

# The inventory structure of Person in the Chinese dialect of Puxian

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One way to classify person systems across languages is by means of the semantic category of person and/or number, where person forms, with distinct referential values, are supposed to be in complementary distribution to each other. However, when we look into some finer details in a language-particular person system, i.e. that of the Puxian dialect in Chinese, there are person forms or expressions that are engaged in supplementary distribution and have meanings beyond what is literally said (Grice 1989). Different from previous approaches, which tended to analyze a person system into separate domains of study, e.g. reflexivity, intensification, logophoricity, empathy, etc., the author proposes that all the person-related meanings (semantics & pragmatics) constitute a “function inventory”, which has a stable structure called “inventory structure”. In the structure, each of the overtly expressed person meanings is assigned to a choice of node, from which multiple outcomes can be developed. The significance of this approach is that it tries to circumvent some pre-established categories and focuses instead on meaningful differences in a system (Sausurre 1983).

**Keywords:** Puxian dialect, person, functional inventory, inventory structure

## 1. Introduction

When it comes to the classification of person systems in languages, one common approach is through the distinctions between the semantic category of *person* and/or *number* among person forms (Greenberg 1963; Ingram 1978). *Person* refers to the participants in speech act context, and *number* is on the distinction between one vs. more than one, as well as on different groupings of participants in the eye of the speaker. Thus, based on these two categories, some common person paradigms are found in Chinese languages, as shown below (see J. Wu 2013b: 395):

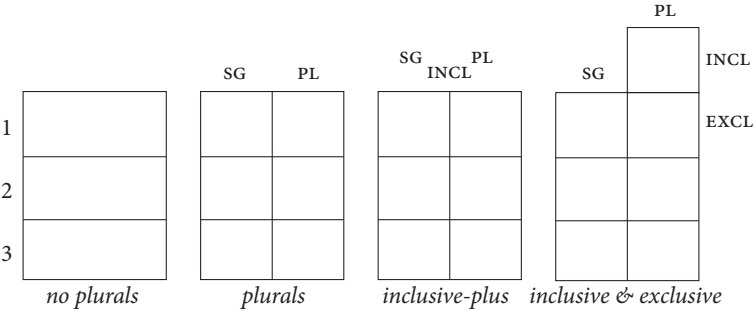


Figure 1. Four common person paradigms in Chinese

The above person paradigms are structurally different, ranging from no formal distinction in *number* to having separate forms of *inclusive* and *exclusive* in the first person complex. The *no plurals* paradigm is attested by ancient Chinese, where person forms have no singular vs. plural distinction,<sup>1</sup> as in (1a). The *plurals* paradigm is shown by the Changsha dialect of Xiang (Y. Wu 2005: 115), where there is a three-way distinction between the singulars and plurals, as in (1b). The *inclusive-plus* paradigm is illustrated by the Jiaochen dialect of Jin (Lu 2011: 8), where there is an inclusive form overlapping on the *plurals* paradigm, yet this inclusive is also used for the first person singular, as in (1c). The *inclusive & exclusive* paradigm is attested by the Huojia dialect in Central Plains Mandarin (He 1989: 263), where there is a dedicated inclusive form and exclusive form in the first person plurals, as in (1d).

- (1) a.

1 我 (wo)

2 汝 (ru)

3 之 (zhi)

(Ancient Chinese)
- b.

SG PL

1 ɲo<sup>41</sup> ɲo<sup>41</sup> mən

2 li<sup>41</sup> ɲi<sup>41</sup> mən

3 t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>33</sup> t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>33</sup> mən

(the Changsha dialect)
- c.

SG PL

tsa<sup>11</sup> (INCL) tsa<sup>11</sup> (INCL)

1 ɲəu<sup>423</sup> ɲa<sup>31</sup> mɔ<sup>3</sup>

2 ni<sup>423</sup> nie<sup>11</sup> mɔ<sup>3</sup>

3 t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>11</sup> t<sup>h</sup>a<sup>11</sup> mɔ<sup>3</sup>

uə<sup>31</sup> tɕia<sup>11</sup> uə<sup>31</sup> tɕia<sup>11</sup> mɔ<sup>3</sup>

(the Jiaochen dialect)

1. In Ancient Chinese, there were a number of characters used for the three-way person markings, such as the 1st person (吾 *wu*, 餘/予 *yu*, 朕 *zhen*, 卬 *ang*, 台 *tai*, etc.), the 2nd person (女/汝 *nü/ru*, 乃 *nai*, 爾 *er*, 若 *ruo*, etc.) and the 3rd person (厥 *jue*, 其 *qi*, 之 *zhi*, 旃 *zhan*, etc.). Although some of them differed in syntactic functions or were not dedicated personal pronouns, none was exclusively marked for plurals.

d.	SG	PL	(The Huojia dialect)
		<i>tsan</i> <sup>53</sup> <i>tou</i> (INCL)	
1	<i>uɿ</i> <sup>53</sup>	<i>an</i> <sup>53</sup> <i>tou</i> (EXCL)	
2	<i>ni</i> <sup>53</sup>	<i>nei</i> <sup>53</sup> <i>tou</i>	
3	<i>tʰa</i> <sup>53</sup>	<i>ʃ</i> <sup>31</sup> <i>tou</i>	

Aside from the *no plurals* paradigm, the other three paradigms are widely attested among Chinese dialects. For instance, the *plurals* paradigm is commonly seen in Xiang, Yue, Hakka, etc. The *inclusive-plus* paradigm is frequently seen in Jin, Wu, Gan, Hui, etc. The *inclusive & exclusive* paradigm is mostly seen in Northern Mandarin and Min, as well as in some dialect contact areas between Xiang, Gan, and Mandarin, e.g. the Changshou dialect or the Dazhi dialect (J. Wu 2013b).

The Puxian dialect to be discussed in this paper is one of the Min dialects, spoken mainly in the coastal areas of Fujian province in southeastern China. It appears to have the same *inclusive & exclusive* paradigm mentioned above, where the inclusive *na*<sup>42</sup> refers to the speaker and addressee and the exclusive *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> refers to the speaker and third party, as in (2):

(2)	SG	PL
		<i>na</i> <sup>42</sup> <sub>incl</sub>
1	<i>kua</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>kuoŋ</i> <sup>32</sup> <sub>excl</sub>
2	<i>ty</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>tyøŋ</i> <sup>32</sup>
3	<i>i</i> <sup>533</sup>	<i>yøŋ</i> <sup>21/32</sup>

The structuring of the above person paradigms is based on semantics (i.e. referential values), also known as “three persons, two numbers” in Chinese linguistics. Typologically, it is called “paradigmatic structure for person marking”, where cross-tabulations between *person* and *number* bring about person paradigms among languages (Cysouw 2009: 101–184; cf. Filimonova 2005: 399–424). Being “paradigmatic”, it means that person forms in a system are in complementary distribution to each other at certain syntactic slots.

Paradigmatic structures are, of course, useful for comparing person systems across languages. However, if we look into some finer details of the person system in Puxian, such structures are not adequate. Take 1st person singular *kua*<sup>21</sup> ‘I’ in Puxian for example. Interestingly, it can be expressed alternatively by six different person forms, as in (3):<sup>2</sup>

2. The first person singular can be pronounced as *kua*<sup>21</sup> or *gua*<sup>21</sup>, where there is a distinction between a voiceless and voiced initial consonant. It appears to be the individual’s style of pronunciation. The former notation is adopted here for it is commonly used for the Puxian dialect (see e.g. Cai 2006: 58). In the nearby Quanzhou dialect of Southern Min, it is noted as *gua*<sup>21</sup> (see e.g. Chen 2004: 5).

