ON “REFLEXIVE INDEFINITES” 
IN ENGLISH AND JAPANESE

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It is shown that the semantic properties of reflexive clauses are extended to apply to a particular type of discourse. “Reflexive discourse,” in our terms, is marked by a type of indefinite noun phrase the properties of which are modeled after those of reflexive pronouns and related expressions. This type of noun phrase is found in both English and Japanese, and is based on two levels of reference: unique identification of a referent and a generic class of which that referent is a member. Various aspects of this type of noun phrase are discussed, including its relation to other types of noun phrases, the speech act associated with it, and the style of reflexive discourse. They are appropriately understood in terms of the Subject-Self metaphor and objectification, a pair of concepts that are originally designed for reflexive clauses.*

Keywords: reflexive pronoun, indefinite noun phrase, generic class, the Subject-Self metaphor, unique identifiability

1. Introduction

In this article, I will compare English and Japanese to provide a semantic-pragmatic account of indefinite noun phrases (or NPs for short) of a particular type. First, consider the indefinite NP *a five-year-old* in the following discourse fragment. In what follows, I will

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* This article is an extended and revised version of the presentation that I made at the 19th National Conference of the English Linguistic Society of Japan, held at the University of Tokyo on November 10–11, 2001. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Yukio Hirose for making a number of helpful comments and providing me with an example, which is analyzed in the text. I am indebted to Michael Penn and Adam Hailes, who answered my questions about some English data and gave me stylistic suggestions. I am also indebted to two anonymous reviewers whose advice and constructive criticism were helpful. All remaining inadequacies are my own.

*English Linguistics 19: 2 (2002) 266-290 — 266—
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underline the relevant NP.

(1) My first hint that there was a city that existed at the same
time as my own life came to me from the very first film I
was taken to see: Three Coins in the Fountain. Why my par-
ents chose this as my first film, rather than some wholesome
children’s picture ... is a question I can’t answer. Three
Coins in the Fountain was not an entirely appropriate film to
take a five-year-old to see.

(Mary Gordon “Rome: The Visible City”: 67)

In (1), the discourse topic is the speaker referred to by the I in the first
sentence, and the subsequent indefinite NP a five-year-old is interpreted
as being coreferential with the I. Apparently, this type of NP occurs
in anaphoric contexts. Stylistically, it is typically used in biographies
or self-portrait stories. Japanese has a similar, and more finely
nuanced, type of NP. Consider the following discourse fragment:¹

(2) Munei wa shoosetsu ya shishuu ni amari kyoomi ga
Munei Top novel and poem in much interest Nom
nai. Mattaku mukanshin to itte mo yokat-ta.
Neg completely indifference Comp say also good-Past
Yoosuruni sorera wa soozoo-ryoku no takumashii
In sum these Top imaginative-power Gen powerful
ningen ga kotoba o moteasonde tsukuriage-ta kyokoo
person Nom word Acc play.with build-Past fiction
no sekai gurai nishika kangaete i-nakat-ta.
Gen world nearly only think Stat-Neg-Past
Genjitsu no kyooaku hanzaisha to kakutooshite-iru mi
reality Gen vicious criminal with fight-Stat body
ni wa totemo kyokoo no sekai de tawamurete-iru
for Top hardly fiction Gen world Loc flirt-Stat
yoyuu wa nakat-ta.
leisure Top Neg-Past
‘Munei is not very interested in novels and poems. In fact,
he has no interest in them at all. He just thinks that they

¹ The glosses of Japanese examples adopt conventional abbreviations. For ex-
ample, Stat means ‘stative morpheme.’
are a matter of imaginary worlds which are invented by people who make fantasies out of words. For a figure who is fighting with vicious criminals in the real world, it is impossible to have leisure to indulge in fiction."

(Seiichi Morimura Ningen no Shoomei: 128)

In (2), Munei is the discourse topic. The discourse type of (2) is the same as that of (1); after reference to the topic is established, the descriptive NP headed by *mi* ‘body’ is used in reference to the same topic. Notice that, in (2), the *mi* is taken to stand for a person who has the body expressed by it.

In this article, I am exclusively concerned with discourse topics that are human beings, and so I refer to them as topic people. A topic person is to be understood in the sense of the main character of a discourse fragment. Examples (1) and (2) have a characteristic in common: the whole of a discourse fragment is consistently related to the topic person. In other words, there would be no other people worth mentioning in this type of discourse. We call this characteristic “the consistency about a topic person.” While the initial referring expression and the NP in question are coreferential, the latter is used to inform the hearer of something different, something that a simple referring expression is not sufficient to express about the topic person. For example, a writer can use this type of NP when he is to tell us another aspect of the topic person, an aspect that a simple reference cannot tell.2

I call NPs of this type “reflexive indefinites,” because they share at

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2 Of course, indefinites of this type include those that express non-human entities, as is exemplified in (i):

( i ) New York and the world ... will always remember Mayor Rudolph Giuliani as he emerged from the rubble to lead a city in shock. He risked his life, saw his friends die. (talk “His Finest Hour”: 87)

As is argued in section 2, the “Subject-Self” metaphor primarily applies to the nature of people, but can be extended to apply to non-human entities too. Like people, non-human entities have two kinds of aspects, a set of aspects that are unique to them and a set of aspects that serve to define their class-membership. In (i), the underlined NP expresses one of the latter aspects of New York. The detailed account of the extension requires further study.
least two properties with reflexive pronouns: (i) both reflexive pronouns and this type of NP are used for the coreference between two nominal expressions, and (ii) both are used to express what Lakoff (1996) and Hirose (1997) call "the Self" or "objective aspects of a person." I further argue that this type of NP is based on two levels of reference. On one level, it is a generic NP which stands for a class of people. On another level, it is a signal that there is a uniquely identifiable person in the situation in which it is used.

