

Approaches to Reflexive Pronouns and Reflexivity

Introduction

1. What do we find in real languages?

- *Pronominals*

(1) English

John_i sees *him*_{j/*i}.

(2) Russian

Petja uvidel ejo.

Peter.NOM saw she.ACC

‘Peter saw *her*.’

(3) Georgian (Kartvelian, South Caucasus) [Testeleets 2005]

givi xedavs mas

Givi sees he.ACC

‘Givi sees *him* (*himself)’

? Hungarian ?

- *Reflexives*

(4) English

John_i sees himself_{i/*j}

(5) Turkish (Altaic) [Kornfilt 2001]

Ahmet kendini çok beğeniyormuş

Ahmet self.ACC very admires

‘Ahmet admires *himself* (*him)’

(6) Hungarian

János megölte magát

Janos kills self.ACC

‘Janos killed *himself* (*him)’

(7) Basque (isolate) [Saltarelli 1988]

Aitak bere burua hil d-u

father.ERG he.GEN head.ABS kill 3.ABS.PRS-AUX.3ERG

‘Father killed *himself* (*him)’

- *Logophors* (are used in the subordinate clause embedded under a mental, speech or perceptive matrix predicate and denote the same referent as the subject of the matrix clause, or the otherwise expressed source of the information)

(8) Japanese [Sells 1987]

Taroo wa Takasi kara [Yosiko ga zibun to nikunde iru to] kiita

Taroo top Takasi from Yosiko nomlog acc hating be comp heard

‘Taroo_i heard from Takasi_j that Yosiko_k hated *him*_j’

2. What cannot be found? [Testeleets 2005]

- A □ pronoun which requires an antecedent in the subordinate clause:

(9) a. □_i said that John_i would leave

b. *□_i said that John_j would leave

- A † pronoun which requires **any** antecedent in the superordinate clause:

(10) a. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see †_i

- b. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ✦_j
 - c. *John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ✦_k
 - d. *John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ✦_l
 - A ▲ pronoun which permits any antecedent except subject:
- (11) a. *John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ▲_i
- b. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ▲_j
 - c. *John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ▲_k
 - d. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ▲_l
 - e. ▲_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_i
 - f. *▲_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_k
- A ■ pronoun which permits any antecedent except a clausemate object:
- (12) a. ■_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ■_i
- b. ■_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_i
 - c. *■_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_k
 - d. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ■_j
- A ⊙ pronoun which permits only and all clausemate antecedents:
- (13) a. *⊙_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ⊙_i
- b. *⊙_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_i
 - c. ⊙_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see John_k
 - d. John_i told Lisa_j that Bill_k would see ⊙_k

3. Classical Government and Binding Theory

Referentially dependent vs. referentially independent expressions ↔ R expressions vs. pronouns
 Anaphora (in a broad sense) refers to the relationship between an anaphor and an R expression that serves as its antecedent and from which the anaphoric expression gets its reference (or other semantic value).

Two narrower senses of anaphora:

- anaphora vs cataphora (We won. I can't believe it! vs. I can't believe it! We won.)
- anaphors vs pronominals (cf. GBT), where anaphors = reflexive pronouns and pronominals = personal pronouns

Syntax: different (often complementary) syntactic distribution of pronominals and anaphors
 → **Government and Binding Theory by Chomsky (1981).**

Different, often complementary distribution of pronominals and anaphors (reflexives):

- (14) a. Lucie_i thought that Lili_k hurt her_{i/*k/j}.
- b. Lucie_i thought that Lili_k hurt herself_{*i/k/*j}.
 - c. Lucie_i thought that she_{i/*k/j} hurt Lili_k.
 - d. *Lucie thought that herself hurt Lili.

Chomsky (1981) Binding conditions

☼ Condition A: An anaphor must be bound in its local domain.

☼ Condition B: A pronoun must be free in its local domain.

☼ Condition C: An R-expression must be free.

Bound = co-indexed with a c-commanding DP.

A node A **c-commands** a node B in a constituent structure tree if the first branching node that dominates A also dominates B.

Structural relation and not simply linear precedence, cf. an example from Bruning (2004) that he attributes to Reinhart (1983).

- (15) a. namono azy ny anadahin-d-Rakoto (Malagasy)
hit/killed him the sister-of-Rakoto
'Rakoto's sister killed him.'
b. *namono ny anadahin-d-Rakoto izy
hit/killed the sister-of-Rakoto he
'He killed Rakoto's sister.'

- (16) a. Mary_i saw herself_i in a mirror.
b. *Mary_i saw her_i in a mirror.
c. Mary_i thinks that Bill loves her_i.
d. *Mary_i believes that Bill loves herself_i.

The binding conditions are claimed to be universal although locality domains are language specific: English – minimal clause with a subject, Russian – minimal finite clause

- (17) a. Mary permitted Ann to hug herself.
b. Mary permitted Ann to hug her.
c. Maša razrešila Anne obnjat' sebjja. (Russian)
Mary.NOM permitted Ann.DAT hug.INF herself.ACC
'Mary permitted Ann to hug her / herself.'
d. Maša razrešila Anne obnjat' ejo.
Mary.NOM permitted Ann.DAT hug.INF she.ACC
'Mary permitted Ann to hug her (= Jane).'

? *Hungarian* ?