

## Why pre-exemption of the reasoning: Intensifier *ziji* as root

**Background:** Mandarin *ziji* 'SELF' and *ta ziji* '3SG SELF' are canonically analyzed separately (Xu 1993a, 1993b), abstracting away from the predicate-internal default referential difference between arguments, but both ultimately address antecedent-dependent reference either within or external to a predicate. Both forms permit non-local antecedents, but *ziji* shows asymmetric (non-)subject blocking (Pan 1997, 2001): an intermediate first- or second-person pronoun blocks subjects further to the left as antecedents more, whereas third-person pronouns do so less readily. Both also have intensifier uses; and, distributionally, occur predominantly in preverbal and postnominal positions (1-2), with (1) emphasizing either 'John' or the VP and (2) only 'John'. When positioned in the canonical object position, they violate local binding and asymmetric blocking (3) (Pan 1998, 2001). This contrastive behavior motivates locating shared constraints, since typological facts point to form identity between intensifiers and reflexives (König et al., 2013).

(1) Intensifier use of <i>ziji</i>	(2) Intensifier use of <i>ta ziji</i>	(3) Non-local antecedents
John <i>ziji</i> wancheng le John SELF finish PRT zuoye homework 'John finished the homework all by himself.'	John ta <i>ziji</i> wancheng le John 3SG SELF finish PRT zuoye homework 'John himself finished the homework.'	John <sub>i</sub> pa wo chaoguo le John fear 1SG surpass PRT <i>ziji</i> / <i>taziji</i> <sub>i</sub> SELF/3SG SELF 'John fears that I surpassed him.'

**Analysis:** What internal components can be recovered inside intensifiers/reflexives? Here it is *ziji*. Focusing on intensification, we argue that the shared form between reflexives and intensifiers is not a form-identity coincidence; *ziji* represents  $\text{SELF} = \text{ID}(e, e)$ ,  $\text{ID}(a) = a$ . How is this shared constraint realized independently in intensification and in reflexive marking? In Gast (2006), ID is truth-conditionally trivial, and becomes effective only via intensification and coargument constraints (reflexive marking). For reflexive marking, SELF searches for a coreferential coargument (Reinhart & Reuland 1993), yielding an anaphoric argument realized as *ziji*, *ta-ziji*, or *John-ziji* when intensification and reflexive co-occur. For intensification, SELF is non-argumental, adjoining to nominal heads, including those in contact with event structure (Hole 2008; Folli & Harley 2005; Liao 2021). The head-adjacent type is effective because focused SELF evokes alternative OF-functions for the same individual argument (e.g. SPOKESMAN OF; Gast 2006; Rooth 1992). When no alternatives can be found, it targets thematic relations and yields "exclusion" readings, namely head-distant exclusive use. We relate this to event decomposition via vDO (agentive, typically animate) versus vCAUSE (causer-compatible, allowing inanimate specifiers) (Folli & Harley 2005). *Ziji* also appears in external-argument-less structures, including stative vHAVE/BE (4), contra Hole's (2008) monolithic agentive Voice, which predicts that only animate agents can be intensified (cf. (5)) and that the unaccusative type cannot occur (cf. (6)).

- (4) Laowang *ziji* jù yǒu wèntí.  
 Laowang SELF PRT have problem  
 'Laowang himself has problems.'
- (5) fēng *zìjǐ* chuī-luò le nàxiē mùtóu.  
 wind SELF blow-fell.down PRT that-some wood  
 'The wind blew down the logs itself.'
- (6) nàxiē mùtóu *zìjǐ* luòxiàláile.  
 that-some wood SELF fell.down PRT  
 'Those logs came down all by themselves.'

**Consequences:** *ziji* is uniformly an identity-based intensifier; *ziji* can adjoin to nominals and events, and *ta ziji* adjoins only to nominals. *ziji* can reflexive-mark predicates, hence local binding; this does not preclude intensification of arguments and their roles in events. This parallels, but differs from, Bergeton (2004): English pronoun+self can be an overt intensifier modifying a null reflexive. If the analysis attempts to achieve complete parallel, an assumption of a null reflexive is posited. In Mandarin, null arguments (Li 2014; Huang 1984), *ta*, and other object nominals are not default-coreferential with the subject, hence unwarranted complete parallel. Pace Pan's near-identical antecedent condition for *ziji/ta ziji* and *ta ziji*'s weaker binding domain expansion (Pan 1997, 1998, 2001), the account avoids overgeneralizing Pan-style blocking: exclusion of anti-reflexive predicates (cf. Pan 2001, ex. 40, here (7)).

- (7) Zǒngtǒng; qǐng wǒ; zuò zài *zìjǐ* shēnbiān.  
 president ask I sit at SELF side  
 'The president asked me to sit beside him.'

### Selected References:

- Hole, D. 2008. Focus on identity—the dark side of *zìjǐ*. *The Linguistic Review* 25.
- Pan, H. 2001. Why the blocking effect? In *Long distance reflexives* (pp. 279–316). Brill.
- Gast, V. 2006. *The grammar of identity: Intensifiers and reflexives in Germanic languages*. Routledge.
- Bergeton, U. 2004. *The independence of binding and intensification*. University of Southern California.