

Not that person again

Kees de Schepper

Radboud University Nijmegen

September 28, 2011

Introduction

- (1) That there is a fundamental, and ineradicable, difference between first-person and second-person pronouns, on the one hand, and third-person pronouns, on the other, is a point that cannot be emphasized too strongly.

John Lyons “Semantics” 1977

- ▶ What does it mean?
 - ▶ Subgrouping with respect to linguistic phenomena
 - ▶ No “1st/3rd vs. 2nd”
 - ▶ No “2nd/3rd vs. 1st”
 - ▶ Only “1st/2nd vs. 3rd”
(and “1st/2nd/3rd” and “1st vs. 2nd vs. 3rd”)

Overview

Situational binding

Internal pronominal syntax

Person hierarchies

Conclusions

Situational binding

- (2) In many cities the mayor is a man
- ▶ Something in *the mayor* is bound by *many cities*
(= situational binding, cf. Elbourne 2005)
- (3) In many households HE does the plumbing and SHE does the ironing
- (4) In many companies they don't care about they environment
- ▶ Also for 3rd person pronouns
- (5) In most conversations you also get to talk
- ▶ Replace *you* with *the addressee*
 - ▶ So: no situational binding for 2nd (or 1st) – but why?

You and me on top

- ▶ Identifying 1st and 2nd takes widest scope (over anything else)
 - ▶ Violation: anonymous talk (Internet forum, from a crowd)
 - ▶ Violation: mis-address (presupposition failure?)

(6) Alice: What are you doing?

Bob: Huh? Which of us are you talking to?

- ▶ 3rd seldom takes widest-scope:

(7) [A woman always complains to her friends about her husband]

You won't believe what he did now!

- ▶ So: 1st/2nd vs. 3rd, as any 3rd can be situationally bound
 - ▶ even names (Geurts 1997):

(8) If a child is christened Bambi and Disney Inc. find out about it, they will sue Bambi's parents.

Limitations

- ▶ Prisoner-sentence (Nunberg 1993) problem?

(9) I am traditionally allowed to order whatever I like for my last meal

- ▶ Something else going on, since *I* ≠ 'the current speaker'
 - ▶ In a 3rd person variant also *he* ≠ 'the man'
- ▶ However, perhaps 1st/2nd widest scope not absolute cf. Amharic (Schlenker 2003):

(10) *ʃon ʃəɡna nə-ññ yil-all*
John hero be-1SG say.3SG-AUX.3SG
'John says that he is hero' (with *he=John*)

- ▶ Still 1st/2nd special

Summary

- ▶ Rather simple, for situational binding:
1st/2nd vs. 3rd
- ▶ Explanation:
1st/2nd generally take widest scope
- ▶ (Situational binding in sign language:
1st = 2nd = 3rd)

Binding

(11) Everyone thinks he's/you're smart

- ▶ *Everyone* may not bind *you*

(12) You think you're smart and so do I

- ▶ Binding possible at all for 1st/2nd? Perhaps.

(13) All men think that he is smart

- ▶ *All men* may not bind *he*: no syntactic agreement
- ▶ Also for *everyone* and *you*: no syntactic agreement

(14) In this room everyone thinks he's smart

- ▶ Semantically *everyone* may include the hearer

**[Every you]*

- ▶ Why no quantifier that can bind 2nd person

(15) **[every you] thinks you're smart*

- ▶ English: *every* & *you* same syntactic position (D)?
- ▶ Dechaine & Wiltschko (2002): in Japanese/Thai pronoun is N

(16) ?dono anata-mo suteki
which you-ever nice
'?Every you is nice'

- ▶ Not intended meaning ('Every one of you is nice')
 - ▶ cf. English *Graceland, for every you*.
- ▶ Even in Japanese pronoun and quantifier incompatible
- ▶ So: pronouns are universally Ds, which explains **[Every you]*

[You linguists]

- ▶ If pronoun is D → why no **[DP you [NP linguist]]*?
- ▶ First plural: possible (*[you linguists]*)
 - ▶ Restrictive vs. appositive

(17) The baby who cried was sleepier than the baby who kept silent.

(18) #The baby, who cried, was sleepier than the baby, who kept silent.

(19) #You linguists are sleepier than you philosophers.

- ▶ So: plural only appositive
 - ▶ How about singular?

[You linguist]

- ▶ Singular also possible, but only as vocative

(20) Stop talking about language, you linguist!

- ▶ Asymmetry singular and plural – why?
 - ▶ 1st/2nd plural allows third persons?
- ▶ Vocative is special: may be 3rd person but refers to addressee

(21) Stop talking about language, idiot/John/everyone!

- ▶ For singular: normally N is restrictive, in vocatives appositive:

(22) *Stop, every man!

- ▶ 2nd vs. 1st/3rd? Second person special?

