Pronouns under Control?  
A Reply to Liliane Tasmowski and Paul Verluyten* 

Peter Bosch 

Abstract 
Liliane Tasmowski and Paul Verluyten have recently expressed their misgivings about a proposal for a distinction between syntactically and referentially functioning anaphoric pronouns that was put forth in Bosch (1980, 1983) and have re-emphasized their ideas towards a uniform treatment of anaphoric pronouns, as originally published in Tasmowski and Verluyten (1982). In the following pages I shall point out some limitations of the uniform pronoun treatment Tasmowski and Verluyten have in mind and I shall propose some amendments and extensions of my earlier proposals in order to take phenomena of gender and number agreement of pronouns into account which were ignored in earlier versions. 

0. Introduction 
Despite almost universal agreement among language scientists that within the class of anaphoric personal pronouns different ways of pronoun functioning must be distinguished, Tasmowski and Verluyten (1982, 1985) are proposing a uniform treatment of anaphoric pronouns¹. The price they pay for the uniformity is the limitation of their proposals to phenomena of gender and number agreement. Semantic as well as syntactic problems of anaphora, which have motivated the distinctions among anaphoric pronouns that others have found necessary, are outside the scope of Tasmowski and Verluyten's theory. Their criticism of theories of anaphora that assume distinct types of anaphoric pronouns was first (cf. Tasmowski and Verluyten 1982) directed against Evans, and in their recent paper (1985) against Reinhart (1983) and Bosch (1983). Since I have discussed Evans' distinctions at length in my (1983) and Tanya Reinhart may speak for herself, I shall here only defend my own proposals. 

Tasmowski and Verluyten's criticism concentrates on some unclarities in the distinction between referentially and syntactically functioning pronouns which I have been advocating and on questions of number and gender agreement between pronoun and antecedent. Particularly with regard to the latter they are pointing out problems that have so far remained unaccounted for. Before I attend to these problems however (in Section 3), I shall try to clarify my distinction between syntactic and referential pronouns (Section 1) and I shall try to show that Tasmowski and Verluyten's uniform pronoun treatment has nothing that could substitute for the required distinction (Section 2). 

¹ I am grateful for the comments on this paper by an anonymous referee of the Journal.
1. Syntactic vs referential pronouns

My hypothesis (in 1980, 1983) was that the crucial distinction that is needed in order to account for a variety of problems in the interpretation of anaphoric personal pronouns is a distinction between pronouns that function purely syntactically and pronouns that function referentially. I have called the two classes syntactic and referential pronouns respectively (for short, SPs and RPs).

It follows from this notion of basing the SP-RP distinction on the difference in referential status of pronoun occurrences that all that can possibly matter for the interpretation of SPs is their structural relation to their controller. In this respect they behave like agreement morphemes that mark subject agreement in the finite verb. There is no issue as to whether the third person -s in a sentence like x leaps refers to anybody or anything and if so to whom or what. Its function is to mark the fact that leap is interpreted as a function that takes x as its argument, no matter what you fill in for “x”: an expression of definite reference, indefinite reference, generic reference, or of no reference, such as a quantifier expression. The referential status of an SP-controller is immaterial to the control relation. Hence such relations will remain undisturbed by any syntactically appropriate substitutions for the antecedent.

This is different for RPs. They need a referent in order to be interpreted, just like any other referentially occurring NP. If, in a particular syntactic structure, this referent is introduced by means of another definite NP and the RP occurs co-referentially with that NP, then the interpretation of the RP depends on the reference of that NP. Thus if we substitute a non-referential NP for the original NP to which a pronoun is anaphorically related via co-reference, the anaphoric relation must break down.

This difference between SPs and RPs is illustrated by the following cases. If we take (1a) in the reading on which he is anaphorically related to Fred, we can see, after the substitution of the non-referentially functioning nobody for Fred in (1b) that the “anaphoric” relation between the pronoun and the subject is maintained. Hence we may conclude that also in (1a) the anaphoric relation cannot depend on co-reference and does not require a referential occurrence of he.

(1)  a. Fred said he was sick.
    b. Nobody said he was sick.