This article is organized as follows: In section 2, I will review Lakoff's (1996) and Hirose's (1997) accounts of reflexive expressions, and extend their accounts to a discourse-level coreference relation. In section 3, I will discuss Rouchota's (1994) analysis of indefinites in referential use and its relevance to reflexive indefinites. I will compare reflexive indefinites with other types of NPs to examine their properties in detail. In section 4, I will analyze the discourse function of reflexive indefinites, in relation to their similarities to indefinite singulars in generic use and their status in the "Givenness Hierarchy" proposed by Gundel et al. (1993). I will also point out a stylistic effect brought about by their use. Section 5 is a brief conclusion.

2. An Analysis of Reflexive Expressions

2.1. The "Subject-Self" Metaphor

Lakoff (1996) and Hirose (1997) propose to analyze reflexive pronouns and related expressions in terms of "Subject" and "Self." I first show that their analyses have important implications for the discourse-oriented analysis of indefinites.

In general, reflexive pronouns like *herself are regarded as the syntactic mark of coreference between the subject and the object in a clause like (3a). Similar remarks apply to Japanese *jibun 'self,' an equivalent to English reflexive pronouns, and to clauses like (3b), a Japanese equivalent to (3a). Note that the coreference relation is indicated by coindexation.

\[
(3)\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{John criticized *himself.} \\
\text{b. } & \text{Joni wa *kare o hihanshi-ta.}
\end{align*}
\]

John Top self/him Acc criticize-Past

But this syntactic aspect is not the whole story of reflexive pronouns. There is a range of meanings which are expressed by them. In order to account for these meanings, I adopt Lakoff's account of reflexives,
which is further developed by Hirose.\textsuperscript{3}

Lakoff (1996) argues that metaphorically speaking, a person is composed of two parts called "Subject" and "Self." He defines the Subject to be "the locus of subjective experience: consciousness, perception, judgment, will, and capacity to feel" (p. 93). On the other hand, the Self is typically a person's body, and includes various other aspects of a person related to his body: body parts, conduct, social status, utterances, and so on. As we will see, we may safely count one's class-membership as an instance of his Self, too. Unlike the consciousness-related aspect, these objective aspects are observable, and, in English, they are expressed by reflexive pronouns.

\[(4)\]
\begin{enumerate}
\item a. John washed himself. (his body)
\item b. John shaved himself. (his face)
\item c. John collected himself. (his emotions)
\end{enumerate}

In (4), each of the reflexive pronouns expresses the objective aspects given in parentheses. Put differently, in English reflexive clauses, the reflexive pronoun is used to express objective aspects of the person referred to by the subject.

Usually, the Subject and the Self are combined together to constitute a person, but one's Subject can move out of his Self and replace the Subject of a distinct person. That is, one's Subject can be "projected" into someone else's Self. Lakoff notes that in the second embedded clause in (5), reflexivization does not take place in spite of the fact that both subject and object of the clause are the same first-person singulares.

\[(5)\] I dreamt that I was Brigitte Bardot and that I kissed me.

In this case, \textit{me} refers to the speaker, whose Subject and Self are his own, but \textit{I} stands for a hypothetical person whose Subject is the speaker's and whose Self is Bardot's. Therefore, the two pronouns are used to refer to two people having different Selves, with reflexivization being

\textsuperscript{3} Here I am not concerned with the question of how to describe the so-called binding relation between reflexives like Japanese \textit{jibun} and their antecedents, a question which has been tackled by numerous studies mainly in the framework of generative grammar. Reinhart and Reuland (1993) is a reference point for this area of research. See also Aikawa (1999) for a survey of generative analyses of \textit{jibun} and related expressions.
exempted from taking place.

Similarly, in (6), the speaker’s Subject is projected into his little boy’s Self, and he observes that the boy’s Self is controlled by the same Subject that he has.

(6) Every time I see my little boy, I see me.

I adopt Lakoff’s (1996) concepts of person identity and subject identity to account for the difference between reflexive clauses like *I shaved myself* and clauses like *I see me*. In the former, the subject person’s Subject and Self are located in the same physical domain, and *I* and *myself* are used to refer to two different aspects of the same person. Person identity applies to this case. In the latter, the subject person separates his Subject from his Self, and projects it into the Self of a distinct person. Thus in (6), *I* and *me* are used to refer to distinct people, but one of whom is conceptualized to have the Subject of the other. Subject identity applies to this case.

### 2.2. Objectification of Self

Hirose (1997: Ch. 3) develops Lakoff’s Subject-Self metaphor to argue that “objectification of Self” is the key point in the situation described by Japanese reflexive clauses involving *jibun*. By the objectification of Self, Hirose means that the person referred to by the subject of a reflexive clause separates his Self from his Subject and talks about it as if it belongs to another person. Thus, he observes it as he observes another person. Hirose (1997: 80) shows this with the speech situation in (7).

(7) Jibun o kyakkantekini mitsume-nasai.

self Acc objectively look at-Imperative
‘Look at yourself objectively.’

