

**Named relations:
A universal in the pragmatics of reference within the kin group***

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1 The pragmatic alternation of kin terms and names

Pragmatically conditioned alternations in the use of person referring expressions lie at the heart of the sociolinguistic study of politeness. In a foundational article, Brown & Gilman (1960) argued that in languages with distinct “polite” and “familiar” pronouns, the choice of which to use is guided by relations of “power and solidarity” between the speaker and the addressee/referent. In much the same vein, others have explored how alternations in the use of names (of various sorts), titles, and other person referring expressions are conditioned by the relative status of interlocutors as well as those they refer to (see the now outdated bibliography in Philipsen & Huspek 1985 for classic examples).

Keeping with that tradition, this paper focuses on an understudied, but particularly robust, alternation between two types of person reference—the use of proper names and kin terms to address consanguineal kin¹. We present findings from a survey of the norms of kin terms and proper name use in addressee-reference in 35 speech communities². In the vast majority of the communities we surveyed,

* Authorship is listed alphabetically; both authors contributed equally. Our thanks to German Dziel, whose bibliography of kinship studies proves invaluable to the comparative researcher.

¹ The study of kinship terminologies has been notoriously biased towards the so-called “referential” rather than the “address” functions of kin terms, the result of now outmoded anthropological interests in kinship terminologies as, alternatively, a lens on the social organization of what were thought to be exclusively kin-based societies or as a lens on linguistic-cum-cognitive modes of semantic classification. Needless to say, these were perspectives that largely overlooked the social pragmatics of kin terms and kin term usages.

Of course, the pragmatic aspects of kin term usage are not limited to “address”. Nevertheless, as with pronominal “politeness”, it is in addressee-reference that we are often most palpably confronted with the pragmatic aspects of person reference. Here kin terms may have suppletive forms and employ vocative or other morphological marks of their pragmatic functions. The dualistic classification of kin terms into categories of “reference” and “address” seems to have been a way to deal with and contain the saliently pragmatic aspects of kin term usage in the latter category. In this paper we employ the category of address in an expanded fashion to include all types of addressee-reference which employ kin terms, whether vocative [“Mommy, are you going?”], propositional [“Is mommy going too?”], or predicative [“You are my mother.”]. There is quite a bit of cross-linguistic variability in the degree to which kin terms (and other common nouns) are used to refer to addressees in propositional function. In southeast Asian languages pronominal avoidance and propositional uses of kin terms are pervasive (see Cooke 1970 on “pronominally used kin terms” in Burmese, Thai, and Vietnamese). Elsewhere, use of kin terms in addressee-reference seems largely limited to vocative function.

² Whether an account of addressee-reference in a speech community was deemed sufficient for inclusion in our sample or not often turned on how rich of a description it offered. A methodological problem arises insofar as the sources that we have consulted often do not indicate whether they are

normative judgments of who should use which noun phrase-type to address whom are conditioned by a simple sociocultural parameter: the relative-age or relative-generation of the speaker and the addressee. And in every community where we find this simple pragmatic alternation between the use of kin terms and proper names, kin terms are normatively used to refer to senior addressees and proper names are normatively used in referring to junior addressees. We have yet to come across a speech community where the opposite is true; that is, where there is a simple alternation in which kin terms are used to refer to junior addressees and names are used to refer to senior addressees. The strong cross-cultural tendency for kin terms and proper names to function as pragmatic alternants and the cross-cultural uniformity in the way in which they alternate with each other call out for explanation. But before we turn to this task, we review in more detail the findings of our survey.

2 A cross-cultural survey of the kin term-proper name alternation

In most of the 35 speech communities in our survey—28 in total (see Table A in the Appendix for the list of linguistic communities in our sample)—there is what we term a *simple pragmatic alternation* between kin terms and personal names. We dub this alternation “simple” because it is conditioned by a single contextual parameter, the relative-age or relative-generation of the speaker and their addressee. Moreover, this simple alternation follows the same pattern in all 28 communities: kin terms are normatively used to refer to addressees senior to the speaker and names are used to address a speaker’s junior consanguineal kin. In none of the communities in our survey do we find the other possible pattern of this simple alternation, in which seniors would address their juniors with kin terms and juniors normatively would refer to senior addressees by name.

