

## DIFFERENT TASKS MODULATE THE LOCALITY BIAS IN REFLEXIVE RESOLUTION IN MANDARIN

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**Introduction** Most experimental studies on the interpretation of Mandarin reflexives *ziji* ('self') and *ta-ziji* ('pronoun-self') using self-paced reading and acceptability judgment (e.g., Dillon et al.'14, 16'; Wang'17; Lyu & Kaiser'23) find that Mandarin speakers prefer local binding for both reflexives. This locality bias is often attributed to the activation of the structural locality constraint, as by default these reflexives are presumably analyzed as syntactic anaphors (e.g., syntax-first account). However, working memory factors such as the recency bias (distinct from the notion of structural locality) may play a highly prominent role in these text-only-based experiments. Thus, examining whether the structural locality bias for *ziji* and *ta-ziji* still exists using other types of experiments is important for (psycho-)linguistic research.

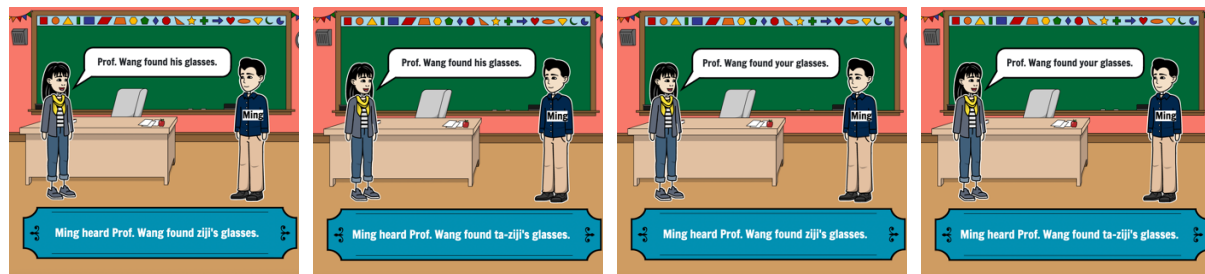
To foreground our conclusions, we discovered that Mandarin speakers prefer local binding for *ziji* and *ta-ziji* alike in the self-paced reading and acceptability judgment tasks but show divergent patterns in a picture-based truth value judgment task where *ziji* tends to be reserved for non-local use and *ta-ziji* tends to be used for local binding.

**Methods** The self-paced reading (Exp.1, 28 participants) and acceptability judgment (Exp.2, 42 participants) tasks used the same sentences (24 targets, fillers included for all experiments). We manipulated the animacy of the local/non-local antecedent to control the binding distance between the animate-compatible reflexive and its antecedent (see (1a-b)). In Exp.1, the critical region is (*ta-*)*ziji*-GEN.

(1) a. Radio station say **journalist** reveal-ASP *ziji/ta-ziji*-GEN interview purpose. (Local)

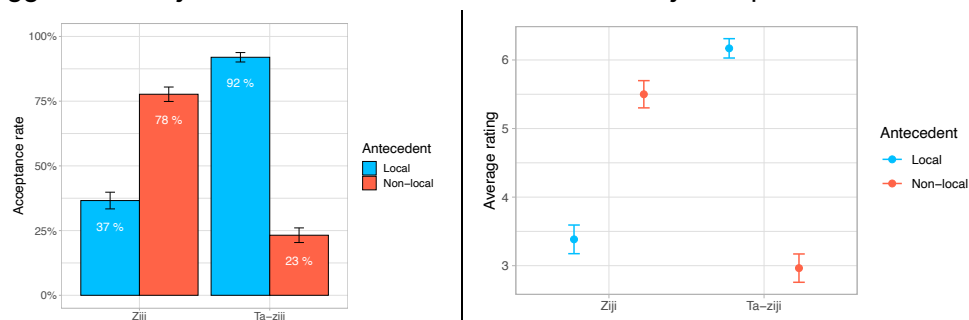
b. **Journalist** say radio station reveal-ASP *ziji/ta-ziji*-GEN interview purpose. (Non-local)

In the picture-based truth value judgment task (Exp.3, 33 participants), participants judged (categorically and numerically) whether the statement below the scene (white text in blue box) is a correct or incorrect summary of the conversation. See (2) for one example (conversations transliterated to English) of the 16 target sets.



Conditions from left to right: local/*ziji*; local/*ta-ziji*; non-local/*ziji*; non-local/*ta-ziji*

**Results** For brevity, we report main findings. As expected, the self-paced reading study shows that participants prefer local binding, as (1b) leads to reading slowdowns ( $p < 0.05$ , *lmer* in R) at the final region (i.e., 'purpose.') for both reflexives. This locality/recency bias was replicated by the acceptability judgment study with the same stimuli (main effect of distance,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, the picture-based truth value judgment task shows a different pattern (shown below), which suggests that *ziji* fits the non-local use better and *ta-ziji* has predominant local use.



(Left: proportions of TRUE answers; right: the higher the rating, the more TRUE the statement)