No condition B? Context-dependent surface-form preference!*

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Outlook

Overarching Questions:

→ Can binding theoretic principles be predicted from competitions among forms?

→ If so, what are those competitions?

Key Data:

(1) **Fiecare politician**$_2$ a vorbit despre **el**$_2$ / **sine**$_2$.
Every politician has talked about **him** / **self**
'Every politician talked about him / himself'.

(2) **Lockhart**$_1$ se$_1$ iubeşte pe **el**$_1$ / **sine**$_1$.
Lockhart REFL.CL loves ACC him / self
'Lockhart loves himself'.

Claims:

→ Competition can capture BT facts. However, Romanian is currently an outlier.

→ Competition occurs at different levels. We'll focus on two:
- the interpretation of a form in a given context, and
- the syntax-semantics of available forms.

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1 Why Romanian?

Romanian presents a puzzle for both classic and competition-based approaches to Condition B, neither of which can predict the bound reading of a personal pronoun in (1) and (2).

To zoom in on competition-based, Principle B effects are obtained by competition between dedicated anaphora and other pronominals in the same positions.

(3)   A KEY PREDICTION
The presence of Condition B effects depends on whether a language has a **dedicated reflexive** form. The absence of Condition B effects correlates with the absence of specialized reflexive anaphors.

(Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd, 2011)

This prediction is supported by languages like Jambi (Cole et al., 2017) and Chamorro (Wagers et al., 2017).

A note about French
French, like Romanian, can allow for locally bound pronouns.

(4)   a.   Jean$_1$ prend soin de lui$_{1/2}$.
Jean takes care of him
'Jean takes care of him/himself.'

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    b. *Jean$_1$ prend soin de soi$_1$.
        Jean   takes care of self
        'Jean takes care of himself'.
        (adapted from ex. (40c) & (41a) from Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd (2011), p. 26)

Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd (2011) argue that French is predicted by (3), because the dedicated reflexive, *soi* and the pronoun *lui* are in complementary distribution, as shown in (4), above: crucially, coreferent *lui* is grammatical where *soi* is not.

As for Romanian, (1) and (2) illustrate that locally bound pronouns and reflexives are both grammatical in the same context, conflicting with the (Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd, 2011) prediction.

2 Setting the stage: context-dependent competition

Traditional Binding Theory accounts were aimed at capturing the complementary distribution of anaphora and pronouns in sentences like (5) by means of separate, <u>independent</u> conditions.

(5)   a.   Lockhart$_1$ talked about him$_{*1/2}$.
       b.   Lockhart$_1$ talked about himself$_{1/*2}$.

(6)   CHOMSKIAN BINDING CONDITIONS
       Principle **A**: An anaphor must be bound in its binding domain.[1]
       Principle **B**: A pronoun must be free in its binding domain.
                                (Chomsky, 1981, 1986)

Reinhart (1983) → disjoint reference effects are a result of an Interface rule (Rule I[2]), which favors the use of a bound variable over a pronoun which could <u>express the same meaning</u>.

While various other proposals ensued (Grodzinsky & Reinhart, 1993; Safir, 2004; Schlenker, 2005; Reuland, 2011; Safir, 2014), for the moment, let us focus on that of Roelofsen (2010), which both directly compares pronouns to reflexives, and encodes **context-dependence** in the choice of an alternative over another.

(7)   COREFERENCE RULE
       A speaker will never use a logical form LF <u>in a context C</u> if the LF is semantically indistinguishable from one of its *binding alternatives.*
                            (Roelofsen, 2010, p. 119)

(8)   BINDING ALTERNATIVES
       Let C be a context, let LF be a logical form, and let A and B be two DPs in LF such that A and B corefer in C and A c-commands B in LF. Then, the structure obtained from LF by QRing A (if it hasn't already been) or replacing B with a (possibly reflexive) pronoun bound by A is called a *binding alternative* of LF in C.
                            (Roelofsen, 2010, p. 120)

With (7) and (8) set in place, for any given sentence where two DPs corefer, a speaker would generate all the LFs where the c-commanded DP is bound. If any of these bound alternatives have the same meaning, then that alternative is chosen.

