

## NO NAME: THE ALLOSEMY VIEW<sup>\*</sup>

*Andrés Saab & Nicolás Lo Guercio*

*Abstract.* According to certain versions of predicativism, names denote metalinguistic predicates of a certain type, e.g. the name *Perón* as it occurs in the sentence *Perón died in 1974* denotes a predicate more or less paraphrasable as “being called Perón” (Burge 1973, Matushansky 2008 and Fara 2011, among others). The metalinguistic theory of names is claimed to be superior in nontrivial ways to direct reference theories, according to which names contribute an individual without the mediation of descriptions (Kripke 1980). The alleged triumph of predicativism is that by assuming the “being called N” property as basic, both referential and non-referential uses of proper names can be given a uniform semantic analysis. By contrast, the referentialist needs to resort to homonymy or semantic ambiguity. In addition, there are some systematic connections between referential and predicative uses of names that at first glance also seem to favor predicativism. The goal of this paper is to present an alternative syntax, semantics and pragmatics of proper names. We assume that grammatical categories and the associated meanings that they are

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supposed to encode are not grammatical primitives, but epiphenomena that result from the particular way in which syntax combines functional material and lexical Roots. Before syntax, lexical Roots have no detectable meanings. On this account, there are no names before syntax, as there are no nouns, verbs or adjectives. Names are thus seen as the result of a particular syntactic configuration whose semantic realization is that of contributing an individual. Metalinguistic uses of names, and other derived uses, are involved in a different syntactic scheme, one that makes a name Root a predicate of a certain type. Besides their different syntactic basis, we argue that metalinguistic inferences in both referential and predicative uses of names have a pragmatic source. According to the theory we propose, then, the so-called Being Called Condition is neither a syntactic nor a semantic primitive. Under this conception of proper names the uniformity argument does not hold and the adduced linguistic evidence cannot lead to any (meta-)semantic consideration.

*Key words:* predicativism, referentialism; allosemy; Roots; polysemy; pragmatics

## 1. Introduction

According to a prevailing view in philosophy of language proper names like *Perón* refer non-descriptively to objects, and contribute only those objects to propositional content. In line with standard use, we will refer to this view as *referentialism*.<sup>1</sup> On standard versions of this view (Kaplan

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that referentialism is often sustained *in tandem* with a related (though different) thesis, namely Rigidity, the view that a proper name's reference is stable across possible worlds (Kripke 1980). Now, although this additional thesis is crucial, we will not be discussing it in detail in what follows, since it would drive us away from our main point.

1989, Salmon 1986, Soames 2002), sentences express structured propositions constituted by objects and predicates (or relations) arranged in a certain way. Thus a sentence like

(1) Perón died in 1974.

expresses a singular proposition constituted by the individual Perón itself and the property *Die-in-1974*:

(1') <<Perón>, *Die-in-1974*>

Referentialism has some initial appeal, since *prima facie* the structure in (1') respects our semantic intuitions regarding the truth-conditions of (1). However, in recent work the prevailing view has been challenged on the basis of putative linguistic evidence. Consider the following sentences:

(2) Alfreds are usually good filmmakers.

(3) The Orson who filmed *A Touch of Evil* is a good filmmaker.

(4) The studio hired an Orson and an Alfred.

(5) Every Alfred in the studio is a valuable employee.

(6) There are two Alfreds in the studio.

The foregoing examples suggest that proper names can occur as predicates. First, intuitively their truth does not depend on what happens with some particular individuals like Orson and Alfred, but

on whether there is one or more individuals called *Orson* or *Alfred* that possess certain properties. In addition, (2)-(6) reveal that proper names can appear as bare plurals as well as complements of definite, indefinite, quantifier and numeric determiners, in a way that parallels the behavior of typical common count nouns.

This kind of linguistic data led several philosophers and linguists (Sloat 1969, Burge 1973, Elbourne 2002, Matushansky 2008, Sawyer 2010, and Fara 2015a, among others) to argue for an alternative to referentialism. One influential view in this respect is Metalinguistic Predicativism (MP for short), according to which proper names are predicates of a certain type, viz. metalinguistic predicates.<sup>2</sup> On this account, the proper name *Perón* denotes a predicate more or less paraphrasable as (simplifying) “being called *Perón*”. Thus, for being used as arguments, proper names require additional linguistic material surrounding them. According to MP, such additional material comes in the form of a phonologically null determiner.

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<sup>2</sup> Metalinguistic Predicativism is not the only predicativist strategy in the literature, or the only metalinguistic one. One might claim that a name like *Orson* applies to Orsons, leaving open what being an Orson is. This is the position advocated by Elbourne (2002:185-186), for whom

“For the purposes of compositional semantics, however, such an account [MP] is not strictly necessary: [...] Alfred has the denotation  $[\lambda x. x \text{ is an Alfred}]$ , and it is no more necessary to do all the sociological (and other) groundwork about naming to use this lexical entry than it is necessary to undertake an extensive zoological project in order to use a lexical entry like  $[\lambda x. x \text{ is a tiger}]$ .”

Alternatively, one could follow Bach’s *Nominal Description Theory* (1981, 2002) according to which proper names are not lexical items in the language: all one needs to know for being competent with a proper name is that it is a name, and that it is semantically equivalent to ‘bearer of *N*’. These are interesting views that need to be addressed. However, a full discussion of such positions is beyond the aims of this article. Instead we will focus on MP. This decision is not unmotivated though, since MP has been extensively defended in the recent literature (see, especially, Matushansky 2006, 2008 2015, and Fara 2011, 2015a). We leave discussion of other possible predicativist/metalinguistic accounts for further research. Yet, it is worth mentioning that apart from MP, most predicativist theories seem to be grounded on the type of arguments that we will try to refute here (e.g., uniformity).

(7) [DP DET [NP Perón]] (DET = /ø/)

Defenders of MP and predicativism in general provide at least two arguments for their view. The first one maintains that uniformity considerations concerning possible syntactic and semantic analyses for (1) and (2)-(6) lead to the conclusion that predicativism is superior in nontrivial ways to referentialism. A quick glance to a flurry of recent works on the syntax and semantics of proper names both in linguistics and in philosophy of language shows that an important part of the debate has been centered on the validity of the uniformity argument (Burge 1973, Geurts 1997, Matushansky 2006, 2008, 2015, Elbourne 2002, Fara 2011, 2015a, among others). Roughly, the main point of the argument is to show that the referentialist is condemned to posit lexical-semantic ambiguity between referential and predicative uses of proper names. Since MP provides a uniform account, it seems to be in a better position to account for the semantics of these expressions.

The second argument (obviously connected to uniformity) contends that referentialism cannot account for some attested systematic connections between referential and predicative uses of proper names (cf. Leckie 2013). There are basically three facts that call for an explanation. First, referentialism cannot account for some acceptable (though not logically valid) inferences as the ones below:

## **I1**

Alfred is a good filmmaker.

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So, at least one Alfred is a good filmmaker.

## **I2**

No Alfred is a good filmmaker.

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So, Alfred is not a good filmmaker.

One natural explanation of these facts is that **I1** and **I2** are licensed by some connection in meaning between apparently referential and apparently predicative uses of proper names. MP has a straightforward explanation of this connection. By contrast, offhand referentialists are not in a good position to account for **I1** and **I2**. Since they are supposedly forced to posit homonymy, they must say that these inferences equivocate on the use of *Orson* in the premises and the conclusion. Moreover, since referentialists contend that referential uses of proper names have no meaning at all beyond the individual they refer to, it is not possible for them to appeal to the *semantics* of the name in order to account for these patterns.

Secondly, competence with apparently referential and apparently predicative uses of proper names appears to be closely related. In effect, an agent that understands ordinary referential uses of *Orson* is typically able to comprehend its predicative uses too, even if she is not previously familiar with them. MP explains this fact easily: since on that view all occurrences of proper names are predicative, a speaker who is competent with one kind of use is *ipso facto* competent with the other. By contrast, referentialism not only does not predict this phenomenon but is at odds with it, since in cases of brute homonymy speakers might not be competent with the different independent meanings of an expression.

Finally, there is evidence stemming from intra and cross-linguistic uniformity considerations. The availability of both referential and predicative readings is not restricted to specific names or languages but it is found in all names across many languages. If referentialism were correct, proper names would be massively ambiguous. By contrast, MP just avoids the problem from scratch by claiming that there is no homonymy at all.

In this paper we refute the arguments in favor of MP and provide our own account for the

syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of referential and predicative uses of proper names, in line with referentialism. The article is structured as follows. In the next section, we introduce the basic concepts of constructivism, the approach to grammar we favor (section 2.1). In 2.2, we rely on linguistic considerations to argue against the validity of the uniformity argument. Roughly, the referentialist would run into problems only if she were forced to posit homonymy (of the *bank* type), but she is not. In turn, she can posit ambiguity in the form of (some sort of) polysemy.<sup>3</sup>

We assume that certain aspects of what can be called “polysemy” in a broad sense boil down to the phenomenon *allosemy*, the phenomenon by virtue of which a given morpheme receives different interpretations depending on the local syntactic context in which it occurs (verbal, nominal and so on). What is more, in 2.3 we will contend that it is possible to reverse the burden of the proof. Not only referentialists need not posit homonymy (of the *bank* type), but it is MP proponents who must face such an undesirable result. Detailed syntactic analyses for both referential and derived uses of names are provided in section 3. Some revealing morpho-phonological patterns regarding Spanish names in metalinguistic uses show that such uses require the postulation of more functional structure. Concretely, we claim that most derived uses of Spanish proper names (the so-called predicative uses) are derived from an underlying null noun construction in Panagiotidis’ (2002) terms. The analysis might be extended to proper names modified by the so-called expletive determiner (e.g., *Vino la María*, Lit. ‘Came the María’). In section 4, we address the semantics and pragmatics of proper names. In 4.1 we tackle referential uses and present a non-semantic account for the Being Called Condition (along the lines of Predelli 2013, 2017), that is, we maintain that the

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<sup>3</sup> For a similar strategy see Leckie (2013). Some predicativists have also stressed polysemy. However, while, for example, Fara (2015b) appeals to some sort of polysemy in order to account for the relation between metalinguistic and other (allegedly non-literal) predicative uses of proper names (e.g. *I saw two Stellas in the museum* (persons called Stella) vs. *I saw two Stellas in the museum* (artworks by Stella)), we will appeal to polysemy in order to account for *all* predicative interpretations, metalinguistic or otherwise.

metalinguistic information that ‘N is called *N*’ is part of the extra-semantic information imparted by referential *uses* of names, and not part of their truth-conditional content. In 4.2 we deal with predicative uses. We contend that these uses are semantically underdetermined, that is, their content can vary as a function of the speaker’s intentions and the linguistic and extra-linguistic context understood in a broad sense. In addition, we show how both the metalinguistic and other derived interpretations can be obtained through the same pragmatic mechanisms. As a consequence, on our view there is no clear-cut distinction between allegedly literal and non-literal predicative uses of proper names, *pace* MP. Finally, in 4.3 we show how the referentialist view we defend can account for the systematic connections between referential and predicative uses of proper names.

