can be seen by the fact that they can be replaced by pronouns (examples in Pratas 2002: 77):

(7) a. N sata purfia ku *mi-me* / *mi* pa-m ka kumi txeu katxupa
1SG PROG insist with 1SG-SELF 1SG PREP-1SG NEG eat much katxupa
'I am insisting with myself in order not to eat too much katxupa'

b. Bu sta ku medu? *Mi-me* / *mi* ta pasaba la tudu dia!
2SG be with fear? 1SG-SELF 1SG TMA pass:PST there every day
'Are you afraid? I (myself) used to pass there every day'

The SELF-type anaphor illustrated in (4) will also be accounted for by the proposed analysis in this paper. We will be back to it in section 5. The next sections will concentrate on the cases where no anaphoric expression is realized and for which, cumulatively, we have no morphological evidence that they are inherently reflexive-marked.

2.2. Invisible reflexivity

The following sets of examples are organized as follows: the clauses in a. are Capeverdean transitive constructions; the clauses in b. show, for identical verbs, the reflexive contexts of the type under investigation; and, finally, the clauses in c. show the European Portuguese entries correspondent to b. Note that a salient fact when we compare b. and c. is that the latter, but not the former — as is expected by now —, are marked by a reflexive clitic (the translations into English for b. and c. are the same, and thus they are presented only once).

(8) a. Maria laba ropa
Maria wash clothes
'Maria has washed the clothes'

b. Maria laba
Maria wash
c. A Maria lavou-se
the Maria wash:PST.3SG-SE
'Maria has washed (herself)'

(9) a. Zé Luis$_i$ fri-l$_{*i/j}$.
Zé Luis hurt-3SG
'Zé Luis has hurt him/her'
b. Zé Luis fri
Zé Luis hurt
c. O Zé Luís feriu-se
the Zé Luís hurt:PST.3SG-SE
'Zé Luis got hurt' / 'Zé Luis has hurt himself'

(10) a. Djon perde dinheru
Djon lose money
'Djon has lost his/some money'
b. Djon perde
Djon lose
c. O Djon perdeu-se
the Djon lose:PST.3SG-SE
'Djon got lost' / 'Djon has lost himself'

Interestingly, if we had something like *Maria laba si kabesa (di abuzu)*, *Zé Luis fri si kabesa (di abuzu)* or *Djon perde si kabesa (di abuzu)* — *di abuzu* meaning 'on purpose', thus proving the agentive nature of those subjects — the interpretation could be, literally, 'Maria washed her head (on purpose)', 'Zé Luís hurt his head (on purpose)' and 'Djon lost his head (on purpose)'. These are, as we can easily observe, anaphoric expressions of a different type, and we are not discussing them here.

Another interesting note is that in (9a) we have a pronominal form for the third person singular direct object. This is relevant here for two reasons: (i) to demonstrate that the language has object pronominal forms — hence, the absence of reflexive pronouns cannot be explained by the lack of a pronominal paradigm that could accommodate either a reflexive morpheme, like the Portuguese *se* for third persons, or a reflexive reading for other morphemes, as is the case of Portuguese first and second persons; the Capeverdean pronominal paradigm, which also includes clitics, is presented in table 1[6]; and (ii) we see that this third person object pronoun cannot indeed be bound by the third person subject — co-reference is impossible, the only reading available being a disjoint interpretation; therefore, this is surely not an anaphor, which, following the standard Binding Theory, should be bound in its local domain — in this case, by the subject.

[6] The object pronominal form in (9a) is a clitic. In this context — with a bare verb form — a free pronoun would be ungrammatical, as illustrated in (i):

(i) * Zé Luís fri el.

This free pronoun is only allowed — and, in fact, obligatory — when the verb is marked for Past, with the affix *-ba*:

(ii) a. Zé Luís ta friba el.
Zé Luís TMA hurt:PST 3SG
'Zé Luís used to hurt him/her'
b. *Zé Luís ta friba-l
Zé Luís TMA hurt:PST-3SG

This restriction has been accounted for through a morpho-phonological approach in Pratas and Salanova (2005) and Salanova and Pratas (in press).