The issue, however, is how to distinguish between the various bound alternatives. This is where Grice comes in. Based on Grice's Maxim of Manner (be as unambiguous as possible), we propose the following modification to (7):

(9)   COREFERENCE RULE MUSHED UP WITH GRICE
       If S and S' have indistinguishable interpretations in a context C, and the set of possible interpretations for S' is a proper subset of the set of possible interpretations for S, speak S'.

In (10) and (11), both pronominals are bound by the c-commanding antecedent and they are binding alternatives of each other. Their different meanings come about in the following contexts:

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[1]The notion of binding domain, although not crucial for this talk, has proved difficult to capture.
[2]In Reinhart (2006), this rule operates outside of syntax proper. Disjoint reference is computed by means of comparing alternatives post-syntactically.

How this works:

Indistinguishable in C	Distinguishable in C

Context: When talking about candidates that voted for themselves...

(10) a. (Only) Hillary$_1$ voted for herself$_1$.
b. #(Only) Hillary$_1$ voted for her$_1$.

Context: When talking about candidates that voted for Hillary...

(11) a. #(Only) Hillary$_1$ voted for herself$_1$.
b. (Only) Hillary$_1$ voted for her$_1$.

Since (9) (to be referred to as GRICE from now on) is a language-universal condition, we expect it to hold for Romanian as well. In fact, it can predict the distribution of Romanian clitics.

3 Case Study: Clitic Competition

3.1 Romanian pronominals

Romanian has a rich pronominal system (personal pronouns, reflexive pronouns, demonstratives, possessives, clitics (reflexive, personal, possessives), intensifiers, resumptive pronouns, etc.) Here are some of the key ingredients for today:

→ null pronouns are grammatical in subject/DO/IO positions
→ clitic doubling (IO/DO) - mandatory for null pronouns
→ optionally overt pronouns in IO/DO positions

(12) **3rd person (singular) personal pronouns**

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE		DATIVE/GENITIVE	
		PRONOUN	CLITIC	PRONOUN	CLITIC
MASCULINE	*el*	*el*	*îl, l-*	*lui*	*îi, i-*
FEMININE	*ea*	*ea*	*o, -o*	*ei*	*îi, i-*

(13) **3rd person reflexive pronouns**

	ACCUSATIVE		DATIVE		GENITIVE
	PRONOUN	CLITIC	PRONOUN	CLITIC	
MASC / FEM	*sine*	*se, s-*	*sie, sieşi*	*îşi, şi-*	*sa, său*

(14) **3rd person (singular) intensifier reflexive adjectives**

	NOMINATIVE / ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE/GENITIVE
MASCULINE	*(el) însuşi*	*(lui) însuşi*
FEMININE	*(ea) însăşi*	*(ei) înseşi*

Reflexive clitics can be resumed either by null or overt pronouns.

(15) a. Băieţii$_2$ s- au ajutat ∅.   NULL
boys.THE REFL.CL have helped *pro*

b. Băieţii$_2$ s- au ajutat pe ei$_2$.   PERSONAL
boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC them

c. Băieţii$_2$ s- au ajutat pe ei înşişi$_2$.   +INT
boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC them INT.MASC.PL

d. Băieţii$_2$ s- au ajutat pe sine$_2$.   REFLEXIVE
boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC self
'The boys helped themselves.'

Crucially, referential DPs cannot resume a reflexive clitic - as shown in (16). We assume that the movement of the reflexive clitic *se* to the T (or *v* head first) leaves behind a trace, which is either unpronounced (*pro*), or spelled-out as a resumptive pronoun.

(16) *Băieţii$_2$ s- au ajutat pe băieţi$_2$.   DP
boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC boys
'The boys helped themselves.'

