Self-Ascription in Conjunct-Disjunct Systems

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Conjunct-disjunct systems

Kathmandu Newari (examples from (Hargreaves 2005):
No person marking on verbs; CJ verb form (-ā) when:

(i) the subject of a declarative is in first person:

1. a. jī: a:pwa twan-ā.
   1.ERG much drink-PST.CJ
   ‘I drank a lot/too much.’

b. chā a:pwa twan-a.
   2.ERG much drink-PST.DJ
   ‘You drank a lot/too much.’

   3.ERG much drink-PST.DJ
   ‘S/he drank a lot/too much.’
(ii) the subject of a question is in second person (2),

2.  a. jī: a:pwa twan-alā?
    1.ERG much drink-PST.DJ Q
       ‘Did I drink a lot/too much?’

   b. chā a:pwa twan-ā lā?
    2.ERG much drink-PST.CJ Q
       ‘Did you drink a lot/too much?’

   c. wā: a:pwa twan-alā?
    3.ERG much drink-PST.DJ Q
       ‘Did s/he drink a lot/too much?’
(iii) With a third person subject, the CJ form indicates that the subject is identical with the evidential source.

3.  
       Syam-ERG much drink-PST.CJ EVD
       ‘Syam said that he drank too much.’
   b.  Syām-ā a:pwa twan-a hā.
       Syam-ERG much drink-PFV.DJ EVD
       ‘It is said that Syam drank too much.’

The disjunct form in -a appears elsewhere.
Conjunct marking in Newari is limited to verbs of intentional action:

- *twan*- ‘drink’ (1-3 above) and *wan*- ‘go’ are control verbs, hence showing the pattern described above
- *then*- ‘arrive’ and *thul*- ‘understand’ are non-control verbs, taking the disjunct form in all three persons, whether in declaratives or interrogative clauses
CJ/DJ systems have been observed in:

- Sino-Tibetan, e.g. Newar (Hale 1980; Hargreaves 2005) and Lhasa Tibetan (Delancey 1997)
- Nakh-Daghestanian, e.g. Akhvakh (Creissels 2008) and Mehwb Dargwa (Bickel 2008)
- Tsafiki (Barbacoan; Dickinson 2000)
- Trans New Guinea, e.g. Oksapmin (Loughnane 2009), Duna and Kaluli (San Roque 2011)
- Guambiano (Norcliffe 2011)
- Cha’palaa (Floyd 2011)

Forthcoming collection of papers on CJ/DJ:

Previous accounts of interrogative flip in CJ-DJ languages

1. Austin Hale (1980, 97): the CJ indicates ‘co-reference of actors’: the actor argument of the verb is coreferential with the ‘locutionary actor’, assuming abstract performatives (Sadock 1974):

   a. Syam$_i$ said that he$_i$ drank too much.
   b. [I$_i$ say to you$_i$] I$_i$ drank too much.
   c. [I ask you$_i$] Did you$_i$ drink too much?

2. Mentioned by Hale (1980) and also by Woodbury (1986, 192, fn. 3): CJ in a 2nd person question anticipates the form to be used by the addressee in her answer.

   a. Did you drink too much?
   b. Yes, I did drink too much.
3. CJ indicates the subject is coreferential with the *epistemic authority* for the utterance: the person who has *primary authority for the truth of the proposition expressed* (other terms: the *informant* (Bickel 2008), *locutor* (Aikhenvald 2004), *epistemic source* (Hargreaves 2005); also *judge* (in work on PoPT).

the *epistemic authority*:
- in a declarative: speaker who declares the truth of the proposition
- in a question: the addressee who is induced to judge the proposition

epistemic and/or illocutionary?

asserting $\phi \approx$ have ‘primary authority for the truth of $\phi$
Krifka’s (2014… a few days ago) theory of questions:

• “Questions are requests by one speaker to perform assertions by the other…” (29)

• “I distinguished between the **performer** of a speech act and the **person that commits to a proposition**. In questions, this diverges: A speaker S1 performs an action that consists in making another speaker, S2, responsible for a proposition.” (30)