(3)	1SG	1SG+ INT	self	INCL	EXCL	person/people
	<i>kua</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>kua</i> <sup>21</sup> <i>kai</i> <sup>52</sup> <i>kua</i> <sup>21</sup> <i>naŋ</i> <sup>22</sup>	<i>kai</i> <sup>52</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>42</sup>	<i>kuoŋ</i> <sup>32</sup>	<i>naŋ</i> <sup>24</sup>

We see that, apart from *kua*<sup>21</sup> “I” in the first column, the other expressions can also be used for this reference of “I”, including the intensifier phrase, *kua*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup> “I self” or *kua*<sup>21</sup> *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> “I person”; the *self*-word, *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self”; the inclusive form, *na*<sup>42</sup> “we<sub>INCL</sub>” and the exclusive form, *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> “we<sub>EXCL</sub>”; the generalized noun *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> “person/people/others”. Although these alternative expressions are not dedicated first-person pronouns, they are frequently used by the native speakers as an alternative to the first person pronoun *kua*<sup>21</sup> in a variety of contexts. Such a phenomenon is also very common among Chinese dialects. For instance, in the Jiaochen dialect of Jin (spoken in Shanxi province in the north), the 1st person plural *ŋa*<sup>423</sup> and the inclusive *tsa*<sup>11</sup> are both used for singular address, and the generalized *man*-word *nia*<sup>11</sup> frequently replaces the 3rd person pronoun 他 *tʰa*<sup>11</sup> or 兀家 *uəŋ*<sup>31</sup> *teia*<sup>11</sup> in conversation (Lu 2011).<sup>3</sup> These alternative ways of person expressions remind us that Chinese speakers may choose one person form over another out of pragmatic reasons, not merely from the semantic ones.

The question we should address in this paper, then, is not so much about the paradigmatic structures that are based on semantics reference, as is about some broader structure that takes both semantics and pragmatics into account. To begin with, we need to assume that all the overtly expressed person meanings constitute a functional inventory. Moreover, the term “inventory” should have language-particular connotations in the sense that there are forms and meanings developed or owned by one language (see e.g. Liu 2011; cf. Deo 2015). Yet we are not satisfied with finding out various meanings in the inventory, but a step further, we suggest that this inventory is not a random collection of meanings, but is well organized with a stable structure, which is to be called “inventory structure” in this paper. Such a structure intends to consider various person-related meanings, showing how they are connected to each other as a system.<sup>4</sup>

For the benefit of the following discussion, we should present the key elements in this inventory structure, as in Figure 2:

3. According to Lu (2011: 13), 兀家 *uəŋ*<sup>31</sup> *teia*<sup>11</sup> is used far more frequently than Mandarin cognate of 他 *tʰa*<sup>11</sup>. The plural form 兀家們 *uəŋ*<sup>31</sup> *teia*<sup>11</sup> *məŋ*<sup>3</sup>, generally refers to someone who is not present at the scene of conversation, while 他們 *tʰa*<sup>11</sup> *məŋ*<sup>3</sup> refers to someone who is present. Differently, the choice of *nia*<sup>11</sup> ‘man/person’ for the 3rd reference is associated with such implicatures as *distancing*, *averseness*, or even *admiration*, etc.

4. “Inventory structure” can be the aggregate of available forms, meanings or both of them. In this paper, we focus on the functional part, i.e. meanings. There has been little study on how the meanings and/or forms in a language are organized as a system, especially taking semantics and pragmatics together into account.

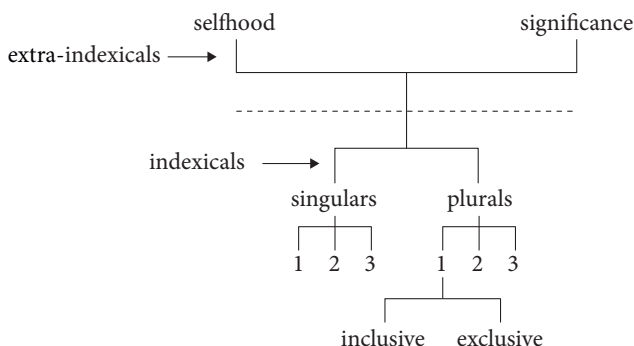


Figure 2. The inventory structure of person-related meanings in Puxian

We see that the inventory structure for person in Figure 2 is divided into two layers: *indexicals* and *extra-indexicals*. The underlying layer of indexicals are structured on the semantics of *person* and *number*, just like the paradigmatic structure in Figure 1. In contrast, the upper layer of extra-indexicals are not so much structured as they involve the two major functional nodes, i.e. *selfhood* and *significance*, each of which further bifurcates into different branches.<sup>5</sup> The person forms in this layer are enriched with the speaker's subjective attitudes and triggers a variety of implicatures in communication. We shall see how they are connected in detail in the following sections.

The data adopted in this paper are based on my fieldwork in the Puxian areas since 2008, especially in the city center of Xianyou County (仙遊縣). The transcriptions thus adhere to the phonological conventions of Xianyou County.<sup>6</sup> Most of the exemplar sentences come from natural conversations between elder Puxian speakers in Xianyou, for instance, the narration of a man who was visited by the local birth-control officials, as in (7a) or a woman who sold bee honey in the hills, as in (7b). In case some linguistic contexts exist but are hard to come by in natural data, e.g. the reflexive contexts<sup>7</sup> of (12–14), I resorted to elicitation so as to check their grammaticality.

My discussion is structured as follows: in § 2, I shall introduce the person forms under investigation and classify them into “indexicals” and “extra-indexicals”; In

5. The notion of inventory structure has been inspired by “decision tree” in statistics, which is a method used to calculate the probability of different outcomes. The similarity between them could be that they are paths one follows until he reaches the final outcomes.

6. The term, Puxian, actually came from Putian and Xianyou, which have been the centers of the areas in the past years.

7. Prototypical reflexive uses of *self*-words, i.e. being the object in a transitive clause, are rarely seen in many Chinese dialect grammars.

§ 3, I shall discuss the extra-indexicals from the upper layer with examples; in § 4, I shall summarize the functional inventory and discuss how this inventory is structured. Finally, some concluding remarks and implications are offered in § 5.

## 2. The person expressions under investigation

Puxian is one of the coastal varieties of Min, known as Coastal Min (Norman 1988: 232–233). Geographically, it is surrounded by Eastern Min in the north and Southern Min in the south, with frequent language contact between the two (see e.g. Li & Chen 1991: 58–138). The person expressions under investigation are listed below in (4):

### (4) Extra-indexicals:

- i. the *self*-expressions (*kai*<sup>52</sup>, *kai*<sup>24</sup>-, *kai*<sup>52</sup> *yai*<sup>21</sup>);
- ii. the *man*-expressions (*naŋ*<sup>24</sup>, *naŋ*<sup>22</sup>);
- iii. the *plurals* (*na*<sup>42</sup><sub>INCL</sub>, *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup><sub>EXCL</sub>, *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup>, *yøŋ*<sup>21/32</sup>)

### Indexicals:

- iv. SG (*kua*<sup>21</sup>, *ty*<sup>21</sup>, *i*<sup>533</sup>);
- v. PL (*na*<sup>42</sup><sub>INCL</sub>, *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup><sub>EXCL</sub>, *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup>, *yøŋ*<sup>21/32</sup>)

In (4), the three-way person forms, i.e. the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person singulars and plurals, are termed “indexicals”, for they are used literally for their conventional meanings. The expressions in the above, which are the focus of this study, are termed “extra-indexicals”. In this category, we include the *self*-expressions, *man*-expressions and the *plurals*. A speaker’s choice of them triggers a variety of implicatures, such as *uniqueness*, *significance*, *empathy*, *logophoricity*, *admiration*, etc. The *self*-expressions consist of the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self”, the clitic-like *kai*<sup>24</sup>- “self-” and the reduplicated *kai*<sup>52</sup> *yai*<sup>21</sup> “self-self”; the *man*-expressions include the independent *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> and the adnominal *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> (with low-level tone) and the *plurals* include the three-way person plurals yet for singular address.<sup>8</sup>

At first blush, the extra-indexicals do not appear to be linked at all, as they are semantically different. In fact, similar expressions in other languages have been subject to various domains of study. For instance, Brown & Gilman (1960: 254) suggest that plurality is a metaphor for social power, as is the case of *T* and *V* distinction in

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8. In terms of marking plurality, many Chinese dialects have an independent plural marker attached to the singular forms. Some are morpheme-like without content meanings, e.g. *men* in Mandarin, *te* in Wu dialects, etc. Some still retain nominal meanings, e.g. *kou nøyŋ* ‘every man’ in the Fuzhou dialect of Min. In the case of Puxian and the neighboring Quanzhou dialect of Southern Min, the plurals are monosyllabic, which may have been derived historically through fusion between the singulars and the word *naŋ/lan* ‘man/person’. Nowadays, in both Puxian and Quanzhou, the appositive use of *naŋ/lan* ‘man/person’ is for intensification, not a way of marking plurality (see § 3.2.2 below).