In six of the communities in our survey, kin terms and proper names do not enter into pragmatic alternation in addressee reference. Either kin terms are normatively used in addressee reference to the exclusion of proper names or proper names are used to the exclusion of kin terms³. Table 1 provides a succinct sum-

describing actual patterns of observed usage of names and kin terms or whether they are reporting explicitly stated or inferred norms of usage. Given the categorical nature of many descriptions (e.g., “People do not address their grandparents by name”), we wonder whether norms are not often being presented as actual patterns of usage. Faced with the challenge of comparing reports from multiple sources, we have taken the more cautious tack of framing the cross-cultural regularity of addressee-reference we put forward here as a regularity of norms. Whether actual practice always and everywhere adheres to these norms is not something we feel the data in our survey can adequately address.

³ The non-alternating patterns are particularly well-attested in certain regions. Reciprocal use of kin terms among all kin dyads is a widespread pattern in Aboriginal Australia (for instance, Thomson 1946:157). In contrast, we find in Micronesia and Western Polynesia a number of speech communities in which proper names are used almost exclusively to address kin (see Goodenough 1965: 267 on Truk; Burrows 1936:73 on Futuna; Burrows 1937:66 on Uvea; Schneider 1984:12 on Yapese). Since we were interested in pragmatic alternations we limited the number

mary of our findings, dividing the speech communities in our survey into five possible types:

Pragmatic Alternation	Addressee		Number of speech communities
	older than Speaker	younger than Speaker	
None	✓	KT	3
	✓	PN	3
Simple	✓	KT	28
	*	PN	0
Complex	✓	KT/PN	1

Table 1: Five possible norms of kin term (KT) and proper name (PN) usage between age-differentiated speaker and addressee-referent, and their cross-linguistic attestation in our sample.

As we have already noted, the vast majority of communities in our survey feature a simple pragmatic alternation in the use of names and kin terms conditioned by the relative age of speaker and addressee-referent. The nature of the relative age difference that factors in this alternation varies somewhat. In the most common pattern, kinship terms are normatively used to address those who are older than the speaker, including elder siblings. The case of Turkish offers an example of this sort (see Table 2; left column). Thus elder siblings and all ascending generation kin are addressed by kin term, while younger siblings and all descending generation kin are addressed by name.

	MASC	FEM	MASC	FEM	MASC	FEM
G ⁺²	<i>dede</i>	<i>ebe</i>	<i>mbuyane</i>	<i>mama</i>	personal name	
G ⁺¹	<i>baba</i>	<i>ana</i>	<i>baba</i>	<i>yaya</i>	<i>danda</i>	<i>dinda</i>
G ⁰	<i>aga</i>	<i>aba</i>	personal name		personal name	
G ⁻¹	personal name				personal name	
G ⁻²	personal name		personal name		personal name	
	TURKISH		GOGO		BUSAMA	

Table 2: Examples of simple relative-age split (left), generation conditioned split (middle) and the complex split (right) in norms of address (PN is shaded, KT is unshaded). SOURCES: Turkish (Casson & Özertug 1976:589, Figure 1); Gogo (Rigby 1969:326); Busama (Hogbin 1963:39-42).

In a number of other cases, relative generation rather than relative age conditions the alternation of kin terms and names. Kin in ascending generations (e.g., parents, grandparents) are addressed with kinship terms and kin in the same or descending generations (e.g., siblings, children, grandchildren) are addressed with proper names. Gogo, a Bantu language spoken in Tanzania, appears as an example of this pattern in Table 2. (This is, we should note, also the norm in American

of languages to three each for these two categories—that means that one shouldn’t take Table A as a proxy for the statistical distribution of these patterns cross-linguistically. Practically, what this meant was that we stopped sampling cases from Aboriginal Australia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.

English usage as described by Schneider & Homans (1955)⁴.)

