

Grammar constrains the way we talk to ourselves

Elizabeth Ritter & Martina Wiltschko

UCalgary & ICREA, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

2 types of self-talk

- People who talk to themselves can do so either with the use of *you* or *I*

Holmberg (2010)

(1) Context: Martina is talking to herself

- a. **You** are an idiot. = *You-centered self-talk*
- b. **I** am an idiot. = *I-centered self-talk*

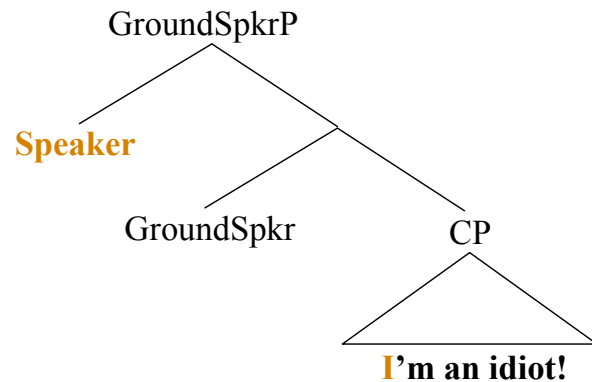
But...

there are different
constraints on the 2
types of self-talk

2 types of self-talk: a structural difference

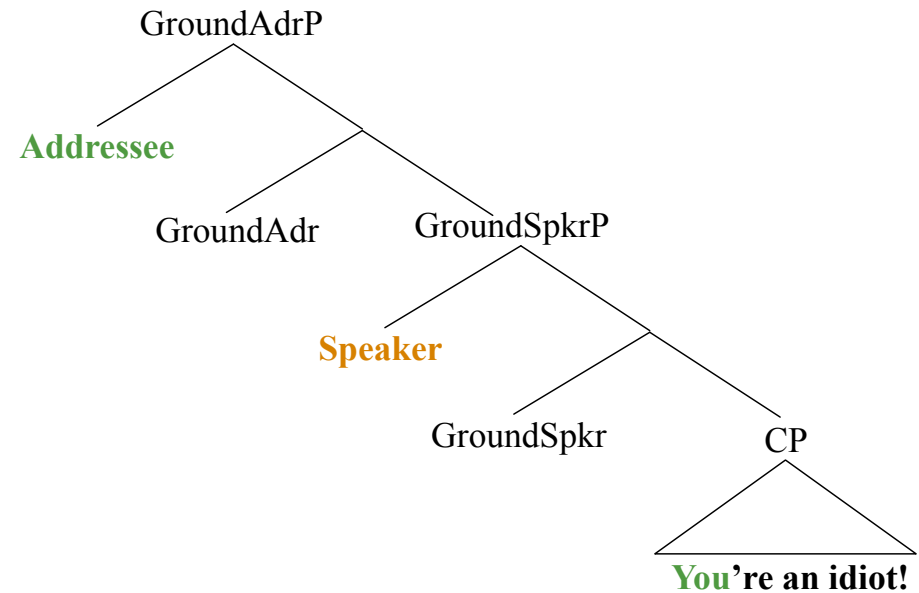
I-centered self-talk

... is thinking out loud
... there is only a **speaker**



You-centered self-talk

... is a conversation with oneself
... self is both **speaker** and **addressee**



2 types of self-talk: empirical differences

	<i>I</i> -centered self-talk	<i>You</i> -centered self-talk
Vocatives		
Imperatives		
Confirmational		
V's of cognition		

But...

there are different constraints on the 2 types of self-talk

Difference #1: Vocatives

Vocatives cannot occur in I-centered self-talk



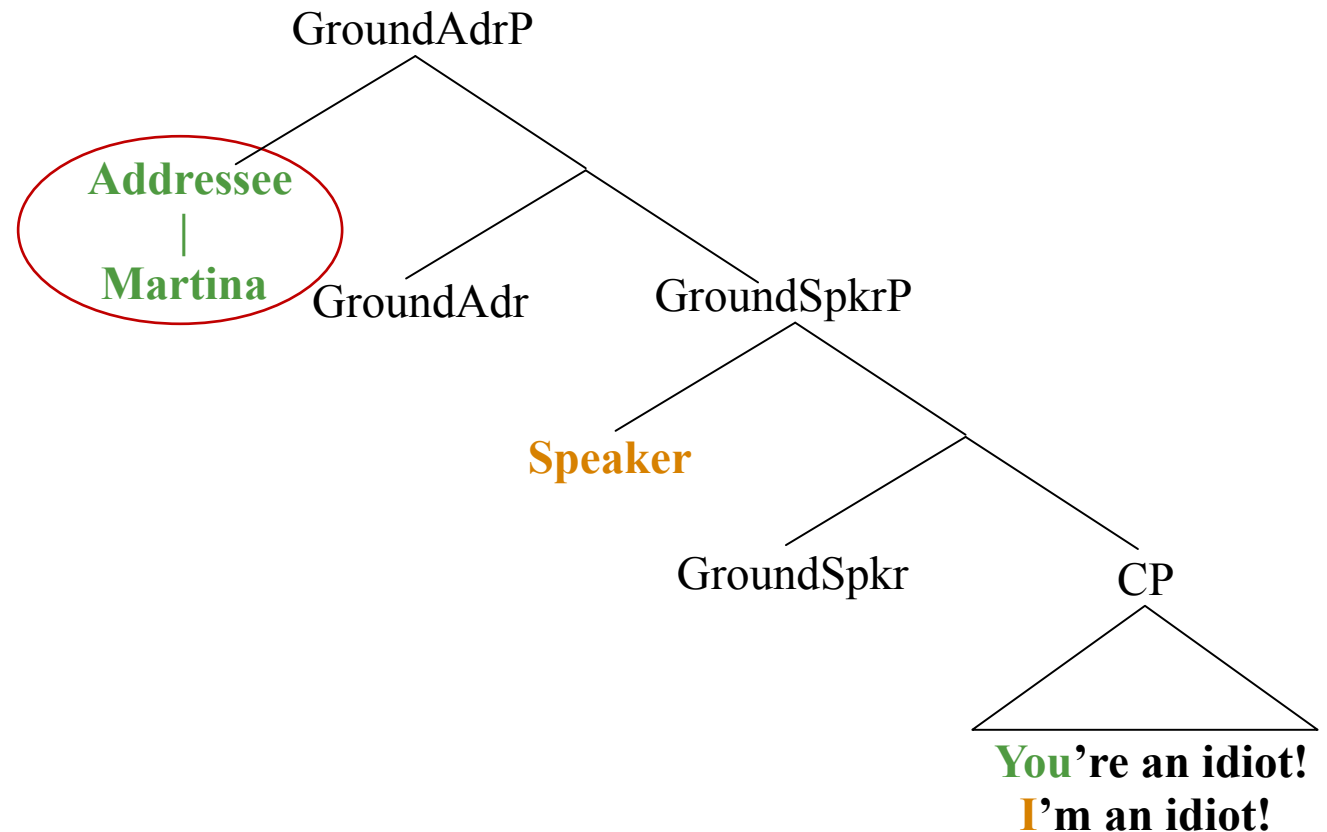
- (1) a. **Martina, you** are an idiot.
b. **Martina, I** am an idiot.



- (2) a. **Martina, you** are an idiot.
b. * **Martina, I** am an idiot.

