

Epithets as *De Re* Pronouns

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This paper outlines the distribution of epithets that occur in a c-command relation with their antecedents in environments where Condition C obviation effects occur. It argues that epithets have the syntax of null pronouns that are modified by a nominal appositive. Cases where their distribution differs from that of pronouns are explained as follows: epithets cannot modify null pronouns that are uninterpreted, e.g. to receive a *de se* construal. This derives different contrasts in the distribution of epithets, shedding new light on the nature of anti-locality and the Binding Conditions.

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1 The Empirical Scope

1.1 What are Epithets?

Epithets are anaphoric expressions that look like definite descriptions, in the sense that they consist of a nominal component and a determiner. However they differ from definite descriptions in that they involve a negative or positive evaluative component, as in the case of *the idiot* in (1a) and *the great man* in (1b), respectively. Any noun can be construed as an epithet if the relevant world view is constructed, as shown in the examples in (2)¹, where *the whistle-blower* and *the Naxalite* are used to convey a negative evaluation of the referent.

- (1) a. Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the idiot]₁.
b. Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the great man]₁.
- (2) a. Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the whistle-blower]₁.
b. Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the Naxalite]₁.

As shown in (1) and (2), epithets can occur in configurations where they are c-commanded by a coreferential DP (here: *John*), an observation that goes back to Dubinsky and Hamilton (1998).² This is generally assumed to be impossible with definite descriptions that do not qualify as epithets (*Binding Condition C*, see Chomsky 1981), as in (3); if we replace *the idiot* with *the businessman* in (1a), the sentence becomes unacceptable.

- (3) a. *Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the man]₁.
b. *Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the businessman]₁.

The core question of this paper is how to account for such ‘Condition C obviation’ effects and how they are constrained. An initial question that arises at this point concerns the na-

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¹Thanks to Noam Chomsky (p.c.) for these examples.

²The relative clause examples in (1) and (2) are based on an example in Dubinsky and Hamilton (1998:687).

ture of the relationship between the epithet and the antecedent, that is, whether it involves (*accidental*) *co-reference* or a *referential dependency*.

1.2 *Co-reference vs. Referential Dependency*

There are different ways in which DPs can co-refer; (4) illustrates a case of *accidental co-reference* (see Evans 1980, Higginbotham 1985).³ In this case, there are multiple occurrences of two DPs (*he* and *John*) that refer to the same individual by virtue of the speaker not knowing the identity of that individual. In other words, in (4), each occurrence of the pronoun *he* and of the proper name *John* denote the same entity and accidentally co-refer due to the (inferable) context (and crucially, without a so-called referential dependency, see below).

- (4) He put on John's coat; but only John would do that; so he is John.
(Higginbotham 1985:570)

By contrast, a *referential dependency* is a relation that holds between two DPs if the meaning of one is dependent on the other (see Evans 1980, Reinhart 1983b). It can be shown that the relationship between epithets and their c-commanding antecedents that we have seen in (1) and (2) is one of referential dependency and not one of accidental coreference.

Reinhart (1983a, 1983b) defines Condition C as a restriction that states that an R-expression (i.e. a non-pronominal DP, such as *the man* or *the businessman*) cannot be c-commanded by an antecedent DP that it is referentially dependent on. Reinhart (1983a, 1983b) attributes the role of c-command to the possibility/impossibility of syntactic binding. The reason that *John* can be c-commanded by *he* in (4) is thus the lack of a referential dependency. We can now argue that the examples in (1)–(2) involve referential dependency, rather than accidental co-reference, that is, we appear to be dealing with syntactically bound epithets: if (1)–(2) involved accidental co-reference, then example (3) should be grammatical as well, in line with example (4). However, (3) exhibits a Condition C violation.

One may conjecture that examples of bound epithets in relative clauses simply involve Quantifier Raising (QR) followed by late merge of a relative clause (see Lebeaux 1988); while this type of QR is known to exist, it is not unconstrained. Fox (1999:181) discusses the examples in (5), which are ungrammatical even though QR should give rise to the LFs in (6).

- (5) a. **/??*You bought him₁ every picture that John₁ liked.
b. **He*₁ bought you every picture that John₁ liked.
- (6) a. [every picture that John₁ liked]₂ [you bought him₁ t₂]
b. [every picture that John₁ liked]₂ [he₁ bought you t₂]

Crucially, epithets can obviate Condition C even in the cases that Fox (1999) takes to be ungrammatical, as shown by (5) vs. (7). The examples in (7), which were constructed by replacing *John* in (5) with an epithet, are acceptable. In fact, the contrast in (5) vs. (7) is sometimes perceived to be stronger than the contrast in (1)–(2) vs. (3), because (5)/(7) involve less distance between the epithet and its antecedent.

- (7) a. You bought him₁ every picture that [the idiot]₁ liked.
b. He₁ bought you every picture that [the idiot]₁ liked.

As further confirmation of the observed contrast, the additional examples in (8) (from Fox 1999:184) are as unacceptable as the examples in (5), whereas the same examples with an epi-

³Indices are omitted, since I generally use indices to mark referential dependency.

that in (9) are acceptable.

- (8) a. ??/*You sent him₁ the letter that John₁ expected you would write.
 b. ??/*You reported him₁ to every cop that John₁ was afraid of.
- (9) a. You sent him₁ the letter that [the idiot]₁ expected you would write.
 b. You reported him₁ to every cop that [the idiot]₁ was afraid of.