There is only one community in our sample that exhibits a pragmatic alternation between kin terms and names which is not simply conditioned by the relative age of the speaker and the addressee-referent. In Hogbin's (1963) description of Busama, a coastal, Austronesian speaking community of Papua New Guinea, parents and children reciprocally use kin terms in referring to one another in address, while grandparents and grandchildren reciprocally use names. Viewed in relation to the pattern of simple, seniority-based alternation most commonly found in our survey, usage in Busama appears complex. Kin terms as well as names are used to refer to both senior addressees and junior addressees. The alternation in Busama is not based simply on the relative age of speaker and addressee-referent, but on their relationship-type. In relationships between members of alternating generations, lineal relatives use names reciprocally in addressing one another. In relationships between members of adjacent generations, lineal relatives use kin terms reciprocally in addressing one another. Busama is unique in our survey as a speech community in which a pragmatic alternation between kin terms and proper names is based on anything more complex than a simple reckoning of the relations of seniority between speakers and addressees.

To sum up, our survey reveals a strong cross-cultural tendency for kin terms and proper names to alternate on the basis of a single contextual parameter: the relative-age or relative-generation of speaker and addressee-referent. Moreover, we find that where this simple alternation exists, kin terms are always used to refer to senior addressees and proper names are always used to refer to junior addressees. So, why is this the case? What is the significance of this alternation and why is it seniors who are addressed with kin terms and juniors with names, and not the other way around? We begin to address this question by considering the pragmatic significance of kin term and name use.

3 Relative-age, respect, and honorification

We have shown that in a wide variety of speech communities names and kin terms alternate simply on the basis of the relative-age or relative-generation of speaker and addressee. However, when we look at local understandings of the pragmatic significance of this alternation we find that it is not typically conceptualized merely as a neutral indicator of the relative-age of speaker and addressee. Rather, the alternation typically indicates a social ranking of speech event participants. Kin terms are used in addressing seniors as a sign of "respect" or "defer-

⁴ In some cases, use of kin terms is associated with a certain life-status. For instance, among the Yanomamö, names may be used in addressing juniors until they reach puberty (Yanomamö [Chagnon 1992: 19]); among Balinese speakers it is considered rude to use a proper name for a married individual (Balinese [Geertz & Geertz 1964: 95]): after marriage, kinship terms, teknonyms or other referring expressions become appropriate. Thus, not only the relative age of speaker and addressee, but the absolute age of the addressee may be a factor conditioning the alternation as well.

ence” to the addressee and the use of proper names in addressing juniors is “a sign of superiority on the part of the user”, as Raymond Firth puts it in his account of usage on Tikopia (1936: 256). Put another way, through this pattern of usage the deference entitlements of seniors vis-à-vis juniors are indexed (see Agha 1993a: 133 *infra*). The alternation of kinship terms and proper names in referring to addressees, we submit, typically has an honorific function.

We find evidence for the honorific signification of kin terms (in contrast to proper names) both in native speakers’ explicit characterizations of their pragmatic value and in the way the use of kin terms parallels and co-occurs with other honorific forms found in these language. Schneider & Holmans (1955: 1199) provide a colorful example of the former in their discussion of the use of the terms “aunt” and “uncle” in American English: “An informant with three uncles would call one “John”, one “Uncle Bill”, and the other “Jim”. When pressed to explain why he called the first uncle just plain “John”, he would reply by saying that the person was a dirty so-and-so and that he would not dignify the man by calling him uncle”. One hears echoes of this sort of explicit characterization of the pragmatic significance of kin terms and proper names when, for instance, Singarimbun (1975: 49) writes of the Karo: “A person is obliged to respect and obey his older siblings, and as a sign of this respect, it is forbidden to mention the name of an older sibling. *Kaka* is the term of address for ‘elder sibling’....Younger siblings are addressed by name.”

Aside from such explicit characterizations, the honorific significance of kin terms vis-à-vis proper names can also be seen in their normative co-occurrence with other honorific phenomena; that is, in diagrammatic relationships between this and other social pragmatic alternations. Often, for instance, use of a kin term in vocative address is associated with use of “polite” pronouns in addressee-reference, which together signal respect for senior addressee-referents.

Type of addressee-reference	Addressee older than Speaker	Addressee younger than Speaker
Vocative:	Kin term / Title	First name / Nickname
Propositional:	<i>usted</i>	<i>tú</i>

Table 3: Co-occurrence of split-address with other social indexical contrasts in Spanish. SOURCE: Spanish [Michoacán, Mexico] (Foster 1964).

