

Pragmatics

Thomas Wagner

Reference

Reference is an act in which a speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable a listener, or reader, to **identify** something

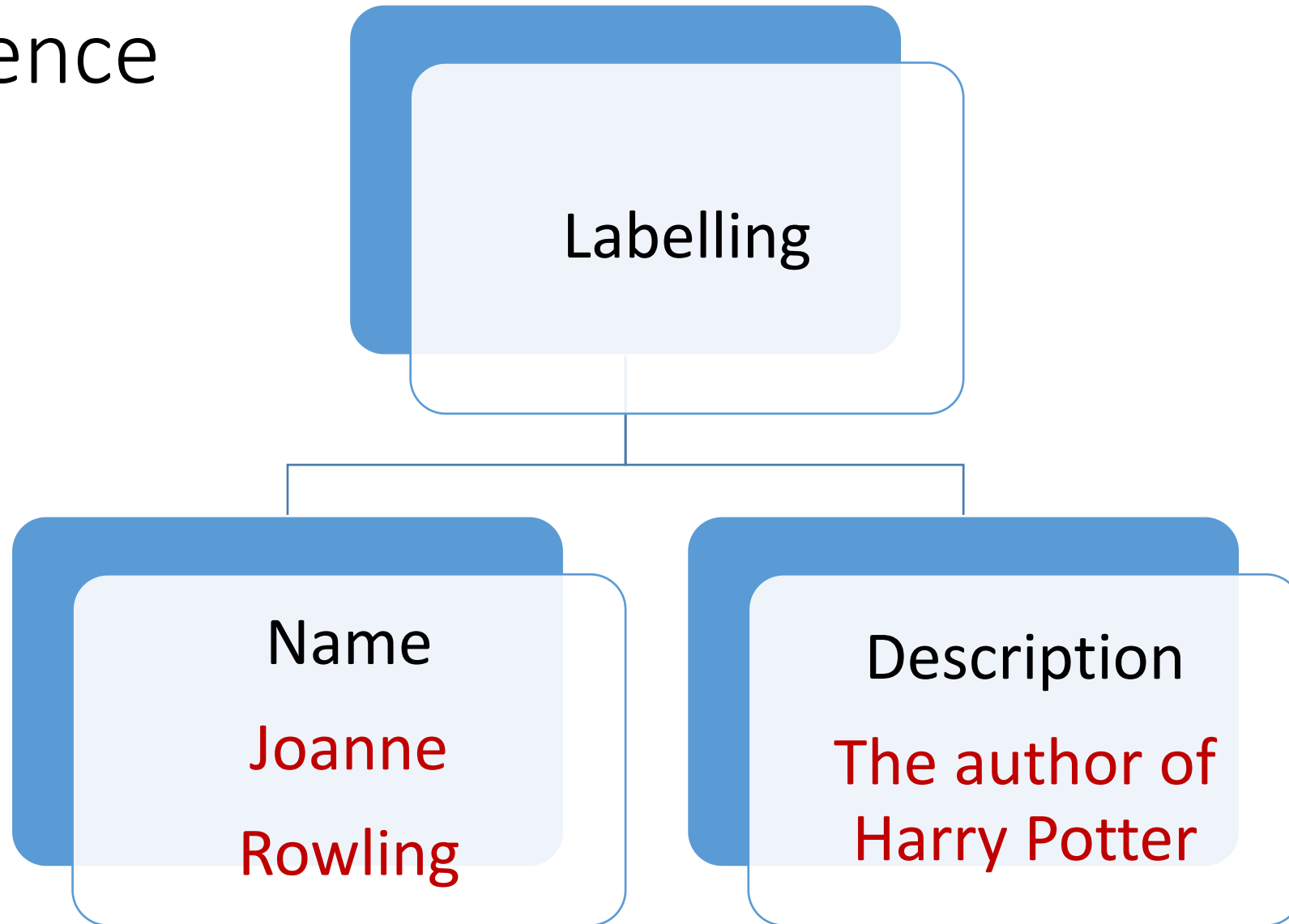
Reference

How do you identify something
linguistically?