	Emphatic forms	*Free forms*	*Clitics*	
			subject	*object*
1sg	ami	mi	N	-m
2sg (informal)	abo	bo	bu	-bu / -u
2sg (form, masc)	anho	nho	nhu	
2sg (form, fem.)	anha	nha		
3sg (fem., masc)	ael	el	e	-l
1pl	anos	nos	nu	-nu
2pl	anhos	nhos		
3pl	aes	es		-s

Table 1. Capeverdean personal pronouns (adapted from Pratas 2007:132)

All the examples presented so far are in simple root clauses with one verb only. But what happens in other sorts of constructions? As we will see in the following contexts, most of them gathered from spontaneous speech among Capeverdean native speakers, nothing changes: in more complex sentences we still have a reflexive interpretation for configurations of the type Subject + Verb:

(11) Nha mai fla ma mininu ta xuxaba
my mother say COMP boy TMA soil:PST
'My mother has said that the boy would soil himself'

(12) Pursora sata mandaba mininus laba
teacher PROG order:PST children wash
'The teacher was ordering the kids to wash themselves / get washed'

Moreover, we get a sloppy reading under stripping:

(13) Pedru ta laba tudu dia i Maria tambe
Pedru TMA wash every day and Maria too
'Pedru washes every day, and Maria does too (wash Maria every day / *wash Pedru every day)'

Fox (1993: 12) says that "any account of VP deletion must require that the LF structure of the antecedent VP will be the same as that of the deleted one". He then suggests that the explanation for the distribution of strict/sloppy ambiguities with reflexives should follow from this requirement. He reformulates R&R condition B, which now entails that a reflexive predicate be reflexive-marked, but also that a reflexive-marked predicate be reflexive:

(14) R&R Condition B (revised by Fox 1993: 12): A predicate is reflexive iff it is reflexive-marked.

The LF movement operation of the reflexive component, which adjoins to the head of the predicate, supplying it with the necessary [+reflexive] feature, affects structure, just like Quantifier Raising does. This means that this movement can take place in the antecedent VP only if the resulting head chain also exists in the deleted VP. In other words, we have the following list of inferences:

(15)

- Whenever a VP is headed by a reflexive predicate it must be reflexive-marked, following (14).
- In deletion contexts, whenever the antecedent VP is reflexive-marked, structure identity requires that the elided VP is also reflexive-marked.
- This forces a reflexive interpretation of the elided VP — the sloppy interpretation under ellipsis is therefore explained.

The data descriptions in this section have established the basis for the theoretically grounded discussion that follows. This discussion starts with the presentation of previous approaches, which is the topic of the next section. The questions left unanswered by these prior proposals will also be listed.

3. Previous approaches and their weaknesses

This section presents two previous approaches to these data: a lexicalist proposal (Pratas 2002) and a more syntactic-oriented analysis (Fiéis and Pratas 2004).

The lexicalist perspective in Pratas (2002) argued that the reflexive contexts illustrated in (1b) — *Irina pentia* 'Irina has combed (herself)' — were a result of a lexical reduction, such as in 'Max washed'; in this case, we have the reduction of the internal argument. According to Chierchia (1989), reduction applies to a two-place relation; it identifies two arguments and reduces the relation to one property. The reduction of the internal argument does not erase its theta-role, but these clauses may indeed look like intransitive entries. In other words, their structure could also be taken as unaccusative. Recall, though, that with unaccusatives the argument missing is the external, not the internal. The next examples, in (16) and (17), are here just to illustrate the type of unaccusative entries also available in Capeverdean. They show the same contrast when compared to European Portuguese: in the latter, they are morphologically marked with *se*, in Capeverdean they are not marked at all.

(16) a. Porta abri
door open
b. A porta abriu-se.
the door open:PST.3SG-SE
'The door has opened'

(17) a. Vidru kebra
glass break
b. O vidro partiu-se
the glass break:PST.3SG-SE
'The glass has broken'

In these cases, the non-animate DP has a Theme or Patient theta-role — the most common and non-problematic analysis for this, which I also assume here, is that it has been generated as the verb internal argument and moved to Spec,TP. There is no external argument projected in the structure.

Still concerning Reinhart's proposal for the type of reflexives under analysis, one may say that in Dutch, just as in Portuguese, the operation of lexical reduction of the internal argument leaves behind a morphological mark of the internal theta-role (and not of the Accusative Case). Recall from (6) that, among the four strategies to mark a lexical reflexive process available for different languages, there are: the marking on the argument (Dutch) and the marking on the inflection system (Italian and, I add, Portuguese).