For (2a), on the reading that links he to Fred, we get the opposite result for the substitution of a non-referential NP for the antecedent. So we may conclude that, other things being equal, the reference of the antecedent plays a crucial role for the anaphoric relation in (2a), i.e. that the pronoun occurs referentially as an RP and co-refers with the antecedent.

(2)  a. When Fred arrived, he was tired.
    b. When nobody arrived, he was tired.

Furthermore, we may consider the effects of substituting a referential NP for the pronoun. If the anaphoric relation remains, then this is clear evidence that the relation between pronoun and antecedent, also in the original version of the sentence, may rest on co-reference and that the pronoun functions referentially as an RP (cf. (2c)). If the outcome of this test is negative however, i.e. if the NP that we have substituted for the pronoun cannot link up to the antecedent, we must be more careful with our conclusions: perhaps we have only not found the right kind of NP and another NP may do the job. Bearing this caveat in mind, a negative
outcome may count as evidence that the anaphoric relation in the original sentence was not based on a referentially functioning pronoun but on a pronoun functioning as an SP (cf. (1c)).

(1)  c. Fred said the old malingering was sick.

(2)  c. When Fred arrived, the old malingering was tired.

Quite apart from the question of how sharp the boundary between these two ways of pronoun functioning can be drawn (a point to which I attend in a moment), one may reasonably expect of any theory of pronouns that it should be able to account for these substitution phenomena and their semantic effects. It seems pretty clear that a pronoun theory that claims that all pronouns function alike will be in big trouble when it tries to account for these observations. Tasmowski and Verluyten seem to think – and this is why I am labouring the point – that the function of these observations is only in providing criteria for a taxonomy of pronoun uses. What they ignore is the status of these observations as problems that need to be accounted for by pronoun theories.

From the theoretical considerations above it is easy to derive the following two tests to decide between SPs and RPs, which I proposed in Bosch (1980, 1983):

I if a 3rd person personal pronoun that stands in an anaphoric relation with some antecedent can be replaced by another referential expression without thereby affecting the anaphoric relationship, then the pronoun functions as an RP. For short:

pronoun replaceable → RP

II if the antecedent, A, of a 3rd person personal pronoun that stands in an anaphoric relation with A can be replaced by another NP that clearly functions non-referentially and the anaphoric relationship remains unaffected, then the pronoun functions as an SP. For short:

antecedent replaceable → SP

When Tasmowski and Verluyten (1985) believe that “such criteria do not allow one to recognize SPs”, they are, as is evident from their attempts to substantiate their criticism, getting the direction of these consequence relations wrong, not reading them as criteria that determine the type of pronoun occurrence (right side of the implication sign) on the basis of the test results (left side of the implication sign), but reading them as predictions: if something is an SP (or RP), then the tests must yield such and such results.

Another point which Tasmowski and Verluyten bring up in order to show specifically that test II is not reliable, concerns anaphoric relations between non-referential antecedents and subsequent pronouns which are referential in nature and depend on an inferred referent, such as in the following case:

(3) Nobody will get into this building, unless he has a valid identification.

In view of such cases, Tasmowski and Verluyten believe that the “nobody-test” (viz. test II above) becomes worthless, because they think that test II would mark the pronoun as an SP. – Well, properly used, the test yields correct results also here. The test requires nota bene replaceability of the antecedent: my claim is that an SP links up to a syntactic position, independently of the referential status of an NP that fills that position. Thus the mere occurrence of nobody (or any other non-referential NP) as an antecedent does not satisfy the condition of the test. When we substitute a referential NP for nobody in (3), the anaphoric relation cannot be preserved except by twisting the meaning of the sentence. This shows that
the pronoun does not link up to the syntactic position occupied by nobody, but to a (generic) discourse referent that is established in the course of the processing of earlier parts of the utterance (cf. for more detail Bosch 1983:133f).

A more essential point is the following. In my (1980, 1983) I assumed that the class of anaphoric pronoun occurrences is exhausted by the two disjoint classes of SP and anaphoric RP occurrences. And although I was perhaps not very explicit about this, I took for granted that the classes of pronoun occurrences that are marked as SP- and anaphoric RP-occurrences by the tests should share this characteristic. But if this were so, we would have a number of potentially troublesome cases: pronoun occurrences that are marked as RP-occurrences by test I and as SP-occurrences by test II. Tasmowski and Verluyten are quite right to point out this difficulty.