In (7), the addressee is told to separate an objective aspect of his Self, such as his conduct, from his Subject, and consider it in the same way as one would consider another person in order to look at it objectively.

Hirose (1997: 81) makes the following statement on the syntax and semantics of the *jibun* in reflexive use, as shown in (7):

(8) The *jibun* in reflexive use represents the separated Self in the sense that it is placed in the predicate of a clause whose subject refers to a person who separates his Self from his Subject (my translation).

As manifested by the saying *A sound mind in a sound body*, the Self normally serves as a container for the Subject. This is the case with
reflexive clauses expressing body-part actions in physical domains like those in (4). In such physical domains, one's Subject is conceptualized as being located with, and thus controlling, his Self, i.e. his body parts. In nonphysical domains like consciousness, however, one can easily separate his Self from his Subject. This separation is true of the self-criticism in (7), and also of the narration of a self-portrait story like (1). I argue that reflexive indefinites are like Japanese jibun in that they express the separated Self. They express a set of objective aspects which are separated from a topic person and are considered as if they would belong to others.

2.3. Japanese Body-Part Nouns in Reflexive Use

Hirose (1997: 82–89) notes that Japanese jibun and English reflexive pronouns differ in the range of objective aspects which they can express. While Japanese jibun is specifically used to express objective aspects that are separated from their Subject and regarded as belonging to others, English reflexive pronouns can express wider objective aspects including not only the separated ones but also those that are located with their Subject.

This difference has to do with the question of how to express the situation in which the subject person acts on his body part, a typical objective aspect which is located with his Subject. As shown in (9) and (10), in sentences expressing body-part actions of this type, what is expressed by a reflexive pronoun in English cannot be expressed by jibun in Japanese. Instead, Japanese uses specific body-part nouns reflexively and specifies which objective aspect is described in the sentence concerned.

(9) Joni wa {kaoi/*jibuni} o sot-ta.
    John Top face/self Acc shave-Past
    'John shaved himself.'

(10) Karei wa mi o kakus-o to shita.
    He Top body Acc hide-try Comp did
    'He tried to hide himself.'

Reflexive pronouns in English express objective aspects as a whole, and do not specify which objective aspect is talked about in the reflexive clause concerned. For example, John's face is the physical objective aspect that is talked about in (4b), and his emotions in (4c). In both cases, the reflexive pronouns provide rough objective aspects, specific parts of which are determined by the meaning of the verb involved.
As stated in (8), Japanese jibun is a special word for expressing the separated Self. Because the Self is located with its Subject in these body-part actions, jibun is not appropriate to express it.

Generally, the term reflexive is used to cover the anaphoric relations in a clause and the syntactic constraints on them. However, it seems reasonable to suppose that the term is also applicable to a wider range of discourse types. In reflexive clauses, the person referred to by the subject is described in reference to the characteristics that the same person has. Similarly, in what I call “reflexive discourse” such as (1) and (2), a topic person is described in reference to the characteristics that the same person has. Like reflexive pronouns, the indefinites in reflexive discourse are used to show person identity, and express objective aspects of a person.

2.4. The Coreference Relation in Terms of Reflexive Indefinites

Yukio Hirose pointed out (personal communication) that pseudo-cleft sentences provide syntactic evidence for the linkage between reflexive pronouns and the indefinites under discussion. The two types of expression overlap in syntactic distribution. Consider the following discourse fragment:

(11) ... I had fought in this ring over a 15-and-a-half-year span, and looking around it from this viewpoint for the last time brought back a flood of memories—... there were all kinds of emotional memories scattered about and beyond that dohyó (ring). What I saw was an 18-year-old boy fresh from Hawaii walking into the scary unknown. I was big and strong, but my size and strength did not prepare me for what I was about to experience.

(Yasokichi Konishiki “My Life as a Rikishi”: 23)

In (11), the underlined NP expresses a specific objective aspect that Konishiki, the topic person, had when he was 18 years old. He uses a single period of his life to explain the whole of it.

The underlined NP in (11) can be replaced by a reflexive pronoun with no change of the person identity, as in (11′):

(11′) ... What I saw was myself walking into the scary unknown

The reflexive pronoun is a case of what Higgins (1979) calls the syntactic connectedness of pseudo-clefts, and this syntactic parallelism further supports the idea that indefinites of this type share a coreference rela-
tion with reflexive pronouns.

However, there is one difference in meaning between the indefinite NP in (11) and the reflexive in (11’). As shown by sentences expressing body-part actions, reflexive pronouns in English express objective aspects as a whole, and this is the case with (11’), too. The preferred reading of (11’) is that myself expresses the speaker’s Self or body at the time of utterance rather than his body as it was when he was 18. This is because the speaker’s Self at the time of utterance represents everything that can be observed objectively in his life. Since the reflexive pronoun can express the objective aspects of a person, it can also express everything that has accumulated since his birth. Hence it represents the Konishiki of the time of utterance in (11’).

Although reflexive pronouns and reflexive indefinites have a coreference relation in common, the latter, but not the former, establish that relation in expressing specific parts of the person who is uniquely identifiable in a given context.

Reflexive indefinites have two properties which can be explained in terms of Japanese reflexive expressions. First, they are closer to Japanese body-part nouns in reflexive use than to English reflexive pronouns, because they express specific objective aspects. Just as the mi ‘body’ is used as a reflexive in (10), so in (2), the NP headed by mi is coreferential with the expression referring to the topic person and expresses an aspect of that person’s Self. Second, in spite of the specific objective aspects they express, they are close to Japanese jibun in that they express the separated Self. English too have indefinites of this type.

