

A Minimalist Account of Balinese Binding

Shannon Bryant and Deniz Satk

1. Introduction

According to Wechsler (1999), the distribution of reflexives in Balinese provides an empirical challenge for GB/Minimalist theories of binding. Balinese, like many Austronesian languages, exhibits two transitive voice markings: Agentive Voice (AV), characterized by a nasal verbal prefix and SVO word order as in (1a), and Objective Voice (OV), which is morphologically unmarked and shows OVS word order as in (1b).

- (1) a. Tiang ngatap biu
1SG AV.cut banana
'I cut a banana.'
- b. Biu gatap tiang
banana OV.cut 1SG
'I cut a banana.'

In AV sentences, a complex reflexive¹ that corefers with its coargument must be post-verbal, as shown in (2a)-(2b). In OV, the reflexive must instead be pre-verbal, as shown in (2c)-(2d). It thus appears that promotion of an argument to matrix subject does not create a new antecedent for binding: as Wechsler points out, within a GB/Minimalist framework this would suggest that the landing site for Balinese subjects – which we take to be Spec,TP² – comprises an A'-position.

- (2) a. Ayu_i nyimpit awak-ne_i
Ayu AV.pinch self-POSS.3SG
'Ayu_i pinched herself_i.'
- b. *Awak-ne_i nyimpit Ayu_i
self-POSS.3SG AV.pinch Ayu
'She_i pinched Ayu_i.'
- c. Awak-ne_i jimpit Ayu_i
self-POSS.3SG OV.pinch Ayu
'She_i pinched Ayu_i.'
- d. *Ayu_i jimpit awak-ne_i
Ayu OV.pinch self-POSS.3SG
'Ayu_i pinched herself_i.'

On the other hand, in raising constructions with the verb *ngenah* 'seem' (which does not undergo the AV/OV alternation) the raised subject appears able to antecede an anaphor within an experiencer-PP adjoined to the matrix clause, as shown in (3). This would suggest that Spec,TP is in fact an A-position, because movement in this case appears to feed binding:

- (3) Ayu_i ngenah sig awak-ne_i jelek sajan.
Ayu seem to self-POSS.3SG bad very
'Ayu_i seemed to herself_i to be very ugly.'

* Shannon Bryant, Harvard University, sgbryant@g.harvard.edu and Deniz Satk, Harvard University, deniz@g.harvard.edu. The data that is presented in this paper was primarily obtained via a mixture of in person and Zoom elicitation sessions from a single native speaker of Balinese, with additional data from discussion with Balinese linguist I Nyoman Udayana. We are grateful to I Nyoman Udayana and I Made Subagiarta for the data presented here, and to Jonathan Bobaljik, Isabelle Charnavel, I Wayan Arka, and the WCCFL39 audience for comments.

¹ Balinese has many different complex reflexive anaphors, all derived from words meaning *body*, as is common across languages (see e.g. Faltz 1985). Here and throughout we exemplify with the low register complex reflexive *awakne*. Following Haiduck (2014), we assume that the possessive suffix *-ne* is attached to the simplex anaphor *awak*. Note that *awakne* is unspecified for both gender and number.

² Although nothing crucial hinges on this assumption, for further evidence on whether the matrix subject position is Spec,TP, the reader is referred to Wechsler & Arka (1998). There is ample evidence from raising, relativization, extraposition, quantifier float and control that the subject moves to Spec,TP (under a Minimalist account) in OV constructions, just as in AV.

In light of these facts, Wechsler argues that Balinese reflexives cannot be accounted for within GB/Minimalist approaches to binding without stipulating variable A/A' status for Spec,TP. Dubbing this seeming paradox the "Balinese Bind," Wechsler concludes that GB/Minimalist approaches are therefore at an empirical disadvantage as compared to HPSG, within which this problem does not arise.³

Our goal in this paper is to show that the Balinese Bind disappears when the wider distributional properties of *awakne* are taken into account. As observed in Udayana (2013), Balinese complex reflexives do not always require an overt local antecedent. In particular, Udayana shows that they can also be used logophorically to refer to a person whose speech, thoughts, or feelings are being reported.⁴ This is illustrated in (4), where *awakne* is neither local to nor c-commanded by its antecedent, *I Sari*, but does occur in a context that expresses I Sari's first personal perspective (namely, her feelings about her marital status).