This indicates that epithets can quite generally obviate Binding Condition C, and that this Condition C obviation does not reduce to an independent phenomenon such as late merge of the relative clauses. At this point, one may ask if Dubinsky and Hamilton's (1998) observation is confined to English. The next section shows that it is not.

1.3 Relative Clauses Cross-Linguistically

The following set of cross-linguistic examples⁴ shows that epithets may quite generally be commanded by a co-referent antecedent when contained in a restrictive relative clause.

- (10) *Czech*
^{OK}Včera Honza₁ narazil na fanouška, který [toho idiota]₁ úplně zbožňuje.
 yesterday Honza bumped on fan who that idiot totally adores
 'Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the idiot]₁.'
- (11) *Croatian*
^{OK}Jučer je John₁ naletio na obožavatelja koji stvarno obožava
 yesterday AUX.3SG John bumped.PTCPL on fan who really adores
 [tog idiota]₁.
 that idiot
 'Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the idiot]₁.'
- (12) *Dutch*
^{OK}Gisteren kwam Jan₁ een fan tegen die helemaal dol is op [de idioot]₁.
 yesterday met Jan a fan PRT who entirely fond is of the idiot
 'Yesterday John₁ met a fan who is really fond of [the idiot]₁.'
- (13) *French*
^{OK}Hier, John₁ est tombé sur un fan qui adore [cet imbécile]₁.
 yesterday John is fallen onto a fan who loves the idiot
 'Yesterday John₁ bumped into a fan who loves [the idiot]₁.'
- (14) *Russian*
^{OK}John₁ včera vstretil poklonnicu, kotoraja bogotvorit [ètogo idiota]₁.
 John yesterday met fan.FEM who.FEM adores this idiot
 'Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the idiot]₁.'

At this point, the question arises if and how Condition C obviation with epithets is constrained. Section 1.4 addresses this issue, as well as outlining the core problem to be solved in this paper.

⁴The aim throughout this paper is not to provide a comparative analysis for all of the empirical data presented, but to show that the observation of epithets in particular configurations that involve Condition C obviation) is cross-linguistically robust.

1.4 The Core Problem

Once we have established that epithets can sometimes be referentially dependent on a c-commanding antecedent, we expect to find such configurations quite generally. And, indeed, in addition to the examples where epithets are bound inside relative clauses, we also find cases where they are bound in complement clauses. In (15), the epithet *the idiot* is in a complement clause and it is c-commanded across the clause boundary by a co-referring antecedent, *John* (which is in the matrix subject position). Such examples are cross-linguistically acceptable, as illustrated for Croatian in (16). Observe the difference between (15a)/(16a) and (15b)/(16b), which shows, once again, that a regular NP such as *the janitor* cannot occur in such contexts.

- (15) a. ^{OK}John₁ convinced the panel that [the idiot]₁ is smart.
 b. *John₁ convinced the panel that [the janitor]₁ is smart.

(16) *Croatian*

- a. ^{OK}Peter₁ je uvjerio predstavnike da će [prokleti
 Peter AUX.3SG convinced.PTCPL representatives that will.3SG damn
 izdajnik]₁ riješiti problem.
 traitor solve problem.
 ‘Peter₁ convinced the representatives that [the damn traitor]₁ would solve the
 problem.’
- b. *Bill₁ je uvjerio predstavnike da će podvornik₁
 Bill AUX.3SG convinced.PTCPL representatives that will.3SG janitor
 riješiti problem.
 solve problem
 ‘Bill₁ convinced the representatives that [the janitor]₁ would solve the problem.’

However epithets cannot freely co-refer with a c-commanding antecedent, as shown by (17) and (18); epithets are less acceptable in complements to *think* than in complements to *convince*, at least when in subject position.

- (17) *Peter₁ thinks that [the idiot]₁ is smart.

(18) *Croatian*

- *Peter₁ misli da je [prokleti izdajnik]₁ pametan.
 Peter thinks that AUX.3SG damn traitor smart
 ‘Peter₁ thinks that [the damn traitor]₁ is smart.’

Contrasts like (19a) vs. (19b) show that matters are more complex. Specifically, a bound epithet can occur in the object position of a complement clause under *think*, but not in the subject position.

- (19) a. *Nero₁ thinks that [the damn traitor]₁ will be invited to the reception.
 b. ^{OK}Nero₁ thinks that they will invite [the damn traitor]₁ to the reception.

The reader should be aware that the judgments for such constructions vary greatly. The data presented here were collected via a ratings questionnaire. For information regarding number of participants for each language, see Patel-Grosz (2012).

In the remainder of this paper, I will attempt to explain the distribution of epithets in contexts where they occur with a c-commanding antecedent, as outlined above. My goal is to derive the contrast between (15a) and (17), on the one hand, and the contrast between (19a)

and (19b), on the other hand. Section 2 presents a syntactic analysis of epithets that accounts for the fact that epithets tend to be exempt from Condition C, even though they take the surface shape of definite descriptions. In section 3, I propose a semantic analysis that derives the examples where Condition C effects appear to resurface, and the contrasts that we have observed.

2 The Syntactic Structure of Epithets

There is a long standing debate in the literature which questions the nature of epithets, that is, whether they are R-expressions or pronouns. I am going to show that for the purposes of the narrow syntax, epithets are pronouns, and present empirical evidence in favour of this claim.⁵ Specifically, I argue that epithets are null pronouns modified by a nominal appositive, as illustrated in (20).

