

Self-Ascription in Conjunct-Disjunct Systems

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Abstract

Conjunct markers, in at least some languages, are analyzed here as grammatically specialized for the semantic function of *self-ascription*: such markers indicate that a participant in the described event ascribed to herself the property described in the sentence. The hypothesis proposed here is that grammatically enabled self-ascription is fundamental to such systems, and that mirativity, as well as various other observed factors such as speaker ignorance, volitionality, and irony, are secondary effects that follow from this self-ascription analysis.

1. Introduction

Conjunct-disjunct systems lack person marking on verbs, employing instead a special conjunct verb form for first person declaratives, second person questions, and *de se* (or logophoric) attitude reports. The disjunct

form appears elsewhere. Conjunct-disjunct systems have been observed in a number of typologically and geographically diverse languages.¹

Conjunct-disjunct systems are often discussed in association with mirative systems, which encode the status of the proposition expressed with respect to the speaker's background knowledge. DeLancey (1997) hypothesized that conjunct-disjunct system arise as grammaticalizations of mirativity. Curnow (2001) argued against the mirativity analysis. But the question remains as to what the conjunct-disjuncts system are.

The idea I propose here is that, in at least some languages, conjunct markers are grammatically specialized for the semantic function of *self-ascription*, that is, the ascription of a property to oneself. I explore the hypothesis that grammatically enabled self-ascription is fundamental to such systems, and that mirativity, as well as various other observed factors such as speaker ignorance, volitionality, and irony, can be explained as secondary effects that follow from this self-ascription analysis.

¹ Conjunct-disjunct systems have been observed in Sino-Tibetan, e.g. Newar (Hale 1980; Hargreaves 2005); Nakh-Daghestanian, e.g. Akhvakh (Creissels 2008) and Mehwb Dargwa (Hale 1980); Tsafiki (Barbacoan; C. Dickinson 2000); Trans New Guinea, e.g. Oksapmin (Loughnane 2009), Duna and Kaluli (San Roque 2011); Guambiano (Norcliffe 2011); Cha'palaa (Floyd 2011).

The paper is organized as follows. In Section 2 conjunct-disjunct systems are described and defined. Section 3 briefly reviews some previous accounts of them. Our proposal is presented in Section 4, ‘Conjunct morphology as indicator of self-ascription.’ Section 5 looks at the crucial issue of the role of the self-ascriber: whether it is the interlocutor who self-ascribes, or rather the agent in the event being reported. Mirativity and other semantic factors are analyzed as pragmatic side-effects of self-ascription systems in Section 6.

2. Conjunct-disjunct systems

Kathmandu Newar lacks person marking on verbs, employing instead a special conjunct verb form when (i) the subject of a declarative is in first person (1), (ii) the subject of a question is in second person (2), or (iii) the verb appears in a *de se* attitude report (3). The disjunct form appears elsewhere (examples from (Hargreaves 2005):

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.'

c. wā: a:pwa twan-a.
3.ERG much drink-PST.DJ
'S/he drank a lot/too much.'

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?'

In a report of a speech act the conjunct form indicates that the subject is identical with the reporter:

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

The basic system is summarized in Table I:

	Declarative	Interrogative
1st person	CJ	DJ
2nd person	DJ	CJ
3rd person	DJ	DJ

Table I. Conjunct (CJ) and disjunct (DJ) marking on Newari verbs

Conjunct marking is limited to verbs of intentional action, or *control verbs* in the terminology of Hargreaves (2005), reflecting the fact that the agent has control over the event. Other verbs use disjunct marking regardless of the subject’s person value. For example, *twan-* ‘drink’ (1-3 above) and *wan-* ‘go’ are control verbs, hence showing the pattern described above, while *then-* ‘arrive’ and *thul-* ‘understand’ are non-control verbs, taking

the disjunct form in all three persons, whether in declaratives or interrogative clauses.

3. Previous accounts of conjunct-disjunct

How are we to explain the distribution of the conjunct verb form?

The main puzzles are to explain the *interrogative flip* phenomenon, that is, the grouping together of first person declaratives with second person questions; and to relate that interrogative flip to the logophoric use in speech act reports such as 3. First I review several closely related proposals from the previous literature, then a more recent one by Dickinson (2011). The present proposal bears some similarities to all of them, but is closest to that of Dickinson (2011).