In Bosch (1983) two types of such cases are mentioned, which I tried to treat as cases of transition in historical language development. I am not yet certain that they are not. But I am certain that the postulate of disjointness of the classes of SP- and RP-occurrences rests on a confusion, and having seen his, it becomes irrelevant for the theory whether or not any cases in the intersection are cases of historical transition.

Let me explain where I think I went wrong. I still believe that the theoretical considerations that lead to the SP-RP distinction are correct. And as the tests follow from these considerations, they ought to be equally correct. The tests however show nothing about occurrences of anaphoric pronouns (as I used to believe), but are strictly concerned with the functioning of pronoun occurrences in processing. More precisely: the distinction is one between the strategies a linguistic processor employs rather than between properties of occurrences. Thus if a pronoun occurrence is tested with positive result for SP-hood we know that it may successfully be processed as an SP, namely independent of any assumptions with respect to reference. And if the tests show the pronoun to be an RP we know that it can be processed as an RP, i.e. on the basis of the assumption that it has a referent. In the absence of a full specification of these processing strategies, however, there is no reason to think that there should not be pronoun occurrences that may successfully be processed by either strategy and possibly even with superficially indistinguishable results.

2. A revival of substitutionalism

The uniform theory for “all true pronouns” (i.e. roughly all pronouns one would loosely refer to as “anaphoric pronouns”) that Tasmowski and Verluyten propose postulates something they call “linguistic control of the pronoun by its antecedent”. But what does “linguistic control” mean in this connection, and what exactly is meant by an “antecedent”? I first thought (cf. Bosch 1984) that linguistic control might be syntactic control, which made me wonder how syntactic control relations could cross sentence boundaries in cases where the antecedent is in another sentence than the pronoun. But Tasmowski and Verluyten have corrected me: linguistic control is not syntactic control. It would appear that by “linguistic control of a pronoun by its antecedent”, at least in the most straightforward cases, they do not mean anything else than that the pronoun agrees with its antecedent with respect to gender and number. There need not be a syntactic relationship between the two, and Tasmowski and

---

2 There are some problems with respect to the delimitation of Tasmowski and Verluyten’s class of “true pronouns”, which however I cannot take up here without going far beyond reasonable limitations of space. For instance a non-emphatic English it in many occurrences would not count as a “true pronoun” for them while it would certainly qualify as an anaphoric pronoun on just about any notion of anaphora.
Verluyten have given no hints at any semantic relation connected with what they call “linguistic control”.

The second question concerns the notion of the pronoun's antecedent. According to Tasmowski and Verluyten all anaphoric pronouns are linguistically controlled by an antecedent. If “antecedent” here means what it normally means, viz “overt antecedent”, then we may expect quite a variety of different relations under the name of “linguistic control”, as might appear from some selected examples in (4) (where the star indicates only that no anaphoric reading of the pronoun with respect to the italicized antecedent is possible).

(4)  a. I met a colleague in the theatre. He was wearing a black tie.
    b. I met a colleague in the theatre. She was wearing a black tie.
    c. I met a colleague in the theatre. They all wear black ties.
    d. I met every colleague in the theatre. *He was wearing a black tie.
    e. I met every colleague in the theatre. They were all wearing black ties.
    f. I didn't meet a colleague in the theatre. *He was wearing a black tie.
    g. Nobody took his hat off.
    h. Nobody took their hat off.
    i. *Nobody took her hat off.
    k. Watch out with that chair. It's not very stable.
    l. Watch out with that chair. They're not very stable.

The observations I want to make with respect to these cases are very straightforward and there is no need to comment on the examples one by one. My main point is that either the claim that the antecedent determines the number and gender of the anaphoric pronoun must be false or most of the italicized antecedents in (4) are not what Tasmowski and Verluyten mean by “antecedent”: we find the same overt antecedent with different pronouns and we find pronoun-antecedent pairs that once allow for an anaphoric relation and once don't. And additionally there are cases, like (4m), where the overt antecedent is of a syntactic category that could not possibly determine the gender and number of an anaphoric pronoun:

(4)  m. *Shakespearean* imitators don't usually capture his style.

