

According to Elbourne (2005), pronouns are interpreted as definite determiners whose complements are elided nouns recovered from the context. So in the discourse *A man walked in. He was wearing a hat*, the pronoun *he* occupies the determiner position in the phrase [_D he [_N man]] which is then interpreted as [_D the [_N man]]. The N-ellipsis analysis of pronouns extends to referential occurrences of pronouns, as well as E-type occurrences. Italian pronominal clitics (PCs) seem to fit nicely into this picture: just like English pronouns, a paraphrase with a definite description correctly captures the intuitive meaning of referential and E-type occurrences of PCs in (1-a) and (1-b). PCs are bold-faced throughout.

- (1) a. Ho conosciuto uno scrittore. **L'**ho invitato a cena.
I met a writer. I invited **him** to dinner.
b. Ogni scrittore che scrive un libro, **lo** pubblicizza sul suo sito web.
Every writer who writes a book advertizes **it** on his website.

However, Italian PCs raise a challenge for Elbourne's proposal: in addition to the definite interpretation predicted by Elbourne, Italian PCs can be interpreted as *indefinite pronouns*.

- (2) a. Vuoi *un maglione rosso* per Natale? (i) No, ce l'ho già. (ii) Sì, anche se ce l'ho già.
Would you like *a red sweater* for Christmas? (i) No, I already have **one/*it** (ii) Yes, even though I already have **one/*it**.
b. Il nostro vicino ha comprato a sua figlia *una bicicletta a strisce bianche e nere con il telaio superleggero*. Se fai il bravo, te **la** compro anch'io.
Our neighbor bought his daughter *a black and white bicycle with a superlight frame*. If you are good, I'll buy **one/*it** for you too.

The answer in (2-a) and (2-b) can be paraphrased as “no, I already have a red sweater” and “if you're good, I will buy you a black and white bike with a superlight frame”, respectively. As the English translations show, the use of a pronoun in English is incompatible with these indefinite readings. Interestingly, Italian PCs have the same range of interpretations as null objects (*pro*) in Japanese.

- (3) Ken-wa kuruma-o kat-ta Erika-mo pro kat-tta. / ken-top car-acc buy-perf Erika-also pro buy-perf / Ken bought a car. Erika bought (a car), too. (Tomioka (2003))

According to Tomioka, Japanese null objects are cases of bare NP anaphora, where the NP *pro* denotes a predicate that can be closed off by two independently needed operations, *Iota* (type-shifting a predicate to an individual) and \exists -closure, giving rise to the referential and indefinite interpretations respectively. If this were true of Italian PCs, it would follow that for (at least) some pronouns Elbourne's semantics does not work as they cannot be analyzed as definite determiners. A piece of evidence one might bring to support the predicate anaphora story is that Italian clitics can be used to refer to predicates introduced in previous discourse, as shown in this example where *lo* is interpreted as the predicate “sick”.

- (4) Gianni è malato e **lo** è anche Maria. /G is sick and **it** is also M /G is sick and M is too.

If this were correct, we would expect languages with PCs, and where clitics can be used for predicate anaphora, to allow indefinite definite readings. French, however, is a counterexample: it allows predicate anaphora ((5)), but it does not allow indefinite readings of PCs ((6)).

- (5) Marie est malade et Ann l'est aussi. / M is sick and A **it**-is also / M is sick and A is too.
(6) (Answering the question in (2-a):)
a. Non, je l'ai déjà. / No, I **it**-have-I already / No, I already have one/*it.

The French facts and the contrast with Italian are puzzling for a story along the lines of Tomioka's proposal for Japanese null objects.

I propose that PCs are always definites: they realize definite articles in determiner phrases

where the nominal element is elided (covert). The reason why Italian but not French PCs allow existential interpretations is that Italian, but not French, allows *indefinite definites* in general: familiar kinds of definite noun phrases in Italian can receive an indefinite interpretation (with some constraints) (Zamparelli (2002)). However, this is not possible in French nor English. The relevant definites are bold-faced.

- (7) Ho comprato **il vino**. / I-have bought **the wine** / OK: I bought (some) wine.
(8) *J'ai acheté **le vin**. / I-have bought **the wine** / intended reading: I bought some wine.
(9) Con questo inquinamento, ammiro i giovani che si fanno regalare **la bicicletta** (invece del motorino). With this pollution, I admire those young people who ask for a bike (lit: **the bike**) (instead of a scooter).

Assuming as we have that PCs are definites, the generalization that emerges is that indefinite interpretations for PCs are available in a language L when L allows indefinite definites more generally. How are indefinite definites interpreted? The definite determiner *il/la* is Chierchia's operator \cap which maps properties into individuals: the individuals that \cap maps properties into are restricted to CONCEPTS in the sense of Krifka (1995). Just like kinds, concepts are abstract entities related to real objects. Kinds are a subset of concepts: in additions to kinds, concepts also include abstract entities that are not well-established. The reason why we need concepts and not merely kinds is that, as (2-b) shows, the antecedent of a PC does not need to be a noun corresponding to a well-established kind and can be modified in various ways. Now, the definite DP *il vino*, "the wine", will denote the concept WINE, i.e. \cap wine. To get the indefinite definite reading in (7), we're going to use an operation akin to Chierchia (1998)'s Derived Kind Predication (DKP), existentially quantifying over realizations of a concept (by means of the operation \cup which type-shifts a concept to the property of being an instance of that concept), so that (7) will be interpreted as follows:

$$(10) \quad \exists x[\cup[il_{the} vino_{wine}](x) \wedge bought(x)(I)] = \exists x[\cup\cap vino_{wine}(x) \wedge bought(x)(I)]$$

Going back to (2-a), the clitic **lo** is interpreted as the definite article and, once ellipsis is resolved, as the phrase [*il_{the} [maglione_{sweater} rosso_{red}]*] referring to the concept RED SWEATER (\cap sweater). Since we have an object-level predicate in the sentence (*have*), the mismatch is resolved by the DKP. The meaning of (2-a) is shown in (11) (ignoring irrelevant details).

$$(11) \quad \exists x[\cup[il_{the} maglione_{sweater} rosso_{red}](x) \wedge have(x)(I)] = \\ \exists x[\cup\cap maglione_{sweater} rosso_{red}(x) \wedge have(x)(I)]$$

The conclusion is that Italian PCs are always definites and their indefinite readings are part of the larger phenomenon of *indefinite definites* in the language, which I propose should be analyzed by using kind/concept semantics as sketched above, following the Neo-Carlsonian semantics in Chierchia (1998), Krifka (1995), a.o. Finally, I will discuss how the distinction discussed by Schwarz (2012) between strong and weak determiners might be relevant to understanding the phenomenon of indefinite pronouns and indefinite definites cross-linguistically: in (at least) cases like (12-b) below, the definite article in Italian seems to patterns like the definite in German which Schwarz argues to be non-anaphoric.

- (12) a. Maria hat einene Ornithologen ins Seminar eingelanden. Ich halte #**vom**_{weak} / von **dem**_{strong} Mann nicht sehr viel. / Maria has invited an ornithologist to the seminar. I don't think very highly of **the man**.
b. Maria ha invitato un ornitologo al seminario. #Non ho una grande stima **dell'uomo** (ok: di quell'uomo). / Maria has invited an ornithologist to the seminar. I don't have much respect for **the man** (/.... of that man).

We will also explore the similarities and differences between the phenomenon of indefinite pronouns and the phenomenon of "weak definites" in English which have been argued to be restricted to well-established kinds only (Aguilar-Guevara & Zwarts (2010), Carlson & Sussman (2005), Schwarz (2012)).