- (4) Ento ngae I Sari kendel awakne suba makurenan.
 that AV.make ART Sari happy self-POSS.3SG PERF MV.spouse
 'That Made I Sari happy that she was already married.' [Udayana 2013: 217(55)]

Building on Udayana's insights on the logophoric uses of *awakne*, we show that *awakne* also appears to be logophorically licensed in raising constructions like (3) above, rather than bound by the raised subject. This finding obviates the need to assign variable A/A' status to Spec,TP, thus unraveling the Balinese Bind.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 investigates of logophoric behavior of *awakne* using diagnostics derived from Charnavel & Zlogar (2015). Specifically, we show that the reflexive experiencer in Balinese raising constructions displays logophoric properties, revealing that it is not locally A-bound by the raised subject. Section 3 offers an analytic account of Balinese reflexive binding that extends the logophoric A-binder hypothesis of Charnavel (2020). We compare this proposal to the Agree-based account of Levin (2014) in Section 4, and we conclude in Section 5.

2. The Balinese Facts

This section explores the logophoric properties of Balinese *awakne*, with particular focus on the properties observed in constructions like (3) above. Just like the English complex anaphor *herself*, *awakne* permits both local and non-local antecedents. When the antecedent is local, *awakne* is compatible with both animate and inanimate antecedents, as shown in (5a)-(5d).

- | | | | |
|--------|---|----|--|
| (5) a. | Yesus ngrujuk awak-ne
Jesus AV.reference self-POSS.3SG
'Jesus references himself.' | c. | Injil ngrujuk awak-ne
Bible AV.reference self-POSS.3SG
'The Bible references itself.' |
| b. | Ayu demen ajak foto-n
Ayu happy with photo-LNK
awak-ne.
self-POSS.3SG
'Ayu likes a picture of herself.' | d. | Buku-ne misi foto-n
Book-DEF contain photo-LNK
awak-ne.
self-POSS.3SG
'The book contains a picture of itself.' |

(6a) shows that *awakne* is also compatible with non-local antecedents⁵ (cf. Udayana 2013 for similar examples). But as captured in the contrast between (6a) and (6b), only animate non-local antecedents are permitted: inanimate DPs such as *surat kabar* 'newspaper' cannot serve as non-local antecedents for *awakne*, even when expressing the source of information.

³ We refer the reader to Wechsler (1999) for the details surrounding an HPSG account.

⁴ Crucially, Balinese reflexives are not free to take any prominent antecedent in the discourse, in contrast with personal pronouns: see Chapter 4 in Udayana (2013) for relevant discussion.

⁵ Notice in (6a) that unlike in English, non-local antecedence is not blocked by the presence of a syntactic coargument in Balinese. Balinese complex reflexives thus appear to comprise *semireflexives* in the sense of Reuland et al. (2020)).

- (6) a. Nyoman_i ningeh uli Arta_j Ayu_k nanjung awak-ne_{*i,j,k}
 Nyoman AV.hear from Arta Ayu AV.kick self-POSS.3SG
 ‘Nyoman_i heard from Arta_j that Ayu_k kicked him/herself_{*i,j,k}.’
- b. Nyoman_i ningeh uli [surat kabar]_j Ayu_k nanjung awak-ne_{*i,*j,k}
 Nyoman AV.hear from document news Ayu AV.kick self-POSS.3SG
 ‘Nyoman_i heard from [the newspaper]_j that Ayu_k kicked him/her/itself_{*i,*j,k}.’

