

Lessons from the wax museum

Sreekar Raghotham
Rutgers University

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Deferred Reference

- ▶ A use of an expression to talk about something other than what it is conventionally used to refer to.
 - (1) **The ham sandwich** is at Table 1
 - (2) **That** is the author of *Syntactic Structures*
 - (3) **Ringo** is next to **George** in Mme. Tussauds
 - (4) Traditionally, **I** (the condemned inmate) can order anything
- ▶ Clearly, these are all very different uses. (4), for instance, displays a descriptive use of the indexical, which in itself is perhaps not a unified phenomenon (King, 2022).
- ▶ Today, I restrict attention to cases like (3) – often called *proxy readings*

Deferred Reference and Deixis

- ▶ For deferred reference, the *locus classicus* is Geoff Nunberg's work.
- ▶ Nunberg (1993) : indexicals' meanings have three components:
 - ▶ **Deictic component** : picks out an element in the context (*index*)
 - ▶ **Classificatory component** : roughly, φ features of the interpretation.
 - ▶ **Relational component** : relationship between index and interpretation.
- ▶ For first and second person pronouns, the deictic component is essentially the character. For demonstratives (including he/she/they), the deictic component is the (possibly implicit) demonstration.
- ▶ Reference is deferred when there is a mismatch between index (plus relational component) and interpretation.
- ▶ Claim: only elements with an **explicit deictic component** allow deferred reference.

Why deixis?

- ▶ Nunberg provides some examples to show that non-deictically used elements disallow deferred reference:
 - (5) *On crossing an accident site* (after Nunberg 1993: exx. 66–67)
 - a. It must have happened recently
 - b. # It usually happens at this bend
 - (6) # Every Mezzo has difficulty when *she* usually is a coloratura (ex. 78)
 - (7) *Looking at the house of a man who's wife is cheating on him* (p. 34)
 - a. He must not be home
 - b. # He is usually the last to know
- ▶ Notice that these are all descriptive uses of the pronouns!
- ▶ There are no examples of infelicitous deferred reference of other types with anaphoric uses of these pronouns.

It's perfectly fine

- ▶ Anaphorically used pronouns do in fact permit proxy readings. (cf. Ruys 2023)

(8) One of the burgher's dogs was also Rodin's subject. **It** faced **its** master.

(9) Every Beatle thought **he** needed a haircut.

- ▶ Moreover, even purely anaphoric elements permit such readings:

(10) Ringo saw **himself** in the wax museum Jackendoff (1992)

(11) Every Beatle wanted **PRO** a sharper chin (in the portrait)

- Deferred reference does not need deixis!

Proxy readings

- ▶ Proxy readings are possible with pretty much all sorts of nominals:
 - (12) I am next to **Chaplin** in the museum (cf. Barrios 2013)
 - (13) I am looking at **the nice Belgian with a funny moustache**
 - (14) I took selfies with **every Beatle**
 - (15) Conan found **himself** in an unlit corner (relevant clip)
 - (16) *Where would you like your statue?*
I prefer **PRO** to be under the spotlight (Haddad 2017)
 - (17) *Looking at an automaton of Mohammad Ali*
He throws punches every five seconds
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- ▶ If the story ended here, it would be somewhat uninteresting. But we're not so unlucky!

- ▶ Two cases where proxy readings of nominals (which otherwise allow them) are impossible:
 - ▶ Verbal reflexivity (Telugu, Greek, French, English, ...)
 - ▶ Monstrous agreement in Telugu
- ▶ **Syntactic v. Semantic Identity**
 - ▶ Syntactic identity necessitates semantic identity, and hence referential identity.
 - ▶ Syntactic non-identity makes possible, but does not require, referential non-identity.

Reflexives & Proxy readings

- ▶ Nominal reflexives allow proxy readings, but verbal reflexives don't.