In his original description of the phenomenon in which the terms *conjunct* and *disjunct* were introduced, Hale (1980, 97) suggested that the conjunct form indicates ‘co-reference of actors’: the actor argument of the verb is coreferential with the locutionary actor. Assuming Sadock’s (1974) theory, Hale posited an ‘abstract performative’ for all sentences, allowing him to unify all three cases:

4.
 - a. Syam_i said that he_i drank too much.
 - b. [I_i say to you] I_i drank too much.
 - c. [I ask you_i] Did you_i drink too much?

In a speech report, the ‘actor’ is explicitly mentioned as the subject of the speech act verb. Hale further assumed that the ‘actor’ in a simplex declarative is the speaker, while that of a question is the addressee. Then all three cases involve co-reference (hence the term *conjunct*). One problem with the coreference account is that identifying the addressee as the ‘actor’ in a question is an unmotivated stipulation.

Another idea, mentioned by Hale (1980) and also by Woodbury (1986, 192, fn. 3), is that the use of the conjunct form in a second person question anticipates the form to be used by the addressee in her answer. Since the question is in second person (*Did you drink too much?*), the answer will be in first person (*Yes, I did drink too much.*), hence will take the conjunct form.

A third proposal, perhaps the most common one currently held, is that conjunct morphology indicates that the subject of the clause is coreferential with the *epistemic authority* for the utterance: the person who has primary authority for the truth (or perhaps knowledge?) of the proposition expressed. Other terms for this role include the *informant*,

locutor, *epistemic source*, *epistemic argument*, or simply the *judge*. In a declarative clause it is the speaker who declares the truth of the proposition, hence the speaker is the epistemic authority; in a question it is the addressee who is induced to judge the proposition, hence the addressee is the epistemic authority.

This latter analysis assimilates conjunct-disjunct systems to certain other natural language phenomena, but the assimilation is only partial. The notion of epistemic authority (informant, judge, etc.) plays a role in the semantics of evidentials and predicates of personal taste. In both of these phenomena, the epistemic authority typically does an ‘interrogative flip’ under the right conditions. A personal taste statement like *Roller coasters are fun* is most naturally interpreted as reporting that they are fun for the speaker, while the question *Are roller coasters fun?* asks about the addressee’s taste (Lasersohn 2005). However, conjunct-disjunct marking differs from those phenomena in that *an argument of the conjunct verb must refer to the epistemic authority*: for Newari that argument is the subject, as in 1-3 above. For the Barbacoan languages Awa Pit (Curnow 2002) and Tsafiki (Dickinson 2000), the epistemic authority may occupy other argument positions. An important question for such accounts is what is responsible for this obligatory binding of some argument of the verb by the epistemic authority.

In a fourth proposal, Delancey (1997, 44) saw conjunct-disjunct marking as a grammaticalization of mirative systems, which distinguish speaker-new from speaker-assimilated knowledge, where mirative forms indicate speaker surprise. The idea is that the *disjunct* form (not the conjunct) corresponds to the mirative: the speaker is unlikely to be surprised by the content of a report of her own actions, so the conjunct form is non-mirative. Further discussion of this idea is postponed until Section 6 below, where I suggest that the direction of the effect is the other way around: mirativity can arise as a pragmatic side-effect of the marking of self-ascription in a conjunct-disjunct system.

The Barbacoan language Tsafiki has a verb form with the ‘interrogative flip’ shown by the conjunct form, namely it is used for first person declaratives, second person interrogatives, and de se reports (C. Dickinson 2000; 2011). Dickinson (2011, 2) proposes that such forms, which she calls *congruent* forms, indicate that ‘the informant was a knowing conscious participant’ in the situation described in the clause. She sees the dimension of ‘knowing and conscious participation’ as having ‘mirative-like values including how congruent the information is with the speaker’s general knowledge and expectations.’ As we will see, the notion of being a ‘knowing conscious participant’ is descriptively very close to the effect of the self-ascription account proposed below.

We have seen five proposals regarding the conjunct-disjunct system: (i) conjunct marking indicates coreference between the agent of the verb and the locutionary agent; (ii) conjunct marking is basically for first person, hence it is used in (second person) questions in anticipation of the first person form of the answer; (iii) conjunct marking indicates that the subject is the epistemic authority for the utterance; (iv) conjunct-disjunct systems are grammaticalizations of mirativity; and (v) the conjunct form indicates knowing, conscious participation by the informant. In the next section I put forth the hypothesis that conjunct marking indicates self-ascription. This idea incorporates certain aspects of several of these proposals, but differs from any of them.