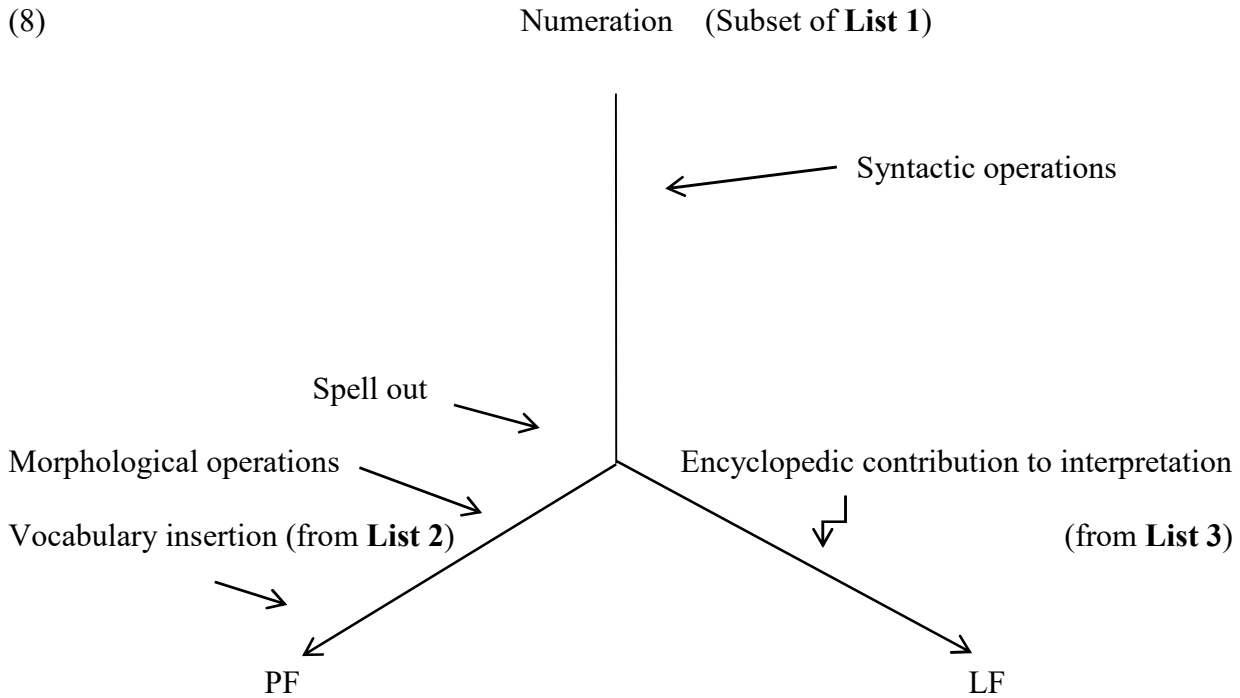
## **2. Predicativism and referentialism under the allosemy view**

### *2.1. Some architectural assumptions*

We assume constructivism as the correct architecture of grammar. For expository reasons, concrete implementations are done in a particular version of constructivism, Distributed Morphology (DM) (Halle & Marantz 1993 and much subsequent work), although our point would follow under other related views (Borer’s 2005 exoskeletal model, being a prominent one). According to DM, “words” are entirely derived from the same principles of structure-building operations that generate phrases (i.e., syntax). There is no independent mechanism of word formation and, consequently, there are no “words” as the output of some putative Lexicon. Conventional lexical items, say the word *cat*, are epiphenomena resulting from the interaction between structure-building operations (Merge, for instance) and three independent lists of primitive objects that are accessed at different stages of a given derivation. The scheme in (8) resumes the



basic architecture as presented in Harley (2014:228):



We also follow Harley (2014:228) in how to conceive of each of the lists in (8):

**List 1:** *Feature bundles*: Syntactic primitives, both interpretable and uninterpretable, functional and contentful.

**List 2:** *Vocabulary Items*: Instructions for pronouncing terminal nodes in context.

**List 3:** *Encyclopedia*: Instructions for interpreting terminal nodes in context.

Thus, List 1 contains the basic primitives out of which syntax composes syntactic objects. It contains abstract morphemes and Roots,  $\sqrt{\quad}$ . Abstract morphemes are taken from a Universal Inventory of Features (UIF) such as [1st person], [past], [female] and so on. The status of Roots is far from being resolved in the current literature. While syncretism phenomena across languages

provide empirical support for the view of abstract morphemes as lacking any phonological representation in the Syntax, there is no conclusive evidence for an “early” or a “late” insertion approach for Roots regarding their phonological exponence.<sup>4</sup> In view of this, we have some alternatives for representing Roots syntactically: (a) it might be that Roots are represented by a label (e.g.,  $\sqrt{19}$ ) which is supplied with a phonological exponent only at the morphological level (Chomsky 1995, Embick 2000, Acquaviva 2008, Saab 2008, 2010, and Harley 2014, among many others); (b) Roots could be sequences of complexes of phonological features plus some diacritic features -as, for instance, class membership- and an index for distinguishing homophones (e.g.,  $\sqrt{\text{báńko}}_{21}$  vs.  $\sqrt{\text{báńko}}_{339}$ ; see, in particular, Embick 2010, 2015); (c) Roots are syntactic placeholders whose exponence is freely determined at PF (Marantz 1995, and De Belder & Van Craenenbroeck 2015 for a related view). For the reasons discussed in Acquaviva (2008) and Harley (2014), we adopt the idea in (a), according to which Roots are just syntactic indexes. At any rate, notice that, as far as the semantics of Roots is concerned, identification criteria for Roots cannot be done on the basis of meaning identity, a crucial consequence for the ongoing discussion. The three aforementioned theories of Root representation are compatible with this idea.

We also adopt the Categorization Assumption:

- (9) **Categorization assumption (CA):** Roots cannot appear (cannot be pronounced or interpreted) without being *categorized*; they are categorized by merging syntactically with category-defining functional heads.

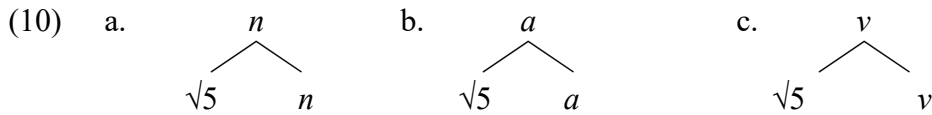
(Embick & Marantz 2008:6)

Under the CA, the same Root (index) may combine with different little *xs* to give rise to what we

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<sup>4</sup> Although see Harley (2014) for an argument in favor of late insertion of Roots based on suppletion.

can informally call *grammatical categories*:



It follows that Roots do not have detectable meanings “before” syntax. The CA also implies differences for semantic typing in model-theoretic terms. On some accounts, the three structures in (10) would correspond at least to three different semantic objects, namely predicates of entities, predicates of properties or predicates of events, respectively (see Marantz 2013 and Harley 2014). It is part of the current debate whether these interpretations are strictly compositional in the sense that, say, (10a) is a predicate of entities because of some semantic rule combining the Root and the category-defining head *n* or if such an interpretation is globally computed from the entire  $[_{nP} n + \sqrt{\phantom{x}}]$  complex. In this respect, we follow Panagiotidis (2014a,b), according to whom the CA would follow from an interface condition:

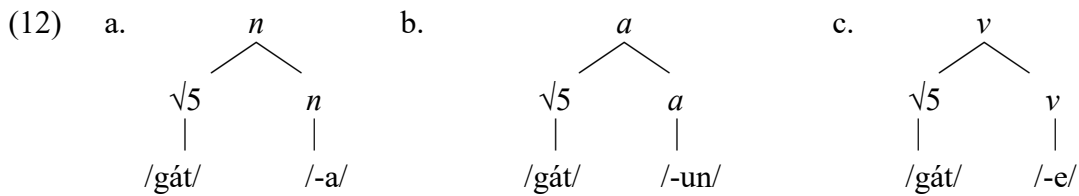
- (11) Free (acategorical) roots are not legitimate LF objects, because they are unreadable by the Conceptual-Intentional/SEM systems.

(Panagiotidis 2014a:290)

That is to say, Roots are semantically deficient objects that require syntactic categorization in order to be readable at the semantic interface. Panagiotidis also suggests that Roots are never interpreted as model-theoretic objects, but the  $[_{xP} x + \text{Root}]$  complex is. This is a way of making sense of Embick & Marantz’s generalization that “the combination of Root-attached *x* and the Root might yield a special interpretation” (Embick & Marantz 2008: 11). As we will see, this approach also

makes sense of the crucial fact that in principle any Root could be a “proper name” under the right syntactic conditions (section 2.3).

At PF, phonological information is added to syntactic abstract nodes through Vocabulary Insertion. If no other morphological operation intervenes, the syntax-PF connection would be transparent (see Embick 2015). Thus, for each terminal node in (10) a phonological exponent is added according to the information available in List 2 and some universal principles of Vocabulary Insertion that regulate which exponent is inserted in a given node. Take  $\sqrt{5}$  as the Root that occurs in *gata* ‘female cat’ (10a), *gatuna* ‘relative to cat’ (10b) and *gatear* ‘to crawl’ (10c). Then, the exponent /gát-/ is inserted in the Root node in a deterministic way in each case, whereas /-a/, /-un/ and /-e/ will be inserted on the nominal, adjectival and verbal position, respectively, according to the aforementioned principles.



The general form of a Vocabulary Item for an abstract morpheme with various exponents is as represented in (13a) and as represented in (13b) for an indexed Root:

- (13) a.  $[\alpha] \leftrightarrow /X/ \text{ / } Y\_Z$   
 $\leftrightarrow /Y/$   
 ...  
 b.  $\sqrt{x} \leftrightarrow /X/$

The list in (13a) is ordered following a specificity hierarchy in such a way that when more than one

vocabulary item competes for the same node the more specified item that match the features of the abstract node wins (*Subset Principle*, Halle 1997). Crucially, exponents with radically different phonological shapes can compete with each other. So, in Spanish, /-b(a)/ and /l(a)/ compete for insertion in the  $T_{[imperfect]}$  node. Phonological identity then is not a conclusive criterion for identifying abstract nodes. The relevant criterion here is syntactic identity. The same can be said when it comes to evaluating “semantic realizations” of the same node. Following Marantz (2013), we call this semantic counterpart of formal allomorphy *allosemy*. In effect, as recently shown in Marantz (2013) and Wood & Marantz (2017), abstract morphemes may have different semantic realizations depending on the syntactic context in which they occur. Thus, the same functional head for introducing arguments will be interpreted as an applicative, agentive or P head depending on the level of syntactic attachment. For Marantz (2013) and Harley (2014) *allosemy* generalizes to Roots. This is especially clear in the pair *gata* – *gatear* used as illustration so far, where there is no meaning connection in the Root position ( $\sqrt{5}$  = ‘female cat’ in the  $[_{nP} \text{Root} + n_{fem}]$  domain and  $\sqrt{5}$  = ‘to crawl’ in the  $[_{vP} \text{Root} + v]$  domain). Importantly, there is no homonymy here, as the same indexed Root underlies both configurations. As in the case of functional heads, meaning is not the relevant identity criterion. Semantic realizations take place at the point in which List 3 is accessed at the LF interface, where the syntactic derivation connects to the conceptual-intentional system. So far, the following picture emerges:

- (14)
- A. Roots are not interpretable objects at the interfaces “before” syntax.
  - B. Categorization of Roots is needed in order to obtain a model-theoretic object at the first level of attachment that can semantically compose with additional material.
  - C. Particular meanings arise as a byproduct of *allosemy* processes, i.e., semantic realizations of the same syntactic node (a Root or an abstract morpheme) contextually conditioned.

