

Limitations on concept formation in personal pronouns

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Introduction

Person in Indo-European languages: 3 atoms:
 1st, 2nd, 3rd person.

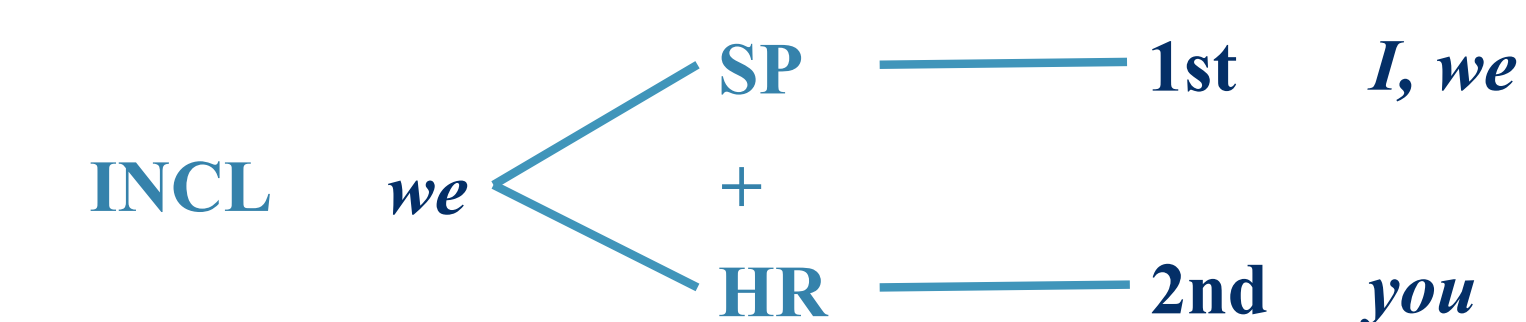
	SG		PL	
1	I	speaker	we	speaker + associates
2	you	hearer	you	hearer + associates
3	he, she, non-participant		they	non-participant + associates

Other languages may add an inclusive pronoun, e.g. Marquesan (Cablitz 2006):

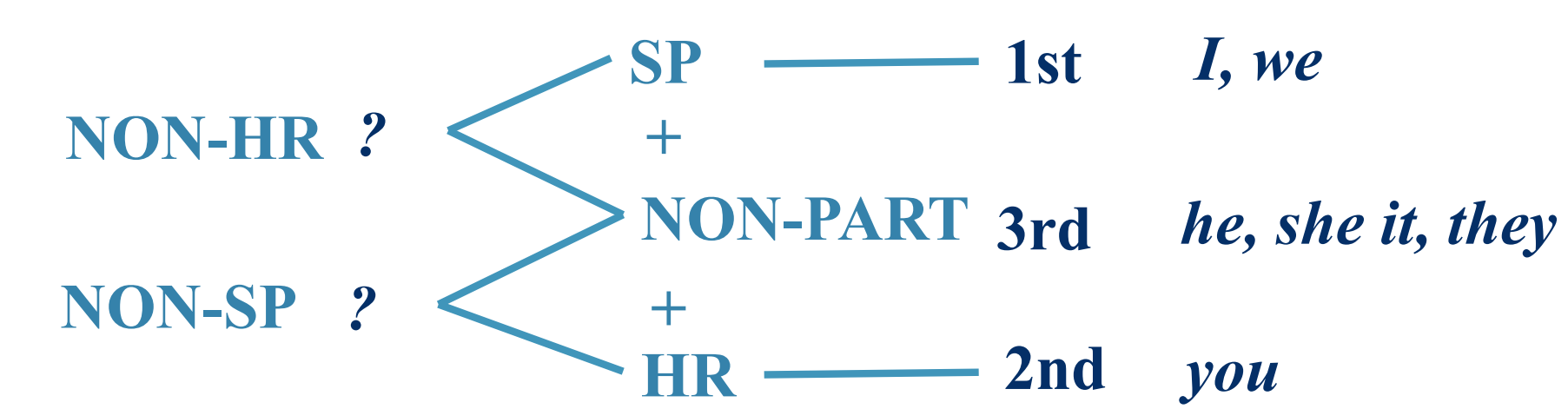
	SG		PL	
INCL			ta-tou	SP + HR (+ ASSOC)
1	au	SP	ma-tou	SP + ASSOC
2	koe	HR	ko-tou	HR + ASSOC
3	ia	NON-PART	a-tou	NON-PART + ASSOC

Questions & Hypotheses

What is the inclusive?



