

## - The intensifier itself: Evidence against long-distance anaphora in ASL-

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**Claim:** ASL, like Chinese but unlike English, allows *SELF* anaphors in the subject position of a finite clause. In this paper, however, I argue that the similarity between ASL and other languages allowing long distance anaphora (LDA) is only apparent; that ASL does not exhibit Chinese-type LDA. Rather, ASL patterns with English in only allowing local anaphors. I show that the apparent LDA is a pronominal element of the form [*pro+SELF*], where *SELF* is interpreted as an intensifier rather than an anaphoric pronoun.

**Against LDA:** There are two major arguments against the long distance reflexive being a case of LDA. First, the antecedent of *SELF* can be an object—a behavior unattested with true long-distance reflexives, which are cross-linguistically subject-oriented (Cole et al. 2006). Second, in contrast to other well-attested LDA, ASL *SELF* is disallowed in object position, even when there is no Blocking Effect (Y.-H. Huang 1984, Tang 1989). In principle, one could claim a new kind of long-distance anaphor for ASL, but, obviously, such an approach would be undesirable. Instead, I argue that the LDA behavior of the reflexive can be accounted for by treating *SELF* as being ambiguous between a true, *himself*-type, local anaphor and a complex element [*pro+SELF*], where *SELF* is an intensifier (in the sense of Eckard 2001) modifying a pronoun. Hence, the latter will be a pronominal, rather than an anaphoric element.

**SELF as an intensifier:** The analysis of *SELF* as a [pronominal+intensifier] immediately predicts *SELF* not to be restricted to subject antecedents. Second, ASL *SELF* is predicted to be impossible in contexts where *pro* is impossible. Third, the impossibility of the [*pro+intensifier*] interpretation of *SELF*, falls out as the result of a cross-linguistic restriction on intensifiers modifying object pronouns. Lastly, I show that the theory of intensifiers (Eckard 2001), coupled with the theory of ASL pronouns (Lillo-Martin & Klima 1990), captures the otherwise contradictory data straightforwardly.

Eckardt (2001) argues that intensifiers like the German *selbst* denote an identity function from the domain of individuals to itself. The definition translates into the following set of characteristics: (a) the intensifier contributes nothing to the truth-conditions of the sentence unless it is stressed; (b) the adnominal intensifier is obligatorily stressed; (c) because of the contribution of focus semantics (Rooth 1984), the readings induced by the intensifier are the alternative set of individuals to the element the intensifier modifies (the X it adjoins to). I show that ASL *SELF* fits the characteristics above both prosodically and semantically—that is, adding the intensifier to a(n overt) pronominal (i) is accompanied by the non-manual markings associated with stress, and (ii) induces a set of plausible alternatives to the original referent.

**Consequences:** The analysis of ASL *SELF* as a [*pro+intensifier*] carries over to several other pro-drop languages. Once the analysis is applied, one can treat certain “ill-behaved” (apparent) anaphors (e.g. the non-local use of the anaphor that is usually allowed only in local contexts in Japanese (Richards 1997)) as regular pronouns.

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