Now Tasmowski and Verluyten (1985) do indeed suggest that the overt antecedent of an anaphoric pronoun is not always the antecedent that linguistically controls the pronoun. Not only in the case of antecedentless anaphoric pronouns the controlling antecedent must somehow be reconstructed, but also in cases where there is an overt antecedent, they occasionally consider another noun that does not occur in the discourse to be the “antecedent” that determines the pronoun’s gender and number. But since they neither give a general rule for when such reconstruction is required nor how it would be accomplished, their notion of a controlling antecedent (as differing from regular overt antecedents) remains somewhat elusive. It is no art (nor science) to look at the pronouns in (4) and in each case think up some NP or noun that agrees with the pronoun in gender and number and would thus willingly yield to the role of the pronoun’s controlling “antecedent”. The question is how we get from identical overt antecedents to wildly different controlling antecedents.

Tasmowski and Verluyten are not the first in this predicament. An approach to pronouns of fundamentally the same substitutional nature was pursued by Bloomfield (1935) and Hockett (1958). They, too, never succeeded in getting rid of the air of arbitrariness in what for Tasmowski and Verluyten is the recovery of the controlling antecedent. In their formulation
pronouns are “substitutes” for full linguistic forms. The relation between the pronoun and the full linguistic form it substitutes for is not a relation of stylistic variation; there is no claim that the form substituted could actually stand in place of the pronoun. The idea is rather that the form substituted for must, in some sense, be in the speaker’s mind when he utters the sentence in question and in the listener’s mind when he understands it (that Bloomfield or Hockett would not have spoken of things in anybody’s mind is not the issue here).

It is roughly this intuition of pronouns being substitutes that early transformationalist accounts of pronouns attempted to make explicit in terms of Deep Structure (which would explicitly contain the full forms) and a pronominalization transformation (as an explanation of the substitution process). But even before the pronominalization approach was abandoned, transformationalists came to accept the fact that the pronominalization transformation could not be all there is to an account for anaphoric pronouns. This insight was brought home by the Bach-Peters Paradox (cf. Bach et. al. 1974, Karttunen 1971), as exemplified by sentences of the kind of (5). Whatever the Deep Structure representation of one of the two pronouns, the Deep Structure representation of the other pronoun must be part of it, and the latter Deep Structure representation in turn must contain the former Deep Structure representation as its part, and so on and nauseam.

(5) The pilot who shot at it hit the plane that chased him.

I fail to see the substantial difference between the difficulties this type of sentence raises for pronominalization and the problems it would raise for Tasmowski and Verluytens’s controlling “antecedents”. Of course one could postulate the noun man as the covert “antecedent” for him and the noun plane as the covert “antecedent” for it. But such a move would only exemplify the arbitrariness of “antecedent recovery”. From what Tasmowski and Verluytens have written on the subject so far, I cannot see how their proposals have risen above this level.

3. Agreement

The important insight in Tasmowski and Verluytens’s work to my mind is a matter quite separate from, and of more general impact than, their substitutionalist anaphora theory. They have pointed out that practically all approaches to pronouns have overlooked the fact that the shape of anaphoric pronouns cannot regularly be derived from properties of their intended referents, and that the agreement features of particular nouns or NPs a language would employ to describe the relevant referent plays a crucial role in the determination of the shape of the pronoun. This oversight may indeed be due to the fact that most of the discussion of pronouns has been carried on in English and with English as an object language. Since formal noun gender plays a marginal role in English, the determination of the agreement features of pronouns could easily pass for a matter of denotation or reference, which it certainly is not. But I am afraid that Tasmowski and Verluytens are overestimating the role of their insight for a comprehensive account of anaphoric pronouns when they offer a generalization of this notion as a uniform pronoun theory. Still, the core of their proposal deserves close attention, because it can, I believe, lead to a better understanding of the form of mental representations that are relevant for the processing of anaphoric expressions.

The clearest case that could be made for a formal determination of pronoun features can be made with antecedentless anaphoric pronouns. And Tasmowski and Verluytens have shown convincingly, already in their (1982), that the gender and number of antecedentless pronouns is determined by the gender and number of a particular NP that is not overtly present in discourse. They refer to such NPs as “absentee antecedents”. The following are two of many examples they provide:
(6)  

a. (Watching a Frenchman trying to put a large table – la table (f.) – into his car):
   “Tu n’arriveras jamais a {la/ *le} faire entrer dans la voiture.”
   [You’ll never manage to get it into the car].

b. (same situation but with a desk – le bureau (m.)):
   “Tu n’arriveras jamais a {*la/ le} faire entrer dans la voiture.”
   [You’ll never manage to get it into the car].