(18) a. Peter wascht *zich* [Dutch]
b. O Pedro lavou-*se* [European Portuguese]

This mark does not exist in Capeverdean. There is, therefore, an outstanding problem for the proposal in Pratas (2002). It may be expressed in the following question: having had as European lexifier a language that shows this morphological marking for the internal theta-role, why is it that Capeverdean belongs to the group of languages that do not show such marking? One could try to solve this by assuming that the language does not have a *se*-type morpheme available in its numeration. As opposed to English, however, the language has a rich pronominal paradigm (see table 1, above). So, why isn't there also a reflexive use of these pronominals, such as the one verified in Portuguese for first and second persons?

As for the proposal in Fiéis and Pratas (2004), it argued that the relevant "visible" contrast between some reflexive entries in different languages — presence/absence of a *se*-morpheme — is determined in the morphological (post-syntactic) module of the grammar. In the syntax, some terminal nodes are generated and moved by syntactic rules and constraints. The result of this constitutes the input of a morpho-phonological domain, the PF branch of the grammar.

One of the problems for that proposal is the stipulation of some morpho-syntactic limitations for Capeverdean, which involved the absence of a *se*-morpheme. But, as said above, what about the other object pronominal forms? Why are they prohibited from reflexive constructions? Another problem comes from the following fact: it postulated that the SELF-type anaphor *si kabesa* appeared as an adjunct and not at the internal argument position. This is, however, difficult to motivate. Under this adjunct hypothesis, these contexts would be similar to the Portuguese ones with the pleonastic intensifier *a si mesmo*; but note that, in Capeverdean, this is not a pleonastic expression — if it were the case, it would not be obligatory. As we have seen in (4b), here repeated as (19b), this is contrary to fact.

(19) a. Djon mata (si) kabesa
Djon kill POSS.3SG head
'Djon has killed himself'

b. *Djon mata
Djon kill
'Djon has killed himself'

In the next section I will present a new perspective on the discussion of these data that will establish the grounds for the new proposal in the current paper.

4. A NEW PERSPECTIVE

At this point of the discussion, some other properties of the constructions under analysis need to be introduced. These properties concern possible relations between these reflexives and some types of passives. In 4.1. there is a tentative organization of the predicates involved, followed by a brief discussion of their aspectual properties — although these aspectual features are not to be discussed in detail in the present paper, there is an intuition that they need to be explored in future studies of these contexts. In 4.2. the possible relation with passives is derived from the discussion of the meanings available for these reflexive clauses.

4.1. Some aspectual properties of these predicates

In (20) we have the tentative organization (adapted from Pratas 2007) of the long list of Capeverdean predicates that allow for the lack of any morphological marker of reflexivity, in spite of having a reflexive reading. Note that, as said before, this does not include clearly unaccusative entries, such as *Porta abri* 'The door opened'.

(20) The open list of Capeverdean reflexive predicates with no overt reflexive marking includes verbs that involve:
(a) some change in one's physical position: *deta* 'lie down', *xinta* 'sit', *labanta* 'stand up'…
(b) some action/effect over one's body: *laba* 'wash', *xuxa* 'soil', 'get dirty', *modja 'wet,* 'get wet', *pentia* 'brush the hair' / 'get the hair brushed', *fri* 'get hurt'…
(c) some action/effect over one's self (as long as it is different from *mata* 'kill'): *perde* 'get lost', *kasa* 'get married', *ngana* 'become mistaken', *zanga* 'become angry'…

In all these sets, there is an associated telic property, for there is a focus on the result obtained. This resultative feature is more visible in paraphrases in English where a *get*-construction is used. Nevertheless, the verbs in the first set, involving some change in one's physical position, are also translated into English with no recourse to a *get*-construction.

Curiously, when we take the verb *xuxa* 'soil' or *modja* 'wet', which could be semantically related to *laba* 'wash' (all of them are in group (20b)), we arrive to a core point in the whole discussion: the internal theta-role of the DP when an accident happened is not the same as when there is an agentive reading — in the first case the DP clearly has only a Theme theta-role. Consider the next pair of examples: in (21a) the DP clearly has no active involvement in the event; in (21b) it may have had this type of role or not. Note, however, that whereas the translations into English express this difference, the Capeverdean construction stays the same:

(21) a. Onti txobe txeu i limarias modja
yesterday rain a.lot and animals wet
'Yesterday it rained a lot and the animals (in the backyard) became wet'
b. Katxor dja modja
dog already wet
'The dog already got wet (someone wetted him / he wetted himself)'

Thus, we have two possible environments, which assume the same form:

- either the subject has been /is being submitted (or whatever the tense and aspect in question) to some event which results in a change of state for it / him;
- or it / he has performed / is performing (or whatever the tense and aspect in question) something which results in a self-change of state.