In the rural Michoacán community discussed in Foster (1964), the age-based appropriateness of using proper names and kin terms mapped precisely onto the appropriateness of using T-form (*tú*) and V-form (*usted*) respectively in pronominal address (see Table 3; for parallel examples see Braun 1988 on Georgian; Morford 1997 on 19th century French upper-class norms; Vreeland 1962 on Khalka Mongolian). Kin terms themselves often alternate with T-form pronouns as well. In Kannada (Dravidian), T-form pronouns are the norm for address “downwards” in genealogical space, while kin terms are used vocatively in lieu of pronouns in ad-

addressing seniors. Again, this is a contrast quite explicitly understood by Kannada speakers in terms of deference and respect (Bean 1978: 34, 68, *infra*).

The pragmatic alternation between proper names and kin terms parallels other honorific phenomena beyond those involving addressee-reference. In Javanese, the alternation between kin terms and proper names maps neatly onto expected speech-level use for different addressees. According to Geertz (1961), kin terms are used to refer to addressees who should be spoken to using “respectful” speech levels, while proper names are used to address those with whom “familiar” speech levels are used (see top of Table 4).

	Addressee Kin Relation	Kin Term	Speech Level	Proper Name
Javanese	Grandparent	Obligatory	High Respect	No
	Parent/Uncle/Aunt	Obligatory	Respect	No
	Older Sibling	Obligatory	Respectful Familiarity	No
	Younger Sibling	Optional	Familiarity	Given Name
	Child	Optional	Familiarity	Nickname
	Addressee Age Relation	Kin Term	Speech Level	Proper Name
Hungarian- speaking Rumanian Village	Grandparental Generation	Obligatory	Formal	Last Name
	Parental Generation	Obligatory	Formal	FFN/IFN*
	Between Self and Parent	Obligatory	Formal	IFN
	Roughly Same Age	No	Informal	IFN
	Younger	Optional	Informal	IFN

Table 4: Co-occurrence of split-address with other honorific phenomena in speaking with kin in Javanese and with non-kin in Hungarian. SOURCES: Javanese (Geertz 1961: 20-21; Koentjaraningrat 1957: 88-89); Hungarian (Vincze 1978: 107-108).

Additional evidence for the honorific character of the kin term-proper name alternation can be found in (so-called) fictive kinship usage. In a Hungarian-speaking village in Rumania, Vincze (1978) finds that non-kin seniors are obligatorily addressed using kin terms and formal names and are spoken to in a formal register of the language, all signs of the deference they are entitled to. As the age difference between speaker and addressee diminishes less formal names are used, modulating the degree of honorification in a way that parallels the modulation of respectful speech levels in Javanese. And as in Javanese, kinship terms are optional and an informal register of the language is used when addressing people the same age or younger (see bottom of Table 4). In “fictive” and “literal” usage

* Formal first names (FFN) are used in conjunction with kinship terms for males of the parental generation while informal first names (IFN) are used in conjunction with kinship terms for females of the parental generation.

alike, we find that the kin term-proper name alternation parallels other honorific alternations.

The honorific significance of kinship terms and the non-honorific significance of names is evident also in the use of fictive kin terms with those of higher social status and names with those of lower social status. In a study of address in urban North Indian, Sylvia Vatuk finds that names are used for juniors as well as for “juniors and seniors of much lower social status, in caste or occupational terms. Thus a sweeper is referred to and addressed by name, regardless of age, and reciprocates with a kin term. Servants and *rikshavalas* [i.e. rickshaw drivers, a low-status occupation] are similarly referred to and addressed by name, regardless of age and even when they are of Brahman caste” (Vatuk 1969: 256). To return to Javanese, Hildred Geertz notes that “[k]in terms are used to address all persons, kin and non-kin, with the exception of one’s own servants and kin who are younger than or junior to the speaker. To address a person without using such a term (and there is a specific word for “to address by name only”: *ndjangkar*) either with or without his name indicates disrespect and extreme familiarity” (Geertz 1961:24). In fictive use, ascending generation kin terms are typically honorific, and are often used like titles in place of or in addition to names. In contrast, bare names are typically reserved for addressing social inferiors. In general, it appears that the principle of seniority as applied within the family often makes the family something of a microcosm—a replica in miniature—of the indexing of status asymmetries within society writ large.