- (20) [*pro* [the idiot]]
 equivalent to [he, [the idiot]]

Section 2.1 argues that epithets are pronominal in nature; section 2.2 provides support for the specific analysis in (20).

2.1 Epithets as Pronominal Elements

2.1.1 In Support of Epithets as Pronouns I To begin with, consider the discussion in Demirdache and Percus (2011a, 2011b). Demirdache and Percus argue that epithets in Jordanian Arabic involve an appositive structure, which contains a pronoun *ha* ‘this’, as in (21). In other words, an epithet such as *the idiot* has the structure *he the idiot*. This seems to be a more general pattern, also observed in Aoun and Choueiri (2000) for Lebanese Arabic.⁶

- (21) xaled, fakartu ?innu ha-l-Hmar bi-l-bajat
 Xaled you.thought that pro-the-donkey at-the-house
 Lit. ‘Xaled, you thought that (he,) this donkey is at home.’
 (Demirdache and Percus 2011a:(15b-ii))

My proposal in (20) is motivated by the assumption that expressions with a similar syntactic and semantic behaviour and distribution also share structural properties cross-linguistically.⁷

2.1.2 In Support of Epithets as Pronouns II Further argumentation for the claim that epithets are pronouns can be found in Beller (2011), who observes that epithets have the same prosodic properties as pronouns, as in (22) (adapted from Beller 2011:1). The contrast between (22a) vs. (22b) shows that a pronoun in a sentence with default focus must be unstressed, (22b), whereas an R-expression carries default stress, (22a). (Pronouns can only be stressed contrastively, (22c).) Beller finds that epithets quite generally pattern like pronouns with respect to prosody. In (23a) (from Beller 2011:1, who attributes it to Ladd 2008), *the butcher* is unstressed, resulting in the epithet reading. In contrast, if we stress *the butcher*, only the literal interpretation is possible, as in (23b).

- (22) a. [Susan slapped JIM]_F.
 b. [Susan SLAPPED him]_F.

⁵Further evidence and argumentation are provided in Patel-Grosz (2012).

⁶In Lebanese Arabic, the expressive component of epithets is typically negative, cf. Aoun and Choueiri (2000) for further discussions and data.

⁷In Arabic, the pronoun is overt, whereas in languages like English and German, the pronoun is null.

c. Susan slapped [HIM]_F.

(23) Context: How was your operation?

- a. Don't ask me about it. I'd like to STRANGLE the butcher.
(*the butcher* refers to the surgeon)
- b. Don't ask me about it. I'd like to strange the BUTCHER.
(*the butcher* refers to the actual butcher)

2.1.3 New Evidence from Quantifier-Variable Binding The strongest piece of evidence for treating epithets as pronouns stems from the following observation. In many languages, an epithet such as *the idiot* can co-vary with a quantifier such as *every professor* that c-commands it. The epithet in such constructions is thus syntactically bound by the quantifier under c-command. Crucially, a quantifier can bind an epithet in a restrictive relative clause, as in (24a), but not in an appositive relative clause, as in (25a). This is the same pattern that we find with bound pronouns, as in (24b) and (25b), thus lending support to the assumption that (24a) involves syntactic binding.

(24) *Dutch*

- a. ^{OK}Bij de receptie is [iedere professor]₃ wel een (één of andere)
at the reception is every professor PRT a one or other
uitmuntende student tegengekomen, die [de idioot]₃ had laten zakken.
excellent student met who the idiot had let fail
'At the reception, [every professor]₃ bumped into some excellent student or other
who [the idiot]₃ had failed.'
- b. ^{OK}Bij de receptie is [iedere professor]₃ wel een (één of andere)
at the reception is every professor PRT a one or other
uitmuntende student tegengekomen, die ze₃ had laten zakken.
excellent student met who she had let fail
'At the reception, [every professor]₃ bumped into some excellent student or other
who she₃ had failed.'

(25) *Dutch*

- a. *Bij de receptie is [iedere professor]₃ die geniale Jan tegengekomen, die
at the reception is every professor that genius Jan met who
[de idioot]₃ had laten zakken.
the idiot had let fail
'At the reception, [every professor]₃ bumped into the genius John who [the idiot]₃
had failed.'
- b. *Bij de receptie is [iedere professor]₃ die geniale Jan tegengekomen, die
at the reception is every professor that genius Jan met who
ze₃ had laten zakken.
she had let fail
'At the reception, [every professor]₃ bumped into the genius John who she₃ had
failed.'

Generally, only pronouns can be bound by quantifiers; therefore, examples like (24a) support the view that epithets are pronouns and not R-expressions. Consider also the German example in (26), which also involves a restrictive relative clause: the pronoun *denjenigen* 'those' can only be modified by a restricted relative clause and not by an appositive relative clause.

- (26) [Jeder NPÖ-Politiker]₁ schickt denjenigen, die [den Idioten]₁ öffentlich
 every NPÖ-politician sends those who the idiot publicly
 unterstützen, eine Kornblume.
 support a corn.flower
 ‘Every NPÖ politician sends a cornflower to those who publicly support the idiot.’

