

Perspective-indexing constructions: irregular perspective shifts and perspective persistence

Workshop convenors:

Caroline Gentens (University of Leuven),
María Sol Sansiñena (University of Leuven & University of Ghent),
Stef Spronck (University of Leuven),
An Van linden (Catholic University of Louvain).

The past decade has seen a surge of interest in the topic of (inter)subjectivity and the expression of perspective, with many studies expanding both the empirical basis of perspective-indexing constructions and our theoretical understanding of how (inter)subjectivity affects grammar (e.g. Dahl 2000; Vandelanotte 2004, 2009; Verhagen 2005; De Smet and Verstraete 2006; Gipper 2011; Bergqvist 2012; Gawne 2013; Bruil 2014; Ghesquière et al. 2014; Cornillie & De Cock 2015; San Roque & Bergqvist 2015; Aikhenvald 2015; San Roque et al. Forthc.; Dancygier et al. 2016.). As a result, we are now able to identify a set of discourse contexts and construction types in which indexical shifts, signaling a change in perspective, tend to occur. Typical perspective-shifting contexts on the complex sentence/clause-level include contexts of reported speech/thought, explicit epistemic authority marking and evidentiality.

Having acknowledged these constructions and contexts as canonical sites for facilitating perspective shifts, in this workshop we examine instances in which, either through language change or within the dynamics of discourse, perspective does not shift (we call these cases of *perspective persistence*) or does shift, whereas elements in the construction would suggest no or a different shift (we call these *irregular perspective shifts*).

Examples of irregular perspective shifts include instances of echoic modality, by means of which a speaker echoes “some position voiced or implied in the preceding discourse” (Verstraete 2007: 216). In a reported speech construction, as in (1), an echoic modal displaces the commitment to the speech act/modal stance to a contextually available source of information other than the represented speaker.

- (1) Over the years, many people have written both positively and negatively about the NCFIC. Here are the seven most common mischaracterizations. (...) The NCFIC believes that the whole family must always be together for all gatherings.

False. We have never said that the whole family **must** be together for all gatherings (Wordbanks Online Corpus, cited in Gentens & Davidse, in prep.)

A second example of an irregular perspective shift is the Ungarinyin construction in (2). It contains the epistemic modal clitic =*karra* ‘maybe’, which normally either expresses doubt on the part of the speaker, or doubt on the part of a reported speaker in quotation. However, when, as in (2), the marker appears in a reported speech or thought construction in which the matrix clause (*ngamara* ‘I said/thought’) interrupts the clause representing the reported message (*goanna nyalangun kuno* ‘there is a goanna’s head over there’), the interpretation of =*karra* ‘maybe’ becomes quite different: it indicates that the belief held by the reported speaker (need not be first person) is evaluated as a wrong belief by the current speaker (Spronck 2015).

- (2) goanna=*karra* nga-ma-ra nya-langkun kuno
goanna=maybe 1SG-think-PST F.SG-head NW.DIST
‘I wrongly thought it was a goanna’s head over there’ (Spronck 2015: 178)

Many multiple-perspective constructions (Evans 2006; San Roque & Bergqvist 2015) display similar types of irregular perspective shifts.

Constructions displaying perspective persistence include egophoric and subjective-prominent constructions (e.g. Ikegami 2005; San Roque et al. Forthc.), in which the first person perspective maintains priority over other perspectives, or non-quotational reported speech constructions (Pascual 2014: ch. 4). An example of the latter type is (3) from the South-American isolate Aikanã.

- (3) *ura-da-re-ê*
laugh-1SG.REFL-FUT-DEC
lit. 'He (says), "I will laugh"'
'He will laugh' (Van der Voort, forthc.)

Example (3) is formally a reported speech construction, and would therefore signal a shift away from the perspective of the current speaker, as in the literal translation. However, as the idiomatic translation indicates, (3) has to be interpreted from the perspective of the current speaker. Therefore, the indexed perspective *remains* that of the speaker, an instance of perspective persistence.

