

Revisiting the de se requirement on *ziji*: The relevance of evidentiality

Zeqi Zhao

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1. Introduction

LDB *ziji*

Just as the English reflexives, the Mandarin “unmarked” bare form *ziji* can be bound to a local antecedent in compliance with Condition A (Chomsky 1981). However, *ziji*’s referential domain is not limited to its local clause.

(1) Locally-bound *ziji*

Zhangsan_i hen xihuan *ziji*_i.

Zhangsan very like SELF

“Zhangsan likes himself very much.

(2) Long-distance bound (LDB) *ziji*

Lisi_i juede Zhangsan_j hen xihuan *ziji*_{i/j}.

Lisi think Zhangsan very likes SELF

“Lisi thinks that Zhangsan likes him/himself very much.”

1. Introduction

LDB *ziji* as obligatory de se

In the literature, it has long been argued that LDB *ziji* must be interpreted de se in attitude environments (Huang & Liu 2001, Schlenker 2003, a.o.).

(3) *S1: Zhangsan sees a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan knows that it is his own purse that is stolen. Zhangsan says: “The thief stole my purse!”*

S2: Zhangsan sees a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan does not realize it is his own purse that is stolen. Zhangsan says: “The thief stole that purse!”

Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le *ziji*-de qianbao

Zhangsan say pickpocket steal-PERF SELF's purse

“Zhangsan_i said the pickpocket_j stole his_i purse.” [√S1, #S2]

1. Introduction

The logophoric analysis of *ziji*

Such observations motivated a camp of non-uniform approaches to *ziji*. Drawing on the notion of logophoricity (Sells 1987), Huang & Liu (2001) dissimilate *ziji* to two uses:

- a. anaphoric *ziji* subject to BCA
- b. **LDB *ziji* as logophor** (which must be bound to the logophoric center **SELF/SOURCE/PIVOT**)

- (4) a. $\lambda w_1 [w_1 \text{ Zhangsan}_i [\text{VP say } [\text{SourceP } \textcolor{blue}{ziji}_i = \lambda x \lambda w_2 [w_2 \text{ pickpocket stole the purse of } t_i = x]]]]]$
b. say (Zhangsan, λx (pickpocket stole the purse of x))

Assuming there is a functional layer in the left periphery (à la Rizzi 1997) reserved for marking the logophoric center, *ziji* raises higher to Spec-SourceP at the LF in (4a). The λ -predicate as a whole denotes a property of Zhangsan that he self-ascribes to himself; thus obligatory de se.

(Huang & Liu 2001)

1. Introduction

The non-de se interpretation of LDB *ziji*

However, it has been reported that LDB *ziji* can also have non-de se readings (Pollard & Xue 2001; Wang & Pan 2012, 2014, a.o):

(5) *S1: Zhangsan can identify Fred, the man who saved his life by “That man saved my life!”*

S2 : Zhangsan is trapped in a burning building and faints. When he wakes up, he is safely outside. He thinks he was lucky, but in fact was saved by a passerby.

Zhangsan zai mei you jian-guo jiu-le *ziji* ming de na-geren

Zhangsan again not have see-PERF save-PERF SELF life DE that-CL-person

‘Zhangsan_i never sees again the person_j who saved his_i life.’ [√S1,√S2]

Cases like (5) are incapable of challenging the de se requirement on the LDB *ziji* in attitude reports. The logophoric *ziji* always selects a SELF/SOURCE antecedent, which in attitude reports, must be the attitude holder.

The important question is: Can LDB *ziji* have non-de se readings even in attitude environments?

1. Introduction

In this talk:

Focus: The exceptional non-de se interpretation of LDB *ziji* in attitude environments.

- Section 2: The non-de se *ziji* , empathy and evidential perspective shift
- Section 3: Testing my hypothesis
- Section 4: Concluding remarks

2. The non-de se *ziji*, empathy and evidential perspective shift

ziji as an empathy marker?

Wang and Pan (2012, 2014) disagree with the judgment in (6) and argue *ziji* should be allowed in S2 when the external speaker “somehow” knows the stolen purse belongs to Zhangsan.

