Reanalysis in Pronouns

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Introduction

This paper will discuss pronominal reanalysis in English and other languages, including Japanese. It forms part of a series of working papers on personal pronouns: Howe（2010a）, a preliminary comparison of personal pronouns in English and Japanese, Howe（2009a）on pronoun morphology, Howe（2010b）on new pronouns and loss of pronouns, Howe（2011）on pronouns and politeness, and Howe（forthcoming a）on reference and ellipsis.

As discussed in Howe（1995 and 1996）, reanalysis[1] is a major feature of change in the personal pronouns in English and other Germanic languages. One example here as illustration are the English 3rd person singular gender forms: English no longer has a grammatical masc.–fem.–neuter distinction － the personal pronouns *he–she–it* are reflexes of this, but their use is governed by different（natural rather than grammatical gender）criteria. Here we will focus on 'permanent' reanalysis, i.e. where a pronoun becomes conventionalised in its new use, and not merely ad hoc variation on the core meaning or point of reference of the pronoun, such as the medical *How are we today?* This distinction is not always clear–cut, however － contrast in English for example the

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[1] In Howe（1995 and 1996）termed functional reinterpretation.

common colloquial use of *us* as singular in requests, such as *Do us a favour, Lend us a tenner, Give us a kiss*, and the more general use of *us* as singular in the northeast of England.

Reanalysis can be phonological, grammatical or semantic, and can be grouped under a number of types. Phonological reanalysis in sandhi is discussed in Howe (2010b) and (forthcoming b) and will not be examined further here. Note that reanalysis does not necessarily mean loss of the original meaning, and further that reanalysis can be according to more than one category/ property, such as person and number. Some reanalysis involves the use of redundant forms to make a distinction. This will be discussed at various points in the paper. Lass (1990) terms the use of redundant ('junk') forms *exaptation* ; Greenberg (see Croft 1990 : 236) uses the term *regrammaticization*. For a suggestion of this kind of process in children's pronoun acquisition, see Chiat (1986 : 391f. & 399). For a recent study including reanalysis in a broader, usage–based theory, see Bybee (2010).

Types of reanalysis in pronouns will be discussed below, beginning with an examination of Japanese.

Pronominalisation and reanalysis

As discussed in Howe (2010b), Japanese shows reanalysis of both titles and directional deictics as personal pronouns, see Table 1, repeated here for reference. Shibatani (1990 : 371 − 272) states that etymologically most of the Japanese pronouns derive 'from regular nouns', citing *watakusi* from 'private (thing)'', *kimi* from 'emperor' and *anata* from 'yonder'. Smith (1983 : 78) writes that most Japanese 'personal referents' were words that originally denoted place or direction, or were titles. On the directional deictics, Suzuki

（1978 : 12）states that 'These demonstratives were … diverted to a suggestive and euphemistic use to indicate indirectly persons in those places or directions.'

Table 1 : Etymologies of selected Japanese pronouns（see Howe 2010b for references）

watakusi 'I'	'private or personal' or 'private（thing)'
boku 'I'	'（your）servant'
kimi 'you'	'lord' or 'emperor'
kisama 'you'	'noble person'

anata 'you'	'that direction' or 'yonder'
omae 'you'	'front'
kare 'he'	'that/one over there'
kanozyo 'she'	'distal‒adnomial‒female'

Takeuchi（1999 : 66）writes that 'Although Japanese during much of its history has done without paradigms of uniquely defined personal pronouns, it should not be overlooked that there exists a recurrent derivative pattern in the language for directional deictic expressions to assume personal reference.' For 3rd person reference, she states（1999 : 69）that *kare* 'he' derives from the premodern distal deictic 'that/one over there' and *kanozyo* 'she' from *ka‒no‒zyo* 'distal‒adnomial‒female'. Takeuchi adds（1999 : 66－67）'on reflection it seems semantically very appropriate that a language with the kind of fluctuating social

deixis as Japanese, should extend the directional series with its inherent cline "more or less close–distant" … in this way'.

Titles share a similarity with personal pronouns in that they designate not the individual as such but a *role* (or rank — relatively high or low — with social deixis). This role or rank reference may be one reason why we commonly find titles as more deferential pronoun substitutes and in some cases, as shown in Table 2, pronominalisation of titles.