In addition to being bound in a restrictive relative clause by a quantifier outside of the clause, (27) from Dutch shows that epithets can also be bound in complement clauses. This corroborates the generalisation from above, that epithets can co-vary with a quantifier and be bound under c-command. In (27), *die idioot* (the idiot) seems to be bound by *iedere uitvoerder* ‘every performer’.

- (27) [Iedere uitvoerder]₁ overtuigde het panel ervan dat [die idioot]₁ slim is.
 every performer convinced the panel of.it that the idiot smart is.
 ‘[Every performer]₁ convinced the panel that [the idiot]₁ is smart.’

Having thus argued that epithets exhibit the behaviour of pronominal elements, we can now turn to the second part of the analysis, which is the treatment of epithets as nominal appositives that modify a null pronoun.

2.2 Epithets as Nominal Appositives with a Null Head

2.2.1 *The Proposal* As briefly discussed above, I propose that epithets have the structure of a nominal appositive, illustrated in (28). Nominal appositives consist of an anchor, such as *John* in (29c), which is the head of the appositive, and an apposition (here: *the idiot*). The analysis in (28) is very much in the spirit of den Dikken (2001) and Kayne (2010), who propose that so-called *committee* nouns actually have the structure *they, the committee* with a null variant of *they*.

- (28) [*pro* [the idiot]]
 equivalent to [he, [the idiot]]
- (29) a. Do you know John? *The idiot* came to my party.
 b. Do you know John? *He, the idiot*, came to my party.
 c. *John, the idiot*, came to my party.

Note that the idea of treating epithets as nominal appositives is not new; see Postal’s (1972:247)⁸ examples in (30) and (31). In this vein, although I adopt a different analysis from Postal (1972), I concur that epithets are pronouns that are modified by an appositive.

- (30) a. I wanted Harry_i to help me but he_i, who is a bastard, wouldn’t do it.
 b. I wanted Harry_i to help me but the bastard_i wouldn’t do it.
- (31) a. I have never met Melvin_i but Joan says she has met him, who_i is a bastard.
 b. I have never met Melvin_i but Joan says she has met the bastard_i.

Let us now turn to empirical arguments for the analysis in (28).

⁸While Postal (1972) suggests on the basis of (30) and (31) that perhaps epithets are underlyingly appositive constructions, he does not explicitly discuss their appositive structure. Since Postal (1972), many others have followed suit in assuming that epithets are appositives (Umbach 2002, Potts 2003, 2005, 2007, and Beller 2011), but the internal structure of the epithet remains controversial.

2.2.2 *Arguments for Treating Epithets as Nominal Appositives with a Null Anchor*⁹ Den Dikken (2001), Kayne (2010) and Taylor (2009) have argued for other constructions that there are nominal appositives which have a null anchor, as I assume for epithets. The basic idea is that so called *plurilinguals* or *committee nouns* that can trigger plural-like agreement (given in (33a)) actually involve a singular nominal appositive (*the committee*) with a plural anchor (a null pronoun corresponding to *they* in (33c)). (33) is based on Kayne (2010:133, fn. 3).

Kayne (2010) presents the following argument for this analysis: on the one hand, floating quantifiers typically associate with a suitable noun phrase (e.g. *the politicians* in (32)); on the other hand, in plurilingual constructions, although quantifier float is possible, as in (33a), the quantifier cannot be a part of the DP, as in (33b). This is exactly what we would expect if (33a) is analysed as (33c), and (33b) as (33d), since quantifiers like *all* cannot modify pronouns like *they*.

- (32) a. The politicians have all voted yes. / All the politicians have voted yes.
 b. The politicians have both voted yes. / Both the politicians have voted yes.
- (33) a. The committee have all voted yes.
 b. *All the committee have voted yesterday.
 c. They, the committee, have all voted yes.
 d. *All they, the committee, have voted yes.

To summarise the core point of Kayne's argument, *committee* nouns can c-command a floating quantifier, as in (33a), but they cannot combine with the quantifier, as in (33b); while we can say *all the politicians*, we cannot say *all the committee*. This follows if the phrase *the committee* actually modifies a null pronoun (*they*), for *all they, the committee* is unacceptable as well.

The data in (34) and (35) show how Kayne's argumentation can be applied to epithets. Here, I use the epithet *scum*, which is grammatically singular but can refer to more than one individual; thus *both/all* cannot be a part of the appositive because **both/all the scum* is ungrammatical due to a number mismatch (*both/all* requires a plural complement). The data indicate that epithets also have such a structure: a null pronoun modified by a nominal appositive.

- (34) a. John, Bill, and Jack were here. The scum have voted yes.
 b. John, Bill, and Jack were here. The scum have all voted yes.
 c. John, Bill, and Jack were here. *All The scum have voted yes.
- (35) a. John and Jack were here. The scum have voted yes.
 b. John and Jack were here. The scum have both voted yes.
 c. John and Jack were here. *Both the scum have voted yes.

I would like to make it clear, however, that *the scum* is not simply a *committee* noun (which would be a possible source of confusion); first, it can refer to individuals, while *committee* nouns cannot, and, second, the judgments in (34) and (35) are shared by speakers of British and North American English; by contrast, *committee* nouns are used only by British English speakers. Based on the data and observations outlined in this section, I conclude that epithets are null pronouns modified by an appositive. We can now turn to the question of why epithets do not always behave like pronouns.

⁹Cf. Patel-Grosz (2012) for further argumentation supporting this claim.

