

ELTE/DELG • BMA-ANGD17-342.35 • Marcel den Dikken • Morphosyntax of pronouns • Handout 1

<i>time & location</i>	Wednesdays, 10:30–12:00; R327
<i>instructor</i>	Marcel den Dikken (marcel.den.dikken@nytud.hu)
<i>focus & aims</i>	This specialisation seminar discusses the internal and external morphosyntax of pronouns, incl. syntactic processes confined or inaccessible to (weak) pronouns and clitics, such as object shift and particle shift. The aim of the seminar is to instill in its participants a robust sense of the empirical and theoretical challenges presented by pronouns (and other proforms as well).
<i>assessment</i>	– active participation in the discussion in class – a two-page research proposal on a topic related to the material discussed in the seminar, to be presented orally in the last class of the semester [instructions on how to prepare the research proposal will be provided via the course website, on the ELTE/SEAS course material website]
<i>literature</i>	– handouts for each topic addressed in the seminar are being provided via the ELTE/SEAS course material website – the following titles will serve as major milestones for the discussion in class; the *-marked titles are obligatory readings for the early part of the semester:

- Asudeh, Ash & Ida Toivonen. 2012. Copy raising and perception. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 30. 321–80.
- * Cardinaletti, Anna & Michal Starke. 1999. The typology of structural deficiency: A case study of three classes of pronouns. In Henk van Riemsdijk (ed.), *Clitics in the languages of Europe*. Berlin: Mouton. 145–233.
- * Déchaine, Rose-Marie & Martina Wiltschko. 2002. Decomposing pronouns. *Linguistic Inquiry* 33. 409–442.
- Dikken, Marcel den. to appear. Scrambling and object shift: Synthesis article. In Katharina Hartmann, Johannes Mursell & Susi Wurmbrand (eds), *Handbook on the Syntax of the Germanic Languages*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Dikken, Marcel den & Balázs Surányi. 2017. Contrasting contrastive left dislocation explications. *Linguistic Inquiry* 48. 543–584.
- Johnson, Kyle. 1991. Object positions. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 9. 577–636.
- Kayne, Richard. 1985. Principles of particle constructions. In Jacqueline Guéron, Hans-Georg Obenauer & Jean-Yves Pollock (eds), *Grammatical representations*. Dordrecht: Foris. 101–140.
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weekly schedule

14 February 2024	Introduction: Why study pronouns?
21 February 2024	A typology of pronominal elements (I): Cardinaletti & Starke (1999)
28 February 2024	A typology of pronominal elements (II): Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002)

6 March 2024	NO CLASS: INSTRUCTOR AWAY AT A CONFERENCE
13 March 2024	Pronouns and obligatory displacement (I): Object shift and scrambling
20 March 2024	Pronouns and obligatory displacement (II): Cliticisation
27 March 2024	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK
3 April 2024	Pronouns and resistance to displacement: Double objects and particles
10 April 2024	Pronouns and their associates (I): Doubling, resumption, and ‘copy raising’
17 April 2024	Pronouns and their associates (II): Clausal prolepsis
24 April 2024	Pronouns and other proforms: Pro-predicates, expletives, demonstratives
1 May 2024	NO CLASS: LABOUR DAY
8 May 2024	Pronouns and referential dependencies: Binding and coreference
15 May 2024	Presentation of students’ research proposals

NB The schedule is subject to change; notice of changes will be given at least a week in advance.

1 Introduction: Why study pronouns?

- pronouns, as their name suggests, are proforms for constituents that *externally* distribute as nominals — typically as arguments, but in a subset of cases as predicates

- (1) [John/that guy] is smart; *he* has my support
- (2) [eating only fruits and veggies] is smart; *it* has my support
- (3) [that they only eat fruits and veggies] is smart; *it* has my support
- (4) John_i is [a professor]_k; *he_i/it_k/that_k* is what I want to be, too

NB while the pronoun *he* can only take argumental DP-antecedents, the pronouns *it* and *that* can take a wider range of antecedents — incl. ones that are not in any obvious sense nominal:

