Dream Report Pronouns, Local Binding, and Attitudes De Se

An Asymmetry: Lakoff’s (1972) first discussed how co-referential pronouns may show de se and non-de se uses in dream report contexts (1a). Recently, Percus and Sauerland (2002) demonstrated that the pronouns’ modes of presentation are unambiguous (1b), but only subject to a c-command relation between the two (2b). The two proposals on the market, a superiority approach due to P&S and a centering-theoretic approach due to Hardt (2003), both invoke movement to account for the contrast in (1-2), despite any syntactic evidence. In addition, they suffer empirical shortcomings: the superiority theory overgenerates (even predicting (1a) to be ambiguous), while the centering theory predicts unattested restrictions on the ambiguity in (2). I demonstrate that the correct generalization for the contrast in (1-2) is that all de se pronouns must be de re-free (contra P&S), a fact which I argue follows from local binding (Fox, 2000), once we make it insensitive to the contributions of de se interpretation.

De Re Blocking: P&S see in the above contrast the signature of superiority – specifically, that the de re counterpart intervenes in a probe-goal relation between a head at the root of the CP and the de se counterpart, which must move to the probe to create a licit LF for de se, in line with Chierchia (1989) (3a). Importantly, this proposal derives the constraint that only the highest de se pronoun must be de re free, which should in turn render (1) as ambiguous as (2), given that the de se pronoun in the first conjunct is de re free (3b). Similar examples are straightforward to generate (4-5); the same generalization holds of Yoruba logophors, which Adesola (2005) showed to be sensitive to de re c-commanders (6). The descriptive characterization of the data, which a superiority constraint cannot straightforwardly derive, is the following:

**De Re Blocking Effect**

No de se element can be c-commanded by a de re counterpart.

Truth-Conditional Obviation: Hardt (2003) sees in P&S’s puzzle a commonality with the multiple pronoun puzzle of Dahl (1973) (i.e., John said he saw his mother. Bill did too (say he saw his mother).) Following Centering Theory (Grosz et al., 1995), Hardt proposes that sloppy/de se readings indicate shifting of the center, a referential index C marking the most discourse-prominent individual. De re(strict readings are the product of movement out of the center-shifted domain by an XP containing the pronoun (7). While Hardt’s system correctly derives the De Re Blocking Effect, it introduces movement that shows no additional interpretive effects, e.g. sensitivity to scope-trapping by a quantifier (8a) or NPI-idiom (8b) (here, ellipsis for simplicity). More seriously, it is unclear how this system derives Fox’s (2000) truth-conditional obviating effect for Dahl’s puzzle (9a), a loophole which exists for the De Re Blocking Effect as well (9b).

Proposal: I propose that the De Re Blocking Effect is simply the result of binding competition between the more local de re pronoun and a long-distance de se operator (Chierchia, 1989) (10). However, why should these two binding representations compete, given that they are truth-conditionally distinct? I propose that for binding competition they aren’t truth-conditionally distinct, given that they are counterparts of the same individual in the actual world. Formally, this is captured by evaluating local binding with respect to models where the counterpart relation is a function (11). Assuming generic you is bound by a generic operator, this proposal additionally captures the fact that indexical you and generic you show the contrast in (1-2) (Malamud 2005). Other attitude contexts do not show the De Re Blocking Effect (12), leading one to ask what they have that dream lacks. I propose that the difference lies with impositions the predicates place
on de re ascription relations: *dream* prohibits pronouns in its scope from being read de re via a de se description, an anti-logophoricity property shared with shifted indexicals in Amharic (Schlenker, 2003) and Navajo (Speas, 1999), O-series pronouns in Abe (Koopman and Sportiche, 1989), and pronouns in Romance subjunctive environments (Schlenker 2005). As predicted (unlike a competition story (Schlenker, 2003)), this prohibition occurs even with a split de se/de re quantificational antecedent (13).

(1) a. I dreamt I was Brigitte Bardot and I kissed me. (Lakoff, 1972)
   b. I dreamt {Brigitte kissed me, #I kissed Brigitte}

(2) a. I dreamt I was Brigitte Bardot and my mother was kissing me.
   b. I dreamt {Brigitte’s mother kissed me, my mother kissed Brigitte}

(3) a. I dreamt \[\text{PROBE}_i \text{I} \text{dere} \text{kissed} \text{me}_i\]
   b. I dreamt \[\text{PROBE}_i \text{I}, \text{I} \text{was} \text{B.B.,} \text{I} \text{dere} \text{kissed} \text{me}_i\]

(4) I dreamed that I was Brigitte Bardot and I placed \{#I, my mother\} next to me\(\text{ds}\) at the dinner table.

(5) Going through a messy divorce with an uncooperative politician, I consider smearing her anonymously. That night, I dream that am I my wife, and that I hear rumors about my PR campaign.
   I dreamed that before I could even get to a reporter, \{#I, my contacts\} had already spread all sorts of lies about me\(\text{ds}\) all over the internet.

(6) John believed that his father gave him his book.

(7) I\(\text{C}\) [my\(\text{C}\) mother]\(\text{C}\) dreamt\(\text{x sentenced}\) \(\text{C}\) I\(\text{C}\) was B.B. and t\(\text{3}\) kissed me\(\text{C}\).

(8) a. Mary\(\text{1}\) said that \{every lobbyist\}\(\text{2}\) thought that the article they\(\text{1+2}\) wrote praised her\(\text{1}\) too much. John\(\text{3}\) did too \{say that \{every lobbyist\}\(\text{2}\) thought that the article they\(\text{1+2}\) wrote praised him\(\text{3}\) too much\}.
   b. John\(\text{1}\) doubted that his\(\text{1}\) mother gave him\(\text{1}\) the time of day.
   Bill\(\text{2}\) did too \{doubt that his\(\text{1}\) mother gave him\(\text{2}\) the time of day\}.

(9) a. John believes that only he likes his mother. Bill does too \{believe that only John likes Bill’s mother\}.
   b. John, and two friends compete for Mary’s affection. One night, John dreams he is Mary and that the three boys must guess her favorite color. Only John guesses correctly.
   John dreamed that only he\(\text{dere}\) guessed his\(\text{dese}\) favorite color.

(10) I dreamt \[\text{OP}_i \text{I} \text{was} \text{B.B. and} \text{I} \text{dere} \text{kissed} \text{me}_i\]

(11) Rule H-mod de se: A variable, \(x\), cannot be bound by antecedent, \(\alpha\), in cases where a more local antecedent, \(\beta\), could bind \(x\) and yield the same semantic interpretation within any model \(M \in \Xi\). (after Fox 2000)
   \[M \in \Xi \text{ iff } \forall x, y, z \in D_e \forall w \in D_s [(x L_w y \land x L_w z) \to y = z]\]

(12) John comes late one night, drunk and without his keys. Undeterred, he smashes through a back window and goes up to bed. By the morning, he has forgotten everything, and is shocked to see the window in pieces. Fearing that he is being robbed, he runs upstairs to check his safe.
   John hoped that he\(\text{dere}\) hadn’t yet found his\(\text{dese}\) safe.

(13) John dreams he is George, the new President-elect. Bill dreams that he is a staffer on Bill’s successful Presidential campaign.
   \# [Both John and Bill]\(i\) dreamed that they\(i\) were voted President.