Given this architecture, as a first step, the referentialist can rest on syntactic considerations alone in order to block the uniformity argument. Let's see how the argument proceeds in detail.

## 2.2. *The predicativist misconception*

According to Jeshion (2015), the MP reasoning goes this way: (i) focus on apparently referential uses of names as in (15) and compare with apparently predicative uses of names as they occur in (16):

- (15)    a. Alfred studies in Princeton.  
          b. Stella is inside the museum.
- (16)    a. Some Alfreds are crazy; some are sane.  
          b. Two Stellas are inside the museum.

Next, (ii) write the semantics for (15) and (16) along the following lines (cf. Fara 2011 and Jeshion 2015 for discussion):

- (17)    **Being Called Condition (BCC):** A proper name 'N' is a predicate true of a thing if and only if it is called N.

Finally, (iii) assume that (17) is the basic semantics of proper names; put differently, proper names

in (15) and (16) are the only cases where they are used literally.<sup>5</sup> Given that this semantics accounts (i.e., provides the correct truth conditions) for proper names in both referential and predicate uses as they occur in (15) and (16), predicativism has a better theory to offer when compared with referentialism, which is in turn forced to posit some sort of lexical ambiguity.

As stated, the uniformity argument also presupposes some notion of *linguistic sameness*. With this much in mind, a naïve way of stating the uniformity thesis would be as follows:

- (18) **Uniformity Thesis (naïve version)**: Bare and non-bare uses of names originate from the same lexical object whose basic semantics is that of a metalinguistic predicate, the *being called N* predicate (or relatives).

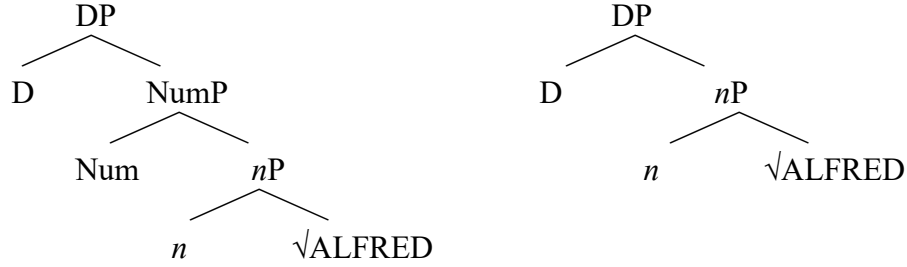
Yet, lexical sameness (i.e., the expression [<sub>XP</sub> *John*] and the expression [<sub>XP</sub> *the John*] contain the same lexical item) cannot be taken seriously, as what is at stake is complex linguistic expressions not lexical items. Thus, the notion of linguistic sameness behind MP involves *syntactic sameness*. Put differently, predicative and referential uses of names have the same meaning because, besides appearances, *they have also the same basic underlying syntax* (Elbourne 2002, Matushansky 2006, 2008, 2015). So, the debate reduces to the basic question whether this is indeed the case.

From this, it follows that in order to block the uniformity argument, the referentialist only needs to show that referential and predicative uses of names correspond to different underlying syntactic structures. Suppose, then, that referential uses occur in a syntactic environment that includes part of the syntax of predicative uses, which is the way in which we should paraphrase the matter on a constructivist approach.

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<sup>5</sup> The claim that these are the only *literal* uses of proper names is important because there are many uses of proper names which do not receive the metalinguistic interpretation (see examples in (31)). Predicativists are well aware of this, but they argue that all such uses are metaphorical, hence irrelevant for the thesis of semantic uniformity.

- (19) a. The syntax of predicate uses:      b. The syntax of referential uses:



The D and Num categories are part of the extended projection of a nominal. The DP head encodes features related to discourse properties and other inflectional, purely grammatical ones (person, for instance), whereas NumP is connected to the syntax of [ $\alpha$  count] nouns. As argued by Borer (2005), Estomba (2016), and Acquaviva (2016) among many others, this category is split in different projections of the same domain, in order to account for the syntax, semantics and morphology of the mass – count division. We subscribe to the Num-split hypothesis, but we will not expand this category here, as it is orthogonal to the arguments to be developed in what follows. What is crucial is that the different analyses in (19) may be the trigger of allosemy rules at the *nP* level. Leaving aside details of implementation to be discussed in the next section, LF will realize the complex *nP* as an  $\langle e, t \rangle$  object in (19a) ( $\langle s, \langle e, t \rangle \rangle$  type in intensional terms<sup>6</sup>), but as an entity-denoting object, *e*, in (19b). Preliminarily, let's suggest the following semantic realizations at the *nP* level for (19a) and (19b):

LF instructions: semantic realizations of  $[n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}]$ :

- (20) a.  $[n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}] \leftrightarrow [[\text{Alfred}]] = \text{the predicate "being called } \textit{Alfred}" / Num ____$
- b.  $[n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}] \leftrightarrow [[\text{Alfred}]] = \text{Alfred} / \text{D} \text{ ____}$

<sup>6</sup> Yet, through this paper we will continue using a simple extensional parlance. This simplification does not affect the main arguments to be defended here.



The syntactic and semantic realizations in (20) can (and must) be revised and we will do it in the coming sections. But as they stand, they shed light on the nature of the predicativist's fallacy. Of course, we might wonder: (i) to what an extent are the meanings in (20) related? And, more importantly, (ii) in which way? Lexical relatedness between identical Roots is a well-known domain in modern morphological and lexical theory. As noticed in the previous subsection, Root identity cannot be determined on the basis of semantic considerations. In DM, semantic (dis)connections between identical Roots are syntactically encoded and subject to different conditions. In the type of name polysemy involved in the predicative / referential ambiguity, the same phase head combines with the same indexed Root at exactly the same level of attachment (first phase). Yet, the combination with different sorts of functional heads produces a different model-theoretic object at the first phase level in each case, namely, predicative uses of names denote in  $\langle e, t \rangle$  and referential ones in  $e$ , both at the  $nP$  level.

