

Syntax and semantics of reference: Where does Principle C live?

Dorothy Ahn

Rutgers University

dorothy.ahn@rutgers.edu

Seoul National University

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www.dorothyahn.com/handouts



Introduction

Reference

Reference: a core part of human cognition and communication

- it happens early
 - and gets incorporated into language early
 - due to this tight connection to mind, it's *necessarily interfacial*
linguistically, it is affected/constrained by
 - prosody
 - structure
 - context
- ...*and* language-externally,
- memory
 - social coordination

Why look at reference?

1. Linguistic studies have shown that nouns and their reference patterns are systematically constrained by morphology, structure, and meaning.
2. Some of the fundamental ingredients of syntax and semantics rely on a dichotomy between two types of morphology: *pronouns* and *r-expressions*

(1) Jin likes his song.

- *his* is a 3sg possessive pronoun
- *Jin* is a name, an r-expression (referential expression; Chomsky 1981)

Today's focus:

syntax and semantics of reference, focusing on pronouns and r-expressions.

pronouns vs. r-expressions

Pronouns and r-expressions are considered to be fundamentally different elements syntactically:

distribution-wise

- (2) a. Jin_i likes his_i song.
b. *He_i likes Jin's_i song.
- (3) Every girl thinks that Mary likes {her / the girl}.

→ Principle C [Chomsky 1981]

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ingredient-wise

- pronouns carry **features**, which enable and constrain Agree
- r-expressions carry **descriptive** content, which use ϕ -features to Agree

pronouns vs. r-expressions

This distinction is reflected in the semantics:

- ϕ features as presuppositions [Heim and Kratzer 1998; Sudo 2012]

$$(4) \quad \llbracket \text{she}_1 \rrbracket^g = g(1), \text{ if } g(1) \text{ is female} \quad g = \{ \langle 1, \text{jim} \rangle, \langle 2, \text{jimin} \rangle \dots \}$$

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- descriptive content (like nouns) as predicates, sets or functions of entities

$$(5) \quad \llbracket \text{singer} \rrbracket = \{ \text{jim}, \text{jimin} \} / \lambda x. \text{singer}(x)$$

$$(6) \quad \llbracket \text{the singer} \rrbracket = \iota x. \text{singer}(x)$$

pronouns vs. r-expressions?

But many developments have challenged this strict dichotomy

- Distributional overlap

- (7) a. I met a linguist. {She / The linguist} looked happy.
b. Nit thinks {he / Nit} is smart. [Zapotec, Thai, Hmong, etc.]

→ Principle C violations

- Semantic overlap

- (8) a. Only Mary did her homework.
b. Only teacher reads teacher's paper.
[Tagalog, Thai, Korean, etc.]

→ fake nouns

Question: How do we bridge this gap?

Today's seminar

Classic dichotomy.

- Binding Theory [Chomsky 1981], specifically Principle C

Empirical challenges

1. Structural overlap: Principle C violations
2. Semantic overlap: fake nouns

Findings

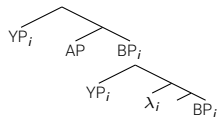
- relevant dichotomy is not in *morphology* (pronoun vs. r-expression)
- but in *reference mechanism* (**attributive vs. referential**)
- implications on pronouns vs. r-expressions

Principle C violations

Biding Theory

Binding Theory: 'restricts the distribution of nouns that have the same referent' [Büring 2005]

- binding can mean many things:
 - coindexation + c-command in syntax
 - operator/quantifier bound in semantics
- Safir 2004: *co-construal* for 'having the same referent' ('any form of identity relation between two nominals')



Co-construal depends on:

1. morphological form of the nouns reflexives, pronouns, r-expressions
2. structural relations between the nouns locality, c-command

Binding Principles

Binding Principles syntactic constraints on distribution

Principles A, B, C [Chomsky 1981]

assuming three primitive categories of nouns

A **reflexives** coconstructed with local, c-commanding antecedent

- (9) a. That it rained upset {Jin, him, *himself}
b. Min_i likes herself $_{i/*j}$.

