Slide 1

# Non-selective interrogative pronominals, categorical presuppositional meanings of proper names and propriality

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Slide 2

Overview…

- A typology of **non-selective interrogative pronominals** (Idiatov 2007)
- **Questions for proper names** in the languages of the world
- Use of **'who?'** in questions for proper names
- Relevance of the notion of **categorical presuppositional meanings** of proper names
- **Propriality** as explanation

Slide 3

Non-selective interrogative pronominals (NIPs): 'who?' & 'what?'

(1) a. *Who is that man over there?*
    b. *Who gave you this?*

(2) a. *What is this thing you have in your hand?*
    b. *What fell out of his bag?*

Slide 4

NIPs: from a typological perspective

For purposes of cross-linguistic comparison, NIPs, 'who?' and 'what?', are best defined through their functions in terms of **prototypical** (or **canonical**) **combinations of values** (cf. Idiatov 2007).

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NIPs: from a typological perspective

Figure 1. Conceptual space for delimiting the prototypical functions of non-selective interrogative pronominals

Values

ENTITY TYPE	PERSON	THING
		[ANIMATE < **INANIMATE** > ABSTRACT]
TYPE OF REFERENCE	IDENTIFICATION (DIRECT REFERENCE)	CLASSIFICATION (REFERENCE VIA A CONCEPT)
EXPECTED ANSWER	PROPER NAME	COMMON NOUN (DESCRIPTION, APPELLATIVE)
	WHO?	WHAT?

Parameters

Interrogative pronominal

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- [person + classification + common noun] (**KIND-questions**)

Russian

(1) A on **kto** voobsche? Vrach?
    and he **who** actually doctor
    '**What** is he actually? A doctor?'

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- [thing + identification + proper name] (**NAME-questions**)

  Kgalagadi (Niger-Congo, Bantu S30; Botswana; Kems Monaka, p.c.)

(1) [A:] *libizho la lehelo lo   ke **anye**?*
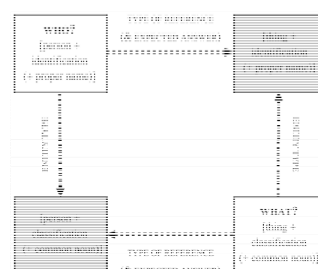   name   of place this is **who**
     [B:] *ke Hughunsi*
        is Hukuntsi
     '[A:] **What** (lit.: '**who?**') is the name of this place?
     [B:] It's Hukuntsi (a village name)'

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Figure 2. Conceptual space for non-selective interrogative pronominals

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Some complications:

- a language may choose a different strategy in different contexts even when the combinations of values in these contexts are the same

- many languages treat non-human living beings similarly to humans in various respects and some also use 'who?' in questions about them (**ANIMATE-questions**)

  Russian

(1) ***Kto*** *eto tebja ukusil? Osa?*
     who this you bit   wasp
     '[Looking at a swelling on someone's hand clearly caused by an insect bite:]
     What stung you? A wasp?'

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'Who?'/'what?'-dominance in cases of non-canonical combinations of values: a typology

	KIND-questions [person + classification (+ common noun)]	NAME-questions [thing + identification (+ proper name)]	Prominence
1	'who?'	'who?'	'who?'
2	'who?'	'what?'	ENTITY TYPE
3	'what?'	'who?'	TYPE OF REFERENCE
4	'what?'	'what?'	'what?'

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'Who?'/'what?'-dominance in cases of non-canonical combinations of values: a (full) typology

		KIND-questions	NAME-questions	ANIMATE-questions	Prominence
1	a b	'who?'	'who?'	'who?' ('what?')	'who?'
2	a b	'who?'	'what?'	'who?' ('what?')	ENTITY TYPE
3		'what?'	'who?'	('what?')	TYPE OF REFERENCE
4		'what?'	'what?'	('what?')	'what?'
5		'what?'	'what?'	'who?'	mixed (4/2a)
6		'what?'	'who?'	'who?'	mixed (3/2a)

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Questions for proper names

- such a question may or may not involve an interrogative pro-word (IPW)

  Bamana (Mande; Mali)

(1) *Í   tɔgɔ?*
     2SG name
     'What's your name'

- constructions involving an IPW with a **non-canonical combination of values**: [thing + identification + proper name] (**NAME-questions**)

- constructions involving an IPW

  - [IPW is X's name?]   an equation betwee an IPW and X's name
  - [IPW is X (by name)?]   an equation between an IPW and X (by name)
  - [IPW is X('s name) named/called?]   a non-equational construction with a verb of naming/calling

- [IPW is X's name?]