3. The Role of the Attitude Predicate

3.1 The Problem

The core problem that we need to address can be stated as follows. First, if epithets are indeed pronouns, as argued in section 2, see (36a), then we would expect them to pattern alike in all environments, that is, we would expect them to always have the distribution of pronouns. In relative clauses, this clearly holds, as shown in (36a-c) vs. (36d). In (36), the epithet *the idiot* behaves exactly like the pronoun *him*.

- (36) a. Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [*pro*₁ the idiot].
 b. Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves him₁.
 c. Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [him₁, the idiot].
 d. *Yesterday, John₁ bumped into a fan who really loves [the teacher]₁.

However, surprisingly from this perspective, the data in (37) show that when epithets are in complement clauses, they sometimes do not pattern like pronouns, but like R-expressions, cf. (37a) and (37d) vs. (37b–c). In (37a), the epithet is unacceptable in a place where a pronoun is acceptable. If epithets are pronominal elements, this raises the question as to why they are unacceptable in certain cases where pronouns are acceptable.

- (37) a. *John₁ thinks that [*pro*₁ the idiot] is smart.
 b. John₁ thinks that he₁ is smart.
 c. John₁ thinks that [he₁, the idiot,₁] is smart.
 d. *John₁ thinks that [the teacher]₁ is smart.

Moreover, recall the core empirical problem: in many languages we find a contrast between complements of *think* and complements of *convince*. A complement of *think* generally cannot contain epithets in subject position that refer to the matrix subject, as in (38a), whereas a complement of *convince* can, as in (38b). The same pattern that we find in English also holds in Russian, as shown in (39); again, an epithet is acceptable in the subject position of the complement of *convince*, as in (39b), but not in the subject position of the complement clause of *think*, as in (39b).

- (38) a. *Peter₁ thinks that [the idiot]₁ is smart.
 b. ^{OK}John₁ convinced the panel that [the idiot]₁ is smart.

(39) *Russian*

- a. *John₁ dumaet, čto [ètot idiot]₁ umjon.
 John.NOM thinks that this idiot.NOM smart
 ‘John₁ thinks that [this idiot]₁ is smart.’
 b. ^{OK}John₁ ubedil sovet, čto [ètot idiot]₁ umjon.
 John.NOM convinced panel that this idiot.NOM smart
 ‘John₁ convinced the panel that [this idiot]₁ is smart.’

Do these empirical data challenge the view that epithets are pronominal rather than R-expressions? The short answer to this question is: no. Epithets systematically differ from regular R-expressions; what we see in (40) is, once again, that genuine R-expressions in the complement of *convince* are still ungrammatical. If epithets were R-expressions, they should be unacceptable in the complement of *convince* as well, in contrast to what we see in (38b) and (39b).

- (40) a. John₁ convinced Peter that [the idiot]₁ is smart.
 b. *John₁ convinced Peter that [the janitor]₁ is smart.

It is worth pointing out that *think* and *convince* do not form a minimal pair; a more minimal example is provided in (41), where we see that an epithet in the complement of *not know* is more acceptable than an epithet in the complement of *know*.

- (41) a. *Nero₁ knows that [the damn traitor]₁ should invite Sarkozy to the peace talks.
 b. Nero₁ doesn't know that [the damn traitor]₁ should invite Sarkozy to the peace talks.

3.2 A Solution

To account for the difference between *think* and *convince* with respect to epithets, I propose an analysis based on Percus and Sauerland (2003a, 2003b). The main idea is that the semantics of predicates like *think* involve the *belief-self* of its subject (i.e. the individual with whom the subject of *think* identifies in his or her beliefs). A pronoun in the complement clause of *think* can be identified with this belief-self, giving rise to a so-called *de se* construal (cf. Lewis 1979, Perry 1979, and Chierchia 1989). In this vein, (42a) describes a situation where John thinks that John's belief-self is smart, that is, John has a belief about himself. Here, the pronoun *he* in the complement clause is construed *de se*.

- (42) a. John₁ thinks that he₁ is smart. (Intended reading: John thinks "I am smart.")
 b. *De se construal*: John₁ thinks that John's belief-self₁ is smart.
 (Where John's belief-self = who John is in John's beliefs)

I propose to derive the epithet-pronoun difference from the assumption that epithets cannot modify a null pronoun that receives such a *de se* construal, as reflected by (43).

- (43) *John thinks that *pro*_{de-se} the idiot is smart.
 (Intended reading: John thinks: "I am smart" and the speaker does not like John.)

As we will see in section 3.3, the proposal sketched informally in (42) and (43) derives the patterns which are at the heart of the problem, repeated in (44). The core idea is that (44a) (in the reading in which it is unacceptable) allows and, in fact, requires a *de se* construal, as in (43), whereas (44b) does not have such a *de se* construal. Note that, in fact, (44a) is only unacceptable in the reading in (43), where John has a *de se* belief. Percus and Sauerland (2003a, 2003b) discuss contexts such as the following: John is drunk, sees a video of someone, and thinks that this person is smart, without recognizing that he himself is the person in the video. Intuitively (44a) is acceptable in such a situation, in which John has a *de re* belief about himself.

- (44) a. *John₁ thinks that [the idiot]₁ is smart.
 b. John₁ convinced Peter that [the idiot]₁ is smart.