In Japanese, as discussed in Howe (2009a) and (2010a), there are several contracted forms of the 1st person 'watakusi' (cited in Makino and Tsutsui 1986/1989 : 28 – 29), which suggests frequency of use and to some extent grammaticalisation from a title to a pronoun.[2]

Table 2 : Pronominalisation in Japanese

watakusi	very formal
atakusi	formal, female
watasi	formal
atasi	informal, female
wasi	informal, older male
assi	very informal, adult male, Tokyo Bay
atai	very informal/vulgar, female

[2] For Early Middle Japanese, Frellesvig (2010 : 246) lists *watakusi* as a 3rd person form, cf. also Vovin (2003 : 97 & 105–106). By Late Middle Japanese, it is listed as a 1st person form (Frellesvig 2010 : 353). I have no further information at present ; however, this could also suggest some kind of reanalysis.

　　As the Japanese examples also show, use of titles is not limited to forms of address. Head（1978 : 187）points out that a 'widespread means of showing respect to an addressee is to humble oneself in self–reference' by the use of terms such as 'slave' or 'servant'. He cites this process in Persian, Khmer, Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, Thai, Burmese and Vietnamese.

　　In English, as discussed in earlier papers, we find this type of grammaticalisation in pronouns only in the lexical plurals 'all' in Southern American English *y'all* and 'ones' in nonstandard regional *you–uns*（*yunz, yinz*）.

Person reanalysis

Use of a 2nd person pronoun to refer to someone other than the addressee is found in English generic 'you', as in

　　You shouldn't drink and drive

　　You should always tell the truth

　　As discussed in Howe（1996）, －accented *you*（and *we*）in English can refer definitely or indefinitely, while accented *YOU*（and *WE*）refer specifically and cannot have general, indefinite reference :

　　YOU shouldn't drink and drive

　　YOU should always tell the truth

　　Your country needs **YOU**

An explanation for such differences is that strength of reference is a function of accent（and vice versa for the speaker） － the more strongly accented, the

stronger and thus more specific the reference. This will be taken up again in Howe (forthcoming a) on reference and ellipsis in English and Japanese.

Person will be discussed further below in sociodeictic reanalysis.

Gender reanalysis

An example of gender reanalysis already mentioned is reanalysis of grammatical gender 3rd person forms according to natural gender, as in English 'he', 'she' and 'it'. In this development, selection of the gender pronoun becomes increasingly governed by the gender of the real–world referent rather than the grammatical gender of the antecedent. This development － attested to varying extents in English and other Germanic languages － contradicts the hypothesis of unidirectionality proposed in grammaticalisation theory (e.g. Hopper & Traugott 1993, chapter 5).

In Japanese, the contracted 1st person form *atasi* (＜ *watakusi* 'private or personal' or 'private (thing)') has been reanalysed as a feminine form. *Atasi* is thus not simply a reduced form, but a gender–marked one. Gender in 1st person person forms is very uncommon globally (see Siewierska 2004 : 104 － 5). As Siewierska points out, gender marking of the 1st (and in Siewierska's view 2nd) person is communicatively redundant as the gender of the speaker is typically clear. Its origins in Japanese is thus likely stylistic rather than deictic.

Number reanalysis

Plural forms as singular

The common colloquial use of the 1st person plural *us* as singular in requests in English has already been mentioned above. The more formalised use of plu-

ral pronouns as singular V[3] forms of address in many languages, including earlier English *ye/you*, will be discussed further below in sociodeictic reanalysis.

English singular they

A further example of number reanalysis in English pronouns is the 3rd person plural *they–them–theirs, their* as sex–indefinite singular forms（cf. Quirk et al. 1985 : 342）:

> Ask a friend if **they** can help.
>
> Can you see that person in the distance? No, I can't see **them**.
>
> Not every drug addict can solve **their** problem so easily.

This use of the 3rd p. plural as singular, though criticised by some, is attested in English since the fourteenth century（see OED 'their'）.