- (5) Mary is [beautiful/in great shape]; *it/that* is what I want to be, too
- (6) Marie est [belle/en pleine forme/une avocate]; ses filles *le/*la/*les* seront aussi (French)
Marie is beautiful.F/in full form/a lawyer.F her daughters CL.M will.be also
‘Marie is beautiful/in great shape/a lawyer; her daughters will be, too’

- (7) a. Mari [gyönyörű]; a lányai is *az*(ok)* (= *gyönyörű*(ek)*) lesznek (Hungarian)
 Mari beautiful the daughter.POSS.PL also it.PL beautiful.PL will.be.3PL
 ‘Mari is beautiful; her daughters will be, too’
- b. Mari [remek formában] van; a lányai is *abban/*az* (= *remek formá*(k)ban*) lesznek
 Mari great shape.in is the daughter.POSS.PL also it(.in) great shape.PL.in will.be.3PL
 ‘Mari is in great shape; her daughters will be, too’
- c. az élelmiszerek nagyon drágák, de nem kell *annak/azoknak* (= *drágá*(k)nak*) lenniük
 the groceries are very expensive but not need it.DAT(PL) expensive.PL.DAT be.3PL
 ‘groceries are very expensive, but they don’t need to be’

- in French (6) (to be revisited in the context of the discussion of Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002 in session 3), the adjectival and nominal predicates are inflected for feminine gender (by subject–predicate concord), but the predicate proform is masculine singular *le* — in spite of the fact that the subject of the pro-predicate is feminine plural (*ses filles* ‘her daughters’)
- likewise, in Hungarian (7c) (where *az* has dative case because of its infinitival environment) number concord is dispreferred; however, in (7a) *az* must inflect for plural as a function of concord — these number concord facts fully match the behaviour of non-proform predicates [an interesting case, found on the internet and to be contrasted with (7a), is: *ott nem betegek a gyerekek, erre mondtam ha az Ákos a madártól lett beteg akkor azok is az lesznek* ‘there the children, aren’t sick, to this I said if Ákos got sick from the birds then they, will also be’]
- in Hungarian (7b), the proform must be case-inflected the same way as the PP antecedent — even though the pro-predicate stands for the entire PP, not just *remek forma* ‘great shape’
- in this seminar, we will mostly focus on pro-arguments (i.e., pronouns that represent an argument of the predicate); in the penultimate session we will briefly look at pro-predicates
- the French example in (6) not only tells us that proforms can differ from their antecedents and their subjects in ϕ -features: it also shows that proforms can occur in syntactic positions that are different from those of their antecedents
- French *le*, like other non-P-introduced non-subject pronouns in the language (incl. dative *lui*), is a so-called **CLITIC** pronoun — it must left-attach (‘procliticise’, as opposed to ‘encliticise’) to the highest eligible verb (the aspectual auxiliary *a* in (8a’) but not the modal *veut* in (8b’))
- clitic pronouns can be predicates (as in (6)) and arguments (as in (8))
- when multiple arguments of a predicate are clitics, these clitics typically string along in a strict linear order: (8a~c)

- (8) a. il *le lui* donnera a'. il *le lui* a donné a''. il veut *le lui* donner (Fr.)
 he CL_{acc} CL_{dat} will.give he CL_{acc} CL_{dat} has given he wants CL_{acc} CL_{dat} to.give
- b. *il donnera *le lui* b'. *il a *le lui* donné b''. *il *le lui* veut donner
 he will.give CL_{acc} CL_{dat} he has CL_{acc} CL_{dat} given he CL_{acc} CL_{dat} wants to.give
- c. *il *lui le* donnera
 he CL_{dat} CL_{acc} will.give

- besides CLITICS, we should recognise a distinction between **STRONG and WEAK PRONOUNS**
- strong pronouns can be modified by focus particles, and they can be coordinated with other strong pronouns: (9)
- weak pronouns cannot be modified by focus particles, and they cannot be coordinated with other pronouns: (10)
- Cardinaletti & Starke (1999) lay out a range of diagnostics for the strong/weak distinction among pronouns; we will look into these in session 2

- (9) a. I like (only/even) HIM [SMALL CAPITALS mark prosodic prominence]
 b. I like (both) him and her
- (10) a. I like (*only/*even) 'm
 b. *I like (both) 'm and her

