

**Title.** Fake nouns: On the role of content in reference

**Abstract.** Phi-features of pronouns in certain environments have been observed to have 'fake' meaning, where their content is ignored as in (1). Existing analyses take this to be a property specific to phi-features: they do not project to alternatives because they are pure presupposition triggers, or they can be absent in the logical representation and can be added later for spell-out because they are features.

1. Only JIN finished her song.  
(No one else, regardless of gender, finished their song.)

In this talk, I present data showing that noun-containing expressions like definite descriptions, too, can appear in bound contexts and show fakeness. For example, in Tagalog, the description *si/ni guro* ('teacher') appears in place of a 2nd person pronoun and the property of being a teacher does not project to alternatives as shown in (2).

2. Si guro lang po ang nagbasa ng papel ni guro.  
Si teacher only hon ang read ng paper ni teacher  
'Only teacher read teacher's paper' (others didn't read their own paper)

This phenomenon of fake nouns cannot be straightforwardly subsumed under existing analyses of fake features because nouns are not generally treated as pure presupposition triggers or things that can be transmitted syntactically like features. Furthermore, analyses of definite descriptions involving an iota-operator carrying indices do not result in the desired meaning for the alternatives. To resolve this, I argue that fakeness is not a property special to features but instead to a referential use of a definite expression. Specifically, I draw a parallel between fakeness and the observation that the descriptive content of a referentially-used definite description does not contribute to the truth-conditional content of the sentence it appears in and extend this analysis to account for fake nouns. I then show that extending this analysis to pronouns allows for a simpler analysis of fake features.