Just to illustrate how productive this is in the language, consider some more examples from the group (20b) — the ones which perform some effect over one's body:

(22) Maria, bu sata xuxa, bu ka ta ba festa
Maria 2SG PROG soil 2SG NEG TMA go party
'Maria, you are getting dirty, [like this] you will not go to the party'

(23) Bu sata pentia otu bes? Kantu bes ki bu pentia oxi?
2SG PROG comb other time how.many time that 2SG comb today
'Are you brushing your hair again? How many times did you do it today?'

(24) N sata muda kel movel-li i N sata magua
1SG PROG change DEM piece.of.furniture-LOC and 1SG PROG hurt
'I am moving this piece of furniture and I am getting hurt'

Now consider some examples with verbs from group (20c) — the ones that refer some effect over oneself. The verbs in question are *perde* 'get lost' and *xatia* 'become upset'.

(25) Di purmeru bes ki e ben Lisboa, e perde
of first time that 3SG come Lisboa 3SG lose
'In the first time he came to Lisbon, he got lost'

(26) Ka bu xatia, Madalena!
NEG 2SG upset Madalena
'Don't you become upset, Madalena!'

An interesting fact about these predicate constructions is that, although we may not be referring to any motivation behind the action but rather to the result itself, there may be the presupposition (not always an information clearly stated — and this is the crucial difference from a true reflexive) that the affected Theme had some active responsibility in the result as well. Even in the case of 'he got lost (in the city)', we easily infer that the subject did something which led to him getting lost. In other words, we have the intuition that this DP is somewhat related to an implicit argument, some kind of Agent for this change of state. In the next subsections, this point will be developed.

4.2. Naturally Reflexive Verbs across languages: any relation with passives?

One possible approach to these constructions might be by way of seeing them as middle constructions, or as having the meaning (although not the structure) of a passive identical to, for instance, the German "process passives" — "Vorgangs" (see Kratzer 2000) —, which are built with the auxiliary *werden* ('get', 'become'), and not with *sein* 'be' (the German passives with 'be' are of the adjectival sort).

At this point, one crucial notion is that most Capeverdean verbs under discussion correspond to the ones described in the literature as Naturally Reflexive Verbs (NRVs) (cf. Kemmer 1993; Alexiadou and Schäfer 2013, among others). Although they come from different semantic subclasses, NRVs have this in common: it is "inherent in their meaning [...] the lack of expectation that the two semantic roles they make reference to will refer to distinct entities" (Kemmer 1993:58).

(27) NRVs contrast both with:

- Inherently Reflexive Verbs (IRVs), which do not have transitive counterparts, such as the Capeverdean *konporta dretu* 'behave [well]' or *rapendi* 'regret'.
- Naturally Disjoint Verbs (NDVs), which motivate the expectation that the two semantic roles involved will refer to distinct entities, just like the distinction regarding Capeverdean *mata* 'kill'.

This is the point where we go back to including passives in this discussion. For NRVs, Alexiadou (2005, following Arce-Arenales et al. 1994) shows that English *get*-passives, but not *be*-passives, are compatible with reflexive action:

(28) a. I got dressed (by my mother or by myself)
b. I was dressed (only by my mother)

Even in *get*-passives with NDVs there is a parallel ambiguity, which is also similar to the one in the French passive with *se faire* (McIntyre 2011):

(29) a. in one interpretation, we have a subject responsibility reading (surface subject portrayed as bringing the event onto itself, be it by action or negligence).
b. in the other interpretation, we have a non-subject responsibility reading (complete absence of responsibility).

(30) John is going to get killed.
(i) Responsibility: John is going to get himself killed.
(ii) Non-responsibility: John is going to be killed.

This formulation captures exactly what has been argued for some Capeverdean clauses discussed in the previous subsection: there may be the presupposition that the Theme affected by the action had some active responsibility in the result as well. Again, there is a parallel ambiguity in those constructions and the English *get*-passive.