- in the wake of the explosion of the functional structure of the clause in the 1980s and 1990s, the syntax of the nominal phrase has seen a great deal of development (under the impetus of early work by Szabolcsi 1983 and Abney 1986)
- the functional syntax of the nominal phrase is highly germane to the topic of this seminar: the morphosyntax of the different types of pronouns may very well translate into different cut-off points in the functional structure of the nominal phrase
- different proposals in this spirit have been put forward by Cardinaletti & Starke (1999) and Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002); we will take a close look at both of these in sessions 2 and 3
- WEAK pronouns distribute differently from STRONG pronouns not just with respect to modification and coordination: they often occur in different syntactic positions, too
- thus, in Mainland Scandinavian (MSc), there exists a syntactic operation called **object shift**: WEAK pronouns surface to the left of adverbial modifiers, and as a rule they have to undergo this operation whenever the structural description for the operation is met (i.e., iff the main verb undergoes movement out of the VP — ‘Holmberg’s Generalisation’; cf. (11b~c))
- Bentzen (2023) (from whose paper (11a,b) were taken): ‘the typical instantiation of OS in MSc is that of a weak pronominal object shifting to a clause-medial position, while full DP objects and contrastively stressed or demonstrative pronominal objects remain in situ’

- (11) a. jeg likte <*filmen> ikke <filmen> (Norwegian)
 I liked film.the not film.the
 ‘I didn’t like the movie’
- b. jeg likte <den> ikke <*den>
 I liked PRON.M.SG not PRON.M.SG
 ‘I didn’t like it’
- c. han tror at jeg <*den> ikke likte <den>
 he thinks that I PRON.M.SG not liked PRON.M.SG
 ‘he thinks that I didn’t like it’

- NB** Bentzen (2023) and Jónsson (2023) make special mention of the Danish and Icelandic equivalents of the English locative proform *there* in connection with object shift — these apparently non-nominal proforms undergo object shift, obligatorily so in the case of unstressed Danish *der*
- this can be squared with the fact that object shift otherwise targets only nominal elements if, in Danish and Icelandic, the locative proform structurally represents the nominal complement of a silent locative P (whereas in Norwegian and Swedish, it is a proform for the entire locative PP; PPs are not eligible for object shift in Scandinavian)
 - a process similar to object shift, called **scrambling**, is undergone by WEAK proforms (incl. PPs) the West-Germanic OV-languages (Dutch, Frisian, German) and in Yiddish (the only Germanic VO-language featuring scrambling; outside Germanic, scrambling is also found, for example, in Russian, a VO-language, and in Japanese and Korean, both OV-languages)
 - again, WEAK pronouns undergo this operation obligatorily (this time regardless of whether the verb leaves the VP or not: the examples in (12) involve the periphrastic perfect, where the participle remains in the VP); strong pronouns and full definite DPs may but do not have to be scrambled, while weak indefinites do not scramble
- (12) a. ik heb <{*die*/**een*} *collega*> gisteren <{*die*/*een*} *collega*> ontmoet (Dutch)
 I have that/a colleague yesterday that/a colleague met
 ‘I met that/a colleague yesterday’
- b. ik heb <’*m*> gisteren <*’*m*> ontmoet
 I have him_{weak} yesterday him_{weak} met
 ‘I met him yesterday’
- c. ik heb <*HEM*> gisteren <*HEM*> ontmoet, niet *HAAR*
 I have him_{strong} yesterday him_{strong} met not her_{strong}
 ‘I met HIM yesterday, not HER’
- object shift and scrambling are functionally (and information-structurally) very similar operations (although their nature is probably different) — their significance in the context of this seminar lies in the fact that they treat WEAK pronouns differently from other DP-types
 - although present-day English lacks scrambling and, if it has object shift in the first place (a much-debated question, like the distribution of object shift within English), generally does not treat WEAK pronouns differently from other DPs with respect to its application, there is one phenomenon in English syntax which does single out WEAK pronouns: **particle shift**
 - similarly to what we see in object shift and scrambling, in English verb–particle constructions WEAK pronouns have to be to the left of the particle while STRONG pronouns and full DPs are welcome to surface to the right of the particle
- (13) a. I called <*the man*> up <*the man*>
 b. I called <’*m*> up <*’*m*>
 c. I called <*HIM*> up <*HIM*>, not *HER*

