

PRONOUNS AS ARTICLES?

ALEKSANDER SZWEDEK

Pedagogical University, Bydgoszcz

1. In an account of surface exponents of coreferentiality in Polish, indefinite and demonstrative pronouns are the most likely candidates to function in the way parallel to the English articles. The aim of the present paper is to examine, in the light of recent research on word order and sentence stress in Polish and in English, to what extent, if at all, pronouns in Polish can be treated as articles.

In 1968 Krystyna Pisarek wrote that "in Polish, where there are no articles nor explicit definiteness or the lack of it realized by morphological features, there are no pronouns which can be called definite. The opposition of definiteness to indefiniteness is expressed in a specific way: for example, by the opposition of a given pronoun to the lack of the pronoun. This is how I understand the sense of grammatical definiteness in Polish..." (1968: 12) (translation into English is my own).

Discussing the demonstrative pronoun *ten* she says that the article-like function of it is clear in two cases:

a) in the substantivating function, as in

- (1) *Te najporządniejsze też robią w łazience bałagan.*
(These tidiest (fem) also make in bathroom mess)

where the appearance of the pronoun *te* changes the adjective into a noun (in a way, it could be compared to *the poor* in English). However, the substantivating function of the pronoun in (1) is not so evident. The adjective will not change its noun-function if we omit the pronoun. It means that the pronoun is not necessary for an adjective to acquire the status of a noun.

b) with proper names, as in

- (2) *Byliśmy najpierw oglądać ten Erfurt.*
(We went first to see this Erfurt)

Pisarek also writes that only in such adverbial phrases as *w tych dniach* (in these days), *tej niedzieli* (this Sunday), etc., is *ten* obligatory. She concludes that since all other occurrences of this pronoun are optional, the suspicion that *ten* may have an article-like function is unjustified.

2. In my paper on definiteness and indefiniteness of nouns in Polish and in English (Szwedek 1974a) I wrote that there are clear and well defined cases where the lack of the pronoun does not mark the noun as indefinite. I have tried to demonstrate this in a number of papers (Szwedek 1974 a, 1974 b, 1975, and in this volume) in which I have shown that coreferentiality and noncoreferentiality of nouns in Polish is inseparably connected with word order and the place of the sentence stress. If it can be shown that in some circumstances a pronoun is obligatory in that the meaning is changed if it is removed, it will mean that at least in some cases it functions as an article.

Consider, first, the following sequence (all examples must be read with a normal, nonemphatic intonation, unless indicated otherwise):

- (3) Widziałem jak do pokoju wchodził mężczyzna.
(I saw as to room was coming in man)
(4) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że mężczyzna stał przy oknie.
(When I entered I saw that man was standing by window)

There is no doubt that the second occurrence of the noun *mężczyzna* refers to the same person as the first one. We may, however, think of a situation in which we have not identified the man standing by the window with the same man we saw entering the room. According to what I wrote in my earlier papers (Szwedek 1975 and in this volume) we may, then, choose three ways for expressing this:

a) First, we may change the word order of (4), as in (5):

- (3) Widziałem jak do pokoju wchodził mężczyzna.
(5) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał mężczyzna.

which signals that the noun under consideration in (5) is noncoreferential to the same noun in (3).

b) The second way is to change the place of the sentence stress. According to the rules formulated in Szwedek (in this volume), the sentence stress is put in sentence final position and/or on the indefinite noun if such is present. Thus we would have (5) again.

The fact that the sentence stress is placed on the last meaningful element in the sentence and that it falls on the noun interpreted as noncoreferential, keeps the word order fixed in a specific, well-defined way and makes a) and b) above inseparable.

Notice that any changes in the word order or the place of the sentence stress in (5) produce undesirable results. With the change of the word order

we would get (4) discussed above, which excludes a noncoreferential interpretation of the noun under discussion. With a change of the sentence stress we would get (6) (considered as a sequence sentence to (3)):

- (6) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał mężczyzna.