B **pronouns** cannot be coconstructed with local c-commanding antecedent

- (10) Jin_i likes him $_{*i}$.

C **r-expressions** cannot be coconstructed with any c-commanding antecedent

- (11) a. She $_i$ likes Min $_{*i/j}$.
b. Min_i thinks that Min $_{*i/j}$ is smart.

Principle C violations

Principle C

- (12) a. Jin_i sees Jin_{*i} .
b. Jin_i thinks that Jin_{*i} is smart.

Principle C violations

Principle C

- (12) a. Jin_i sees Jin_{*i} .
b. Jin_i thinks that Jin_{*i} is smart.

many violations across languages

r-expressions coconstrued with identical c-commanding r-expressions

- Zapotec, Hmong, Vietnamese, Thai, ...

- (13) **Nít₁** phûut wâa **Nít₁** sabaaj
Nit say comp Nit comfortable
'Nit said that she's comfortable.' [Thai; Chaiphet and Jenks 2021; Lasnik 1986]

- (14) R-yu'lààa'z ra **bxuuhahz** ra **bxuuhahz**
hab-like pl priest pl priest
'The priests like themselves.' [Zapotec; Black 1994; Lee 2003]

Principle C violations

Maybe these are just reference to different guises

(15) Nit_i said Nit_j is comfortable.

a. $g(i) = Nit_A$

b. $g(j) = Nit_B$

Principle C violations

Maybe these are just reference to different guises

(15) Nít_i said Nít_j is comfortable.

a. $g(i) = \text{Nít}_A$

b. $g(j) = \text{Nít}_B$

No,

- second Nít allows sloppy interpretation [Chaiphet and Jenks 2021; Lee 2003]

(16) Mii khêε Nít thîi khít wâa Nít chàlàat.

ext just Nit rel think comp Nit smart

'Only Nit thinks that she's smart.'

(Others don't think they are smart.)

[C&J'21:(13)]

→ means only Nít has the property of [*y* thinking *y* is smart]

→ suggests that Nít here is truly like a pronoun, semantically bound

Principle C violations

Our options

Discard Principle C. pronoun = r-expression

Principle C violations

Our options

Discard Principle C. pronoun = r-expression

Save Principle C. pronoun \neq r-expression

- The idea: they are *NOT* r-expressions in syntax!

1. they are copies of their antecedents [Lee 2003]
2. they are features on pronouns [Chaiphet and Jenks 2021]
a subset of r-exp (titles, names, kinship terms) as 'open-class' person features

(17) she₇: <7,e, **3**> [complex indices; Sudo 2012]

(18) a. Nít₁: <1, e, **Nít**>
b. khruu₄: <4,e, **teacher**>

Summary

Challenges to pronoun vs. r-expression dichotomy

- **Distributional overlap** ←

(19) N_it_i said N_it_i is comfortable.

- response: they are morphological features for agreement

some issues

1. *conceptually*, open-class person features?
2. *derivationally*, problem of when ϕ -features enter derivation

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1. *conceptually*, open-class person features?
2. *derivationally*, problem of when ϕ -features enter derivation

- **Semantic overlap** *new!*

(20) a. Only Mary did her homework.

→ fake features

b. Only teacher reads teacher's paper.

→ fake nouns

- features on pronouns valued later [Bassi 2021; Kratzer 2009; Messick 2023, a.o.]

- **nouns cannot be valued later**

Fake nouns

Fake features of pronouns

Phi-features of pronouns systematically ignored in certain contexts (leading to terms like 'fake indexicals/features') [Kratzer 1998; Heim 2008, a.o.]