While overt pronouns are optional, reflexive clitics are <u>mandatory</u> for null/overt pronouns in DO/IO position. Compare (15) to (17).

(17) a. *Băieţii$_2$ au   ajutat ∅.
          boys.THE have helped *pro*

    b. *Băieţii$_2$ au   ajutat pe ei$_2$.
          boys.THE have helped ACC them

    c. *Băieţii$_2$ au   ajutat pe ei   înşişi$_2$.
          boys.THE have helped ACC them INT.MASC.PL

    d. *Băieţii$_2$ au   ajutat pe sine$_2$.
          boys.THE have helped ACC self
          'The boys helped themselves.'

Pronominal clitics can be resumed by silent or overt proforms[3], but they are obligatorily present for DO/IO.

(18) Hermione$_1$ **(l$_2$-)**   a   rugat (pe el$_2$) să   **(îi$_{1/*2}$)**
      Hermione CL.MASC.ACC has asked ACC him SUBJ. CL.DAT
      facă o poţiune (ei$_1$)
      make a potion   (her)
      'Hermione$_1$ asked him to make her$_1$ a potion'.

As shown in (32), PP arguments do not get clitic doubled.

(19) a. Hermione vorbeşte despre Lockhart.
          Hermione talks   about Lockhart
          'Hermione talks about Lockhart'

    b. Hermione vorbeşte despre el.
          Hermione talks   about him
          'Hermione talks about him'

3.2 Reflexive vs. Pronominal Clitics

The only possible referent for reflexive clitics is the surface subject of the same clause. (20a) and (20b) illustrate the reflexive clitic cannot take a non-local subject as an antecedent (in (20b), there are two reflexive clitics, both referring to Trump).

In (20c), while the accusative reflexive clitic is ungrammatical (since the sentence is a passive), the dative reflexive clitic must take the passive subject as an antecedent.

(20) a. Ron$_1$ a   spus că   Lockhart$_2$ **s**$_{2/*1}$-   a lăudat.
          Ron has said that Lockhart REFL.CL.ACC has praised.
          'Ron said that Lockhart praised himself.'

    b. Hillary a   spus că   Trump$_1$ **şi**$_1$
          Hillary has said that Trump DAT.REFL.CL
          s$_1$-   a descris (pe   sine$_1$) (sieşi$_1$).
          ACC.REFL.CL has described (ACC self)   (self.DAT)
          'Hillary said that Trump described himself to himself.'

    c. Trump$_1$ **şi**$_1$-   a fost descris (sieşi$_1$) (de
          Trump DAT.REFL.CL has been described (self.DAT) (by
          către sine).
          self)
          'Trump was described to himself (by himself)'.

The data in (20) present evidence that the reflexive clitic is a 'well-behaved' Condition A obeying anaphor, which is necessarily bound by a c-commanding DP in an A-position (intervening c-commanding elements - via scrambling - cannot be antecedents for the reflexive clitic).

Takeaway

> Reflexive clitics are necessarily subject-oriented.

While both pronominal and reflexive clitics can be resumed by pronouns, their roles are clear-cut in Romanian: reflexive clitics encode
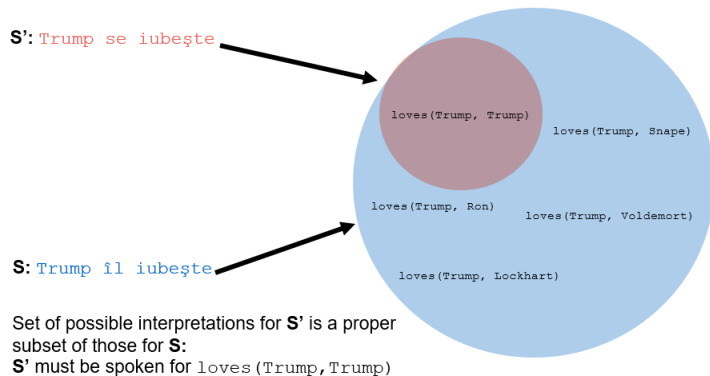
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[3]And referential DPs.

coreference with the local subject, while pronominal clitics necessarily give rise to disjoint referent interpretations.