Because of the infrequent occurrence of structures of this type it may be difficult to interpret it correctly. It seems, however, that *mężczyzna* in (6) is coreferential to the same noun in (3).

c) The third way is to add a pronoun to the noun, as in (7) (as a sequence to (3)):

- (7) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał jakiś mężczyzna.
(When I entered I saw that by window was standing some man)

Now the pronoun overtly signals noncoreferentiality of the noun in (7) with the noun in (3). If we change the word order as in (8):

- (8) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że jakiś mężczyzna stał przy oknie.

we will see that no change in the interpretation of coreferentiality follows. It must be most strongly emphasized at this point that whereas there is no difference in coreferentiality of the noun in (5) and (7) (which I repeat for convenience):

- (5) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał mężczyzna.
(7) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał jakiś mężczyzna.

in that in both the noun is noncoreferential with the noun in (3) (thus the pronoun is optional), there is an essential difference between (4) and (8):

- (4) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że mężczyzna stał przy oknie.
(8) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że jakiś mężczyzna stał przy oknie.

(8) is a possible sequence of (3) with the meaning of (5) (i.e., with a noncoreferential interpretation of the noun) only when the noun is preceded by the indefinite pronoun *jakiś*. Without that pronoun, as in (4), the noun is understood as coreferential to the noun in (3). We may conclude that in sentence initial position an indefinite pronoun is obligatory if the noun is to have a noncoreferential interpretation.

3. Consider, next, what can be changed in (4) on the condition that the coreferential interpretation of the noun is preserved. It has been demonstrated in Szwedek (1974a) and by (5) above that a change of the position of the noun from sentence initial to sentence final is followed by a change of the interpretation of coreferentiality of the shifted noun. Such a change of the position of the noun in (4) would yield (5), an impossible sequence sentence to (3)

if the nouns are to be interpreted as coreferential. Also a shift of the sentence stress from sentence final to sentence initial position, as in (9):

(9) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że mężczyzna stał przy oknie.

results in a sentence that obviously carries a contrastive meaning.

It is only proper to say here that points 2a and 2b and what has just been said above show that word order and the sentence stress in Polish cannot even be given the freedom they were allowed in my earlier papers where I suggested that a stressed noun has a noncoreferential meaning and an unstressed noun a coreferential meaning, and that it is usually the case that a noncoreferential noun is put in sentence final position because the most frequent intonation pattern is such that places the sentence stress at the end of the contour. In view of (6) and (9) this position must be further restricted. It seems that the final position (as in (6)) is so predominantly associated with a noncoreferential interpretation that if we move the sentence stress from it, it is not immediately clear that the noun is coreferential. Also, when we move the noun AND the stress to the initial position, as in (9), the result is an emphatic reading rather than a normal noncoreferential one. It means that only the stress on the noun in sentence final position renders a clear noncoreferential reading, and the lack of the stress on the noun in the initial position a clear coreferential reading. Other cases seem to be either contrastive or at best ambiguous (if correct at all).

As has already been said, coreferentiality of the noun can be marked by a demonstrative pronoun, as in (10):

(10) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że ten mężczyzna stał przy oknie.

(10) does not differ in coreferentiality from (4). Similarly as in the case of (7) and (8) we may, now, change the word order as in (11):

(11) Kiedy wszedłem zobaczyłem, że przy oknie stał ten mężczyzna.

Strange as this sentence may sound, it significantly differs from (5) in that in (5) the noun has a noncoreferential interpretation while in (11) the coreferentiality of the noun is marked by the pronoun. It proves that a definite pronoun is necessary before a noun in sentence final position if the noun is to be interpreted as coreferential to the noun in (3). The awkwardness of such sentences as (11) supports the point made above that word order has been allowed too much freedom and must further be restricted.

4. It would be interesting to see how English demonstrative pronouns and the definite article, and Polish demonstrative pronouns behave with respect to the sentence stress. Notice, first, that in the example (12):

(12) Give me (the, this, that) book.

each word may be stressed. In the following discussion we will ignore the sentence stress on *me* as it has no bearing on the problem dealt with here. Compare now the following three sentences:

(13) Give me the book.

(14) Give me this book.

