

On Logophoric Phenomena Inside Nominals: Implications for NP Structure

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Various languages of West Africa including the Ibibio language (from the Cross-river region of Nigeria) have special logophoric pronouns that are used only in embedded CPs to refer to a designated argument of the matrix clause. For example, in (1) the logophoric pronoun *imo* can be used as the embedded subject to refer to the matrix subject, but it cannot be used as the possessor of the object to refer to the matrix subject; only the ordinary pronoun *omo* can do that.

- (1) Emem a-ma a-dokko eka omo/***im**o ke **im**o i-ma i-dep ebot.
Emem 3s-past 3s-tell mother his/LOG that LOG 3s-past 3s-buy goat
'Emem told his (=Emem's) mother that he (=Emem) bought a goat.'

In this talk, I consider how these logophoric pronouns can be used as a probe into aspects of DP structure. A first trivial-seeming fact is that DPs do not license logophoric pronouns the way that CPs do. (2) illustrates this with a minimal contrast.

- (2) a. Okon i-kit-te n-dudue eka om~~o~~/***im**o.
Okon 3.SG-see-NEG NMLZ-commit.fault mother his/*LOG
'Okon_i does not see his_i mother's mistake/fault.' (derived nominal)
- b. Okon i-kit-te ke eka **im**o a-ma-a-due.
Okon 3.SG-see-NEG that mother LOG 3.SG-PST-3.SG-commit.fault
'Okon_i does not see that his_i mother committed a fault.' (CP)

However, the fact that (2a) is bad is instructive in itself: I claim that it follows from the general fact that DPs do not license A-bar specifiers in their periphery the way that CPs do, possibly for fundamental reasons concerning the theory of categories (Baker 2003). Then I go on to show that logophoric pronouns are in fact possible inside DPs if (a) the DP has a "mixed projection" structure (i.e. it is a nominal gerund) or (b) if the head noun takes a CP complement (e.g., in a structure like 'I heard Okon's news that LOG won the lottery'). In contrast, logophoric pronouns are not licensed in relative clauses (*'I heard Okon's news that LOG heard from Emem'). I argue based on this that both possessors and CP complements count as true arguments within DP, not as adjunct modifiers. Finally, I consider some complex examples that imply that nouns like 'news' in Ibibio can also take silent arguments, which can be anteceded by arguments of a higher verb in a way that recalls nonobligatory control in European languages, rather than the more constrained relationship of obligatory control.