At this point, the question remains why a *de se* reading cannot arise in (44a) as a special type of *de re* reading; we come back to this question below.

3.3 Formalising the Solution

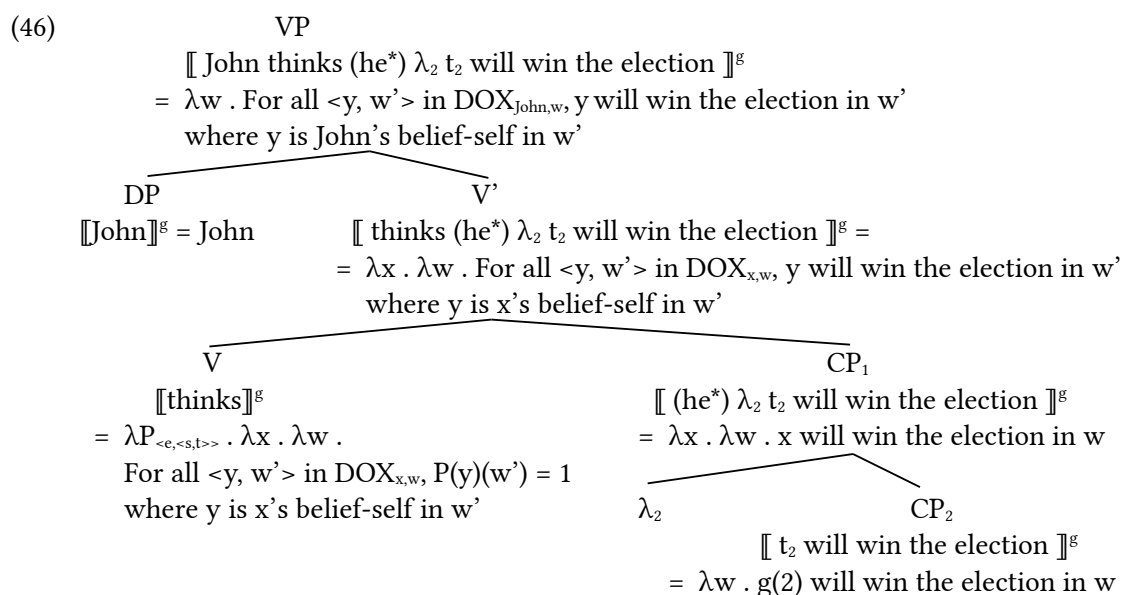
Percus and Sauerland (2003a, 2003b) argue that, in English, *de se* readings for examples like (42) above have an independent logical form in the semantics. Percus and Sauerland (2003a)

discuss the example in (45) and argue that it can be used to describe both the *de se* belief in (45b) and the *de re* belief in (45c). In other words, (45a) can be used to describe two different situations: in the *de se* situation, described in (45b), John has a conscious belief about himself. Here, the embedded pronoun that co-refers with *John* is identical to his belief-self (i.e. the individual identical to John in all of John's belief worlds). In the *de re* case, described in (45c), John also has a belief about himself but he does not know that the belief is about himself.

- (45) a. John₁ thinks that he₁ will win the election.
(Percus and Sauerland 2003a)
- b. *De se belief*
John thinks: "I will win the election."
- c. *De re belief*
John is drunk and sees someone giving a speech on TV; not recognising that it is he himself, John thinks: "This guy (on TV) will win the election."

The core idea that I pursue is that when an epithet is contained in the complement proposition of *think*, and a *de se* interpretation is intended, the epithet cannot be interpreted in its surface position. In (44a), this yields ungrammaticality. I return to this in section 3.4.

Let us first revisit Percus and Sauerland's (2003a, 2003b) analysis, shown in (46).



In this analysis, a predicate such as *think* takes a clausal complement, which contains an empty individual variable slot that is bound by the subject's belief-self *y*. To get the *de se* LF, Percus and Sauerland assume that a complement clause, such as *he will win the election*, is turned into a property. This is done by lambda-abstracting over one of the embedded arguments, and that argument is the *de se* pronoun. By doing this, the embedded argument position that is superficially occupied by the *de se* pronoun is actually bound by the belief-self that its matrix verb introduces. The relevant parts of the Percus and Sauerland analysis are given in (46), deriving a *de se* LF for (45a–b). ($\text{DOX}_{x, w}$ stands for the set of pairs $\langle y, w' \rangle$ such that w' is a world compatible with x 's beliefs in w , and y is the individual in w' who x in w identifies as himself.) A pronoun that has a *de se* construal is marked by an asterisk (*). The resulting LF is given in (47): most importantly, (47) conveys that John has a belief about his belief-self; put differently, he has a conscious belief about himself.

- (47) De *se* LF
 [[John thinks (he*) λ_2 [t₂ will win the election]]]
 = λw . For all $\langle y, w' \rangle$ in $\text{DOX}_{\text{John}, w}$, y will win the election in w', where y is John's belief-self in w'
 In words: 'In all worlds that are compatible with John's thoughts/beliefs, and which contain John as he views himself (= John's belief-self), John's belief-self will win the election.'

This is very different from a *de re* LF, which is given in (48). We can think of two possible *de re* LFs. The two *de re* LFs in (48a-b) differ from the *de se* LF in (47), because in both (48a) and (48b), the belief-self doesn't bind the argument position associated with the embedded pronoun. As shown, *de re* LFs can involve binding of the embedded pronouns by the matrix subjects, as in (48a), or simply coreference, as in (48b). In either case, the embedded argument will not be identified with the matrix subject's belief-self. In other words, John's beliefs are not about his belief-self; they are about an individual in the actual world who happens to be John.

