

The Givenness Hierarchy

Read: Gundel, Hedberg & Zacharski
(1993)

- Different determiners and pronominal forms conventionally signal different cognitive statuses (information about location in memory and attention state).
- The Givenness Hierarchy

in focus	>	activated	>	familiar	>	uniquely identifiable	>	referential	>	type identifiable
{ <i>it</i> }		{ <i>this, that,</i> <i>this N</i> }		{ <i>that N</i> }		{ <i>the N</i> }		{indefinite <i>this N</i> }		{ <i>a N</i> }

- Each status is a necessary and sufficient condition for appropriate use of the forms under it.
- Each status entails all lower statuses. If a referent has a particular status then the form under it or any lower form can be used.
- Type Identifiable
 - The addressee is able to access a representation of the type of object described by the expression.
 - *I couldn't sleep last night. A dog kept me awake.*

- Referential

- The speaker intends to refer to a particular object or objects.
- The addressee can identify the speaker's intended referent by the time the sentence has been processed.
- *I couldn't sleep last night. This dog (next door) kept me awake.* (indefinite *this*).

- Uniquely Identifiable

- The addressee can identify the speaker's intended referent on the basis of the noun phrase alone.
- Addressee will construct a representation of the referent if he doesn't already have one in memory.
- *I couldn't sleep last night. The dog (next door) kept me awake.*

- Familiar

- The addressee is able to uniquely identify the intended referent because he already has a representation of it in memory.
- *I couldn't sleep last night. That dog (next door) kept me awake.*

- Activated

- The referent is represented in current short-term memory.
- Includes the speech participants as well as other entities in the immediate discourse context.
- *I couldn't sleep last night. That kept me awake.*

- Speaker activation condition: proximal demonstratives have to be activated in the speaker's context space.

- A: *Have you seen the neighbor's dog?*

- B: *Yes. And that dog/?? this dog kept me awake last night.*

- In Focus

- The referent is not only in short-term memory, but is also at the current center of attention.

- *I couldn't sleep last night. It kept me awake.*

- The partially ordered subset of activated entities that are likely to be continued as topics of subsequent utterances, e.g. subjects and objects of matrix sentence.

- *My neighbor's bull mastiff bit a girl on a bike. That/It's the same dog that bit Mary Ben last summer.*

- *Sears delivered new siding to my neighbors with the bull mastiff. #It's/That's the same dog that bit Mary Ben last summer.*

Inferrables

- Prince 1981 Familiarity Scale:

Evoked;			Containing	Brand	Brand
Situationally	>	Unused	>	Inferrable	>
Evoked				New	>
				Anchored	

- GHZ: Inferrable isn't a separate status, rather a way that an entity can come to have a particular status.

- *...The nurse was called in on June 21st, and during that day the doctors visited the patient three times. His condition grew steadily worse. . . On the day after, the 22nd, he was worse still--in great pain, the pulse growing weaker, and the skin about the mouth getting dry and peeling off. [D. Sayers]*
- *#that pulse, #it.*
- Inferrables should have different statuses, depending on the nature and strength of the link between the inferrable and its associated discourse entity.
 - *We went to the Minnesota Orchestra last night. That conductor was very good.*
 - *There was not a man, woman or child within sight; only a small fishing-boat, standing out to sea some distance away. Harriet waved wildly in its direction, but they either didn't see her or supposed that she was merely doing some kind of reducing exercises.*

Chinese

- In focus > Activated > Familiar > Uniquely > Referential > Type
- | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | | Identifiable | Identifiable |
| Ø | <i>zhe</i> ‘this’ | <i>nei</i> N | <i>yi</i> N ‘a N’ |
| <i>ta</i> ‘s/he,it’ | <i>nei</i> ‘that’ | | Ø N |
| | <i>zhe</i> N | | |

- *Ta zai bisai zhong huo jiang.*
He in game during win prize ‘He won a prize in a/the game’
- *Zuotian wanshang wo shui-bu-zhao. Gebi-de nei tiao gou jiao de lihai.*
Yesterday evening I sleep-not-achieve. Next.door that CLF dog bark ADV extremely
‘I couldn’t sleep last night. The [lit. that] dog next door was barking.’
- A: *Wo juede wode xiaoshuo bi luxun xie-de hao.*
I think my novel than Luxun write-NOM good
‘I think my novels are better than Luxun’s’
B: *Zheige/?Neige wo chengren.*
I admit. ‘I agree with this/that.’