Reviewing both “fictive” and “literal” kin term usage across a wide range of cultures, we find that senior kin terms regularly serve as honorific variants of proper names in addressee-reference. Native speakers and ethnographers alike explicitly characterize the use of kin terms as an indication of the “deference” or “respect” appropriate to senior kin or other superiors. The alternation of kin terms and proper names also operates in parallel with a range of other honorific phenomena, from the T/V alternation in pronominal address to the use of honorific speech levels. Taken together, both explicit characterizations of usage and its implicit patterning reveal a strong cross-cultural tendency for the alternation of kin terms and proper names to serve as more than an indicator of the relative age of speech event participants. It functions within a logic of honorification.

4 Social pragmatics and the semantico-referential properties of NPs

The consistent way in which kin terms and names alternate as address forms cross-culturally has led us to discern a cross-cultural regularity in the pragmatic functioning of this alternation: again and again kin terms, on the one hand, and proper names, on the other hand, play similar roles in systems of honorification. How should we account for the remarkable cross-cultural consistency in the pragmatic functions of these alternants? We suggest that it is important to attend to the semantic and referential properties of kin terms, on the one hand, and proper names, on the other, as distinct noun phrase-types found in all languages. These

distinct semantic and referential properties, we submit, motivate their pragmatic functions as respectively honorific and non-honorific person referring expressions when they are used in alternation with one another. We focus on two factors in particular: (1) the relative affordances of the predicate structure and semantic content of kin terms (*vis-à-vis* proper names) for the elaboration of nonreferential indexical functions; and (2) the relatively specific and “direct” referentiality of proper names (*vis-à-vis* kin terms), and how these referential properties motivate negative type-level stereotypes concerning the pragmatic functions of names. Taken together, these two factors conspire to strongly motivate (*a.*) the directionality of the pragmatic alternation (i.e. PNs for juniors; KTs for seniors), (*b.*) its simplex rather than complex character (see Table 1) and (*c.*) the pragmatic asymmetry whereby names, but not kin terms, are categorically avoided. We address these two factors in turn.

1. *Relative affordances of kin terms for achieving honorific functions.* Lexical honorifics often piggyback on the predicate structure of the word-types in which they occur. For instance, verbs with two prototypically human arguments (e.g., give, speak to, beseech) are often a locus for the elaboration of honorific vocabulary that indicates the deference owed by the agent of the predicate to the benefactee or goal. In the nominal domain, kin terms are particularly well-suited to perform a similar honorific function. Kin terms express the relationship between two human arguments, the kin term’s possessor, or propositus, and the person(s) denoted by the kin term itself. Kin terms, then, like other two-place predicates which take human arguments are likely loci for honorification, itself a two-place pragmatic relation, to find expression⁵. (See Agha 2007: 317-322 for a more detailed discussion of the mapping of the target of honorifics onto the predicate structure of lexical types.)

Beyond the fact that kin terms are two-place predicates, they provide a semantic characterization of the relationship between their two arguments, which can serve as the basis for a semantic-to-pragmatic analogy. Kin terms semantically characterize the relationship between their two arguments in terms of the genera-

⁵ Because kin terms are two-place predicates, both the indexical origo and the indexical target of honorification are referentially specified. To be a little more precise about their character as honorifics, we can note that they thus parallel honorific verbs that index deference relations between the referents of NPs occupying slots in their case frame. Lexical honorifics of this kind are particularly well attested in southeast and east Asian languages (e.g. Javanese [Errington 1988], Tibetan [Agha 1993b], Japanese and Korean [Uehara 2011]). These two-place honorifics index speaker’s estimation of the relative deference entitlements owed the (referent of the) dative benefactee or goal of the predicate by the (referent of the) predicate subject (Agha 1993b: 97). But though they index a deference relationship between referents, it is clear that their privileged use occurs when the exalted referent is the addressee of the utterance and the humbled referent is its speaker. Note that the emic designators for such forms reflect these speaker-humbling functions: in Japanese these are labeled as *kenjigoo* “self-humbling” forms; in Javanese, verbs of this type are typically classed as part of the *krama andhap* or “low” [i.e. speaker/referent-lowering] *krama* vocabulary (Errington 1988:99). The common cross-cultural normative prescription that speaker use a kin term in addressing senior kin involves a similar telescoping of semantic roles onto interactional roles.

