

Grammatical encoding of shared knowledge: towards a cross-linguistic typology

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Recent cross-linguistic research has brought to light much information about grammaticalised intersubjectivity, i.e. the grammatical marking of shared/mutual knowledge, for which the term *engagement* has been recently coined (Landaburu 2007; Evans et al. 2018a, 2018b). The findings also shed new light on the analysis of better known cases such as the modal markers *ja* in German (e.g. Modicom 2012) and *ju* in Swedish (e.g. Bergqvist 2020).

Focusing on shared knowledge of propositions rather than shared identifiability of referents (the latter signaled e.g. by definite articles), we argue that markers of shared knowledge belong to the same overall functional domain as evidentiality, and we propose a set of parameters for their analysis.

As a first parameter, grammatical markers of shared knowledge may or may not be paradigmatically opposed to markers of knowledge that is exclusive to the speaker or addressee – described in the literature as markers of epistemic authority, or egophoricity (San Roque et al. 2018: 9). Marking of shared knowledge without an “exclusive knowledge” counterpart is found, for example, in German and Southern Nambikwara (Kroeker 2001), whereas an opposition is attested in Kogi (Bergqvist 2016) and Jaminjung (Schultze-Berndt 2017).

Second, cross-linguistic evidence supports a distinction between general, ‘encyclopedic’ knowledge (i.e. propositions that every fully socialised member of a speech community would know) and shared knowledge in the narrow sense (i.e. propositions known to speaker and addressee). Markers of general knowledge – found e.g. in proverbs, traditional narratives, and procedural texts – have been described e.g. for Wutun (Sandman 2018: 187f.), Kalmyk (Skribnik & Seesing 2014), and Maimandê (Eberhard 2018: 349–355).

Third, marking of shared knowledge (in the narrow sense) may be based on access to shared episodic memory, but may also be restricted to evidence for a proposition that is shared at utterance time. Markers of the latter type are attested e.g. in Lakondê (Nambikwaran, Brazil; Telles & Wetzels 2006; Eberhard 2018), Yurakaré (isolate, Bolivia; Gipper 2014), and Jaminjung (Mirndi, Australia, shown in (1)), and raise questions about the degrees of integration of such knowledge into the Common Ground (Grzech 2016, 2020).

- (1) *janyungbari* *yina* *motika* *jid* *ga-ram=mindi*
another DIST car go.down 3SG-come.PRS=**SHARED**

‘Another car there is coming down there!’ (spontaneous utterance when a car comes into view simultaneously for speaker and addressee)!’ (Schultze-Berndt 2017: 200)

From these observations, it follows that at least a subset of the attested markers are best analysed as indicating shared *access to evidence* for a proposition, rather than shared *knowledge* of a proposition (cf. Gipper 2014 for Yurakaré; Schultze-Berndt 2017 for Jaminjung), and are therefore related to evidentials. Moreover, markers of shared knowledge can formally be part of an evidential system, as e.g. in Sihuas Quechua (Hintz & Hintz 2017).

- (2) *tushi:ka:yan-mi* *tushi:ka:yan-ma*
‘individual knowledge’ ‘mutual knowledge’

tushi:ka:yan-chri *tushi:ka:yan-chra*
‘individual conjecture’ ‘mutual conjecture, invite discussion’

tushi:ka:yan-shi *tushi:ka:yan-sha*
‘reported information’ ‘generalized knowledge from reported information’
‘they are dancing’ (Hintz & Hintz 2017: 91, original glosses)

A theoretical account of the above-mentioned domains which is supported by these empirical findings defines evidentiality as *mode* of access to a proposition (Michael 2008; Plungian 2010), while marking of shared knowledge – and of its counterpart, epistemic authority – concerns the *distribution* of access (e.g. Bergqvist 2018; Evans et al. 2018a:116). Thus, we not only demonstrate that shared knowledge and joint perception are cognitively salient notions across languages and cultures, but also contribute empirical data to the debate on what constitutes common knowledge and common ground.

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