LOCAL COREFERENCE	DISJOINT REFERENCE
(21) **Trump**$_1$ <u>se</u>$_1$ Trump REFL.CL iubeşte (pe **el**$_1$). loves ACC him 'Trump loves himself.'	(23) **Trump**$_1$ îl$_{2/*1}$ Trump MASC.CL iubeşte (pe el$_{2/*1}$). loves ACC him 'Trump loves him.'
(22) **Trump**$_1$ <u>se</u>$_1$ Trump REFL.CL iubeşte (pe **sine**$_1$). loves ACC self 'Trump loves himself.'	(24) **Trump**$_1$ îl$_{2/*1}$ Trump MASC.CL iubeşte (*pe sine$_1$). loves ACC self 'Trump loves him.'

We argue that GRICE is responsible for the distribution of reflexive and pronominal clitics in Romanian. Assuming that pronominal clitics could also be bound by local subjects, (23) would have two possible interpretations: *Trump loves himself* and *Trump loves some other man.* However, (21) only has the former reading, so its interpretations are a proper subset of the interpretations of the alternative (23). Their set/subset interpretation relations are schematized in (25).

(25)   Interpretations for (21) and (23)

S': Trump se iubeşte

loves(Trump, Trump)

loves(Trump, Snape)

loves(Trump, Ron)   loves(Trump, Voldemort)

S: Trump îl iubeşte

loves(Trump, Lockhart)

Set of possible interpretations for **S'** is a proper subset of those for **S**:
S' must be spoken for loves(Trump,Trump)

The competition between the subject-oriented reflexive and the pronominal clitic leads to pronominal clitics only being used to express disjoint reference. An argument in favor of this competition driving disjoint reference effects comes from 1st and 2nd person clitics.

Both local and disjoint reference are possible with 1/2 reflexive clitics and pronouns. Since there is no 1/2 form which is necessarily subject-oriented, there is no competition, hence GRICE doesn't apply: 1/2 pronominal forms can express either referential relation.

LOCAL COREFERENCE	DISJOINT REFERENCE
(26) **Eu**$_1$ <u>mă</u>$_1$ I 1ST.REFL.CL iubesc (pe **mine**$_1$). love ACC me 'I love myself.'	(28) **Trump**$_1$ mă$_{2/*1}$ Trump 1ST.REFL.CL iubeşte (pe mine$_{2/*1}$). loves ACC me 'Trump loves me.'
(27) **Tu**$_1$ <u>te</u>$_1$ you 2ND.REFL.CL iubeşti (pe **tine**$_1$). love ACC you 'You love yourself.'	(29) **Trump**$_1$ te$_{2/*1}$ Trump 2ND.REFL.CL iubeşte (*pe tine$_1$). loves ACC you 'Trump loves you.'

Takeaway

> Competition is alive and well in Romanian!
> GRICE can account for the necessarily disjoint reference effects of pronominal clitics based on the assumption that subject-orientation is hardwired in reflexive clitics.

4   Competing bound forms: resuming reflexivity

In the previous section, we saw that reflexive clitics can be resumed by a variety of proforms: null, (intensified) personal pronouns, and reflexive pronouns. The example is repeated below.

(15)   a.   Băieţii$_2$ s-   au   ajutat ∅.   NULL
              boys.THE REFL.CL have helped *pro*

b. Băieţii$_2$ s-   au ajutat pe ei$_2$.   PERSONAL
   boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC them

c. Băieţii$_2$ s-   au ajutat pe ei înşişi$_2$. +INT
   boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC them INT.MASC.PL
                                                    =

d. Băieţii$_2$ s-   au ajutat pe sine$_2$.   REFLEXIVE
   boys.THE REFL.CL have helped ACC self
   'The boys helped themselves.'