tional (e.g. mother/daughter) or age (e.g. elder brother/younger brother) relation between them. This appears to ground a metaphoric extension from the semantic domain of kin denotation into the pragmatic domain of deference and honorification. That is to say, the semantic ascription of seniority through overt lexical form seems often to serve as a social index of the comportment appropriate toward kin who are older—namely, deference or respect. By identifying one’s addressee as senior, speaker pays respect to them. In contrast, proper names offer no semantic characterization of their referent, let alone a characterization of the relationship between multiple human arguments. They, thus, offer little of the “infrastructure” needed for bearing an honorific signification; there is little semantic substance upon which to build a pragmatic metaphor.

2. *Specific and “direct” referentiality of proper names and type-level hypostatization of their pragmatic functions.* If the first perspective suggests why kin terms might be better suited to achieving honorific functions, a second perspective offers some suggestions as to why proper names might better serve non-honorific functions. A given proper name (“Hillary Clinton”, for instance) makes specific and differential reference to some particular person for all individuals socialized to its use—names are “rigid designators” of their referents (Kripke 1980). For kin terms, in contrast, interlocutors must know more than the denotation of the form to know its reference; they must know the possessor of the kin term and reconstruct the referent as a function on that variable. As a result, kin terms may be conceptualized by speakers as a more indirect mode of referring compared to the rigid designation of a referent by a proper name. Moreover, as Levinson (2007) argues, the referent of a kinship expression is less specific and more ambiguous than the referent of a name: ‘my brother’ may refer to many more possible referents than the name ‘Hilary Clinton’ does. To use Levinson’s term, kin terms are more “circumspect” than names and may be used when a name would be considered impolite or taboo.

The “directness” of names and their specificity (i.e., lack of circumspectness)—their overall referential bluntness—can seem impolite from a perspective that sees circumspection and indirectness as strategies of politeness (e.g., Brown & Levinson 1987). Indeed, names not only lack the semantico-referential properties that make kin terms common honorific forms; proper names often have impolite or anti-deferential connotations. Beyond being merely non-honorific, they are often anti-honorific. In the languages surveyed, proper names are quite often categorically avoided in ascending-generation address in a way that kin terms are not in descending-generation address. The categorical avoidance of proper names in addressee-reference to seniors suggests that speakers avoidance of names is not exclusively driven by token-level considerations of referential circumspection. Rather, it suggests that speakers impute pragmatic values to proper names as lexical types, and that it is these type-level judgments which govern token-level patterning of their occurrence.

Proper names seem to differentially motivate such a hypostatization of pragmatic function to the word-type. This can be seen by looking at the range

of name-tokens (contra kin-term tokens) that are subject to pragmatic valuation cross-linguistically. As Table 5 illustrates, names are subject to avoidance not only in address but across a wide range of discursive contexts and referential uses. In some of these the reference of the token does not condition pragmatic felicity. When we speak of the pragmatics of person reference the assumption is that the particular reference of discourse-tokens conditions construals of the kind of pragmatic act that is performed. Whether the use of a T-form pronoun is considered an act of “impoliteness” or an “expression of solidarity” depends in part upon the particular identity of the referent of the form. This is not always true of proper names. For instance, among Gonja speakers “it is extremely rude, and indeed unheard of, to call one’s parent by name” but it is equally reprehensible to use the name to refer to a namesake of the parent (Goody 1973: 247). Token-reference does not defease or cancel out the pragmatic infelicity of using the parent’s name. In some cases the range of tokens which are proscribed is even greater. So, for instance, in a number of Mon-Khmer languages of Vietnam, speakers avoid tokens of the names of ascending consanguineal kin not only when used to refer to those kin or when used to refer to namesakes, but they also avoid phonologically similar lexical forms (i.e. homonyms). Various extensions of name avoidance beyond the domain of addressee-reference are illustrated as a cline in Table 5.