We are now better equipped to understand the proposal in Alexiadou and Schäfer (2013). In order to account for Greek NRVs, the authors assume the analysis in Kratzer (1996), Marantz (1997) and Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou and Schäfer (2006): external arguments are severed from the verbal predicate and introduced by the functional projection Voice, above the lexical verbal phrase (vP/VP). They also propose that the Greek Nact-Voice head is not passive, but middle (Doron 2003, Alexiadou and Doron 2012), assuming the following diathesis division:

(31) a. Active
b. Non-active
— passive
— middle

Greek Nact-morphology thus signals the absence of Spec,Voice — so, no external argument is merged here. These points raise an important question in the context of the present paper: do Capeverdean NRV clauses have a non-active diathesis?

One thing we know for sure: they do not show non-active morphology. But, in spite of this, should we follow the clue in Kemmer (1993), when she defends that these verbs do not actually denote reflexive events and should be given a semantic analysis different from reflexives? For Embick (2004), passives, unaccusatives and reflexives have one point in common: they lack an external argument. All these observations point to a careful examination of Capeverdean passives, before we proceed with the current analysis.

In the end, I will demonstrate that this is not true for Capeverdean. The final proposal will be exposed in section 5. In the next subsection, I will present some relevant properties of passives in this language.

4.3. Capeverdean passives and other related constructions

The tripartion of passives proposed for European Portuguese in Duarte and Oliveira (2010), following Embick (2004) and Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (2008), is here assumed for Capeverdean. Thus, the language displays three types of passives: verbal, resultative and stative.

Verbal passive:

(32) Porta abridu
door open:PASS
'The door has been opened'

Resultative passive:

(33) Kintal fika intxidu d'águ na 10 minutu
backyard become full of'water in 10 minutes
'The backyard has become waterlogged in 10 minutes'

Stative (adjectival) passive:

(34) Porta sta abertu
door be.STAGE-LEVEL open
'The door is open'

As we can see by the examples above, there are some important morphological differences between the three types of Capeverdean passives.

Verbal passives (32) are marked by a passive morpheme, which is affixed on the verb, and do not include any auxiliary. The temporal and aspectual interpretation of the sentence is conveyed by the same morphemes, and their various combinations, that guarantee this information in their active counterparts: Null Perfect (Pratas 2012, 2014), progressive *sata*, the modal *ta* (that participates both in habitual and in future constructions) and the past variant of the passive *-du*, which is *-da* (Pratas 2007, 2010; Rendall, in prep.)

In the resultative passive (33), the verb may also be marked with the passive morpheme, but, as opposed to verbal passives, an auxiliary is at stake here: *fika*, here meaning 'become'. The clause refers exclusively the result, nothing is said or suggested as to any action leading to it.

Finally, the stative/adjectival passives (34) do not show any passive morphology — compare (34) with (32) — and are formed with the stage-level copula *sta* 'be'.[7] [8]

[7] There is another copula in Capeverdean, the individual-level *e* 'be', which participates in other types of statives, like *Djon e altu* 'Djon is tall'.

[8] One anonymous reviewer asked about adjectival passives like *Livru sta ledu* 'The book is read': *ledu* seems indeed to include the passive morpheme *-du*. I argue, however, that this is not the case: we see this by the fact that, in this construction with *sta* 'be', *-da* (the past variant of the passive morpheme) is never allowed. Thus, although *ledu* seems the same word in both constructions (adjectival passive: *Livru sta ledu* 'The book is read' / verbal passive: *Livru ledu* 'The

Besides these three types of passives, Capeverdean displays the whole array of constructions that have been cross-linguistically related both to passives and reflexives.

Impersonal passives:

(35) (es anu) Bendedu kaza txeu pa rizolve problemas di bankus
(this year) sell:PASS house a.lot PREP solve problems of banks
'(this year,) Many houses have been sold to solve bank problems'

Anticausatives (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995):

(36) Freskinha dindereti ku calor
icecream melt with heat
'The ice-cream melted with the heat'

Dispositional middles:

(37) Kel livru-li ta le sabi
DEM book-LOC TMA read good
'This book reads well/easily'

Crucially, a property of Capeverdean apparently non-related to the reflexive constructions under discussion in the present paper is the fact that verbal passives disallow an agentive *by*-phrase.