- (21) a. The syntax of predicative uses:      b. The syntax of referential uses:
- ```

graph TD
    DP --> D
    DP --> NumP
    NumP --> Num
    NumP --> nP["nP_{<e,t>}"]
    Num --> n1["n"]
    nP --> n2["n"]
    nP --> sqrtALFRED["\sqrt{ALFRED}"]

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graph TD
    DP --> D
    DP --> nPe["nP_e"]
    nPe --> n3["n"]
    nPe --> sqrtALFRED2["\sqrt{ALFRED}"]

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Evidently, this is a radical difference with respect to the denotation domain, but as we will see in section 4 there is no expectation that such a syntactic-semantic difference interferes with patterns of inference, productivity and cross and inter-linguistic variation. We will postpone discussion about this aspect of the MP argument until section 4. For the time being, let's repeat that beyond semantic relatedness issues, these preliminary considerations regarding the syntax of names are enough to

block the uniformity argument, at least conceptually. The sketched strategy is one of the many conceivable ways in which constructivist and realizational approaches to word formation can provide the basis for understanding how syntax produces the inputs for morpho-phonological and semantic realizations at the interfaces of the language faculty. Our move implies abstracting away semantic information and formal exponence from the set of identity criteria for diagnosing *sameness* of Roots and abstract morphemes. The important corollary for the arguments to be developed is that semantic identity does not identify Roots in the syntax (see 2.1). Two radically different semantic “exponents” may, then, correspond to the same syntactic Root as a by-product of allosemy. To believe that semantic opacity leads to homonymy is a misconception. And we think that this is the misconception in which MP incurs, when adducing the uniformity argument:

(22) **MP misconception:** Semantic opacity between identical exponents leads to homonymy.

In section 3, we will show that there are indeed robust empirical basis for defending an allosemy analysis, as essentially sketched in (19). But before entering into the details of our theory of names, let’s conclude this section presenting an important objection to MP, one that reverses the burden of the proof.

### 2.3. *Who’s in need of homonymy?*

Lots of names in Spanish and other languages are phonetically identical to different sort of nouns. Just to take one relevant example, consider:

(23) a. Libertad está cansada. (Lit. *Fredoom* is tired<sub>fem</sub>)

- b. la famosa Libertad Lamarque      (Lit. the famous *Freedom* Lamarque)
- c. La libertad es una aspiración.      (Lit. The freedom<sub>fem</sub> is an aspiration)

The sentence in (23a) is a referential use of the proper name *Libertad*. In (23b) we have the same proper name in a predicative use. Finally, *libertad* in (23c) occurs as the abstract noun *freedom*. As noticed by Borer (2005), in fact, any noun (or other categories) will be a “proper name” provided the right syntactic conditions. So, the common nouns in

- (24)      Pez/Tigre/Mesa/Silla está acá. (Fish / Tiger / Table / Chair is here)

are all forced to be read as proper names by virtue of the syntactic environment in which they occur. In some cases, they can be easily recognized, e.g. *Mesa* is a common Hispanic surname (cf. also *Iglesia(s)* Lit. ‘church(es)’). Here is the basic structure for the names in (24):

- (25)
- $$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{DP} \\
 \swarrow \quad \searrow \\
 \text{D} \qquad \text{nP} \\
 \qquad \swarrow \quad \searrow \\
 \qquad n \quad \{\sqrt{\text{PEZ}}, \sqrt{\text{MESA}}, \dots\}
 \end{array}$$

Importantly, there is no need for postulating any homonymy here, as identical Roots and their meanings are syntactically distinguished. Yet, the predicativist, for whom there are basic or literal meanings of names, is forced to postulate lexical ambiguity in those cases in which names like *Libertad* are socially recognized (and attested in dictionaries, in some cases).

- (26)      Libertad<sub>1</sub> = abstract noun “MEANING”

Libertad<sub>2</sub> = the property of being called *Libertad*

This is unproblematic. Now, when it comes to possible analyses for (24), the MP proponent is forced either to create a new lexical entry for, say, *Pez* with the meaning “being called *Pez*” or to conclude that this is a noun used as a name. Whatever this last option means, it leads to an undesirable result, as now every noun (and other categories) can be “used” as a name with exactly the same semantic results of *bona fide* names. What a proper name means is then what every noun can mean provided some lexical stipulations. Assuming the syntax in (19) for predicative and referential occurrences of a given name Root, we would end up with the following semantic realizations for the Root *Pez*:

LF instructions: semantic realizations of  $\sqrt{\text{PEZ}}$ :

- (27) a.  $[n + \sqrt{\text{PEZ}}] \leftrightarrow$  “being a pez”/ Num \_\_\_\_  
 b.  $[n + \sqrt{\text{PEZ}}] \leftrightarrow$  “being called PEZ” / D \_\_\_\_

On this analysis, the “being called N” property is always available for any type of noun. But this jeopardizes predicativism, as the putative inherent meaning of proper names -the predicate they denote- is, after all, the byproduct of a particular syntactic scheme. The alternative is to resort to some sort of radical homonymy process, according to which all nouns are ambiguous as in (26). This is not a better solution. Both are undesirable because they obscure what seems to be the right empirical generalization, namely that there are no names or nouns, but just syntactic configurations in which something is interpreted as a name or a noun. Of course, there are specialized Roots for names (ALFRED) as there are specialized Root nouns (PEZ), and cases in between (LIBERTAD). But this is a purely encyclopedic issue, regarding the semantic “exponence” of the nodes that syntax

constructs. In broad terms, the basic generalization regarding the “semantic exponence” of Roots for “names” and Roots for “nouns” boils down to the absence / presence of descriptive content at the  $nP$  level. This empty semantic exponence is also a matter of syntax, in the sense that absence of Number nullifies any descriptive property which in another syntactic context would be a “meaningful” Root. At any rate, no particular implementation of the semantics of Roots would change what we have shown with respect to the uniformity argument: the linguistic facts emerging from paradigms like those in (15) and (16) cannot ensure the predicativist thesis and, more importantly, they do not make predicativism better than referentialism.

In the next section, we will take a closer look at the syntax of names in different uses under the allosemy perspective. We argue that the syntax of predicative uses of names requires more than the simple presence of Number, a surprising fact, if correct, but one that once again favors the referentialist intuition that predicative uses of names are the result of syntactic transformations, a point explicitly suggested in Chomsky (1965). Then, in section 4, we argue that the underlying syntactic analyses for predicative and referential uses of names give rise to a set of particular semantic and pragmatic properties that account for the referential distribution of names in each of their basic uses and, more importantly, for what we think is the ultimate source of the “being called condition”, namely, pragmatics.

### **3. The syntax of proper names: Making names from Roots and nouns from names**

With some notable exceptions (Longobardi 1994, Matushansky 2006, 2008, 2015), the syntax of referential and predicative uses of names has not received the attention it deserves. The fact that there are instances of modified proper names inter and intra-linguistically has been taken as

conclusive evidence in favor of predicativism (Longobardi 1994 being an important exception). Referentialists have remained more defensive in the face of such linguistic evidence and tried to show that predicative uses of names do not defeat the main assumptions of referentialism (see Predelli 2015, Leckie 2013, Jeshion 2015). The issue becomes pressing under the umbrella of allosemy theory. Our contribution in this respect follows the insights in Longobardi (1994), Borer (2005) and Acquaviva (2007, 2016), specially, when it comes to the analysis of referential uses of names. Briefly, we assume the structure in (21b), repeated in (28b), with a minimal modification, namely, human “proper names” contains a [human/animate] feature on *n*, which is the source of gender, under some assumptions.<sup>7</sup> Regarding predicative uses we contend that there is evidence that shows that their structure is more complex than in (21a), repeated as (28a):

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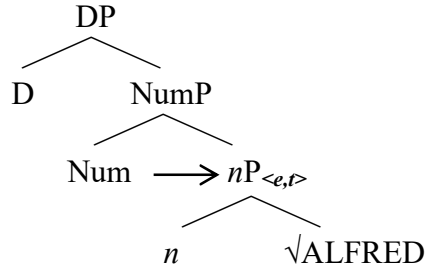
<sup>7</sup> Thus, such a feature is posited for syntactic reasons (concord, differential object marking and so on), not connected to the semantic typing of the [<sub>NP</sub> *n* + Root] phrase. Differential object marking effects in Spanish clearly show that animacy plays no role in the semantic conversion. Thus, human proper names trigger differential object marking (DOM), but other names do not:

- |     |    |                     |      |        |
|-----|----|---------------------|------|--------|
| (i) | a. | Visitamos           | *(a) | Juan.  |
|     |    | visit.1PL           | DOM  | J.     |
|     |    | ‘We visited Juan.’  |      |        |
|     | b. | Visitamos           | (*a) | Paris. |
|     |    | visit.1PL           | DOM  | J.     |
|     |    | ‘We visited Paris.’ |      |        |

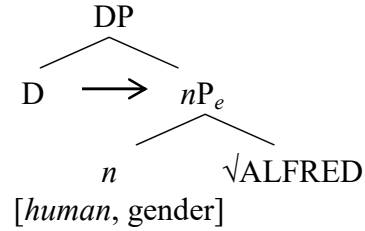
The same applies to common nouns when they occur in “name” position. In (ii), presence or absence of DOM does not change the name nature of *Pez*, but only the type of the individual referred. Without DOM, *Pez* could be easily read as referring to a city:

- |      |                   |     |      |
|------|-------------------|-----|------|
| (ii) | Visitamos         | (a) | Pez. |
|      | visited.1PL       | DOM | Fish |
|      | ‘We visited Pez.’ |     |      |

(28) a. The syntax of predicative uses:



b. The syntax of referential uses:



As a minimum the structures for the relevant predicative uses contain a human null noun that forms a complex predicate with the name (i.e., the lower [*n* + Root] complex). Here is our proposal of the syntax of predicative uses of names:<sup>8</sup>

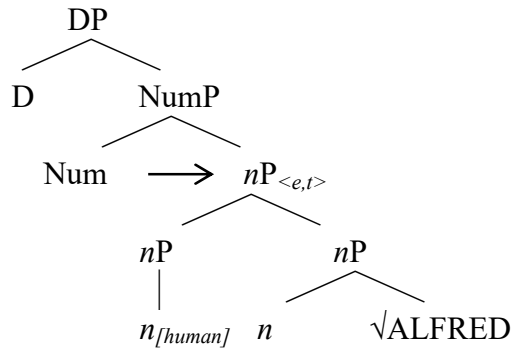
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<sup>8</sup> The structures in (28b) and (29) with minimal changes in feature specification would give us the different syntactic structure for names for days and months in a language like Spanish. While month days behave exactly like human proper names in bare referential uses, day names require a modifying article.

- (i) a. Juan llegó en (\*el) febrero.  
 J. arrived in (\*the.MASC.SG) February  
 ‘Juan arrived in February.’
- b. Juan llegó \*(el) lunes.  
 J. arrived \*(the.MASC.SG) Monday  
 ‘John arrived on Monday.’

We assume that several cross and intra-linguistic differences in the exponence of the article could be analyzed along these lines, *contra* Matushansky (2006) who reduces most differences in article exponence to purely morphological processes (see Cornilescu & Alexandru 2015 for an important criticism to Matushansky’s analysis).

(29) The syntax of predicative uses in Spanish:<sup>9</sup>



The type of construction that this tree schematizes can be seen as a variety of the so-called *human null construction* (see Panagiotidis 2002, and Saab 2019 for references):

- (30)    los            de        al                            lado / los            tontos /  
           the.MASC.PL   of        to.the.MASC.PL       side    the.MASC.PL   fool.MASC.PL  
           los            que        cantan  
           the.MASC.PL   that    sing  
           ‘the ones living next door / the foolish / the ones who sing’

The hypothesis that predicative uses of names are derived from null noun constructions has important consequences for the theory of names. As we will show, the syntactic process underlying

<sup>9</sup> One might wonder whether such structure would not cause distinctiveness effects at the *nP* level (see Richards 2010) and conjecture that the *nP* containing the null noun could have more syntactic structure for hosting gender / animacy features (see for instance Picallo 1991). This way, no distinctiveness issue would arise. We are not certain, however, that an adjunction structure like (29) triggers distinctiveness effects at the high *nP* level, as adjuncts can be linearized in a different PF cycle. At any rate, although it might be the case that the null *nP* is structurally more complex, we think that gender and animacy features are encoded on the null *n* itself (see Saab 2010 for empirical arguments in favor of this idea). But again, we remain open to the possibility of projecting more functional structure above the null *nP*. Yet, for the purposes of this article we will continue assuming the analysis in (29).