This is consistent with previous observations in the literature that reflexives can take non-local antecedents only when the antecedent is a logophoric center (see Charnavel 2020 and citations therein). As argued in Charnavel & Sportiche (2016), inanimates can never be logophoric centers, since they necessarily lack mental perspective.

As shown in (7), logophoric interpretations are also available for reflexive experiencers in Balinese raising constructions.

- (7) Nyoman_i ngaden Ayu_j ngenah sig awak-ne_{i/j} jelek sajan
 Nyoman think Ayu seem to self-3POSS bad very
 ‘Nyoman_i thinks Ayu_j seems to himself/herself_{i/j} to be very ugly.’

The fact that *awakne* can be logophorically interpreted in this configuration already weakens the purported paradox of Wechsler (1999), since it shows that other licensing possibilities exist beyond local binding by the raised subject. We propose that reflexive experiencers in raising constructions are in fact *always* logophorically licensed, and never bound by the raised subject, thus eliminating the paradox altogether. We show this by using two diagnostics for antecedence by an attitude holder derived from Charnavel & Zlogar (2015): *obligatory de se* and *double orientation*, defined in (8) and (9) respectively.

- (8) **Obligatory de se test:** If a reflexive is anteceded by a non-local attitude holder, it must be compatible with the first-personal perspective of the antecedent.
- (9) **Double orientation test:** If a reflexive is anteceded by a non-local attitude holder, an evaluative expression substituted for the reflexive can be evaluated by the antecedent as well as the speaker.

Starting with the obligatory *de se* test, it has often been observed that non-local antecedence by an attitude holder is unacceptable when paired with a *de re* context, in which referential identity between the reflexive and its antecedent is inconsistent with the beliefs of the attitude holder (Huang & Liu 2000, Schlenker 2003, Anand 2006, Charnavel 2020, a.o.). For example, the English sentence in (10) is unacceptable in context in which John doesn’t recognize himself, as shown in (11).

- (10) According to John_i, the article was written by Ann and himself_i. [Kuno 1987: 121]
- (11) *Context: John is looking at a research article that he co-wrote with Ann many years ago, but does not recognize it as one of his own papers. Instead, he falsely assumes that Ann’s co-author is a colleague of his who happens to have the same name as him.*
- # According to John_i, the article was written by Ann and himself_i. [Charnavel & Zlogar 2015: (17)]

As shown in (12), the reflexive experiencer in raising constructions in Balinese cannot be paired with a *de re* context either.

- (12) *Context: Ayu is very drunk at a weekend party at her friend’s house. She sees a portrait of herself that her friend has hanging up and calls the woman in the portrait ugly, though she does not realize that she is the woman in the photo.*
- # Ayu_i ngenah sig awak-ne_i jelek sajan
 Ayu seem to self-3POSS very bad
 ‘Ayu_i seems to herself_i to be very ugly.’

Importantly, the infelicity of the example prior does not arise from the unavailability of *de re* readings of raised subjects in Balinese. As illustrated with the context-sentence pair in (13) below, raising with *ngengah* 'seem' is generally compatible with *de re* contexts. Hence, the problem with (12) does not appear to be with referring to the object of belief as *Ayu*; rather, infelicity arises from referring to the belief holder with *awakne*, as we would predict if *awakne* is here anteceded by an attitude holder.

(13) *Context: Intoxicated, Ayu looks at a picture of Nyoman but doesn't realize it's him.*

✓ *Nyoman ngenah sig Ayu jelek sajan.*
Nyoman seem to Ayu bad very
 'Nyoman seems to Ayu to be very ugly.'

Turning now to the double orientation test, Charnavel & Zlogar (2015) propose that evaluative expressions can be used to determine whether a reflexive takes an attitudinal antecedent. Specifically, we can replace the reflexive with an evaluative expression and check the available interpretations: if the expression can be evaluated from the perspective of the antecedent rather than the speaker, then the antecedent is an attitude holder, and the reflexive falls within its attitudinal domain. Applying this test to (10) as shown in (14), we find that it is possible for the author great in the eyes of either the speaker or the attitude holder, John.