4. Conjunct morphology as indicator of self-ascription

The Newari sentence 1a, repeated here, consists of the first person subject *jī:* and the predicate *a:pwa twanā* denoting the ‘drank too much’ property:

5. a. $j\bar{i}$: a:pwa twan- \bar{a} .
 1.ERG much drink-PST.CJ
 ‘I drank a lot/too much.’
- b. $[j\bar{i}]_{NP}$ ‘I’
- c. $[a:pwa\ twan\bar{a}]_{VP}$ $\lambda x.drank-a-lot(x)$

My hypothesis is that the conjunct verb morphology ($-\bar{a}$) marks the verb phrase as denoting a property that is *self-ascribed* by its subject argument (Castaneda 1966; Lewis 1979; Perry 1979). As noted above, in some languages such as Awa Pit (Curnow 2002) and Tsafiki (Dickinson 2000) the first person argument licensing conjunct marking need not be the subject. For such languages, the self-ascribed property does not correspond to the VP; instead we arrive at the self-ascribed property by lambda-abstracting over any occurrences of the first person pronoun.

What is self-ascription? When someone self-ascribes a property, she ascribes the property to herself: she believes that she has the property. But self-ascription is more specific: the self-ascriber must self-identify as the person to whom the property is ascribed. For example, when John says *I drank too much*, he self-ascribes the property ‘drank too much’. But now suppose a friend shows John a photo from last night’s party in which someone is wearing a lampshade on his head. John points to the lampshade-wearer and says, *He drank too much*. John attended the party

but drank so much that he does not remember what happened. Unbeknownst to John, the wearer of the lampshade is none other than himself. John is pointing to a picture of himself as he makes the statement, so he is asserting (*de re*; see below) that John drank too much. But he is not self-ascribing the ‘drank too much’ property. A simple test for self-ascription is that one self-ascribes a property if and only if one is prepared to make a first person statement. In this scenario, John is not prepared to say *I drank too much*; he is not self-ascribing.

Following Lewis (1979), I assume that to have a *de re* belief (a belief about a real thing), one must bear some *acquaintance relation* with that thing (the *res*). A self-ascription, which Lewis called a *de se* belief, is a *de re* belief in which the acquaintance relation is identity. Under either of the two scenarios in the previous paragraph, sentence 6 would be true, and John’s belief has the same propositional content, namely that John drank a lot. But there are two rather different beliefs:

6. John_i believes that he_i drank a lot.
 - a. *de re* (but not *de se*) interpretation: John sees photo of a guy wearing a lampshade; doesn’t realize it is a photo of himself that he sees
 - b. *de se* interpretation: John might say ‘I drank a lot.’

On the lampshade-wearing scenario, 6 would be technically true but perhaps a bit misleading; the scenario in which he knows it was himself that was drinking is a more normal one to be described by such a sentence. But in any case the point is that mere propositional content is not sufficient to distinguish between what are intuitively two rather different beliefs. Beliefs are more finely sorted than propositions, and that sorting is agent-dependent. It depends on the believer's acquaintance relations with the things in the world that the beliefs are about. Thus an *object of belief* is a triple $\langle a, R, P \rangle$ consisting of an agent a , an acquaintance relation $R(a,x)$ between a and an individual x , and a property P . The two interpretations of 6 can be represented as follows:

7. John_i believes that he_i drank a lot.
 - a. $Bel(j, \langle j, \text{see.photo}(j, x), \lambda y.\text{drank.a.lot}(y) \rangle)$
 - b. $Bel(j, \langle j, \text{self}(j, x), \lambda y.\text{drank.a.lot}(y) \rangle)$

Here *Bel* is the believing relation. In prose, 7a says that John has a belief; the object of his belief consists of John, the 'see a photo of' acquaintance relation between John and some individual x ; and the 'drank a lot' property. John believes that x has that property. Interpretation 7b differs only in the acquaintance relation: the acquaintance relation is identity,

shown here as the ‘self’ relation— that ‘particular and primitive way’ (Frege 1918) in which a person is presented to himself.