My point in this article is this: The coreference relation between the subject and the reflexive expression in a clause is extended to apply to the properties of a discourse type whose topic person is consistently unique. By incorporating the concept of class, I propose the following pragmatic principle as one that is responsible for reflexive indefinites:

(12) Principle of Extended Coreference Relation in Reflexive Discourse: Given the consistency about a topic person, the speaker can divert an NP expressing a specific objective aspect that the topic person has to denote a class of which the topic person is a member, so that he helps the hearer identify that topic person as a member of the class denoted.

Being pragmatic in nature, this principle does not serve to constrain the nature of indefinites as such; rather it applies to the way the speaker
uses them to communicate to the hearer a particular type of discourse-level coreference relation.

Principle (12) links two different levels of reference by diversion: reference to an objective aspect of someone uniquely identifiable and reference to his class-membership. This diversion is based on the fact that just as one can objectively observe what he has as a part of his Self, he can objectively observe himself as a part, i.e. a member of the class to which he belongs on a par with others. In the sense of the diverted reference of broader range, reflexive indefinites are a means to express class-membership. By using a reflexive indefinite, the speaker can communicate to the hearer not only the unique identifiability of a topic person, but also a generalization about the class which includes the topic person as a member.

Reflexive indefinites have a great deal to do with other uses of indefinites, especially indefinites in referential use and those in generic use. In the next section, I will analyze reflexive indefinites in English and Japanese in comparison with these uses of indefinites.

I have so far focused on the reflexives and indefinites that express various aspects of the Self, and had little to say about the Subject. In section 4.2, however, I will argue that unique identifiability is the discourse counterpart of the Subject, using Reddy's (1979) conduit metaphor to explicate an essential property shared by both concepts.

3. Reflexive Indefinites as Instances of Referential Use

In this section, I first review Mori (1983) and Rouchota (1994). I build on their analyses and argue that, in light of the hearer's unique identifiability, reflexive indefinites are instances of referential use. I also discuss the speech act associated with their use. In so doing, I show why indefinite NPs rather than other forms of NPs are suited to Principle (12).

3.1. Previous Studies

Mori (1983: 42-43) offers example (13a), and calls the underlined indefinite NP an “indefinite NP in semi-referential use.” He also points out that indefinite NPs of this type are characteristically used in book titles. For example:

(13) a. Scoundrel! He (=Heathcliff) is not altogether guiltless in this illness of mine; and that I had a great mind to
tell him. But, alas! how could I offend a man who was charitable enough to sit at my beside ...?

(Emily Brontë Wuthering Heights: 90)


Mori argues that by using an indefinite NP in this way, reference to a particular referent can be expressed as reference to a general class named by that NP, and the appropriate context for such an indefinite is one in which the speaker explains to the hearer the relationship between him and the topic referent.

Rouchota (1994) discusses the question of how to distinguish between the specific and the referential use. Rouchota builds on Ludlow and Neale (1991), and argues that the two uses are distinguished in terms of the identifiability on the part of the hearer. An indefinite NP in specific use is one for which the speaker, but not the hearer, has a particular referent in mind. An indefinite NP in referential use, on the other hand, is one for which the speaker and the hearer communicate reference to a particular referent; in this use, the hearer too can identify the referent in the situation in which that NP is used.

Rouchota (1994: 464-466) offers examples (14a, b), and argues that besides the identifiability on the part of the hearer, indefinites in referential use may create a context in which the speaker expects the hearer to interpret the referent. For example, suppose a situation in which the speaker and the hearer do business regularly with Jones, and in picking out Jones, the speaker says (14a) to the hearer:

(14) a. An embezzler was arrested yesterday.

b. Vita Sackville-West died in 1962. A charismatic gardener was gone for ever.

As far as the hearer's identifiability alone is concerned, utterance (14a) would be equivalent to 'Jones was arrested yesterday,' but in addition, the indefinite NP in (14a) is able to offer a hint of why the referent of that NP was arrested.

Rouchota points out that in light of the hearer's unique identifiability, a charismatic gardener in (14b) too is an instance of referential use, but it is concerned more with description of Vita Sackville-West than with reference to him. She mainly deals with the definition of referential use, and offers several situations in which a given indefinite is classified as an instance of referential use. She does not, however, specify the discourse type in which indefinites in referential use like a char-
ismatic gardener in (14b) are appropriately used, nor does she examine in detail the relation that such indefinites have to other types of referring expressions. In this respect, Principle (12) is able to offer a more detailed account in terms of reflexive discourse.

In interpreting discourse fragment (14b), the hearer relies on two facts to believe that the speaker follows Principle (12) to use a charismatic gardener: (i) Vita Sackville-West is the only uniquely referring expression available in (14b), and (ii) indefinite NPs are used to denote a generic class on independent grounds. Unless otherwise specified, the hearer combines these two facts to assume that (14b) has the consistency about a topic person, and takes the indefinite NP to be coreferential with that uniquely referring expression in the sense of Principle (12): it denotes a class of which the topic person is a member, and at the same time, serves to express his objective aspect in terms of which he is identified as a member of that class.