Dual forms as plural

Many of the Germanic languages show to some extent reanalysis of dual pronouns as plural forms, for example :[4]

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[3] As discussed in earlier papers, the terms T and V, coined by Brown and Gilman in their 1960 paper 'The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity', are often used as abbreviations for socially differentiated forms of address. However, these abbreviations, from Latin *tu* and *vos*, are not satisfactory, as 3rd person forms（such as German 3rd p. plural *Sie*）also occur as forms of address. Similarly, the 1st person *pluralis majestatis* is not accurately labelled 'V'. And, of course, examination of Japanese – and indeed close examination of English – also shows these terms to be inadequate : it is not only in address that T/V– like criteria are relevant.

[4] For a fuller range of forms and variants, see Howe（1996）.

Table 3 : Dual pronouns as plural forms in Germanic languages

Icelandic			
1st p. plural	við	okkur	okkar
2nd p. plural	þið	ykkur	ykkar

Faroese			
1st p. plural	vit	okkum	okkara
2nd p. plural	tit	tykkum	tykkara

Norwegian (some varieties)			
1st p. plural	[5]	okko (n)	okka (s)
2nd p. plural	[5]	dykk	dykkar

Swedish (comparatively rare)			
1st p. plural	wið		
2nd p. plural	ið	ikk	ikkä

Low German (some varieties)		
2nd p. plural	(g)it	ink

High German (some varieties)		
2nd p. plural	es	enk/eng

Yiddish (some varieties)		
2nd p. plural	ets	enk	enker

Reasons for the loss of the dual number in English and the other Germanic languages are not discussed here. What is of concern here is, given a loss of the dual number, what was the development of the dual *forms* － i.e. why, with the loss of the dual number, should dual pronoun forms survive in a number of the Germanic languages?

Explanations for the retention of dual forms after the loss of the dual number can be divided into two types. One, as put forward in the study by Guðmundsson（1972）for Icelandic, but also applied to some of the other Germanic languages, sees as the central factor honorific usage of the 1st and 2nd p. plural pronouns, with the dual forms replacing the old plurals as unambiguous plural forms. The other explanation, for example Seip/Saltveit（1971）for Norwegian, Kranzmayer（1954）for Bavarian German and Shirmunski（1962）for Low German, suggests that dual forms replaced the original plurals because of phonological reduction and/or formal ambiguity of the plural pronoun（s）.

In Icelandic, the etymologically plural forms, used as honorifics, can occur in all numbers. They have, as Guðmundsson（1972 : 97）points out, an ill-defined number meaning. Guðmundsson（1972 : 98）states : 'Under pressure from the increased honorific usage in the 2nd person the necessity arose to get an unequivocally defined plural. For this reason the 2nd-person dual pronouns gradually acquired a plural meaning, followed shortly afterwards by the 1st-per-

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[5] In Modern Norwegian, because of the loss of final consonants, it is not certain whether 1st and 2nd p. plural subj. forms such as *me*,（*vi*）, *de*, *di* derive from originally dual and/or originally plural forms. The same also applies to some of the subj. forms in Swedish dialects with originally dual oblique pronouns. Only few Norwegian areas have unambiguously originally dual subj. forms（*mid*, *did*）. It cannot be automatically assumed that originally dual obj. and gen./poss. pronouns prove the dual origin of a subj. form in a particular dialect – Norwegian, Icelandic, Faroese and Swedish all to some extent record mixed paradigms of dual and plural forms. See further Howe（1996 : 320–321）for references.

son pronouns, mainly by analogy.' These changes should also be seen in the context of the 'precarious' position of the dual number in the language. For many Icelanders, there is no longer an honorific–ordinary distinction : the plural forms are thus no longer used and their system is singular and (originally dual forms as) plural.

In German, Kranzmayer (1954 : 252ff.) explains the retention of the 2nd person dual forms in Bavarian dialects as a reaction against homonymy in the personal pronouns. He states that the 2nd p. plural nom. and the 3rd p. sing. masc. nom. pronouns merged when unstressed, so that the same form could mean for example either 'macht er' or 'macht ihr'. In *Binnenbairisch* the dual form 'ess' replaced 'ihr' as 2nd p. plural nominative to differentiate the 2nd p. plural nom. from the 3rd p. sing. masc. nom. In the most phonologically conservative dialects on the fringes of the Bavarian speech area, however, 'ihr' still remained separate from 'er' even when unstressed, and here the 2nd p. plural pronoun 'ihr' remained the plural form.

