

A NOTE ON SOME NON-ABSOLUTE INTRANSITIVES

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Winifred Boagey has remarked interestingly on the so-called "absolute" construction (*Te Reo* 17-18 (1974-75): 11-28). She has considered the reduction of certain supposed reciprocals (p. 20f.).

A principal concern of her discussion has been (p. 26) "to delimit the absolute construction more closely than in previous accounts, so that its character might be more clearly seen..." Boagey concludes that it "is necessary to resort to semantics to explain many of its characteristics." This seems to be even more true than she represents. The present note is occupied with clarifying just such a view for her claimed reciprocals.

For verbs such as *hate*, *kiss*, *meet*, *touch* Boagey instances (p. 20) the following:

- (1) Paul kissed Jo
Paul and Jo kissed each other
Paul and Jo kissed.

First we must notice that this range is not possible for *hate*. Boagey asks whether *each other* is incorporated in the last example. The answer is that it is not:

- (2) Paul kissed Mary on her dimpled chin
Paul and Mary kissed each other on their salt-sprayed lips
Paul and Mary embraced each other with their outreached arms
*Paul and Mary kissed on their salt sprayed lips.

It is clear that the second and third of (2) are derived from a conjoining of the form:

- (3) Paul kissed Mary, and Mary kissed Paul.

Boagey has remarked on verbs, noticed earlier by Poutsma and others, that require a plural subject. These would presumably behave like *flock*, *swarm*, *huddle*, etc. It seems immediately clear that, contrary to (3), the last example under (1) belongs with:

- (4) Paul and Jo huddled together.

We seem therefore to require a specific feature [Associative] that is associated with certain verbs such as *visit*, *converse*, *fuck*, *be convivial*, etc. A verb such as *kiss* may obviously be derived by the addition of this feature.