

The role of sentence type in Ika (Arwako) egophoric marking

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1. Introduction

This paper analyses the relationship between sentence type¹ and egophoric marking, also known as conjunct/disjunct², in Ika (ISO 639-3:arh), an Arwako-Chibchan language spoken by some 15.000 in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region of northern Colombia³. Prototypically, egophoric/conjunct marking occurs with first person subjects in declaratives and second person subjects in interrogatives. Non-egophoric/disjunct marking is reserved for all other combinations of subject person and the declarative/interrogative sentence types. The special status of egophoric marking thus has to be accounted for in both declarative and interrogative contexts. However, the prototypical distribution of egophoric marking is not without noted exceptions, some of which stem from the relationship between sentence-type and subject person (see Section 2). In Ika, there are specific distributional restrictions with the egophoric marker and second person subjects that depend on the relationship between subject person and sentence type, and which have consequences for the analysis of the system (see Section 3). The status of such exceptions has yet to be determined with regard to their explanatory role in the definition of egophoric marking, but it is argued here that they are consistent with the functional motivations underlying egophoric marking although they may in detail be specific to the system found in Ika.

From the point of view of egophoric marking in Ika, the possibility is raised that egophoric marking with second person subjects, i.e. ones that target the epistemic perspective of the addressee, should be analyzed from the perspective of the speaker in terms of his/her existing expectations on the addressee's involvement in some event (cf. Bergqvist 2012). The addressee's and the speaker's epistemic perspectives may be thus considered as poles of an 'epistemic gradient' in interrogatives where the epistemic commitment of one of the speech participants may be raised or lowered (cf. Enfield et al. 2013; Heritage 2012). Following this analysis, interrogatives are discussed from their interactionally grounded functions and their capacity to shift the perspective of the speech-participants in an epistemic sense (see Section 4). The notion of 'bias' is an attested component of polar interrogatives and tag-questions (cf. Pope 1976), and in many languages this meaning component is explicitly addressed in contrastive interrogative forms; ones that feature the speaker's expectations, and ones that do not.

Egophoric marking in Ika is, for these reasons, analyzed using the notion of "complex epistemic perspective" that houses the epistemic perspectives of both speech participants (cf. Evans 2005; Bergqvist 2011) and is hypothesized to encode the speaker's epistemic access to an event that involves (at least) one of the speech participants. With second person subjects, egophoric marking is only possible by including the perspective of

¹ Cf. König & Siemund (2007)

² E.g. Bickel & Nichols (2007), Bickel (2008), Creissels (2008), Hale (1980), Tournadre (1996)

³ The materials that the present analysis builds on were collected over two trips to the field in 2009 and 2012. The analysis builds mainly on elicited data, which has been correlated with a small sample of collected texts. The relevant observations presented here are therefore somewhat tentative. For additional information on epistemic marking in Ika, see Bergqvist (2012)

the addressee in the epistemic assessment of the speaker, not by means of epistemic “flip” or reversal, as suggested in other accounts of egophoric marking (see Creissels 2008; Section 2, below).

The notion of epistemic/observational “access” plays a role in Ika egophoric marking and may be compared to the concept of ‘knowledge’ by being underspecified with regard to how knowledge of/access to something is acquired. Access, in its present use, is meant to distinguish between events that are available to be experienced, and/or known, and those that are not. Inaccessible events include (but are not restricted to) “public” events that do not directly involve the speaker and the “private” (inner) states of the speaker and others. The key to understanding egophoric marking in Ika is *involvement*, and any other form of perceptual access remains under-specified in the definition of this form of epistemic marking.

Following this analysis, egophoric marking in Ika is represented graphically by a version of “the stance triangle”, which represents dialogical structure in discourse (cf. Du Bois 2007) and illustrates the multi-dimensional nature of perspectives-taking and epistemic assessment (cf. Givón 1990; Heritage & Raymond 2005, Heritage 2012; Kockelman 2004). The implications of the arguments presented in this paper are that egophoric marking is sensitive to contextual influence on the level of the speech-act as indicated by sentence type, and that this influence is non-trivial in the definition of such systems. In order to support this argument, it is necessary to consider the declarative-interrogative contrast from the point of view of epistemic marking and Ika offers an opportunity for this.

