Two notions of *de se* in desire reports

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Lakoff on two types of counterparts in desire reports. This paper addresses the example in (1) from Lakoff (1972). Lakoff comments on this example as follows: *[(1)] is not contradictory. I may want to be president because I am power-hungry, while not wanting myself to be president because I am lazy and corrupt, and it would be bad for the country.*

(1) I wanted to be president, but I didn't want myself to be president.

His assumption is that examples of this kind involve two different kinds of counterpart relations: a "participant-counterpart relation" and an "observer-counterpart relation". This paper spells out what exactly this could mean on a formal account that takes into consideration standard assumptions about the semantics of desire reports and the notion of *de se*.

Two types of wishes *de se*. Another way to characterize what is happening in (1) is as follows: (1) conjoins a *de se* wish (in a narrow sense) with a *de dicto* wish that is about, or focuses on, the belief-self. We can call both wishes *de se* in a broad sense. To account for Lakoff's example, two things are needed: First, a compositional semantics for the two types of wishes *de se*. Second, a pragmatic account that spells out under what circumstances these two types of *de se*-wishes can rationally be conjoined (without contradicting oneself). This paper focuses only on the first step and tries to spell out a compositional semantics for the two types of wishes *de se*; assuming that the pragmatic account can be worked out against this background.

***De dicto* wishes about oneself.** Our starting point for the semantics of the second conjunct of (1) is Heim (1992)'s semantics for desire reports with *want*; as spelled out in (2).

(2) $w \in [\![\alpha \textbf{ wants } \varphi]\!]$ iff for every $w' \in \text{Dox}_\alpha(w)$, $\text{Sim}_{w'}([\![\varphi]\!]) <_{\alpha,w} \text{Sim}_{w'}(W \setminus [\![\varphi]\!])$

The central idea for the semantics is that the pronoun *myself* denotes the *de se*-belief-counterpart of the speaker, i.e., the counterpart in the desire worlds of who the speaker believes to be. Who the speaker believes to be (= the belief-self) is not a single individual but is usually characterized by a set of *de se*-alternatives, for which I write "$\text{Dox}^{se}_{\text{speaker}}(w)$". The counterpart of the belief-self in a desire world w' can be thought of as the most salient individual that has all the properties all the individuals in $\text{Dox}^{se}_{\text{speaker}}(w)$ share (or, more precisely, the most salient individual that has at least as many of these properties as any other individual in w'). I want to call this individual the "*de se*-belief-counterpart":

(3) a. $f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)} = \{P \in W \times D$: x self-ascribes P in $w\}$ such that $\bigcap f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)} = \text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)$

b. *de se*-belief$_{x,w}$-counterpart(w') =
$\text{CP}^{se}_{w'}(f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)})$ =*def*
the salient $y \in D$ in w' s.t. for every z in w': $\langle w', y\rangle \leqslant_{f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)}} \langle w', z\rangle$.

c. $\langle w', y\rangle \leqslant_{f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)}} \langle w', z\rangle$ iff
$\{P$: $P \in f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)}$ & $\langle w', z\rangle \in P\} \subseteq \{P'$: $P' \in f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_x(w)}$ & $\langle w', y\rangle \in P'\}$

Two more ingredients are needed: I assume that there is a perspectival or logophoric "SELF" morphem that is interpreted relative to a doxastic perspective (= $\text{Dox}^{se}_{w}(w)$; see Zimmermann (2012) for the corresponding notion of 'perspective') or, to be technically more precise, the corresponding set of self-ascribed properties. This perspective is introduced by the desire verb *want* (belief "parasitism"; cf. Maier (2015), Blumberg (2017)). What is special here, it is syntactically represented as a bound perspective pronoun that carries a feature log checked by the attitude and inherits inflection features under binding by the verb.

(4) a. $[\![\text{SELF}]\!] = \lambda w.\ \lambda A^{(set)t}.\ \text{CP}^{se}_{w}(A)$
b. $\text{SELF}_{w_i}(\mathcal{A}[\sout{\text{1st,sg}}])$ is spelled out *myself* in an ECM construction

(5) λw_0 [**I want**$_{w_0}$ [$\lambda\mathcal{A}_3[\sout{\text{log,1sg}}]\ \lambda w_1$ [$\text{SELF}_{w_1}(\mathcal{A}_3[\sout{\text{log,1sg}}])$ **to be president**$_{w_1}$]]]

Second, I assume that some morphems are interpreted relative to perspectives, as for example subjunctive mood on von Fintel (1997)'s account. In the umebedded case this perspective is the actual context set C; in case of an embedded use under an attitude verb like *want*, this perspective shifts to the doxastic perspective of the attitude holder, here, the *de se*-perspective $\text{Dox}^{se}_{x}(w)$; assuming a corresponding adjustement of the rule of functional application. As a result, we get the interpretation in (7) that captures the notion of a *de dicto* wish about a *de se*-belief counterpart.