metalinguistic uses extend both to (at least some) non-metalinguistic uses of proper names (31) and to referential uses with expletive determiners (32), which are commonly attested in varieties of Spanish and other languages:

- (31) a. Vi un Rembrandt en el museo. *Creator / Producer*  
 saw.1SG a R. in the museum  
 ‘I saw a Rembrandt at the museum.’
- b. Los Messi son muy unidos. *Family names*  
 the.MASC.PL M. are very close  
 ‘The Messi are very close.’
- c. Julián es un Andrés. *Resemblance*  
 J. is a A.  
 ‘Julián is an Andrés.’
- d. Me compré una/un Fender. *Brand*  
 CL.ACC.1SG bought a.FEM/ a.MASC Fender  
 ‘I bought a Fender (guitar) / a Fender (bass/amp).’

“Expletive” determiners:

- (32) a. Voy a lo del Pedro.  
 go.1SG to the.NEUT of.the.MASC.SG P.  
 ‘I am going to Pedro’s place.’
- b. El Pedro viene a casa esta noche.  
 the.MASC.SG P. comes to home this night  
 ‘Pedro comes home this night.’

c. Hoy vi a la Legrand por televisión.  
today saw.1SG DOM the.FEM.SG L. by tv  
‘Today I saw Legrand on tv.’

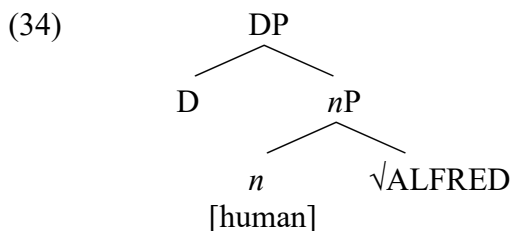
The step from (28a) to (29) is certainly unexpected. What is more, if we are correct in that this is also the case for names with expletive articles, then there is more than simple allosemy in the [ $n$  + Root] domain. In principle, all derivations should be allowed by the formal apparatus, so our hypothesis is certainly not the default. In the next sections, we justify why we consider that (28b) and (29) are the underlying configurations for referential and predicate names, respectively.

### 3.1. *The basic ingredients of bare referential names*

In the last section, we have assumed that [ $_{DP}$  D [ $_{nP}$   $n$  + Root]] complexes denote in  $e$ . Recall that the “semantic exponent” of a [ $_{nP}$   $n$  + Root] complex only arises by contextual allosemy, specifically, a [ $_{nP}$   $n$  + Root] complex refers to an individual if selected by D:

$$(33) \quad [_{nP} n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}] \leftrightarrow [[\text{Alfred}]] = \text{Alfred} / \text{D} \text{ \_\_\_}$$

This semantic realization of a name Root is a direct consequence of the proposed syntax. Recall our basic tree:



This is precisely the syntax suggested by Acquaviva (2016):

It is possible that proper names like *Fido* occur in DPs in this minimally reduced guise (which, however, is still syntactically a structure since a root is not the same as a nominalized root); this would depend on whether morphology admits truly numberless nouns in the language.

(Acquaviva 2016:10)

On Acquaviva's theory of nominality the motivation for such a suggestion is directly connected to his central hypothesis that for being predicates denoting in, say,  $\langle e, t \rangle$ , *n*Ps require the syntactic presence of some of the categories in the Num-domain.<sup>10</sup> We contend here that Acquaviva's conjecture is correct and that the basic ingredients of names are exactly these:

- (35) a. presence of  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$ , *n* and D in the specified syntactic derivation, and,  
b. absence of any projection of the Num-domain.

Presence of *n* is justified by gender and concord / agreement, a property of the *n* head (see Saab 2008, Estomba 2016, among others):<sup>11</sup>

- (36) María / Juan es alta/ alto.  
M. / J. is tall.FEM.SG tall.MASC.SG

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<sup>10</sup> For Acquaviva, *n*Ps define abstract entity types which can be interpreted either at the object or the kind level depending on the syntactic context in which they occur. Certainly, this is not the standard view on *n*Ps, according to which they are predicates. Although we believe that the syntax and semantics of names brings new support for Acquaviva's hypothesis, our arguments here are independent of these competing approaches to nominality.

<sup>11</sup> At any rate, presence of *n* is required by the interface condition in (11).

On top of this, it seems plausible that at least for animate / human nouns *n* is also specified with an animacy feature. As is well known, animate / human direct objects trigger differential object marking in Spanish, i.e., insertion of the pseudo-preposition *a* (see also footnote 7):

- (37) a. Juan vio *a* María.  
           J.     saw    DOM   M.  
           ‘Juan saw María.’
- b. Juan compró el libro.  
           J.     bought     the    bought  
           ‘Juan bought the book.’

This means that such an animacy feature must be syntactically active to trigger differential object marking. As for the active presence of a D head, we refer the reader to Longobardi (1994) for a detailed discussion. We will just add here a piece of evidence from some dialects of Spanish. This involves the phenomenon of accusative clitic doubling, an obligatory phenomenon with pronouns in all dialects:

- (38) a. Juan me                               vio a mí.  
           J.     CL.ACC.1SG               saw   DOM   me  
           ‘Juan saw me.’
- b. Juan te                               vio a vos.  
           J.     CL.ACC.2SG               saw   DOM   you  
           ‘Juan saw you.’
- c. Juan lo                               vio a él.

J. CL.ACC.MASC.3SG saw DOM him

‘Juan saw him.’

d. Juan nos vio a nosotros.

J. CL.ACC.MASC.1PL saw DOM us

‘Juan saw us.’

e. Juan los vio a ellos.

J. CL.ACC.MASC.1PL saw DOM them

‘Juan saw them.’

There is robust evidence that clitic doubling is doubling of a D head syntactically active in the doubled DP. If this is correct, the fact that in most varieties of Argentinean Spanish bare names and full lexical DPs are optionally doubled indicate the presence of such a head (see Di Tullio *et al* (to appear) for an explanation of optionality):

- (39) Juan (**la**) vio a María / a la mujer.  
 J. (CL.ACC.FEM.3SG) saw DOM M. / DOM the.FEM.SG woman  
 ‘John saw María / the woman.’

Following Longobardi (1994), we assume that the D node in bare referential names is similar to an expletive. Its expletive nature is also a case of allosemy contextually determined. Concretely, definite D realizes an identity function when directly merged with  $[_{nP} n_{([human])} + \sqrt{\cdot}]$ .<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> We would like to add two comments on this. First, one could think of (40) as a partial identity function in order to introduce certain presuppositions. Let’s say, for instance, that D encodes person features which are presupposition triggers at LF (Heim & Kratzer 1998, Schlenker 2003, Heim 2008, and Kratzer 2009, among others). Assuming that third person encodes a [- participant] feature (Halle 1997), then we should reformulate (40) as in (i):

$$(40) \quad D[\text{definite}] \leftrightarrow \lambda x.x \ / \text{---}[n\text{P } n_{[\text{human}]} + \vee]$$

The implicit idea is that referential DPs of the appropriate type encode referentiality in different ways depending on the absence or presence of Num. When Numb is present, the structure below D denotes a predicate, so referentiality is encoded directly on D. In cases in which Num is absent, the  $nP$  domain bears the referentiality information and D is expletivized. This captures in a different way Longobardi's (1994) original proposal (see also Borer 2005).

Absence of number, in turn, is justified by the absolute impossibility of pluralizing bare referential names, a mysterious fact for predicativism (although see Matushansky 2006 for a morphological analysis).

- (41) a. \*Juanes llegaron a la fiesta.  
J.PL came.3PL to the party
- b. Juan llegó a la fiesta.  
J. came to the party

(i)  $D_{[\text{definite}]} \leftrightarrow \lambda x: x \text{ is } [-\text{participant}]. x / [{}_{nP} n_{[\text{human}]} + \vee]$

Second, even if redefined as in (i), our denotation for D is still an identity function, different from other semantic realizations of D. We think that this is a welcome result in view of the fact that this D has a zero PF realization in many languages, an expected pattern with heads denoting identity functions (paradigmatically, copular items). Variation in the PF realization of name determiners have been largely discussed in Longobardi (1994), and in Elbourne (2002) or Matushansky (2006) from opposite perspectives (referentialist and predicativist views, respectively). In our opinion, the fact that some languages show syncretism between meaningful determiners and expletive ones (Portuguese), different non-zero realizations of both (Catalan), or the zero / non-zero distinction (English, Spanish) is exactly the pattern we expect under constructivist assumptions.

‘Juan came to the party.’

Once pluralized, proper names behave as “common” nouns as far as their syntactic distribution is concerned. Thus, (41a) is grammatical if the subject occurs in post-verbal position, a fact that parallels the behavior of bare plurals, as also witnessed by their indefinite interpretation:

- (42) a. Llegaron        Juanes        a        la        fiesta.  
         came.3PL        J.PL        to        the        party  
         ‘(Several) Juanes came to the party.’
- b. \*Invitados    llegaron        a        la        fiesta.  
         guests        came.3PL        to        the        party
- c. Llegaron        invitados    a        la        fiesta.  
         came.3PL        guests        to        the        party  
         ‘Guests came to the party.’

The question is then why bare referential nouns can be bare only when singular. As said, it is an important gap that referential bare names do not pluralize. It is a problem for most predicativists, but also for Schoubye (2017, see footnote 20) who claims that proper names are just pronouns with a semantic presupposition connected to the metalinguistic fact that the individual picked-up by the pronoun is named in such and such a way. Third person pronouns obviously pluralize (cf. *el* ‘he’ vs. *ellos* ‘they’).<sup>13</sup> Absence of number projections accounts for this gap in the paradigm. If Acquaviva

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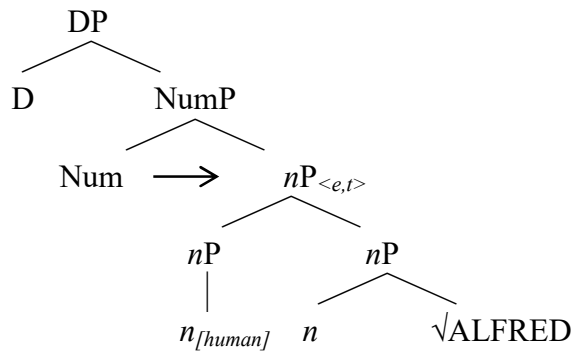
<sup>13</sup> Do pronouns then contain a minimal predicate in their nominal part as, indeed, suggested in Elbourne (2013)? This will depend on how we analyze the internal structure of pronouns. If they contain a nominal domain, maybe such a domain could be converted into a predicate by the presence of the Number domain, but other alternatives are available (see below).

is on the right track, then we find the perfect correlation between absence of number and absence of predication, a conclusion in consonance with direct reference approaches for names.

### 3.2. *The basic ingredients of predicative uses*

As mentioned, according to Acquaviva, conversion of a noun into a predicate requires the presence of Number. Yet, we have suggested that more than this is necessary at least for some predicate uses of Spanish names. In other words, such uses require also the presence of an additional null noun:

(43) The syntax of predicate uses in Spanish (cf. 29):



The main reason that leads us to posit more nominal structure above the lower *n* domain is empirical. As is well-known, feminine nouns in Spanish triggers *la-el* alternation in the  $D_{[\text{feminine, singular, } \alpha\text{definite}]}$  node when such nouns begin with stressed /á/.<sup>14</sup> So, for a set of feminine nouns the phonological exponent that corresponds to the feminine and singular article is /el/ or /un/ instead of expected /la/ or /una/. Let us state the rule in allomorphic terms (maybe a controversial point):

(44)  $D_{[\text{feminine, singular, definite}]} \leftrightarrow /el/ \quad / \quad \_\_\_\_\_\_ [n \sqrt{\text{á...}}]$

<sup>14</sup> Reference to the nominal category is unavoidable, as adjectives do not trigger the rule, e.g., *la ancha avenida* ('the.FEM.SG broad.FEM.SG avenue').



/la/, elsewhere

D<sub>[feminine, singular, indefinite]</sub> ↔ /un/ / \_\_\_\_ [<sub>n</sub> √/á.../ ]

/una/, elsewhere

- (45) a. el {hacha, el águila, el aula, el arma, ...}  
the.SG {ax, eagle, classroom, weapon, ... }<sup>15</sup>  
b. un {hacha, águila, aula, arma... }  
a.SG {ax, eagle, classroom, weapon, ... }

There are however some putative “exceptions”. Names for letters and proper names are especially relevant now:

- (46) a. la Ana (cf. \*el Ana ‘the.SG Ana’)  
the.FEM.SG Ana  
b. la hache (cf. \*el hache), la “á” (cf. \*el “a”)  
the.FEM.SG hache the.FEM.SG “a”
- (47) a. una Ana (cf. \*un Ana)  
a.FEM.SG Ana  
b. una hache (cf. \*un hache), una “á” (cf. \*un “a”)  
a.FEM.SG hache a.FEM.SG “a”

According to the *Nueva Gramática de la Real Academia Española (NGRE)*, the exception in

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<sup>15</sup> We translate the article *el* (or *un*) that modifies these feminine nouns just as singular, and not as masculine singular (like the true masculine article, *el*). Diachronically, the feminine *el* derived from Latin *illa*, not *ille*, unlike the masculine article.