(18) *English*

- Ringo shaved **himself**
- Ringo shaved

(19) *Telugu*

- Ringo **tana-ni tanu** poguḍu-**kunn**-aa-ḍu
Ringo 3sg.self praised-*vr*-pst-3ms
'Ringo praised himself'
- Ringo **tana-ni tanu** pogid-ææ-ḍu
Ringo 3sg.self praised-pst-3ms
'Ringo praised himself'

✓ S ; * P

✓ S ; ✓ P

Standard treatments: Feature 1

- ▶ The complexity of the nominal reflexive is what allows proxy readings (Pica & Snyder, 1997; Reuland, 2011).
- ▶ The extra *self* in the complex reflexive contributes a function that outputs representations of the input

$$\llbracket \text{themselves}_1 \rrbracket^g := f(g_1)$$

- ▶ The exact nature of f is irrelevant here. For present purposes, let us assume it maps individuals to their representations.

Standard treatments: Feature 2

- ▶ The absence of the reflexive in English disallows proxy readings (of the theme to the exclusion of the agent) (Jackendoff, 1992; Reuland & Winter, 2009).
- ▶ There is only one syntactic argument, so you can't manipulate one instance of the argument without manipulating another.

[[John shaved]] = **shave** *j* *j*

[[John shaved himself]] = **shave** *f(j)* *j*

Standard treatments: Feature 3

- ▶ All standard treatments of the English proxy contrast presuppose that the two sentences have different logical forms (even if rhetorically denying the difference: Reuland & Winter 2009; Reuland 2011; cf. Dimitriadis 2012). This rules out all accounts that try to reduce one kind of reflexivity to another:

[[John shaved]] = **shave** $j_1 j_1$

[[John shaved himself]] = **shave** $j_2 j_1$

- ▶ See also Sportiche 2023 for a generalized argument where nominal anaphors show a degree of independence from their antecedents.

Nothing special about complex reflexives

- ▶ Feature 1, appealing to the syntactic complexity of reflexives, seems obviously wrong. We have already seen evidence that there's nothing special about complex reflexives.
- ▶ A distinct but related version of this account: Anaphors are lexically specified for whether or not they allow proxy readings (Lidz, 2001).

(20) Hari **tana-annu** nood-i-**konḍ**-a
Hari self-acc see-pp-refl.pst-3sm
'Hari saw himself'

Proxy = ✗; Lidz 2001, (10a)

(21) Hari **tana-annu-taane** nood-i-a
Hari self-acc-self see-pst-3sm
'Hari saw himself'

Proxy = ✓; Lidz 2001, (10b)

- ▶ The two examples above are not a minimal pair!

Not lexically specified

- ▶ (21) forms a minimal pair with (22) — remember that in the former, proxy readings are possible.

(22) Hari **tana-annu-taane** nooḍ-i-**koṇḍ**-a
Hari self-acc-self see-pp-refl.pst-3sm
'Hari saw himself'

Proxy = ✗

(23) Hari **tanu** Ringo bagiliige iddane anta heḷida
Hari tanu Ringo next.to be.3ms comp said
'Hari said that he_p was next to Ringo'

Proxy = ✓

- ▶ (23) : The simplex anaphor does allow proxy readings.

! Verbal reflexives block proxy readings.

Telugu reflexives

- ▶ Feature 2, appealing to the lack of a second syntactic argument, might work for English (although I don't think it does), but faces trouble when confronted with transitive reflexives that nevertheless block proxy readings. Telugu demonstrates:

(24) Ringo (**tana-ni tanu**) poguḍu-**kunn**-aa-ḍu
Ringo 3sg.self praised-vr-pst-3ms
'Ringo praised himself'

✓ S ; * P

(25) Ringo **tana-ni tanu** pogid-ææ-ḍu
Ringo 3sg.self praised-pst-3ms
'Ringo praised himself'

✓ S ; ✓ P

- ! Verbal reflexives block proxy readings regardless of the presence of an anaphor.