Background: The syntax of vocatives (R&W 2020)

Vocatives occupy
Spec of $\text{Ground}_{\text{Adr}}\text{P}$

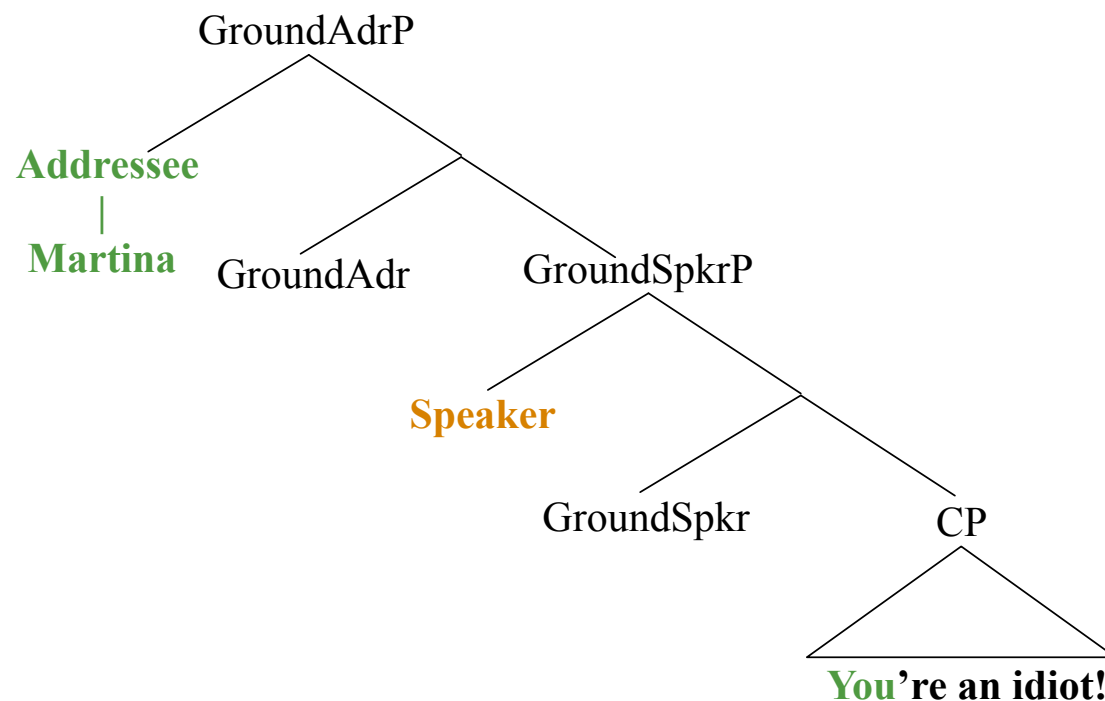
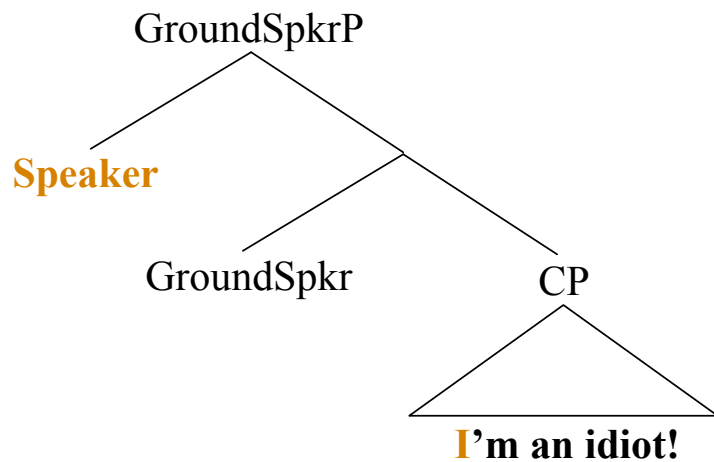


Difference #1: Vocatives

Vocatives cannot occur in I-centered self-talk



Martina



Difference #2: Imperatives

Imperatives cannot occur in I-centered self-talk



- (1) a. Stop putting **yourself** down!
- b. Stop putting **me** down!

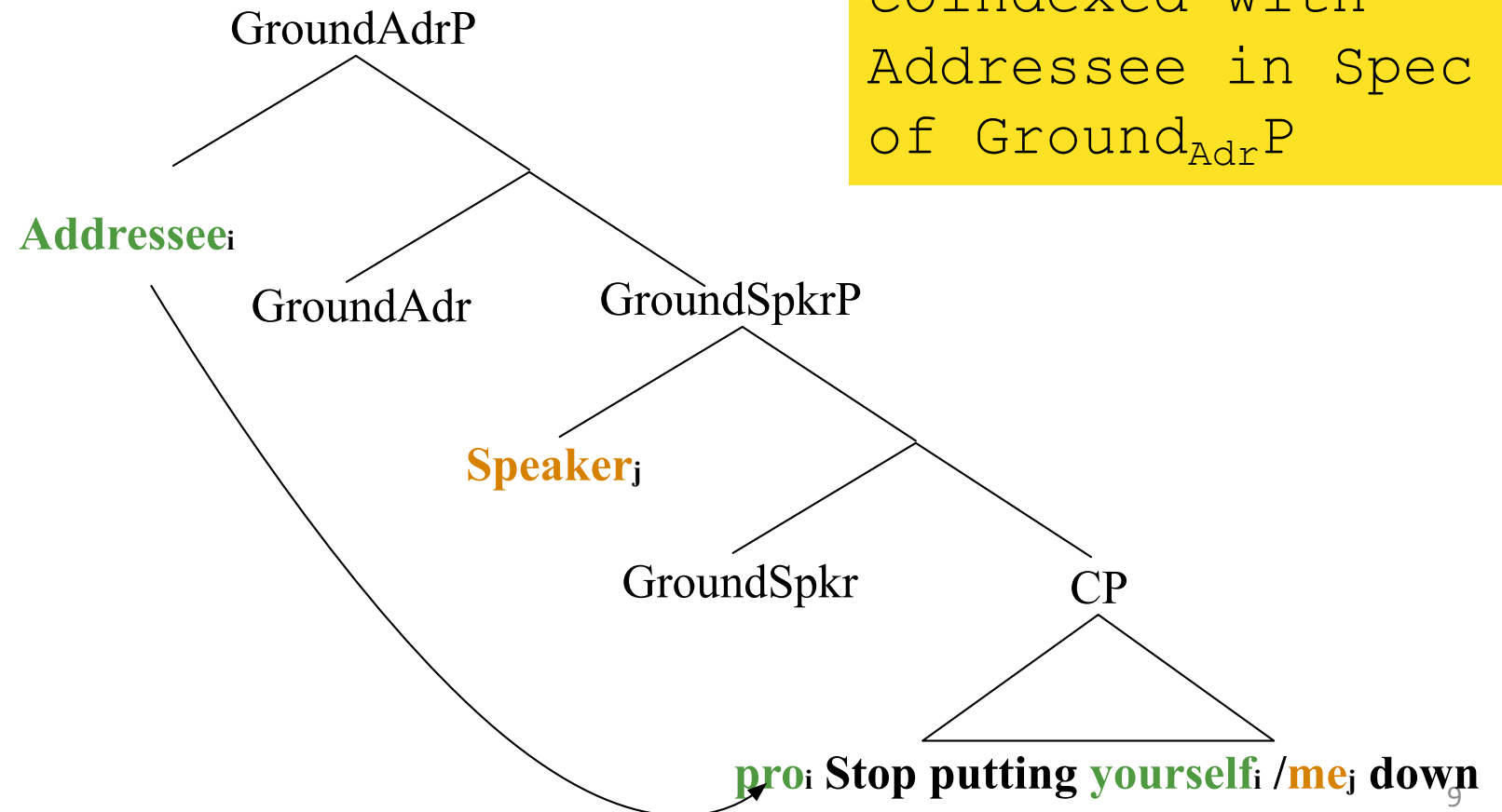


- (2) a. Stop putting **yourself** down!
- b. * Stop putting **me** down!