Japanese

- In focus > Activated > Familiar > Uniquely > Referential > Type

			Identifiable	Identifiable
Ø	<i>kare</i> ‘he’	<i>ano</i> N		Ø N
	<i>kore</i> ‘this’	‘that N’(D)		
	<i>sore</i> ‘that’ (M)			
	<i>ano</i> ‘that’ (D)			
	<i>kono</i> N ‘this’ N			
	<i>sono</i> N ‘that’ N (M)			
- Kinoo wa hitobanjuu nemurenakatta. Tonari no ie no ano inu no sei da.*
 Yesterday TOP all.night couldn’t.sleep. Neighbor GEN house GEN that dog GEN reason is.
 ‘I couldn’t sleep last night. That dog next door kept me awake.’
- A: *Watashi no hon wa Mishima no yori ii.*
 I GEN book TOP Mishima GEN than good. ‘My book is better than Mishima.’
 B: *Sore/#Kore wa honto da.*
 TOP true be ‘That/this is true.’

Spanish

- In focus > Activated > Familiar > Uniquely > Referential > Type

			Identifiable	Identifiable
Ø	ÉL	ese N	el N	Ø N
él 'he'	éste 'this'(P)	'that N'(M)		un N 'a N'
	ése 'that'(M)	aquel N		
	aqué! 'that'(D)	'that N'(D)		
	este N 'this N'			
- No pudo dormir anoche. Ese/Aquel perro de al lado no me dejó dormir.*
 Not could sleep last.night. dog of to.the next.door not me let sleep.
 'I couldn't sleep last night. That dog next door kept me awake.'
- A: *Mis cuentos son mayores que los de Ortega.*
 My stories are better than those of Ortega.
 B: *Estoy de acuerdo con eso/??esto.*
 Am in agreement with 'I agree with that/this'
- El quiere (una) gaseosa pero no encuentre.*
 He wants a soft.drink but not find. 'He wants a soft drink, but can't find (one).'

Russian

- In focus > Activated > Familiar > Uniquely > Referential > Type Identifiable

Ø	ON	èto N	Ø N
on	èto 'this'	to N	
	to 'that'		
- Èto/To sobaku u sosedu mne vsju noch' ne davala spat'.

dog at neighbor me all night not allow to.sleep'

'That dog next door kept me awake all night.'
- A: *Moi rasskazy luchshe chem ego rasskazy.*

My stories better than his stories

'My stories are better than his stories.'

B: *Ja s ètim/?tem soglasen.*

I with agree.

'I agree with this/that.'

Quantitative Study

- Data from a variety of spoken and written sources, including goldfish stories and Frederickson tapes.
- 240 (Chinese) - 655 (English) noun phrases.
- All but a few expressions met the predicted necessary conditions:

M: These. Do these go in here or there?

K: These?

M: The ones I just got done writing.

- More typically, addressee accommodates:
 - *K: Barb got it.*
N: Catmopolitan?
K: Yeah.
N: Catmopolitan.
K. She got it.
N: I suspicion she was a cat in her other life.
*K. Oh did I tell you that they have a cat, they have two cats;
 one is Maynard and one's Dudley.*
- Pro-drop varies:
 - Japanese: Ø 87 *kare* 4
 - Spanish Ø 63 *él* (subj) 30 *él* (nonsub) 57
 - Chinese: Ø 25 *ta* 40
 - Russian: Ø 18 *ono* 51

- There are forms to the right used for particular cognitive statuses to the left.
- This is especially true for definite articles in Spanish and English and for the null determiner in the other three languages:

	FOC	ACT	FAM	UID	REF	TID
– Chinese Ø N	12	17	14	49	2	10
– English <i>the</i> N	30	95	47	108		
– Japanese Ø N	14	32	20	71	45	44
– Russian Ø N	25	29	22	66	21	28
– Spanish <i>el</i> N	23	45	22	42		

- What explains the choice among forms when necessary conditions for use of more than one form are met?

Grice's Maxims and the G.H.