Why is only the combination of speaker and hearer lexicalised (INCL) and the other combinations of the atoms unlexicalised?



➔ Predicted by the Concept Formation Constraint: The kite

Analysis

The inclusive

Morphology:

- 80% of the languages: morphologically independent inclusive, i.e. not related to first or second person (3) (Daniel 2005).
- Otherwise: mostly related to 1st (and sometimes also to 2nd) person (4).

(3) Tümpisa Shoshone (Dayley 1989)

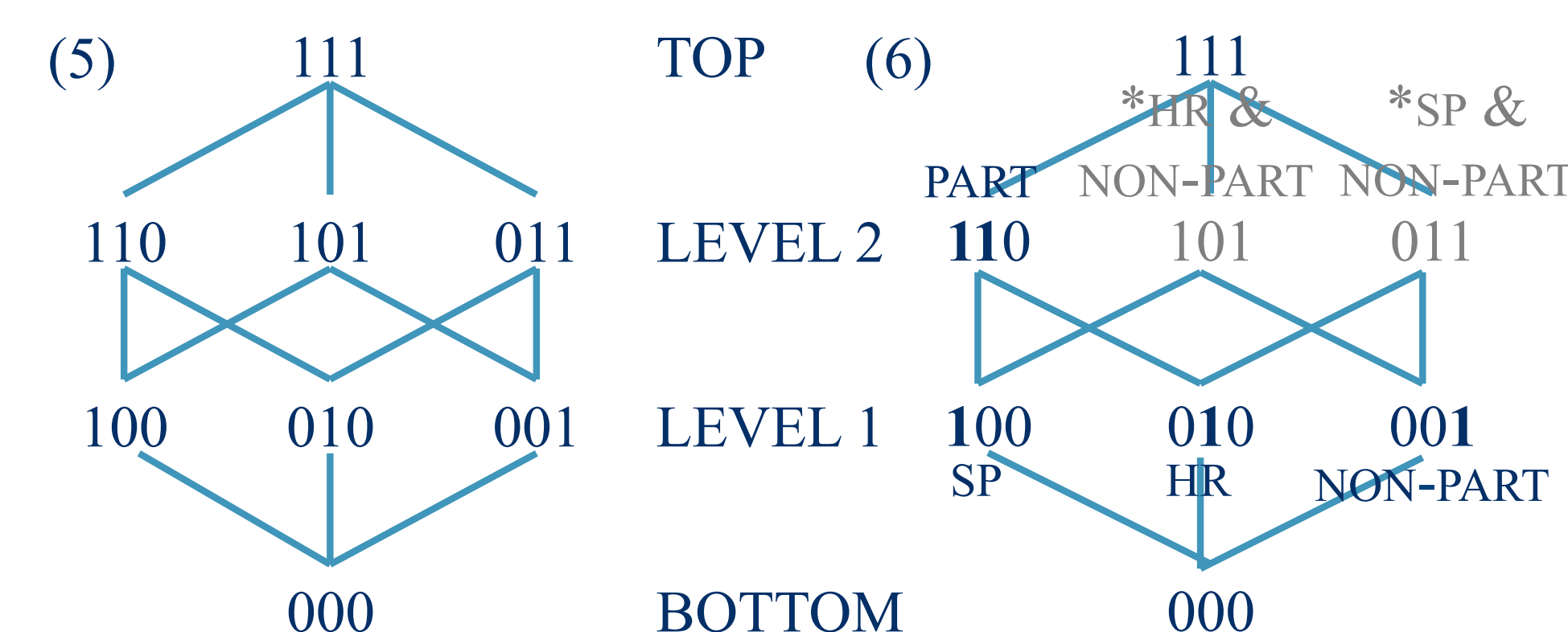
	SG	PL
INCL		ta-mmü
1	nü	nü-mmü
2	ü	mü-mmü
3	(demonstratives)	

(4) Quechua (Adelaar 1977)

