Logophoricity and complement pronominalization with German relational nouns (and other complex nominals)
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0. Introduction and main claims

- A proviso
- This talk deals with German sentences as in (1) and (2).

(1)   **Context:** Sertab and Paul have night vision devices, and they are watching an intruder in the pitch dark warehouse that they are supposed to guard. They can see that the intruder is likely to run into a box in front of him. The intruder brought no light, he can see nothing. Sertab says to Paul:

Wird er gegen die Kiste vor ihm/*sich stoßen?
'Will he run into the box in front of him?'

(2)   **Context:** Sertab and Paul are watching an intruder in the brightly lit warehouse that they are supposed to guard. They can see that the intruder is likely to run into a box in front of him, even though he can clearly see the box. Sertab says to Paul:

Wird er gegen die Kiste vor ihm/sich stoßen?
'Will he run into the box in front of him?'

- I will claim that German may not just signal logophoricity/perspective-taking at the level of CPs, but also at the level of DPs.

- Just like the content of CPs can be encoded in language as represented in the mind of conscious protagonists, so can the content(=the reference) of DPs.

- I will identify *selbst* 'self' and, under certain circumstances, *sich* as morphemes with a logophoric presupposition.

- The rest is a total mess.

1. Background on German pronouns and *selbst*

- German, like most other European languages, has morphologically simplex SE reflexives (Reinhart & Reuland 1993).

- English has SELF reflexives, i.e. the reflexive pronoun of English has the emphatic particle *self* conventionally built into it.

- This contrast leads to more finegrained distinctions in pronominal paradigms of European languages other than English.

- The exact distribution of some of these pronominal forms has never been investigated (but cf. Kiss 2012).

- Here's a first summary of the forms that German has at its disposal. I mostly restrict my attention to the **accusative/dative of the third person singular**. (I submit that plural forms behave alike, but I haven't tested that in each case.)

	PRONOMINAL forms	*sich* forms
SIMPLEX	*ihn/ihm* (msc.) *sie/ihr* (fem.) *es/ihm* (ntr.)	*sich*
COMPLEX	*ihn selbst/ihm selbst* (msc.) *sie selbst/ihr selbst* (fem.) *es selbst/ihm selbst* (ntr.)	*sich selbst*

Table 1: Simplex and *selbst*-augmented accusative/dative singular 3rd person pronouns of German

- In normal argument positions, these *selbst*-augmented forms don't do much work.

- As Eckardt (2001) and Hole (2002, 2008) point out, *selbst* in them denotes the identity function. Under stress, this makes available relational alternative concepts with an argument slot for the referent of the deaccented pronoun.

(3)   [About Angela Merkel:]
        *Ich will **sie selbst** treffen, nicht **ihren Sprecher**.*
        $^?$'I want to meet her **herself**, not **her speaker**.'

(4)   [[*die Kanzlerin selbst*]]=[[***selbst***]]([[*die Kanzlerin*]])
        = λx_e **. x**(Angela Merkel)=Angela Merkel

(5)   [[*den Sprecher der Kanzlerin*]]=[[*den Sprecher*]]([[*der Kanzlerin*]])
         λx_e **. the speaker of x**(Angela Merkel)=the speaker of Angela Merkel
        =Steffen Seibert

- *Selbst* augmenting normal pronouns in argument positions does not alter binding relations.

(6)   *Sertab$_i$ sah sich$_i$ /*[sie (selbst)]$_i$ im Spiegel.*
       'Sertab saw herself in the mirror.'

(7)   *Paul$_i$ zwickte sich$_i$/*ihn (selbst)$_i$.*
       'Paul pinched himself.'

- It will be our constant pain in the following sections to determine whether *ihn selbst* does perspectivizing work in some environments, or whether we are dealing with more instantiations of the information-structural effect illustrated in (3).

2. DP-internal pronominalization in German
2.1 Picture nouns

- The situation is different in the complement position of relational nouns if the complement is a variable bound by the local DP or CP subject.

(8)   a.   DP-INTERNAL ANTECEDENT
           [*Pauls$_i$ Bild von sich$_i$/ihm selbst$_i$/*ihm$_i$*] *wurde verkauft.*
           'Paul's picture of himself was sold.'

      b.   CLAUSAL SUBJECT ANTECEDENT
           Wird Paul$_i$ [*das Bild von sich$_i$/*ihm$_i$/ihm selbst$_i$*] *(ver)kaufen?*
           'Will Paul buy/sell the picture depicting himself?'

_____

      c.   NO SYNTACTIC ANTECEDENT
           [*Das Bild von *sich$_i$/ihm$_i$/$^{d.n.a.}$ihm selbst$_i$*] *hing in Pauls$_i$ Wohnzimmer.*
           'The picture of him$_i$ was hanging in Paul's$_i$ living-room.'