(46a)/(47a) could be attributed to the fact that speakers avoid gender confusion with human referents. But this cannot be on the right track, as other human nouns with female reference do trigger the rule, as acknowledged by the *NGRE*:

- (48) a. el ama de llaves (cf. %la ama de llaves), un ama de llaves  
the.SG housekeeper.FEM.SG a.SG housekeeper.FEM  
(cf. %una ama de llaves)
- b. el hada madrina (cf. %la hada madrina), un hada madrina  
the.SG Fairy Godmother.FEM.SG a.SG Fairy Godmother.FEM  
(cf. %una hada madrina)

Notice that the judgments are more unstable here. At any rate, there is no variability in grammaticality judgments (46) and (47); these “names” strongly reject the use of the regular feminine article. Crucially, this is so both in clear metalinguistic uses of the names at hand as in the case of referential uses with the expletive article (for those speakers who have the construction):

- (49) a. \*El/la Ana que conozco... *Predicate use*  
the.FEM.SG A. that know.1SG  
‘The Ana I know...’
- b. Voy a la casa de \*el/la Ana. *Referential use*  
go.1SG to the house of the.FEM.SG A.  
‘I went to Ana’s house.’

This is a strong piece of evidence that modified names (referential or predicative) are not just

simple count nouns. As suggested in fact by the same *NGRE*, some of the exceptions to the *la-el* rule correlate with the presence of a null noun, regardless of how we analyze this phenomenon. This is particularly clear in the case of names for letters, where the paraphrase *la letra hache* ‘the letter *hache*’ comes to mind immediately. If certain morpho-phonological processes require locality conditions related to the presence of cyclic heads (little *xs*, on some accounts; see Embick 2010 for an explicit theory), then we can tell a story according to which the presence of a null noun (a type of cyclic head) interrupts the locality between the D head and the lower *n* in cases like (47). This, of course, requires further elaboration, but the intuition is clear enough. Just for the sake of exposition, let us then refine (44). Concretely, we propose that the *la-el* alternation is indeed allomorphy, which is triggered only under adjacency between the target and the trigger (Embick 2010, 2015):

$$(50) \quad D_{[\text{feminine, singular, definite}]} \leftrightarrow /e/ \ / \ D \wedge [n \ /á../] \quad ( \wedge = \text{adjacency} )$$

Blocking of the rule (50) is predicted by the structure in (43), given that the null noun is concatenated with D and this triggers insertion of the “elsewhere” exponent /la/:

$$(51) \quad D_{[\text{feminine, singular, definite}]} \wedge [n \ \emptyset], [n \ \emptyset] \wedge [n \ /ána/] \rightarrow /la/$$

As noticed by Dave Embick (pers. comm.), it would be important to see how “regular” nominalizations behave in this respect, as it could be a good way to set alternative analyses apart. A relevant case would involve eventive nominalizations of the  $[n \ [v \ \checkmark] ]$  type (e.g., *destrucción* ‘destruction’). The kind of example that would satisfy all the required syntactic-semantic and morpho-phonological properties is almost impossible to find. Yet, Ariel Carpio (pers. comm.)

suggests the following example of deverbal nominal: *alza* (increasing.FEM.SG) that occurs with eventive meanings in cases like *El alza de los precios de marzo fue mayor de la esperada*. ('The increasing of prices in March was more than expected.'). The relevant structure would be like in (i):

$$(52) \quad [{}_n [{}_v \text{alz} + \emptyset] + \text{a}]$$

Taking *v* and *n* as cyclic heads, we could expect the blocking of the *la-el* rule. Yet, the rule applies (there is some dialectal variation, but this is the general case). It seems that it is the presence of an empty noun, as something different from a real nominalization process, what blocks the rule. Other type of evidence in consonance with this conclusion comes from adjectives in null noun constructions. Recall first that adjectives do not trigger the rule (see footnote 14). As extensively discussed in Panagiotidis (2002) and many others, adjectives can instead occur as modifiers of empty nouns (e.g., *the rich*, *the poor*, etc). In Spanish, when an adjective begins with stressed /á/, the *la-el* rule is blocked, as expected (thanks to Antonio Fábregas for the example):

- (53) a. *la/\*el ágrafa* (the.FEM.SG /\*the.SG agraphic.FEM.SG)  
       b. *el ágrafo* (the.FEM.SG /\*the.MASC.SG agraphic.MASC.SG)

Interestingly, the strong deviance of (53a) is the same as the one observed for names above. This fact could be taken as evidence in favor of the empty noun analysis we are pursuing for predicate uses of names. However, this would be still a hurried conclusion in face of the nature of the data and their possible analyses.

In summary, in this section we have shown that there are solid reasons to distinguish referential uses of names from predicate ones on the basis of syntax alone. Thus, the conceptual

considerations discussed in section 2 regarding the nature of the uniformity argument can be evaluated on purely empirical grounds. If we are on the right track, then, predicate and referential uses of names are the direct result of syntactically conditioned polysemy, i.e., allosemy. Having shown that there are no reasons to sustain the Being Called Condition as a syntactic-semantic primitive, we will now argue that there *are* reasons to conceive of such a condition as derived from purely pragmatic considerations.

#### **4. The pragmatics roots of the Being Called Condition**

In the previous section we presented our proposal for the syntax of proper names both in referential and predicative position. In this section we complete the picture with a semantic and a pragmatic account for both kinds of uses. Concerning the former we follow the Referentialist tradition: the only contribution of a name in referential position to the content of the sentence in which it occurs is its reference. Additionally, we rely on work by Predelli (2013, 2017) to argue that (in addition to its truth conditional contribution) referential uses of proper names impart information by virtue of extra-semantic regularities encoded in its *use*, concretely, the information that Alfred is called *Alfred*. We thereby provide a non-semantic account of the Being Called Condition. With respect to predicative uses, we advance the view that the semantic realization of the whole *nP* level corresponds to some sort of predicate (i.e.  $\langle e, t \rangle$ ) vaguely translated as the property of being a N-human. We argue that these uses are underdetermined, i.e. their semantic value varies from occurrence to occurrence as a function of what the speaker means and the context of conversation understood in a broad sense. We also offer an explanation of how the predicate that gets into the content of the utterance might be pragmatically derived. If this is correct, there is no clear-cut

distinction between allegedly literal (metalinguistic) and non-literal predicative uses of proper names, *pace* MP. Finally, we provide a non-semantic explanation of the systematic connections between referential and predicative uses of proper names.

#### 4.1. *On the semantics and pragmatics of referential uses*

On the semantic side, our approach lines up with the traditional Referentialist account: we endorse the standard view according to which the only contribution of a name to the truth-conditions of the utterance in which it occurs is its reference. Concretely, we adopt the view that a  $[_{nP} n + \text{Root}]$  selected by D (in referential position), always denotes in  $e$  and refers to an individual, as in, for example, (54) (= (20b)):<sup>16</sup>

$$(54) \quad [_{nP} n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}] \leftrightarrow [[\text{Alfred}]] = \text{Alfred} / D \text{ \_\_\_}$$

What about the Being Called Condition? In this respect our view differs from MP but also from a view like Schoubye's (2017), according to which the Being Called Condition is a semantic

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<sup>16</sup> There are various ways in which one can assign individual denotations to linguistic expressions. We will remain agonistic with respect to this particular issue, as it is orthogonal to the main arguments developed in this paper. Yet, we would like to make clear that referentialism is not forced to adopt massive homonymy for each particular name Root (or, to be more precise, the  $[n + \text{NAME}]$  complex). In principle, our approach is compatible with an indexical approach to name semantics (cf. Recanati 1993, Pelczar & Rainsbury 1998), according to which D-selected  $n$ Ps express an index. Such an index could be taken as the input of a partial function from natural numbers to individuals, i.e., an assignment function (for an overview on assignments, see Heim & Kratzer 1998). So, suppose that we have the following syntax for the name *Alfred*, where the subscript indicates the index assigned to the entire  $n$ P complex:

$$(i) \quad [D [_{nP} n + \text{ALFRED}]_{[23]}]$$

If 23 is under the domain of the relevant assignment function (say,  $[23 \rightarrow \text{Alfred}]$ ), then  $[[23]] = g(23) = \text{Alfred}$ .

presupposition (see footnote 20). In what follows we argue, in line with Predelli (2013, 2017), that a use of a complex like  $[_{nP} n + \sqrt{\text{ALFRED}}]$  in referential position *imparts* the information that Alfred is called *Alfred*. We thereby provide a non-semantic account of the metalinguistic information conveyed by referential uses of proper names. In order to show this, we begin by distinguishing between sentence-context pairs (Kaplan’s *occurrences*) and actual uses of sentences in context (see Kaplan 1989: 526). We can semantically evaluate an expression with respect to a context even if the expression is not used in that context –as Kaplan notes, for example, some sentences can only be true in a given context,  $c$ , if *not* used in  $c$ , e.g. “I say nothing”. By contrast, a use is a particular event of speaking in which there is a token of an expression in a context. Now, a use conveys different sorts of information in different ways. On the one hand, it conveys information by virtue of its conventional meaning. On the other hand, and most importantly, it *imparts* information by virtue of extra-semantic regularities encoded in the specific type of use. Put differently, the specific constraints imposed on contexts by a certain theory of use “provide the background for the explanation of how [a use]  $u$  manages to impart information straightforwardly not encoded within the semantic content” (Predelli 2013:37).

This idea of use-imparted information can be cashed out in terms of the notion of settlement (Predelli 2013:30). Roughly, a use of an expression  $e$  in a context  $c$  settles<sup>T</sup> a sentence  $S$  iff whenever  $c \in \text{CU}^T(e)$ ,  $S$  is True (i.e. iff  $S$  is true in all the contexts that belong to the set of contexts of use of type  $T$  of  $e$ ). For example, the use of the expression “I am a linguist” settles<sup>F</sup> (where ‘F’ stands for the face-to-face conversation type of use) the sentence “There exist tokens now”, given a plausible constraint placed upon contexts of the face-to-face type that there exist tokens of articulations of expressions in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$  (the world and time of the context). That this sentence is settled<sup>F</sup> means that there are no contexts of use of the face-to-face type in which “I am a linguist” is tokened in which the sentence “there exist tokens now” is false.

We maintain that a use of a proper name  $N$  in argument position settles<sup>F</sup> ‘ $N$  is called  $N$ ’. In other words, the use of a proper name *imparts* the information that  $N$  is called  $N$ . If this is correct, the Being Called Condition is not part of truth-conditional content. Although we will only argue for this thesis in the case of face-to-face uses, it can plausibly be argued for other type of uses as well.<sup>17</sup>