In a declarative statement, the speaker declares his beliefs; he asserts. Now consider interrogative utterances. When we ask questions, we seek to ascertain the addressee’s beliefs. Suppose John asks his wife Mary:

8. Did I drink a lot last night?

The topic of that question is Mary’s belief, not John’s. (The way for John to ask about his own beliefs is to ask *Do I think that I drank a lot?*). In 8 John is not asking about his beliefs; rather, he is asking about his drinking habits, according to Mary. What is the structure of Mary’s belief? It contains the believer Mary; her acquaintance relation to an individual; and the ‘drank a lot’ property. Her acquaintance relation is not identity, but rather the ‘husband’ relation, or perhaps the ‘interlocutor’ relation. Since the believer’s relation to John is not the identity relation, the object of belief that is being questioned in 8 is not a self-ascription.

With that as background, let us turn to the Newari conjunct-disjunct system, focusing on the verb phrases. An English predicate such as the VP *drank too much* denotes a property that can be used either for self-ascription (ascription under an acquaintance relation of identity), for

unknowing ascription to oneself (the lampshade scenario), or for ascription to others. Such a VP is simply unspecified as to whether it can function as a self-ascribed or a non-self ascribed property. Now let us suppose that the Newari conjunct verb morphology (-*ā*) marks the verb phrase for self-ascription by its subject. That is, the VP *a:pwa twan-ā* in 1a and 2b represents the ‘drank a lot’ property under the ‘self’ acquaintance relation, so a sentence with conjunct verb marking reports a self-ascription by the verb’s subject participant. That subject can be in first, second, or third person (see 1a, 2b, and 3a, respectively), as long as the conditions of that sentence support the self-ascription interpretation.

This hypothesis applies to uses of conjunct marking as follows. A declarative utterance is a declaration of speaker belief, that is, an assertion. In a first person subject declaratives the speaker declares the belief that results from *self-ascribing* the VP-denoted property, so she uses the conjunct form in 1a/5a. In second or third person declaratives the speaker does not self-ascribe the property, but rather ascribes to the addressee or some other person, so the conjunct form is not used (1b,c).

As explained above, what is at stake in a question is the addressee’s beliefs. In a second person subject question the addressee is induced to declare the belief that results from *self-ascribing* the VP-denoted property if and only if she holds that belief. So in 2b, repeated here as 9, the conjunct form is used:

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

The function of a polarity question is to determine whether the addressee is prepared to ascribe the VP property to its subject. The addressee is being asked whether she would assent to a self-ascription of the ‘drink too much’ property, so the conjunct form is used.

In contrast, in a first person question such as 2a, no self-ascription is in question. When John asks Mary, ‘Did I drink too much last night?’, he may ascribe the ‘drank too much’ property to himself in order to conceptualize the proposition in question. But as explained above, that self-ascription is not the topic of his question. Obviously he is not asking Mary whether *she* self-ascribes the ‘drank too much’ property. Nor is he asking Mary whether *he* self-ascribes that property. He is asking whether *she* ascribes that property to *him*. So it is not a self-ascription that is in question, and for that reason the conjunct form is not used in a Newari first person question such as 2a.

Finally, the conjunct form is used in a report such as 3a (repeated here as 10):

10. Syām-ā a:pwa twan-ā hã.
Syam-ERG much drink-PST.CJ EVD
‘Syam_i said that he_i drank too much.’

This sentence reports a situation where Syam would be prepared to make a first person assertion (such as 1a/5a), hence it is a report of a self-ascription. The property denoted by the VP is a self-ascribed one, so the conjunct form is used.

In contrast, a simple third person sentence like ‘Syam drank too much’ or ‘He drank too much’ does not report on Syam’s self-ascription, hence it uses the disjunct form (1c above). Such a sentence does not report Syam’s beliefs or assertions at all, but rather it reports his drinking habits.

Summarizing, there are various linguistic situations involving self-ascription in different ways. In a simple first person declarative, the speaker self-ascribes a property. An interrogative utterance that questions whether the addressee self-ascribes a property naturally appears in the second person. Finally, in a report of a self-ascription the subject may appear in any person. The present hypothesis is that the conjunct form is specialized for use as a self-ascription, hence it appears in just those contexts.

Predicates specialized for self-ascription have been identified before. Certain Japanese experiencer predicates, when used in simple declarative sentences, allow only first person subjects (8a) (Kuno 1973, Kuroda 1965). But in questions, they require second person subjects (5b):

11. a. {watasi/*anata/*kare}-wa samui desu.
 I/you/he-TOP cold COP
 ‘I’m cold.’
- b. {?watasi/anata/*kare}-wa samui desu ka?
 I/you/he-TOP cold COP Q
 ‘Are you cold?’