Indefinites of the form a(n) N are suited to the diversion of reference stated in (12), because they have the referential ranges that are serially narrowed down as follows: a generic class, a member of that class, and a specific part of that member. Indefinites and reflexives overlap in this last range, for both express various parts that a person has in his Self.

Use of reflexive indefinites is an instance of what Clark and Carlson (1982) call informative illocutionary acts or informatives. By informatives, Clark and Carlson mean that the speaker produces an utterance in order “to make it public knowledge among the speaker and participants (to the speech situation) what the speaker is doing with his utterance” (p. 350). As far as the present article is concerned, use of a reflexive indefinite is based on an informative of the following type: in using an indefinite NP in reference to a topic person, the speaker makes it commonly known among him and participants to the speech situation that the topic person is a member of the class denoted by the NP. That is, in using an indefinite NP to help the hearer identify a topic person, the speaker informs him of the class-membership assigned to that person.

According to Rouchota, example (14b) was taken from a radio program on great gardeners. In such a situation, the speaker (the announcer of a program) addresses an unspecified number of hearers. He may use a uniquely referring expression like a proper name so as to help hearers identify a particular person, but use of a proper name
alone is not sufficient to make public knowledge to unspecified hearers the information he has about that person. In using a reflexive indefinite, the speaker not only helps the hearers identify the person, but also informs them of the class to which he belongs. Thus, he provides the information about the topic person's class-membership to be shared by him and the hearers. Taking advantage of the shared information, the speaker allows the hearers to understand the topic person from one specific aspect of that person's Self.

3.2. Grammatical Properties of Reflexive Indefinites

In this subsection, I point out four grammatical properties of reflexive indefinites in English and Japanese. First, in English, this type of NP is regularly indefinite.

(15) For the first time I read a book about the Vietnam War. For \( a/*\)the \ person who didn’t know the fact, the contents of the book were very shocking.

Indefiniteness, together with the count head noun, is appropriate because this type of NP expresses a property that is separately predicated of an individual, i.e. a separated aspect of the topic person's Self.

In first-person reflexive discourse such as (15), definite NPs cannot be used in reference to the speaker himself. There is, however, a set of definite NPs which are used for self-reference, for example the author and the writer. They are typically used in the prefaces of academic writings, as in (16).

(16) The author is much indebted to his colleague Professor Virgil L. Anderson .... He is also indebted to Professor J. W. Schmidt of Virginia Polytechnic Institute ....

(Irving Burr *Applied Statistical Methods*: xix)

Reflexive indefinites in the first-person narrative differ from definite NPs for self-reference such as the author with respect to the person identity and the style in which they are used.

In the context of first-person narratives, the speaker separates one of his objective aspects and expresses it in terms of an indefinite NP, but he keeps person identity between him and that NP. Thus, the first-person pronoun I and a reflexive indefinite express different aspects of the same person.

On the other hand, the academic context in which the speaker uses definite NPs of the author-type for self-reference is properly compared to the context in which one person is conceptualized as being split into
two people, and sentences like I kissed me are acceptable, as in (5). In the world of dream, there was a hypothetical person whose consciousness was ‘mine’ but whose body was Brigitte Bardot’s, and that person was conceptualized as being distinct from ‘me.’ Similarly, the speaker conceptualizes his role in an academic field as someone who does not participate in the situation in which he assumes to have a dialogue with the addressee. In this case, the speaker does not have person identity between him and expressions referring to him, and so he uses third person pronouns in reference to him, as in (16). Thus, definite NPs of this type are excluded from first-person narratives.

Second, this type of NP can be paraphrased as a predicate NP with an understood subject, which is introduced by as:

(17) My parents divorced when I was in the ninth grade. | A fourteen-year-old girl / As a fourteen-year-old girl, I | couldn’t understand what they were doing at that time.

The understood subject is the topic person in the relevant discourse fragment. This paraphrase relation provides evidence for Principle (12), which states that reflexive indefinites denote a class. A reflexive indefinite denotes a class of which the topic person is a member in the way that a predicate NP denotes a class of which the subject is a member.

Third, a reflexive indefinite is modified with a so-phrase in postnominal position. For example:

(18) I liked the dry way in which she (=Georgie) accepted our relationship. Only with a person so eminently sensible could I have deceived my wife.

(Iris Murdoch A Severed Head: 1)

Postmodification of this type serves to emphasize the degree of a property; it provides the whole indefinite NP with the quality of a descriptive rather than referring expression.

These three facts find a simple explanation in terms of the nature of indefiniteness in English: indefinite NPs express properties and are referentially defective. However, this type of NP is also a signal whose use implies that both speaker and hearer can uniquely identify a person in the situation in which it is used. In this sense, reflexive indefinites serve two functions at a time: description and identification.

Fourth, reflexive indefinites in Japanese have a contrast that reflects the psychological distance between the speaker and the topic person. In the first-person narrative in which the speaker talks objectively
about a part of his Self, he expresses it in terms of a reflexive indefinite whose head noun is *mono* ‘thing’ instead of *hito* ‘person.’ Example (15) is literally translated into Japanese as follows:


Like the indefiniteness in English, this type of Japanese NP disallows determiners such as *kono* ‘this’ or *sono* ‘the’; it does not refer to a particular person, but rather expresses a property applicable to a class of people in general. The second sentence in (19) would be odd with such determiners.

(19') ... Jijitsu o shiranakatta {*kono/*sono} mono nitotte wa shoogekitekina naiyoo datta.