To see the point, consider a referential use of the name *Alfred* in a face-to-face conversation. There are at least three plausible constraints on contexts of use of the face-to-face type of this name (see Predelli 2013: chaps. 2-3). First, that there exists the name *Alfred* in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$ , that is, that there exists an expression endowed with a certain character, that is to say (if referentialism is correct) the constant function yielding Alfred for every context and circumstances of evaluation. Second, that there exists an intentional agent in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$ . Finally, the agent of  $c$  must token the articulation *Alfred* in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$  as endowed with the character abovementioned. Hence, every face-to-face use of *Alfred* imparts the information (or settles<sup>F</sup>) that there is an agent in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$  who tokens the articulation *Alfred* in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$ , endowed with a certain constant character yielding Alfred for every context and circumstances of evaluation. From this fact it follows that a given context is a context of face-to-face use of *Alfred* only if *Alfred* refers to Alfred in  $c_w$  at  $c_t$ . Under the plausible assumption that whenever  $N$  is the referent of the name  $N$  by virtue of  $N$ ’s character,  $N$  is called  $N$ , we can then conclude that any face-to-face use of *Alfred* settles<sup>F</sup> the sentence “Alfred is called *Alfred*”, that is, whenever  $c \in \text{CU}^F(\text{Alfred})$  it is true that “Alfred is called *Alfred*”. If this is on the right track, the property “individual called Alfred” is not part of the conventional meaning of the name *Alfred*, i.e. it is not part of the truth-conditions of sentences containing it, but it is extra-semantic information

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<sup>17</sup> We will focus on face-to-face uses because they are ubiquitous, thus providing a widespread, systematic, yet non-semantic association between referential uses of a proper name and the information that someone is called that name. This will prepare the ground for arguing that the connections between referential and predicative uses of proper names mentioned in the introduction are underpinned by non-semantic regularities.



imparted by the uses of the name.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4.2. On the semantics and pragmatics of predicative uses

In this section we turn to predicative uses. On the semantic side, we propose that the realization of the whole *nP* level corresponds to some sort of predicate (i.e.  $\langle e, t \rangle$ ) vaguely translated as the property of being a N-human, where N stands for the predicate denoted by the lower *nP*. The resulting predicate can be obtained conjoining two properties by Predicate Modification (Heim & Kratzer 1998), where the empty noun provides some minimal predicate realized as “being a human” (i.e.,  $[_n \text{ human}] \leftrightarrow \lambda x. x \text{ is human} / \text{Num} \_\_$ ) and the name, i.e., the lower *nP*, is realized as a property of the form:  $\lambda x. x \text{ is N}$ . So, we end up with  $[\lambda x. x \text{ is human} \ \& \ \lambda x. x \text{ is N}]$  or, equivalently,  $[\lambda x. \text{Human}(x) = 1 \ \& \ \text{N}(x) = 1]$ .

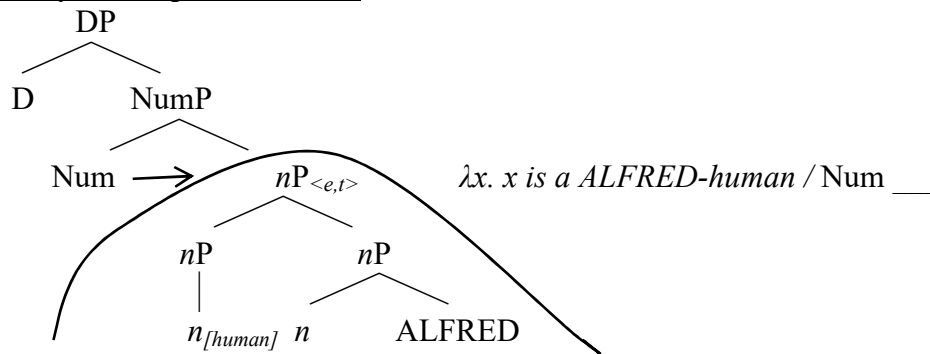
But what kind of property is the “being N” property? We think that in isolation this is just a

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<sup>18</sup> Predelli’s work suggests another possibility. According to him (see also Gutzmann 2015), some expressions pose a constraint on appropriate, non-defective uses which arises from a non-truth conditional, yet *conventional* dimension of meaning. For example, ‘Hurray!’ in the sentence ‘Hurray! Barcelona won the match!’ has no impact on truth-conditions but imposes upon appropriate contexts of use the constraint that the agent of *c* is favorably disposed to the fact that Barcelona won the match. One could argue, against the view maintained in the foregoing paragraphs, that the Being Called Condition on proper names is part of their bias. On this view, a proper name, e.g. *Alfred*, possesses a conventional restriction on non-defective contexts of use, such that  $c \in \text{CU}(\text{Alfred})$  only if Alfred is called ‘Alfred’ in *c*. One way of adjudicating between both views is by showing that there are cases in which a name N can be used in a context *c* despite the fact that N is not called *N* in *c*. This would show that the restriction does not have to do with bias. Although we favor a use-imparted approach here, we are willing to embrace the bias hypothesis if it turns up that such cases do not exist. It is important to note, however, that whether the Being Called Condition is part of *bias* or of use-imparted information encoded in uses of proper names referentialism is safe, since on both views such condition lies outside truth-conditional meaning. Finally, García-Carpintero’s (2017) alternative view is also worth mentioning here. According to his view, proper names carry a descriptive metalinguistic condition in the form of a semantic presupposition (that is, it is part of conventional meaning but not of truth conditions). We believe that García-Carpintero’s view is mistaken on this point, but we cannot discuss the issue here, since it would take us far from our main concerns in this article (see Lo Guercio 2018).

vacuous property, in the sense that it cannot determine any class of entities. Put differently, whenever a name becomes a predicate it requires some descriptive support, given that name Roots are meaningless objects even in predicate position. We contend that descriptive support comes in the form of a minimal predicate (the null noun, in this case), which composes with the name in order to output the predicate of “being N-human”. Thus on our view the grammar only provides the following meaning at the high *nP* level:

(55) The syntax of predicate uses:



Crucially, we contend that the complex predicate “being N-human” has no full applicability conditions outside of context or, in other words, it is semantically under-determinate: its semantic value varies from occurrence to occurrence as a function of what the speaker means and the context of conversation understood in a broad sense. Thus, the so-called ‘literal meaning’ of a sentence containing a predicative occurrence of a proper name (‘what is said’ by the sentence in the minimal sense) expresses only a semantic *schema* or propositional function (see Recanati 2004). As a consequence, on our view there is no clear-cut distinction between allegedly literal (metalinguistic) and non-literal predicative uses of proper names: in both cases some degree of pragmatic interpretation is required in order to retrieve the predicate intended by the speaker. In other words, “being called *N*” is not a predicate encoded in the grammar but a sort of enriched meaning that

arises only through pragmatic interpretation. The N-human property is then predicted to be able to adopt other meanings besides the metalinguistic one, such as the ones attested by *Creator/Producer*, *Resemblance*, *Family*, *Brand* (see (31) above), and other examples, although on our view all these interpretations (including the metalinguistic one) are non-literal, in contrast to what MP supporters claim. Below we show how these readings can be pragmatically derived.

Some clarifications are in order before proceeding. First, on our view this form of pragmatic enrichment can be pre-propositional, that is, it might take place before a whole proposition is computed. Second, since pragmatic enrichment is needed in order to get a full proposition, the process is mandatory, in the sense of Recanati (2004:7-8). However, it is not linguistically governed, as is arguably the case of indexicals, which encode a linguistic instruction for retrieving specific values from the narrow context of utterance. Third, although we claim that the property expressed by predicative uses of proper names is always pragmatically enriched, we do not mean that utterances containing such uses are always felt by speakers or interpreters as figurative, or in general as indirect speech acts. As many have argued (Sperber & Wilson 1986, Recanati 2001, 2004 and Ariel 2002) speakers and interpreters might deem as literal a lot of non-literal (that is, pragmatically enriched) uses of an expression.

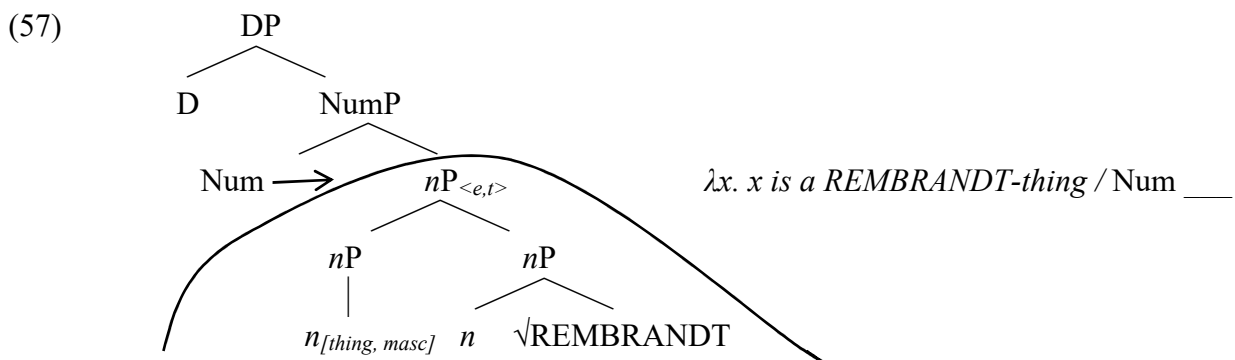
Another question that must be addressed is how we obtain a specific interpretation in context. Our view is compatible with several ways of thinking of the pragmatic processes involved in retrieving the proposition intended by a speaker. By way of illustration, we will focus on the account developed by Recanati (2004). On this view, when a sentence is uttered a sub-personal, non-inferential, automatic process starts at the interpreter's mind, through which a number of hypotheses are accessed and rapidly discarded or activated (this is interactive, i.e., it might occur in parallel with the interpretation of other linguistic items in the sentence). Ultimately, the representation that becomes more active is the one that enters the interpretation of the utterance.

The level of activation depends on several factors: the linguistic context, the general topic of conversation (a representation is more easily activated if related representations are activated too), the frequency of activation of such representation in the past and whether the representation has been activated recently, among other things.

Now, as mentioned, our view predicts that the N-human property may be read in different ways depending on linguistic and extra-linguistic context. We can provide a pragmatic account of these different interpretations. Consider for example (31a) (repeated here as (56) for ease of exposition)

- (56) Vi                    un       Rembrandt    en       el       museo.                    *Creator / Producer*  
       saw.1SG        a        R.                    in        the        museum  
       ‘I saw a Rembrandt at the museum.’

A plausible analysis would be introducing a non-human noun with some general feature, say, [*thing*] and an associated masculine feature:



Evidence for the null noun analysis is not so straightforward here as the null noun is masculine. But

the instability of number agreement favors this analysis again, at least for the case in which the creator name does not agree in number within the DP:

- (58) Vi                    dos    Picasso / Picassos    en    el    museo.  
          saw.1SG        two    P.SG    / P.PL            in    the    museum  
          ‘I saw two Picasso(s) at the museum.’

As far as the semantic realization at the  $nP$  layers is concerned, we obtain the following:

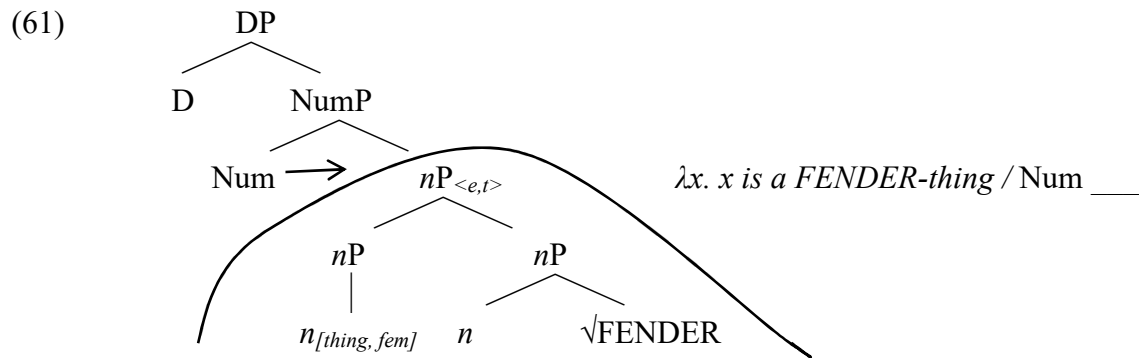
- (59)    high  $nP \leftrightarrow$  “ $\lambda x. x$  is a Rembrandt-*thing*” / Num\_\_\_\_\_

Now, on the present view the appearance of the complex [ $nP$   $n + \sqrt{\text{Rembrandt}}$ ], even when it occurs in a predicate-like syntactic environment, can activate the referential interpretation of the name. As mentioned, the activation might be stronger depending on features of context: the speaker/interpreter’s familiarity with the name, whether the name was recently used, whether related representations are activated in the linguistic or extra-linguistic context, and so on. If the view discussed in the foregoing sections is correct, a use of a name in referential position conveys two pieces of information: on the one hand, it refers to a particular individual; on the other hand, it imparts information in virtue of extra-semantic regularities encoded in its use, viz. that Rembrandt is called *Rembrandt* (which involves the property ‘individual called Rembrandt’). Thus in the face of a predicative use, the related referential interpretation of the name might come to mind and these two pieces of information might become active. Now, since the Root occurs in a predicate-like syntactic environment the pragmatic process is somewhat oriented in these cases, i.e. the interpreter searches for a property. Depending on features of the context understood in a broad sense and the

linguistic context, the metalinguistic property ‘individual called *Rembrandt*’ or a different property somehow related with a specific individual (e.g. artworks made by Rembrandt) will become more or less activated. The one that wins this competition enters the interpretation of the utterance. In the case of (56), common knowledge concerning Dutch painters and the occurrence of the word *museum* in the sentence will most likely suffice in standard contexts to secure a *producer/creator* interpretation.

A similar analysis extends to brand names:

- (60) Me                      acheté              une/un              Fender.              *Brand*  
 CL.ACC.1SG              bought              a.FEM / a.MASC              Fender  
 ‘I bought a Fender (guitar) / a Fender (bass/amp).’



Again, the semantic realization is straightforward:

- (62) high nP  $\leftrightarrow$  “ $\lambda x. x \text{ is a Fender-thing}$ ” / Num \_\_\_\_

Here, the linguistic context is crucial. On the one hand, the interpretation ‘I bought an individual called *Fender*’ would be absurd in standard contexts. On the other hand, gender specification is also

vital, for it will determine, together with contextual and cultural information, whether we interpret the predicate as a Fender guitar (*guitarra* is feminine in Spanish) or as a Fender bass or amp (*bajo* and *amplificador* are both masculine in Spanish).

In the case of the feminine null noun, evidence for the analysis comes from the *la-el* alternation. Take the guitar brand *Ávila* as illustration:<sup>19</sup>