Reference

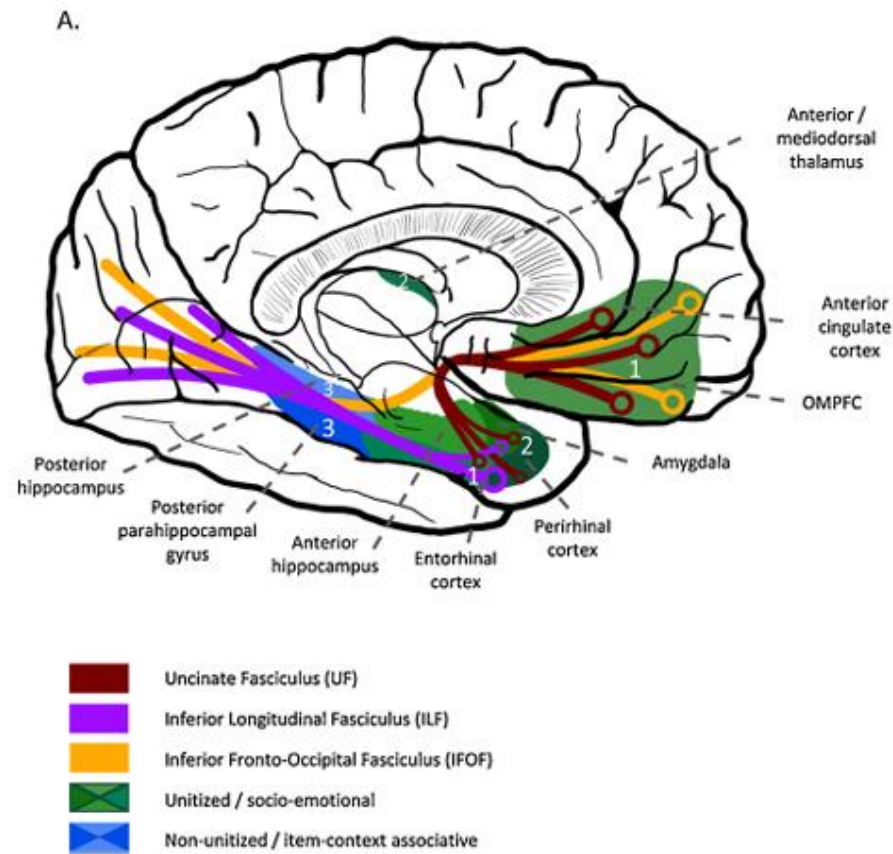


Reference

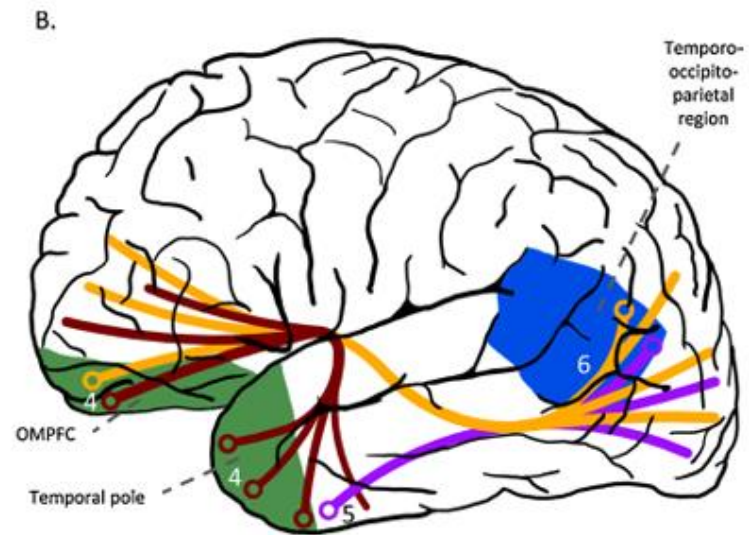


Reference

T. O'Rourke and R. de Diego Balaguer



Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews 108 (2020) 308–321



Reference

- referring expressions

- proper nouns

Shakespeare

- **definite** noun phrases

the professor

- **indefinite** noun phrases

a student

- pronouns

he, her, it, them

Reference

- referring expressions

- Take **this** !
- Look at **him** !

→ needs **inference**



- *Oh, look, Prof “Don’t-ask-me-any-questions” is late again !* 😊
- *Mr Aftershave is late today !* 😊

Reference

- referring expressions
- Prof Wagner
- Jack the Ripper
- Shakespeare
- Santa Claus
- Batman
- the tooth fairy



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Do all **referring expressions** always have a physical referent?

Reference

- Do all **referring expressions** always have a physical referent?
- There is a **man** outside with lots of money.
- He wants to marry a **woman** with lots of money.
- “Behold, a little cloud like a **man**'s hand is rising from the sea.”

Kings, 18:44

Reference

- Do all **referring expressions** always have a physical referent?
- There is a **man** outside with lots of money. **referential**
- He wants to marry a **woman** with lots of money. **attributive**
- There was no sign of the killer. **inference ?**

Reference

- Do all **referring expressions** always have a physical referent?
- Can I borrow your **Shakespeare**?
- Yeah, **it's** over there on the table?
- Where is the **cheese sandwich** sitting?
- **He's** over there by the window?

Reference

- maintaining referents
- There is a **man** outside with lots of money. **He** looks weird
- He wants to marry a **woman** with lots of money. **She** would need to be pretty, too.

Reference

- maintaining referents – more than one act of referencing

- There is a **man** outside with lots of money. **He** looks weird
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antecedent

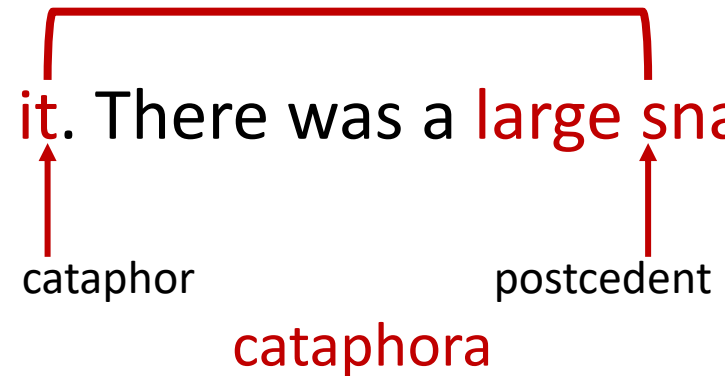
anaphor

anaphora

Reference

- maintaining referents – **more than one** act of referencing

- I turned the corner and almost stepped on **it**. There was a **large snake** in the middle of the path.



Reference

- zero anaphora / **ellipsis**
- Peel an onion and slice it.
- Drop the slices into hot oil.
- **Cook** for three minutes.



Reference

- when **referent** and **sense** contradict each other → **irony** 😊
- funny examples (ca. 4')
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irQBb4dW3NU>