(14) According to John, the article was written by Anne and a great author. Charnavel & Zlogar 2015: (15)]

When we apply this test to the raising sentence in (3), we again find that an evaluative expression substituted for the reflexive can be evaluated from antecedent's perspective rather than the speaker's, providing further evidence for antecedence by an attitude holder:

(15) *Context: Ayu thinks some person is well-behaved, but you think that same person is not well-behaved. Ayu is upset because that person doesn't like her appearance.*

Question: Why is Ayu upset?

✓ *Ayu ngenah sig anak sane masolah becik jelek sajan (nanging tiang ngerasa anak-e*
Ayu seem to person REL behave good bad very (but 1SG feel person-DEF
ento tusing masolah becik).
DEM NEG behave good)
 'Ayu seems to a well-behaved person to be very ugly (but I think that person is not well-behaved).'

These two tests suggest that *awakne* is logophoric in raising constructions like (3): we would not expect these properties if *awakne* were simply A-bound from Spec,TP. If this is right, we would predict that subject raising is not necessary to license the reflexive. As (16) shows, this prediction is borne out.

(16) *Context: Arta took a photo of Ayu and Nyoman. Ayu doesn't like the way she looks in the photo, so she hid the photo in the closet.*

Question: Why did Ayu hide the photo?

✓ *Ngenah sig awak-ne_i ia_i jelek sajan.*
seem to self-POSS.3SG 3SG bad very
 'It seems to herself that she is very ugly.'

We conclude that, despite appearances, the raised subject in (3) does not locally A-bind the reflexive. There is therefore no need to assign variable status to Spec,TP in Balinese and, hence, no Balinese Bind.

3. Analysis

The previous section established that the reflexive experiencer in raising constructions is logophoric, rather than anteceded by an overt local binder. But this raises a new problem for a GB/Minimalist

approach to binding: seeming exceptionalism to Condition A, a purported binding universal. In this section, we pursue a formal analysis for Balinese following Charnavel (2020), according to which all reflexives, including logophoric reflexives, are locally A-bound in accordance with Condition A.

As in Charnavel (2020), we assume a phase-based formulation of Condition A, given in (17). We also adopt Charnavel's hypothesis that logophoric reflexives are not truly exempt from Condition A but, rather, are covertly bound by a null logophoric pronoun, pro_{log} – the syntactic realization of the perspectival center associated with the domain containing the reflexive. Under this hypothesis, every Spell-Out domain may optionally contain a logophoric projection, LogP , which hosts pro_{log} in its specifier. (Like other pronouns, pro_{log} does not itself need a local binder.) Hence, logophoric reflexives, just like plain reflexives, are A-bound within their minimal Spell-Out domain, as shown in (18).

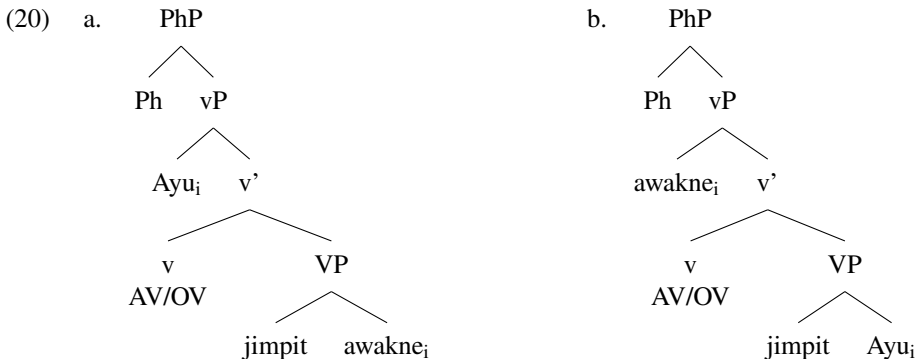
(17) **Condition A:** An anaphor must be bound within its smallest Spell-Out domain.