European languages (e.g. Latin *tu* and *vos*, French *tu* and *vous*, etc.), where the plural *V*-forms can refer to a reverential or powerful individual. Somewhat differently, Brown & Levinson (1987: 198) consider the use of plurals for singular address to be a pragmatic strategy for politeness. In addition, the *man*-expressions look very similar to the European impersonal pronouns, such as English *one*, German *man*, French *on*, etc. (Siewierska 2004: 236). The *self*-expressions, in terms of being an object in a transitive clause, are often termed *reflexive anaphors*, or if they do refer back to the matrix subject beyond the immediate clause, a term *long-distance reflexive* or *logophor* is used (see. e.g. Huang 1994). What is more, when they appear in the appositive or adverbial position, they are termed *adnominal intensifiers* with a function of “focused assertion/alternative-evoking” or *adverbial intensifiers* with the meanings of “alone/by self/ in person, etc.” (König & Gast 2006; J. Wu 2010).

Although it is a common practice for linguists to analyze linguistic phenomena into separate categories, one particular concern in this paper is whether independent categories, e.g. reflexives or intensifiers, may actually break what has been an integral system into separate pieces and keep a holistic picture of it even more obscure. In other words, provided that we have known very well the entry criteria for a category (e.g. what is prototypical and what is marginal), we are still clueless as to how this category may fit in well with the overall system. For example, Puxian *kai*<sup>52</sup> is frequently used as an agent in the subject position<sup>9</sup> but less often as a patient in the object position. Therefore, the best way to describe it is not to presume its status as an English-like reflexive pronoun or judge that it has been used “atypically” in the subject position, but rather we should begin by treating every one of its uses equally and then grasp an overall picture of them. In view of this, we may need the concept of “inventory” and “inventory structure”. The former refers to the available forms and/or meanings in a language and the latter refers to the meaningful differences between these forms and meanings, as well as how they can be connected and visualized as a whole.

### 3. Meanings beyond person and number: The extra-indexicals

Since indexicals, with distinct referential values and deictic functions, have been extensively studied in the past (e.g. Siewierska 2004; Bhat 2004, etc.). We shall concentrate more on the extra-indexicals in this paper. By looking closely at the minute details of them, we decide to classify them into two major branches, namely, *selfhood* and *significance*. A look at the former first.

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9. According to my data on the syntactic functions of Mandarin *ziji*, the subjectal uses are almost as frequent as the objectal ones.

### 3.1 Person meanings related to *selfhood*

The term *selfhood* is represented by the form *kai*, literally meaning “self”. *kai* has four different formal or structural realizations, i.e. the adnominal *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self”, the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self”, the clitic-like *kai*<sup>24</sup>- and the reduplicated *kai*<sup>52</sup> *yai*<sup>21</sup>. Although all of them mean “self” literally, the implicatures triggered are not the same, including *unique self*, *empathetic self*, *logophoric self*, *sameness of referents*, *reflexivity*, *enhanced reflexivity*, or *by self*, etc. The discussion below demonstrates how these meanings are distinguished and united under the notion of *selfhood*.

#### 3.1.1 *Unique self*

The term, *unique self*, is a combined meaning between the semantics (i.e. *self*) and pragmatics (i.e. *unique*), that is, the identity of *self* has a sense of *uniqueness*. Such a meaning is typically represented by two types of *self*-forms: the adnominal *kai*<sup>52</sup> and the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup>. In the linguistic literature, the adnominal *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self” may be termed “adnominal intensifier”, with the function of “evoking of alternatives to the referent of the NP they relate to”, and independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> may be termed “headless intensifier”, if the adjoining head NP is dropped in the argumental position (Parker et al. 1990; König & Siemund 2000a, 2000b, among others). However, in the case of Puxian, it may be premature to say that the basic function of the adnominal *kai*<sup>52</sup> is to “evoke alternatives” or the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> should be of intensifier or reflexive origin (see § 3.1.4 below). More appropriately, they should be regarded as extra-indexicals, which are in supplementary uses to the regular NPs. Thus for example:

- (5) a. *i*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup> *na*<sup>21</sup> *ts<sup>h</sup>aŋ*<sup>42</sup> *ts<sup>h</sup>aŋ*<sup>21</sup>, *p<sup>h</sup>ø*<sup>24</sup> *ha*<sup>42</sup> *tou*<sup>21</sup> *p<sup>h</sup>an*<sup>24</sup> *kua*<sup>21</sup>.  
 3sg self be poor-poor no solution help me  
 ‘He himself is poor and cannot help me.’  
 b. *ʔe*<sup>24</sup> *na*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup> *aŋ*<sup>24</sup> *mia*<sup>42</sup> *li*<sup>24</sup>, *kua*<sup>21</sup> *a*<sup>21</sup> *p<sup>h</sup>ø*<sup>24</sup> *ha*<sup>42</sup> *tou*<sup>21</sup>.  
 teacher self not-want come 1sg too no solution  
 ‘The teacher himself doesn’t want to come. I can do nothing about it.’

In (5), the appositive phrase “NP + *kai*<sup>52</sup>” is longer in form than the bare NP, *i*<sup>21</sup> “he” or *ʔe*<sup>24</sup> *na*<sup>21</sup> “teacher”, which signals an extra effort by the speaker to encode extra meanings. More specifically, the speaker conveys a message that the entity being referred to is somehow distinctively characteristic of itself, e.g. the subject being poor, as in (5a), or the subject making a decision not to come out of his own will, as in (5b). These meanings are contextual inferences and are subsumed under the more basic notion of *unique self*. Here, *unique* does not mean “sole” in the traditional sense of the word, but implicates a sense of “relational”, that is, the entity being depicted is not something/somebody else.



The independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> also attests such a meaning of *unique self*. In the following sentences, it is used contrastively with the *man*-word, *nan*<sup>24</sup>, as in (6a-b):

- (6) a. *u*<sup>11</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup> *pø*<sup>24</sup> *pe*<sup>22</sup>-*nan*<sup>24</sup>.  
 have self no other men  
 ‘One is selfish.’  
 Lit. ‘(You) have self but not others.’
- b. *kai*<sup>52</sup> *tia*<sup>24</sup> *tij*<sup>24</sup>, *nan*<sup>24</sup> *tia*<sup>24</sup> *kien*<sup>24</sup>.  
 self eat sweet, man eat salt  
 ‘One is comfortably fed while others suffer.’  
 Lit. ‘Self eats sweets, others eat salt.’

In (6), the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup> does not have a specific person referent, or it may have one but is context-dependent. The speaker chooses this form mainly to convey a sense of *unique self*, which is contrastively different from the other participant, i.e. *nan*<sup>24</sup> “others” in the same sentence. Thus, an implicature of “comparison/contrast” arises in the context. Therefore, we may say that these two meanings, i.e. *unique self* and *comparison/contrast* overlap, converging on the single form of *kai*<sup>52</sup> and the former appears to be more of the basic one that leads to the other.<sup>10</sup>

Since both *unique self* and *comparison/contrast* are frequently associated with the appositive or the independent *kai*<sup>52</sup>, we may view them as some frequently-implicated meanings (but less than “conventionally”),<sup>11</sup> both of which deserves a place of node in the inventory structure.