To summarise, although we have two different explanations for the retention of dual forms, their common denominator is that the (2nd p.) dual forms were used to make a distinction that the plural forms could no longer adequately make, and it is here that the key to their retention may in many cases be found, i.e. reanalysis as unambiguous plural forms. As stated above for Icelandic, this reanalysis of dual forms as plurals should also be viewed in the context of the 'precarious' position of the dual number in the recorded stages of most of the Germanic languages.

These developments can be compared with examples of case form reanalysis where, in the context of decreased importance of morphological subj.–obj. (or nom.–acc.–dat.) case distinction, oblique pronouns — for example Swedish

dom 'them' as 'they' ― are used as subj. forms to create a clear person/number distinction. Case reanalysis will be discussed below.

Case reanalysis

If a grammatical category/property–based distinction is lost in noun phrases, the evidence from the Germanic languages indicates that the distinction is also（eventually）lost in the personal pronouns. A distinction is drawn here between 'grammatical' and 'natural' categories in the same sense as grammatical and natural gender. Categories/properties can be grammatical and/or natural based on real–world entities. Examples of grammatical categories in the personal pronouns in the Germanic languages are（nominative, accusative, dative, genitive）case, or（masculine, feminine, neuter）grammatical gender. Examples of real world–based categories are for instance person, natural gender and T/V.

Personal pronouns cannot indefinitely uphold a grammatical category/property–based distinction alone, and the loss in noun phrases means that the personal pronouns are left with a grammatical category/property–based distinction that has little or no noun phrase parallel. It is in this context that the reanalyses of case forms discussed here can take place. Three examples from English are given below :

3rd p. sing. masc. him	dat. > acc./dat.
3rd p. sing. neuter it	nom./acc. > nom./acc./dat.
2nd p. you	acc./dat. > nom./acc./dat.

As already mentioned in discussion of the dual, a number of the Germanic languages show case reanalysis where an oblique pronoun is used as a distinct

subject form where the original subj. pronoun was ambiguous, for example (see Howe 1996 : 78 for further discussion) :

Swedish and Norwegian 3rd p. plural	dom, dem etc.
Norwegian 2nd person	dere and døkk etc.
Partly West Frisian 2nd person	jo
Possibly Dutch 3rd p. plural	hun, hullie, hulder

Case levelling in pronouns is often complex and is discussed further below under Accent.

Accent reanalysis

Case forms as accent forms

Loss of case pronouns, in Germanic languages at least, is often not simply loss of a form, but reanalysis according to accent. This is the case for much accusative–dative levelling in the personal pronouns in the Germanic languages, and stress–governed subj.–obj. usage is recorded fairly widely in English dialects. In these developments, the original case distinction of the pronouns is lost or obsolescent, and the pronominal case forms are reanalysed as +accent and –accent. This also means that such accent variants are then not simply phonologically reduced or emphatic versions of one another but etymologically case forms.

Detailed examination of the personal pronouns in those Germanic languages that underwent case levelling reveals that it is frequently very much a simplification to speak of levelling to the dative or of levelling to the accusative for instance. Furthermore, there is generally not a simple or straightforward

correspondence of direction of levelling with case, person or number. As an example we may take the 3rd person accusative and dative pronouns : what is revealed time and again in much of the accusative–dative levelling is not a straightforward generalisation of（for example）the dative form and loss of the accusative form. Rather, much of the levelling can be better accounted for as reanalysis of the case forms according to accent. This type of development is also found to some extent in accusative–dative levelling in the 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns. And, as mentioned above, it is found in subjective–objective levelling － on English dialectal stress–governed subj.–obj. usage, see Howe（1996 : 6.6.3）and below.