Background: The syntax of imperatives (Ritter 2018)

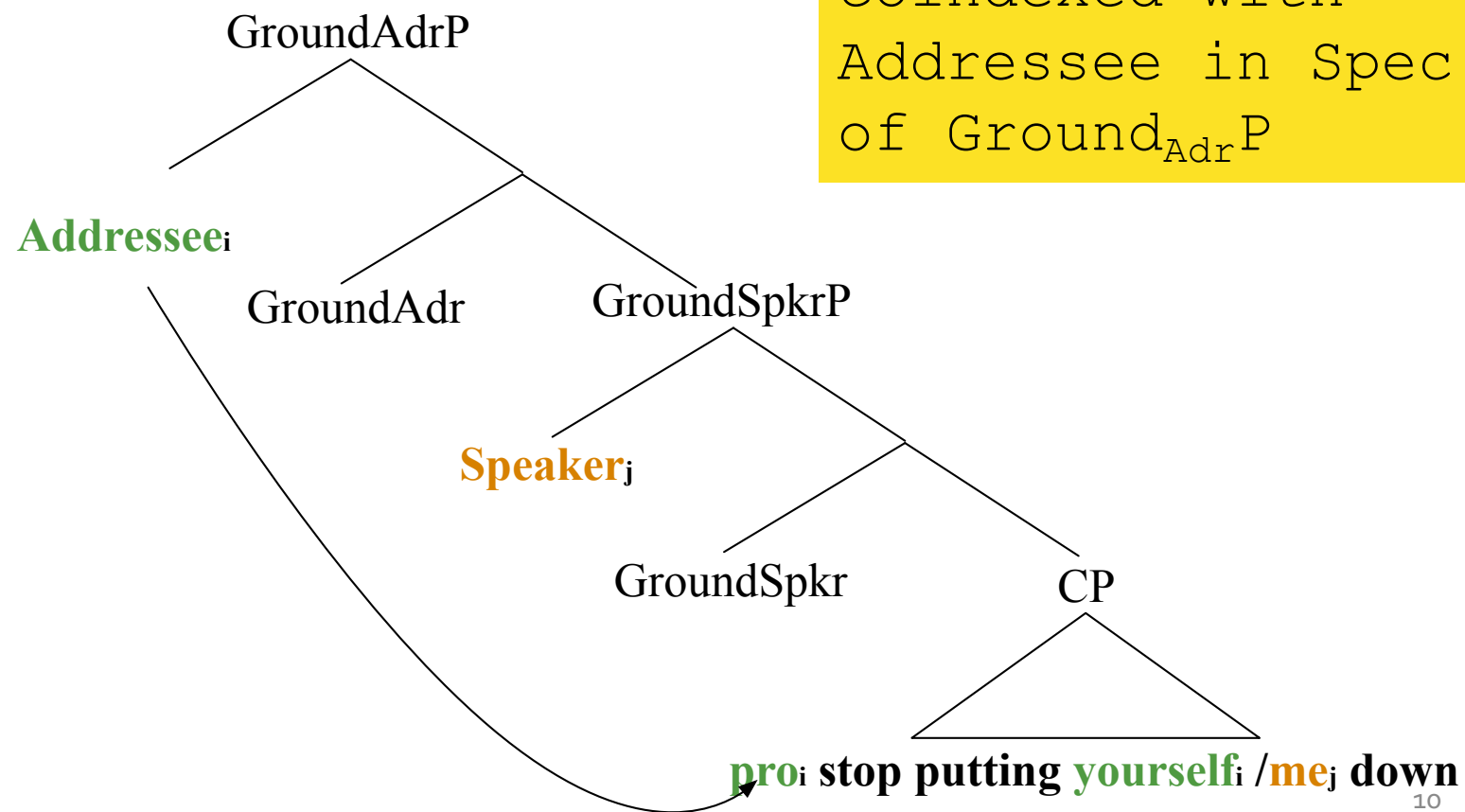
Null subjects of imperatives must be coindexed with Addressee in Spec of $\text{Ground}_{\text{Adr}}\text{P}$



Difference #2: Imperatives

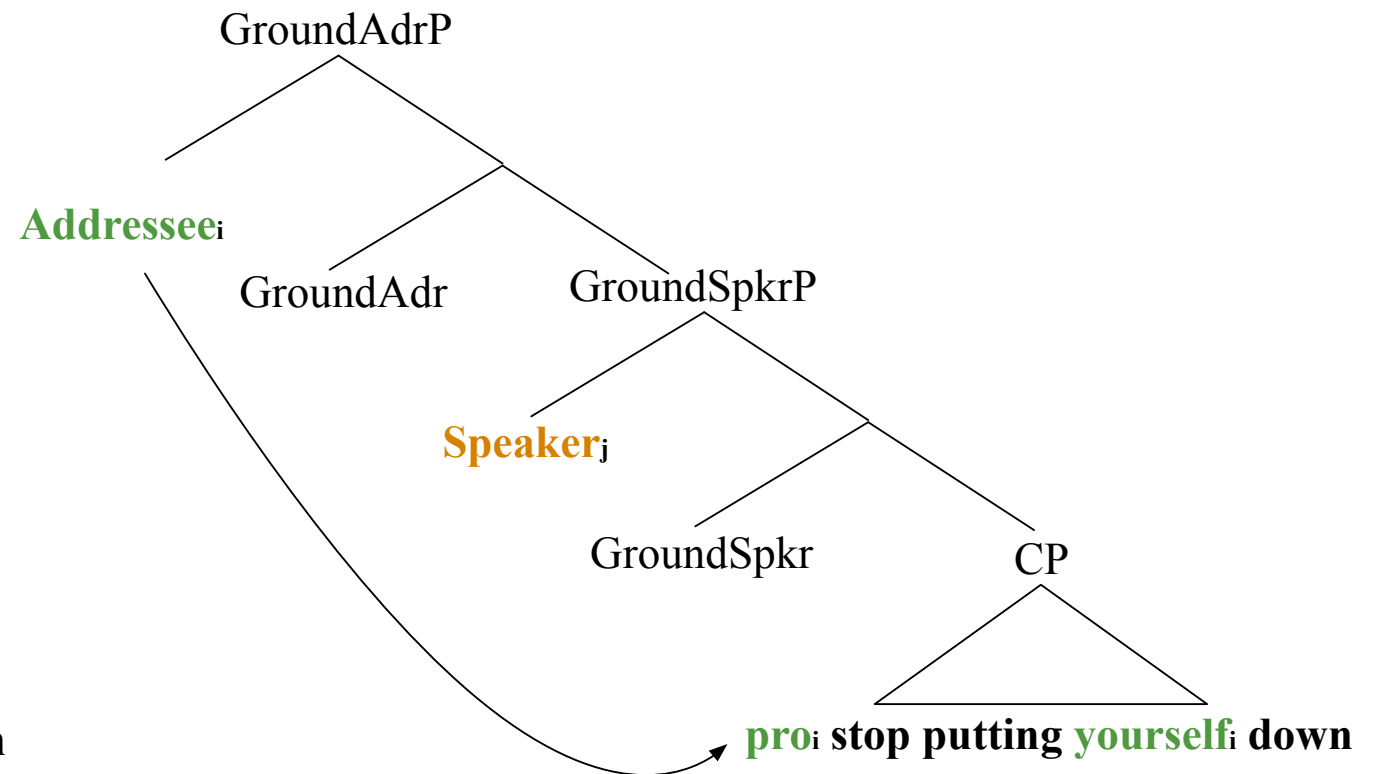
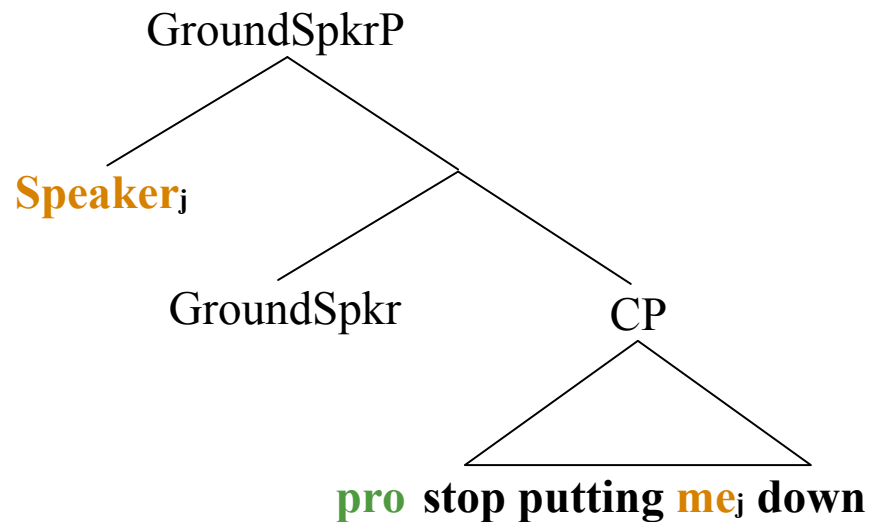