- allows mismatched gender alternatives under focus operators

(21) Only Mary_F did her homework. [Heim 2008; Kratzer 1998, a.o.]
= No one else (**regardless of gender**) did their homework

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- allows mismatched gender alternatives under focus operators

(21) Only Mary_F did her homework. [Heim 2008; Kratzer 1998, a.o.]
= No one else (**regardless of gender**) did their homework

- allows sloppy readings with mismatching ϕ in ellipsis

(22) I did my homework, but you didn't [~~do **your** homework~~]. [Bassi 2021]

Minimal pronouns

→ **Features are not present in the derivation**

- it's not being interpreted (*not in LF*)
 - focus alternatives copy everything but *f*-marked element
[Rooth 1985; Schwarzschild 1999]

(23) Jin_F danced again. ALT: {Sol danced again, Min danced again,..}

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- it's not violating identity condition of ellipsis (*not in derivation*)
 - an elided XP must have a parallel structure/LF as antecedent XP
[Sag 1976, Keenan 1971, Chomsky 1965, Ross 1969, a.o.]

(24) *A taxi driver was called, but Sally didn't. [Stockwell 2024]

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Then where do these features live?

- **In the PF interface, for Spell-out purposes**
 - features transmitted through Agree (but late) [Kratzer 1998; Messick 2023]
 - features valued from contextual information [Bassi 2021]

Challenge: fake nouns

Observation: bound descriptions also show the same 'fakeness' property

- (25) In this old photo, only Mary_F looks like Mary.
= No one else looks like themselves [Roeper 2006]
- (26) *The linguist* used to believe that the students in *the linguist's* class were happy, just as the philosopher did [~~believe that the students in **the philosopher's** class were happy~~]. [sloppy reading available; Safir 2014]

Almost no English data (other than Roeper 2006; Safir 2014 and Ahn 2024, 2026)

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→ more productive in languages where descriptions can be bound more readily

Tagalog 2nd person reference

When nouns with proprial article *si/ni* are used as 2nd person reference, the same ‘fakeness’ is observed [Gérard Avelino, pc]

(27) Si guro lang po ang nagbasa ng papel ni guro.
si teacher only hon ang read ng paper ni teacher
‘Only teacher read teacher’s paper.’ (others didn’t read their own paper)

- While *si* usually appears in front of referential names [Schachter and Otones 1972], actual proper names do not seem to allow bound-reading here (Gérard Avelino pc)

si-marked nouns allow fakeness in Tagalog.

Korean 2/3 reference

Nouns can be used instead of pronouns, potentially due to honorification and/or the lack of a 3rd person pronoun

- (28) kyoswunim-man kyoswunim nonmwun twu-pen ilkcyo pothong
prof-only prof paper 2-cl read normal
salam-tul-un caki nonmwun tasi an ilkeyo.
person-pl-top self paper again neg read
교수님만 교수님 논문 두 번 읽죠, 보통 사람들은 자기 논문 다시 안 읽어요.
'Only professor reads professor's paper twice, others don't read their papers again.'
- (29) emma-nun emma-il-ul hay-ss-ci, na-nun an hay-ss-e
mom-top mom-work-acc do-past-decl, I-top neg do-past-decl
엄마는 엄마 일을 했지, 나는 안 했어.
'Mom did mom's work, but I didn't [~~do my work~~']'

Bare nouns, titles, names allow fakeness in Korean.

And more fakeness

Going back to English

There was an event at the linguistics department and a photographer from the SAS Communications came by and asked if he could take photos. Everyone was so shy that they said no. Jane, who came late because she has been sick for the whole week, was nice enough to tell him that he could take a photo of her.

- (30) Only Jane let the photographer take a photo of her delicate self.
= Others, **delicate or not**, did not let the photographer take a photo of them.

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- (30) Only Jane let the photographer take a photo of her delicate self.
= Others, **delicate or not**, did not let the photographer take a photo of them.

- *delicate* is ignored in alternatives (n=20)
- parallel results with ellipsis for Japanese [David Oshima, Ryo Kobayashi, pc]

- (31) Yasuko-sensei-wa Seiko-ni-yorimo mazu sakini Chiaki-ni sikkaritosita
Yasuko-teacher-top Seiko-dat-than first early Chiaki-dat responsible
kanojo/zibun-no choosho-o mit-tu kangae-sase-ta.
she/self-gen strengths-acc 3-cl think-cause-pst
'Yasuko let Chiaki think about 3 strengths of responsible her/self earlier than (Yasuko
let) Seiko [think about 3 strengths of **responsible** her/self].'