	SG	PL
INCL		nuxa-niči(k)
1	nuxa	nuxa-guna
2	xam	xam-guna
3	pay	pay-guna

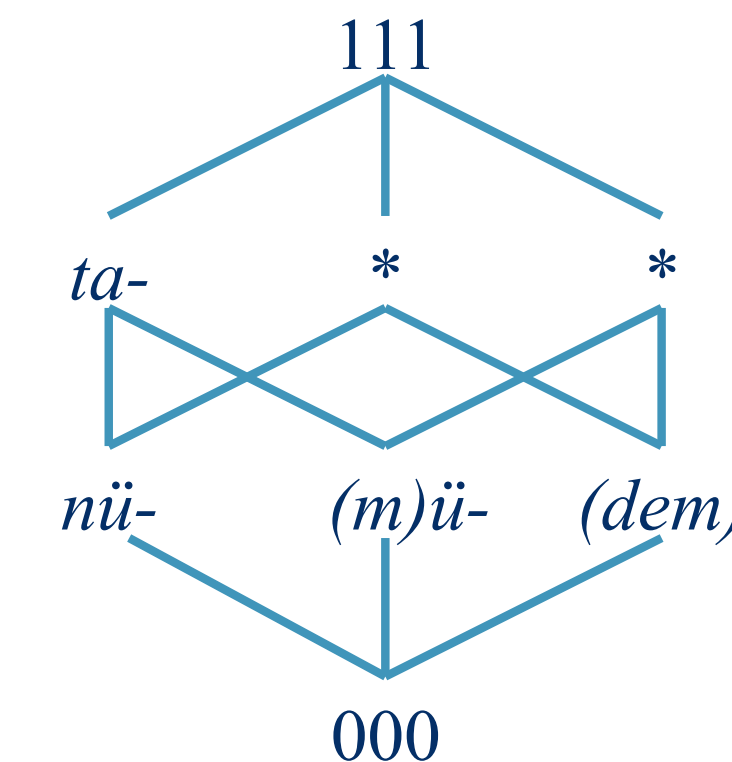
Consider a Hasse diagram (Smessaert 2009, Jaspers 2012):

- with atoms represented by bitstrings (5)
- for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person (6):



The inclusive (Level 2) is semantically made up of the atoms SP and HR (Level 1):

(7) Tümpisa Shoshone



Unlexicalised combinations:

- SP + NON-PART
- HR + NON-PART

➔ Predicted by THE CONCEPT FORMATION CONSTRAINT in the kite framework (Jaspers 2012, Seuren & Jaspers 2014)

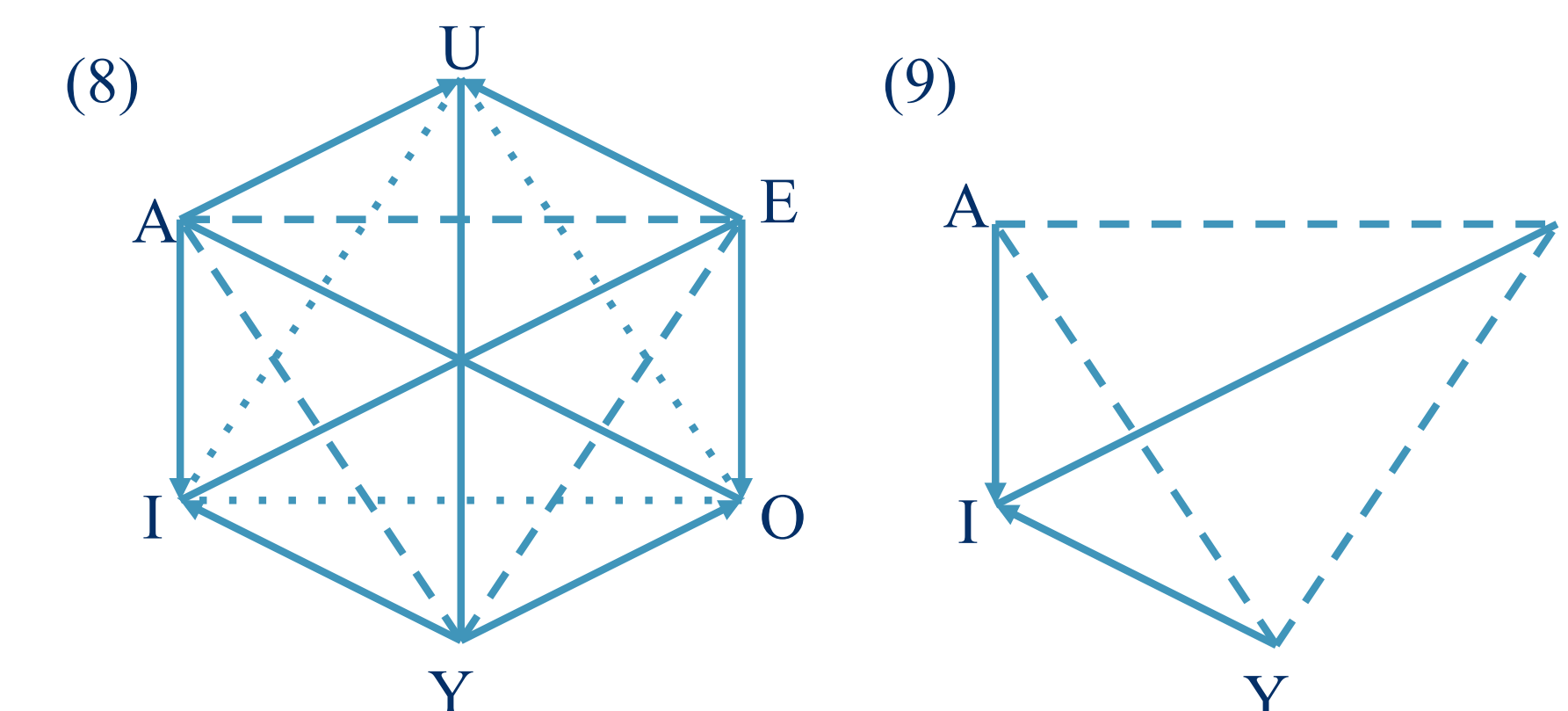
The Kite Framework & CONCEPT FORMATION CONSTRAINT