  Kgalagadi (Niger-Congo; Bantu S30; Botswana; Kems Monaka, p.c.)

(1) [A:] *libizho la lehelo lo ke* **anye***?*
     name of place this is **who**
  [B:] *ke Hughunsi*
     is Hukuntsi
  '[A:] **What** (lit.: '**who?**') is the name of this place?
  [B:] It's Hukuntsi (a village name)'

- [IPW is X (by name)?]

  Tuvaluan (Austronesian, Remote Oceanic, Nuclear Polynesian; Tuvalu)

(1) a. *ko-oi tou fenua?*
      FOC-who 2SG.POSS island
      'What's your home island?' or 'What's your native country?' (lit.:
      'Who (is) your island?') (Besnier 2000:422)
   b. *ko-oi t-tino naa?*
      FOC-who DEF.SG-person that
      '[Addressed to someone in the dark:] Who is there? (lit.: 'Who (is) that
      person?')' (Besnier 2000:424)

- [IPW is X named/called?]

  German

(1) *wie heißt er?*
    how is.named he
    'What's his name? (lit. 'How is he named?')'

  Semelai (Austro-Asiatic, Mon-Khmer, Aslian; Malaysia)

(2) a. *kadeh glɒʔ?*
      who be.named
      'What are (you) called?', 'What is your name?' (Nicole Kruspe, p.c.)
   b. *kadeh na-tɔʔɛn?*
      who DEM-to.down
      'Who is the one (coming) down?' (Kruspe 1999:293)

"Avoidance" strategies

- in the case of a non-canonical combination of values, the use of both 'what?'
  and 'who?' can be **avoided** altogether

  - **'how?'**

    German

(1) *wie heißt er?*
    how is.named he
    'What's his name? (lit. 'How is he named?')'

    Arabela (Zaparoan; Peru; Rolland Rich, p.c.)

(2) [A:] **taa**-*te quia sesa-ni?* [B:] *John*
      how-Q 2SG name-Q PROP
    [A:] What is your name? (lit.: 'How is your name?') [B:] John'

"Avoidance" strategies

- in the case of a non-canonical combination of values, the use of both 'what?'
  and 'who?' can be **avoided** altogether

  - **'where?'**

    Standard (Eastern) Hausa (Afro-Asiatic, West Chadic; Nigeria)

(1) **inaa** *suuna-n-ka?*
    where name-of-2SG
    'What is your name? (lit.: 'Where is your name?')' (Paul Newman, p.c.)

"Avoidance" strategies

- in the case of a non-canonical combination of values, the use of both 'what?'
  and 'who?' can be **avoided** altogether

  - **'which one?'**

    Amharic (Afro-Asiatic, West Semitic; Ethiopia; Seyoum Mulugeta, p.c.)

(1) *səm-əh* **yïtəɲɲaw** *näw?*
    name-2SG **which.one.M.SG** COP.M.SG
    'What is your name? (lit.: 'Which one is your name?')'

  - predicative **'which?, what kind of?'**

    French

(2) *quel* *est son nom?*
    which[M.SG] is his name
    'What is his name? (lit.: 'Which is his name?')'

NAME-questions: 'who?' vs. 'what?'

- when no avoidance strategy is recurred to in the case of a non-canonical combination of values, we have either **'what?'-dominace** or **'who?'-dominance**
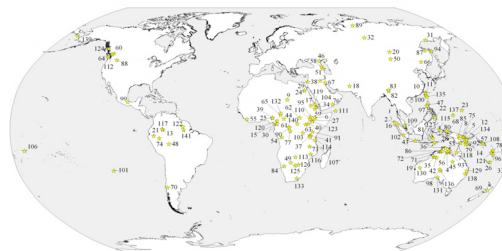
Namia (Sepik-Ramu, Sepik, Yellow River; Papua New Guinea; Becky Feldpausch, p.c.)

(1)   [A:] *ne-k(a)*   *ilei*   ***tal(a)*?**   [B:] *John*
       2SG-POSS   name   **who**   PROP
   [A:] **What** is your name? [B:] John'

NAME-questions: personal proper names

- clearly, the **most common context** with 'who?'-dominance in NAME-questions in the languages of the world

Map 1. The distribution of languages allowing 'who?' in NAME-questions about personal proper names

NAME-questions: proper names of domestic animals

Angami Naga (Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Kuki-Chin-Naga; India; Giridhar 1980:36)

(1)   a. *ñ*   *zâ*   *šŭpuò*   *gā?*
     your name   who   Q
     'What is your name?' (lit.: 'Who is your name?')

    b. *ñ*   *fŏ*   *zâ*   *šŭpuò*   *gā?*
     your dog   name   who   Q
     'What is the name of your dog?' (lit.: 'Who is the name of your dog?')