- fakeness extends beyond nouns (I'll focus on nouns)

Summary of the issue

Expressions with descriptive content (bare nouns, si-marked nouns, modified reflexives, and definite descriptions)* allow bound readings, but their content seem to be inactive in syntax/LF.

*I'll call them 'fake nouns'

Issue

Recall: ϕ is 'fake' because they are ϕ .

- **minimal pronouns.** get their features valued through Agree [Kratzer 1998; Messick 2023] or context valuation [Bassi 2021]
 - nouns are not transmitted syntactically
 - nouns cannot just live in PF

Summary

Challenges to pronoun vs. r-expression dichotomy

- **Distributional overlap** [Principle C violations]

(32) N_it_i said N_it_i is comfortable.

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- **Semantic overlap** [fake nouns]

(33) a. Only Mary did her homework.
b. Only teacher reads teacher's paper.

- nouns and modifiers cannot be valued later
- pronouns and r-expressions show parallel fakeness

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Let's take a detour to a semantic analysis of fake nouns.

Fake nouns and reference

Intuition

The relevant dichotomy is *not* ϕ vs. nouns. It's mechanisms of reference

[Ahn 2026] The presence of index backgrounds the content

- nouns are not added at PF
- they are present in derivation but are sometimes *backgrounded*

[Q] When?

[A] When an index is present.

Reference: [content] + [index]



[description]

Reference

Reference: [content] + [index]



[description]

Reference

Reference uses 2 ingredients:

content and index

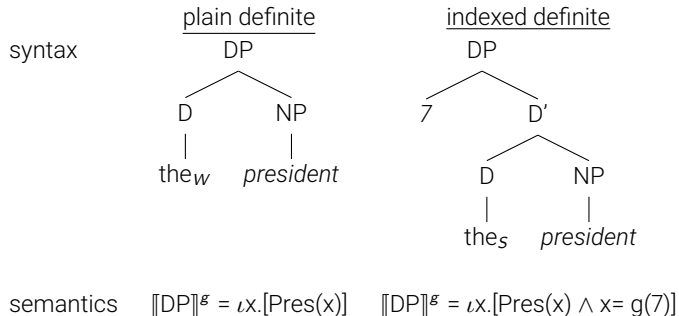
- content: linguistic description
(noun, ϕ -information, etc.)
- index: deictic, anaphoric

[Ahn 2025b] Definite space
defined by presence and overt
marking of content and index

Implementation

Content and index can be represented in syntax and semantics:

[Schwarz 2009, Elbourne 2008, Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2010, Ahn 2019, Jenks and Konate 2022]



Attributive vs Referentiality

In referring, we can decide to rely on content, index, or both

- when index is known (anaphoric), then content is not so necessary
- if index is not known (we don't know who), content is all we have

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→ attributive vs. referential use

[Donnellan 1966]

- **referential use:** famous misdescription use [Donnellan 1966]

(34) (looking at a man with water) The man with a martini is tall.

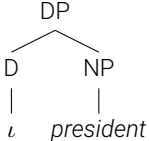
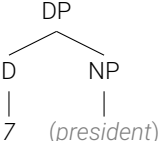
- **attributive use:** description has to be foregrounded

(35) In the next party, the man with a martini will be give the toast.

A different implementation

a different implementation

indexed definite just returns $g(7)$ [Gutzmann and McCready 2014, Ahn 2024]

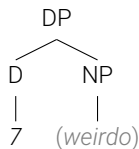
	<u>plain definite</u>	<u>indexed definite</u>
syntax	 <pre>graph TD DP1[DP] --- D1[D] DP1 --- NP1[NP] D1 --- i[ι] NP1 --- president[president]</pre>	 <pre>graph TD DP2[DP] --- D2[D] DP2 --- NP2[NP] D2 --- 7[7] NP2 --- president["(president)"]</pre>
semantics	$[[DP]]^g = \iota x.[Pres(x)]$	$[[DP]]^g = g(7)$ (if pres)

- for indexed definite, content is backgrounded
- better accounts for attributive vs. referential dichotomy