Two types of reflexivity

- ▶ Suggestion: In Telugu, Kannada, and perhaps also in French (*auto-*) and English (*self-*), there are two types of reflexivity at play — verbal, and nominal.
- ▶ Verbal reflexives assign two thematic roles to the same syntactic argument.

$$(26) \quad \llbracket R \text{ praise-kun} \rrbracket = \exists e : \text{praise } e \wedge \text{ag } r_1 e \wedge \text{th } r_1 e$$

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- ▶ Both can co-occur

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If a thematic role is specified for an event, it is uniquely specified

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PRO and Proxy readings

- ▶ A familiar contrast, re: *de se* construal

(29) John expected that he would win the award

(30) John expected PRO to win the award

- ▶ PRO, more generally, allows proxy readings.

(31) Every Beatle wanted PRO to have a sharper chin (in the portrait)

(32) I prefer PRO to be under the spotlight (Haddad, 2017)

De Se doesn't block proxy readings

- ▶ In general, first-person attitudes do not prohibit proxy readings:

(33) anjaniyaa kahkai ki ham baṛhiyāā lagit hi
anjaniyaa said.3sg that 1sg good look be.1sg
'Anjani₁ said that I_{1/P} look good' Magahi; Deepak Alok p.c.

(34) *Looking at Chaplin's statue, which gets a makeover everyday, Chaplin:*
I look good today

Monstrous agreement in Telugu

- ▶ In Telugu (Dravidian), embedded subjects, morphologically third person, can control first person agreement. When they do, they are obligatorily interpreted *de se* (Messick, 2022).

(35) adwait [tanu baag-unn-aa-**ḍu** ani] anukunn-aa-ḍu
adwait 3sg good-be-pst-3ms comp think-pst-3ms
'Adwait₁ thought he_{1/2} looked good'

(36) adwait [tanu baag-unn-aa-**nu** ani] anukunn-aa-ḍu
adwait 3sg good-be-pst-1sg comp think-pst-3ms
'Adwait₁ thought he_{1/*2} looked good'

No proxy readings with monstrous agreement

- ▶ Unlike the other obligatory *de se* constructions, Telugu monstrous agreement cases do not allow proxy readings:

(37) adwait [tanu baag-unn-aa-**nu** ani] anukunn-aa-ḍu
adwait 3sg good-be-pst-1sg comp think-pst-3ms
'Adwait₁ thought he_{1/*P} looked good'

Proxy = ✗

(38) adwait [tanu baag-unn-aa-**ḍu** ani] anukunn-aa-ḍu
adwait 3sg good-be-pst-3ms comp think-pst-3ms
'Adwait₁ thought he_{1/P/2} looked good'

Proxy = ✓

Why should this be?

- ▶ As we have already seen, there is nothing about *de se* construal itself that seems to block proxy readings.
- ▶ The semantics of shifted indexicals, logophors, and pronouns controlling shifted agreement are identical on most accounts (Anand, 2006; Deal, 2020).
- ▶ They might get there through different means — context shifting for shifted indexicals, and binding by shifty operators for the others — but they end up being interpreted alike.
- ▶ We cannot appeal to the different mechanisms for deriving the difference in proxy possibilities: Logophors in languages like Yoruba (Adesola, 2005), permit proxy readings:

(39) Olú rò pé òun rẹwà

Olu think that log beautiful

Olu₁ thought that he_{1/P} looked handsome

Adesola (2005)

Why should this be?

- ▶ (Higginbotham, 2009, ch.12) considering sentences like the following:

(40) I remember myself crying

(41) I remember PRO crying

points out the second case asks more of my memory: it is only true if I remember the crying as one where I was the agent. The former doesn't ask so much.

- ▶ These remembering cases also seem to prohibit proxy readings:

(42) I prefer PRO to be next to Chaplin

(43) I remember PRO being next to Chaplin

- ▶ Higginbotham suggests lexically specifying PRO as something that is also the subject/experiencer of the matrix predicate – this is untenable, for reasons we've already seen.
- ! PRO-Rememberings and Monstrous agreement cases are somehow more first-personal than other obligatorily *de se* interpretations.

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Syntactic and Semantic Identity

- ▶ Syntactic identity necessitates semantic identity. (Reflexives)
- ▶ Syntactic non-identity makes possible, but does not require, referential non-identity.

Linguistic context can further restrict a nominal's interpretive freedom and require referential non-identity. (Rememberings/Monstrous Agreement)

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