Experiencer predicates involve directly experienced emotions and sensations: *samui* ‘cold’, *sabisii* ‘lonely’, *atui* ‘hot’, and so on (McCready 2011, 2-3). These Japanese predicates are specified for self-ascription, or at least heavily favor it. Conjunct marking is a morphological category corresponding to this lexical class.

5. Volitional agent as self-ascriber

In the previous section we saw self-ascribers in several different roles: the role of the speaker (of a first person declarative), the role of the addressee (of a second person question), and the role of the logophoric agent in a speech act report. But we have omitted what is perhaps the most obvious role for a self-ascriber: the role of the participant in the event or state described in the sentence containing the conjunct verb. In this sentences 1-3, this would be the role of the ‘drinker’. After all, conjunct marking appears on the verb meaning ‘drink’, so on the hypothesis that conjunct marking indicates self-ascribed properties, one might expect that the subject of that verb is the one self-ascribing the property.

Of course, if that subject is first person then it may seem that saying that the *drinker* self-ascribes the ‘drank a lot’ property is similar to saying, as we did above, that the *speaker* self-ascribes the ‘drank a lot’ property. But there is a crucial difference. If the drinker self-ascribes that property, then he does so *in his role as drinker*. Suppose you go to a party, you drink a lot, and while you are drinking a lot, you are perfectly aware that you are drinking a lot. Then during that party, you are self-ascribing the ‘drink a lot’ property. Performing an action knowingly in

this way is a condition for *intentional action*, specifically what Searle (1983) called ‘intention-in-action’.

Indeed, as noted above, conjunct marking in Newari is limited to verbs of intentional action. This includes verbs such as *twan-* ‘drink’ (1-3 above) and *wan-* ‘go’. Other verbs, such as *then-* ‘arrive’ and *thul-* ‘understand’, uniformly take the disjunct form. This suggests that, at least in Newari, the condition of self-ascription applies not only to the ‘epistemic authority’ (speaker of a declarative, addressee of a question, logophoric agent in a speech act report) but also to the agent of the action being reported. Not all conjunct-disjunct languages impose the same intentionality condition on conjunct marking; such conditions vary across languages. But it is striking that intentionality is one of the factors observed again and again in conjunct-disjunct languages. It is significant that intentionality can be derived as a side-effect of the self-ascription condition applying to the agent.

Intentionality is one of the factors conditioning the conjunct-disjunct alternation cross-linguistically; others include speaker surprise (mirativity), irony, and ignorance. In the next section we explore the idea that these various observed factors can be derived as pragmatic-side effects of the present self-ascription based account, taking Tsafiki (Barbacoan) and Lhasa Tibetan as examples.

5. Side-effects of self-ascription: mirativity, intentionality, ignorance, and irony

Mirativity is a grammatical encoding of “the status of the proposition with respect to the speaker’s overall knowledge structure” (DeLancey 1997, 3). A mirative marker indicates speaker surprise: a contrast or incongruity between the speaker’s prior assumptions and information in the utterance reflecting her immediate experiences in the utterance context. Conjunct-disjunct systems have been analyzed as mirativity systems, where the *disjunct* form is the mirative marker.

While dedicated mirative morphology is attested, mirative interpretations are also known to arise as a pragmatic side-effect of evidential systems (Aikhenvald 2004; Peterson 2012). An ‘indirect evidence’ evidential form, normally reserved for information for which the speaker has not witnessed direct evidence, can often be used when the evidence is obvious and present in the immediate utterance context. In such cases the effect is one of speaker surprise at that new evidence, a mirative use of the evidential. I will suggest that in addition to evidential systems, self-ascription systems (i.e. conjunct-disjunct systems) also give rise to mirative interpretations as side-effects.