(6) $[\![\textbf{want}]\!]^C = \lambda w.\ \lambda p^{*}_{((set)t)st}.\ \lambda x.$ for every $w' \in \text{Dox}_x(w)$,
$\text{Sim}_{w'}(p^{*}(f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_{x}(w)})) <_{x,w} \text{Sim}_{w'}(W \backslash p^{*}(f_{\text{Dox}^{se}_{x}(w)}))$

(7) $[\![(5)]\!]^C = \lambda w.$ for every $w' \in \text{Dox}_{\text{speaker}}(w)$, $\text{Sim}_{w'}(\{w''$: *de se*-belief$_{\text{speaker},w}$-counterpart(w'') is president in $w''\}) <_{\text{speaker},w} \text{Sim}_{w'}(W \backslash \{w''$: *de se*-belief$_{\text{speaker},w}$-counterpart$(w'')$ is president in $w''\})$

***De se* wishes.** To capture what Lakoff calls the "participant-counterpart", I propose to extend Heim's semantics by allowing the desirability order to range over centered possible worlds instead of simple possible worlds simpliciter. In a nutshell, the proposal is to extend Heim's semantics to the *de se*-case in the same way as a Hintikka-semantics in the case of belief reports can be extended to the *de se*-case by substituting centered possible worlds for simple possible worlds. The relation $<^{se}_{x,w}$ orders centered possible worlds according to how desirable it would be for x in w to be the corresponding individual in the corresponding world.

(8) a. For any $\langle w, x\rangle, \langle w', x'\rangle, \langle w'', x''\rangle \in W \times D$, $\langle w', x'\rangle <^{se}_{x,w} \langle w'', x''\rangle$ iff to be $\langle w', x'\rangle$ is more desirable to x in w than to be $\langle w'', x''\rangle$.
b. For any $\langle w, x\rangle \in W \times D$, $X \subseteq W \times D$, $Y \subseteq W \times D$,
$X <^{se}_{x,w} Y$ iff $\langle w', x'\rangle <^{se}_{x,w} \langle w'', x''\rangle$, for all $\langle w', x'\rangle \in X$, $\langle w'', x''\rangle \in Y$.

Given the conceptual shift to centered possible worlds, the Sim-function has to be adjusted accordingly to "Sim^{se}".

(9) $\text{Sim}^{se}_{\langle x,w\rangle}(P) =_{def} \{\langle w', x'\rangle$: $\langle w', x'\rangle \in P$ and $\langle w', x'\rangle$ resembles $\langle w, x\rangle$ no less than any other world-individual-pair in $P\}$ cf. (Heim, 1992, ex. (38))

The corresponding details for *want* in a *de se* wish report and the truth conditions for the first conjunct of Lakoff's example are as follows:

(10) $[\![\textbf{want}^{se}]\!] =$
$\lambda w.\ \lambda P_{set}.\ \lambda x.$ for every $\langle w', x'\rangle \in \text{Dox}^{se}_{x}(w)$, $\text{Sim}^{se}_{\langle w', x'\rangle}(P) <^{se}_{x,w} \text{Sim}^{se}_{\langle w', x'\rangle}(W \times D \backslash P)$

(11) λw_0 [**I want**$^{se}_{w_0}$ [$\lambda w_1\ \lambda x_2$ [PRO_2 **to be president**$_{w_1}$]]]

(12) $[\![(11)]\!] = \lambda w.$ for every $\langle w', x'\rangle \in \text{Dox}^{se}_{\text{speaker}}(w)$, $\text{Sim}^{se}_{\langle w', x'\rangle}(\lambda w''.\ \lambda x.\ x$ is president in $w'') <^{se}_{\text{speaker},w} \text{Sim}^{se}_{\langle w', x'\rangle}(W \times D \backslash \lambda w''.\ \lambda x.\ x$ is president in $w'')$

Two notions of *de se*. In the last part of the paper, we discuss the fact that, although the extension of Heim's semantics to the *de se*-case is straight forward, the notion of *de se* that it introduces is crucially different from the notion of *de se* on standard accounts. The notion of *de se* on standard accounts (including accounts of multiple *de se*) is what I want to call "ascriptive *de se*" which basically amounts to substituting centered possible worlds for simple possible worlds in the classical Hintikka-semantics for attitudes. The notion of *de se* that we arrive at when we extend Heim's semantics, I want to call "evaluative *de se*". For the context of this abstract, the main point can be summarized as follows: For the same reasons that a Heim-semantics for desire reports cannot be reduced to a Hintikka-semantics for desire reports, evaluative *de se* cannot be reduced to ascriptive *de se*.

Selected references. Heim, I. (1992). Presupposition Projection and the Semantics of Attitude Verbs. Journal of Semantics, 9.3:183–221. • Lakoff, G. (1972). Linguistics and natural logic. In Davidson, D. and Harman, G., editors, Semantics of natural language. Reidel, Dordrecht. • von Fintel, K. (1997). The Presupposition of Subjunctive Conditionals. In Orin, O. P. and Sauerland, U., editors, MIT Working Papers in Linguistics. Boston. • Zimmermann, T. E. (2012). Context dependence. In Maienborn, C., von Heusinger, K. and Portner, P., eds., Semantics: An Int. Handbook of Natural Language Meaning, HSK 33.3, pages 2360–2407. de Gruyter, Berlin.