The choice of one pronominal over the other is context-dependent and can also be accounted for by GRICE.

Let Ron, Harry and Neville be the boys in our context.

(30) a. DISTRIBUTIVE CONTEXT
          Harry helps Harry, Ron helps Ron, Neville helps Neville.
                                                    ✓a, ✓b, ✓c, ✓d

      b. NON-REFLEXIVE CONTEXT
          Harry helps Ron, Ron helps Neville, Neville helps Harry.
                                                    ✓a, ✓b

      c. CUMULATIVE CONTEXT
          Harry, Neville and Ron are working on a potion together.
          They need help, but in the end, they just had to help
          themselves (together)
                                                    ✓a, ✓b, ✓d

GRICE favors c (the intensified pronoun) in a distributive context.

The reflexive pronoun, d, has a proper subset of the meanings that a and b have in the contexts above. → GRICE favors d (the reflexive) in a cumulative context.

The sets of meanings of the null and personal pronoun (they are proper subsets of each other) so GRICE won't distinguish between them.

This is a feature, not a bug. In singular contexts, all pronominals are equally acceptable, since there is no difference in meaning.

(31) a. Ron$_2$ s-   a ajutat ∅.   NULL
          Ron REFL.CL has helped *pro*

      b. Ron$_2$ s-   a ajutat pe el$_2$.   PERSONAL
          Ron REFL.CL has helped ACC him

                                                        +INT
      c. Ron$_2$ s-   a ajutat pe el înşuşi$_2$.
          Ron REFL.CL has helped ACC him INT.MASC.SG

      d. Ron$_2$ s-   a ajutat pe sine$_2$.   REFLEXIVE
          Ron REFL.CL has helped ACC self
          'Ron helped himself.'

All the alternatives in (31) have indistinguishable meanings - Ron is helping himself in any way he can.[4] GRICE lets all the pronominals in (31) 'win', and they do.
But GRICE also undergenerates.

5   The PP puzzle

Let us go back to the PP example in French.

(4) a. Jean$_1$ prend soin de lui$_{1/2}$.
         Jean takes care of him
         'Jean takes care of him/himself.'

     b. *Jean$_1$ prend soin de soi$_1$.
         Jean takes care of self
         'Jean takes care of himself'.

Since the *soi* alternative is ungrammatical, then there is no competitor for *lui* in (4). If there is no S' such that S' is associated with a

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[4]*de se* vs. non *de se* contexts do not help when it comes to distinguishing between these alternatives either.

[5]In order to capture *lui-même* vs. *lui*, some other machinery, like BE SMALL! on page 9, is needed.

proper subset of the possible interpretations for S, then, for the French *lui* above, both local coreference and disjoint reference survive.[5]

In Romanian, however, the reflexive form is acceptable in the same context (it works the same way of *taking care of*). Since Romanian does not make use of oblique clitics (PP objects are not clitic doubled), (32a) can have both local and disjoint reference interpretations.

(32)   a.   Rita$_1$ hodorogeşte **despre ea**$_{1/2}$
           Rita   yaps   about   her

        b.   Rita$_1$ hodorogeşte **despre sine**$_{1/*2}$
           Rita   yaps   about   self

        c.   Rita$_1$ hodorogeşte **despre ea însăşi**$_{1/*2}$
           Rita   yaps   about   her INT.FEM.SG.
           'Rita is yapping about herself'.

According to our Gricean rule, the interpretations associated with (32b) and (32c) are a proper subset of those associated with (32a). This would wrongly predict that (32c) and (32b) would always 'win' over (32a). The task at hand is understanding why (32a) survives.

5.1 Proposal: Minimal bound pronouns

5.1.1 Ingredient: Null vs. Overt pronouns

In languages like German, (see (33), taken from Sauerland (2007)), semantic gender is not presuppositional. In Romanian, however, the opposite is true: *her* cannot refer to an inanimate.