In the literature, conjunct-disjunct marking is often associated with the notion of mirativity. Indeed, conjunct-disjunct systems have been analyzed as essentially mirative systems. DeLancey (1997, 44) saw conjunct-disjunct marking in Lhasa Tibetan as ‘a grammaticalization of the old vs. assimilated knowledge distinction’, and identified the disjunct forms in Lhasa Tibetan as mirative forms. Similarly, in her study of Tsafiki (Barbacoan), Dickinson (2000) prefers the terms *congruent-noncongruent* to conjunct-disjunct. The *congruent* form ‘indicates that the information contained in the proposition is congruent with the speaker’s general knowledge. “Noncongruent” indicates that the information is not congruent.’ (C. Dickinson 2000, 383)

After reviewing the basic conjunct-disjunct pattern of Lhasa Tibetan and Tsafiki, we will see the evidence that led Delancey and Dickinson, respectively, to see the conjunct-disjunct systems of those languages as fundamentally mirative systems. Then I will consider how their data might instead be explained as a consequence of the view that conjunct marking semantically encodes self-ascription.²

² However, see Curnow (2001) for further arguments against DeLancey’s proposal that conjunct-disjunct systems are grammaticalizations of mirativity. Many of Curnow’s arguments are highly relevant here.

Delancey establishes that Lhasa Tibetan has a conjunct-disjunct systems: the copula takes a special form in first person statements (9), second person questions (10), and logophoric speech reports (11).

12. Lhasa Tibetan declaratives

- a. nga bod=pa yin
 I Tibetan(person) be/CJ
 ‘I am a Tibetan.’
- b. kho bod=pa red
 he Tibetan be/DJ
 ‘He is a Tibetan.’
- c. khyed=rang-gis/khos byas-pa red
 you-ERG/he:ERG did-PERF DJ
 ‘You/he did it.’ (DeLancey 1992: 42–45)

13. Lhasa Tibetan questions (DeLancey 1992, 43)

- a. khyed=rang bod-pa yin pas?
 you Tibetan be/CJ INT
 ‘Are you a Tibetan?’
- b. nga rgya=mi red pas?
 I Chinese:person be/DJ INT
 ‘Am I a Chinese?’

14. Lhasa Tibetan speech reports

- a. khos kho bod=pa yin zer=gyis
he-ERG he Tibetan be/CJ say=IMPERF
'He_i says that he_i is Tibetan.'
- b. khos kho bod=pa red zer=gyis
he-ERG he Tibetan be/DJ say=IMPERF
'He_i says that he_j is Tibetan.'

Dickinson established a similar pattern for Tsafiki: the verb takes a special form in first person statements (12), second person questions (13), and logophoric speech reports (14).

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.'

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

1MASC 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?’

17. Tsafiki speech reports (Dickinson 2000, 385)

a. ya mantoka jiyoe tie

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.’

Tsafiki exhibits the interrogative flip pattern: the same form for first person declaratives, second person interrogatives, and de se reports. It differs from some conjunct/disjunct languages in that the disjunct form is found only in first person interrogatives, with an unmarked form in the other cells, as shown in Table 2.

	Declarative	Interrogative
1st person	CJ (congruent)	DJ (non-congruent)
2nd person	∅	CJ (congruent)
3rd person	∅	∅

Table 2. Conjunct (CJ), disjunct (DJ), and unmarked (∅) Tsafiki verbs

As noted above, Dickinson prefers the terms congruent and non-congruent for what I am calling conjunct and disjunct, and indeed the systems differ as shown in Table 2. But I will still use the terms conjunct-disjunct since the conjunct form exhibits the interrogative flip pattern. Using that

terminology, we may say that both Lhasa Tibetan and Tsafiki have the characteristic conjunct-disjunct type pattern.

First person declaratives normally appear in the conjunct form (12a, 15a). Interestingly, as pointed out by Dickinson, both languages also allow the exceptional use of the *disjunct* form in a *first person declarative*, to indicate ‘surprise, accident, ignorance or irony.’ (Dickinson 2000, 389). In what follows, I will review some of the examples presented by Delancey and Dickinson, and then attempt to account for these effects under the present self-ascription based analysis.

Consider first speaker surprise. Lhasa Tibetan sentence 18a is a simple neutral report by the speaker that she has money. But the Lhasa Tibetan speaker in 18b is surprised to discover, just now, that she has money (Delancey 1992, 43-44).

18. a. ngar dngul tog=tsam yod.
 I.DAT money some EXIST.CJ
 ‘I have some money.’

 b. ngar dngul tog=tsam ’dug.
 I.DAT money some EXIST.DJ
 ‘I have some money!’ (DeLancey 1992: 43–44).

Delancey analyzed this disjunct form as a mirative, a marker of speaker surprise.