- possible only in languages where 'who?' can be used in NAME-questions about **personal proper names**
- through the assimilation of domestic animals to humans in some respect, i.e. their **personification**

NAME-questions: proper names of places

- **much less common** and very much restricted both geographically and genetically
- [Who is X (by name)?]: Oceanic branch of Austronesian & a Bantu language Ngombe

Tuvaluan (Austronesian, Remote Oceanic, Nuclear Polynesian; Tuvalu)

(1)   a. *ko-oi*   *tou*   *fenua?*
     FOC-who   2SG.POSS   island
     'What's your home island?' or 'What's your native country?' (lit.: 'Who (is) your island?') (Besnier 2000:422)

    b. *ko-oi*   *t-tino*   *naa?*
     FOC-who   DEF.SG-person   that
     '[Addressed to someone in the dark:] Who is there? (lit.: 'Who (is) that person?')' (Besnier 2000:424)

NAME-questions: proper names of places

According to Besnier (2000:422), in Tuvaluan, interrogative *ai/ei/oi* 'who?' is "also used in questions about names of **places of regional or political import**. Islets, islands and atolls, island groups, countries, and continents fall in this category". Together with personal proper names, these words form a **lexico-syntactic class of proprial nominals** in Tuvaluan.

- not "regional or political import" but rather the conceptualization of the respective places as **inhabited** (or at least, as typically inhabited), that is as related to humans

fenua is not only 'island', but also 'country' and 'island community'

NAME-questions: proper names of places

- [Who is X's name?] and [Who is X named?]

Africa

Niger-Congo, Bantu:
- Tswana (S30; Botswana & South Africa; Andy Chebanne, p.c.)
- Tswapong (S30; Botswana; Bennett Maifala, p.c.)
- Kgalagadi (S30; Botswana; Kems Monaka, p.c.)
- Subiya/Kuhane (K50; Namibia & Botswana; Ndana Ndana, p.c.)
- Takwane (P30; Mozambique; Oliver Kröger, p.c.)

Afro-Asiatic, Cushitic:
- Hadendowa Bedawi (North Cushitic; Sudan; Martine Vanhove & Mohamed-Tahir Hamid Ahmed, p.c.)
- Libido (Highland East Cushitic; Ethiopia; Joachim Crass, p.c.)[24]
- West Central Oromo (East Cushitic; Ethiopia; Tolemariam Fufa, p.c.)

Afro-Asiatic, West Semitic:
- Amharic (Ethiopia; Joachim Crass, p.c.; Seyoum Mulugeta, p.c.)[25]

Nilo-Saharan, Central Sudanic, East:
- Ma'di (Uganda; Mairi J. Blackings, p.c.)

Eurasia

Altaic, Northern Tungusic:
- Poligus Evenki (Russia; Konstantinova 1968:73)

Southeast Asia & Oceania

Austronesian, Remote Oceanic, Nuclear Polynesian:
- Rapa Nui (Viki Haoa Cardinali, p.c.)

New Guinea

Trans-New Guinea, Main Section, Central & South New Guinea:
- Duna (Papua New Guinea; Lila San Roque, p.c.)[26]

NAME-questions: proper names of places

Kgalagadi (Niger-Congo, Bantu S30; Botswana; Kems Monaka, p.c.)

(1) [A:] *libizho la lehelo lo ke anye?*
　　　 name　 of　 place　 this　 is **who**

　　 [B:] *ke Hughunsi*
　　　　 is Hukuntsi

　　 '[A:] **What** (lit.: '**who?**') is the name of this place?
　　 [B:] It's Hukuntsi (a village name)'

- [Who is X's name?] and [Who is X named?]: for **all** named places, irrespective of their relation to humans

Poligus Evenki (Altaic, Northern Tungusic; Konstantinova 1968:73)

(2) *ər bi:ra ŋi: gərbi:-n?*
　　 this river[NOM] who name-3SG.POSS
　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') is the name of this river?'

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NAME-questions: temporal proper names

- According to Van Langendonck (2007:225-231), **temporal names** indicating points or periods in time, such as *Monday* or *May*, can function as **proper names**

- [Who is X (by name)?]: Nuclear Polynesian subgroup of Austronesian (only for the names of **months**)

Tuvaluan (Austronesian, Nuclear Polynesian, Samoic-Outlier; Tuvalu; Besnier 2000:423)

(1) a. *ko-oi te maasina e fano ei koe?*
　　　　 FOC-who DEF.SG month NON‹PST› go ANAPHORIC 2SG
　　　　 'What month are you leaving in?' (lit.: 'Who is the month you are leaving?')

　　 b. *ko te maasina o oi e fano ei koe?*
　　　　 FOC DEF.SG month of who NON‹PST› go ANAPHORIC 2SG
　　　　 'What month are you leaving in?' (lit.: 'It is the month of who that you are leaving?')