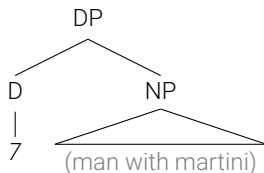
Referential *the* as a pronoun with backgrounded content

Gutzmann and McCready 2014

- referential *the* as a pronoun with backgrounded content, like epithets
multi-dimensional semantics [Potts 2005, Gutzmann 2012; McCready 2010, a.o.] for compositionality
descriptive content becomes $\langle e, u \rangle$ via * due to type-mismatch



I met the weirdo on the street
I met x_7 (and x_7 is a weirdo)



The man with a martini is tall
 x_7 is tall (and x_7 is a man with a martini)

Backgrounded content and fakeness

Advantage

Backgrounded content is ignored in ellipsis and focus.

implemented by 'truth'-conditional and 'use'-conditional dimensions

1. not subject to identity under ellipsis [Potts et al. 2009]:

- (36) a. I met that idiot in the movie theater.
b. I did ~~meet that~~ **idiot** ~~in the movie theater~~ too, but he's no idiot.

2. does not project to alternatives:

- (37) Only Jin_F is so peculiar that they decided to interview the weirdo.
a. Others, weirdo or not, were not interviewed

Coming back to fake nouns

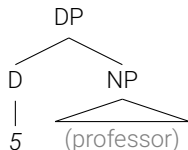
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semantics	$[[\text{DP}]]^g = \iota x. [\text{Pres}(x)]$	$[[\text{DP}]]^g = g(7)$ (if pres)

Implementation: presence of an index backgrounds the predicative content

1. Nominal content as $\langle e, t \rangle$ predicates
2. Ambiguity falls on presence and absence of index:
 - If index is present, content is backgrounded
 - If no index, predicate is subject to: ι , quantifier *the* [Pupa 2022]

Deriving fake nouns

(38) $professor = x + (prof)$



(39) $[\alpha \text{ Only } [\beta \text{ professor}_F \lambda_5 t_5 \text{ reads professor}_5\text{'s paper}]]$

- $[[[\beta \text{ ..}]]]^o = \lambda w . \text{read}(5, \text{paper-of}(5))$
- $[[[\beta \text{ ..}]]]^f = \{\lambda w . \text{read}(z, \text{paper-of}(z)) \mid z \in D_e\}$
- $[[(39)]] = \text{No one other than 5 read their own paper; (prof}(5))$

Coming back to fake nouns **and features**

(recall)

The relevant dichotomy is *not* ϕ vs. nouns. It's mechanisms of reference

[Ahn 2026] The presence of index backgrounds/erases the content

- nouns are not added at PF
- they are present in derivation but are sometimes *backgrounded*

Implementation: presence of an index backgrounds the predicative content

1. Nominal *and* ϕ content as $\langle e, t \rangle$ predicates
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Attributive vs. referential dichotomy

Attributive vs. referential dichotomy extends beyond nouns

ϕ of a pronoun and NP of a definite description are subject to one underlying mechanism [Ahn 2024]

Both can be backgrounded (referential use):

- (40) a. {She / Every kid} is drinking coffee.
b. {The linguist / Every linguist} drank the coffee that I made for the linguist.

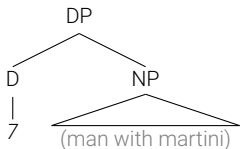
Both can be foregrounded (attributive use):

- (41) a. I don't know the LINGUIST personally, because she is an astronomer.
b. I don't know HER personally, because he is a man. [Sudo 2012]
- (42) a. In a QP defense, the student presents and the advisor asks questions.
b. In every 1960s marriage it was understood that he should take out the garbage and she should wash the dishes. [Roberts 2023 LSA]

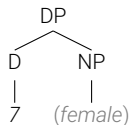
ϕ as a predicate

→ ϕ is a predicate, but is backgrounded when there is an index
(This is often the case, unless marked for attributive use)

(43) *she* = x + (female)



The man with a martini is tall
 x_7 is tall (and x_7 is a man with a martini)



