This book is a substantially revised version of van Hoek’s (1992) Ph.D. dissertation, Paths through conceptual structure: constraints on pronoun anaphora, which has influenced recent work by Langacker (1996, 1997). Van Hoek sets out with the ambitious aim of providing an explanatory account of restrictions on coreference, both within clauses and cross-sententially. Her analysis is formulated within the framework of Cognitive Grammar, and contains a clear introduction to the relevant aspects of the theory (chapter 2). She begins by posing the following questions (3), to which any account of anaphora must provide satisfactory answers if it is to be truly explanatory and comprehensive:

- Why do full noun phrases, pronouns and reflexives exhibit different patterns of distribution, and why are coreference possibilities the way they are?
- Why, despite its limitations, does c-command work as well as it does?
- What relation is there between syntactic coreference constraints and discourse-level coreference (if any, given that generative accounts of anaphora have typically excluded discourse-level coreference)?
- What is the role of ‘point of view’ and linear word order in anaphora?
- Why do grammaticality judgements vary with regard to certain constructions, and why are some grammatically acceptable constructions rare in actual usage?

Van Hoek takes as her starting point the semantic characterisation of nominals developed in Accessibility Theory by Ariel, Givón and others. In Accessibility Theory, different types of referring expressions reflect the relative accessibility of mental representations of their referents in a given context; for example, a pronoun indicates a higher degree of accessibility than a full noun phrase. Van Hoek proposes that unacceptable sentential coreference results when, say, a full noun phrase, indicating low accessibility of (the mental representation of) its referent, is embedded in a context in which the referent is in fact highly accessible (37). In this case, a pronoun would be expected, resulting in “an instance of semantic conflict between a nominal and its immediate context” (47) and hence obligatory non-coreference.

Van Hoek’s initial task, therefore, is to develop a characterisation of the contexts which are relevant for pronominal anaphora; this she does (in chapters 3 and 4) in terms of a model based on conceptual REFERENCE POINTS. A reference point is a nominal which sets up the context within which other elements are interpreted, and is determined primarily on the basis of PROMINENCE and SEMANTIC CONNECTIVITY (with linear word order playing a secondary role). A nominal is likely to be a reference point relative to some other element if it is more salient than that element. This reflects the idea that less salient discourse entities tend to be recovered and located mentally in relation to more salient entities (58). Semantic connectivity and linear word order together determine which entities can be located relative to a given reference point (that is, the extent of a reference point’s DOMINION). For example, the principle of linear word order (that nominals are more likely to be reference points in relation to elements which follow them than in relation to elements which precede them (81)) explains why coreference between the italicised nominals is acceptable in (1a) but not in (1b):

(1) (a) Peter has a lot of talent and he should go far.
(b) *He has a lot of talent and Peter should go far.
The conjoined clauses in (1) exhibit a high degree of semantic connectivity; presumably the lower degree of semantic connectivity in example (2) (not in van Hoek 1997) explains its greater acceptability, despite this example having the same linear word order as (1b):

(2) (?) *He* doesn’t have a lot of talent but *Peter* should go far.

One of the advantages of van Hoek’s analysis over generative accounts is that the interaction of different factors in the determination of reference points and dominions, plus the fact that prominence and semantic connectivity are matters of degree, provides a principled account of variations in acceptability judgements. Variation, in both use and grammaticality judgements, is particularly noticeable in relation to reflexives (chapter 7), and it is to van Hoek’s credit that she has addressed variation in this area to the extent that she has. She compares American and British English, and accounts for variation with respect to reflexives in terms of degrees of divergence from established ‘constructional schemas’ derived from prototypical uses of the reflexive construction (British English apparently allowing extensions from certain schemas that are not allowed in American English). Even so, she rules out reflexives in subject position in both varieties, although some speakers of British English accept both (3) below (which van Hoek (191) marks as ungrammatical) and the use of reflexives in conjoined noun phrases functioning as subjects (4):

(3) Someone like *himself* might appreciate these things.
(4) The Prime Minister and *myself* are in complete agreement.

Variation is also discussed in relation to ‘point of view’ effects (chapter 8), although here the methodology employed in the elicitation of acceptability judgements is occasionally unclear, and her findings are again at odds with the judgements of some speakers of British English.

As well as providing an interesting account of bound anaphora (chapter 6), Van Hoek accounts for data not covered by traditional analyses based on the c-command relation (chapter 5), such as patterns of anaphora in discourse and backwards anaphora (using corpora rather than constructed data). She argues that c-command deals with sentential anaphora as well as it does because the tree structures according to which it is defined inadvertently capture relevant SEMANTIC information. The limitations of c-command result because it is based on an incomplete model of the relevant semantic facts, rather than directly on the facts themselves.

To conclude, van Hoek has made a valuable contribution to the study of anaphora and to the debate over autonomous syntax. Although formulated in terms of Cognitive Grammar, this book should also be accessible and of interest to those unfamiliar with this framework.

REFERENCES