(6) *S1: Zhangsan sees a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan knows that it is his own purse that is stolen. Zhangsan says: “The thief stole my purse!”*

S2: Zhangsan sees a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan does not realize it is his own purse that is stolen. Zhangsan says: “The thief stole that purse!”

Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le *ziji*-de qianbao

Zhangsan say pickpocket steal-PERF SELF's purse

“Zhangsan_i said the pickpocket_j stole his_i purse.” [✓ S1, # S2]

They therefore propose the use of *ziji* suggests the external speaker **empathizes** (à la Kuno & Kaburaki 1977) with Zhangsan and attributes the relevant property to Zhangsan.

2. The non-de se *ziji*, empathy and evidential perspective shift

Unresolved issues

- Wang and Pan's intuitions need to be examined.
- They didn't explicitly spell out the scenario in which the non-de se interpretation of *ziji* is allowed. What allows the speaker to empathize a person's lack of self consciousness in a described event?

(7) *S1: Zhangsan saw a pickpocket running away with a purse but didn't realize it was his own purse that is stolen. Lisi didn't witness what happened but only heard Zhangsan say: "The thief stole that purse!" Later, Lisi reports:*

S2: Zhangsan saw a pickpocket running away with a purse but didn't realize it is his own purse that is stolen. Zhangsan said: "The thief stole that purse!" Lisi saw what happened but he couldn't see how the stolen purse looks like from a distance. Later, Lisi reports:

Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le *ziji*-de qianbao

Zhangsan say pickpocket steal-PERF SELF's purse

"Zhangsan_i said the pickpocket_j stole his_i purse." [# S1, # S2]

2. The non-de se *ziji*, empathy and evidential perspective shift

Perspective Sensitivity and Perspective Shifting

The information encoded in certain expressions like “interesting” are evaluated w.r.t. the opinions of a Perspective Center (PC). When the PC shifts in various embedded contexts, it means the encoded source of information or evidence also shifts.

(8) (It appears to the PC that) *Intro to Semantics* is an *interesting* course.

For (8) to be true,

- a) *Intro to Semantics* is interesting as a course according to the PC's judgments
- b) the speaker draws such a conclusion based on knowledge, perception, or other bodies of evidence

When the external speaker Lisi **empathizes** with Zhangsan, the PC shifts accordingly. For Lisi to report “(It appears to me that) Zhangsan_i said *the pickpocket_j stole ziji_i's purse*”:

- a) according to the Lisi's judgments, Zhangsan said the preadjacent and the pickpocket stole Zhangsan's purse
- b) Lisi draws such a conclusion based on knowledge, perception, or other bodies of evidence

2. The non-de se *ziji*, empathy and evidential perspective shift

Hypothesis:

For the speaker to empathize with the reference of LDB *ziji* who participates in the event that he reports, the speaker should at least have direct perceptive evidence to support his judgment that the reported sentence is true. The Evidential Perspective Center (EPC) shifts to the speaker.

(9) S1: *Zhangsan was shopping with Lisi. Zhangsan saw a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan did not realize the stolen purse was his, but Lisi recognized Zhangsan's unique key chain. He realized the stolen purse belongs to Zhangsan. Zhangsan said to Lisi: "The thief stole that purse!"*

Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le *ziji*-de qianbao

Zhangsan say pickpocket steal-PERF SELF's purse

“Zhangsan_i said the pickpocket_j stole his_i purse.” [✓ S1]

2. Testing my hypothesis

Methodology

Two groups of 20 educated Mandarin native speakers were required to finish **6 multiple-choice judgment tasks** online (<https://www.wenjuan.com/s/UZBZJvKWfv/#>).

Group 1: 20 students at the University of Göttingen and **speak different dialects**

Group 2: 20 college students born and raised in Jiaozuo and (theoretically) **speak the same dialect**.

In each task, 3 possible scenarios are provided,

- a) the de se scenario,
- b) the non-de se and non-empathic scenario
- c) the empathic scenario where only the external reporter holds direct perceptual evidence regarding the relevant eventuality.