Domains of proper name avoidance	ENGLISH [Indo-Euro.]	THAKALI [Sino-Tibetan]	GONJA [Nig.-Congo]	KATU [Mon-Khmer]
Addressee reference	X	X	X	X
All tokens in reference		X	X	X
All tokens of PN-type			X	X
Icons of tokens of PN				X

Table 5: Different ranges of usages of consanguineal kin’s personal names [PNs] subject to normative injunction in different speech communities. SOURCES: English (Schneider & Homans 1955: 1200); Thakali (Vinding 1979: 176); Gonja (Goody 1973: 247); Katu (Wallace 1969: 71).

In Gonja and Katu, speakers treat all tokens of the personal name type (or even the phonological form of the name) as having equivalent pragmatic effects. Fleming 2011 argues that native speakers’ tendencies to understand the social pragmatic function of names as a context-independent, type-level property is related to the constancy of indexical reference of proper names across tokens of use discussed above. That is, an analogy is created between referential and non-referential indexical functions; just as all tokens of a name type have the same reference, so too do all tokens of the name type have similar pragmatic effects. These data suggest that names more than kin terms are hypostatized as having ‘inherent’ social indexical functions at the level of the lexical type; in the data we are looking at, these are “anti-honorific” functions that motivate name avoidance and even tabooing. Kin terms, much as with pronouns, anaphors, titles, and other person referring expressions, do not motivate the same patterns of lexical avoid-

ance.

In sum, these two factors seem to work in consort to motivate the pragmatic patterning of proper names and kin terms in kin address. (1) The two-place predicate structure of kin terms makes those terms which refer to senior kin apt to serve two-place deference-indexing functions. Here a semantic-to-pragmatic analogy is formed between the denotation of seniority and the indexing of deference, whose normative basis within the kin group is understood to be precisely predicated upon genealogical seniority. Speakers index their own subordination within social frameworks of kinship by predicating the seniority of their addressee. (2) Meanwhile, the specific and direct referentiality of names, which do not have abstractable sense-properties upon which to build honorific functions, motivates speakers to understand these as impolite or disrespectful, at least when in paradigmatic opposition to kin terms. This anti-honorific significance of names is understood as an inherent property of name-types rather than name-tokens through analogy to their referential constancy, thus further canalizing patterns of name-avoidance in reference to ascending generation kin.

5 Conclusion: Beyond Field Methodologies

Our survey illustrates that the use of kin terms and personal names in addressee reference is subject to pragmatic norms of appropriate use that have a striking regularity across different languages and cultures. While there are cases where either names or kin terms are exclusively employed in all speaker-addressee dyads within the kin group, most of the cases in our sample are characterized by an asymmetry of usage: *juniors are enjoined to use kin terms and not personal names to address their senior kin while senior kin use personal names to address their juniors.*

To explain this pattern, we have considered the pragmatic significance of the kin term-proper name alternation, finding that in many areas of the world, kinship terms and personal names have distinct indexical values: the use of one or the other indexes the socio-interactional position of the speaker vis-à-vis the addressee as senior or junior kinsperson, and more than that, as being entitled to deference or not. Moreover, the regularity with which these indexical values are associated with kin terms and personal names respectively suggests that the distinct semantico-referential characteristics of these nominal types significantly constrain and afford distinct indexical potentialities when they function as pragmatically-conditioned variants.

In conclusion, we have found that a purview that goes “beyond field methodologies”, in the words of the special session title, is indispensable for analyzing the pragmatic alternation of kin terms and personal names in kin address. It is, of course, possible to couch explanations of this alternation in culturally particular terms afforded by ethnographic and other field methods. Schneider & Homans (1955: 1206), for example, make the argument that the use of personal names to

address junior kin in “American culture” is the result of particular American values that stress personal achievement:

To go out and do the things that need to be done to achieve something, [a child] must be relatively free of any encumbering bonds of kinship, and he must be motivated to do so. It is as part of this wider context, we suspect, that the older generation uses personal names rather than kinship terms toward the younger generation.