- *These incredibly small magnetic bubbles are the vanguard of a new generation of ultradense memory-storage systems. These systems/Those systems/The systems/New generation ultradense memory-storage systems are extremely rugged: they are resistant to radiation and are nonvolatile.*
(Popular Science)
- *Simplified English disallows the use of passive, progressive, and perfective auxiliary verbs, among other things. It requires engineers to break up long compound nouns and technical expressions into chunks of three or less elements. [electronic news group]
/This requires engineers to break up long compounds...*

- Maxim of Quantity (Grice 1975)
 Q1: Make your contribution as informative as required
 (for the current purposes of the exchange)
 Q2: Do not make your contribution more informative than
 is required.
- *I agree with all of what you said.*
I agree with some of what you said. +> not all.
 - Horn 1972: Use of a weaker form implicates negation of stronger form.
- *I'll give you a dollar if you mow the lawn.* +> iff
I'll give you a dollar if and only if you mow the lawn.
 - Atlas & Levinson 1981: Use of a weaker form implicates stronger form when the meaning associated with the stronger form is stereotypical.
- Since cognitive statuses form an implicational scale, we expect Quantity implicatures of both sorts.

Q1

- Use of an indefinite article conversationally implicates that the addressee can't uniquely identify the referent.
 - *The senate on August 10 voted 50 to 48 to spend \$736,400 for a third Senate Gymnasium due to be built in the/a 137.7 million-dollar Host Senate office building opening in January.* (US New & World Report)
 - *Dr. Smith told me that exercise helps. Since I heard it from a doctor, I'm inclined to believe it.* (Dahl 1984)
 - *I met a student before class. A student came to see me after class as well--in fact it was the same student I had seen before.*
 - *...the Getty decided that the fake documents were not reason enough to ask Mr. Becchina, the Basel dealer who had sold the kouros, to take back the sculpture.... Then last April, an independent scholar in London...was shown a photograph of a fake torso of a kouros, belonging to a Basel dealer (not Mr. Becchina, that looked similar.... (NY Times)*

- Use of a demonstrative pronoun often implicates by Q1 that the referent is not currently in focus, i.e. it signals a focus shift.
 - *When Snepp makes a speech he has to submit a text to CIA censors first. When he wrote a book review for the Los Angeles Times, he had to show it to the agency before he sent it to the newspaper, and when the editor asked for a change, he had to show that to the censors too.* (Minneapolis Star & Tribune).
 - *Anyway going on back from the kitchen then is a little hallway leading to a window, and across from the kitchen is a big walk-through closet. On the other side of that is another little hallway leading to a window. ...* (personal letter).
 - Simplified English example: Demonstrative refers to previous statement rather than a previous in-focus individual entity.

Q2

- Over 85% of full NPs whose referents were at least familiar were introduced by a definite article in English and Spanish, or by a bare noun in Russian. Plus 47% of bare nouns in Chinese, and 59% in Japanese were at least familiar.
- Since pronominals have so little descriptive content, information about cognitive status is crucial in their interpretation, so Q1 is at work.
- With full NPs, signalling identifiability is often enough, and an explicit signal of a more restrictive status is unnecessary; hence, Q2 is at work.
- Moreover, familiarity is the most frequent reason for identifiability, so Q2 induces the stereotypical interpretation.

- Since Q2 predicts use of the weakest possible form for full definite NPs, when demonstrative determiners do occur there is often a good reason for conveying the stronger cognitive status information.
 - Reminder *that* uses explicitly signal that the referent is familiar and conversationally implicate by Q1 that the referent is not activated.
 - *Exxon Oil claims it will take several million dollars to clean up that oil spill off the coast of Alaska* (beginning of a radio newscast).

- Redescriptions of an activated entity provide a compelling example of a stronger than strictly necessary form being required:
 - *Nearly lost in the polemic was Judge Kennedy himself. That was ironic, because in many ways this former small-city lawyer with the stable marriage and three attractive children and the fine reputation appears to personify just those values that made the image of Ronald Reagan so attractive after the convulsions of the 1960's and 1970's.* (NY Times)
- Demonstratives are infrequent because they are weaker than unstressed personal pronouns (use due to Q1) and stronger than definite articles (use due to Q2).
 - Thus Q1 and Q2 conspire to make them infrequent.