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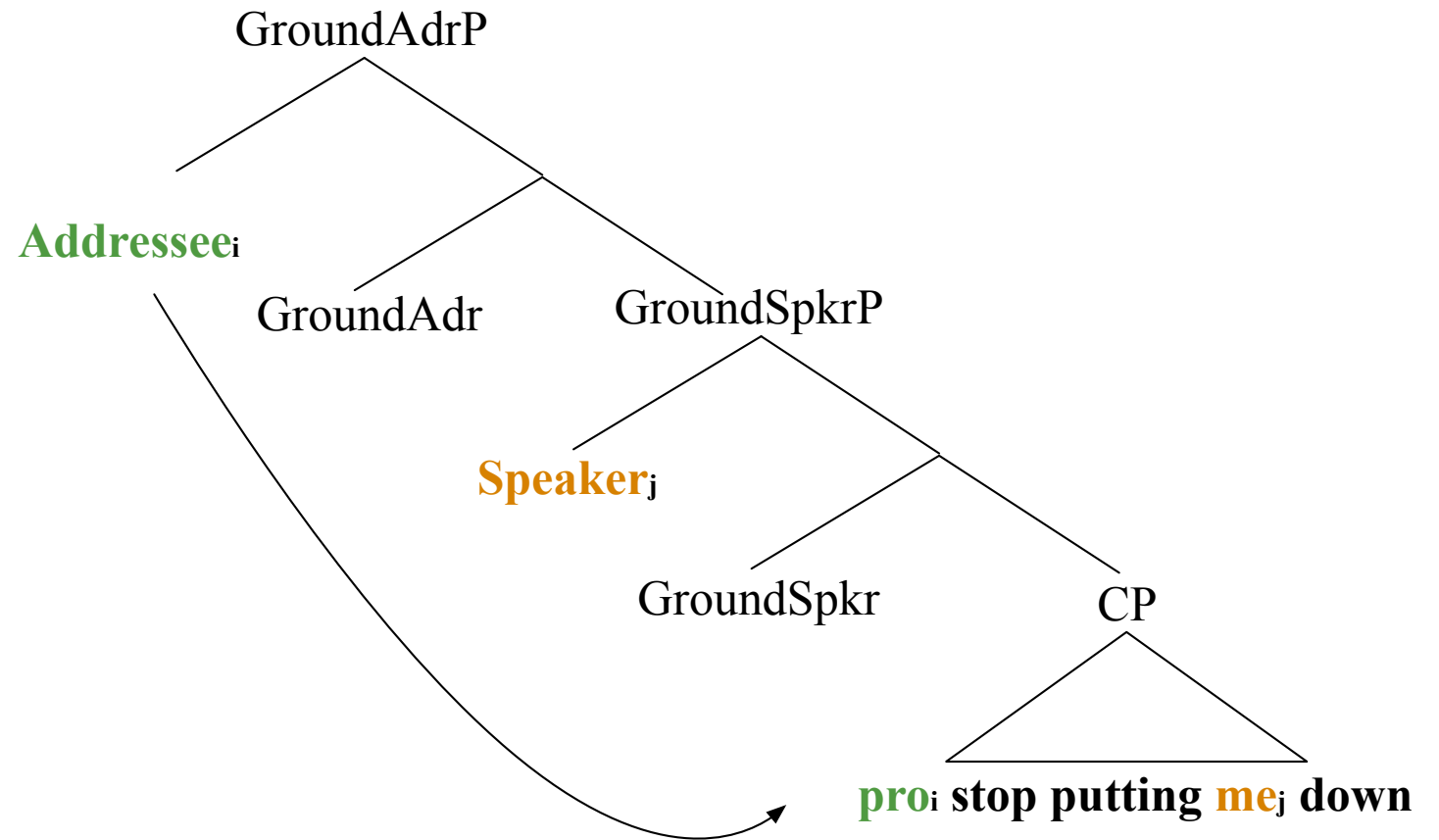