She is happy
 x_7 is happy (and x_7 is female)

↑
similar effects as presupposing gender

A nice consequence: reducing fake features to backgrounded content

Fake features subsumed under backgrounded content

(44) $[\alpha \text{ Only } [\beta \text{ Mary}_F \lambda_5 \text{ t}_5 \text{ did her}_5 \text{ homework}]]$

a. $[[[\beta \text{ ..}]]]^\circ = \lambda w. \text{did}(5, \text{homework}(5))$

b. $[[[\beta \text{ ..}]]]^f = \{\lambda w. \text{did}(z, \text{homework}(z)) \mid z \in D_e\}$

c. $[[\langle 44 \rangle]] = \text{No one else other than 5 did their homework, (female}(5))$

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- c. $[[\langle 44 \rangle]] = \text{No one else other than 5 did their homework, (female}(5))$

Advantages

- No separate mechanism (syntactic transmission) needed
- A uniform account for fake features and nouns

Implications

a uniform semantics for pronouns and descriptions: both $\langle e, t \rangle$

- fakeness results when index is present
- subsumes fake features into broad fakeness

→ ϕ as backgrounded $\langle e, t \rangle$ content

- aligns with syntactic stories that say ϕ valuation is late
they are there, but backgrounded for LF

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- fakeness results when index is present
- subsumes fake features into broad fakeness

→ ϕ as backgrounded $\langle e, t \rangle$ content

- aligns with syntactic stories that say ϕ valuation is late
they are there, but backgrounded for LF
- **challenges strict dichotomy**

Coming back to the dichotomy

What we have seen so far

Challenges to pronoun vs. r-expression dichotomy

- **Distributional overlap** [Principle C violations]

(45) N_it_i said N_it_i is comfortable.

- **Semantic overlap** [fake nouns]

(46) a. Only Mary did her homework.

b. Only teacher reads teacher's paper.

- ϕ vs. noun isn't driving fakeness, it's presence vs. absence of index
- features and descriptions semantically uniform

Pronouns

(recall) Tripartition of primitive noun classes.

reflexives, pronouns, r-expressions

Pronouns

(recall) Tripartition of primitive noun classes.

reflexives, pronouns, r-expressions

- cross-linguistic picture: pronoun status less clear
- pronouns vary in the kinds of content they carry [Ahn 2019, 2025a]:
 - Pronouns that rely on features [Thai, Kazakh, Hindi]
 - Pronouns that carry noun classes [Bantu]
 - Pronouns that rely on NPs [Korean, Vietnamese]

[use of open class NPs] → [noun classes] → [closed-class features]

'Pronouns' of other languages: featural definites

1. Relying on NPs

[Korean, Vietnamese]

- (47) a. kyay (ku-ay: that-**kid**)
b. anh ay (**older.brother** DEM) (Beryl Bui, pc)

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[Bantu languages]

- (48) ɲé (pron.cl1); yó (pron.cl9)

	Basaá pron	Tunen pron
1sg	mè	miàṅó
2sg	wè	àṅó
1pl	bēs	b ^w ə́sú
2pl	bee	b ^w ə́nú
cl. 1	ɲé	wéy
cl. 2	bó	b ^w ə́bú
cl. 3	wó	múit
cl. 4	ɲwó	mít
cl. 5	jó	nét
cl. 6	mó	mát
cl. 7	yó	yét
cl. 8	gwó	bét
cl. 9	yó	mét
cl. 10	yó	mít
cl. 13	có	túét
cl. 14		búét
cl. 19	hyó	hit

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3. Primitive features

[Thai, (Kazakh, Hindi)]

- Thai: *kǎo* (animate) vs. *man* (inanimate)
- Kazakh (Merlin Balihaxi, pc) and Hindi:

- (49) a. *ol* (animate); NP for inanimate
b. *vo* (animate); NP for inanimate

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Pronouns as featural definites

What is a pronoun?

a featural definite that relies on primitive features

- primitive features: [Harley and Ritter 2002]
 - in phonology: physical properties [±sonorant], etc.
 - in morphology: cognitive properties person/number/gender/animacy
- class features: intermediate between primitive features vs. lexical items
- definite description: relies on the lexical item NP

Pronouns as featural definites

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pronouns to r-expressions, a gradience of content

[use of open class NPs] → [noun classes] → [closed-class features]

Why so different?