Participants were required to pick out the scenario(s) they consider suitable for the attitude report in question containing LDB *ziji*.

2. Testing my hypothesis

An example task for illustration

Task 1: In which of the following scenarios do you consider Lisi's report acceptable? (Multiple-choice)

A. S1 B. S2 C.S3 D. None

S1: Zhangsan was shopping at the mall with Lisi. Zhangsan saw pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan knows that it is his own purse that was stolen. Zhangsan said to Lisi: "The thief stole my purse!" Later, Lisi reports what happened:

"Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le ziji-de qianbao"

Zhangsan say pickpocket steal-PERF SELF's purse

S2: Zhangsan was shopping at the mall with Lisi. Zhangsan saw a pickpocket running away with a purse; Neither Zhangsan nor Lisi realizes it is Zhangsan's purse that was stolen. Zhangsan said to Lisi: "The thief stole someone's purse!" Later, Lisi reports what happened:

"Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le ziji-de qianbao"

S3: Zhangsan was shopping at the mall with Lisi. Zhangsan saw a pickpocket running away with a purse; Zhangsan does not realize it is his own purse that was stolen. Lisi recognized Zhangsan's purse. Zhangsan said to Lisi: "The thief stole someone's purse!". Later, Lisi reports what happened:

"Zhangsan shuo xiaotou tou-le ziji-de qianbao"

2. Testing my hypothesis

Methodology

Following the reasoning above based on EPS, the use of empathic *ziji* should be more compatible with certain attitude predicates.

(11) A hierarchy of attitude predicates that may induce empathic contexts

Communication predicates (say) > Mental state predicates (be happy to)

≥ epistemic/knowledge predicates (think, know)

(based on Kuno & Kaburaki 1977, Sells 1987, Huang & Liu 2001)

(12) A list of predicates tested in judgement tasks

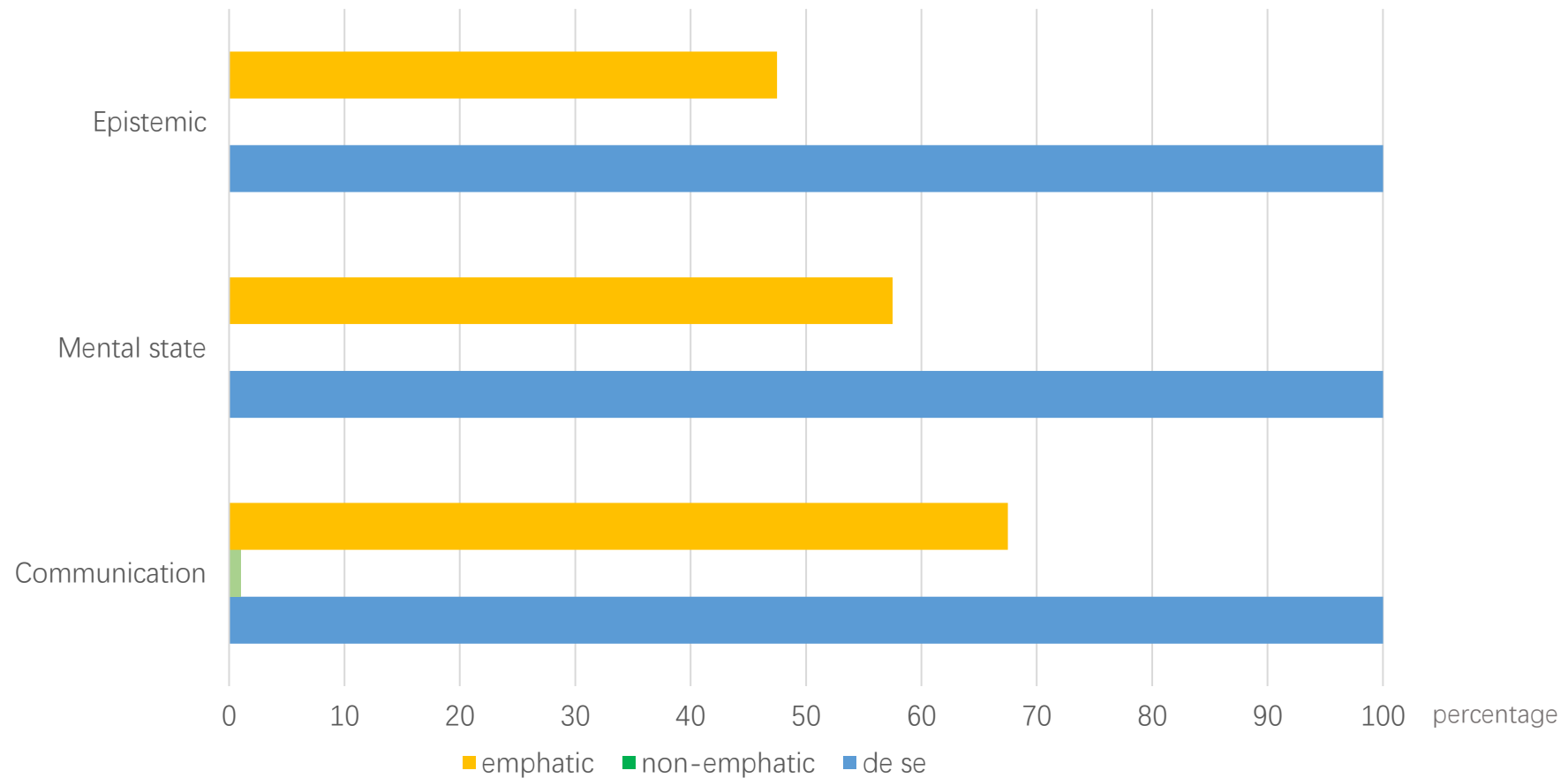
a. Communication: 说 *shuo* ‘say’, 告诉 *gaosu* ‘tell’