　　For example in the 3rd person singular masc., although most of the Germanic standard languages that underwent accusative–dative levelling have as objective pronoun the originally dative form, e.g. English *him*, West Frisian *him*, Dutch *hem*, Swedish *honom*, Danish *ham*, what is frequently overlooked is that retention of the originally accusative form as an unaccented pronoun is widespread, see Howe（1996 : 113）for references to English, Frisian, Dutch, German, Swedish and Danish. Similarly, in the 3rd person singular fem., in both West Germanic and Continental Scandinavian, languages and dialects that show levelling most usually generalised the original dative, at least as an accented form, but originally accusative forms frequently occur as unaccented pronouns. As in the masculine singular, the standard languages generally have the originally dative as objective pronoun, e.g. English *her*, West Frisian *har*, Dutch *haar*, Swedish *henne*, Danish *hende*, Norwegian Bokmål *henne*, but originally accusative unaccented forms also occur in some as standard and in nonstandard and dialect, e.g. West Frisian *se*, East Frisian *ze*, North Frisian（*e*）*s*, Dutch *ze*, Swedish *–na* and Norwegian *a*（see Table 4）.

The importance of examining the personal pronouns in connected speech has already been stressed in Howe (1996), and here we see one example of the significance of the accent variation of the personal pronouns in English and other Germanic languages and types of pronominal change. These complex developments illustrate the potential pitfalls of superficial examination of linguistic data, particularly analysis based on the standard language or written form only.

Table 4 : Example reanalysis of case forms according to accent in Germanic languages (3rd person sing. fem. originally accusative and dative)[6]

Frisian		
har	+accent	< dative
se, ze, (e)s	−accent	< accusative

Dutch		
haar	+accent	< dative
ze	−accent	< accusative

Swedish		
henne	+accent	< dative
−na	−accent	< accusative

Norwegian		
henne	+accent	< dative
a	−accent	< accusative

With the reanalysis there may be subsequent generalisation of one or other of the forms, for example generalisation of the +accented form also as a –accented pronoun, though generalisation of the unaccented form can also occur. For instance in English, Wright in his *English Dialect Grammar*（1905 : 272）records the 3rd p. sing. masc. obj. form［ən］as the regular unaccented form in much of southern England : in Leicestershire, Herefordshire, Pembrokeshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. The *Linguistic Atlas of England*, from a survey about half a century later, maps *en* in a（somewhat）smaller area, suggesting that subsequent speakers in some areas（as well as standard speakers）generalised the originally dative *him*［hɪm, ɪm］in all positions. In such generalisation of one or other of the forms, it is usually the +accent form rather than the unaccented form that is supported by writing/ literary tradition and standard usage though, as pointed out, the retention of unaccented forms in nonstandard and dialect speech is comparatively widespread in the Germanic languages.

A further parallel is English dialectal subj.–obj. usage. In the Midlands and the Southwest it is possible for the personal pronouns to reverse their historical roles as subject and object, being governed instead by stress, with the objective form used for the subject when the pronoun is unemphatic, and the subjective form used as the emphatic form of the object（Wakelin 1972 : 114f.）. Trudgill（1990 : 89 − 93）also notes similar usage in traditional Essex dialect. For discussion of 'I', 'we', 'thou', 'he', 'she' and 'them', see Howe（1996 : 175 −

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[6] This is a simplified table – as stated in the text, in accusative–dative levelling the dative did not always become the +accent form and the accusative the –accent form – see further Howe（1996, chapter 3）.

177). It appears from Wright (1905 : 271) that this usage, too, was more wide-spread in dialect at around the turn of the century than is recorded in the *Survey of English Dialects* some fifty or sixty years later. Wright states that objective forms are often used as unemphatic subjects especially in the south Midland, Eastern, Southern and Southwestern counties, and conversely in all dialects of these areas the subject pronoun is used as the emphatic form of the object. Although the use of these forms is in some cases complex and the usage is not uniform across all dialects, this can to some extent be described as reanalysis of the subjective and objective forms according to accent, i.e. the subjective and objective pronouns are reinterpreted as + and – accent forms respectively.

In the 2nd person it is possible that to some extent *you* and *ye*, originally obj. and subj. forms respectively, were reinterpreted as + and – accent forms. This seems to be supported by Spies' statement (1897 : 103) that *ye* was usually avoided in stressed position and replaced by *you*. In addition, Bourcier (1978 : 202) states that in Shakespeare and Milton *ye* is often found in unemphatic position. For further discussion of *ye–you*, see Howe (1996 : 166 – 169).

As noted elsewhere in this paper, the historical distinction of subject versus object case no longer adequately accounts for the usage of the personal pronouns in Present English and, as shown by subj.–obj. unspecific *you* and the significance of syntactic position discussed below, subj.–obj. distinctions in the personal pronouns are a redundant feature for case. In the developments discussed here, the original case function of the pronouns is lost or obsolescent, and the pronoun forms are reanalysed according to accent. This development also contradicts the hypothesis of unidirectionality proposed in grammaticalisation theory.