- (18) a. **Plain reflexive:** $[_{\text{PhP}} \text{Ph}^0 [_{\text{XP}} \dots \text{DP}_i \dots \text{reflexive}_i \dots]]$
 b. **Logophoric reflexive:** $[_{\text{PhP}} \text{Ph}^0 [_{\text{LogP}} \text{pro}_{\text{log}-i} \text{OP}_{\text{LOG}} [_{\text{XP}} \dots \text{reflexive}_i \dots]]]$

The head of LogP , OP_{LOG} , semantically enforces the first-personal perspective of pro_{log} 's referent, as shown in the simplified denotation in (19). This means that every phase may be specified as being presented from the perspective of some individual. A reflexive bound by pro_{log} must therefore be consistent with the perspective of the referent of pro_{log} . Adopting this hypothesis allows us to derive the interpretive properties of logophoric reflexives in Balinese without positing homophony.

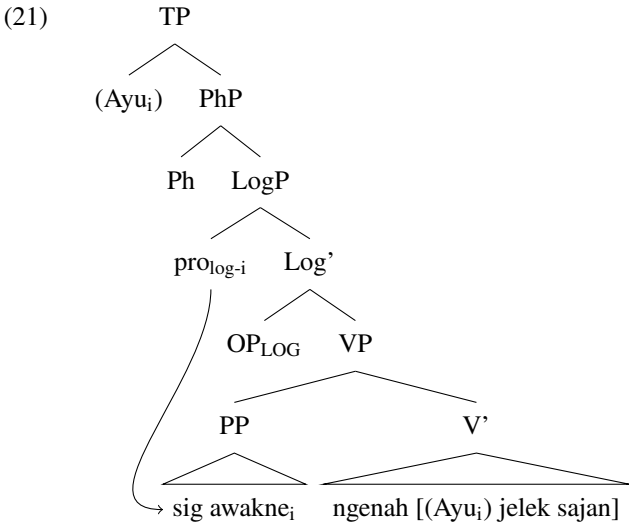
(19) $[[\text{OP}_{\text{LOG}}]] = \lambda P.\lambda x: P$ from x 's first-personal perspective

With this background in place, we can account for the binding paradigm exemplified in (2)-(3). Beginning with basic transitive cases, as in much previous literature, we assume that Balinese AV and OV sentences are structurally identical within the first phase, with the external argument c-commanding the internal argument in base position. As shown in (20a), when the internal argument is reflexive, it is locally bound by the external argument (which we assume to first Merge within the Spell-Out domain⁶) prior to promotion of either argument to matrix subject. This correctly accounts for the acceptability of both (2a) and (2c). Conversely, as shown in (20b), when the external argument is reflexive, it cannot be bound in its base position, immediately ruling out (2b); in order to also rule out (2d), we suggest that movement of the internal argument renders it external to the Spell-Out domain and, hence, inaccessible.



As for raising constructions, we propose the structure in (21), in which the reflexive experiencer is locally bound by pro_{log} . Condition A is thereby satisfied regardless of whether raising occurs.

⁶ See Charnavel & Sportiche (2016) for relevant discussion. We leave open the identity of the phase head.