- ‘particle shift’ can be modelled in such a way that it is not the particle but the nominal object that changes its position — which then likens ‘**particle shift**’ quite directly to **object shift**
- pronouns sometimes do not occur ‘on their own’ in a sentence but are linked to an **associate** that shares with the pronoun the same θ -role
- the relationship between the pronominal element and the tautothematic associate can be either **anaphoric** or **cataphoric**
- in the literature on clitic constructions, the cataphoric relationship between a clitic and its associate is called **CLITIC doubling**: (14)

(14) *lo vimos a él[%] Juan* (Spanish)
 CL.3SG.M we.saw to him/Juan
 ‘we saw him/Juan’

- with independent pronouns, doubling of the type in (14) is unusual — though perhaps the ‘afterthought’ construction in (15) comes close (but in this seminar, we will set this aside)

(15) I don’t like *’m, John*

- but when the full DP comes before the proform and occurs at the left edge of the clause (in the topic field), an anaphoric relationship between this DP and a WEAK ‘**resumptive**’ pronoun is not uncommon — this is called ‘hanging topic left dislocation’, illustrated in (16)

(16) (as for) *John*, I don’t like *’m*

- Dutch and German both have a direct equivalent of (16) in which the resumptive is a personal pronoun occurring in clause-internal position and an alternative in which the resumptive is a ‘**d-pronoun**’ (an independent demonstrative) itself occurring in the left periphery

(17) a. *Jan, ik mag ’m niet* (Dutch)
 Jan I like him_{weak} not
 b. *Jan, die mag ik niet*
 Jan D-PRON like I not

- the construction illustrated by (17b) is called ‘**contrastive left dislocation**’; its syntax has been the subject of close scrutiny (see Den Dikken & Surányi 2017 for an overview), and we will look into it at some length in session 6
- in the examples in (14)–(17), the proform and its associate share a single θ -role
- a familiar approach to these cases postulates a constituent that underlyingly harbours both the proform and the associate — a ‘**big DP**’ (see Torrego 1996, Uriagereka 1995 on clitic doubling, and Grohmann 2003 on contrastive left dislocation): either (18a) or (18b) for (14)

- (18) a. [_{DP} *él/Juan* [_{D'} D=*lo*]]
 b. [_{DP} [_{D'} D=*lo* [*él/Juan*]]]

- in the so-called ‘**copy raising**’ construction, illustrated for English in (19), we also find a dependency between a proform (in the subordinate clause) and an associate (in the matrix clause); and because *seem* is not a θ -role assigner, only a single θ -role is assigned to the pair

- (19) a. *John* seems like *he*’s tired
 b. *John* seems like *his* mind is somewhere else
 c. *John* seems like she terrifies *him*

- the ‘copy raising’ construction in (19a) is semantically on a par with ‘ordinary raising’: (20)

- (20) *John* seems *ec* to be tired

- but while ‘ordinary raising’ can straightforwardly be analysed in terms of (A-)movement, ‘copy raising’ presents major difficulties for a movement approach — esp. in light of the fact that the ‘copy pronoun’ (the **resumptive**) can be in positions from which A-movement to subject is otherwise strictly impossible (see (19b,c))

- in ‘copy raising’ constructions, it is unlikely that the proform and its associate start out in the same constituent — instead, the two originate in separate clauses, both in an A-position, getting licensed independently

- (20) a. *John* seems like *his* head is in the clouds
 b. *John* seems like Mary just walked out on *him*

- **CLITIC DOUBLING** is a case of a cataphoric relationship between a proform and its associate
- such cataphoric dependencies involving a single θ -role are cross-linguistically common in cases in which the associate of the proform is a **clause** — instances of **clausal prolepsis**

- (21) a. *it* seems [*that you did this*]
 b. I hate/like *it* [*that you did this*]

- clausal prolepsis shares with clitic doubling, left dislocation and ‘copy raising’ the fact that no separate θ -roles are available for the proform and its associate