Rapa Nui (Austronesian, Nuclear Polynesian, East; Chile; Du Feu 1996:22)

(2) *ko-ai te ava'e ko tara hao hai vanaga tire?*
　　 FOC-who ART month FOC January INS language Chile
　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') is January in Spanish?'[33]

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NAME-questions: temporal proper names

- [Who is X (by name)?]: Nuclear Polynesian subgroup of Austronesian (only for the names of **months**)

- the names of months are the only kind of temporal names that belongs to the special **morphosyntactic class of proper names** marked by a "personal article"

　 i　 **a**　　　 *hora iti*　 'in August'
　 in **PERSONAL** August

　 i　 **te**　　 *mahana piti*　 'on Tuesday'
　 in **SPECIFIC** Tuesday

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NAME-questions: names of "folk genera" (species)

"folk genera [should be] seen as a **kind of 'proper name'** (in fact the 'real name' […]) which cannot be reduced to a set of observable properties and which is linked with a presumed 'underlying essence'" (Wierzbicka 1996:370)

- "folk genera" largely correspond to **"basic level terms"** in hierarchies such as *animal* ["life form"] > **dog** ["folk genus"] > *beagle* ["specific taxon"]

- [Who is X (by name)?]: examples are somewhat problematic

- [Who is X's name?] and [Who is X named?]: 4 Bantu languages (Tswana, Tswapong, Kgalagadi and Subiya/Kuhane), and two Cushitic languages (Hadendowa Bedawi and Libido)

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NAME-questions: names of "folk genera" (species)

Subiya/Kuhane (Niger-Congo, Bantu K50; Namibia & Botswana; Ndana Ndana, p.c.)

(1) a. *i-zina lye lyi samu njeni?*
　　　　 AUG-name of this tree COP.who
　　　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') is the name of this tree?'

　　 b. *i-lyi samu lyi sumpwa ni?*
　　　　 AUG-this tree it.is.called who
　　　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') is this tree called?'

Libido (Afro-Asiatic, Highland East Cushitic; Ethiopia; Joachim Crass, p.c.)

(2) a. *ka hakk'an summi 'aye?*
　　　　 this tree.GEN name.NOM who
　　　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') is the name of this tree?'

　　 b. *ka hakk'a 'aye yaka'o?*
　　　　 this tree.ACC who they.say
　　　　 'What (lit.: 'who?') do they call this tree?'

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NAME-questions: pure autonyms

- Pure autonyms are **metalinguistic names**, i.e. linguistic expressions that refer to themselves, such as *stand for* and *about* in the phrase *the words 'stand for' and 'about'* (cf. Van Langendonck 2007:246-249).

- In many respects autonyms behave like proper names and should be considered as "a **subclass of proper names** in their own right" (Van Langendonck 2007:95, 246-249).

Hadendowa Bedawi/Beja (Afro-Asiatic, North Cushitic; Sudan)

(1) *oo-tam　　　　　　　 ʔaab eedna t-'arabyeet-iib?*
　　 ART.M.SG.ACC-sorghum.ball who.ACC say.IPFV.3PL ART.F.SG-Arabic-in
　　 'What is *sorghum ball* in Arabic? (lit.: 'Who do they call *sorghum ball* in Arabic?')' (Martine Vanhove & Mohamed-Tahir Hamid Ahmed, p.c.)

Libido (Afro-Asiatic, Highland East Cushitic; Ethiopia; Joachim Crass, p.c.)

(2) a. *libitt'isan　　 "sheep"-a 'aye yaka'o?*
　　　　 Libido.language.in "sheep"-ACC who they.say
　　　　 'What is *sheep* in Libido? (lit.: 'Who do they call *sheep* in Libido?')'

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NAME-questions: some generalizations

- **'who?'-dominance hierarchy**: personal proper names (& proper names of domestic animals) < place names < (temporal proper names) < names of folk genera < pure autonyms

- with every step to the right, the number of languages involved **reduces drastically**, i.e. with a magnitude of several times

- on the world-wide scale, there are **3 major foci of 'who?'-dominance** in NAME-questions:

  - Bantu and Cushitic languages in Africa
  - Austronesian languages in Asia and the Pacific
  - Pama-Nyungan languages in Australia

Explaining the use of 'who?': personal proper names

Namia (Sepik-Ramu, Sepik, Yellow River; Papua New Guinea; Becky Feldpausch, p.c.)