For further examples of reanalysis of case pronouns as accent forms in the Germanic languages, see the following sections in Howe（1996）: English 6.2.7, 6.6.1, 6.6.3, Frisian 7.2.3, 7.6.1, Dutch 8.1.8, German 11.6.3, Swedish 14.1.2, Danish 15.1.2 and Norwegian 16.1.6.

Syntactic reanalysis

Personal pronouns can also be reanalysed syntactically（cf. Howe 1996 : 98 － 100）. Although English has, for many（but not all）of the personal pronouns, separate subjective, objective and genitive/possessive forms, the morphological subjective and objective case distinction in the pronouns is a reflex of a grammatical property distinction lost in noun phrases. As pointed out above and discussed in Howe（1996）and（2009a）, personal pronouns eventually lose grammatical categories/properties lost in noun phrases. The former accusative and dative distinction has already been lost in the pronouns（see above and Howe 1996, chapter 3）, and the subjective and objective forms show reanalysis. Syntactic reanalysis is outlined briefly below, together with examples from other Germanic languages :

Objective forms become increasingly excluded from preverbal position ; the nominative form becomes increasingly obligatory preverbally（in inversion postverbally）.

Passive constructions

Icelandic　　　　　　　　**Mér** var gefin bókin af Jóni

German　　　　　　　　　**Ihm** wurde von jemand ein Buch gegeben

Present English　　　　　**He** was given a book by Junko

Impersonal constructions

Icelandic	**mér** er kalt
German	**mir** ist kalt
English, Chaucer	**me** were levere
	hym oghte

The nominative form becomes increasingly restricted to preverbal position
(in inversion postverbal) in finite clauses; the objective form is increas-
ingly generalised in other positions[7]

Present English

It's **me**

I can't stand heights, **me**

I hate doing homework. **Me** too

She's older than **him**

Us girls can always take a joke

Me and Junko are going to the pictures

Danish

Det er **mig**

Du er større end **mig**

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[7] Note that in examples such as *Him I really can't stand* the nominative form is still
(relatively) preverbal. Note further that even in quite formal English comparatively wide-
spread hypercorrection such as *from Peter and I* etc. also indicates a disparity between
(perceived) prescribed use and the natural use of many speakers, though analysis of *x
and I* as a polite sequence is also possible (Quirk et al. 1985 : 338).

Jeg er lige så god som **ham**

Low German

ick bün **dat**（Schleswig–Holstein）is usual,

but dat is **mi** also occurs

These developments － the first is of course a continuation of the second － represent a major drift in English and other Germanic languages, carried through most in for example English and least in Icelandic, Faroese and German.

The result in much of Present English is that the choice of subjective or objective pronoun is governed not primarily by the original case distinction but by syntactic position and, as formal expressions of subject and object case, the subjective and objective forms of the personal pronouns － as *you* shows － are no longer real integral parts of the system of subject–object distinction. We are therefore seeing here a gradual change in the originally nominative pronouns from independent person marker to affix, from 'a referential expression with deictic or anaphoric force to a syntactic agreement marker'（Siewierska 2004 : 261ff.）, and generalisation of the originally objective pronouns in other positions. Compare also some parallels in pronoun usage in French, for example :

French

Moi, **je** suis anglais

Je ne **l'**ai pas vu, **moi**

Toi, **je te** connais

Tu l'as vu, **toi** ?

For a review of possible explanations for similar changes in other languages, see Siewierska (ibid.).

Sociodeictic reanalysis

A final and important type of reanalysis in pronouns is sociodeictic, i.e. reanalysis of a pronoun or pronouns to connote superior or inferior status, power or solidarity, social distance or familiarity etc. There are numerous examples of this type of reanalysis in pronouns in European languages, and indeed in languages worldwide. According to Head (1978), variation of pronominal categories (and of types of pronouns) to show degrees of respect or social distance is more common in address than in reference to the other participants in discourse. In this type of reanalysis, pronouns may also retain their original use. As discussed in Howe (2011), we also find derogation or loss in status of some forms of reference, such as German *Er* and Japanese *kisama*.