	DP-INTERNAL ANTECEDENT	CLAUSAL SUBJECT ANTECEDENT	NO SYNTACTIC ANTECEDENT
sich	✓	✓	*
ihm	*	*	✓
ihm selbst	✓	✓	d.n.a.

Table 2: Pronominalization in N complements (picture nouns)

Sich and *ihm selbst* alternate in binding contexts in complements of picture nouns. (To the best of my knowledge, this is a new descriptive generalization.)

2.2. Propositional nouns

- With propositional nouns like *Gerücht* 'rumor', *Witz* 'joke' or *Geschichte* 'story', perspectivization kicks in with pronominal complements.
- Again, to the best of my knowledge, this is a new observation.
- Let's begin with examples where all three forms are good. I will return to these examples below.

(9)   a. *Er$_i$ war durch* [*das Gerücht über sich$_i$/ihn$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$*] *überrascht.*
       'Paul was surprised about the rumor about himself.'
    b. *War er$_i$ durch* [*das Gerücht über sich$_i$/ihn$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$*] *überrascht?*
       'Was Paul surprised about the rumor about himself?.'

- I deliberately chose a psych verb in (9). In (10)-(12) we get to see examples with a non-psych verb. Non-psych verbs do not entail anything about the mental representation of the reported event in a referent that is encoded as one of the arguments of the verb.
- And here we do get a relevant contrast.

(10)   [Paul is totally unaware of the fact that there's this rumor about him that most people know about.]
    Natürlich wird er durch dieses Gerücht über ihn$_i$/*sich$_i$/$^{d.n.a.}$ihn selbst$_i$ geschädigt.
    'Of course he$_i$ has disadvantages from this rumor about him$_i$ circulating among people.'

☞ Proposition and discourse referent not mentally represented in Paul.

(11)   [Paul knows very well that there's this rumor about him that most people know about. And he knows …]
    [Paul weiß, dass es dieses Gerücht über ihn gibt und dass die meisten Leute es kennen. Und er weiß…]
    … dass er durch dieses Gerücht über ihn$_i$/sich$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$ geschädigt wird.
    'Of course he$_i$ had disadvantages from this rumor about him$_i$ circulating among people.'

☞ Proposition and discourse referent mentally represented in Paul.

(12)   [Paul knows very well that there's this rumor about him that most people know about. But he doesn't know …]
    [Paul weiß, dass es dieses Gerücht über ihn gibt und dass die meisten Leute es kennen. Aber er weiß nicht,…]
    … dass er durch dieses Gerücht über ihn$_i$/sich$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$ geschädigt wird.

☞ Discourse referent mentally represented in Paul. Proposition not mentally represented in Paul.

	CP VALIDATED	PROPOSITIONAL DP VALIDATED	NO DP/CP VALIDATION
sich	✓	✓	*
ihn	✓	✓	✓
ihn selbst	✓	✓	d.n.a.

Table 3: Pronominalization in N complements (propositional nouns)

With propositional nouns, DP-internal *sich* and *ihn selbst* alternate, and both signal DP or CP validation.
Ihn is just compatible with DP and CP validation.
(To the best of my knowledge, these are new generalization.)

- Returning to (9):

(13) a. *Er$_i$ war durch [das Gerücht über $^{+/-FID}$sich$_i$/$^{-FID}$ihn$_i$/$^{+FID}$ihn selbst$_i$] überrascht.*
(=(9)) 'Paul was surprised about the rumor about himself.'
    b. *War er$_i$ durch [das Gerücht über sich$_i$/$^?$*ihn$_i$$^{-FID}$/ihn selbst$_i$] überrascht?*
    'Was Paul surprised about the rumor about himself?.'

Note that even on [–FID] readings of (13a), the DP referent is always validated because of the psych verb semantics of *überrascht sein* 'be surprised about'. Table 3 captures (13) just like (10)-(12).

2.3 DPs with embedded locative PPs

- Our examples from the introduction again (non-propositional DP referent located in space)

(13) **Context:** Sertab and Paul have night vision devices, and they are watching an intruder in the pitch dark warehouse that they are supposed to guard. They can see that the intruder is likely to run into a box in front of him. The intruder brought no light, he can see nothing. Sertab says to Paul:

    *Wird er gegen die Kiste vor ihm/*sich$^{/d.n.a.}$ihm selbst stoßen?*
    'Will he run into the box in front of him?'

(14) **Context:** Sertab and Paul are watching an intruder in the brightly lit warehouse that they are supposed to guard. They can see that the intruder is likely to run into a box in front of him, even though he can clearly see the box. Sertab says to Paul:

Wird er gegen die Kiste vor ihm/sich/^{dna}ihm selbst stoßen?
'Will he run into the box in front of him?'

	LOCATUM DP VALIDATED	LOCATUM DP NOT VALIDATED
sich	✓	*
ihm	✓	✓
ihm selbst	d.n.a	d.n.a.