How can we explain this ‘mirative’ effect under the present analysis? The conjunct form in 18a indicates self-ascription, as usual: the speaker self-ascribes the ‘have money’ property. The ‘have money’ state, whether the one depicted in 18a or 18b, includes the present moment, due to the present tense, and it is naturally assumed to extend into the past (the recent past, at least). After all, we do not expect money to suddenly, magically materialize in our pockets, and that sort of magic is not the source of the surprise reported in 18b. Rather, she already had the money, but during that recent past she did not know she had it. Therefore, during most of the period described by the sentence, the speaker of 18b would *not* assent to the sentence ‘I have money’. The state described by the sentence covers the recent past, but during that time the money-haver does *not* self-ascribe the ‘have money’ property. So the conjunct form is avoided. On the other hand, if she knew all along that she had money, then she was prepared to self-ascribe the ‘have money’ property all along and so the conjunct form is preferred, as in 18a.

Note, incidentally, that a similar analysis could apply to the mirativity that arises as a side-effect of evidential systems. The ‘indirect evidence’ evidential is used despite the obvious presence of immediate sensory evidence in the speech context, and the effect is mirativity.

Suppose the evidential marker indicates that during *most of* (much of, etc.) the period of the situation described by the sentence, the speaker lacked direct sensory evidence. It follows that the present sensory evidence must be new information that is incongruous with the background knowledge. Indeed, in his careful study of the evidential-mirative effect, Peterson (2012) observes that it is not the proposition itself that is surprising in these utterances, but rather what he calls the *new environmental information*.

Now consider intentional action, as in this contrast from 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.’

Using her terms congruent and noncongruent for what we have been calling conjunct and disjunct respectively, Dickinson (2000, 387) describes these sentences this way:

The congruent form [(19a)] would be uttered in a situation where the speaker intentionally cut someone. The noncongruent form [(19b)] would be produced in a context where the speaker swung the machete and accidentally cut someone.

On the present self-ascription based account, we ask whether the machete-wielding agent would agree with the first person sentence, during the act of wielding the machete. Could he have been thinking *'I'm cutting him with a machete'*— or not? If he had such a thought, then he was self-ascribing the 'cut him with a machete' property, and so the conjunct form is appropriate for reporting that event, as in 19a. If not, then a disjunct form must be used, as in 19b. That seems to capture the contrast described in the above quote.

It is not clear how this contrast would follow from a standard 'mirative' analysis of conjunct-disjunct, according to which the conjunct and disjunct forms indicate information consistent and inconsistent, respectively, with the *speaker's* background knowledge. Regardless of whether the cutting was intentional or accidental, the speaker surely

knows that he cut someone. After all, both 19a and 19b are reports of this injury. So the disjunct form, Dickinson's *noncongruent* form, is perfectly consistent with the background knowledge that the speaker brings to the utterance.

As Dickinson points out, the contrast is not a matter of volitionality per se, but rather whether the final result of the action correlates with the agent's intention. In the previous example, both sentences involve volitional action, but the question is whether the result was the intended one: 'The noncongruent form indicates the speaker volitionally performed the action of swinging the machete, but did not intend the final result.' (Dickinson 2000, 392) This distinction is illustrated even more clearly with another example. With the conjunct form (20a), the speaker intentionally threw out the paper. With the noncongruent form (20b), the speaker threw out some papers, but did not intend to throw out this specific paper.

20. a. tse pila kidoka keereyoe
tse pila kido=ka ke-ere-yo-e
1FEM paper skin=ACC throw-send-CJ-DECL
'I threw out the paper (intentionally).'

- b. tse pila kidoka keereie
 tse pila kido=ka ke-ere-i-e
 1FEM paper skin=ACC throw-send-DJ-DECL
 ‘I threw out the paper (unintentionally).’

As Dickinson (2000, 392) explains, ‘In both examples, the initiating action is intentional and volitional — the speaker was conscious and aware of performing the action. But with the noncongruent form, the final result does not correlate with the original intention.’

On the self-ascription analysis, the question once again is whether the agent self-ascribed the property expressed in the sentence. In either example, the agent might have been thinking ‘I am throwing out papers’. But the object nominal refers to a specific paper, so the question is whether he might have been 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 the conjunct form in reporting the event (20a). If not then the disjunct form is more appropriate (20b). The reason the notion ‘final result’ seems to be relevant is that the final result is defined by what the sentence describes.

