

Overview

Goal: Linguistic analysis of a class of prepositional and adverbial modifiers of referring expressions, which I call *identificational appositives*

- (1) a. Mia **here** is my best friend.
b. Joan's mother, **with the white hair**, is coming over tomorrow.
c. I just got a text from the accountant, **from the party yesterday**.

Why they're interesting: They allow us to distinguish between *restrictivity*, the use of a modifier to clarify the reference of the modified noun (the ANCHOR), from *subsectivity*, whether a modifier shrinks the extension of the anchor

Analysis: They are appositives that function as fragment answers to implicit *Questions of Identification* (QoIs) – e.g., *Who is Mia?* – licensed by the anchor

Upshot: Speakers can use multiple grammatical / pragmatic mechanisms to clarify reference, with the ultimate goal of referring being hearer identification of a (weakly) familiar discourse referent, rather than uniqueness (Roberts 2003)

Establishing reference outside of the core DP

Core function is clarifying speaker reference

- Can be necessary for speakers to successfully refer at all (Context I)
- Redundant if speakers can successfully refer using just anchor (Context II)

- (2) *Ana and Joe just got home from a party where they spoke to Mia, among others.*
Ana: Guess what? ...
a. ... Mia is coming over tomorrow.
b. ... Mia, **with the blue hair**, is coming over tomorrow.

Context	(2a)	(2b)
I. <i>Ana knows it was the first time Joe met Mia, and Joe didn't learn her name.</i>	#	✓
II. <i>Ana knows Joe has known Mia for a while, and thus knows her name.</i>	✓	#

The Modifiers are Appositives

A. They lack anti-uniqueness implications: the modifier in (3a) but not (3b)/(3c) implies that there have been more than one president of South Sudan.

- (3) a. In 2012, I met the president of South Sudan **with the huge hat**.
b. In 2012, I met the president of South Sudan, **with the huge hat**.
c. [*The speaker points at a man.*] In 2012, I met the pres. of S.S. **here**.

B. They are invisible to NP-ellipsis / *one*-anaphora: there's a reading of (4a) but not (4b) where Bill caught the second train with a specific kind of big engine.

- (4) a. Sam caught the first train **with the big engine**, and Bill caught the second (one).
b. Sam caught the first train, **with the big engine**, and Bill caught the second (one).

C. They are subject to an anti-backgrounding requirement: the PP modifier in (5a) but not (5b) is allowed to be trivial (Potts 2002).

- (5) A: You see the dog with the blue eyes? Do you like him?
a. B: Yes, I like the dog with the blue eyes.
b. B: #Yes, I like the dog, with the blue eyes.

How to explain the integrated prosody of *here*

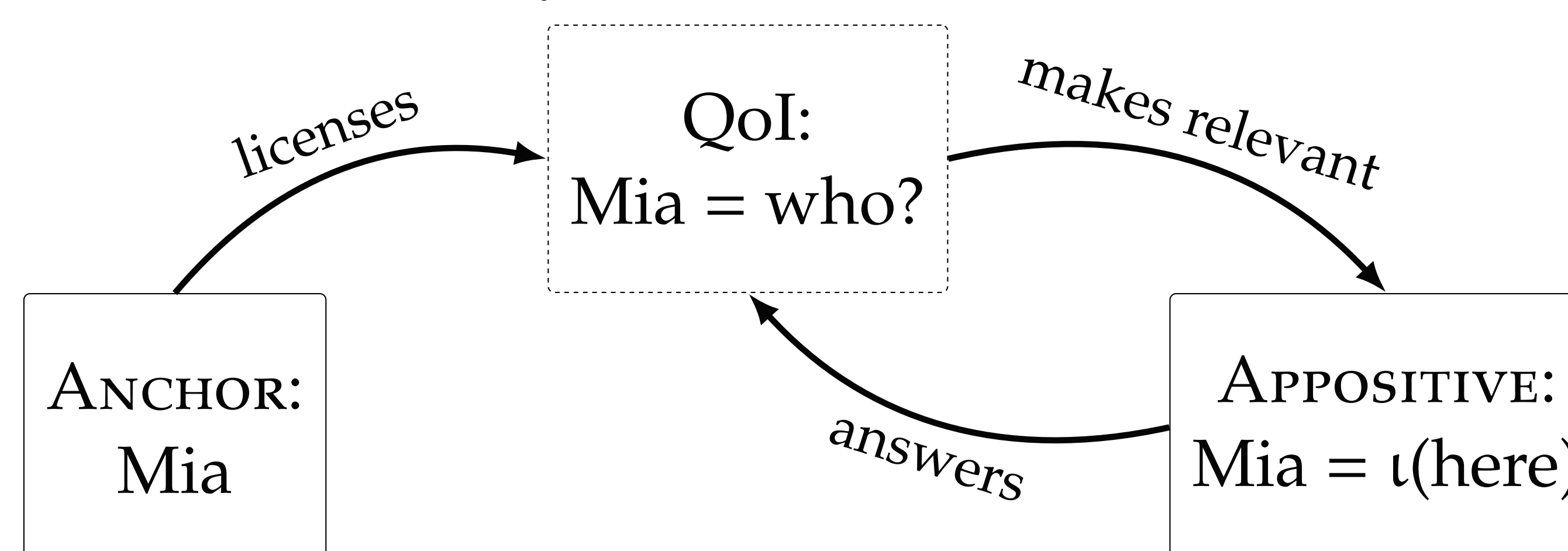
- Notice that *here* can only be used as an identificational appositive when it is **deaccented** (6a)/(6b) (this contrasts with normal integrated modifiers).
- Follows from the interaction of two constraints.
 - Indexicals tend to be **given**, and thus deaccented (Wagner 2006).
 - Prosodic constraints require accents in every phrase (Selkirk 2005).

