

The first name/last name asymmetry - Update on the experimental design and a possible semantic analysis

In my research I adopt the assumption that proper names are no different than common nouns. This assumption bears the name *predicativism* in the literature on proper names. For predicativists, proper names enter the syntax as property denoting expressions (Geurts 1997, Fara 2015, Matushansky 2008) (e.g., $\llbracket^{\text{NP}}\text{John}\rrbracket = \lambda x_e. x$ is called *John*) and they get their referential interpretation by combining with covert elements. I believe that predicativism can provide potential insight into the way in which proper names interact with determiners in some languages, into the structure of proper names below the word level and into the structure of full names.

The focus of this presentation will be to discuss my ongoing reflection on the semantics of last names (and, by extension, of full names). First, I will present the design of an experiment – soon to be online¹ – that should guide the way we conceptualize the syntax and semantics of full names. Then, I will propose a sketch of the semantic contribution of last names drawing from the semantics of quasi-names (e.g., *dad*, *mum*) (Muñoz 2019).

References

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¹ The pre-test version is accessible following the link below until the 08.12.22. It should be accessible with a computer or a phone/tablet. If you want, you can provide feedback directly on the questionnaire!
<https://www.soscsurvey.de/projectfogl1/?act=wj9wNwUFuKsoToeFEtgPI1ve>