This phenomenon is by no means peculiar to French, but is commonly found in languages that employ formal noun gender. Cf. the following cases from German.

(6)  

c. (watching a German trying to move a wardrobe – der Schrank (m.)):
   “Wenn du die Kleider nicht rausnimmst, kriegst du {ihn/ *sie/ *es} nie von der Stelle.”
   [If you won’t take the clothes out, you’ll never make it move].

d. (a German looking at his typewriter in dismay – die Schreibmaschine (f.)):
   “[Sie/ *Er/ *Es] tut’s nicht mehr. Ich muß {sie/ *ihn/ *es} reparieren lassen.”
   [It doesn’t work any more. I must have it repaired].

The story that Tasmowski and Verluytten tell about these cases is one of a two-step control: there must be a salient object in the situation (e.g. the table; in (6a)) which “pragmatically controls” an absentee antecedent (in the cases at hand the French noun la table) which in turn “linguistically controls” the pronoun.

The open question is, as in the general case already discussed, how we can recover these absentee antecedents. Tasmowski and Verluytten speak of “severe recoverability conditions”, but in practice this boils down to the bare requirement that the absentee antecedent must be recoverable. How it is recovered was, at least in their (1982) paper, left to the reader’s own fantasy, except for the constraint that the absentee antecedent must agree with the pronoun (and, presumably, denote the pronoun’s referent).

In order to account for these cases I suggested in my (1984) that the agreement features of the pronoun should be taken as inherited from the default description of the referent in question. In the unmarked case this is the basic level common noun (cf. e.g. Rosch 1977) that classifies the intended referent. Cornish (1986) has, independently I believe, arrived at the same proposal, and also Tasmowski and Verluytten seem to be adopting the idea in their most recent paper (1985). They add, quite correctly, that it will not always be the basic level common noun that determines the pronoun’s agreement features, but that there may be contextual variation; the default value for an object’s description may be reset for specific contexts. This is a point already reasonably well established in studies of categorization and naming (cf. e.g. Tversky, 1977; Osgood, 1971). Basic level categorizations are default categorizations.

The notion that there is, for each object and context, one unique common noun that would form the least marked, and hence the most naturally expectable, description of the object in that context gives us at least a sketch of the kind of relation that Tasmowski and Verluytten call “pragmatic control”; and for unmarked contexts we not only have a sketch but can make the empirical prediction that the appropriate basic level common noun is the least marked description and that it is this noun that determines the gender of the anaphoric pronoun.
There are many details still to be worked out until these mechanisms of the determination of the shape of anaphoric pronouns are entirely clear. This is not the place to attempt to do this (but cf. Bosch in preparation). But if there is a way of making the idea of *constructio ad sententiam*, or “notional agreement”, as it is sometimes called, explicit as far as feature agreement of anaphoric pronouns is concerned, I believe that is along these lines.

The only point in this connection I want take up here is the question of how these agreement mechanisms for referential anaphoric pronouns (APs, in order to distinguish them from the wider class of RPs of which they form a subset) differ from the syntactic control mechanisms that determine the shape of syntactic anaphoric pronouns (SPs).

### 3.1 Feature agreement for SPs and APs

Since the forms of third person personal pronouns are used both in the function as SPs and APs, we may assume that the agreement features in SP- and AP-agreement are also the same. Thus if we assume that the processing of an NP results in a representation that contains, among other things, also the NP’s agreement features, then it is these feature specifications with which a pronoun must agree in order to link up anaphorically with the NP. And on this general level there is no difference between SPs and APs. The difference is that in the case of referentially used NPs the feature representation is linked to (or perhaps forms part of) a representation of the NPs referent, which is not the case for non-referentially occurring NPs. Since we have seen that SPs do not care about the referential status of their antecedents it is plausible to assume that they can be processed with respect to the feature representation alone. And if the relation between SPs and their antecedents is indeed a relation of syntactic control, it is also plausible to assume that these feature representations, as long as they are not linked to referential representations, are rather short-lived representations that are available only during the actual syntactic processing and are deleted when the processor leaves the relevant syntactic domain (the Processing Unit, in terms of Bosch (1983)). In the referential case, however, these representations are integrated into discourse or context models that contain representations of discourse entities. Accordingly they are accessible via referential devices also after the processor has left the syntactic domain in which the antecedent NP occurs. Cf. the following examples:

(7) a. Nobody was tired. *But he left.
    b. Nobody was tired when he left.