### 3.1.2 Sameness of referents

*Sameness of referents* is also regarded as an implicature associated with the form of *kai*<sup>52</sup>, indicating that it is an inferrable with forward (cataphoric) or backward/bridging (anaphoric) inference. Such an implicature is so frequently associated with *kai*<sup>52</sup> that it becomes the preferred meaning of it. In the following sentences, *kai*<sup>52</sup> is an agentive subject (an extra-indexical), which has the preferred meaning of *sameness of referents*.

10. In the field of social psychology, the concept of “*self*” is defined as “the person’s sense of unique identity differentiated from others” (Brewer & Gardner 1996). That is, an individual’s conception of selfhood stems from the comparison/contrast from others in his/her daily life. Cross-culturally, this is one of the source of the interpersonal patterns that characterize one’s social identities. In the case of Puxian, both *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self” and *nan*<sup>24</sup> “man/people/others” appear frequently in the subject or appositive position, thus forming a contrast between *self* and *others*, as in (6). This may be viewed as linguistically encoded *self* vs. *others* contrast, which has been talked about in social psychology.

11. Please refer to Davis (2012) or Horn (2013) on “what is conventionally implicated” for further details.

- (7) a. *liau* *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup><sub>i</sub> *na*<sup>24</sup> *phe*<sup>24</sup> *ts<sup>h</sup>iau*<sup>24</sup> *ka*<sup>21</sup>, *kai*<sup>42</sup><sub>i</sub> *ky*<sup>21</sup> *ts<sup>h</sup>iau*<sup>24</sup> *le*<sup>4</sup>.  
 and 2PL if want search house, self go search PRT  
 ‘If you want to search the house, you just do it yourself.’  
 Lit. ‘If you<sub>i</sub> want to search house, self<sub>i</sub> just do it.’
- b. *i*<sup>21</sup><sub>i</sub> *na*<sup>24</sup> *kua*<sup>21</sup> *tse*<sup>42</sup> *pie*<sup>453</sup> *e*<sup>4</sup>, *kai*<sup>52</sup><sub>i</sub> *ya*<sup>42</sup> *nui*<sup>4</sup>.  
 3SG if 1SG here buy PRT, self change PRT  
 ‘If he bought it here, he can return it himself.’  
 Lit. ‘If he<sub>i</sub> bought it here, self<sub>i</sub> can return it back.’

In the above sentences, (7a) can be interpreted as “if you want to search the house, the **same** you just do it”, and (7b) can be interpreted as “if he bought it here, the **same** he can return it back here”. The sense of “sameness” is stressed by the choice of *kai*<sup>52</sup>. Otherwise, a regular personal pronoun can be used. However, the sense of *sameness* is not always guaranteed. It can be cancellable when *kai*<sup>52</sup> is not coreferential with any other entity in the same sense. In the case of (7b), *kai*<sup>52</sup> may refer to the addressee and the sentence is read as “if he bought it here, you can return it (for him)”. This shows the referent of *kai* is context-dependent. Therefore, we do not presume that *kai*<sup>52</sup> is a reflexive anaphor or a long-distance reflexive pronoun at the very beginning of our description, not only because these two terms are sensitive to certain grammatical frameworks (e.g. the generative one)<sup>12</sup> but also because they tend to ignore or marginalize the unbound nature of *kai*<sup>52</sup>.

### 3.1.3 Logophoric self & empathetic self

Siewierska (2004: 201) points out that “most utterances in discourse are egocentric, that is, the situation or event depicted in the utterance is presented from the point of view of the speaker.” However, there are also utterances that a speaker may intend to express from egos other than himself, that is, from a secondary ego of the matrix subject. This is called *logophoricity* in linguistics. Some languages have a dedicated person form for logophoricity, for instance, the logophoric pronoun *yè*- in Ewe of Kwa (Niger-Congo). It is used for the sole purpose of referring back to the source of a reported statement or thought in indirect speech environment (Clements 1975: 142). Other languages, however, lack such dedicated forms for logophoricity and may leave it up to inference from other forms. For instance, in the English sentence, *John thinks Mary is unhappy with him/himself*. The choice between *him* and *himself* actually reflects whether the indirect discourse is reported from the current speaker (via *him*), or the secondary ego *John* (via *himself*) (it may also be interpreted as empathy as well; see below). Such an alternation between

12. Cole et al. (2015) also find that the notion of “local domain” is not necessarily useful for Peranakan Javanese.

reflexives and personal pronouns for viewpoint-adjusting is well recognized in some Eastern Asian languages, such as Mandarin, Korean or Japanese (see. e.g. LaPolla 1993: 21).<sup>13</sup> In the following sentences, *kai*<sup>52</sup> not only has the implicature of *sameness of referents*, but logophoricity as well, as in (8a-b):

- (8) a. *i*<sup>21</sup><sub>i</sub> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *ou*<sup>453</sup> *e*<sup>24</sup> *hø*<sup>24</sup> *lia*<sup>42</sup>, *le*<sup>4</sup> *t*<sup>h</sup>*i*<sup>11</sup> *iau*<sup>24</sup> *kɛ*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup><sub>i</sub> *e*<sup>4</sup>  
 3sg speak taro be good eat and must give DAT self POSS  
*kyä*<sup>453</sup> *tia*<sup>24</sup>.  
 son eat  
 ‘He said taro is tasty and he gave it to his own son to eat.’  
 Lit. ‘He<sub>i</sub> says taro is good to eat and give it to self<sub>i</sub>’s son to eat.’
- b. *Andi*<sub>i</sub> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>42</sup><sub>i</sub> *na*<sup>24</sup> *kou*<sup>24</sup> -*kou*<sup>24</sup> -*i*<sup>42</sup>.  
 Andi say self be shy  
 ‘Andi<sub>i</sub> says he<sub>i</sub> is shy.’  
 Lit. ‘Andi<sub>i</sub> says self<sub>i</sub> is shy.’

In both of the sentences, *kai*<sup>52</sup> triggers an implicature that the speaker reports from the source of a secondary ego, i.e. the matrix subject, who may say, think or perceive something. The main predicate, *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> “speak” contributes to this implicature of logophoricity.

Apart from logophoricity, *self*-words in languages are associated with empathy (see e.g. Kuno 1987: 206; LaPolla 1993; Oshima 2004, 2006). Being empathetic, it means the *self*-word chosen by the speaker stands for his pivotal point of view as well as his emotional identification with the participant he refers to. For instance, in the following Japanese sentence, *zibun* “self” is said to be empathetic only.

- (9) *Yasuo<sub>i</sub> wa zibun<sub>i</sub> ga tomodati kara karita hon o nakusita.*  
 Yasuo TOP self NOM friend from borrowed book ACC lost  
 ‘Yasuo lost a book that he borrowed from a friend.’  
 Lit. ‘Yasuo<sub>i</sub> lost a book that self<sub>i</sub> borrowed from a friend.’

(Japanese; Hirose 2002)

In (9), *zibun* does not appear in the subordinate clause of a saying or thinking verb, but is embedded in the relative clause, modifying the head noun *hon* “book”. In this case, *zibun* stands for empathy, which is similar to *kai*<sup>52</sup> in (7), both of which convey a meaning that the event is depicted from the speaker’s pivotal viewpoint, who is empathetic with the participant in the sentence. Such a meaning is not readily available for regular personal pronouns.

13. LaPolla (1993) points out Mandarin *ziji* “self” in Chinese is pragmatically or semantically controlled, even its antecedent is contextually-dependent, not controlled by the syntactic function of the antecedent or its position in the sentence.