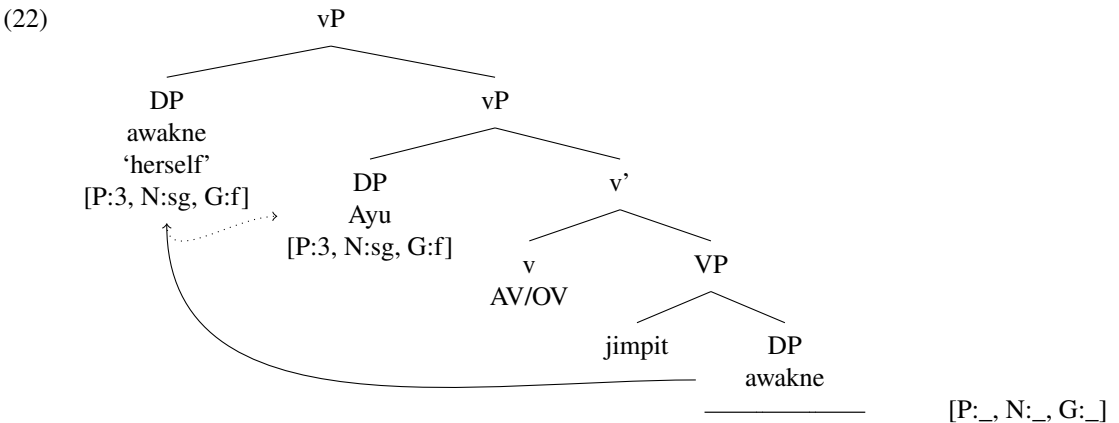


While we locate LogP along the verbal spine, another option is to locate it within the experiencer-PP, in light of Citko’s (2014) claim that PPs—with or without subjects—may also comprise phases. What is important for us is that binding happens within the smallest Spell-Out domain containing the reflexive, which crucially excludes Spec,TP.

To summarize, we propose that reflexive binding in Balinese is uniformly subject to a phase-based Condition A. Reflexive experiencers in raising constructions, which we have shown to be logophoric, are not bound from matrix Spec,TP, but by a null logophoric pronoun located lower in the clause. This proposal allows us to sidestep the issue of whether Spec,TP is an A- or A'-position in Balinese while maintaining an exceptionless Condition A. Hence, contrary to the claims of Wechsler (1999), reflexive binding in Balinese can be fully accounted for within a GB/Minimalist approach.

4. Levin (2014) and the Balinese Bind

Before concluding, we briefly discuss a prior solution to the Balinese Bind offered in Levin (2014). Levin adopts the Agree-based binding theory of Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd (2011), according to which reflexive anaphors are deficient in ϕ -features and therefore require ϕ -agreement to be licensed. An illustrative tree is given below, showing the derivation for (2a) and (2c).



According to this approach, in both AV and OV, the internal argument raises to an adjoined projection (Spec,vP) above the external argument, as shown above. A reflexive internal argument is then able to agree with the external argument, prior to subsequent movement of the latter (in AV) or the former (in OV) to Spec,TP. In order to rule out examples like (2b) and (2d), Levin assumes that the external

argument Merges in the phase edge (rather than within the Spell-Out domain, as assumed here) and that Agree with the internal argument is blocked by a strict Phase Impenetrability Condition. Finally, to account for raising constructions like (3), Levin suggests that the reflexive experiencer covertly moves out of PP to Spec,vP, where it c-commands (and, hence, can Agree with) the embedded subject before raising occurs.⁷ Levin's Agree-based account of Balinese binding thus captures the central binding pattern in (2) and (3) without assigning variable A/A' status to Spec,TP: it simply sidesteps this problem.

We believe, however, that there are two major shortcomings with Levin's approach. First, it does not predict the logophoric properties of *awakne* first noted by Udayana (2013), and developed further in section 2 of our paper. In particular, it is unclear under Levin's account *why* the reflexive experiencer would have logophoric properties in raising constructions, since such properties are not a product of Agree. Second, it does not predict the acceptability of examples like (16) above, in which binding occurs in the absence of raising. The embedded clause appears to be finite: it licenses the presence of the overt subject, *ia*, a property which is usually understood to indicate finiteness.⁸ This implies that the embedded subject is contained in the Spell-Out domain of a phase and is therefore not accessible for further operations, including Agree; this is especially so under the strict conception of the Phase Impenetrability Condition adopted in Levin (2014). Because ϕ -agreement with the embedded subject is unavailable in (16), Levin's account would predict the reflexive experiencer to likewise be unavailable, contrary to fact.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this paper, we hope to have demonstrated that, contrary to Wechsler (1999), Balinese does not present a paradox for GB/Minimalist theories of binding. In both simple transitive and raising sentences, reflexives are bound within the smallest Spell-Out domain, which crucially excludes Spec,TP: raising to subject can never create new antecedents for binding, so there is no need to assign variable status to Spec,TP. Despite the illusion of local binding from Spec,TP in raising constructions, reflexives in these examples were shown to in fact be logophoric. While perhaps surprising, we note that raising constructions do express someone's first-personal perspective – namely, the perspective of the person for whom the seeming holds. In order to report on how the world seems to Ayu, for instance, we must have access to Ayu's perspective. By adopting the logophoric A-binder hypothesis of Charnavel (2020), we are able to account for reflexive experiencers in Balinese raising constructions without appealing to binding by the raised subject, and without weakening Condition A.