The aim of this workshop is to bring together linguists working on different types of perspective-indexing constructions from a wide range of languages, to understand how these different types of constructions relate to each other, and what type of perspective shifts they illustrate. More specifically, the topics and questions we want to address include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What newly described phenomena can add to our understanding of perspective-indexing constructions?
- What is the semantic status of irregular perspective shifts?
- What are pragmatic conditions for underspecifying such shifts?
- What are common diachronic sources of perspective-indexing constructions?
- Can we detect areal biases in the distribution of perspective-indexing constructions?
- Does the availability of perspective-indexing constructions covary with the availability of morphological systems of evidentiality or egophoricity or yet other systems?
- What parameters are needed for a typology of perspective-indexing constructions?

References

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2015. Evidentials: Their links with other grammatical categories. *Linguistic Typology* 19(2): 239-277.
- Bergqvist, H. 2012. Epistemic marking in Ika (Arwako). *Studies in Language* 36: 154-181.
- Bruil, M. 2014. Clause-typing and evidentiality in Ecuadorian Siona. PhD dissertation Universiteit Leiden.
- Cornillie, B. & De Cock, B. (eds). 2015. *Hearer-orientation in Spoken Genres*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- De Smet, H. & Verstraete, J.-C. 2006. Coming to terms with subjectivity. *Cognitive Linguistics* 17: 365–392.
- Dancygier, B., Lu, W. & Verhagen, A. 2016. *Viewpoint and the Fabric of Meaning. Form and Use of Viewpoint Tools across Languages and Modalities*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Dahl, Ö. 2000. Egophoricity in discourse and syntax. *Functions of Language* 7: 37-77.
- Evans, N. 2006. View with a view: Towards a Typology of Multiple Perspective Constructions. In Cover, R. T. & Kim, Y. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the thirty-first annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, Berkeley: Berkeley Linguistics Society. 93-120.

- Evans, N. 2007. Insubordination and its uses. In Nikolaeva, I. (Ed.), *Finiteness. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 366-431.
- Gawne, L. 2013. Lamjung Yolmo copulas in use: Evidentiality, reported speech and questions. Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, School of Languages and Linguistics, The University of Melbourne.
- Gentens, C. & Davidse, K. in prep. Modality in factive complements: A taxonomy of stance patterns.
- Ghesquière, L., L. Brems & F. Van de Velde (eds). 2014. *Intersubjectivity and Intersubjectification in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Gipper, S. 2011. Evidentiality and Intersubjectivity in Yurakaré: An Interactional Account. PhD dissertation Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen.
- Ikegami, Y. 2005. Indices of a 'subjectivity-prominent' language: Between cognitive linguistics and linguistic typology. *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics* 3: 132-164.
- Pascual, E. 2014. *Fictive Interaction: The Conversation Frame in Thought, Language, and Discourse* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- San Roque, L. & Bergqvist, H. (eds.). 2015. *STUF -- Language Typology and Universals*, special issue on Epistemic marking in typological perspective.
- San Roque, L., Floyd, S. & Norcliffe, E. Forthc. Evidentiality and interrogativity. *Lingua*.
- Spronck, S. 2015. Refracting views: How to construct complex perspective in reported speech and thought in Ungarinyin. *STUF -- Language Typology and Universals*, 68, 165-185.
- Vandelanotte, L. 2004. From representational to scopal distancing indirect speech or thought: a cline of subjectification. *Text* 24.4: 547-585.
- Vandelanotte, L. 2009. *Speech and thought representation in English. A cognitive-functional perspective*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Verhagen, A. 2005. *Constructions of intersubjectivity: Discourse, syntax, and cognition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Verstraete, J.-C. 2007. *Rethinking the Coordinate-Subordinate Dichotomy. Interpersonal Grammar and the Analysis of Adverbial Clauses in English*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Verstraete, J.-C., D'hertefelt, S. & Van linden, A. 2012. A typology of complement insubordination in Dutch. *Studies in Language* 36 (1): 123–153.
- Van der Voort, Hein. Forthc. Recursive inflection and grammaticalized fictive interaction in the Southwestern Amazon. In Pascual, E. & S. Sandler (Eds.). *The Conversation Frame: Forms and Functions of Fictive Interaction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.