- (6) a. *MIA* here went to the concert.
b. #*Mia* *HERE* went to the concert.

The Modifiers are Elliptical Answers to QoIs

- The appositives are licensed when a Question of Identification, an equative question about the anchor (e.g., *Who is Mia?*), is available in the context.
- Expands on Onea & Ott's account of nominal appositives (2022)

(1a) Mia [*Mia is here*] is my best friend.



A. They are answers to potential QoIs

- They can be used as answers to overt QoIs

- (7) *A & B are looking at a picture of a number of people.*
A: Mia is so cool.
B: Which one is Mia?
A: [*points to Mia*] Oh, **here** / **with the white hair**.

- They must denote uniquely (i.e., are subject to QoI answerhood reqs)

- (8) *Ana and Joe just went to a party and talked to Mia, but Joe never learned her name. Joe asks Ana: "I loved that party. Who should I be friends with?"*
a. Ana: Mia, with the blue hair, is really nice.
b. Ana: #Mia, with blue hair, is really nice

B. They are elliptical copular clauses

- Integrated relative clauses cannot be used in this position.

- (9) a. *Mia that has the blue eyes is a good friend of mine.
b. *You see the dog, that has the blue eyes?

- IRCs (10), but not PPs (11), are ungrammatical after copulas:

(10) **Mia/The dog is* that has the blue eyes.

(11) *Mia is* here / from the party yesterday.