In (19), the *mono*-NP is diverted to denote a generic class of people who meet the descriptive content. Importantly, the NP suggests that the speaker himself is a member of such a class.

In contrast to (19), the *hito*-NP can be used in reference to a third party such as Taro Yamada in (20). As one reviewer pointed out, it is possible to use a *mono*-NP here too.


The *hito*-NP denotes a class of which Taro Yamada is a member, and suggests that the speaker is not associated with that class. Since the speaker narrates what he himself cannot experience in this reading, the *hito*-NP version of (20) sounds better with the sentence-final auxiliary of epistemic modality *daroo* ‘it seems.’

On the other hand, the *mono*-NP in a third-person narrative is acceptable only in the situation in which the speaker assumes the topic person to be close to him. For example, in (20), the *mono*-NP is appropriate when the speaker and Taro Yamada belong to the same class, and are closely acquainted with each other, but not when Taro Yamada is a total stranger to the speaker. Notice that the sentence-final *daroo* can be dispensed with in this reading involving the psychological closeness: the speaker narrates what happened to a third party as if it happened to him.
Note that Japanese has a morphologically marked variant of reflexive indefinites. Reflexive indefinites of this type are headed by nouns denoting social roles, and are prefixed by the numeral ichi 'one.' Like the English example in (13b), they are typically used in book titles, as shown below:

         nuclear-energy Acc pursue one
         Kisha no Kaisoo. Chunichi-Shinbun honsha.
         journalist Gen memory Chunichi newspaper head-office
         ist's Memory. Chunichi Press.'

This too is a means by which identification of an understood topic person is expressed objectively.

Unlike English, Japanese marks reflexive indefinites in two respects. First, they can indicate the psychological distance between the speaker and the topic person in terms of the head noun. In first-person narratives, the reflexive indefinite is headed by mono, for the speaker himself is the closest topic person to any speaker. In non-first-person narratives, on the other hand, the reflexive indefinite is headed either by hito or by mono, with the former being a signal of distance, and the latter a signal of closeness, on the part of the speaker.

Second, reflexive indefinites in Japanese may be prefixed by the numeral ichi. NPs of this form are specifically used to identify the understood topic person in reflexive discourse. This means that Japanese has a morphological correlate for a type of NP which expresses a property and is referentially defective, but whose referent is uniquely identifiable by speaker and hearer.

An objective aspect that someone has in him and his class-membership defined in terms of that objective aspect are two sides of the same coin. To return to (2), Munei has the objective aspect described by "a figure who is fighting with vicious criminals in the real world" and he is also a member of the class of people each of whom is so described. This is a shift in perspective from what is internal about a person to what is external about him. Since the internal characteristic of a person is part of the characteristics of the class of people of which he is a member, it is possible to metonymically use the former to stand for the latter. Reflexive indefinites have essentially the same nature as indefinite singulars in generic use in this respect.
4. The Discourse Function of Reflexive Indefinites

We take up example (1) again. In (1), the speaker uses *a five-year-old* to describe an objective aspect that she had. At the same time, it is used to bring about the implication that *The Three Coins in the Fountain* would not be an appropriate film for any child of this age. That is, the property of being a five-year-old was the reason for the inappropriateness. This interpretation is two-fold. First, the property of being a five-year-old is predicated of a person. Second, it is also predicated of a class of people. Reflexive indefinites have essentially the same nature as indefinite singulars in generic use in that what is originally a property of a person such as ‘being a five-year-old’ is diverted to a property applicable to a class, such as ‘a class of five-year-old children.’

4 In this section, I illustrate that reflexive indefinites partially inherit grammatical properties from indefinite singulars in generic use (cf. Goldberg (1995: Ch. 3)).

4.1. Reflexive Indefinites and Generic Indefinite Singulars

Burton-Roberts (1977: 187–188) comments on the situation in which utterance (22) is appropriately used. By way of getting Emile to open doors for ladies, the speaker addresses him and uses the generic indefinite NP *a gentleman* in reference to him, who usually does not behave like a gentleman.

(22) Emile! *A gentleman* opens doors for ladies.

In our terms, the speaker’s role in (22) is analyzed as follows: while he performs an informative in informing Emile of an objective aspect described by *a gentleman*, he also identifies him as a member of the class of gentlemen, thereby helping him behave like a gentleman.

Since utterance (22) is produced exclusively to Emile and contains an indefinite that denotes a class, the addressee may reasonably assume

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4 Previous studies on indefinite singulars in generic use (Perlmutter (1970), Nunberg and Pan (1975), and Burton-Roberts (1976) among others) have focused on their sentence-level properties, for example, their difference from NPs determined by *any*, their relation to tense and aspect, and their cooccurrence restriction on so-called class predicates (e.g. *A dodo is extinct*). By contrast, I focus on their discourse function.
that it is an instance of reflexive discourse. Thus, he uses Principle (12) to link two levels of reference to be involved in the indefinite NP. First, a gentleman is taken to denote a generic class, and he knows that he is expected to behave as a member of the class. Second, it is taken to express an objective aspect which he is supposed to have in him, and he knows that it is his qualification for the class-membership in question. In this way, the generic class denoted is understood as talking about an objective aspect of his. In Lakoff’s terms, the addressee’s Subject is prompted to identify his Self with respect to the objective aspect of being a gentleman.

In (23), the speaker objectifies himself to observe what is objectively true of his Self, i.e. the death of his body. He separates one of his objective aspects from his Subject, and expresses it as a man.