(15) Give me that book.

all with the sentence stress on the verb. As has been demonstrated in Szwedek (in this volume), the normal sentence stress does not fall on a definite noun. In such a case the noun is interpreted as coreferential to some other noun mentioned before. Indeed, there is no doubt that the definite noun in (13)–(15) must be interpreted as coreferential to a noun mentioned before. What is most astonishing, however, is the fact that the demonstrative value of *this* and *that* is lost in (14) and (15), and the demonstrative pronouns express nothing more than the definite article.

Consider next the same structure with the sentence stress on *book*.

(16) Give me the *book*.

(17) Give me this *book*.

(18) Give me that *book*.

The noun in (16) can be interpreted in two ways:

a) as a "unique" noun (with the meaning: the Bible),

b) as contrasting, for example: the *book*, not the *hook*.

(17) and (18) seem to express contrast too, but I fail to imagine what context they could appear in.

The third set of examples is as interesting as the first one ((13)–(15)) and concerns the same structure with the sentence stress on the article and demonstrative pronouns.

(19) Give me *the* book.

(20) Give me *this* book.

(21) Give me *that* book.

In (19) the noun has the meaning *book of books*. (20) and (21) are of greater importance because only here, when stressed, do they have a truly demonstrative meaning. This becomes particularly clear when we compare the third set of examples ((19)–(21)) with the first one ((13)–(15)).

In Polish, an article-less language, we can only compare the two demonstrative pronouns *ten* and *tamtę*. As a frame we will take a structure similar to (12):

(22) Daj mi (tę, tamtą) książkę.

(Give me (this, that) book)

As in English, each element may bear the sentence stress. Again as in English we will disregard the stress on *mi* (which under stress has the form *mnie*) for the same reasons as in the English examples.

(23) *Daj mi tę książkę.*

(24) *Daj mi tamtą książkę.*

Also as for English, I feel there is no demonstrative meaning in the pronouns when they are unstressed. There may be a shade of "distance" implication in (24) but I am unable to substantiate this impression. Both, however, have a clearly coreferential meaning.

The second set consists of sentences with the stress on the noun:

(25) *Daj mi tę książkę.*

(26) *Daj mi tamtą książkę.*

(25) seems to carry a contrastive meaning (compare the English example (16) above). *Tę*, then, does not have a demonstrative meaning. I have been unable to find a context to which (26) could be a sequence sentence. In fact, I do not understand (26).

The third set of examples consists of sentences with the sentence stress on the pronoun:

(27) *Daj mi tę książkę.*

(28) *Daj mi tamtą książkę.*

And only when the demonstrative pronouns are stressed do the demonstrative value and the "distance" difference between them find full expression.

5. By way of conclusions let me repeat the main points of the present paper. I have tried to show that in Polish the demonstrative pronoun *ten* and the indefinite pronoun *jakiś* are obligatory in some cases depending on the word order and the place of the sentence stress, and therefore they function in a way similar to the English articles (this was exactly the situation in Old English). By analogy these pronouns spread from obligatory positions discussed above to other positions in the sentence producing such structures as, for example, *ten Erfurt (this Erfurt)*.

I have also tried to show how the demonstrative and article-like meaning of the pronouns is dependent on the sentence stress. The interesting observation is that in both English and Polish, if unstressed, they lose the demonstrative value and retain the article function only.

Another interesting point is a certain parallelism in the meaning of personal pronouns (3 sg.) discussed in Szwedek (in this volume) and the demonstrative pronouns discussed above with respect to the sentence stress. If unstressed, both express textual coreferentiality (i.e., the referent must be

mentioned earlier in the text), and if stressed, both go beyond the text or in the case of the personal pronouns beyond the immediate context. When stressed, they have an emphatic (contrastive) meaning and they specifically deny coreferentiality with the preceding noun or pronoun. All these meanings are in full agreement with the *new-given information* distinction as marked by the sentence stress. That is, when stressed, they are interpreted as referring to a new object (thus expressing selection from (contrast against) many other objects); when unstressed, they are understood as referring to an object already mentioned. It is clear that the role of the sentence stress in semantic interpretation has been underestimated and a complete description of it will require further detailed studies.

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