[Q] But why are they so different?

→ reduced to differences in content

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1. Informativity and attributive vs. referential tendency
 - Pronouns used referentially much more than attributively
 - Definites readily used attributively
2. Markedness
 - Definites carry more content
 - subject to pragmatic economy [Schlenker 2005]

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prediction

1. If definite nouns are not marked, they should allow variable bound reading more readily (✓ Korean, Tagalog)
2. When definite is called for due to other reasons (disambiguation), bound reading should be possible (✓ English)

(50) [A linguist working on Binding Theory]_i was so devoid of any moral sense that he_i forced [a physicist working on particles]_k to hire [the linguist's]_i girlfriend in his_k lab. [Schlenker 2005]

Where does Principle C live?

Outside of syntax.

Reducing Principle C to pragmatics

- Descriptions can be bound if you control:
 - plausibility, at-issueness [Gor and Syrett 2018]
 - markedness, discourse coherence [Schlenker 2005, Varaschin et al. 2026]

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Obviative theories

[Reinhart 1983]

- Basically, if you could've used a pronoun for the same interpretation, but you used a name/description, it cannot be coconstructed.

Discussion

Summary

Classic dichotomy.

- Binding Theory [Chomsky 1981], specifically Principle C

Empirical challenges

1. Structural overlap: Principle C violations
2. Semantic overlap: fake nouns

Findings

- relevant dichotomy is not in *morphology* (pronoun vs. r-expression)
- but in *reference mechanism* (**attributive vs. referential**)
- pronouns and r-expressions are parallel *distributionally* and *semantically*

Are we removing BT from syntax?

No

- By identifying the role of pragmatics, we actually delineate what is truly syntax and what falls outside

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One possible direction: *One True Anaphor*

[Safir 2014]

- **D-bound** (which is constrained fully in syntax)
 - D-bound: a universally available dependent anaphor that must be A-bound
 - subject to feature matching with antecedent
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 - D-bound: a universally available dependent anaphor that must be A-bound
 - subject to feature matching with antecedent
 - spell-out of form sensitive to whether A-binding is phase-internal
- everything else falls outside of syntax
 - if something else appears in D-bound position, there is an *expectation of disjoint reference* (subsumes Principle B and C)

(51) Syntax-Induced Obviation
If X can be a binder for D-bound in position Y and Y is not D-bound,
then X and Y are not expected to be coconstrued

Additional venues for research

Today, we have looked at syntax-semantics interface for BT:

- reduces pronoun / r-expression boundary to kind/amount of content
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 - Disjoint reference as default [Dillon 2023]
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 - Principles A and B as early filters for anaphora [Kush and Dillon 2020]
 3. syntax and the lexicon
 - features on nouns can't be fake [Bobaljik and Zocca 2011; Sprouse et al. 2022]
- (52) a. Mary did her homework. John did, too.
b. #Mary is an actress. John is, too.

Taking stock

Once we shift the focus from nominal morphology to mechanisms of reference, many apparent asymmetries become explainable in independently motivated semantic and pragmatic terms.

- helps us delineate the role of syntax in binding

Thank you!



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Appendix

Non-identical copies; problematic for Principle C accounts

Prediction: bound expression must be identical or less than antecedent

- copy has to be at most the antecedent
- π features must agree and be identical

non-identical copies

(53) Only *the linguist* called the philosopher for the news article that identified the idiot as a culprit.

(54) wuli kyoswunim-man cip-ey kase wuli taytanhan kyoswunim
our prof-only home-DAT go our awesome prof
nonmwun ilkcyo
paper read
'Only our professor goes home and reads our awesome professor's paper.'

- Note that non-identical copies of r-expressions can be bound is problematic for early accounts of Principle C violations: copy theory nor complex index story