• “These systems [showing interrogative flip, such as CJ/DJ— S.W.] have in common that they target the position x in the representation of the speech act $x \vdash \phi$, [x commits to the truth of $\phi$— S.W.] which is the speaker in assertions, and the addressee in questions…

• “Speas & Tenny (2003) have coined the term ‘seat of knowledge’ for this instance; I would rather suggest the term **commitment holder**, as I think knowledge is secondary to commitments in assertions and questions.” (30)

Newar CJ marking: the subject is the **commitment holder**
Self-ascription

Newar CJ-marked assertions are self-ascriptions.

A self-ascription:

1. I drank a lot.
   ⇒ John self-ascribes the drunk-a-lot property.

A non-self-ascription involving mistaken identity:
John sees a photo from last night’s party in which someone is wearing a lampshade on his head. Unbeknownst to John, the wearer of the lampshade is none other than himself. John points to the picture and says:

2. He drank a lot.
   ⇒ John does not self-ascribe the drunk-a-lot property
Application for a Russian visa

2nd person normally forces the addressee to self-ascribe.

A weird question:

Q: Has this application been completed personally by you?
A: ???
Self-ascription and questions

John asks Mary:

1. Did I drink a lot last night?  (DJ form)

   • The question concern’s Mary’s belief [commitment], not John’s.
   • John is not asking about his beliefs [commitments]; rather, he is asking about his drinking behavior, according to Mary.
   • He is not asking Mary whether he self-ascribes that property.
   • Nor is he is not asking Mary whether she self-ascribes it.
   • He is asking whether she ascribes that property to him.

So the DJ form is used.

To see if the addressee self-ascribes the drink-a-lot property, ask:

2. Did you drink a lot last night?  (CJ form)
Self-ascription

Newar CJ-marked assertions are self-ascriptions.

Is the relevant notion self-ascription a type of belief state (a de se attitude) or a type of speech act?

Perhaps the latter: specifically, a type of assertion.
Conjunct/Disjunct in Tsafiki

Tsafiki is a Barbacoan language spoken in the western lowlands of Ecuador (described by Connie Dickinson)

15. Tsafiki declaratives (Dickinson 2000, 383)
    a. tse Tsachi joyoe.
       tse Tsachi jo-yo-e
       1FEM Tsachi be-CJ-DECL
       ‘I am a Tsachi.’
    b. ya/nu Tsachi joe
       ya/nu Tsachi jo-e
       3/2 Tsachi be-DECL
       ‘He/you are a Tsachi.’
Conjunct/Disjunct in Tsafiki

16. Tsafiki questions (Dickinson 2000, 384)
   a. nu seke tera kiyun?
      nu seke tera ki-yo-n
      you good dance do-CJ-INT
      ‘Did you dance well?’
   b. la seke tera kiin?
      la seke tera ki-i-n
      l1MASC good dance do-DJ-INT
      ‘Did I dance well?’
   c. ya seke tera kin?
      ya seke tera ki-n
      he/she good dance do-INT
      ‘Did he/she dance well?’
Conjunct/Disjunct in Tsafiki

17. Tsafiki speech reports (Dickinson 2000, 385)
   a. ya mantoka jiyoê tiê
   ya man-to=ka ji-yo-e ti-e
   3 other-earth=LOC go-CJ-DECL say-DECL
   ‘He$_i$ said that he$_i$ went to Santo Domingo.’
   b. ya mantoka jie tie
   ya man-to=ka ji-e ti-e
   3 other-earth=LOC go-DECL say-DECL
   ‘He$_i$ said that he$_j$ went to Santo Domingo.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Declarative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>CJ (congruent)</td>
<td>DJ (non-congruent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>CJ (congruent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Conjunct (CJ), disjunct (DJ), and unmarked (Ø) Tsafiki verbs
Both Lhasa Tibetan (Delancey 1997) and Tsaflki also allow the exceptional use of the DJ form in a 1st person declarative, to indicate:

- accident
- ignorance
- irony
- surprise

(Dickinson 2000, 389)
Proposal:

CJ marking indicates a self-ascription is asserted

DJ marking is unmarked; it therefore implicates non-self-ascription

- When DJ marking cooccurs with 1st person, the effect is a 3rd person perspective on the 1st person protagonist.
- i.e. DJ establishes the protagonist’s doxastic center (even if it is 1st person) as distinct from that of the speaker
Two ways to tell a 1st person story

1. **Vivid narration**: the narrator adopts the doxastic perspective of the 1st person protagonist. Once I went on a trip to a conference in Japan. The trip started out normally. I arrived at the airport on time. I got my boarding pass as usual. I went through security with no problem and proceeded to the gate, where I caught my plane. The plane took off, and after it leveled off, I opened the laptop to work on my slides, which were not ready, as usual. But I immediately saw that something was very wrong. Everything in the laptop had changed! The desktop pattern was different. The files had changed. Then I realized what happened: at the security checkpoint, my laptop had been switched with someone else’s! I had picked up his, and he had picked up mine.

2. **Hindsight narration**. Once on a trip to a conference in Japan, my laptop got switched with someone else’s at the airport security checkpoint. I arrived at the airport…etc… At the security checkpoint, I picked up the wrong laptop. …
In past tense narration, the narrator ascribes properties to his past self—an individual whose beliefs differ from those of the narrator.

In **vivid narration**, the narrator presents the story from the perspective of that former self, the protagonist. So the ascriptions are self-ascriptions.

⇒ In Tsafiki, the CJ form is used in such cases.

In **hindsight narration**, the narrator presents the story from his own (current) perspective, with the benefit of hindsight. These are not self-ascriptions.

⇒ In Tsafiki, the DJ form is used in such cases.
intentional action

Tsafiki (Dickinson 2000, 387)

19.  a.  la yaka machitechi poreyoe
     la ya=ka machite=chi pore-yo-e
     1MASC 3=ACC machete=INSTR cut-CJ-DECL
     ‘I cut him (intentionally) with the machete.’

     b.  la yaka machitechi poreie
     la ya=ka machite=chi pore-i-e
     1MASC 3=ACC machete=INSTR cut-DJ-DECL
     ‘I cut him (unintentionally) with the machete.’

unintentional: speaker’s current knowledge differs from the machete-weilding protagonist’s knowledge ⇒ DJ
intentional action

A test: Could the machete-wielding agent have been thinking ‘I’m cutting him with a machete’?

• If so, then speaker & protagonist have same doxastic state; so he self-ascribes the ‘cut him with a machete’ property ⇒ CJ form
• If not, then a DJ form must be used.

That seems to capture this contrast (Dickinson 2000, 387):

“The congruent form [CJ, 21a] would be uttered in a situation where the speaker intentionally cut someone. The noncongruent form [DJ, 21b] would be produced in a context where the speaker swung the machete and accidentally cut someone.”
Not mirativity

‘Mirative’ analysis of CJ-DJ: the CJ and DJ forms indicate information consistent and inconsistent, respectively, with the speaker’s background knowledge.

But the speaker is not surprised that he cut him with a machete.

Rather, the speaker’s knowledge is inconsistent with the protagonist’s knowledge.
Not volitionality

Both sentences describe volitional actions:

19. a. ‘I cut him with a machete intentionally.’
   b. ‘I cut him with a machete unintentionally.’

‘The noncongruent form indicates the speaker volitionally performed the action of swinging the machete, but did not intend the final result’ (Dickinson 2000, 392).

On the present self-ascription analysis, the crucial factor is not ‘intending the final result’ per se, but rather whether the sentence is one that the protagonist would have assented to during the event.
CJ form (20a): the speaker intentionally threw out the paper.

DJ form (20b): the speaker threw out some papers, but *did not intend to throw out this specific paper*.

The object nominal refers to a specific paper.

Was he thinking *‘I am throwing out the (specific) paper’*?