- (48) a. De *re* LF with binding
 John λ_2 thinks [he₂ will win the election]
 b. De *re* LF without binding
 John thinks [he₂ will win the election] (Where he₂ refers to John)
 c. [[(48a)] = [(48b)]] =
 λw . For all $\langle y, w' \rangle$ in $\text{DOX}_{\text{John}, w}$, John will win the election in w', where y is John's belief-self in w'
 In words: 'In all worlds that are compatible with John's thoughts/beliefs, and which contain John as he views himself (= John's belief-self), John will win the election.'

In brief, the difference between the two denotations ultimately comes down to the fact that in the *de se* case in (47), the subject of *will win the election* is identified with John's belief-self. By contrast, in the *de re* case in (48), the subject of *will win the election* is identified with John in the actual world, not with John's belief-self.

To derive the restrictions on epithets, I pursue the idea that *de se* LFs are obligatory whenever the context involves a *de se* belief (cf. Schlenker's (2005b) *Prefer De Se!*).¹⁰ Furthermore, it is not possible for an epithet to contain a null pronoun that is construed *de se*. What this means in Percus and Sauerland's system is that the appositive contained in an epithet cannot modify an uninterpreted pronoun that is marked by an asterisk (*pro**). The purpose of using such an uninterpreted pronoun is to identify the pronoun's argument position with the matrix subject's belief-self.

Note that for object pronouns, Percus and Sauerland (2003a) assume a configuration analogous to (47), as given in (49). Here, the embedded object is identified with the belief-self of the matrix subject.

- (49) a. John thinks Mary will vote for him.

¹⁰An anonymous reviewer points out that it is unclear why the unacceptable examples with bound epithets cannot simply be saved by a *de re* construal, whenever they are presented in out-of-the-blue contexts. This seems to be connected to the fact that *de re* readings (where someone has a belief that involves themselves without realizing that it is about themselves) are generally more difficult to access than *de se* readings (where someone consciously has a self-directed belief). Native speakers report that the most natural reading of *John thought that he was smart* is always a reading in which John thought: "I am smart." The alternative *de re* readings always require an elaborate context to become accessible.

- b. *De se* LF: John thinks (him*) λ_2 [Mary will vote for t_2]
 (Adapted from Percus and Sauerland 2003a:241)

To recapitulate, my proposal amounts to the idea that predicates which do not allow a bound epithet in the embedded clause are the same predicates that allow for *de se* LFs. Specifically, epithets cannot combine with null anchors consisting of uninterpreted pronouns. This idea is based on Demirdache and Percus (2011a, 2011b). Turning to the core examples, repeated in (50), a pronoun in the complement of *think* that refers to the matrix subject must be identified with its matrix subject's belief-self, rendering (50a) unacceptable. By contrast, the acceptability of (50b) can be attributed to the fact that a pronoun in the complement of *convince* cannot be identified with the matrix subject's belief-self, that is, it cannot receive the relevant *de se* construal, see Stephenson (2007). This is due to the fact that *think* introduces the matrix subject's belief-self and *convince* has been argued to introduce the matrix object's belief-self; see (51) vs. (52).

- (50) a. *John₁ thinks that [the idiot]₁ is smart.
 b. ^{?OK}John₁ convinced Peter that [the idiot]₁ is smart.

In the framework of Percus and Sauerland (2003a), *think* has a meaning as given in (51); as shown by Stephenson (2007:43, 149), *convince* differs in that the belief state that results from a convincing event is a belief-self on the part of the hearer. This is shown in (52).

- (51) *The meaning of think*
 $[[\text{think}]]^g = \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle s, t \rangle \rangle} . \lambda x . \lambda w . \text{For all } \langle y, w' \rangle \text{ in } \text{DOX}_{x,w}, P(y)(w') = 1$

- (52) *The meaning of convince*
 $[[\text{convince}]]^g = \lambda z_e . \lambda P_{\langle e, \langle s, t \rangle \rangle} . \lambda x . \lambda w . x \text{ communicates with } z \text{ in a way that causes it to be the case that for all } \langle y, w' \rangle \text{ in } \text{DOX}_{z,w}, P(y)(w') = 1$

The analyses for (50) are summarized in (53). In (50a), a *de se* LF is possible and, in fact, obligatory, giving rise to the unacceptable (53a). For (50b), a *de se* LF is impossible and we get the acceptable (53b), thus deriving the *think* vs *convince* difference. This motivates the following conclusion: *think* must combine with *de se* LFs whenever the reported context is one where the actual belief is best characterized as a *de se* belief. As *convince* is not interpreted with respect to the subject's beliefs, a *de se* reading cannot pick out the subject's belief-self, which derives the fact that (53b) is acceptable.

- (53) a. *John thinks *pro** λ_2 [t_2 the idiot] is smart (*de se* LF)
 b. ^{?OK}John convinced Peter that [*pro*₁ the idiot] is smart (only *de re* LF, where *pro*₁ refers to John)

Note that the relative clause cases are also predicted to be grammatical under this analysis, since the relevant constructions with relative clauses that we discussed in section 1 do not contain a predicate that introduces a belief-self (such as *think*). As a consequence, a *de se* construal of the null pronoun modified by the epithet does not arise.