(38) a. Djon kume bolus
Djon eat cake:PL
'Djon has eaten the cakes'
b. Bolus kumedu (*pa Djon)
cake:PL eat:PASS
'The cakes have been eaten (by Djon)'

Rendall, Pratas and Costa (2012) argued that the lack of a *by*-phrase in verbal passives is not unexpected, for the language has no means of expressing an agent via a prepositional phrase.

(39) * distruison di sidadi pa soldadus
'the destruction of the city by the soldiers'

The obligatory absence of an overt external argument in (38b) strikes a clear contrast with the fact that Capeverdean prohibits null referential subjects in active root clauses, even in cases where their reference is easily recovered from the context and where these null categories are clearly allowed in European Portuguese.

(40) Q: Undi ki bu bai?
where that 2SG go
Where did you go?
A: *(N) bai praia
1SG go beach
'I went to the beach'

As we can see by the Answer clause in (40), an overt subject pronoun is obligatory, despite the fact that the subject reference results, in this sequence, very clear. Moreover, Capeverdean also seems to prohibit null objects in identical circumstances.

(41) Q: Kuse ki mininu sata fazi katxor?
what that boy PROG do dog
'What is the boy doing to the dog?'

book has been read'), I propose that in the adjectival passive what we have is an adjective, not a form of the type V + passive morpheme.

A: E sata enbrasa*(-l)
3SG PROG hug 3SG
'He is hugging it'

The impossibility of a *by*-phrase in verbal passives, however, is not incompatible with the existence of a syntactically active external argument (Rendall, Pratas and Costa 2012; Rendall, in prep). We have three diagnostics for this:

(i) modification by purpose adverbials is possible:

(42) Karu riskadu di abuzu
car scratch:PASS on purpose
'The car has been scratched on purpose'

(ii) the implicit argument may control the subject of an adverbial non-finite clause:

(43) Banku saltadu pa roba dinheru
bank rob:PASS PREP steal money
'The bank has been robbed to steal the money'

(iii) instrumental PPs are allowed:

(44) Meza limpadu ku panu
table clean:PASS with cloth
'The table has been cleaned with a cloth'

In the next section, I will show that this latter property of the passives is indeed relevant for the current proposed analysis of the reflexive contexts under discussion.

5. The current proposal for these Naturally Reflexive Verbs

The current analysis for Capeverdean reflexive contexts with no overt reflexive expression is grounded on several assumptions proposed by other authors for different languages. Some of them have already been mentioned in the previous sections. Others will be introduced along the present exposition.

5.1. The critical role of Voice

Among the concepts already mentioned, one that I also assume for Capeverdean is found in Alexiadou and Schäfer (2013), as to the analysis of Greek Naturally Reflexive Verbs:

(45) a. external arguments are severed from the verbal predicate (they are not part of the verb meaning).
b. they are introduced by the functional projection Voice, above the lexical verbal phrase, vP/VP (Kratzer 1996, Marantz 1997, Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou and Schäfer 2006).

In another study that is crucial for the current analysis, Sailor and Ahn (2010) also develop, for English, the notion of a Voice head as proposed in Kratzer (1996), arguing that it encodes grammatical Voice. This head, which they also put, syntactically, above little *v*, is the one that "modulates all grammatical voice alternations, by introducing an external argument (or not) and triggering predicate fronting (or not)" (Sailor and Ahn 2010: 5).

Furthermore, these authors adopt the strongest possible interpretation of Borer-Chomsky Conjecture (as in Baker 2008), which follows from Minimalist principles (Chomsky 2005):

(46) Borer-Chomsky Conjecture: "All parameters of variation are attributable to differences in features of particular items (e.g. the functional heads) in the lexicon" (Baker 2008: 3).

This strongest possible interpretation leads Sailor and Ahn (2010) to the following proposal:

(47) A functional head Voice^0 is present in every finite clause, and it alone determines the grammatical voice (passive, middle, etc.) of that clause. Any and all syntactic differences among the voices arise from featural differences among the lexical entries for Voice^0.

They consequently assert that this was implied in Collins (2005): there are no voice-related "transformations". Passives and middles are in no way derived from actives. Instead, the three are truly in complementary distribution (Sailor and Ahn 2010: 6-7).

