CALL ME AN AMBULANCE

We will use cross-linguistic evidence to argue that verbs of naming (1) should be syntactically (though not semantically) assimilated to verbs of nomination/transformation (2) and therefore postulated to project a small clause structure. This hypothesis leads to a semantics for proper names that will allow for their compositional analysis in predicate and argument positions.

**Natural class:** That verbs of naming and nomination should be unified is suggested by the fact that the same verbs can act in both roles (3), but the main evidence for our proposal comes from overt Case-marking. In Russian (4), DP₂ can bear Instrumental, which is the standard predicate Case in Russian (Bailyn and Rubin 1991, Bailyn and Citko 1999, Pereltsvaig 2001, etc.); the same effect can be seen in Hungarian (Dative), Arabic (Accusative), etc. In Latin (5) and Modern Greek, the Case-marking on DP₂ of naming and nomination constructions is the same as on DP₁: Accusative with an active verb and Nominative when it is passivized. This Case-doubling is a characteristic property of small clauses (6), not shared by double direct object constructions (7). This, along with the fact that DP₂ is marked as a predicate in Russian (4), Hungarian, Arabic, etc., permits us to rule out the theory that DP₁ and DP₂ are both arguments of the verb.

**The small clause analysis** leads to the assumption that names can function as predicates. This claim is supported by languages and dialects where proper names in argument positions must appear with a definite article, such as some Italian and German dialects, as well as Modern Greek and Catalan. In these languages, this definite article is regularly omitted in vocatives and naming contexts (8). That the constraint is not due to some syntactic ban on definite DPs in that position is shown by the fact that when modified, proper names necessitate the definite article in naming contexts (cf. (12)). We assimilate this to the known fact that definite NP predicates can be bare (2) if the NP predicate can inherently be true of one individual only (Stowell 1989, Levin 1993).

**Semantics:** The suggested syntactic structure of verbs of naming has far-reaching consequences for the semantic analysis of proper names. What is the meaning of proper names in predicate positions and how is it related to their meaning in argument positions, with its well-known property of rigidity of reference (Kripke 1977, 1980)? To resolve this problem, we will propose that proper names are specified for an additional argument slot, that of the naming relation holding between the subject and the predicate of a naming small clause (9), and that this relation is supplied by the verb stem in naming constructions, assuming predicate decomposition along the lines of Distributed Morphology. In argument positions, this slot is usually saturated by the contextually specified indexical of the naming convention in force between the speaker and the hearer, along the lines suggested by Recanati (1997) and Pelcsar and Rainsbury (1998), among others. As a result, names in argument positions are analyzed as definite descriptions (10) that are indexicals due to their compositional semantics, with the definite article in languages that require it before proper names no longer having to be analyzed as semantically vacuous. The lack of a definite article with proper names in most European languages can then be treated as an instance of definite article drop (cf. Smith 1997, Borthen 2003, etc.).

**Results:** That names can now be treated as definite descriptions (cf. Frege 1893, Russell 1911, Searle 1958, Barwise and Cooper 1981, Geurts 1997, etc.), as well as indexicals (Recanati 1997, Pelcsar and Rainsbury 1998), allows us to provide a compositional semantics for complex (11) and modified (12) proper names, and to be able to explain why (13a) is a necessary truth, while (13b), whose interpretation, according to the suggested theory, is roughly equivalent to (13c), is not (Donnellan 1972, Kripke 1977, 1980, Kaplan 1989, etc.). It will also allow for an analysis for examples like (14a) on a par with (14b), that is not hampered by the rigidity of proper names. An added benefit is that we gain a better insight into the well-known distinction between “mention” and “use”.

**Alternative syntactic analyses:** On the basis of cross-linguistic data (Finnish, Russian, Dutch, etc.), we will examine and discard the theories that verbs of naming and nomination involve secondary predicates (depictive or resultative), project a control structure, or are ditransitive.
(1) Call/name/christen/baptize me Al.

(2) a. The Senate nominated/elected/declared Caesar consul.
   b. The queen appointed her lover treasurer of the realm.
   c. Anne’s death made George (the) king of England.

(3) a. In 1051 Edward named William his successor/his firstborn William.

(4) a. Pervogo klonirovannogo rebenka nazvali Eva/Eva
   first-Acc cloned-Acc child-Acc called-pl Eve-Instr/Nom
   The first cloned child was called Eve.
   b. Senat izbral Cezar' a konsulom/*konsul nomination
   Senate-Nom chose-M Caesar-Acc consul-Instr/*Nom/*Acc
   The Senate elected Caesar consul.
   c. Cezar byl izbran konsulom/*konsul nomination: passive
   Caesar-Nom was-M chosen -M consul-Instr/*Nom/*Acc
   Caesar was elected consul.

(5) a. suieum regem appellant Latin: verb of naming
   his-pl-Nom him-Acc king-Acc call-3pl
   His subjects call him king.
   b. (ille) rex ab suis appellatur. Latin: SC (passive)
   (he) king-Nom by self’s-pl-Abl call-Pass-3sg
   He is called king by his subjects.

(6) a. Ciceronem clarum habent. Latin: SC
   Cicero-Acc famous-Acc consider/hold
   They consider Cicero famous.
   b. Cicero clarus habetur Latin: SC (passive)
   Cicero-Nom famous-Nom consider/hold-Pass
   Cicero is considered famous.

(7) a. Doceo vos [linguam Latinam] Latin: double direct object
   teach-1sg you-Acc [language Latin]-Acc
   I teach you Latin.
   b. Docemini [linguam Latinam] teach-Pass-2pl [language Latin]-Acc
   You are taught Latin.

(8) a. Ich habe den Karl gesehen. Alemanic German
   I have the-Acc Karl seen.
   I have seen Karl.
   b. Ich habe ihn (*den) Karl genannt
   I have him-Acc the-Acc Karl called
   I called him Karl.

(9) [Alice] = \( \lambda x . R . x \in D \land R . x \) is Alice by virtue of the naming relation R

(10) [der Karl] = the unique individual that is [karl] by virtue of the naming convention in force
     between the speaker and the hearer

(11) Miss Alice Liddell, the famous detective Sherlock Holmes, my friend Hercule Poirot…

(12) a. Gloria Trevi is nicknamed the Madonna of Mexico.
    b. Fiona’s colleagues dubbed her the Lady Macbeth of TV.

(13) a. The person named Alice is named Alice. a logical truth
    b. Alice is named Alice. not a logical truth
    c. The person referred to as Alice according to the naming convention in force between
       the speaker and the hearer is named Alice.

(14) a. William Shakespeare didn’t exist.
    b. The man that we call William Shakespeare didn’t exist.

    b. Name/christen/baptize me *French/*talented/√Red.