Difference #2: Imperatives

Imperatives cannot occur in I-centered self-talk



Difference #2: Imperatives



Difference #3: ADR-oriented Confirmationalals

ADR-oriented confirmationalals cannot occur in I-centered self-talk

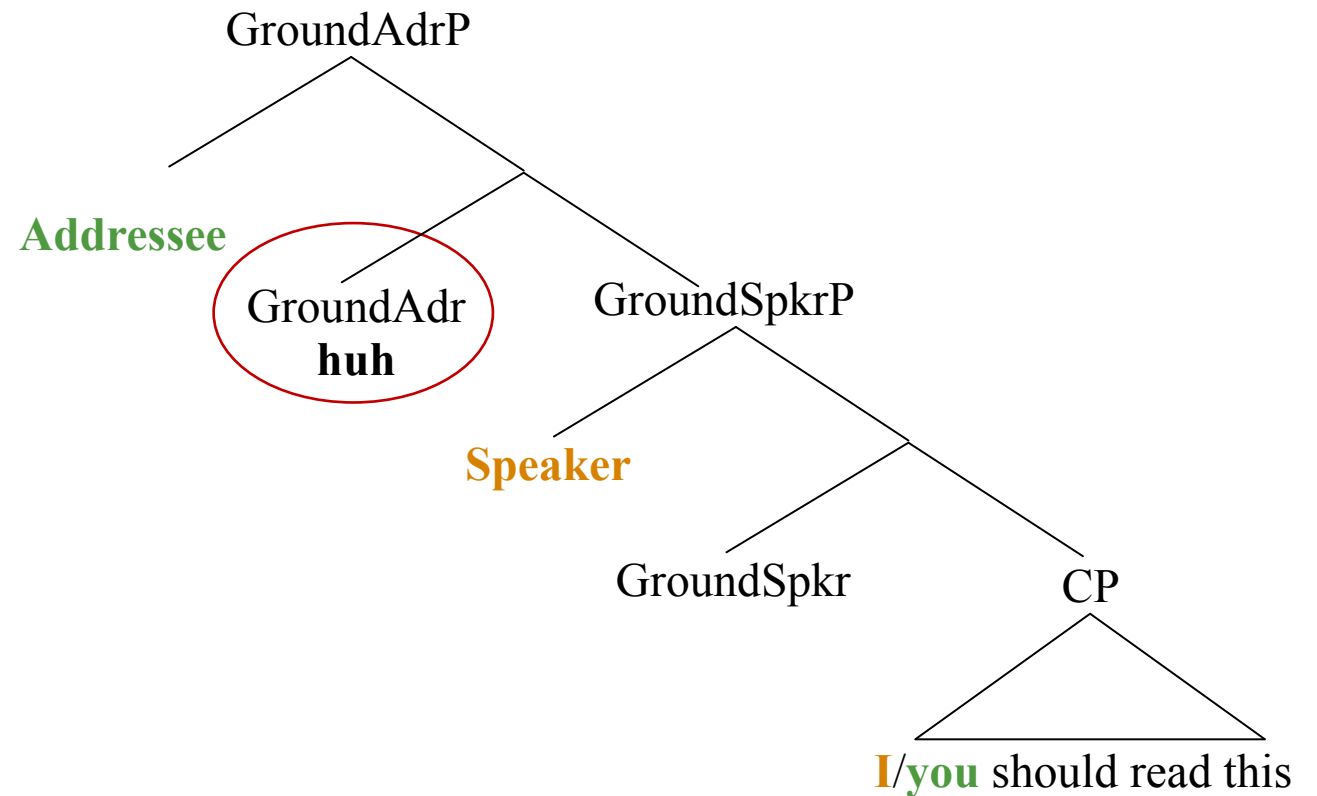


- (1) a. **You** should read this, **huh?**
b. **I** should read this, **huh?**



- (2) a. **You** should read this, **huh?**
b. ***I** should read this, **huh?**

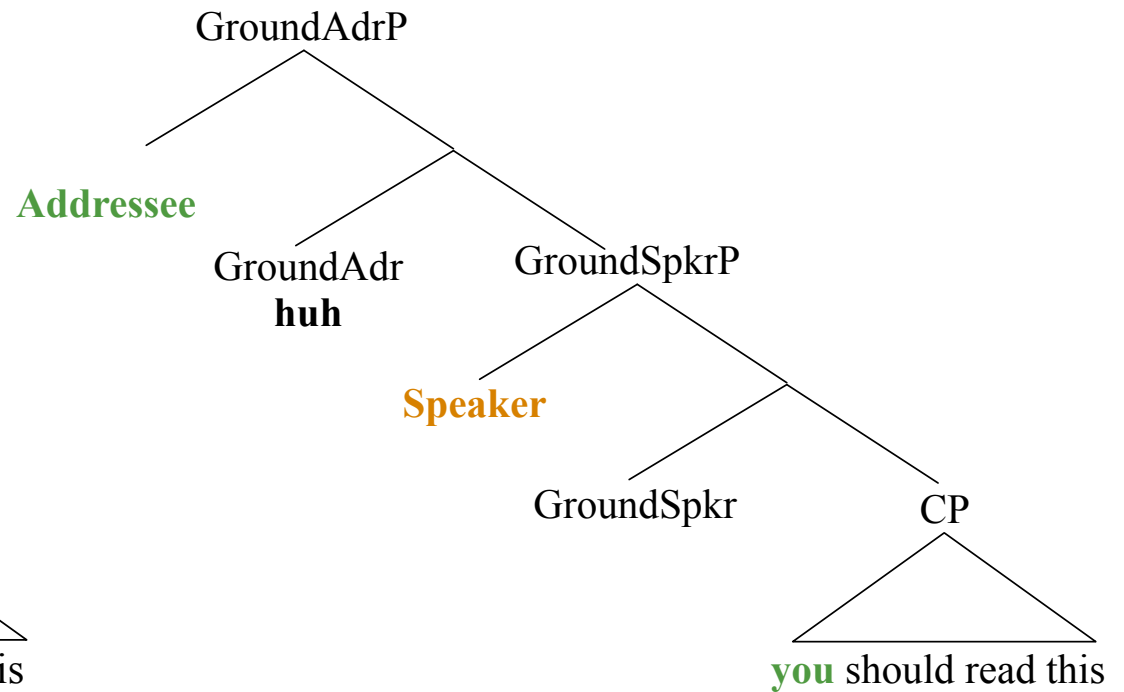
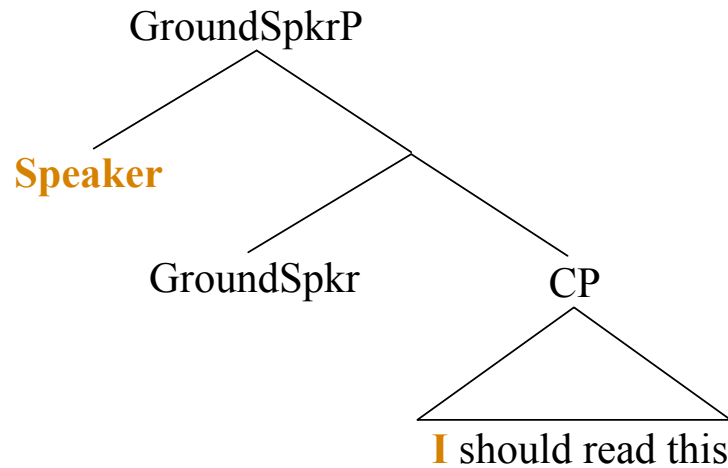
Background: The syntax of confirmationalals (Heim & Wiltschko 2016)



Difference #3: Confirmationalals



huh



Are there restrictions on
you centered self-talk?

Summary

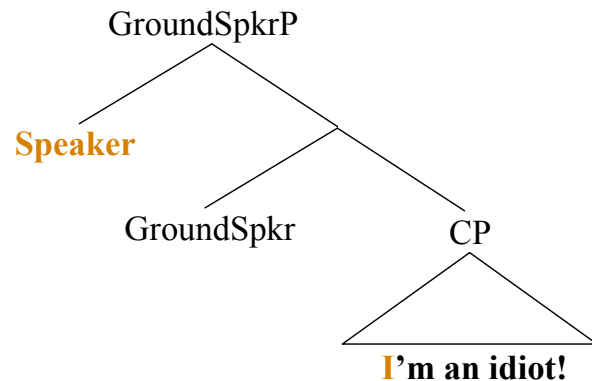
Restrictions on *I*-centered self-talk are structurally conditioned:

Differences	<i>I</i> -centered self-talk	<i>you</i> -centered self-talk
Vocatives	X	✓
Imperatives	X	✓
Confirmational	X	✓

Summary

I-centered self-talk

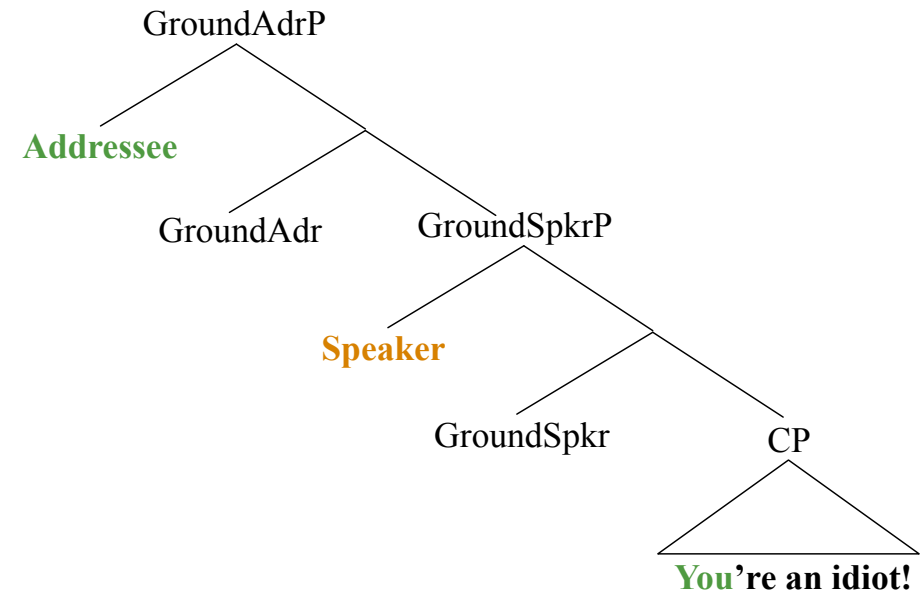
... is thinking out loud
... there is only a **speaker**



Prediction: Any restrictions on you-centered self-talk are restrictions on conversations

You-centered self-talk

... is a conversation with oneself
... self is both **speaker** and **addressee**



Vs of cognition
cannot occur in
you-centered
self-talk

Difference #4: Vs of cognition



- (1) a. * **You** can't **believe your** luck.
b. **I** can't **believe my** luck.

(Holmberg 2010: 59)

Difference #4: Vs of cognition

Prediction: Any restrictions on you-centered self-talk are restrictions on conversations



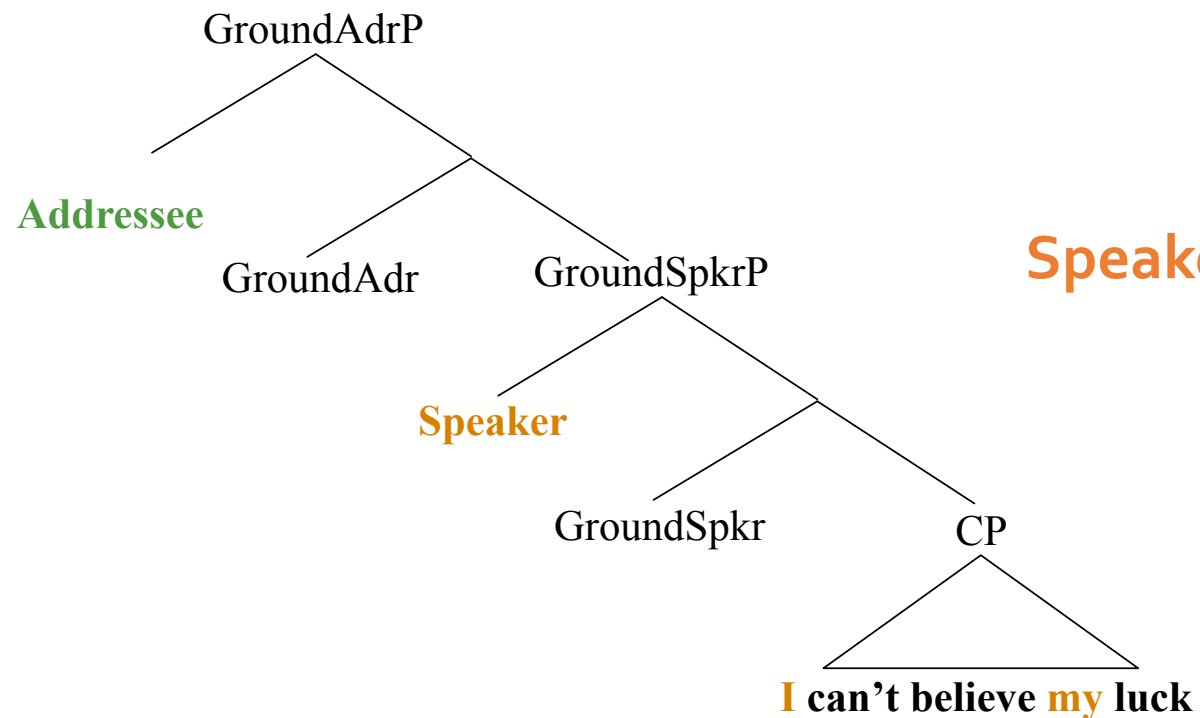
- (1) a. * **You** can't believe **your** luck.
b. **I** can't believe **my** luck.