If so, then he was self-ascribing the property denoted by the verb phrase, and so he would use CJ in reporting the event (20a).
Bodily processes: conscious but not intentional

Tsafiki speakers use CJ for: *achi* ‘sneeze,’ *are* ‘burp,’ *jada* ‘yawn,’ *jeko* ‘hiccup,’ *katsa* ‘vomit’.

A speaker explained that ‘one has a sense of nausea before one vomits’.

After being presented with a scenario where someone vomits suddenly without warning, they accepted a DJ form (in a dative construction that literally means ‘vomit came out of me’).

‘The distinction between the two forms is not so much one of control, but rather between premonitory consciousness and surprise.’ (Dickinson 2000, 403)

Performing an action knowingly is a condition for intentionality, specifically what Searle (1983) called ‘intention-in-action’.
Ignorance

Two ways a speaker can tell the story of how she pointed at the stars, but then was told never to do that:

22a.
seitonke miitoto, tsaboka tedechi
seiton=ke mi-ito-to tsabo=ka tede=chi
bad=QT know-not.be-SS star=ACC hand=INSTR
mikuwaie.
mi-kuwa-i-e
know-give-DJ-DECL
‘Not knowing it was wrong, I pointed at the stars.’
b.
tsaboka tedechi mikuwayoe.
tsabo=ka tede=chi mi-kuwa-yo-e
star=ACC hand=INSTR know-give-CJ-DECL
‘I pointed at the stars.’
Would the protagonist have uttered or thought:

In 22a: #Not knowing it is wrong, I am pointing at the stars

No. *know* is factive: *x doesn’t know p* presupposes that *p*. So it is infelicitous to assert that one does not know that *p*. 
Irony

Context: a Tsachi woman was complimented for her prowess in soccer. Someone said she played like a man and she uttered 21a, 'ironically with a shrug of the shoulders.' (Dickinson 2000, 388)

21. a. unila joie
    unila jo-i-e
    man be-DJ-DECL
    ‘I’m a man!!’

b. unila joyoe
    unila jo-yo-e
    man be-CJ-DECL
    ‘I am a man.’

21b is a simple statement of fact.
In 21a (DJ): the speaker is not saying that she is a man, literally or even figuratively—she is not saying that her playing is man-like.

Rather, *someone else has ascribed this property to* her and she is jokingly speaking as if from their point of view.

She projects a distinct doxastic center (with different beliefs) from which comes the assertion that she is a man. It is not a self-ascription.
Speaker surprise

22a: a simple neutral report by the speaker that she has money.
22b: the speaker in is surprised to discover, just now, that she has money.

22. a. kala  tayoe
        kala  ta-yo-e
        money  have-CJ-DECL
      ‘I have money.’

        b. kala  taie
        kala  ta-i-e
        money  have-DJ-DECL
      ‘I have money!!’

Delancey analyzed the similar Lhasa Tibetan DJ form as a *mirative*, a marker of speaker surprise.
Speaker surprise

Proposed self-ascription analysis: The ‘have money’ state includes the present moment, due to the present tense, and it must extend into the past (the recent past, at least) since it is a durative predicate.

22a (CJ): the speaker self-ascribes the ‘have money’ property.

22b (DJ): Although the protagonist already had the money, *during the recent past she did not know she had it*. During most of the period described by the predicate of the sentence, the speaker of 22b could *not* commit to the sentence ‘I have money’.
Conclusion

Conjunct marking indicates a self-ascription is asserted
Disjunct marking implicates non-self-ascription
  • When DJ marking cooccurs with 1st person, the effect is a 3rd person perspective on the 1st person protagonist.
  • I.e. it establishes the 1st person protagonist’s doxastic center as distinct from that of the speaker.

This suggests that ascription to oneself is grammatically distinguished from ascription to others at the level of the speech act, and not (just) in the propositions expressed.
Thank-you!
References


Norcliffe, Elisabeth. 2011. “Conjunct/disjunct Patterns in Guambiano HANDOUT.”