3.4 Deriving the Subject-Object Asymmetry

I now want to return to the subject-object asymmetry, as discussed in section 1.4. The data are repeated in (54). We find that epithets in the complement of *think* are only ungrammatical when co-referring to the matrix subject if they are in subject position, and not if they are

in object position. The data in (54a) sharply contrast with those in (54b): while (54a) is unacceptable, (54b) seems to be perfectly acceptable.

- (54) a. *Nero₁ thinks that [the damn traitor]₁ should invite Sarkozy to the peace talks.
 b. ^{OK}Nero₁ thinks that Sarkozy should invite [the damn traitor]₁ to the peace talks.

From the perspective of Percus and Sauerland, subject pronouns and object pronouns should not differ in terms of a *de se* construal; see (47) and (49). These contrasts are thus not predicted by the above analysis. The idea that I pursue is inspired by Demirdache and Percus (2011a, 2011b). The idea is that the asymmetry follows from an asymmetry on extraction.

I propose that constructions where epithets surface in the location of an uninterpreted null anchor can be saved by Demirdache and Percus's epithet float, given in (55). Demirdache and Percus argue that epithets cannot attach to a trace that results from a *de se* construal of a pronoun. This is equivalent to my own proposal for other languages. However, crucially, they argue that in such cases the expressive material can move covertly from its surface position to the position of its antecedent, known as *epithet float*.

(55) *Epithet float*


On the way to LF, an epithet's expressive term can float away from its host pronoun and combine with the pronoun's "antecedent".

(Demirdache and Percus 2011b:382)

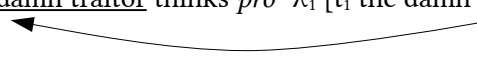
The LFs in (56a) and (56b) would be the ungrammatical *de se* LFs of (54a) and (54b) if epithet float did not apply. Once epithet float is applied, we see that it can save (56b), but not (56a).

- (56) a. *LF: Nero thinks *pro** λ₂ that [t₂ the damn traitor] should invite [Sarkozy] to the peace talks
 b. *LF: Nero thinks *pro** λ₂ that [Sarkozy] should invite [t₂ the damn traitor] to the peace talks

The important contrast is given in (57) vs. (58). I propose that the grammatical (57a) actually has the LF in (57b), generated by covert movement, as in (57c). Crucially, in (57c), the epithet can covertly move out of the object position, which is why it is grammatical. The question that remains is why (58) cannot involve such movement. (58a) should have the LF in (58b), generated from the surface syntactic structure by analogous covert movement, as in (58c). This should be grammatical if epithet float was unconstrained. I conjecture that the difference between (57) and (58) is related to the fact that subject positions are islands for extractions, while object positions are not (Huang 1982). The core idea is thus that epithet float in these cases can move the epithet from the object position in (57), as opposed to the subject position in (58). The former is possible, the latter is not.

- (57) a. ^{OK}Nero₁ thinks that Sarkozy should invite [the damn traitor]₁ to the peace talks.
 b. ^{OK}LF: [Nero, the damn traitor], thinks *pro** λ₁ Sarkozy should invite t₁ to the peace talks
 c. Epithet float of *the damn traitor* at LF:
 Nero the damn traitor thinks *pro** λ₁ Sarkozy should invite [t₁ ~~the damn traitor~~] ...
- 

- (58) a. *Nero₁ thinks that [the damn traitor]₁ should invite Sarkozy to the peace talks.
 b. *LF: [Nero, the damn traitor], thinks *pro** λ₁ t₁ should invite Sarkozy to the peace talks

- c. Epithet float of *the damn traitor* at LF: (ungrammatical due to island constraints)
 *Nero the damn traitor thinks *pro** λ_1 [~~t₁ the damn traitor~~] should invite Sarkozy ...
- 

A recent data point to illustrate a similar subject/object asymmetry for a less controversial case of covert movement is given by Kayne (1998:234, 241), who presents the contrast in (59a) vs. (59b). Kayne argues that Quantifier Raising cannot move an embedded subject into the matrix clause, whereas an object can undergo such movement.

- (59) a. She has requested that they read [not a single linguistics book].
 ^{OK}QR-ed reading:
 ‘There was not a single linguistics book such that she requested that they read it.’
 b. She has requested that [not a single student] read our book.
 *QR-ed reading:
 ‘There was not a single student such that she requested that he read our book.’

4 Conclusion

I have presented a new puzzle for anti-locality, repeated in (60), and I argued that epithets are null pronouns with an adjoined nominal appositive.

- (60) a. *Nero₁ thinks that [the damn traitor]₁ will be invited to the reception.
 b. ^{OK}Nero₁ thinks that they will invite [the damn traitor]₁ to the reception.
 c. ^{?OK}John₁ convinced Peter that [the idiot]₁ is smart.

The difference between *think* in (60a) and *convince* in (60c) then follows from the assumptions that epithets cannot modify uninterpreted *de se* pronouns. The subject-object asymmetry in (60a) vs. (60b) follows from general constraints on movement, such as the constraint that extraction is possible from the object position, but not from the subject position. One open question remains, namely: when is a *de se* interpretation possible or blocked to begin with? This is a more general issue that goes beyond the focus of this paper.

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