The kite framework deals with (mereo)logical relations between concepts, represented in the geometrical figures (shown below):

- Entailment and proper parthood (arrows)
- Contradiction (full lines)
- (Sub)contrariety (dotted and dashed lines)

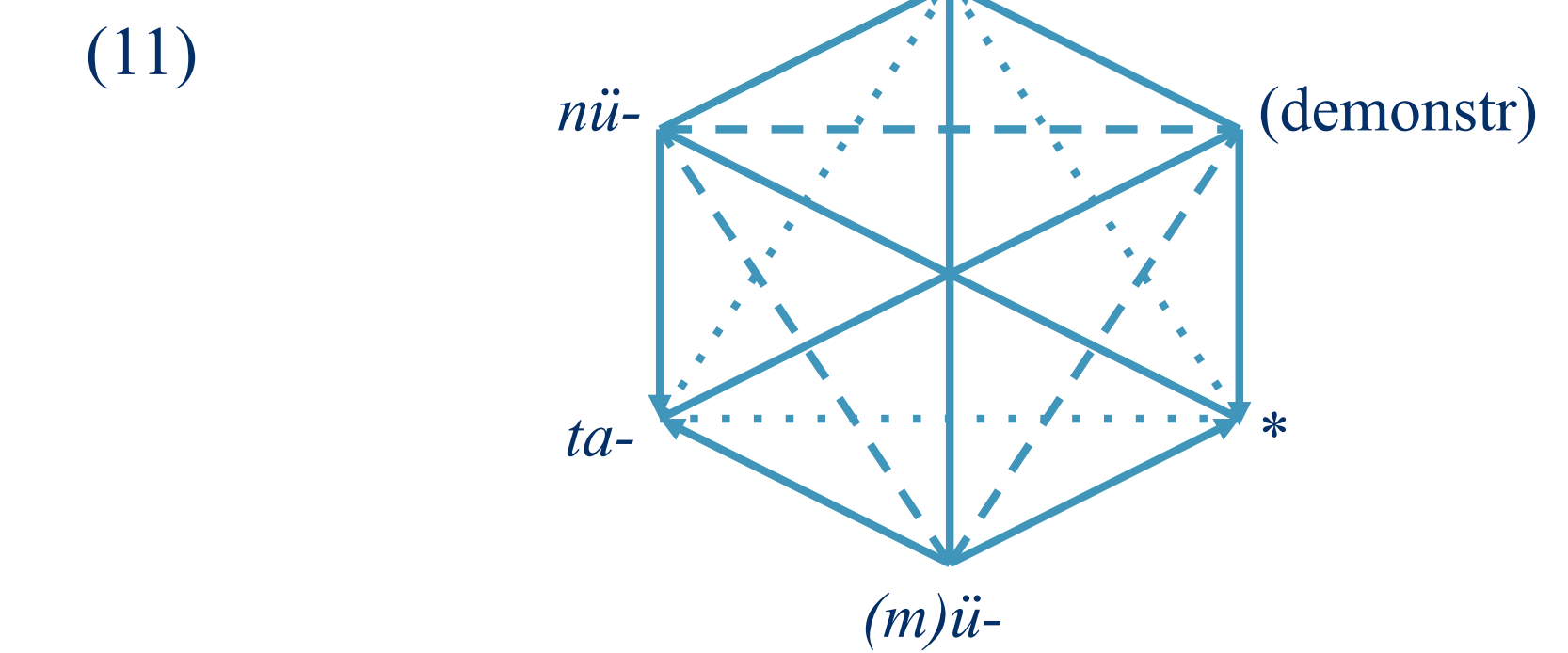
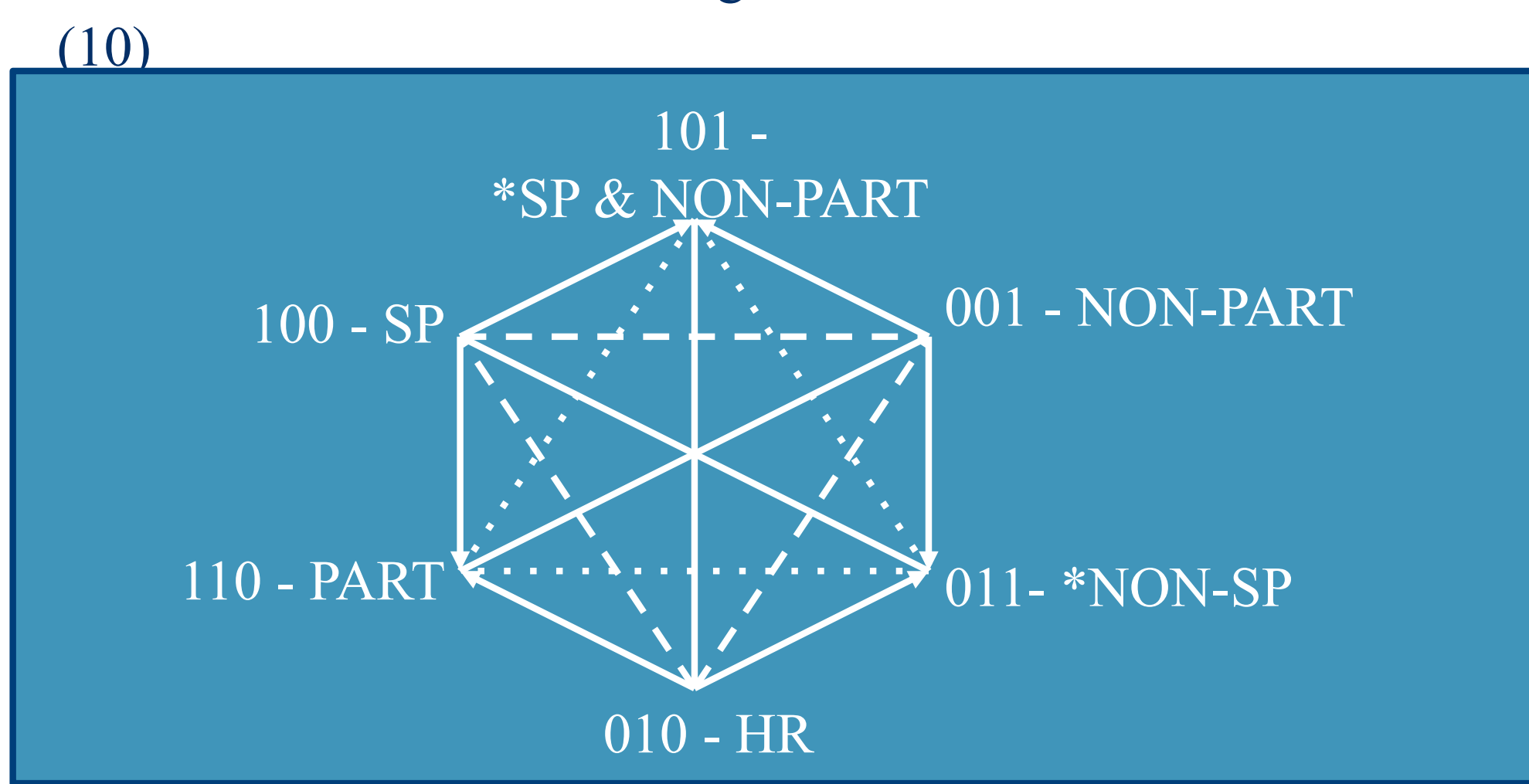
The concept formation constraint posits that:

- O and U in the logical hexagon (8) are never lexicalised
- This results in a kite structure (9).



This has been demonstrated for a.o. the natural logic quantifiers, predicate calculus operators and colour terms (Seuren & Jaspers 2014, Jaspers 2012).

The same applies to person, corresponding exactly to the observations in the Hasse diagram:



Extension: Number

Confusing terminology:

THIRD PERSON	3	other
PLURAL	+3	+others

Person and number:

- Two distinct features
- Belonging to two distinct categories

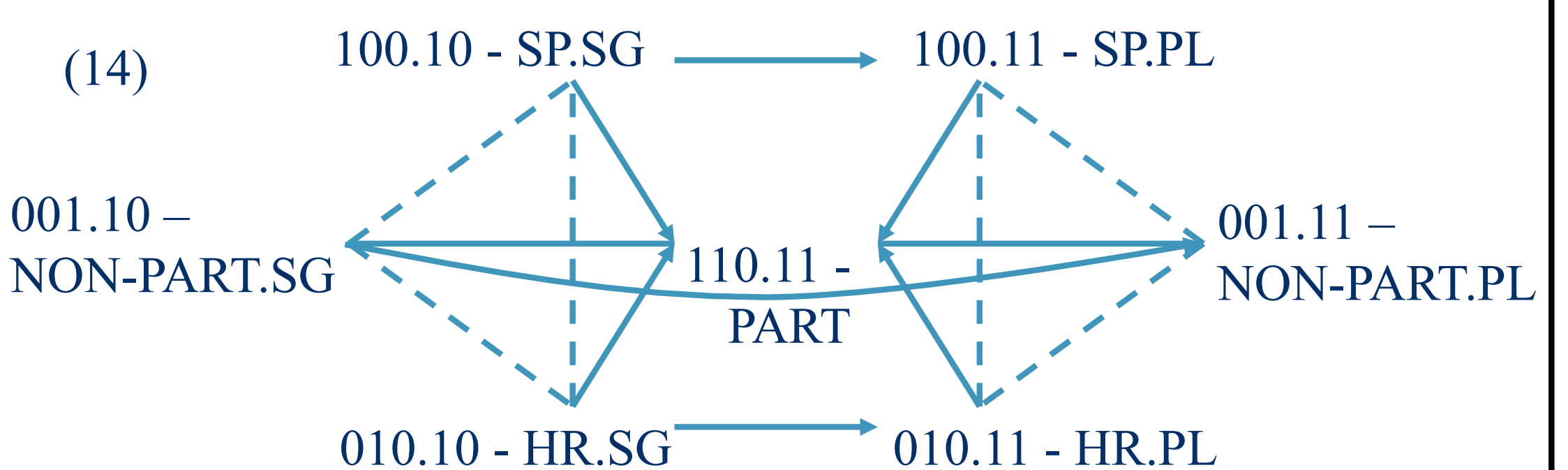
I therefore employ the following terminology:

THIRD PERSON	non-participant
PLURAL	+ associates

This distinction is confirmed by:

- Semantics: person is deictic vs. plural is never defined as such (a.o. Béjar 2003, Corbett 2004).
- Morphology: no languages have the same morpheme for PL and 3rd

For number, I propose the following extension (Sonnaert 2016):



- Bitstrings: to calculate further relations, such as the proper parthood relations between the singular and plural versions of the same person.
- PART: Languages have no simplex lexicalisations for an extra number distinction in inclusive, which is why the PART corner is shared by both kites.

Literature Cited

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Conclusion

A kite analysis of person sheds light on person distinctions in personal pronouns:

- Captures the complexity of the inclusive person.
- Predicts other combinations to be unlexicalisable.

The system can be extended to add number in order to account for the basic personal pronoun distinctions.

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