Sometimes, logophoricity and empathy do not have a clear-cut boundary, as with *kai*<sup>52</sup> in (10):

- (10) *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup><sub>i</sub> *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> *tsø*<sup>11</sup> *kā-c*<sup>21</sup>, *kai*<sup>52</sup><sub>i</sub> *thø*<sup>42</sup> *aili*<sup>4</sup> *tsau*<sup>21</sup> *lua*<sup>42</sup>  
 1PL man do child, self too like run PRT  
 ‘When I was child, I used to play around.’  
 Lit. ‘When I<sub>i</sub> was child, self<sub>i</sub> used to play around.’

In (10), *kai*<sup>52</sup> can be logophoric, if it reports from the source of the narration, that is, the 1st person subject *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> “I” (a plural for singular address); or it can be empathetic, if we think the speaker has been identifying himself with the participant other than *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> in the sentence. In this case, it happens to be the speaker herself.

In the above sentences (7), (8), and (10), the empathetic *kai*<sup>52</sup> and logophoric *kai*<sup>52</sup> share a common implicature of *sameness of referents*, but this implicature can be cancelled without affecting empathy in the same sentence (but logophoricity is lost). For instance,

- (11) a. *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup><sub>i</sub> *yø*<sup>24</sup> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>42</sup><sub>j</sub> *u*<sup>42</sup> *liau-a*<sup>42</sup> *iau*<sup>24</sup> *liau-a*<sup>42</sup>.  
 we<sub>EXCL</sub> mother say self have much take much  
 ‘My mother<sub>i</sub> says you (/they)<sub>j</sub> can take as much as you want.’  
 Lit. ‘My mother<sub>i</sub> says self<sub>j</sub> can take as much as (self<sub>j</sub>) want.’  
 b. *i*<sup>533</sup><sub>i</sub> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>42</sup><sub>j</sub> *tiau*<sup>24</sup> *menni*<sup>21</sup>.  
 3SG say self must wise  
 ‘He<sub>i</sub> says you (/he) should act wise.’  
 Lit. ‘He<sub>i</sub> says self<sub>j</sub> should be wise.’

In (11), *kai*<sup>52</sup> does not refer back to the matrix subject (thus no implicature of *sameness of referents*). (11a) means that *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> *yø*<sup>24</sup> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> “my mother” earnestly asks *kai*<sup>52</sup> (e.g. the hearer or the guests) to take as much as they want. The speaker chooses *kai*<sup>52</sup> “self”, instead of a regular personal pronoun, *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup> “you” or *yøŋ*<sup>21/32</sup> “they”, in order to express the mother’s empathy with the referent(s) of *kai*<sup>52</sup>, a way to show her hospitality. In (11b), the sentence means that the subject *i*<sup>533</sup> “he” asks the other participant (e.g. the hearer or some youngsters) to be wiser. The speaker deliberately chooses an empathetic *kai*<sup>52</sup> in order to show the advice is sincerely given by the subject himself. In either case, *kai*<sup>52</sup> is not anaphoric, yet it is enriched with the extra meaning of empathy (thus an “extra-indexical”). We would term this type of empathetic *kai*<sup>52</sup> as “intra-empathetic self”, for it shows empathy between two participants in the same sentence, without necessarily requiring them to be co-referential with each other.

So far, the meanings of *selfhood* are referent-oriented. We now turn to the other sub-branch, which is action-oriented.

### 3.1.4 Reflexivity & enhanced reflexivity

Reflexivity, as prototypically defined, has to do with action or transitivity. In this sense, it is action-oriented. In this paper, reflexivity is viewed as an implied meaning triggered by *kai*, i.e. “sameness of the participant roles” or “coreference between agent and patient”, while the regular personal pronouns, i.e. the indexicals, are not associated with this meaning. For example:

- (12) *kua*<sup>21</sup> *p<sup>h</sup>a*<sup>42</sup>/*mv*<sup>42</sup> *kua*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup>/*kai*<sup>52</sup>.  
 1SG beat/scold 1SG self/self  
 ‘I beat/scold myself.’

The Example (12) is a typical reflexive context in Puxian, where the patient can be an adnominal phrase *kua*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup> or an independent *kai*<sup>52</sup>. Verbs with clear instances of a volitional agent, such as *t<sup>h</sup>ai*<sup>42</sup> “kill”, *p<sup>h</sup>oŋ*<sup>42</sup> “throw”, *t<sup>h</sup>e*<sup>42</sup> “kick”, *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> “speak to/criticize”, etc. are frequently used in this context. For instance,

- (13) *ty*<sup>21</sup> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>52</sup>, *ŋ-nan*<sup>21</sup> *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> *pe*<sup>22</sup>-*naŋ*<sup>24</sup>  
 2 SG speak self not.AUX speak others  
 ‘You should criticize yourself, not others.’

In the context of (13), *koŋ*<sup>21</sup> is a transitive verb, meaning “speak to” and/or “criticize”, which makes the patientive object *kai*<sup>52</sup> possible.

In addition, psych-verb with stimulus subjects, such as *hiā*<sup>42</sup> “frighten”, *ts<sup>h</sup>v*<sup>42</sup> “disturb”, etc., which profile a volitional agent who has the ability to control the performance of the action and inflict some changes on the experiencer subject, can also be used in the reflexive context, as in (14) below. In this sense, these verbs do resemble the transitive verbs in (12) and (13). However, psych-verbs, such as *aili*<sup>24</sup> “like”, *kiā*<sup>42</sup> “fear”, *tuan*<sup>42</sup> “think/consider”, etc. or intransitive/unergative verbs, such as *ts<sup>h</sup>iau*<sup>21</sup> “laugh”, *hau*<sup>42</sup> “cry”, *tsau*<sup>42</sup> “run”, or body-care verbs, such as *lie*<sup>533</sup> “wash”, *thi*<sup>21</sup> “shave”, etc. are seldom used reflexively.<sup>14</sup> This is different from similar verbs in European languages, for they tend to be reflexive-marked *syntactically* (not

14. Haspelmath (2008) points out that some verbs in Europe tends to have a reflexive object, such as German *wäsch sich* “wash oneself”, while others tend to have non-reflexive object, *hasst ihn* “hate him”. The former is termed an “introverted verb”, the latter an “extroverted verb”. The former reflexively-marked verbs are also known as “middle voice marking”, which profiles a self-initiated action and a lower degree of event elaboration (see e.g. LaPolla & Yang 2004). In the case of Puxian or Standard Mandarin, there are no “introverted verbs”. Speakers of these languages typically say “wash hand” or “wash head”, “shave beard” or “shave head”, in which these body-care verbs usually have non-referential objects without using reflexives. In fact, most *self*-words in Chinese dialects favor the subject, the preverbal adverbial, or the appositive position, rather than the postverbal object position, and we seldom see instances of the latter in Chinese dialect grammars. This is probably both a cultural and grammatical phenomenon yet to be explored in the future.

necessarily having a semantic role), e.g. French *se considère intelligent* “consider himself intelligent”, German *lachte sich tot* “laugh himself dead” or Dutch *wast zich* “washes”.

One way to emphasize the sense of reflexivity is to use two *kai*-forms in the same clause, as in (14b-c) in contrast to (14a):

- (14) a.  $i^{21}$   $hi\tilde{a}^{42}$   $kai^{52}$   
           3SG frighten self  
           ‘He frightened himself.’  
       b.  $i^{21}$   $kai^{52}$   $hi\tilde{a}^{42}$   $kai^{52}$   
           3SG self frighten self  
           ‘He frightened himself.’  
       c.  $i^{21}$   $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$   $hi\tilde{a}^{42}$ .  
           3SG self- self frighten  
           ‘He frightened himself.’