- (63) Me compré una *Ávila* nueva.  
 CL.ACC.1SG bought a.FEM *Ávila* new  
 ‘I bought a new *Ávila*.’

As before, the use of the feminine *una* is mandatory indicating the active presence of a null noun. Curiously, *Ávila Burger* is also a hamburger brand (*hamburguesa* is feminine). Here’s an internet example:

- (64) Admítelo, después de comer **una *Ávila Burger***  
 admit-it after of eat.INF a.FEM *Á.B.*  
 no tomas nada.  
 not drink.2SG nothing  
 ‘Admit it! After eating an *Ávila Burger* you don’t drink anything.’

The syntax for (63) is essentially the same as that of (61) (although minor manipulation of the feature structure could be required) and, consequently, we also obtain the basic meaning in (62)

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<sup>19</sup> Notice that data like these show that it makes no sense to claim that the rule is blocked to avoid gender confusion; here the referent is a guitar.

with the required modifications. We see no difference with metalinguistic uses of names in the sense that the set of properties “being a guitar/bass/hamburger related to the brand X”, “being a painting by Rembrandt” and, crucially, “being called *N*” are not provided by the syntax of the relevant DPs, but by a process of pragmatic enrichment involving a sort of restrictive appositive structure. Thus, we eliminate the odd “being called *N*” predicate as a semantic primitive. Given the reasons adduced in the previous sections, we take this as a welcome empirical result.

Notice that the conjectures made in this section regarding the structure of derived names can be easily tested by relevant syntactic criteria that languages provide on the basis of particular phenomena. Thus, in Spanish the *producer* / *metalinguistic* readings are disambiguated by different means. Adding the differential object mark in the object in (65) immediately blocks the *producer* reading and triggers the *metalinguistic* one, even when the context obviously favors the *producer* meaning (see Zdrojewski 2015):

- (65)

Vi

a

un

Rembrandt

en

el

museo.

saw.1SG

DOM

a

R.

in

the

museum

‘I saw a Rembrandt at the museum.’

This is so, just because in most dialects of Spanish differential object marking is banned with non-human/animate objects.

In summary, referential and predicative uses of names correlate with different syntactic and semantic configurations. The syntactic and semantic analysis we have defended constitute independent evidence for Acquaviva’s hypothesis that the *nP*-level is not a basic predicate but an entity-denoting object (more precisely, an abstract entity) that becomes a predicate through the adding of functional structure of the Num-domain. At any rate, metalinguistic uses of names cannot



be taken as basic neither under syntactic or semantic grounds (*contra* Matushansky 2008, 2015). They are pragmatically enriched meanings, the by-product of the absolute incapacity of name Roots for defining any property.

#### 4.3. *Systematic connections between referential and predicative uses of proper names*

As mentioned in the introduction, *prima facie* MP has an advantage over traditional Millian accounts of proper names, for it nicely accounts for some attested systematic connections between referential and predicative uses. In this section we show how our account deals with these connections.

##### 4.3.1. *Patterns of inference*

In previous sections we argued that ‘Alfred is called *Alfred*’ is true whenever *Alfred* is used in a face-to-face conversation. This already provides a way of accounting for the inferences presented in the introduction. Consider again **I1** and **I2** (assume that the interpretation is the metalinguistic one):

#### **I1**

Alfred is a good filmmaker

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So, at least one Alfred is a good filmmaker

#### **I2**

No Alfred is a good filmmaker

---

So, Alfred is not a good filmmaker

Now, “Alfred is a good filmmaker” settles<sup>F</sup> “Alfred is called *Alfred*”, which in turn, implies “someone is called *Alfred*”. Hence, the premise “Alfred is a good filmmaker” also settles<sup>F</sup> “someone is called *Alfred*”, and most importantly, “someone called *Alfred* is a good filmmaker”, which is precisely what the conclusion affirms. The inference is not logically valid, but it is acceptable in the following sense: in every context in which the premise is used in a face-to-face conversation and is true, the conclusion is also true. To be sure, the inference is not acceptable in every context, since there are possible contexts, such as those where the name does not exist, in which it is true that Alfred is a good filmmaker but he is not called *Alfred*, so it is false in that context that at least one Alfred is a good filmmaker.

We can also account for the second inference. The premise’s truth-conditions are that no person called *Alfred* is a good filmmaker. There are contexts in which this premise is true but the conclusion is false (contexts in which Alfred is a good filmmaker but he is not called *Alfred*). However, every context *of use* (of the face-to-face type and plausibly many others) of the conclusion is such that *Alfred* is a meaningful expression yielding Alfred as its referent, and the agent of the context uses *Alfred* with its appropriate character in that context, so that it is true that Alfred is called *Alfred* in that context. Then, if we restrict the contexts to those in which both premise and conclusion are used in a face-to-face conversation, it is the case that whenever it is true that no Alfred is a good filmmaker, it is true that Alfred is not a good filmmaker. In light of all this, we obtain an explanation for the intuitive acceptability of **I1** and **I2** without assuming that the Being Called Condition is part of the truth-conditions of the sentences containing proper names, that is, in a way that is compatible with referentialism.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Our view contrasts with the approach defended by Schoubye (2017). He claims that the condition that N is called *N* is part of the character of proper names. Thus, in his view the above mentioned inferences are licensed by the semantics of the expressions. In addition, he presents some worries for a strategy like the one we’ve been defending. Roughly, he claims that if something constraints what the name can be used to refer to in a context, then that must be a semantic

### 4.3.2. *Competence*

Our view can also account for systematic connections based on linguistic competence. The fact to be explained was that a person who is competent with referential uses of proper names typically understands predicative uses too, even if she was not previously familiar with them. To be clear, what is meant by this is that interpreters which are competent with referential uses of proper names are typically able to comprehend predicative uses in their metalinguistic interpretation. This fact is usually emphasized because the metalinguistic interpretation is commonly thought of as the literal interpretation of predicative uses of proper names, while other interpretations are considered deferred or metaphorical (but see Jeshion 2015 for an alternative view). MP has a good explanation for this fact, since on that account all uses of proper names possess a metalinguistic, predicate-like semantic value. In contrast, according to our proposal all interpretations of predicative uses are non-literal in the sense that they need to be worked out pragmatically (although they are not necessarily felt as cases of figurative or indirect discourse). Our proposal provides a pragmatic explanation of metalinguistic interpretations too. In our view, the interpreters' ability to comprehend predicative uses of proper names does not come from their semantic competence but from their general pragmatic capacities. The semantic underdeterminacy of predicative occurrences of proper names triggers a pragmatic process of enrichment which delivers this or that interpretation depending on features of context. Interpreters are able to work out speaker's meaning just by virtue of their knowledge of the context and their ability to interpret the speaker's beliefs and intentions.

As we pointed out in section 4.2, when the process aims to the metalinguistic interpretation, the use-imparted information associated with referential uses of proper names plays an important

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constraint. We cannot discuss his arguments in full detail here, but if correct our strategy shows that there can be some non-semantic features that constrain uses of proper names.

role. We argued that face-to-face referential uses of a proper name  $N$  impart the information (or settle<sup>F</sup>) that  $N$  is called  $N$ , which involves the property “individual called  $N$ ”. Since face-to-face uses are the most common ones, this co-occurrence of referential uses of proper names with the property “individual called  $N$ ” is widespread and regular. In virtue of this, whenever the predicative occurrence of a complex  $[_{nP} n + \sqrt{N}]$  in a predicate-like syntactic environment activates or makes accessible its referential interpretation, it also makes accessible the property commonly associated with it. If this interpretation makes sense against the background assumptions, it will be the one selected by the interpreter.

#### 4.3.3. *Intra and cross-linguistic uniformity*

Here, again, what is meant is that the metalinguistic interpretation of predicative uses of proper names is widespread both intra and cross-linguistically. If the proposal advanced in this article is on the right track, predicative uses of proper names are the result of a process of pragmatic enrichment, which in the case of a metalinguistic interpretation is licensed by the abovementioned pragmatic regularities related with the use of those expressions in referential position, viz. the fact that face-to-face referential uses of proper names impart the information that  $N$  is called  $N$ . Now, as we noted earlier (4.1) whether a name imparts such information does not depend on peculiarities of this or that specific proper name, so to the extent that our argument is sound, the regularity that licenses metalinguistic interpretations holds intra-linguistically. Moreover, since there are no significant differences as to the features of face-to-face type of uses across different languages, the thesis holds cross-linguistically too.

## 5. Conclusion: on the emptiness of name roots

We have rejected the uniformity argument as a good argument to decide between MP and referentialism. Relatedly, we have also rejected MP's central thesis arguing that the so-called Being Called Condition is neither a syntactic nor a semantic primitive. Instead, we have provided plausible reasons to adopt a purely pragmatic view of such a condition and its effects. Both in referential and predicate uses of names there is a common source for such a pragmatic output. The underlying syntax of referential uses does not support any predicative reading of the *nP* complex containing the name Root at the semantic interface. As for predicative uses, their underlying syntax does allow for a predicate reading but [<sub>NumP</sub> [<sub>nP</sub> *n* + NAME ROOT]] structures denote zero predicates in a way such that combining this predicate with the minimal predicate introduced by the null noun gives rise to a sort of systematic pattern of pragmatic enrichment, which, in turn, makes available the Being Called property, whenever the context makes it salient.

We have shown how our account explains the systematic connections between predicate and referential uses regarding patterns of inference, competence and intra a cross-linguistic uniformity. Crucially, the final pragmatic picture we obtain regarding certain important aspects of the interpretation of names is the direct by-product of the fact that name Roots never activate a predicate meaning, even in those cases where syntax provides the conditions for this (i.e., when [*n* + Root] is Num-selected). This makes names particular in the realm of nominal categories (and beyond) in the following sense: allosemy, conceived of as the source of syntactically-conditioned polysemy, can alter the semantic typing of a [<sub>nP</sub> *n* + name Root] complex, but not its content. And the reason is this: Name roots, given their empty nature, do not contribute any content to the syntactic-semantic environments in which they occur.

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*Saab, Andrés,*

*Consejo nacional de investigaciones científicas y técnicas - Universidad de Buenos Aires*

*Cucha Cucha, 1029,*

*Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, CP\_1405*

*Argentina*

*al\_saab75@yahoo.com.ar*

*Lo Guercio, Nicolás*

*Consejo nacional de investigaciones científicas y técnicas*

*Bulnes 642,*

*Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, CP C1176ABL*

*Argentina*

*nicolasloguercio@gmail.com*