

Social relationships between a speaker, addressee and the “third person” are known to be encoded in many languages via pronouns, honorifics, allocutive marking and other speech-act markers. Since the choice of the feature bundles that result in the manifestation of the morphemes that represent these elements is dependent on discourse/speech-context, research over the years has suggested that speakers and addressees and the relation(s) they share need to be represented in the narrow syntax (Ross 1970; Sadock 1974; Miyagawa 1987; Hale & Keyser 1999). Considering arguments for a rich left periphery (Rizzi, 1997 a.o.) and the structure mapping found between the CP and DP domains, positing a rich layer above DPs/NPs does not seem unreasonable. Speech act layers have been proposed above CPs (Speas & Tenny 2003; Haegeman & Hill 2011), as “context phrase” projections above pronouns (Portner et al. 2019), and to encode pronominal clitics in the verbal domain (Kaur & Raynaud, upcoming). This paper argues for a context layer within the structure of Bangla pronouns, using novel data from child and adult language. It adapts Portner et al.’s (2019) hierarchy-representing features to represent the relations between participants and proposes a structure for the pronouns.

Bangla pronouns are sensitive to the social relationship between the (S)peaker, the (A)ddressee and the (O)ther. For the 2nd person, which has a three way distinction, we posit three “sub-categories” of pronouns based on politeness. These are L1, L2 and L3 in increasing order of social/ageal distance. For the syntax, what matters is that the levels are formed of two features, STATUS and FORMAL. Following Portner et al (2019), STATUS marks the hierarchical relationship between the speaker and addressee, and FORMAL conveys whether the relationship is formal or not. See (1) for the proposal for the Bangla 2nd person, and (2) for an exemplification of (1).

- (1) a. **L1** STATUS:[S ≥ A], FORMAL: – (eg. S & A are (int)imate/(fam)ilar or/and S is (sup)erior/(ol)der to A).  
 b. **L2** STATUS:[S ≤ A], FORMAL: – (eg. S & A are int/fam or/and A is sup/ol to S).  
 c. **L3** STATUS:[S ≤ A ], FORMAL: + (eg. S & A are non-int/non-fam or/and A is sup/ol to S)
- (2) tui /tumi /apni baʒi kok<sup>h</sup>on p<sup>h</sup>ir-b -i /-e /-en  
 2.L1.SG /2.L2.SG /2.L3.SG home when return-FUT -L1 /-L2 /-L3  
 ‘when will you return home?’

In the 3rd person, there is a two way distinction, L1 and L3 [see (3) & (4)].

- (3) a. **L1** - STATUS:[S ≥ O], FORMAL: – (eg. S & O are int/fam or/and S is sup/ol to O)  
 b. **L3** - STATUS:[S ≤ O], FORMAL: + (eg. S & O are non-int/non-fam or/and O is ol/sup to S)
- (4) o /uni baʒi kok<sup>h</sup>on p<sup>h</sup>ir-b /-e /-en  
 3.L1.SG /3.L3.SG home when return-FUT -L1 /-L3  
 ‘when will she/he return home?’

However, in a context like (5), neither L1 nor L3 is felicitous. (6a) and (6b) illustrate two conversations that shows that in such a context, exemplified by (6b), only the noun used to refer to O (and, of course, the reflexive) can be used, since L1 is too impolite, and L3 is too formal and distant.

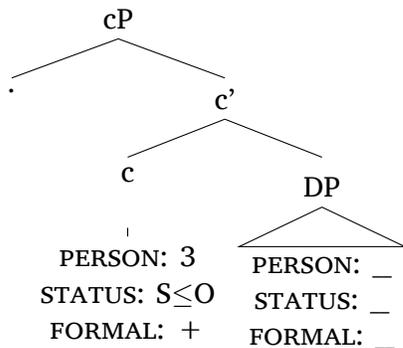
- (5) - STATUS:[S ≤ O ], FORMAL: – (eg. S & O are int/fam or/and O is ol/sup to S)
- (6) a. STRANGER TO LITTLE GIRL: dadu ki kor-tʃt<sup>h</sup>-e-n  
 grandpa what do-PROG-PRS-L3  
 what is grandpa doing?

LITTLE GIRL: dadu<sub>i</sub> onar<sub>i</sub> tʃoʃma k<sup>h</sup>udʒ-tʃtʃ<sup>h</sup>-e-n  
 grandpa 3.L3.SG.GEN glasses search-PROG-PRS-L3  
 Grandpa<sub>i</sub> is looking for his(form.)<sub>i</sub> glasses

b. (W)OMAN: dadu ki kor-tʃtʃ<sup>h</sup>-e  
 grandpa what do-PROG-PRS  
 what is grandpa doing?

W'S DAUGHTER: dadu<sub>i</sub> dadu-r<sub>i</sub> /#onar<sub>i</sub> tʃoʃma k<sup>h</sup>udʒ-tʃtʃ<sup>h</sup>  
 grandpa grandpa-GEN /3.L3.SG.GEN glasses search-PROG  
 -e /#-en  
 -PRS.L1 /#-PRS.L3  
 Grandpa<sub>i</sub> is looking for Grandpa's<sub>i</sub>/ #his(form.)<sub>i</sub> glasses.

Modifying the structure proposed in Portner et al (2019, p. 31), the following is posited for pronouns [here, for *uni* (3.L3.SG.NOM) 'he']. N's unvalued interpretable features probe upwards and are valued by the valued uninterpretable features of the c head. 'c' here stands for Context.



Semi structured elicitation tasks, designed to test Bangla speaking children's production of the third person pronouns, show that children (2;0-7;0) only produce the L1 pronoun, even when the context demands the production of an L3 pronoun [see (7) for an instantiation].

(7) RESEARCHER: onar meje ki kor-tʃtʃ<sup>h</sup>-e ek<sup>h</sup>ane  
 3.L3.SG.GEN daughter what do-PROG-L1 here  
 What is his(form.) daughter doing here?

CHILD (6;2): #or<sub>i</sub> meje oke<sub>i</sub> ador kor-tʃtʃ<sup>h</sup>-e  
 3.L1.SG.GEN daughter 3.L1.SG.ACC-DAT love do-PROG-L1  
 His<sub>i</sub>(infor.) daughter is showing her affection towards him<sub>i</sub>(inform.)

Children perform poorly on L3 pronouns, not because they lack the context layer but because they have not acquired the feature value [+ ] for the feature FORMAL. This predicts that they should also not be producing the 2nd person L3 pronouns (eg. *apni* 2.L3.SG 'you').

References Hale, K.; & Kayser, S. (1999) Bound features, merge and transitivity alternations. Kaur, G. & Reynaud, L. (upcoming) 3rd person needs licensing too: examining the se/suu connection. Miyagawa, S (1987) LF affix raising in Japanese. Rizzi, L. (1997) The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. Ross, J. (1970) On declarative sentences. Portner et al (2019) The speaker-addressee relation at the syntax-semantics interface. Sadock, J. (1974) Towards a linguistic theory of speech acts. Speas, P. & Tenny C. (2003) Configurational properties of point of view roles.