In the above, the sense of reflexivity is enhanced by placing  $kai^{52}$  on each side of the transitive verb,<sup>15</sup> as in (14b), or by means of a reduplicated form,  $kai^{52} yai^{21}$  in the preverbal position, as in (14c). Interestingly, it is difficult to decide whether the reduplicated form  $kai^{52} yai^{21}$  “self self”<sup>16</sup> is an argument or an adverbial, for the transitive verb needs a patient in its argument structure, yet  $kai^{52} yai^{21}$  is placed in the typical adverbial position,<sup>17</sup> which means it is also an adverbial (i.e. manner of the verb). As far as this paper is concerned, it is appropriate to term this expression “enhanced reflexivity” and leave its syntactic functions aside for the moment.

### 3.1.5 *By self*

The meaning of *by self* can be expressed by the reduplicated form,  $kai^{52} yai^{21}$  as well. In this case, it is no longer considered argumental but adverbial, as in (15):

15. This type of enhanced reflexivity like (14b) is also seen in Mandarin, Cantonese, Gan, Wu, and many other Chinese dialects, but not the type in (14c).

16. The second *kai* should be changed to a lower tone and its initial consonant changed to fricative initial [ɣ]. Consonant mutation is a principled phonological phenomenon in Puxian. It is primarily used when two monosyllabic lexemes join together to form a compound word or a phrase. For instance, if a second lexeme in compounding has the initial consonant [h] and the first lexeme has its final consonant [ŋ], [h] of the second lexeme should be changed to [ŋ] as well. E.g., the two words,  $phaŋ^{42}$  “set” and  $hue^{453}$  “fire”, when forming a phrase “set-fire”, will be pronounced as  $phaŋ^{42} \eta ue^{453}$ .

17.  $kai^{51}$  is the cognate of 家己  $kai^{22} ki^{42}$  in Southern Min. According to my investigation, 家己 in the Huian dialect of Southern Min remains disyllabic in postverbal object position, and is fused into  $kai^{21}$  only in preverbal adverbial position. In Puxian,  $kai^{52}$  is always monosyllabic.

- (15) a.  $i^{21}$   $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$   $\eta ya^{24}$   $uai^{21}$ .  
 3SG self-self burn fire  
 ‘He tended the fireplace by himself.’  
 Or ‘He tended the fireplace in person.’
- b.  $tse^{21}$   $p^{h}ou^{24}$   $i^{21}$   $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$   $k^{h}un^{42}$ .  
 this bed 3SG self-self sleep  
 ‘He wants to sleep on the bed himself/in person.’  
 Or ‘This bed, he wants to keep the bed to himself.’
- c.  $tsui^{21}$   $e^4$   $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$   $lau^{24}$   
 water can self-self flow  
 ‘Water flows by itself/automatically’

In the above sentences, the adverbial element  $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$  is used to modify the predicate verb, with such extended meanings as *solo/in person/exclusively/alone/automatically*, etc. In (15a), the sentence can be interpreted as “he burns the fire *in person*” or “he burns the fire *by himself*”. Similarly, in (15b),  $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$  is used to modify the action of “sleeping on the bed”. It may mean the subject wants to sleep on the bed *in person* or wants to keep the bed exclusive to himself; in (15c), since the subject  $tsui^{21}$  “water” is an inanimate subject,  $kai^{52}$   $yai^{21}$  does not mean *in person* or *exclusively* but *by itself*, *automatically* or *spontaneously*. We therefore subsume all these meanings under the term, *exclusion of others*, which is related to the basic meaning of *by self*.

There is another way to express the meaning *by self*, that is, to use the clitic-like  $kai^{24}$  in a verbal compound, as in (16):

- (16) a.  $ts^{h}ai^{42}$   $i^{21}$   $kai^{24}$ - $ly^{21}$ .  
 dish 3SG self-cook  
 ‘Dishes are cooked by himself.’  
 Lit. ‘Dishes, he self-cooks.’
- b.  $i^{21}$   $kai^{24}$ - $lia^{24}$ ,  $kua^{21}$   $t^{h}\emptyset^{42}$   $an^{42}$ .  
 3SG self-eat, 1SG too so  
 ‘He lives by himself, and me too.’  
 Lit. ‘He self-eats, I do the same.’

In (16a),  $ts^{h}ai^{42}$  “dishes” is the topic of the sentence and  $i^{21}$  is the agentive subject. The predicate consists of  $kai^{24}$ -, with a rising tone, and the following verb  $tsy^{32}$  “cook”, whose initial consonant is changed to [l] due to “progressive assimilation” in (16b),  $i^{21}$  “he” is the subject of the sentence and the predicate is a verbal compound too (the initial constant of the verb  $lia^{24}$  “eat” is changed to [l] as well). Such a fused form is iconic, suggesting a close relationship between an actor and his action, i.e. *by self*.

To summarize this section, we are now able to identify a series of referent-oriented meanings with *kai* “self”, including *unique self*, *sameness of referents*, *logophoric*

*self*, *empathetic self*, and *intra-empathetic self*. In addition, we also find out some action-oriented meanings, such as *reflexivity*, *enhanced reflexivity* and *by self*, the latter of which is linked to some specific meanings, e.g. *exclusion of others*, *solo*, *in person*, *alone*, *automatically*, etc. These meanings are interconnected, sharing a blurred boundary sometimes, but they are mostly distinguishable from each other and deserve one place in the functional inventory.

### 3.2 Person expressions related to *significance*

*Significance* is an implicature derived from the use of extra-indexicals in speech act context. It consists of three sub-types, i.e. *significant plurals* (by means of using the plurals for singular address), *significant other(s)* (by means of the independent or adnominal *naŋ*<sup>24/22</sup>) and *significant multitude* (also by means of the independent or adnominal *naŋ*<sup>22/24</sup>), which are further connected to such contextual meanings as *sympathy*, *irony*, *defending*, *distancing*, *importance*, *truthfulness*, etc. Person expressions associated with the above meanings signal the extra efforts spent by the speaker to highlight a sense of significance.

#### 3.2.1 *Significant plurals*

Plurals are often defined in relation to the singulars, yet this is only the semantic aspect of them. When plurals are used for singular address, they could be a metaphor for social power (Brown & Gilman 1960), a strategy for politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987: 198) and more importantly, a sign of collectivity or multitude. In Puxian, plurals often appear in the possessive determiner position for kinship (17) and for affiliation (18). In contrast, when a singular determiner is used, the speaker intends for direct person reference. Consider the following examples:

- (17) a. *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> *lau*<sup>24</sup> *ma*<sup>42</sup> *liau*<sup>24</sup>-a<sup>2</sup> *kau*<sup>453</sup> *k<sup>h</sup>* *oŋ*<sup>24</sup>.

1PL.EXCL wife much diligent

‘My wife is diligent on house chores.’

- b. *kua*<sup>21</sup> *lau*<sup>24</sup> *ma*<sup>42</sup> *ŋ*<sup>2</sup> *me*<sup>21</sup> *tsi*<sup>4</sup>.

1SG wife not know character

‘My wife doesn’t know Chinese characters.’

- (18) a. *tyoŋ*<sup>32</sup> *ha*<sup>21</sup> *toŋ*<sup>24</sup> *lua*<sup>21</sup> *u*<sup>11</sup> *tsiŋ*<sup>4</sup>.

2PL school much have money

‘Your school is rich.’

- b. *ty*<sup>21</sup> *ha*<sup>21</sup> *toŋ*<sup>24</sup> *tuo*<sup>21</sup> *ti*<sup>21</sup> *a*?

2SG school locate where

‘Where is your school?’

In (17), the subject “my wife” or “your school” has two alternative expressions: one has a plural determiner (17a) or (18a) and the other has a singular determiner



(17b) or (18b) (the possessive marker  $e^{21}$  is not obligatory here). The reason for the speaker to choose a plural determiner is to convey to the hearer that the said kinship or affiliation referred to is somehow significant or important, which looks (in form) as if they were collectively shared.<sup>18</sup> Since plural determiners are an alternative or a supplement to the neutral singulars,<sup>19</sup> they are regarded as extra-indexicals in the person inventory.