Reanalysis of number to convey social meaning

In a study of over a hundred languages, Head (1978 : 156) states that 'Variation of number to show degrees of respect or social distance is found in pronominal reference to each of the three participant roles in discourse : the speaker, the addressee, and the one spoken about.' He concludes :

1. Variation of number is the most widespread process for showing degrees of respect or social distance
2. When variation of number is used in reference to convey social meaning, *the non-singular typically indicates greater respect or social distance than the singular in any person in which both are used in reference to in-*

dividuals（emphasis S.H.）

The most common pronoun to show variation of number is the 2nd person. Head（1978 : 157）reports this for at least 75 languages of his sample, including Amharic, Arabic, Basque, Bengali, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, Hindi, Icelandic, Indonesian, Kannada, Latin, Malagasy, Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Mande, Russian, Sanskrit, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu and Yoruba. Here we could of course also add English, with earlier reanalysis of the plural *ye/you* as V and the singular *thou* as T.

　　As noted, in almost all of the languages with number variation to convey social meaning in Head's sample, the non-singular conveys greater respect or social distance than the singular（1978 : 158－9）. Head concludes : 'In view of its genetic and geographic range, the list suggests that this semantic process － use of the non-singular for polite address of an individual － is neither a characteristic of particular groups or families of languages nor limited to a single area of the world … it appears to be a universal tendency'. The term 'universal' needs to be qualified here, as some languages lack a number distinction in pronouns（see e.g. Siewierska 2004 : 79 on Greenberg）. What is likely universal is that less direct means more polite, and that in pronouns in many languages this is often realised by use of the non-singular.

　　Variation of number to show different degrees of respect or social distance is also found in some languages in 3rd person pronominal reference, i.e. to someone other than the speaker or addressee, for example Amharic, Bengali, Kannada, Malagasy, Malay, Marathi, Persian, Shona, Tamil, Tulu and Yoruba （Head 1978 : 162f.）. Here, as in the 2nd person, the non-singular typically shows greater respect or social distance. As Head points out for 2nd person

reference, in the 3rd person, although less common, 'the genetic and geographic range of the languages in which this process of conveying social meaning is found is sufficiently great to indicate that it is not to be accounted for by some specific motivation in each language community in which it occurs, nor by particular circumstances in one language or another'.

For the 1st person, Head (1978: 163−4) states that the royal 'we' (or *pluralis majestatis*) is found at one time or another 'in most, if not all, languages of Western Europe'. In addition to Indo-European languages such as Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and others, Head reports use of the 1st person plural for self-reference in a wider range of languages including Amharic, Arabic, Haida, Kannada, Navaho, Tagalog and Turkish. In all these languages, though there are also exceptions, use of the non-singular for self-reference implies greater respect due to the speaker or greater social distance between the speaker and others (Head 1978: 165).

Reanalysis of person to convey social meaning

Based on his sample of over a hundred languages, Head (1978) states :

1. Variation of the categories of person to show degrees of respect or social distance in address typically co-occurs with variation of number for the same purpose

2. Alternation of person indicates greater differences in degree of respect or social distance than does alternation of number, while alternation of both categories shows greater difference in social meaning than does change of only one of them

Head（1978: 167）states that variation of person in reference 'appears to be most common in address, but it is also found in reference to the speaker or to someone other than the addressee or the speaker. Moreover, use of the third person for either the addressee or the speaker also appears to be more common than use of either the first person for reference excluding the speaker, or the second for someone other than the addressee.'

As discussed in Howe（2011）, 3rd person pronouns are used as 2nd person forms of address in German, for example:

Sprechen **Sie** Deutsch?

Speak–PRES : 3PL they German?

Do you speak German

Wie geht es **Ihnen**? Gut, danke. Und **Ihnen**?

How goes it them–DAT? Good, thanks. And them–DAT?

How are you? Fine, thanks. And you?

Haben **Sie Ihren** Koffer schon gepackt?

Have–PRES : 3PL they their suitcase already packed?

Have you packed your suitcase yet?