(23) “I am dying, Maximus,” Marcus said. “And when a man sees his end, he wants to know that there was some purpose to his life.” (Dewey Gram Gladiator: 49)

The three expressions I, a man, and he are all used to identify the speaker, but express his three different aspects. In using I, he refers to his uniqueness. In using a man, he refers to two levels. First, its reference is to a generic class of men. He talks about a generalization which applies to men in general. Second, he uses this indefinite NP to describe his own situation. In other words, he helps the hearer identify him as a member of the generic class of men. In using he, he uses person shift to suggest that what is generally the case with the class of men is also the case with any other member of that class referred to by he. In this case, the speaker sees himself as he sees someone who is not in the speech situation.

Reflexive indefinites only partially inherit the grammatical properties from generic indefinite singulars, since, as I have argued, they inherit from reflexive expressions too. They differ from generic indefinite singulars in the following respects. Basically, generic indefinite singulars occur only in subject position, and are appropriately used only in the sentences that describe general characteristics and habits, but not in the sentences that describe particular events. By contrast, reflexive indefinites appear in various positions in a sentence, and may be used in the sentences, or contexts, that describe particular events. For example, example (1) is about a particular past event experienced by a particular person, and the reflexive indefinite is in object position.

A reflexive indefinite occurs in a descriptive context that follows the
context that establishes a unique topic person, and expresses a non-referential property in reference to that person. Because they follow other referring expressions, reflexive indefinites appear to be distributed over anaphoric contexts. We will have more to say about this in section 4.3.

I now argue that the use of a reflexive indefinite ranges from denoting a generic class to reference to a particular person. Typical examples of the former are the indefinites in (22) and (23). A special case of the latter is exemplified in (24):

(24) Without the specialized assistance provided by the Cambridge University Press this book would never have seen the light of day. Jeremy Mynott read both volumes in typescript .... Penny Carter ... had to cope with far more inconsistencies and handwritten changes in the typescript than an author should have been allowed to make. I am grateful to both of them for their help and their forbearance.

(John Lyons Semantics 2: xiii)

In (24), an author is special in that it is embedded in the sentence with an implication of imaginary past. The sentence describes a world which was not realized, and in that imaginary world, John Lyons, the topic person, would identify himself as a member of the class of authors each of whom would minimize inconsistencies and handwritten changes in the typescript. He wished that the imaginary world author would become his objective aspect expressed as an author in the real world, but he couldn't do that. Thus, he, at the utterance time of (24), separates this objective aspect from his Subject, and observes it through a comparison of the real world and the imaginary world.

The indefinite NP is still an instance of referential use, because it helps the hearer uniquely identify the topic person, or more precisely, the background against which the topic person is to be identified. On the other hand, although the indefinite NP is used in a context that refers to a particular past event, it shares at least one property with generic NPs; it stands for a class, a class which contains only one member, however.5

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5 One may wonder whether bare plurals too can be used as reflexive indefinites. This question is beyond the scope of this article, and so I leave it open. Here I
4.2. The Subject and Unique Identifiability

I have so far used the Subject-Self metaphor to analyze indefinites of a particular type as the discourse counterpart of reflexives, i.e. expressions of the Self. Then, what is the discourse counterpart of the Subject? My answer is this: it is the unique identifiability of reference to a topic person.

According to Reddy’s (1979) conduit metaphor, communication is viewed as involving the container in which its content is put. In this metaphorical sense, the Self is a container for the Subject, because, as we communicate by shaking hands, we use our body-parts as containers in which our consciousness is put and by which we send it to other people. However, we also saw that the Self can be separated from the role of container for the Subject, which Hirose calls objectification of Self. Similar remarks apply to the communication in which we use referring expressions to convey unique identifiability.

By way of reference to someone unique, we usually use proper names like *Mary Poppins*, deictic pronouns like *I* and *you*, and definite anaphoric devices, as containers for unique identifiability, and send it to other people. In this sense, uniquely referring expressions like these are containers for unique identifiability. However, it can be communicated among participants to a speech situation without using such expressions. When unique identifiability is taken for granted, that is, the consistency about a topic person is guaranteed, it can move out of the expressions that have uniqueness as part of their meaning, and replaces the original function of descriptive expressions. This is just mention one relevant fact. Even if we modify the context of (24) into a context in which the book was written by two people, as in (i), the bare plural *authors* is inappropriate. The modified context would require a definite NP or a deictic pronoun, instead.

(i) ... Penny Carter had to cope with far more inconsistencies and handwritten changes in the typescript than {*authors/the authors/we*} should have been allowed to make ....

If we change the tense of the sentence and make a generic statement like (ii), the bare plural turns out to be appropriate:

(ii) ... than authors should be allowed to make ....

But this generic statement is equally appropriate in a context in which the book was written by one author.
true of reflexive indefinites. Unlike uniquely referring expressions, reflexive indefinites are used with, but do not contain, unique identifiability. They make a discourse type in which unique identifiability is separate from uniquely referring expressions in the way that the Subject is separate from the Self in reflexive clauses.

4.3. Reflexive Indefinites and Definite Anaphoric Devices

I next examine the question of what it means to say that unique identifiability is separate from referring expressions that have uniqueness as part of their meaning. This question has to do with the difference between definite anaphoric devices and reflexive indefinites, for the former are specifically used to contain, and express, the idea of unique identifiability by referring uniquely back to their antecedents.