Such plurals also appear independently in the subject position (though the first and second person only), as in (19):

- (19) a. *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> *a<sup>4</sup>-miã<sup>21</sup>* *y<sup>533</sup>*  
 1PL.E<sub>XCL</sub> not want go  
 ‘I don’t want to go.’  
 b. *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup> *tua<sup>21</sup>* *kai<sup>21</sup>len<sup>21</sup>*  
 2PL very great  
 ‘You are great.’

In (19a), when someone asks the speaker to visit a place that he feels uneasy about or threatened, e.g. to attend a party full of strangers or to run errands he does not want to, he tends to use 1st person plural *kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup>. This is an emphatic expression, roughly meaning “I really do not want to go” in English. In (19b), when a speaker wants to address the hearer who has done something great, he tends to use 2nd person plural *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup>, and the sentence roughly means that “you are really great”. In other situations, when the speaker says, *tyøŋ*<sup>32</sup> *tua<sup>21</sup>* *kai<sup>21</sup>len<sup>21</sup>* “you are really great”, but what he actually intends is to downplay the hearer. An ironic effect is felt due to the mismatch between the form and meaning. In English, the emphatic force may reside in the adverbial intensifier *really*, whereas Puxian uses the plurals for this function. They are thus considered extra-indexicals for *significance*, whereas the indexicals are generally used for person reference with a neutral attitude.

18. In Chinese dialects, there is a semantic distinction between kinship and affiliation on the one hand, and body parts on the other. The former are more likely to have plural determiners (yet in singular sense) and the latter is more likely to have singular determiners for singular senses. The reason is that kinship and affiliation often mean something that is collectively shared by its members; for instance, one’s wife or brother is always kin to the other members of the family. As has been pointed out by J. Wu (2013a), this is a cultural phenomenon, rather than the semantic contrast between “alienability” and “inalienability” (cf. Haiman 1983). Hollmann & Siewierska (2007) also found that in Lancashire dialect of England, the first person possessive form *my* is read as [mi]/[ma]/[mə]. They suggest that this phonological reduction is not about “inalienability” as well, but a “construction schema” due to high frequency of collocation between 1st person and kinship or body part terms. In a similar vein, frequency of usage may also account for the choices of plural determiners in Puxian.

19. In some Chinese dialects, e.g. the Wu dialect, plural determiners for kinship terms are the default forms, not in contrast with the singulars any more.

### 3.2.2 *Significant others*

The meaning “significant others” is expressed by *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> “person/people” in the adnominal position or as an independent form. Let us look at the adnominal *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> (with low-level tone) first, as in (20):

- (20) a. *i*<sup>21</sup> *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> *tʰi*<sup>21</sup> *te*<sup>24</sup> *na*<sup>42</sup>, *lua*<sup>21</sup> *kai*<sup>21</sup> *len*<sup>21</sup>  
 3SG person be teacher very great  
 ‘He is a teacher. He is great.’  
 b. *kua*<sup>21</sup> *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> *aŋ*<sup>24</sup> *mia*<sup>42</sup> *li*<sup>21</sup>, *i*<sup>21</sup> *pʰe*<sup>4</sup> *o*<sup>42</sup> *kua*<sup>21</sup> *li*<sup>21</sup>  
 1SG person not-want come 3SG want force 1SG come  
 ‘I didn’t want to come. He forced me to come.’

In the above, (20a) can be read literally as, “he, the person, is a teacher and he is great”; and (20b) as “I, the person, didn’t want to come, and he forced me to come”. In both sentences, the subject referent is attached with *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> and one of the intended meanings, apart from *significance*, is that it looks as if the entity being referred to were from an outsider’s or observer’s perspective. This is a pragmatic strategy to enhance the illocutionary force of assertion, argumentation or defense. Thus, in (20a), *i*<sup>21</sup> *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> “he, the person” triggers a conversational implicature that the referent is admirable, noteworthy or significant; in (20b), *kua*<sup>21</sup> *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> “I, the person”, may sound as if the subject *kua*<sup>21</sup> “I” were exonerated from his own action of coming and a sense of defending or arguing arises. In the previous example of (5), we see that *kai*<sup>52</sup> is also used in the appositive position. The difference between them is that *kai*<sup>52</sup> emphasizes some distinctive or unique aspects of the referent, whereas *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> treats the referent as a significant individual and the phrase sounds as if the speaker were narrating from an observer’s perspective. Thus the appositive *kai*<sup>52</sup> and *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> constitute a pair of contrast in both semantics and pragmatics.

Similarly, the independent *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> (with a rising tone) is also used for such pragmatic meanings. Its referent is context-dependent and may refer to the speaker or the third person, as in (21):

- (21) *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> *aŋ*<sup>24</sup> *mia*<sup>42</sup> *li*<sup>21</sup>, *ty*<sup>21</sup> *pʰe*<sup>4</sup> *iŋ*<sup>21</sup> *o*<sup>42</sup>  
 man not-want come 2SG want strong force  
 ‘I/he/they didn’t want to come, but you insisted.’

In (21), the speaker deliberately chooses *naŋ*<sup>24</sup>, to highlight the person he refers to. The mechanism is very similar to the plural determiners or plural subjects in (17)–(19), for both of them involve deliberate mismatches between forms and meanings, that is, they are used in place of regular personal pronouns, i.e. indexicals. The meanings associated with *naŋ*<sup>24/22</sup> is termed “significant others” in this paper, for the speaker not only intends his referent to be a significant individual but also, to some extent, distancing himself from the referent, as if he were speaking from an

observer's perspective (somewhat external). This is different from the meaning of "unique self", which emphasizes some distinct or personal properties of the referent.

Interestingly, *nan*<sup>24</sup> "person/people" is also used anaphorically, as a subject in (22a), or as an object in (22b). In both cases, the implicature "significant others" arises, even though the speaker may refer to himself.

- (22) a. *an*<sup>24</sup> *t<sup>h</sup>i*<sup>21</sup><sub>i</sub> *ts<sup>h</sup>ai*<sup>21</sup> *tsy*<sup>42</sup> *liau*<sup>21</sup> *lo*<sup>2</sup>, *nan*<sup>24</sup><sub>i</sub> *tsau*<sup>21</sup> *tia*<sup>4</sup>  
 brother dish cook PRT PRT person run where  
 'Our brother<sub>i</sub> cooked the dishes, but where is he<sub>i</sub> / others<sub>j</sub> now?'  
 Lit. 'Brother<sub>j</sub>, dishes cooked, but where is the person<sub>i</sub> / people<sub>j</sub> now?'  
 b. *John* *p<sup>h</sup>a*<sup>42</sup> *nan*<sup>24</sup>  
 John hit person  
 'John hit me/him/someone.'  
 Lit. 'John hit man.'

In the above cases, *nan*<sup>24</sup> may mean the speaker, the third person or some non-specific others. The sense of significance is felt when it refers to the speaker or the third person singular. This is because the usual meaning for *nan*<sup>24</sup> is *person/people/others*, which is non-specific in nature, and the deictic uses of it (i.e. being referential and definite) are thus marked only for extra pragmatic meanings.

### 3.2.3 Significant multitude

When *nan*<sup>24</sup> refers to a group of people or people in general, it triggers a sense of "significant multitude". Thus for example:

- (23) a. *na*<sup>21</sup> *nan*<sup>22</sup> *p<sup>h</sup>e*<sup>21</sup> *teŋ*<sup>22</sup>-*na*<sup>21</sup> *ti*<sup>21</sup> *t<sup>h</sup>eŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kui*<sup>22</sup> *e*<sup>4</sup>  
 IPL.INCL man will how be destined PRT  
 'We are all fated' or 'We all have a destiny.'  
 b. *i*<sup>21</sup> *nan*<sup>22</sup> *ke*<sup>21</sup> *lau*<sup>24</sup>*ly*<sup>a533</sup> *ko*<sup>21</sup>, *da*<sup>21</sup> *ke*<sup>11</sup> *nan*<sup>24</sup> *ti*<sup>4</sup> *hun*<sup>4</sup> *tu*<sup>o11</sup> *a*<sup>4</sup> *po*<sup>21</sup>  
 3SG man PASS snake bite everyone be use rope to tie  
 'When people are bitten by a snake, they use a rope to bind up (the wound).'  
 Lit. 'He, the people, is bitten by a snake, everybody uses a rope to tie.'