- (2) a. * **You** can't believe **your** luck.
b. **I** can't believe **my** luck.

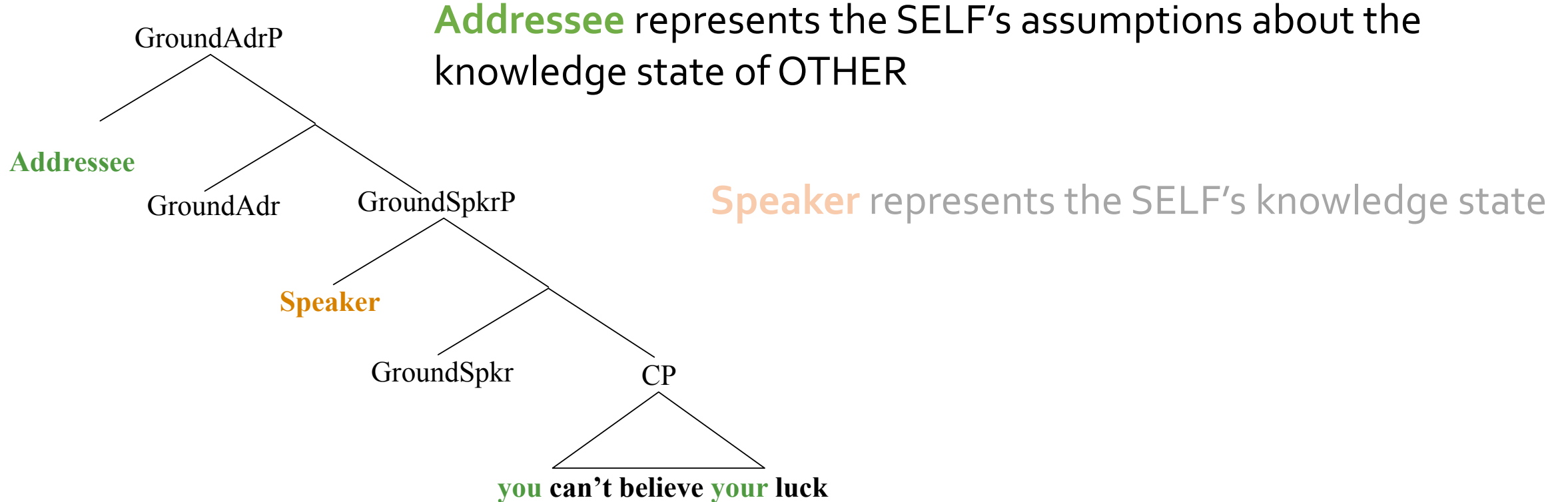
Explanation: Speaker cannot make assertions about Addressee's propositional attitudes

Interpreting Speaker and Addressee



Speaker represents the SELF's knowledge state

Interpreting Speaker and Addressee



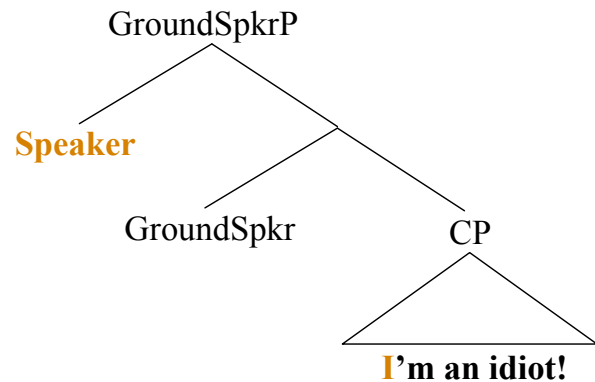
Summary

Differences	<i>I</i> -centered self-talk	<i>You</i> -centered self-talk	Analysis
Vocatives	X	✓	Structural Differences
Imperatives	X	✓	
Confirmationals	X	✓	
V's of cognition	✓	X	Constraint on interpretation

Conclusion

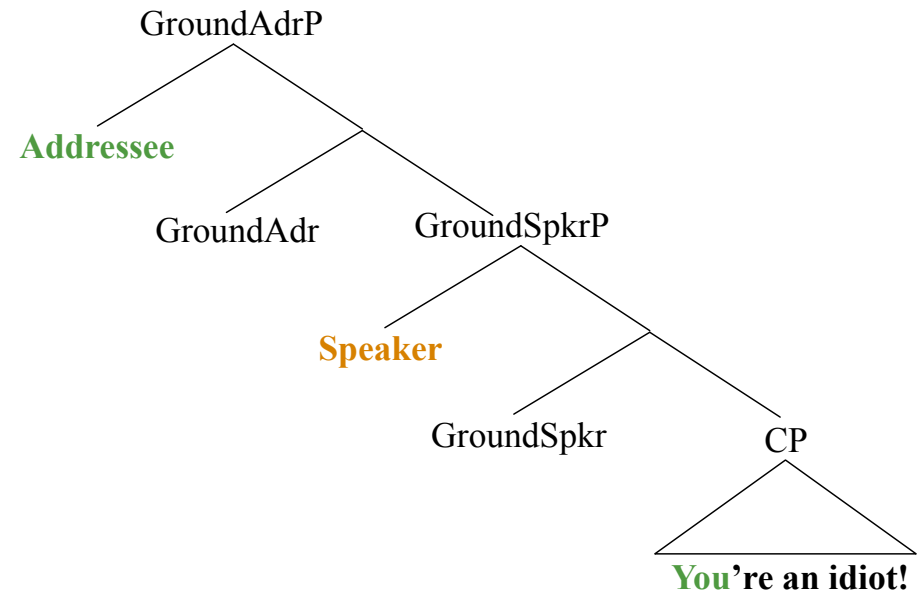
/-centered self-talk

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You-centered self-talk

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... self is both **speaker** and **addressee**



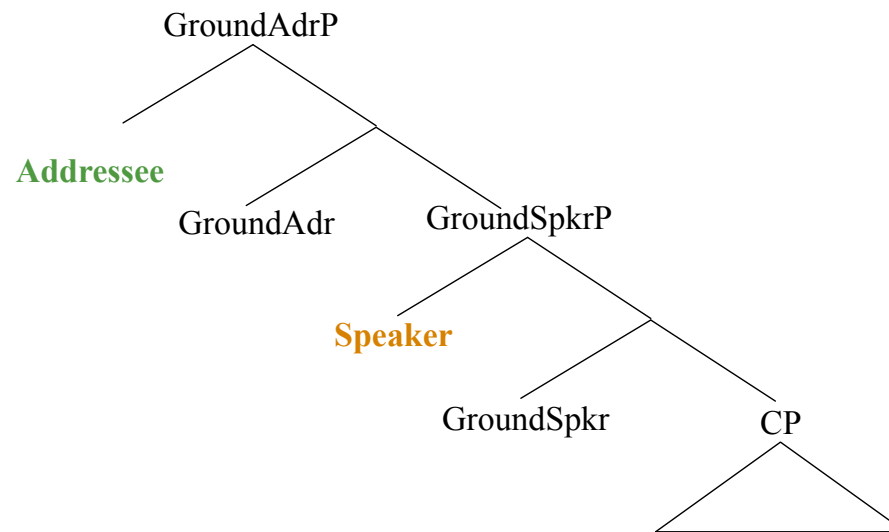
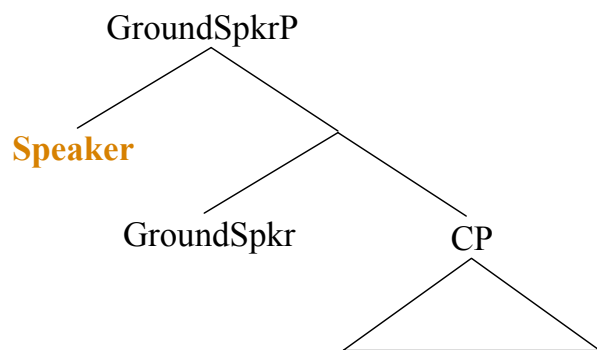
Theoretical Consequence

