

Anaphoric R-Expressions: “Bound” Names as Bound Variables

San Lucas Quiavini Zapotec (SLQZ), an Otomanguean language of southern Mexico, allows apparent Principle B and C violations: R-expressions regularly refer to identical R-expressions, and pronouns to pronouns, in the same clause (1-2). (Object pronouns such as *la'anng* ‘him/her’ in (2) may refer independently (3) and thus are not standard anaphors.)

I will argue that (1-2) do not constitute violations of Principles B and C. Rather, the ‘bound’ arguments in these constructions are neither syntactically nor semantically true R-expressions or pronouns, but are bound variables spelled out as copies of their antecedents. Following Reinhart and Reuland (1991), Lidz (1997), I assume that reflexive predicates are functions mapping a single argument to both argument positions (4).

SLQZ lacks a distinct series of true anaphors (syntactically dependent pronominal elements that cannot refer independently). Thus, it employs another strategy for expressing reflexive relations: it spells out anaphoric arguments as copies of their antecedents.

This proposal is supported by the fact that R-expressions and pronouns used anaphorically behave as bound variables in VP-ellipsis constructions (5-6). Constructions of this type only allow sloppy readings: the second conjunct in (5) can only be interpreted to mean that Felipe looked at himself, not that Felipe looked at Mike. Thus, the bound arguments in the first conjuncts of (5-6) cannot be interpreted referentially, but only as bound variables.

Furthermore, pronouns and R-expressions can only behave anaphorically when bound by identical elements. Pronouns must be bound by pronouns with identical person, number, and proximity features; they cannot be bound by c-commanding R-expressions (7). Nor can R-expressions be bound by pronouns (8) or different R-expressions (9).

The fact that R-expressions and pronouns cannot be locally bound by arguments distinct from themselves suggests that Principles B and C do hold in SLQZ. This is consistent with the idea that the bound objects in (1-2) are variables spelled out as copies of their antecedents, rather than true referential expressions or pronouns, and thus do not constitute violations of Principles B and C.

Thus, the grammaticality of (1—2) cannot be explained as language-specific non-application of Principles B and C, as proposed for other languages allowing apparent Principle C violations (Lasnik 1986). The fact that Principle C does in fact hold in SLQZ is supported by the presence of both strong and weak crossover effects. Because SLQZ has predominant VSO word order and no subject agreement appears on verbs with lexical subjects, fronted argument wh-words may be construed as either subjects or objects (10). On either reading, however, (10) only allows a reading in which the wh-word represents a set of possible candidates distinct from *la'anng* ‘him/her’.

Weak crossover effects are shown in (11). The reflexive possessive marker *-ni* is necessarily bound by a c-commanding antecedent. In (11), the possessed DP *x:nnàaan-ni* ‘his/her own mother’, can only be interpreted as the object, not the subject, of the sentence, and the wh-word can only be grammatically construed as the subject.

1. R-yu'lààa'z Gye'eihlly Gye'eihlly 2. R-yu'lààa'z-ëng la'anng
 hab-like Mike Mike hab-like-3s.prox 3s.prox
 "Mike likes himself" "He/she likes himself/herself"
3. R-yu'lààa'z -ënn la'anng 4. x (P...x...x)
 hab-like-1p 3s.prox.
 "We like him/her"
5. B-gwi'ih Gye'eihlly lohoh Gye'eihlly zë'cy cahgza' Li'eb
 perf-look Mike at Mike likewise Felipe
 "Mike looked at himself, and Felipe did too" (Felipe looked at himself/*Mike")
6. R-yu'lààa'z -ëng la'anng chiru' zë'cy cahgza' Gye'eihlly
 hab-like-3s.prox 3s.prox also likewise Mike
 "He/she likes himself/herself, and Mike does too" (Mike likes himself/*him/*her)
7. R-yu'lààa'z Gye'eihlly_i la'anng_{j/*i}
 hab-like Mike 3s.prox
 "Mike likes him/*himself"
8. B-gwi'ih-ëng_i lohoh Gye'eihlly_{j/*i}
 perf-look-3s.prox at Mike
 "He_i looked at Mike_{j/*i}"
9. R-yu'lààa'z Gye'eihlly_i me's_{j/*i}
 hab-like Mike teacher
 "Mike_i likes the teacher_{j/*i}"
10. Q: Tu r-ralloh la'anng r-yu'lààa'z (t) Li'eb (t)
 Who hab-think 3s.prox. hab-like Felipe
 "Who does he think Felipe likes?/
 'Who does he think likes Felipe?"
- A: Lia Pamm-zhi'
 Ms. Pam-maybe
 "Maybe Pam"
11. Tu r-yu'lààa'z t x:-nnàaan-ni' *t
 who hab-like gen-mother-refl.poss
 "Who like his/her own mother/*Who does his/her own mother like?"