Summary

- ▶ For simple variable binding (**[Every I/you]*):
1st/2nd vs. 3rd
- ▶ (Simple variable binding in sign language:
1st = 2nd = 3rd)
- ▶ *I/you* with N: only appositive
- ▶ Perhaps for vocatives:
2nd vs. 1st/3rd

Preliminaries I: hierarchies

- ▶ Example: number
 - ▶ singular usually has less morphemes than plural:
book vs. *book-s*
 - ▶ Hierarchy: *sg* > *pl* > *dual*
- ▶ Based on frequency (Haspelmath 2006)
- ▶ Person hierarchies also possible

Evidentiality

- ▶ Evidentiality: source of information (Aikhenvald 2004)
 - ▶ Example: inferential evidential in Eastern Pomo

(23) sá-he? mowós-k-ine
fish-SPEC ripe-PUNCT-INFR
'The fish must be ripe'

- ▶ For so-called *internal states* (e.g. *feel sick*):
1st or inclusive may be dropped under sensory evidentiality

(24) sá-he? misé-nk'e
fish-SPEC smell.PUNCT-NONVIS
'I smell the fish' (not 'The fish smells')

- ▶ So: 0, 1 > 2, 3

Preliminaries II: the inclusive

- ▶ In some languages special inclusive form ('you and I') besides 1PL ('he and I')
- ▶ This inclusive is the fourth person value
 - ▶ Evidence (Cysouw 2003): singular-plural homophony in languages with an inclusive

Homonymy	%
3SG/3PL	38.8
2SG/2PL	25.6
1SG/1PL	19.0
1SG/0PL	0.8

- ▶ The inclusive is glossed as "0PL"

Imperatives

- ▶ Imperative: *Stop punishing yourselves*
Hortative: *Let's stop punishing yourselves*
- ▶ Imperative & hortative are connected:
**Let you go away!*
- ▶ Hierarchy (Aikhenvald 2010):
 $2 > 0 > 3 > 1$
- ▶ Example: French *parle, parlez, parlons*

Hierarchies without borders

0>1>2>3	0>1>2,3	0>1,2>3	0,1>2>3
0>1>3>2	0>2>1,3	0>1,3>2	0,1>3>2
0>2>1>3	0>3>1,2	0>2,3>1	0,2>1>3
0>2>3>1	1>0>2,3	1>0,2>3	0,2>3>1
0>3>1>2	1>2>0,3	1>0,3>2	0,3>1>2
0>3>2>1	1>3>0,2	1>2,3>0	0,3>2>1
1>0>2>3	2>0>1,3	2>0,1>3	1,2>0>3
1>0>3>2	2>1>0,3	2>0,3>1	1,2>3>0
1>2>0>3	2>3>0,1	2>1,3>0	1,3>0>2
1>2>3>0	3>0>1,2	3>0,1>2	1,3>2>0
1>3>0>2	3>1>0,2	3>0,2>1	2,3>0>1
1>3>2>0	3>2>0,1	3>1,2>0	2,3>1>0
2>0>1>3			
2>0>3>1	0,1>2,3	0>1,2,3	0,1,2>3
2>1>0>3	0,2>1,3	1>0,2,3	0,1,3>2
2>1>3>0	0,3>1,2	2>0,1,3	0,2,3>1
2>3>0>1	1,2>0,3	3>0,1,2	1,2,3>0
2>3>1>0	1,3>0,2		
3>0>1>2	2,3>0,1		
3>0>2>1			
3>1>0>2	1,2,3,0		
3>1>2>0			
3>2>0>1			
3>2>1>0			

- ▶ How many hierarchies are there?
- ▶ With no restrictions
76 possibilities generated
- ▶ Overgeneration

Hierarchies with some borders

ego	tu	Hierarchy
++	-	1>0>3>2
+	-	1>0,3>2
+	--	1>3>0>2
+	0	0,1>2,3
0	-	1,3>0,2
++	+	0>1>2>3
-	--	3>1>2>0
+	+	0>1,2>3
0	0	0,1,2,3
-	-	3>1,2>0
+	++	0>2>1>3
--	-	3>2>1>0
0	+	0,2>1,3
-	0	2,3>0,1
-	++	2>0>3>1
-	+	2>0,3>1
--	+	2>3>0>1

- ▶ Decompose person values into two primitives: *ego* and *tu*
- ▶ Inclusive = [ego,tu]
First person = [ego]
Second person = [tu]
Third person = []
- ▶ Only 17 possible hierarchies
- ▶ Both evidential hierarchy & imperative hierarchy are generated

Summary

- ▶ Evidential hierarchy:
 $0, 1 > 2, 3$
- ▶ Imperative hierarchy:
 $2 > 0 > 3 > 1$
- ▶ With ego and tu as primitives only 17 hierarchies possible

Conclusions

- ▶ Problems for Lyons:
 - ▶ Perhaps vocatives:
 2^{nd} vs. $1^{\text{st}}/3^{\text{rd}}$
 - ▶ Evidential hierarchy:
 $0, 1 > 2, 3$
 - ▶ Imperative hierarchy:
 $2 > 0 > 3 > 1$
- ▶ Thus: difference between $1^{\text{st}}/2^{\text{nd}}$ and 3^{rd} not “fundamental” and “ineradicable”

Thank you

- ▶ And especially
 - ▶ Emar Maier
 - ▶ Helen de Hoop
 - ▶ Martine Zwets