The current use in German of the 3rd person plural pronoun *Sie*（and earlier the singular *Er*）as a V form of address derives from title use. From the seventeenth century the 3rd person pronouns（*Er* and *sie*）were used, initially with titles such as *Herr* 'Sir' and *Frau* 'Madam' and then also independently. Subsequently, the 3rd person plural pronoun *Sie*（equivalent to English 'they'）be-

came the more polite or V form of address. This usage also spread to Danish and Norwegian （Bokmål） with the 3rd person plural *De*.

As pointed out in Howe （2011）, we can find ad hoc examples of 3rd person address in English, in UK parliamentary debate, for instance in the following examples from 2010 :[8]

'Will **the Deputy Prime Minister** now give an undertaking to the House that **he** will intervene …'

'Does **my right honourable friend** recognise that … Does **he** also recognise the importance that …'

And a century or so ago in English, in the dialects of the north, in Lancashire, Cheshire and in Suffolk *he* was often used for 'you'. In Suffolk it was used 'when the speaker wishes to be particularly respectful' ; conversely, in Cheshire it was sometimes used by a superior to an inferior, and in the West Riding of Yorkshire it was only used when addressing children （Wright 1905 : 274）.

Head （1978 : 167） reports the use of 3rd person pronouns for reference to the addressee in several languages, including Amharic, Bemba, Danish, German, Italian, Kashmiri, Sotho and Tagalog. This list does not include languages where 3rd person pronouns merely corefer with nouns or nominal expressions used as forms of address.

Use of 1st person pronouns to refer to the addressee can be found in English in examples such as the doctor's or nurse's question to a patient mentioned at the beginning of this paper :

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[8] UK Parliament, House of Commons, 27 July 2010, www.parliament.uk

How are **we** today?

Use of the non-singular 1st person is also very widespread in child-directed language（Head 1978 : 172f.）. In Japanese, however, *boku*, normally used as a male 1st person singular, can be used to address a small boy（cited in Head 1978 : 173 and adapted from Hinds 1986 : 244）:

　　Ken-tyan, **boku** mo iku?
　　Ken, I-MASC am coming along?
　　Ken, are you coming along?

　　Boku, dô shita no?
　　Me-MASC, what happened?
　　Little boy, what happened?

Watasi can also be used in this way, for example by a teacher to a female pupil in elementary school :

　　Watasi mo sô omou no?
　　Do I think so, too?
　　Do you think so, too?

According to Head（1978 : 173）, in address 'the first person often indicates less social distance than do other forms of address, or is downward directed, denoting superior status of the speaker'. The reference of the 1st person 'plu-

ral', as illustrated by Figure 1 in Howe (2011), shows that for example English 'we' merely stipulates the presence of the speaker/writer plus other (s). We can therefore easily see how the plural (or non-singular) can occur in the medical 'we' or in child-directed language, in that it can include the speaker and the addressee. Such 1st person address can also, as shown by Japanese boku, shift the point of reference to the one being spoken to (cf. Suzuki 1978).

Reanalysis of other pronominal categories/properties to convey social meaning

From his sample, Head (1978 : 175) states that use of categories/properties other than number and person to convey degrees of respect or social distance seems to be much less common.

As discussed in Howe (2011) and touched upon above, the politeness or degree of respect of a great deal of person reference can be explained by indirectness. Such indirectness in person reference — ranging from the most direct to not referring overtly to the person at all — parallels politeness patterns found elsewhere in language. For example in English :

Get out!
Would you mind leaving?
Is that the time?
［Not uttering anything, but glancing at one's watch］

And similar patterns can likely be found in all languages.

　　In Howe （2011）, Figure 1, we saw that the 2nd person plural is less direct than the 2nd person singular because, rather than referring to the addressee singularly, it refers to a group to which the addressee belongs. Using the 3rd person for 2nd person reference is more indirect than using the 2nd person plural as the 3rd person formally excludes reference to the addressee. This usage, then, formally does not refer to the addressee at all. Using the 3rd p. plural for 2nd person reference is more indirect still : not only as with the 3rd p. sing. is there no formal reference to the addressee, but reference is made even less direct by the use of the plural.

　　Given this, we can understand how categories/properties of number and person can be reanalysed sociodeictically. The examples here show that such sociodeictic reanalysis is a common feature in pronouns in a wide range of languages, suggesting, as Head states, more universal tendencies.

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