Speaker and Addressee are conceptually (and hence grammatically) different

- **Speaker** represents the **speaker's** mental state
- **Addressee** **does not** represent the **Addressee's** mental state
- But rather **Addressee** represents the **speaker's** assumptions about the **addressee's** mental state

Methodological consequence

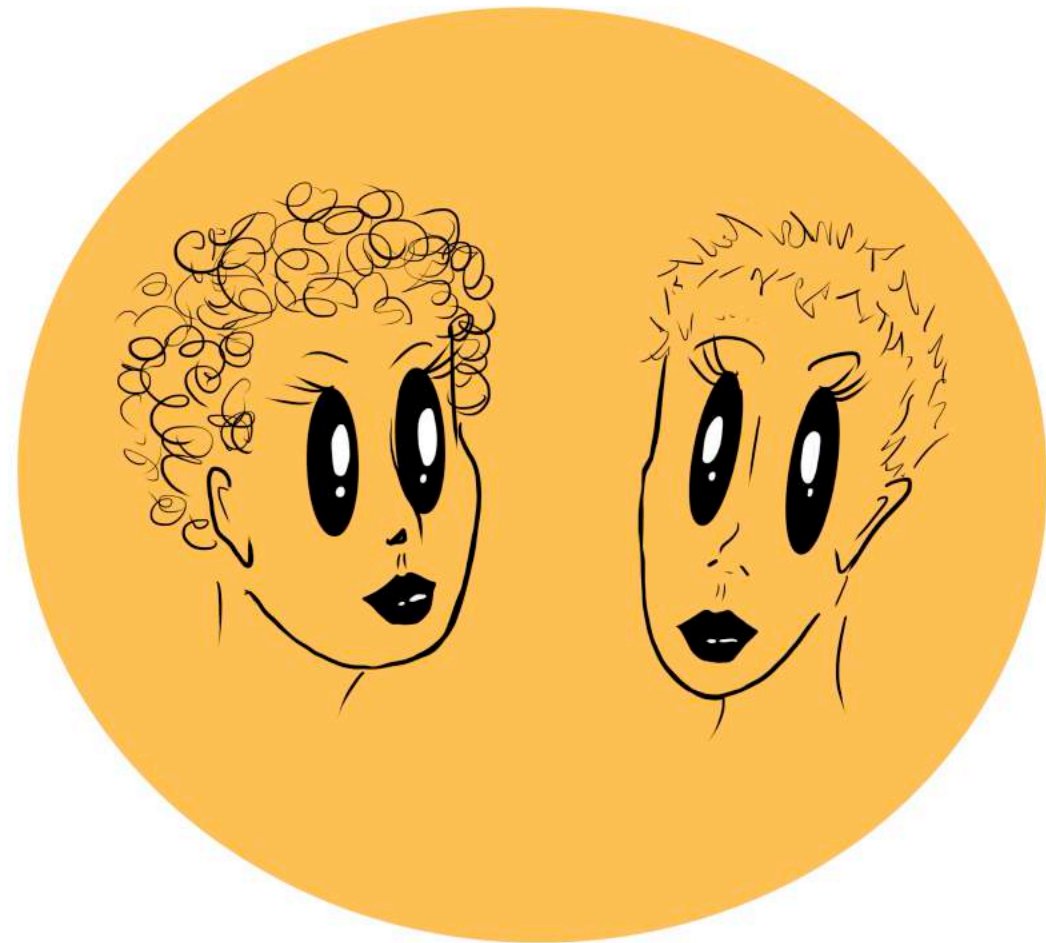
- Content that is associated with $\text{Ground}_{\text{Adr}}\text{P}$ is ruled out in *I-centered self-talk*
→ *I-centered self-talk* vs. *you-centered self-talk* is a novel diagnostic
to test if interactional content is associated with $\text{Ground}_{\text{Adr}}\text{P}$ or $\text{Ground}_{\text{Spkr}}\text{P}$



you
Thank ~~me~~!

Funding: SSHRC

Images: Quinn Goddard



You is not a mindless self

Vs of cognition
cannot occur in
you-centered
self-talk

- (1) Context: Martina is talking to herself.
- a. * **You** can't **believe your** luck.
 - b. **I** can't **believe my** luck.

(Holmberg 2010: 59)

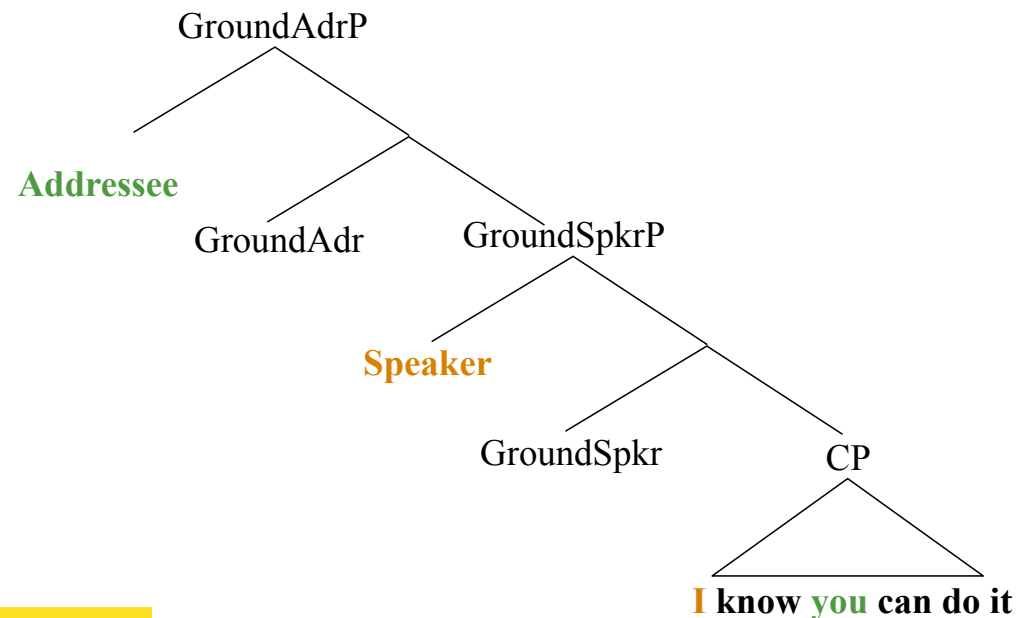
“you can't refer to the self as holder of thoughts or beliefs, in self-talk...
[because it is] ~~a mindless self~~”

(Holmberg 2010: 60)

... because it is a representation of self whose **mind is inaccessible**

You-centered self-talk can talk about *me*

- (1) a. I know you can do it
b. ***You** know I can do it
- (2) a. You're driving **me** mad.
b. * I'm driving **you** mad.



When self-talk contains *you* and *me*, it is *you*-centered self-talk, subject to the same constraint on accessibility

Syntacticizing interaction

From Ross to Wiltschko

Evidence for syntactic representation of Speaker & Addressee

- Allocutive agreement = Agreement with ADR (e.g., in Jingpo)
 - a. hkying gade htu s-a'-tâ?
time how.many point COS-**3**SG.GOAL₁-WH
'What time is it?'
 - b. hkying gade htu s-e-tâ?
time how.many point COS-**2**SG.GOAL₁-WH
'What time is it?' (singular addressee)
 - c. hkying gade htu me-s-in-tâ?
time how.many point **PL**-COS-**2**.GOAL₁-WH
'What time is it?' (plural addressee)

Zu 2013: 6-8

Evidence for syntactic representation of Speaker & Addressee

- Speaker agreement (e.g., in Jingpo)
 - a. jongma du hkumma-s-ai
student arrive complete PL-PERF-3.DECL
'The students have all arrived.'
 - b. jongma du hkumsa-ga-ai
student arrive complete PERF-1PL-DECL
'The students have all arrived.'