(33)   a.   Tim hat eine   Gabel gestohlen. Sie   war aus Gold.
           Tim has a.FEM fork   stolen   pro.FEM was of   gold

        b.   Tim a   furat   o furculiţă. (*Ea)   era din aur.
           Tim has stolen a fork.FEM   pro.FEM was of   gold
           'Tim stole a fork. It was made of gold'

The ban on pronominal referents which are not semantically gendered holds only in positions where null pronouns are licensed: Subj, IO, DO.

(34)   a.   Eu l-   am iubit ∅.   ESSAY/PERSON
           I   MASC.CL have loved *pro*
           'I loved it / him.'

        b.   Eu l-   am iubit **pe el**.   PERSON
           I   MASC.CL have loved ACC him
           'I loved him.'

In positions where null pronouns are ungrammatical (hence they can't compete), overt personal pronouns are no longer constrained to refer to antecedents with semantic gender.

(35)   a.   *Lockhart a   scris   despre ∅.
           Lockhart has written about   *pro*

        b.   Lockhart a   scris   despre **el**.   ESSAY/PERSON
           Lockhart has written about   him
           'Lockhart wrote about it / him / himself.'

The contrast between (34) and (35) illustrates that semantic gender is necessarily interpreted in positions where null pronouns are licensed. When overt pronouns surface as PP objects, however, semantic gender need not be interpreted.[6]

One way of capturing this effect is by means of minimal pronouns.

5.1.2 Pronominal Typology

We propose that null pronouns are **minimal pronouns** (Kratzer, 2009) in Romanian. These pronouns are base-generated as ∅$_1$ - they come with an index, but with no ϕ-features.

We also suggest that Romanian has **overt minimal pronouns** with uninterpreted ϕ-features. These pronouns have the same morphologi-

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[6]This could be obtained through Maximize Presupposition (Heim, 1991). Null pronouns have no presuppositions (other than indexation), so when they compete with overt pronouns and these pronouns win, then the gender presupposition of overt personal pronouns is maximized and they can only refer to referents with semantic gender.

cal form as regular personal pronouns. One argument in favor of this approach comes from resumption[7]:

(36) a. Fata   care ţi-   am vorbit de   **ea** ...
          girl.THE that 2ND.CL.DAT have talked about her ...
          'The girl I told you about her...'

Null and overt minimal pronouns are two sides of the same coin: they are both base-generated as minimal pronouns with no inherent presuppositions (other than indexation).

Minimal pronouns get their features from the antecedent via FEATURE TRANSMISSION (Heim, 2005) - or via AGREE. Crucially, these features are not inherent, and, hence *uninterpreted*.

There is a feature-matching condition on the spell-out of these overt minimal pronouns - they can only be spelled-out if their features match with those of their antecedent.

(37) PRONOMINAL TYPOLOGY

	INDEX	REFLEXIVE	GENDER	PERSON	FORM
∅	✓	X	X	X	*pro*, el, ea
FEATURED	✓	X	✓	✓	el, ea
REFLEXIVE	✓	✓	X	✓	sine
PRO+INT	✓	✓	✓	✓	el însuşi

With the typology in place, we can explain the constraint on semantic gender in (34) and the lack thereof in (35) by means of the competition between null and overt minimal pronouns.

A Gricean principle that looks at the syntax and semantics of these pro forms will be able to do just that.

(38) SPEAK CLEARLY!
      Let A and B be homophonous DPs with different denotations.
      Let A and C be homosemes (having the same denotation) with different pronunciations. If A and C have the same referent

and are in an environment where A, B, or C is licensed: Don't use A.

The constraint in (38) targets a three-way competition (3 DPs): one between two pronominals with the same spell-out form and one between two pronominals with the same denotation.

According to our typology in (37), only null and overt minimal pronouns will have the same denotation, while overt minimal pronouns and regular personal pronouns have the same form.

In the case of (34), repeated below, the null pronoun, the featureless overt minimal pronoun, and the regular pronoun compete for the same slot. The overt minimal pronoun and the regular pronoun have the same form (*el*), but different denotations - only the regular personal pronoun is specified for ϕ-features.