b. Mental state: 希望 *xiwang* ‘hope’, 高兴 *gaoxing* ‘be happy to’

c. Epistemic: 认为 *renwei* ‘think’, 确信 *quexin* ‘be certain of’

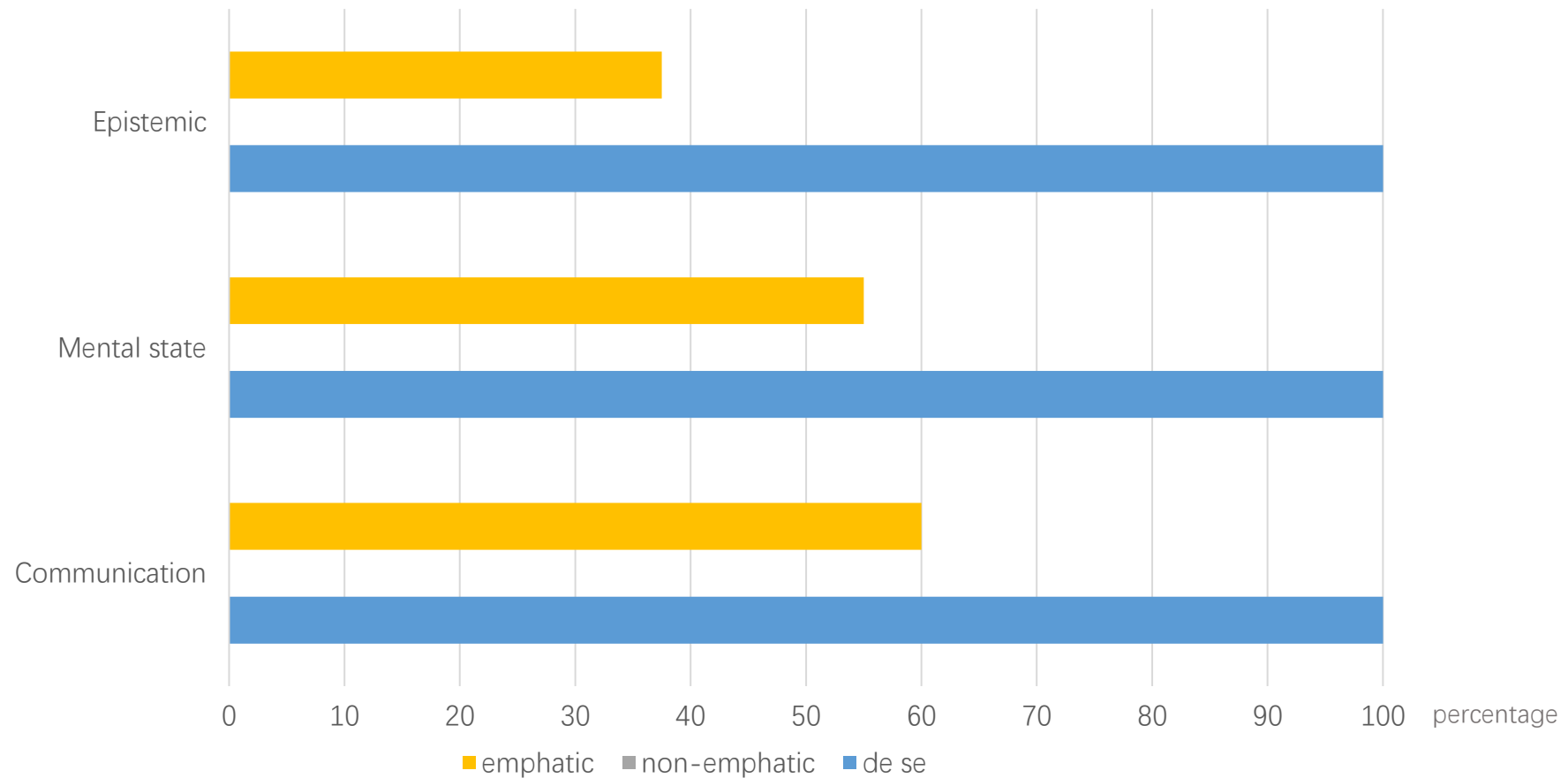
2. Testing my hypothesis

Results: The acceptability judgment of informants in Group 1 (different dialects)



2. Testing my hypothesis

Results: The acceptability judgment of informants in Group 2 (same dialects)



2. Testing my hypothesis

Analyses of the results

The Results show:

- almost all informants rejected the use of LDB *ziji* in non-de se and non-empathic scenarios and embraced the de se reading of *ziji*;
- around half allow the use of LDB *ziji* in empathic scenarios where the external reporter holds direct perceptual evidence regarding the relevant eventuality;
- Even though less informants from Group 2 allow the empathic use of *ziji*, there is no evidence that suggests the dialectal distinction leads to discrepant judgments.
- More informants accept the empathic use of *ziji* when embedded under communication predicates.

3. An attempt to derive the non-de se interpretations of *ziji*

Assumptions

- I assume like many other East-Asian languages, Mandarin also optionally allows EPC shift in declaratives. The optionality of EPC shift takes the form of inter-speakers variation.
- The EPC is provided by **an appropriate context** where the author of such a context bears reliable acquaintance relation to the res of *ziji*. When no such an appropriate context is available, some Mandarin speakers allow the EPC to shift to the external speaker holding reliable evidence regarding the relevant eventuality; Otherwise, the use of LDB *ziji* is not licensed.

Concluding remarks

- The collected data provide further support for Wang & Pan (2014)'s hypothesis that the standard *de se/de re* dichotomy is insufficient to capture attitude reports in natural language.
- An adequate theory of LDB *ziji* in Mandarin must respond to the following 2 desiderata at least:
 - a. The *res* of LDB *ziji* denotes the author of the embedded attitude context. *ziji*'s reference will be shifted with the EPS.
 - b. LDB *ziji* is not obligatory *de se* in attitude environments when its empathic use is allowed.
- I chose to associate the notion of EPC with direct perceptive evidentiality and tested the interpretation of *ziji* in scenarios involving a direct-evidence holder. There is abundant room for further research on whether indirect evidence (e.g. inference) counts as reliable to license the empathic use of *ziji*.

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