Dai 2010 as cited in Zu 2015: 152 (2)

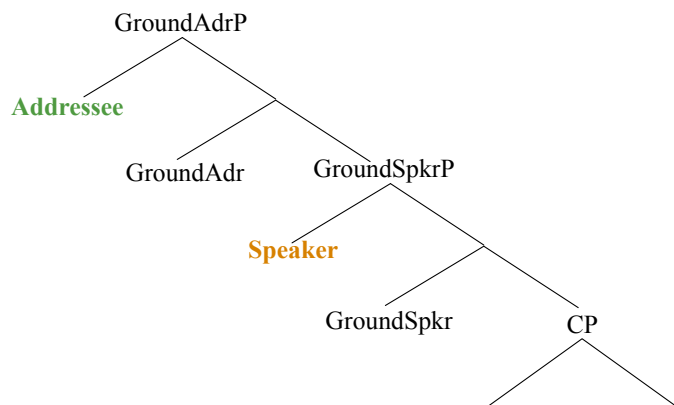
Evidence for syntactic representation of Speaker & Addressee

- Agreement is a reflex of a syntactic operation of AGREE between 2 syntactic positions
- Therefore agreement with speaker and addressee is evidence that speaker and addressee occupy positions in the syntax

Self as Addressee vs. Other as Addressee

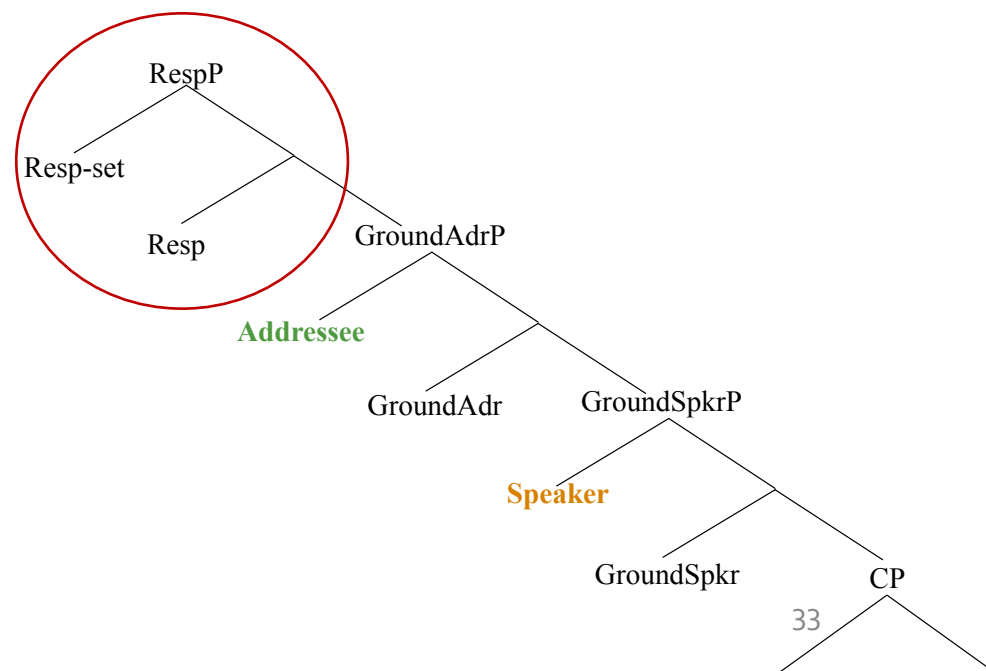
You-centered self-talk

- ... Addressee is audience
- ... speaker does not call on Adr for response
- ... structural correlate: no RespP



other-oriented talk

- ... Addressee is active interlocutor
- ... speaker may call on Adr for response
- ... structural correlate: RespP

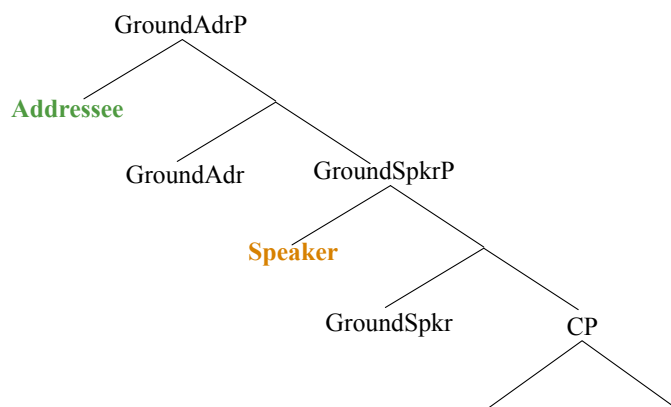


Self as Addressee vs. Other as Addressee

... in English, call on Addressee is realized as rising intonation in Resp (Heim & Wiltschko 2016)

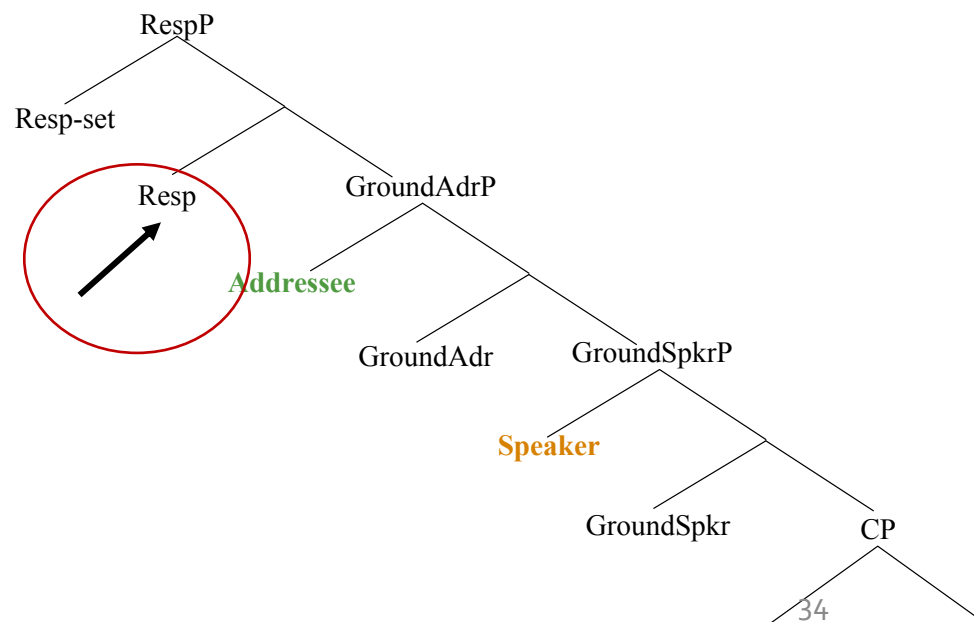
You-centered self-talk

... no rising intonation



other-oriented talk

... rising intonation possible



Self as Addressee vs. Other as Addressee

You-centered self-talk

... no rising intonation

- (1) What are you doing? ↘
- (2). *What are you doing? ↗

other-oriented talk

... rising intonation possible

- (3) What are you doing? ↘
- (4) What are you doing? ↗

Prediction about tags in English

		I-centered self talk	You centered self-talk	Other-oriented talk
S-oriented tag	S-oriented narrative <i>eh</i>	✓	✓	✓
	S-oriented confirmational <i>eh</i> ↗	X	X	✓
A-oriented tag	A-oriented narrative <i>eh</i>	X	✓	✓
	A-oriented confirmational <i>eh</i> ↗	X	X	✓

Evaluative vocatives

Vocatives cannot occur in I-centered self-talk



- (1) a. **Martina, you** are an idiot.
b. * **Martina, I** am an idiot.

Plain vocative

- (2) a. **You** stupid idiot! What have **you** done?
b. * **I/me** stupid idiot! What have **I** done?

Evaluative vocative