In the above, the inclusive *na*<sup>21</sup> "we" and the 3rd person singular *i*<sup>21</sup> "he/she" refer to people in general,<sup>20</sup> as in (23a), or a group of non-specific people, as in (23b). The

20. According to J. Wu (2010: 103), the corpus data shows personal pronouns in Puxian are thirteen times more likely to assume specific reference than non-specific reference (a ratio of 2,326:169), yet the first person singular and the second person plural have no usage of "non-specific reference". The third person singular *i*<sup>21</sup> can assume plural references as well as non-specific references.

adnominal *naŋ*<sup>22</sup> adds a sense of “significant multitude” to the impersonal subject, which leads to another implicature, viz. *commonly known* or *generally recognized* in the context.

In a similar vein, *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> is also used independently in the subject position (with a rising tone), as in (24), where the impersonal reading of *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> contributes to the implicature of *commonly known* or *generally recognized*, as is part of the utterance meaning.

- (24) *naŋ*<sup>24</sup> *p<sup>h</sup>e*<sup>21</sup> *teŋ*<sup>22</sup> *na*<sup>42</sup> *ti*<sup>21</sup> *t<sup>h</sup>eŋ*<sup>21</sup> *kui*<sup>22</sup> *e*<sup>4</sup>.  
 man will how be destined PRT  
 ‘We are all destined.’

Now we can summarize this branch of *significance*, which consists of three sub-branches, i.e. “significant plurals”, “significant others”, and “significant multitude”. They can be further linked to a list of context-dependent implicatures mentioned above, e.g. emphasis, distancing, irony, etc. In the following section, we shall think out a way to connect them in the functional inventory.

#### 4. Summarizing the person-related meanings in the inventory structure

Based on the above discussion, we attempt to summarize all the person-related meanings in the functional inventory. First, there is a division between the regular personal pronouns based on the semantics of *person* and *number*. This is the case of the three-way personal pronouns, *kua*<sup>21</sup> “I”, *ty*<sup>21</sup> “you” and *i*<sup>21</sup> “he” or *na*<sup>21</sup>/*kuoŋ*<sup>32</sup> “we”, *tyoŋ*<sup>32</sup> “you” or *yøŋ*<sup>32</sup> “they”. They should be used in complementary distribution to each other due to different referential values. On the other hand, there are those person expressions, i.e. the *plurals*, *man*- or *self*- words, which are considered extra-indexicals, indicating extra efforts by the speaker to convey his subjective attitudes.

By means of “classification tree”, we can assign all the above person-related meanings to each relevant choice of node, so that the speaker develops multiple relevant “outcomes” from these nodes, as in Figure 3 below.

According to Figure 3, the underlying layer of person expressions is structured according to the semantic values of *person* and *number*, just like the paradigmatic structure in (1), whereas in the above layer of person meanings, there is a distinction between *selfhood* and *significance*, from which more context-dependent meanings are extended. We see that, on the branch of *selfhood*, there is a distinction between the *referent-oriented* branch and the *action-oriented* branch; the former includes *unique self*, *empathetic self*, *logophoric self* and *sameness of referents*

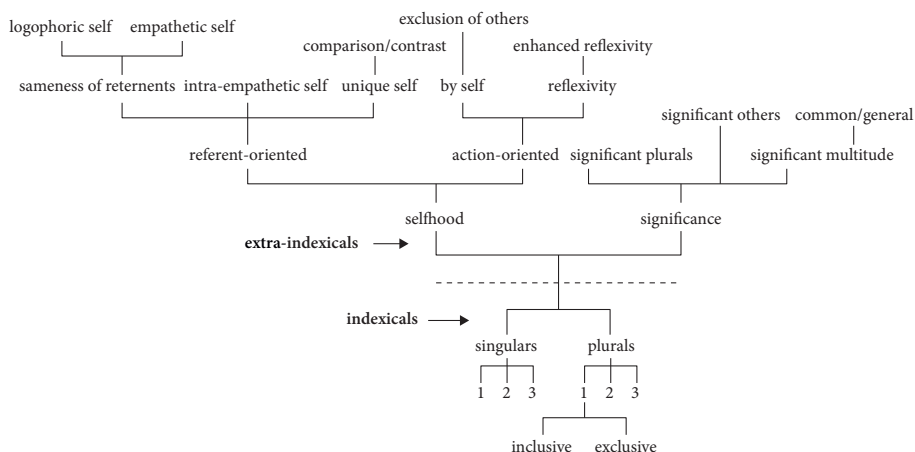


Figure 3. The inventory structure of person-related meanings in Puxian

and the latter three are connected somehow due to the need for co-reference in a sentence. On the *action-oriented* branch, there is a distinction between *reflexivity*, *enhanced-reflexivity* and *by self*, where *reflexivity* signals that an agent performs an action on itself, and *enhanced-reflexivity* put emphasis on such an action (by using two *kai*-forms). In addition, the meaning *by self* can be expressed by the reduplicated form of *kai*<sup>52</sup> *yai*<sup>21</sup> or the clitic-like *kai*<sup>24</sup>-, both of which mean “exclusion of others” or more in the context.

On the other branch of *significance*, there are three separate meanings, such as *significant plurals*, *significant others* and *significant multitude*. In this category, *significance* can be overtly expressed by the plurals (a sign of collectivity) or the *man*-expressions (denoting a noteworthy person, an observer’s perspective or a sense of being *well known*). They are of “significance” because they signal the speaker’s uses of extra-indexicals (thus extra efforts) to express his personal attitudes; otherwise, indexicals or regular person pronouns can be used.

We tend to believe that the inventory structure presented in Figures 3 helps keep a myriad of person-related meanings organized, easy to understand, and has a potential for cross-linguistic comparison (cf. comparative concepts) (Haspelmath 2010a). When similar inventory structures are drawn from in a number languages, especially when differences among pragmatic meanings, as well as their connections to the semantics, are presented, we shall be in a better position to see the emerging cross-linguistic patterns, and more importantly, how these patterns may fit into the language-particular system. The inventory structure approach is therefore different from the category-based approaches that are defined with prototypes.

5. Conclusion

The above discussion has brought about a number of interesting findings concerning the functional inventory of *person* in Puxian. I proceed from the question whether the well-known concept of “three persons, two numbers” in Chinese linguistics or “paradigmatic structure for person marking” in linguistic typology (Cysouw 2009) are adequate to cover aspects of person meaning in the Chinese dialect of Puxian and other Chinese dialects; I then propose to divide the person inventory into *indexicals* and *extra-indexicals*. The extra-indexicals include the *plurals*, the *self*-words and the *man*-words, which are used for remarkable interpersonal functions that can be subsumed under the branches of *selfhood* and *significance*.

The need to understand this person system as a whole, instead of reducing it into separate grammatical categories, prompts me to unite all the person-related meanings into a structure. Such an approach addresses the very concern in linguistic typology, that is, being “framework-neutral” (Nichols 2007), “framework-free” (Haspelmath 2007, 2010b) or “very basic linguistic meanings” (Dixon 2010). It also echoes Saussure (1983: 88), i.e. “in the language itself, there are only differences”. It is hoped that such a method can be applied in other areas of linguistic research in the future.

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Abbreviations

1	1st person	EXCL	Exclusive	PL	Plural
2	2nd person	INT	intensifier	POSS	possessive
ACC	accusative	INCL	Inclusive	PRT	particle
AUX	Auxiliary	NOM	nominative	SG	singular
DAT	dative	PASS	Passive	TOP	topic maker

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