The quantifier *nobody* does not occur referentially (cf. Bosch 1983:43ff), certainly not in the sense that it would introduce any referents into the discourse. It does not result in a referential representation to which an AP could link up at a later stage (cf.(7a)). But the quantifier NP can control SPs for the simple reason that it can control VP-agreement (cf. (7b)).

(8) a. Nobody was tired. But they left.
    b. Nobody was tired when they left.

Somewhat puzzling in this connection may be (8) where the pronoun does not agree with the singular number of *nobody*. Here, however, *they* is not an SP but functions referentially. It is not anaphorically linked to the quantifier (which would be impossible because of the disagreement) but to the contextually understood set of people over which it quantifies. And if such a set of people is contextually assumed, there must be a representation of this set in the context model which is accessed by the pronoun.
That they in (8b) can indeed not be an SP is demonstrated by the fact that the finite verb that is controlled by nobody must take the singular form. Hence if SP-agreement functions like verb-agreement, as I have been claiming, also SPs must take the singular (cf. 9).

(9) a. Nobody {has/ *have} gone out.

In this respect nobody contrasts with the quantifier none, which is not specified with respect to the number feature. Accordingly we may have the verb in either singular or plural (10a), and also the SP (10b). When we remove the underdetermination in the NP only one of the alternative verb forms or pronoun forms remains (cf. (11) where the stars, as before, apply only to the intended anaphoric reading).

(10) a. None of the ladies {has/ have} gone out.
   b. None of the ladies took {her/ their} luggage.

(11) a’. Not one of the ladies {has/ *have} gone out.
   b’. Not one of the ladies took {her/ *their} luggage.
   a”. All of the ladies {*has/ have} gone out.
   b”. All of the ladies took {*her/ their} luggage.

The lack of number determination in the subject of (10) thus would seem to lead to a feature specification that is matched by feature specifications with arbitrary values for the number feature (and is thus in agreement with singular as well as plural VP features).

Nobody not only has a definite feature value for number, as we have seen, but it is also specified with regard to its gender value, viz as generic personal. The pronoun his in (12) does not permit the conclusion that we are concerned with males, and it is only in virtue of this use of the masculine pronoun form as an implicit generic pronoun that his is possible in (12). Her is excluded for precisely the reason that it does not have a generic use. The (composite) explicit generic pronoun he or she is of course possible.

(12) Nobody took {his/ *her/ his or her} luggage.

Despite the superficial similarity between French personne plus negation and nobody, the two do not behave quite the same way. Cf.

(13) a. Personne n’a admis {qu’il/ *qu’elle} connaissait le coupable.
   [Nobody admitted that {he/*she} knew the culprit]
   b. J’ai interrogé toutes ces dames. Personne n’a admis {qu’elle/ *qu’il} connaissait le coupable.
   [I have questioned an the ladies. Nobody admitted that {she/ *he} knew the culprit.
   c. Personne n’est satisfait.
   [Nobody is satisfied (m.)]
   d. Personne de ces demoiselles n’est satisfaite.
   [None of these young ladies is satisfied (f.)]

Although French grammars usually insist that the indefinite pronoun personne is of masculine gender, we see that this is only a default value and that it can be over-written by specific contextual information. That we are concerned with a value in the feature specification and
with agreement, rather than with pronouns functioning with reference to the set of people over which personne quantifies is clear from the gender in the participle in (c) and (d).

The default specification of the gender value of personne must not be mistaken to mean that personne is unspecified with respect to the gender feature (as English none is for the number feature). When no specific information is available feminine agreement is excluded (cf. (13a)). Since however the masculine forms of pronoun or participle do not allow for the inference that personne quantifies over males, the correct analysis should be analogous to nobody and would postulate a specification as generic personal rather than as masculine. The difference between personne and nobody is that for personne we are concerned with a default value for the gender feature, whereas nobody has its gender value fixed. (12’) is not a good English expressions for the reading on which nobody quantifies over the set of ladies introduced in the first clause. Cf.

