Language Diversity: A Key to Understanding Human Diversity

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A micro-investigation: North-East England
Standard English  Sunderland (and Tyneside)

a) I saw him.            I saw him.
b) We saw him.           We saw him.
c) He saw us.            He saw us.
d) He saw me.            He saw us.
Standard English, Sunderland

a) Are you going with us?

Tyneside

b) Are you going with we?
Standard English, Sunderland

a) This shirt needs mending.
b) I might be able to help you.

tynside

c) This shirt needs mended.
d) I **might could** help you.
a) Standard English, Tyneside
   help /hElp/

b) Sunderland, most non-standard English of England
   help /Elp/
a) Standard English (with plural reference)
   **You** are leaving.

b) Sunderland
   **Youse** are leaving.

c) Other non-standard
   **You lot / You guys / Y’all** are leaving.
a) Standard English, Sunderland (with singular, familiar reference)
   Are you leaving?

b) Archaic Standard English
   Art thou leaving?

c) Murton
   Is thou leaving?
A macro-investigation: Reference tracking
a) John and Mary went for a walk in the garden. John saw a butterfly. He pointed it out to Mary. She told him that she had not seen butterflies in the garden for a long time. He asked her if she thought it meant that the environment was getting cleaner.

b) John and Bill went for a walk in the garden. John saw a butterfly. He pointed it out to Bill. He told him that he had not seen butterflies in the garden for a long time. He asked him if he thought it meant that the environment was getting cleaner.
John saw Bill. He ran away.

Adults’ versus children’s use of pronouns in English
Switch reference: Haruai

a) Mö hön rg ng ng-ön, köpa dwöNa.
woman pig stone put put-ss leaf went
‘A woman built a pig house, and went for some leaves.’
b) Nöbö mörö wök pg-mön, glñN gyo gyö r-öN-a.
man garden clear get-ds bushfowl gyo gyö did
‘A man cleared his garden, and a bushfowl went “gyo gyö”.’
Obviation (Plains Cree)

Меµкwa еµпимохтеµ-t, иspатинамw wаµpaht-am, еµамmaciweµ-yit ayêsiyiniw-a, naµreµw-a. E~kwa kitaµpam-emw kitaµpamкан
еµканавµpамканемhикеµ-yit
ayêsiyiniw-a нанаптавµpан-amuµyit. Kискемyиm-emw
ahyahciyiniw-a.
While $h_{ep}$ was walking, $h_{ep}$ saw a person$_o$ climbing a hill, a man$_o$. Then $h_{ep}$ observed him$_o$, spying, the person$_o$ who was seeking people$_o$. $h_{ep}$ knew him$_o$ to be a Blackfoot$_o$. 

$P =$ proximative

$O =$ obviative
Reference tracking in American Sign Language
Logophoric (Gokana)

a) $\text{Ae} \sim \text{kO ae} \sim \text{dO} \sim$.
   ‘He$_i$ said that he$_j$ fell.’

b) $\text{Ae} \sim \text{kO ae} \sim \text{dO-} \text{E} \sim$.
   ‘He$_i$ said that he$_i$ fell.’
Emphatic pronouns (German)

a) Die Männer begrüßten ihre Freunde und ihre Kinder.
   ‘The men greeted their friends and their children.’

b) Die Männer begrüßten ihre Freunde und deren Kinder.
   ‘The men greeted their friends and their children.’
Conjunction reduction: English, Dyirbal

a) I saw you and came here. [sc. and I came here]

b) Nganja nginuna buran, baninyu.
   I.nom you.acc saw, came.here
   ‘I saw you and [you/*I] came here.’
Sonó el teléfono y supo que la iban a matar.

rang the telephone and (he/she/it-)knew that her (they-)were-going to kill

‘The telephone rang and she knew that they were going to kill her.’

(Arturo Pérez-Reverte, La Reina del Sur)
!The telephone rang and knew that they were going to kill her.

[sc. ... and the telephone knew ...]
Exotic Europe: Relative clauses
a) I saw the man yesterday. The man left today.

b) I gave the book to the man yesterday. The man left today.

c) The man whom I saw yesterday left today.

\[ \text{NP}[\text{the man S[whom I saw — yesterday]}_{S}]_{NP} \text{ left today} \]

d) The man to whom I gave the book left today.

\[ \text{NP}[\text{the man S[to whom I gave the book — yesterday]}_{S}]_{NP} \text{ left today} \]
la misión [a la que ha dedicado su vida —]  
‘the mission [to which he has dedicated his life —]’

el llibre [de què parlaves —]  
‘the book [of which you were speaking —]’
a) Gakusei ga hon o katta.
   student nom book acc bought
   ‘the student bought the book.’

b) [gakusei ga katta] hon
   student nom bought book
   ‘the book [which the student bought —]’
Persian

a) Ketâbhâ-râ be mardhâ dâde budid.
   books-acc to men given you.are
   ‘You have given the books to the men.’

b) mardhâi [ke ketâbhâ-râ be ânhâ dâde budid]
   men that books-acc to them given you.are
   ‘the man [to whom you have given the books —]’
Non-standard English

a) the girl [that her eighteenth birthday was on that day]
b) You come to a group [that you have to eat certain foods].
Non-standard Spanish

Es el periódico [que en casa estamos suscritos].
lit. ‘It is the paper that at home we are subscribed’
i.e. ‘It is the paper to which at home we are subscribed’
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