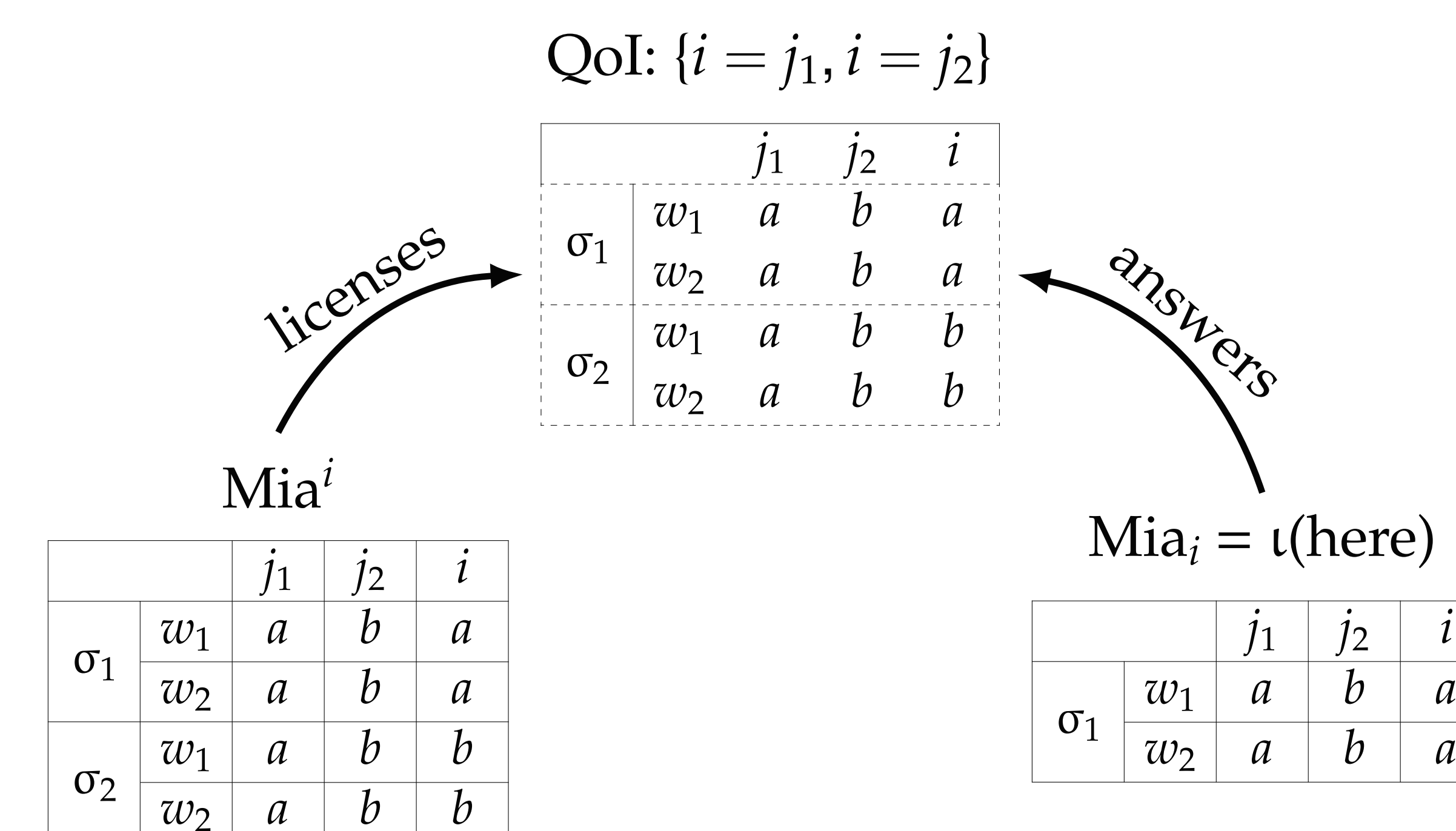
- We can explain *with*-PPs' ungrammaticality in full copular clauses as morphological blocking by *has* (=is with), a spell-out rule that does not apply with an elided-copula (Kayne 1993, Harley 2002, Levinson 2011)

How identificational appositives become restrictive.

- Referring expressions are associated with a requirement of identification with a discourse referent across epistemic possibilities (world/assignment pairs) in the CG, corresponding to Roberts (2003)'s notion of WEAK FAMILIARITY

(12) **Identification:** Given a DP with index i , $\exists j \in \text{domain}(C) : \forall \langle w, g \rangle \in C : g(i) = g(j)$

- When Identification is not met and cannot be accommodated, a QoI becomes salient in the context, equating i with distinct drefs j_1, j_2 , etc.
- The appositive discourse update satisfies Identification, as it associates i with a particular weakly familiar dref j
- Can model using Heimian contexts (as above), but more likely we need sets of possibilities or reference systems (Beaver 1999, Anderbois et. al. 2015).



- We can also define a more general notion of restrictivity that captures both substantive modifiers and identificational appositives:

(13) **Restrictivity:** A *restrictive* modifier in context C maps C to C' s.t.
 $\exists x \in \text{dom}(C) \cap \text{dom}(C') : \{g'(x) \mid \langle w', g' \rangle \in C'\} \subset \{g(x) \mid \langle w, g \rangle \in C\}$

Outstanding questions

- If all referring expressions require Identification, why do unfamiliar names but not descriptions require such an appositive to resolve reference (14a/b)?
- Note that incomplete descriptions may require these appositives (14c)

(14) *The hearer doesn't know Mia, or that the speaker's job has an HR rep.*

- a. Mia #(, with the blue hair,) asked me out!
b. the HR rep at my job (, with the blue hair,) asked me out!
c. the HR rep #(, with the blue hair,) asked me out!

Some Thoughts:

- It can't be that unfamiliar names are non-unique, as there are no implications about multiple Mias (compare to the integrated modifier (3a))
- It can't be that names are 'strong definites' (syntactically bearing an index), as they take weak determiners in many languages (Schwarz 2009)

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SELECTED REFERENCES [1]Potts, C. 2002. The logic of conventional implicatures. [2] Onea, E., Ott, D. 2022. Nominal appositives in grammar discourse. [3] Roberts, C. 2003. Uniqueness in definite noun phrases. [4] AnderBois et. al. 2015. At-issue proposals and appositive impositions in discourse.