(34) a. Eu l-   am iubit ∅.   ESSAY/PERSON
          I   MASC.CL have loved *pro*
          'I loved it / him.'

      b. Eu l-   am iubit **pe el**.   PERSON
          I   MASC.CL have loved ACC him
          'I loved him.'

According to SPEAK CLEARLY!, if there is another pronominal with the same denotation as one of the two *el*s, that pronominal will 'win' the competition. This is the case in (34): the null *pro* will have the same denotation as the overt minimal pronoun, so the featureless overt minimal pronoun is not chosen - hence only the regular overt pronoun with semantic gender is found in this position.

In the case of (35), repeated below, the null overt pronoun is ungrammatical as an object of a PP, so there is no competition between null and overt minimal pronouns.

(35) a. *Lockhart a scris   despre ∅.
          Lockhart has written about *pro*

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[7]P-stranding is ungrammatical in Romanian. PPs need objects - you either pied-pipe (*the girl about which I told you...*) or resume.
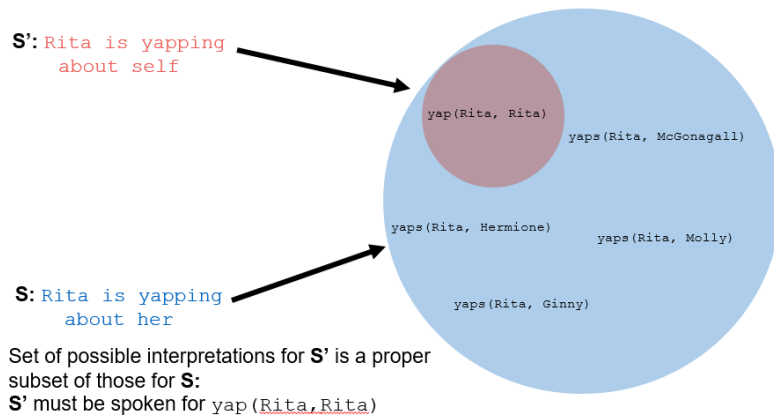
   b.   Lockhart a   scris   despre **el**.   Essay/Person
           Lockhart has written about him
           'Lockhart wrote about it / him / himself.'

Critically, in (35), we are dealing with two different *el*s - one that comes with inherent semantic gender (the featured regular pronoun), and one that comes with no features whatsoever (the overt minimal pronoun). In the case of the former, Lockhart is writing about a person, in the latter, the animacy of the referent does not matter.

5.2   Be Small!

Grice works for English.

(39)   a. $Rita_1$ is yapping about $herself_1$.
       b. $Rita_1$ is yapping about $her_{*1/2}$.

S': `Rita is yapping about self`

yap(Rita, Rita)

yaps(Rita, McGonagall)

yaps(Rita, Hermione)   yaps(Rita, Molly)

yaps(Rita, Ginny)

S: `Rita is yapping about her`

Set of possible interpretations for **S'** is a proper subset of those for **S**:
S' must be spoken for `yap(Rita,Rita)`

Since (39b) has a binding alternative, (39a) which has an indistinguishable interpretation in a context where Rita is talking about Rita, Grice chooses (39a) as the clear winner.

Going back to the Romanian PP puzzle, the issue that Grice faces with (32) is that it would wrongly predict that (32a) should not have

a reflexive interpretation.

(32)   a. $Rita_1$ hodorogeşte **despre** $ea_{1/2}$
         Rita yaps   about   her

       b. $Rita_1$ hodorogeşte **despre** $sine_{1/*2}$
         Rita yaps   about   self

       c. $Rita_1$ hodorogeşte **despre ea însăşi**$_{1/*2}$
         Rita yaps   about   her INT.FEM.SG.
         'Rita is yapping about herself'.