I first review the relevant part of the “Givenness Hierarchy” proposed by Gundel et al. (1993) so as to clarify the difference in identifiability among anaphoric pronouns, definite NPs, and indefinite NPs. Hierarchy (25) is designed to specify the correspondence between the form of referring expressions and the cognitive status that the speaker assumes the hearer to have of a particular referent in the discourse fragment concerned.

(25) in focus \{it, unstressed pronouns\} ... > ... uniquely-identifiable \{the N\} ... > ... type-identifiable \{a N\}

Hierarchy (25) bears the title “Givenness” in the sense that different levels of identifiability for a referent are ranked according to the amount of identifiability-related information given to them. As the speaker assumes the hearer to have higher identifiability for a particular referent, he can successfully use a referring expression in the higher status for that referent. This means that the higher the status Hierarchy (25) gives to a referring expression, the more restrictive conditions its successful use has to fulfill. The indefinite NP is least restrictive, and so the speaker can use it when he only assumes that the hearer can identify the type or descriptive content expressed by the NP without being able to identify a referent that has that descriptive content. This applies to indefinites in specific use, such as those of there-constructions in first mention contexts. A definite NP is appropriately used if the speaker assumes the hearer to be able to uniquely identify a referent with the help of the NP’s descriptive content. Typical examples are anaphoric definites. The unstressed pronoun is most restrictive; both speaker and hearer not only are able to uniquely identify a referent,
but agree to regard it as being in focus in the speech situation concerned.

Gundel et al. (1993: 296) note that “the referent of an indefinite noun phrase can be uniquely identifiable, or even familiar, in some contexts.” That is, the status of an indefinite may be upgraded to the level of identifiability where Hierarchy (25) would call for other forms of referring expressions of higher statuses. For example:

(26) Dr. Smith told me that exercise helps. Since I heard it from a doctor, I’m inclined to believe it.

Since the hearer shares the identifiability for a particular person with the speaker in (26), referring expressions of higher statuses such as him or the doctor would equally be available.

Concerning the role played by indefiniteness in (26), Gundel et al. simply say that “it is the property of being a doctor, and not the identity of this particular doctor, which is relevant here” (p. 296). Given what I have argued in this article, their account is too simple; they do not specify in detail the type of discourse in which indefinites of this type are appropriately used, as I have. Principle (12) gives a straightforward account of this NP in terms of reflexive discourse. I also take advantage of Hierarchy (25) by saying that although a referring expression of higher status cannot be used to identify a referent whose identifiability level is lower than its status, a referring expression of lower status can be used to identify a referent whose identifiability level is higher than its status. This is exactly the case with reflexive indefinites. To return to the question of this section, I can answer as follows: the upgrading of the status of indefinite NPs to the level of unique identifiability is the discourse counterpart of the separation of unique identifiability from referring expressions that are specialized for it.

On the surface, both reflexive indefinites and definite anaphoric devices such as he or the doctor appear to be in anaphoric contexts. They differ in style, however. Definite anaphoric devices explicitly show that the topic person continues to enjoy the status of being a main or unique discourse topic. On the level of identifiability, he is unique, and thanks to the status of the referring expression, he is marked as being unique as well. By contrast, reflexive indefinites imply that the topic person no longer enjoys the status of unique discourse topic and is demoted to the status of being a member of the class of people, each of whom is equally described by a common prop-
erty. He is still unique on the level of identifiability, but here he is marked in terms of his class-membership instead of uniqueness thanks to the lower status of indefiniteness.

It is argued in Nishida (2002) that this type of coreference relation between a topic antecedent and the “anaphor” expressing its class-membership is used to bring about “objectification” of the topic person referred to by that antecedent. Now I explain how Hirose’s sense of objectification can be developed as a characteristic of style, and why Principle (12) is used to achieve that special type of objectification. To understand one’s class-membership, one has to separate an objective aspect of his from his Subject and observe it against the background of the others who share it with him. In other words, he has to have in view not only the objective aspect that he has in him, but also the objective aspect in terms of which others recognize him as a member of a particular class. Thus, he sets his Self distant enough to observe it as others observe it. This is essentially parallel to the reflexive situation in (7), but with one modification. In the original version of objectification proposed by Hirose, the subject person separates his Self from his Subject and observes it as he observes another person. In the objectification proposed here, the topic person observes his separated Self as others observe him.

Similar remarks apply to Japanese reflexive indefinites. In particular, Japanese has the numeral prefix ichi; because it means ‘one,’ a reflexive indefinite combines with it to express the topic person as one member of a class in an obvious way.

Therefore, we may say that reflexive indefinites differ in style from definite anaphoric devices in that, in addition to the identification of the topic person in a given context, their use carries the sense of objectification of that person.

5. Concluding Remarks

This article focused on indefinites of a particular type which have hitherto received scant attention. As stated in Principle (12), reflexive indefinites are based on two levels of reference, and their properties are inherited from reflexives and generic indefinite singulars. On one level, they are understood in terms of generic indefinite singulars because both denote a class. On another level, they are understood in terms of reflexives because both express objective aspects of a person
in the sense of Lakoff (1996) and Hirose (1997). I extended the 
coreference relation in a clause to explore a new and wider field of the 
coreference relation created by indefinites in discourse. This analysis 
gave a principled account of English and Japanese data. I hope I have 
demonstrated the validity of the accounts originated by Lakoff and 
Hirose.

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