We do not doubt that culturally particular rationalizations of the use of kin terms and personal names may reinforce, and perhaps even run counter to, the semantico-referential motivational structure that shapes the pattern of their pragmatic alternation. But the cross-cultural regularity of the alternation that we have found can be satisfactorily explained through recourse to culturally particular motivations only if we suppose that these happen to converge on a single pattern of alternation over and over again. Particularism has its place, but we hope to have shown that it can profitably be complemented by comparative and typological frameworks.

Moving “beyond field methodologies”, the pragmatic typology we present here reframes the issue. Rather than presume all patterns of alternation are equally possible and seek out cultural motivations for the observed patterns in “the field”, we have found one pattern of contextually conditioned alternation to be common across a large number of speech communities and the other unattested. The explanation that is needed is one that accounts for the regularity of the attested alternation, which we suggest is one which can be found in attending to the distinctive semantico-referential characteristics of kin terms and personal names as distinct expression-types found in all languages. It is the semantico-referential differences between these noun-phrase types which condition—both as constraint and affordance—the potentialities of their pragmatic functioning.

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Appendix

LANGUAGE [Stock] (Source)	NORMS OF ADDRESS FOR LINEAL CONSANGUINEAL KIN	
	older-to- younger	younger-to- older
TONGAN [Polynesian] (Aoyagi 1966: 161)	PN	PN
TRUKESE [Micronesian] (Goodenough 1965: 267)	PN	PN
YAPESE [Micronesian] (Simons 1982: 211)	PN	PN
TIWI [Australian] (Hart 1930: 285)	KT	KT
TWANA [Coast Salish] (Elmendorf 1946: 421)	KT	KT
WIK [Australian] (Thomson 1946: 158)	KT	KT
ANLO EWE [Volta-Niger] (Nukunya 1969: 55)	PN	KT
ARABIC (KUWAITI) [Afro-Asiatic] (Yassin 1978: 55-56)	PN	KT
CEBUAN [Malayo-Polynesian] (Hart 1980: 736 ff.)	PN	KT
CHINESE [Sino-Tibetan] (Chao 1956: 237)	PN	KT
ENGLISH (AMERICAN) (Schneider et al. 1955: 1200)	PN	KT
GEORGIAN [Kartvelian] (Braun 1988: 104)	PN	KT
GOGO [Bantu; Tanzania] (Rigby 1969: 326)	PN	KT
HUNGARIAN [Finno-Ugric] (Vincze 1978: 107 ff.)	PN	KT
JALÉ [Papuan] (Koch 1970: 295 ff.)	PN	KT
JAPANESE (Befu & Norbeck 1958: 67)	PN	KT
JAVANESE [Malayo-Polynesian] (H. Geertz 1961: 24)	PN	KT
KACHIN [Sino-Tibetan] (Leach 1965: 307)	PN	KT
KANNADA [Dravidian] (Bean 1978: 66 ff.)	PN	KT
KARO [Malayo-Polynesian] (Kipp 1984: 912)	PN	KT
KOREAN (Lee et al. 1973: 34)	PN	KT
MONGOLIAN (KHALKA) [Mongolic] (Vreeland 1962: 67)	PN	KT
NOCTE [Sino-Tibetan] (Sonowal 2014: 8)	PN	KT
NUER [Nilotic] (Evans-Pritchard 1964: 221)	PN	KT
RUNGUS DUSUN [Malay.-Polynes.] (Appell 1978: 152-3)	PN	KT
SERBIAN [Slavic] (Radojicic 1964: 3, 15-16)	PN	KT
SPANISH [Romance] (Foster 1964: 112 ff.)	PN	KT
SUYÁ [Gê] (Seeger 1981: 125-6)	PN	KT
THAI [Tai-Kadai] (Kemp 1983: 88)	PN	KT
THAKALI [Sino-Tibetan] (Vinding 1979: 195-6)	PN	KT
TIKOPIA [Polynesian] (Firth 1936: 256)	PN	KT
TURKISH [Turkic] (Casson & Ozertug 1976: 588)	PN	KT
VIETNAMESE [Mon-Khmer] (Luong 1990: 106 ff.)	PN	KT
YORUBA [Volta-Niger] (Oyetade 1995: 526-7)	PN	KT
BUSAMA [Austronesian] (Hogbin 1963: 39-42)	PN/KT	PN/KT

Table A: Patterns of addressee reference in 35 speech communities.