In (32a), we are dealing with either an overt minimal pronoun or with a regular personal pronoun. Either way, just like null pronouns, they can both express either local or disjoint reference.
              → Grice will not distinguish between them.

Since (32b) and (32c) can both only express coreference with the local subject, their meanings overlap.
   → Grice will not distinguish between them either.

However, when comparing (32a) to (32b) (or (32c)), Grice predicts that Romanian should be English: the non-reflexive should lose.

In order to capture the fact that (32a) is still alive and well, we need a new contest: one that applies to the overt minimal pronoun and not the gendered one. This is where (40) comes in.

(40)   Be Small!
       If two DPs, A and B, refer to the same individual in some context, and A has a proper subset of the syntactic-semantic content of B, then speak A.

Be Small! does not distinguish between null pronouns and overt minimal pronouns, but it favors minimal pronouns (null or overt) over regular personal pronouns, reflexive pronouns and personal pronouns with intensifiers.
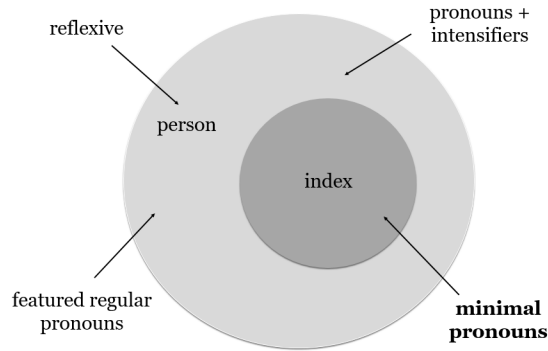
According to our typology, minimal pronouns have a subset of the features that overt pronouns do: they only have index. All of the other pronouns in the typology will have person features, so minimal pronouns will always be *smaller* than pronominals that come equipped with semantic features.

The notion of selecting the *smallest* XP that does the job is, obviously, not new. It is rooted in economy and processing principles (including minimalism - Chomsky (2014)), and it finds various outlets in the literature on pronominal DPs, definite descriptions and their implications for BT (Schlenker (2005); Sauerland (2007); Johnson (2012), a.o).

Importantly, a constraint like BE SMALL! should be a violable, weighted, soft constraint. It predicts the general preference for null pronouns (in languages that have them), but it does just that - predict **preference**, not grammaticality.

Nevertheless, our current system accurately predicts the behavior of bound pronominals in Romanian prepositional phrases.

(41)   COMPETITION IN PPS
     a.   GRICE favors unambiguously reflexive pronominals. *sine* (and pronouns with intensifiers) win!
     b.   BE SMALL! favors minimal pronouns. Null pronouns are ungrammatical in this position, so overt minimal pronouns

(with uninterpreted features) win!

In this case, since there are no clear winners, all three forms survive.

6   Two final notes

6.1   A matter of preference

BE SMALL!, SPEAK CLEARLY! and GRICE allow for the lack of complementary distribution of bound personal pronouns and reflexives.

Although not grammatically conditioned, the choice of one form over another is subject to context and discourse dependent preference.

In order to understand how these constraints are weighted in Romanian, we need to gather experimental data. One piece of the puzzle is how the set of available antecedents in the discourse plays a role in the interpretation and production of personal pronouns over reflexives.

(42)   a.   At Brian's house, Kyle talked about him/self.
     b.   At Lyn's house, Kyle talked about him/self.

6.2   Weird Ellipsis

The flexibility of Romanian personal pronouns presents another puzzle.

(43)   Fiecare$_4$ profesor a   vorbit despre **el**$_4$ și   Rodica la fel.
     every$_4$ professor   has talked about   **him**$_4$ and Rodica at kind
     'Every professor talked about himself and Rodica did too'

(43), just like its counterpart with *sine*, or just like English, gets a sloppy reading where Rodica talks about herself.

However, (43) also gets another (surprising) 'strict-like' reading where Rodica talks about every professor. Minimal pronouns **may** allow us to derive this reading, but that's a story for another time.

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