On the present self-ascription analysis, the crucial factor is not intentionality per se, but rather whether the sentence is one that the participant would have assented to during the event. One place where the

two can be clearly teased apart is in verbs for bodily processes like vomiting, sneezing, yawning and so on. Such processes are normally not intentional, but the agent is surely conscious of them, so we predict that conjunct form should be possible. Indeed, Dickinson (2000, 403) reports conjunct forms (her congruent forms) with Tsafiki bodily process coverbs like *achi* ‘sneeze,’ *are* ‘burp,’ *jada* ‘yawn,’ *jeko* ‘hiccup,’ and *katsa* ‘vomit.’ For example, seakers offered conjunct forms for ‘vomit’, explaining that ‘one has a sense of nausea before one vomits’, and only after being presented with a scenario where someone vomits suddenly without warning did they accept a disjunct form, in a dative construction that literally means ‘vomit came out of me’. Dickinson (2000, 403) observes that ‘The distinction between the two forms is not so much one of control, but rather between premonitory consciousness and surprise.’ This is exactly what is expected on the self-ascription analysis. Once again, it is important to keep in mind that the ‘surprise’ here is not speaker surprise: the speaker is not indicating, by avoiding the conjunct form, that she is surprised, at the time of utterance, to learn that she vomited. Rather, she is reporting that when she vomited, it surprised her.

Next consider a case described as involving irony. The context for Tsafiki example 17a is that a Tsachi woman was complimented for her prowess in soccer. Someone said she played like a man and she uttered

17a, ‘ironically with a shrug of the shoulders.’ (Dickinson 2000, 388) In contrast, 17b is a simple statement of fact.

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.’

On the present view, the use of the disjunct form in 17a reflects the fact that the predicate is not actually a self-ascription by the speaker. 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.

Another of Dickinson’s (2000, 386) examples involves declaratives with the grammatically third person subject *Tsachila* ‘the Tsachila (people)’. In a sentence meaning ‘In those days they say the Tsachila used to eat snakes’, the verb does not appear in the conjunct

form. But in a sentence meaning ‘Nowadays (we) Tsachila don’t eat snakes’, the conjunct form is used. Dickinson observes that in the latter case, ‘the speaker is a knowledgeable member of the group’ denoted by the subject. In that case the speaker would self-ascribe the ‘don’t eat snakes’ property (while also ascribing it to other members of the Tsachila group), so the conjunct form is expected.

Finally let us consider an example illustrating ‘ignorance’. Dickinson describes a scene in which she pointed at the stars, but was stopped by a young Tsachi girl, who told her never to do that. Dickinson contrasts two sentences, one with the modifier ‘not knowing it was wrong’ appearing in disjunct form, and the other without the modifier, in conjunct form:

22. a. 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.’

On the self-ascription account the question, as always, is whether the agent might have uttered (or thought) the sentence while performing the action. A sentence like ‘Not knowing it is wrong, I am pointing at the stars’ is hardly coherent, at least not in English, since *know* is factive. (One cannot assert that one does not know that a proposition *p* is true, since *x doesn’t know p* presupposes that *p*.) So a modifier like ‘not knowing that *p*’ cannot be in the scope of a conjunct marker, which explains the lack of conjunct marking in 22a.

Summarizing, in Lhasa Tibetan and Tsafiki, first person statements normally take the conjunct verb form. But the disjunct form can be used instead, giving rise to interesting pragmatic effects involving ‘surprise, accident, ignorance or irony.’ (Dickinson 2000, 389) Each of these effects can be explained on the assumption that the conjunct marking is specialized for reports of self-ascriptions, where the self-ascriber is crucially designated as a participant in the described situation. Like the mirative analysis, this analysis is related to the knowledge state of the speaker (or other ‘epistemic authority’). However, on the present analysis,

what is relevant is the knowledge state of the speaker *in his role as a participant in the described situation*— not the knowledge state of the speaker within the speech situation.

Conclusion

Dickinson (2011, 2) describes the Tsafiki conjunct forms (her *congruent* forms), as indicating that ‘the informant was a knowing conscious participant’ in the situation described in the clause. This paper is an attempt to relate the semantics of ‘the knowing conscious participant’ to the notion of self-ascription of properties by the participant. Crucially, the dimension of ‘knowing and conscious participation’ describes the mental state of the participant, while the notion of ‘mirativity’, as that term is normally used, relates to the mental state of the speaker instead.

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