- in clausal prolepsis constructions, a syntactic relationship between the **proleptic pronoun** and its associate needs to be established wherein one of the two terms is (part of) the predicate and the other is (part of) its subject

- informative in this connection is the fact that in Hungarian clausal prolepsis constructions featuring the raising verbs *látszik* ‘seem’ and *tűnik* ‘appear’, the proleptic proform can be either pronominal *az* ‘it’ (22a) or non-pronominal *úgy* ‘so’ (22b) — the latter construable only as a predicate

- (22) a. *az* {látszik/tűnik}, [*hogy te csináltad*] (Hungarian)
 it seems/appears that you do.PST.DEF.2SG
 b. *úgy* {látszik/tűnik}, [*hogy te csináltad*]
 so seems/appears that you do.PST.DEF.2SG
 both: ‘it seems/appears that you did it’

- the use of *úgy* ‘so’ in (22) as a proleptic proform is a natural segue to a discussion of proforms that are **not pronominal** and that (consequently) do not serve as arguments
- we had already encountered proforms for **predicates** in (4)–(7), above; see also English (23), where *so* either represents or affirms the predicate *leave*

- (23) a. she left, and *so* did he
 b. he did *so* leave

- but while generally a pro-predicate, *so* can also ‘stand in’ for propositional arguments: (24)

- (24) a. she says that the world is flat, and he says *so*, too
 b. she thinks that the world is flat, but I don’t think *so*

- this places sharply into focus the question of whether one and the same proform can serve both argument and predicate functions — a question that we previously faced for *it/that* and French *le* as well (on *le*, see Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002, to be discussed in session 3)

- the *it* of (21a) is customarily treated as an **expletive** — a syntactically necessary but semantically vacuous piece of morphology, serving neither as an argument nor as a predicate
- an expletive approach to the *it* of (21b) is plainly very difficult to uphold: while *seem* assigns no θ -roles, *hate* and *like* clearly do
- that even the *it* of (21a) is arguably not an expletive is suggested by the fact that this *it* can, under the right circumstances, serve as the controller of the silent subject (**PRO**) of an infinitival clause (Bennis 1986) — something a ‘genuine expletive’ like Dutch *er* in (25c) cannot

- (25) a. sometimes *it* seems (likely), without [PRO being perfectly obvious], that he is kidding
 b. soms lijkt *het*, zonder [PRO meteen ook duidelijk te zijn], dat hij een grapje maakt
 sometimes seems it without immediately also clear to be that he a joke.DIM makes
 c. **er* is gebleken, zonder [PRO officieel bevestigd te zijn], dat de koning onwel was
 there is turned.out without officially confirmed to be that the king unwell was

- the question of whether genuine expletives (*qua* elements that serve no ‘deep’ grammatical function and are inserted purely for structural reasons) exist is one that will come up again in the course of the seminar

- the last thing we will discuss in the seminar is the behaviour of pronouns in **referential dependencies**

- nominal proforms are evidently very helpful in this connection: to refer back to the matrix subject in (26), one would want to use a proform rather than a repetition of the referential expression itself
- but note that the nominal proform of choice in the subject position of the subordinate clause in these examples depends on whether this clause is finite or non-finite — finite (26a) must feature the pronoun *he*; non-finite (26b) requires the reflexive anaphor *himself* when the embedded subject is overt, or (in the case of *prefer*) can leave this subject unexpressed (PRO)

- (26) a. *John* finds [that *he*/**himself*/**John* is the best candidate for this job]
John would prefer [that *he*/**himself*/**John* be selected for this job]
- b. *John* finds [*himself*/**him*/**John* to be the best candidate for this job]
John would prefer [(for *himself*/**him*/**John*) to be selected for this job]

- sometimes, a WEAK pronoun is not the optimal choice of anaphoric element, because of potential ambiguity (see (27): who said that the board was still in a meeting?)
- languages can resort to the use of a STRONG pronoun or **demonstrative** to disambiguate — the ‘non-subject reading’ is signalled unambiguously with the use of a STRONG pronoun or demonstrative, as in (28b); (28a) is ambiguous in principle, but the ‘non-subject reading’ is non-salient for it
- the use of non-deficient proforms signals that the antecedent is not the subject/topic of the preceding discourse; deficient proforms (in the sense of Cardinaletti & Starke 1999) cross-linguistically prefer to take be ‘continuing topics’, taking the topic of the preceding sentence/discourse as its antecedent
- this tendency is even stronger for **null subjects** (called *pro*) in so-called ‘pro-drop languages’