In a different work, which is focused on subject-oriented reflexivity, Ahn (2013) establishes a relation between this Voice head and English reflexive contexts. He defends that, syntactically, REFL is situated just outside the thematic domain, just as other grammatical voices, like passive (Harley 2012). In subject-oriented reflexive constructions, this Voice head is endowed with an EPP feature that attracts the reflexive arguments. Semantically, REFL co-identifies two arguments — the reflexive anaphor and the subject. One crucial note is that either or both the reflexive Voice^0 and the anaphor that move to Voice,P may be silent. Thus, this co-identification of subject and object does not need an overt reflexive expression.

5.2. A silent head in Capeverdean reflexives

In the current paper, the proposal of Voice^0 is assumed for Capeverdean, including in the reflexive contexts under analysis — with Naturally Reflexive Verbs.

One important question at this point is: what is it that moves / is merged at this Voice projection? Recall that, according to Alexiadou and Schäfer (2013), in Greek Naturally Reflexive Verbs Nonactive-morphology signals the absence of Spec,Voice — hence, no external argument is merged there. I propose that both for the Capeverdean reflexives under analysis (which do not show non-active morphology) and for passives (in these, there is non-active-morphology: the morphemes *-du* or *-da*, as said above), Spec,Voice is always projected. However, and extending the analysis in Ahn (2013), just like the Voice head, Capeverdean Spec,Voice may be silent. In any case, we need this position to account for the fact that, even in verbal passives (where there is no *by*-phrase and, thus, no overt external argument), there is clearly a syntactically active implicit argument, as has been demonstrated in examples (42)-(44). In the same fashion, an implicit argument is also proved for reflexive contexts, as we can see below:

(i) modification by purpose adverbials is possible:

(48) Mininu modja di abuzu
boy wet of abuse
'The boy got wet on purpose'

(ii) the implicit argument may control the subject of an adverbial non-finite clause:

(49) Mininu modja p'-e fika mas fresku
boy wet PREP-3SG become more fresh
'The boy got wet in order to refresh himself'

(iii) instrumental PPs are allowed:

(50) Mininu modja ku agu di mangera
boy wet with water of hose
'The boy got wet with the water from the hose'

We have now all the information to present a table with all the relevant properties of all these constructions.

	Verbal passives	*Resultative passives*	*Stative Passives*	*Impersonal passives*	*Anti-causatives*	*IRVs*	*NRVs*	*Middles*
Internal argument is promoted	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓
May have implicit external argument	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Denote change of state	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Show passive morphology	✓	?	*	✓	*	*	*	*

Table 2. Properties of Capeverdean Naturally Reflexive Verbs (NRVs) as related to passives and middles.

Therefore, the analysis proposed here includes the following assumptions:

(51)

A. All Capeverdean finite sentences, except unaccusatives, have a Voice head in their functional structure; this Voice head is responsible for assigning, or not, external theta-roles. This also includes: middles, passives and constructions with Naturally Reflexive Verbs.

B. Spec,Voice is always projected, even when there is no passive morphology (cf. Alexiadou & Schäffer 2013, for Greek NRVs).

C. The Voice head is responsible for the distinct properties in different sentences:

- in reflexive constructions with Naturally Reflexive Verbs, Voice co-identifies two arguments; it is endowed with an EPP feature that attracts the internal argument to a preverbal position, as was proposed in Ahn (2013) for English subject-oriented reflexive constructions; Voice^0 remains silent (note that this is different from a lexical operation of reduction of the internal argument — cf. section 3);
- in active, canonical transitive constructions, the internal argument stays in its base position, as the verb complement; Voice^0 remains silent; an overt external argument is merged in Spec,Voice:
  - — this also holds for the transitive counterparts of reflexive constructions with NRVs (cf (1a);
  - — as for the contexts with the SELF-type anaphor si *kabesa*, as illustrated in (4a) (thus, with Naturally Disjoint Verbs), the configuration is exactly the same as the one above, for transitives: the Voice head is not endowed with an EPP feature and, therefore, it does not attract the internal argument; an external argument is merged in Spec,Voice and the co-reference between this and the internal argument/anaphoric expression that it c-commands obtains straightforwardly under the binding Condition A (Chomsky 1981); note that this is different from postulating that si *kabesa* is merged as an adjunct (cf. section 3);
- in passives, the morphemes *-du* or *-da* are lexicalized in Voice^0; in compliance with a generalized version of the Doubly Filled COMP Filter (Sportiche 1992), either the head or the specifier must be empty — therefore, since here Voice^0 is not silent, no argument can be merged at or moved to Spec,Voice; the internal argument moves to Spec,TP for Case reasons and Spec,Voice, even though it is silent, allows for the interpretation of an implicit external argument (cf. examples in (42)-(44)).

