

Abstract

Normally, in order refer to himself/herself, a speaker uses 1 person singular pronominal forms *I, me, my, mine, myself*, and to refer to the addressee, a speaker uses 2 person singular pronominal forms *you, your, yours, yourself*. In this paper, we analyze a class of grammatically 3 person DPs that are used to refer to the speaker or the addressee. Some examples are given below.

- (1) a. At the time, CBS News and *this reporter* fully believed the documents were genuine.
- b. You won't have *Nixon* to kick around any more, because, gentlemen, this is my last press conference.
- c. ...though *yours truly* has tried to present his readers with a diverse variety of viewpoints, some very different from his.
- d. *Your humble servant* finds the time before our next encounter very long.
- e. *This reviewer* was unable to strictly follow the logic of the submission.
- f. *Your faithful correspondent* wishes you the happiest holidays possible.
- g. (*Your*) *daddy* is going to get you an ice cream cone.
- h. Would *madam/the baroness* like more wine?
- i. Can *the general/the judge* tell this committee why so many cases have yet to be processed?

We call such 3 person singular forms *imposters*. See Jespersen (1925) for an insightful discussion of the phenomenon. Even though they denote the speaker or hearer, all of the imposters determine 3 person verb agreement.

- (2) a. This reporter is/*am signing off from Madrid, Spain.
- b. Nixon is/*am not going to resign.
- c. Yours truly is/*am unhappy.
- d. Yours truly runs/*run in the morning.
- e. Is/*are Madam not feeling well?
- f. Is/*are the general going to dine in his suite?

The above data suggest then that imposters are fairly regular instances of the category of 3 person DPs, except for their meanings. This then could naturally lead to the following view as a basic, minimal hypothesis about imposters.

(3) **The Notional Hypothesis**

Imposters are syntactically regular 3 person singular DPs with the lexically determined semantic peculiarity that they denote either the speaker (in the same sense as 1 person singular pronouns do) or the hearer (in the same sense as 2 person singular pronouns do).

We will argue the perhaps surprising point that those imposters interpreted as denoting 1 person are in a clear sense a syntactically 1 person forms, as well as syntactically 3 person forms. Likewise, we argue that those imposters denoting 2 person are in a clear

sense syntactically 2 person forms, as well as syntactically 3 person ones. One piece of evidence for this conclusion comes from sentence such as the following (see Collins, Moody, Postal 2007):

- (4) PRO₁ to cover myself₁ in case of an investigation, yours truly₁/this reporter₁/Daddy₁ is going to keep himself₁ out of the newspapers.

In this sentence, the imposter controls PRO (obligatorily) which in turn is the antecedent for the 1 person singular pronoun *myself*. The imposter itself is the antecedent for the 3 person singular pronoun *himself*. This example shows that imposters such as *yours truly*, *this reporter* and *Daddy* must simultaneously have 1 person features (which determine the shape of the reflexive bound by PRO) and 3 person features (which determine the shape of the reflexive bound by the imposter). As we will discuss at length, the sentence in (4) makes it impossible to maintain the Notional Hypothesis.

We will give much data converging with the control data in (4), including data on coordination, as-for constructions, tag questions, long distance reflexives, Condition B effects, and Condition C effects.

We briefly suggest an informal proposal to account for the documented features. This proposal takes imposter DPs to be complex DPs with a core component being the pronominal DP providing the denotation of the whole. Another component is a 3 person DP providing elements of the surface form and determining subject-verb agreement.

References

Collins, Chris, Simanique Moody and Paul M. Postal. (2008) An AAE Camouflage Construction. *Language* (to appear).

Jespersen, Otto. (1925) *The Philosophy of Grammar*. London. George Allen & Unwin.