We would like to close by noting that Balinese reflexives challenge a long-standing generalization that has often been made in the literature. It was first pointed out in Faltz (1985) that long-distance anaphors (what we have here treated as logophoric) tend to be monomorphemic; Pica (1987) strengthens this claim, stating that long-distance anaphors *must* be monomorphemic. Perhaps the most studied example of a long-distance monomorphemic anaphor is the Chinese reflexive *ziji*. *Ziji* can have long-distance antecedents as the syntactic object of the embedded verb:

- (23) Zhangsan_i zhidao Lisi_j xihuan ziji_{i/j}.
 Zhangsan know Lisi like self
 'Zhangsan_i knows Lisi_j likes himself_{i/j}.' [Giblin 2016: 58]

Pica's (1987) position – which has since become the dominant view in the literature – is that the availability of non-local binding in examples like the one above follows from the monomorphemicity of *ziji*. The morphologically complex reflexive *ta-ziji*, which has the third person pronoun *ta* prefixed onto *ziji*, precludes the possibility of long-distance binding in any context:

⁷ This idea echos the proposal of Rooryck & Vanden Wyngaerd (2011) for English raising constructions. There it is noted that if the entire experiencer-PP moved to Spec,vP to a position c-commanding the external argument, the reflexive would not be able to value its ϕ -features because it would be too deeply embedded.

⁸ See, for example, Pesetsky (2021) on the relationship between finiteness and subject extraction.

- (24) Zhangsan_i zhidao Lisi_j xihuan ta-ziji_{*i/j}.
 Zhangsan know Lisi like 3SG-self
 ‘Zhangsan_i knows Lisi_j likes himself_{*i/j}.’ [Giblin 2016: 58]

It is easy to find counterexamples to Pica’s generalization, however (see e.g. Charnavel 2020, Reuland et al. 2020 and citations therein). For example, *herself* in English, which seems to be a complex anaphor, can have non-local antecedents in certain contexts. One way to avoid this problem is given by Haspelmath (2008), who provides the most generous interpretation possible of this generalization:

- (25) **Haspelmath’s Universal 7:** If a language has different reflexive pronouns in local and long-distance contexts, the local reflexive pronoun is at least as complex phonologically as the long-distance one.

Although we have focused only on Balinese complex reflexives in this paper, Balinese in fact also has a simplex reflexive, *awak*. Unlike complex *awakne*, which can always optionally be bound long-distance, simplex *awak* must always be bound locally, as illustrated in (26) (Udayana 2013 chapter 5).

- (26) Nyoman_i ngaden Ayu_j nanjung awak_{*i,j}
 Nyoman think Ayu AV.kick self
 ‘Nyoman_i thinks Ayu_j kicked herself_{*i,j}.’

Balinese exhibits the exact opposite pattern than what is predicted by the universal in (25). The simplex anaphor is monomorphemic but can never occur in long-distance contexts. On the other hand, the complex anaphor is bimorphemic, and yet permits long-distance (i.e., logophoric) interpretations. Balinese is therefore a counterexample to both Pica’s (1987) generalization and Haspelmath’s (2008) universal, providing additional evidence that the relationship between morphological complexity and long-distance antecedence cannot be maintained.

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