D. True unaccusatives lack an external argument at all levels of derivation and interpretation; this is, cross-linguistically, unlike middles, which have been shown in the literature to lack an external argument in the narrow syntax, but have an implicit argument in the interpretation. I propose here that this unaccusative property also distinguishes these constructions from Capeverdean passives and reflexives.

- note that the assumptions above establish a relation between all these constructions that is different from the one proposed in Embick (2004), for whom passives, unaccusatives and reflexives have in common the fact that they lack an external argument.

If this analysis is on the right track, we have two other clear benefits:

A) The sloppy reading under stripping nicely follows, without having to resort to LF movement. Recall the sentence in (14), here repeated as (52):

(52) Pedru ta laba tudu dia i Maria tambe
Pedru TMA wash every day and Maria too
'Pedru washes every day, and Maria does too (wash Maria every day / *wash Pedru every day)'

In order to fully understand this, we can adapt some crucial inferences that were listed in (15):

(53) Adaptation of the inferences in (15):
- Whenever we have a reflexive configuration with a Naturally Reflexive Verb, the Voice head is endowed with an EPP feature that attracts the internal argument to a preverbal position.
- In deletion contexts, whenever the antecedent Voice Phrase exhibits this type of structure, structure identity requires that this is also the case with the elided Voice Phrase.
- This forces a reflexive interpretation of the elided Voice Phrase — the sloppy interpretation under ellipsis is therefore explained.

B) We can now easily presume that the distinction between the reflexives under analysis in Capeverdean and in European Portuguese lies in the lexical expression of Voice. Therefore, the burden of this specific configuration is not on the side of the pronouns available in each language: Capeverdean pronominals could perfectly do this job, should its Voice head be necessarily non-silent.

Finally, the answer to a question raised in a previous section is now straightforward: do these Capeverdean reflexive clauses with Naturally Reflexive Verbs have a non-active diathesis? The answer is no. The point is that we do not need to stipulate this in order to have the desired effects of the Voice head. Moreover, since the language has non-active morphemes available (*-du* and *-da*) and that there is no non-active-morphology in these reflexive constructions, this stipulation would indeed be rather strange.

6. Final remarks

In the present paper, some Capeverdean reflexive constructions that do not have an overt reflexive expression have been analysed. After a detailed description of the data, I have proposed that all Capeverdean finite sentences, except unaccusatives, have a Voice head, which is responsible for assigning external theta-roles. This also includes: middles, passives and constructions with Naturally Reflexive Verbs.

It is this Voice head that, in reflexive constructions with Naturally Reflexive Verbs, is responsible for the attraction of the internal argument to a preverbal position. In passives, Voice^0 is not silent — it accommodates the morphemes *-du* or *-da*; thus, in compliance with a generalized version of the Doubly Filled COMP Filter (Sportiche 1992), no overt argument can be merged at or moved to Spec,Voice; the internal argument moves to Spec,TP for Case reasons and Spec,Voice, even though it is silent, allows for the interpretation of an implicit external argument. Moreover, I argue that for passives in Capeverdean there is no fronted VP. A fronted verbal projection has been proposed in Collins (2005) for English, which accounts for the word order in long passives, with a *by*-phrase. Since there is no such fronted VP in Capeverdean, there is also no way of accommodating a *by*-phrase (cf. Rendall, in prep).

A possible future development in the study of these Capeverdean reflexive constructions concerns their aspectual properties, which is a line of inquiry inspired by the following facts, also mentioned in this paper:

(i) there is a crucial, although subtle, distinction among the internal theta-roles of these constructions, and between these and the internal theta-role in transitives/regular passives;

(ii) there is some telicity involved — we are referring to the accomplishment and not to a process or an activity.

This is also to be related to the possible implications of the proto-role entailments proposed in Dowty's (1991: 572), where some contributing properties for the distinct proto-roles are listed. This is, evidently, some point that will be investigated in future work.

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