- (27) *John* was talking to *Bill*, and *he* said that the board was still in a meeting
- (28) a. *Jan* stond te praten met Wim en *hij* zei dat het bestuur nog in vergadering was (Dutch)
 Jan stood to talk to Wim and he_{Jan} said that the board still in meeting was
- b. *Jan* stond te praten met Wim en *HIJ/die/deze* zei dat het bestuur nog in vergadering was
 Jan stood to talk to Wim and HE/that/this_{Wim} said that the board still in meeting was

- pronouns can be referentially dependent on an antecedent in two different ways:
 - via **binding**
 - via **coreference**
- ‘sloppy identity’ readings in ellipsis contexts are a good way to tease the two apart

- (29) John thinks that he is smart, and Bill does, too
- a. ‘John thinks that John is smart, and Bill thinks that Bill is smart’ → ‘sloppy’
- b. ‘John thinks that John is smart, and Bill thinks that John is smart’ → ‘strict’

- on the strict reading (29b), *he* stands for the same person (*John* in the case at hand) in each of the two conjuncts — *he* is identified with a referent via coreference, not via binding

[note that *he*, on the strict reading, does not have to be anaphoric to *John*: it can make reference to any male person not identified in the sentence; but importantly, the referent of *he* will be the same in both conjuncts]

- on the sloppy reading (29a), *he* is a **bound variable** that takes the local subject as its antecedent (a different DP in each of the two conjuncts) — *he* is referentially identified with its antecedent via binding, not via coreference
- the ‘strict/sloppy’ ambiguity arises only in environments in which both coreference and binding are allowable options — hence not in cases in which the matrix subject is a quantificational expression (which has no reference, hence pronouns cannot be coreferent with it)

- (30) every Hungarian man thinks that he is smart, and every American man does, too
- a. ‘every *x* thinks that *x* is smart, and every *y* thinks that *y* is smart’ → ‘sloppy’
 - b. *‘every *x* thinks that *x* is smart, and every *y* thinks that *x* is smart’ → *‘strict’

- it has been demonstrated that children, at an early age, have good mastery of anaphoric dependencies involving binding (*every bear is touching her* is reliably rejected with coindexation of *every bear* and *her*) but perform near chance level on coreference (*Mommy bear is touching her* is accepted with coindexation about 40% of the time)
- binding (a grammatical dependency) is easy; coreference (a semantic dependency) is harder
- the neat division of labour between pronouns and reflexive anaphors that we saw in (26) frequently fails due to the lack of morphological distinctions
- thus, while French (33a,b) clearly evinces this division, for first and second person objects only a pronoun is available
- first/second person CLITICS can be locally coreferent in Romance; third person CLITICS cannot

- | | | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|------|--|
| (31) | a. $il_m me_i$ lave
he me washes
‘he washes me’ | (32) | a. $il_m te_j$ lave
he you washes
‘he washes you’ | (33) | a. $il_m le_k/*se_k$ lave
he him/REFL washes
‘he washes him’ |
| | b. $je_i me_i$ lave
I me wash
‘I wash myself’ | | b. $tu_j te_j$ laves
you you wash
‘you wash yourself’ | | b. $il_m se_m/*le_m$ lave
he REFL/him washes
‘he washes himself’ |

- Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002:430–1) point out that, alongside being able to be coreferent with a local antecedent, first and second person object CLITICS in French can also be **bound variables** in cases such as (34) — unlike English first and second person pronouns: (35)

- (34) je pense que la police m’a vu, et Marie le pense aussi (French)
I think that the police me has seen and Marie it thinks also
- a. ‘I think the police saw me, and Marie thinks the police saw me’ → ‘strict’
 - b. ‘I think the police saw me, and Marie thinks the police saw her’ → ‘sloppy’

- (35) I think the police saw me, and Mary does, too