

- (8) *un propre chien de Jean '*an own dog of John'
 (9) *quelques propres chiens de Jean '*some own dogs of John'

Therefore, I propose that *propre* does not denote the mere identity function (as opposed to *même* which directly combines with an individual), but includes it in its denotation in two different ways depending on which argument is intensified:

- intensification of the possessor: $\llbracket \text{propre1} \rrbracket = \lambda x. \lambda R. \lambda a. a(R(\text{ID}(x)))$
- intensification of the possessum: $\llbracket \text{propre2} \rrbracket = \lambda x. \lambda R. \lambda a. \text{ID}(a(R(x)))$

where ID is the identity function on the domain of individuals: $\langle e, e \rangle : \text{ID}(x) = \lambda x. x$

R is a relation: $\langle e, et \rangle$,

x is an individual of type e,

a is a specific kind of choice function defined for singleton sets, which corresponds to the definite article of type $\langle et, e \rangle : \text{THE} = \lambda P. \iota x P(x)$

So, just as both adnominal *selbst* and adverbial *selbst* always denote the identity function but take different semantic arguments (DP or Voice Head ; cf. Hole 2002), the identity function in the denotation of *propre* targets two possible arguments, the possessor or the possessum.

Furthermore, not only is the semantic logic the same in *selbst* (or *x-même*) and *propre*, but the specific case of adverbial *x-même* also occurs with *propre* as shown by the above example (3). In this case, *propre* does not express that the possessor as opposed to other individuals created the website, but that he created the website without any help (which is precisely the meaning of adverbial *selbst* according to Hole 2002). This happens when the possessor corresponds to an agent argument in the event denoted by the noun, that is, when the possessive DP does not express a possessive relation in the narrow sense, but a predication (verb nominalization). Therefore, this supports Hole's hypothesis that such an interpretation ('without assistance') is associated with agentivity (intensification of the Voice head). Indeed, when the possessor does not correspond to an agent but to a patient argument as in (4), the interpretation is parallel to the one with adnominal *x-même*. So, since *propre* has the same range of interpretations as *même* even if its surface syntax remains the same, this suggests that these different interpretative possibilities for intensification are intrinsically related and should not be associated with different homonym lexical entries (*contra* Eckardt 2000 who distinguishes focus particle *selbst* from intensifying *selbst*).

In conclusion, I show that French *propre* is an intensifier that is restricted to possessive DPs ; its specificity is that the identity function included in its meaning targets the possessor or the possessum. Moreover, *propre* presents the same range of intensifying uses as *même*, but without any change in its surface syntax which makes highly plausible the unity of *propre*. This suggests in parallel that the adnominal and adverbial uses of *même* belong to the same particle *même*. Thus, the specificity of intensifiers such as *propre* (on the DP scale) or *même* (on the VP scale) is that they involve an identity function in focus (thereby relating to contextually salient alternative functions that do not map the respective referent onto itself, but onto some other referent) which may take different semantic arguments, whether the surface syntax of the intensifier remains the same or not.

References

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