Table 4: Pronominalization in DP-internal locative PPs

3. The status of *selbst*

- What to do about *ihn selbst* in our special contexts?

option 1: treat all *ihn selbst* occurrences as normal uses as illustrated in (15) (=(3))

(15) [About Angela Merkel:]
*Ich will **sie selbst** treffen, nicht **ihren Sprecher**.*
$^?$'I want to meet her **herself**, not **her speaker**.'

BUT: there are cases where adding *selbst* really seems to change grammaticality, and not just felicity.

(16) DP-INTERNAL ANTECEDENT
[*Pauls$_i$ Bild von sich$_i$/ihm selbst$_i$/*ihm$_i$*] *wurde verkauft.*
'Paul's picture of himself was sold.'

option 2: treat all *ihn selbst*s as deriving perspectivized nouns, where perspectivization may mean different things. Cf. (17) vs. (18).

(17) CLAUSAL SUBJECT ANTECEDENT + PICTURE NOUN
(=8b) *Wird Paul$_i$ [das Bild von sich$_i$/*ihm$_i$/ihm selbst$_i$] (ver)kaufen?*
'Will Paul buy/sell the picture depicting himself?'

(18) DP VALIDATION + PROPOSITIONAL NOUN
(=11) [Paul knows very well that there's this rumor about him that
       most people know about. And he knows …]
       [Paul weiß, dass es dieses Gerücht über ihn gibt und dass die meisten
       Leute es kennen. Und er weiß…]
       *… dass er durch dieses Gerücht über ihn$_i$/sich$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$ geschädigt
       wird.*
       'Of course he$_i$ had disadvantages from this rumor about him$_i$ circulating
       among people.'
BUT: there are cases in which it appears to be so obvious that *selbst* is used as in run-of-the-mill cases.

(19) [Paul knows very well that there's this rumor about him that most people know about. But he doesn't know …]

[Paul weiß, dass es dieses Gerücht über ihn gibt und dass die meisten Leute es kennen. Aber er weiß nicht,…]

… dass er durch dieses Gerücht über ihn$_j$/sich$_i$/ihn selbst$_i$ geschädigt wird.

option 3: treat some *ihn selbst*s as normal uses, and others as doing something else

	DP-INTERNAL ANTECEDENT	CLAUSAL SUBJECT ANTECEDENT	NO SYNTACTIC ANTECEDENT
sich	✓	✓	*
ihm	*	*	✓
ihm selbst	✓	✓	(✓)

Table 2': Pronominalization in N complements (picture nouns)
reflexivization: distribution like *sich*

	CP VALIDATED	PROPOSITIONAL DP VALIDATED	NO DP/CP VALIDATION
sich	✓✓	✓✓	*
ihn	✓	✓	✓
ihn selbst	✓✓	✓✓	(✓)

Table 3': Pronominalization in N complements (propositional nouns)
perspectivization: distribution like *sich*

	LOCATUM DP VALIDATED	LOCATUM DP NOT VALIDATED
sich	✓	*
ihm	✓	✓
ihm selbst	(✓)	(✓)

Table 4': Pronominalization in DP-internal locative PPs
run-of-the-mill: distribution like *ihm*

Selbst is like a chameleon.
    reflexivizer in picture nouns
    perspectivizer in propositional nouns
    run-of-the-mill intensifier in DP-internal locative PPs

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4. Conclusions

- Trying to elucidate the distribution of *selbst* in non-canonical binding contexts of German, I caused a big mess.

- My intuition tells me that *selbst* has three functions:
  (i)   reflexivizing
  (ii) perspectivizing
  (iii) normal identitity function uses under stress.

- My intuition as a researcher tells me that this is not a very neat result.

- But then again, if *selbst* always denotes the identity function (which amounts to having no truth-conditional meaning at all), then it will be the perfect carrier for presuppositions of different kinds.

- At least the perspectivizing function may then be said to be lexically parasitic on the identity function in those cases in which we see a perspectivizing function.

- Hole (2002) aimed at classifying non-canonical uses of *x-self* in argument positions in English.

(19)   *Harry watched the Hermione in the pumpkin patch throw the Invisibility Cloak over* **himself** *and Ron.*

- He found the following functions:

  (i)   perspectivizing (logophoric/somatophoric)
  (ii) identity function under stress
  (iii) facilitating co-reference with disfavored antecedents
  (iv) enabling appositive readings of *like* x-*self*
        [*Even Muggles like yourself/Even Muggles, and you are a Muggle, should be celebrating this happy, happy day!*]
  (v)   smoothing out dispreferred phonological patterns (avoids crowding)

- Maybe it's worthwhile to go back and compare the two languages even more closely.

- But we certainly need more corpus data and experimental data.

References

Hole, D. 2002. Spell-bound? Accounting for unpredictable *self*-forms in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter stories. *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 50(3), 285-300.

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