(1) [A:] *ne-k(a)*   *ilei*   ***tal(a)*?** [B:] *John*
    2SG-POSS   name   **who**   PROP
    [A:] **What** is your name? [B:] John'

- It is the **categorical presuppositional meaning** of the proper name expected as an answer, viz. the fact that it is a proper name of a person (or a personified entity), that is metonymically taken into account

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Explaining the use of 'who?': toponyms, etc.

- An explanation appealing to the categorical presuppositional meaning of proper names cannot be extended to account for the use 'who?' in questions for names whose categorical presuppositional meaning is not a person (or at least a personified being, as in the case of domestic animals, deities and the like), such as toponyms, temporal names, folk genera and autonyms

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Explaining the use of 'who?': toponyms, etc.

- A **synchronic explanation**: the use of 'who?' is due to the proper name status, **propriality**, of these nouns.

  - questions for personal proper names involve the use of 'who?' due to the categorical presuppositional meaning of the personal proper names
  - the language has a clear morphosyntactic class of proper names containing both personal and non-personal nouns
  - by analogy, questions for non-personal proper names also involve the use of 'who?'

- This explanation may work for the Austronesian languages with a special **morphosyntactic class of proper names** marked by a "personal article"

- Elsewhere, such explanation is much more problematic due to the very abstract nature of its semantic basis, viz. propriality, which is supposed to override the **semantic clash** between the very concrete categorical presuppositional meanings of the personal and non-personal proper names.

Explaining the use of 'who?': toponyms, etc.

- A **diachronic explanation**: the use of 'who?' is due to a concurrence of certain developments in the evolution of the IPWs

  - on an earlier stage, a selective (or locative) interrogative indifferent to the semantic opposition person vs. non-person was used in questions about (personal & non-personal) proper names to avoid the use of 'who?' and 'what?' (**avoidance strategy**)
  - this selective (or locative) interrogative has developed into 'who?', as is not uncommon cross-linguistically
  - as a result, questions for (personal & non-personal) proper names involve the use of 'who?'

Cushitic (a branch of Afro-Asiatic)

- **avoidance strategies** are not uncommon in NAME-questions in Afro-Asiatic

  Standard (Eastern) Hausa (Afro-Asiatic, West Chadic; Nigeria)

(1) ***ìnaa***   *suuna-n-ka?*
    where   name-of-2SG
    'What is your name? (lit.: 'Where is your name?')' (Paul Newman, p.c.)

  Amharic (Afro-Asiatic, West Semitic; Ethiopia; Seyoum Mulugeta, p.c.)

(1) *səm-əh*   ***yälïtəɲɲäw***   *näw?*
    name-2SG   **which.one.M.SG**   COP.M.SG
    'What is your name? (lit.: 'Which one is your name?')'

- Beja 'who?' *ʔaːb* (ACC), *ʔaw* (NOM) is a reflex of Proto-Cushitic *ʔayy- '**which one?**'.

  - Compare also Saho (East Cushitic) *ay ~ aː* 'who?, what?, which [N]?, what (kind of) [N]?', Proto-Cushitic *ʔay(y)u-da 'where?', (primarily) South Omotic *ʔay* 'who?', (primarily) North Omotic *ʔay-(b-)* 'what?', and Proto-Semitic *ʔay* 'where?'.

Bantu (a branch of Niger-Congo)

- **avoidance strategies** are not uncommon in NAME-questions in Bantu and Niger-Congo

  Eton (Niger-Congo, Bantu A71; Cameroon; Van de Velde 2008:179)

  (1) pèpá wô àŋgábé ꜝdwé yá?
  |pòpá ú-ɔ̀   à-ŋgá-bé d-òé   já|
  father I-your I-RP-COP 5-name how
  'How was your father called?'

- As discussed in Idiatov (2009), Bantu 'who?' interrogatives commonly reconstructed as *n(d)a(n)i have developed out of a **selective interrogative** 'which one?' and ultimately a **locative interrogative** construction *[AG9(or AG7) COP G16-'what?'].

  - In several Bantu languages of zone C, reflexes of this interrogative construction mean both 'who?' and 'what?'

Conclusions

- The use of 'who?' in questions for personal proper names supports the relevance of the notion of **categorical presuppositional meanings** of proper names

- **Propriality** can account only for a small part of cases of the use of 'who?' in NAME-questions for non-personal proper names in the languages of the world

- A **diachronic explanation** of the use of 'who?' in NAME-questions (especially, about very marginal kinds of proper names, such as names of "folk genera" and pure autonyms) is more adequate and should be preferred all things being equal