(12’) The ladies have left, but nobody took her luggage.

The theoretically interesting point about personne is that we find clear evidence for the intrusion of context specific information into feature specifications, which cannot be removed by postulating a referential functioning of the anaphoric pronouns, as it could in the case of the plural pronoun following nobody (cf. (8) above). If we were to say that the pronouns in (13a,b) function referentially, we would also have to say that the participle in (13c,d) functions referentially.

The model I am proposing maintains agreement relations as syntactic and context independent relations and relegates the referential relation into the interpretation of personne. This does not mean that the quantifier personne is ascribed a referential occurrence. Similarly, the NP none of these ladies cannot occur referentially and none does not occur referentially either in this NP. The referential sub-constituent that establishes the link to the context and enables the use of contextual information is the NP these ladies, which makes the domain of quantification of none explicit.

It seems that the feature specifications that result from the processing of the antecedents of anaphoric pronouns are always specified with respect to gender. In the first instance this specification comes from the head of the NP and if the head is not specified for gender the value is supplemented from its explicitly given or implicitly understood domain description. If the gender value of the head, as in the case of personne, is only a default value, it can be over-written by domain descriptions.

The value of the number feature must either be supplied by the determiner of an explicit antecedent, in which case it may be singular or plural or undefined, or alternatively, it may be supplied by the domain of denotation or quantification of the antecedent, in which case it is plural. If, as in the case of none, the head is unspecified with respect to number then the feature specification of the whole NP will also lack a value for the number feature.

So far I have argued that anaphoric pronouns agree with the feature specification that results from the processing of their antecedent NPs. The processing of the NP may, but need not, take context specific referential, information into account. The relation between the pronoun and the feature specification is one of strict VP agreement: the pronoun behaves like the finite verb.

To this general rule we have seen one type of exception, where the anaphoric pronoun does not behave like the finite verb and does not agree with the feature specification of this antecedent but functions referentially with respect to a contextually available referent (cf. the case of nobody...they). In order to maintain the generality of the rule that anaphoric pronouns
agree with the feature specification of their controller or antecedent, we should say that
*referentially functioning anaphoric pronouns* agree with the feature specification of a
contextually available description of their referent. This description, as we can see from the
*nobody* case, must have the shape of an NP, i.e. it must not only contain a noun but also a
determiner, for otherwise it could not prescribe a value for the pronoun’s number feature.

4. Conclusion
Let me try to sum up. Tasmowski and Verluyten and I seem to agree that the shape of
anaphoric pronouns is not explicable on the basis of their objects of reference alone.
Tasmowski and Verluyten say that anaphoric pronouns agree with their antecedents (in their
special sense of “antecedent” noted earlier).

I want to say that anaphoric pronouns agree with feature representations that result from the
processing of their antecedents. In the case of SPs these feature representations are identical to
the feature specification of the controller, unless this specification is incomplete with respect
to any features or specifies only a default value for them. In such cases the feature
representation is completed with respect to the missing feature values and default
specifications may be overwritten by information that is drawn in from the context.

In the case of referential APs there is still the same agreement relation between the pronoun
and a feature specification, but first it is not a relation of syntactic control, but mere feature
agreement, and second, it is not necessarily the overt antecedent that is the origin of the
feature representation but the currently most relevant description of the pronoun’s referent,
which may or may not be identical to an overt antecedent.

I should be glad to offer this proposal as either a further specification, with some
amendments, of what Tasmowski and Verluyten are proposing or alternatively as an
extension, with some amendments, of what I advocated earlier. If they want to accept the first
of these ways of looking at our discussion, I am a happy man and we are in the same boat. If
they don’t I shall opt for the second alternative.

References
Bosch, Peter (1980): The Modes of Pronominal Reference and Their Constraints, in:
Kreiman, J. and A.E. Ojeda (eds.): *Pronouns and Anaphora. Papers from the Parasession
(ed. J.S. Petöfi).
Bosch, Peter (in preparation) Anaphora and Representation.