While egophoric marking in Ika is atypical in how the egophoric marker occurs in interrogative contexts, it is not clear that this difference motivates analyzing egophoric marking in Ika as a different kind of epistemic marking from the one found in e.g. in Kathmandu Newar (see directly below; Hale 1980). The main difference between egophoric marking in Ika and Kathmandu Newar (as a prototypical instance of egophoric marking) lies in how sentence type distinctions are analyzed in the two languages. Person sensitive aspects of the system relating to notions of ‘involvement’, ‘volition’, and ‘control’ have already been observed to vary between egophoric marking systems (see e.g. Creissels 2009) it remains to be demonstrated that some degree of variation to other parts of the pattern should warrant a different analysis.

2. Issues of analysis

A defining instance of egophoric marking is found in Austin Hale’s description of finite verb forms in the Sino-Tibetan language Kathmandu Newar (Hale 1980). Egophoric marking⁴ in Newar is reserved for first person subjects in declaratives and second person subjects in interrogatives as exemplified in (1) where *-ā* is egophoric and *-a* is non-egophoric with the verb *wane*, ‘go’ in the past tense:

- (1) a. *Ji ana wanā*
 1S there go.EGO
 ‘I went there.’

⁴ Conjunct/disjunct is the term used by Hale

- b. *Cha ana wanā lā*
 2S there go.EGO INTERR
 ‘Did you go there?’
- c. *Cha ana wana*
 2S there go.NON.EGO
 ‘You went there.’
- d. *Wa ana wana*
 3S there go.NON.EGO
 ‘He went there.’

(ibid: 95)

However, first person subjects may combine with egophoric marking in interrogative contexts, resulting in a rhetorical reading as in (2):

- (2) *Ji ana wanā lā*
 1S there go.EGO INTERR
 ‘Did I go there? (I most certainly did not!)’

(ibid: 100)

Likewise, second person subjects may combine with non-egophoric marking in interrogatives, also resulting in a rhetorical reading:

- (3) *Cha wala lā*
 2S go.NON.EGO INTERR
 ‘Did you come? (most certainly not!)’

(ibid: 100)

Aside from these exceptions, there are restrictions on what predicates may inflect for egophoric marking in Kathmandu Newar, where only *volitional acts* are marked egophoric (ibid: 96). An active predicate that would be available for egophoric marking with a first person subject is interpreted as resulting in an involuntary act when marked non-egophoric.

- (4) a. *Ji danā*
 1S go.EGO
 ‘I got up (voluntarily)’ (conjunct)
- b. *Ji dana*
 1S go.NON.EGO
 ‘I got up (involuntarily)’ (disjunct)

(ibid: 99)

Similar restrictions on combinations of egophoric marking with certain predicates have been observed in other languages where egophoric marking is attested, e.g. in Akhvakh (Nakh-Dagestanian; Creissels 2008), where only “controllable actions” combine with egophoric marking (“assertors agreement/involvement” in Creissel’s terminology, Creissels 2009: 18).

In addition to instances of egophoric marking exemplified above, the egophoric marker may also occur in coreferential quotative constructions with third person subjects, i.e. constructions where the subject of the subordinate “quoted” clause is identical to the subject of the finite main predicate, such as in (5a). In (5b), by contrast, a non-coreferential construction with two distinct subjects is non-egophoric:

- (5) a. *wqq* *wa* *ana* ***wanā*** *dhakāā* *dhāla*
 3S.AGT 3S there go.EGO that say.NON.EGO
 ‘He said that he went there (himself)’
- b. *wqq* *wa* *ana* ***wana*** *dhakāā* *dhāla*
 3S.AGT 3S there go.NON.EGO that say.NON.EGO
 ‘He said that he went there (someone else)’

(ibid. 95)

Assuming that egophoric marking in coreferential quotative constructions is derived from instances of egophoric marking with first and second person subjects in simple clauses, it appears that subject person, sentence type, and predicate type are the crucial variables of egophoric marking as a qualificational system. Predicate type restrictions aside (see e.g. Hale 1980, Creissels 2008, Curnow 2002), the key to understanding the functional motivations behind the system arguably resides in the distribution of the egophoric marker with subject person in accordance with sentence type. This aspect of egophoric marking is addressed by Denis Creissels in his description of egophoric marking in Akhvakh:

“What is the property shared by 1st person arguments in declarative clauses and 2nd person arguments in questions that may justify this apparent inversion of person marking between declarative and interrogative clauses? [...] this property is not difficult to identify: in declarative speech-acts, the speech-act participant in charge of the assertion is the speaker, whereas in questions, the speech-act participant in charge of the assertion is the addressee. In other words, the choice of *-ada* [egophoric] encodes that an A or SA argument is identical with the speech-act participant in charge of the assertion.” (Creissels 2008: 316; [author additions in square brackets]).

The proposed reversal of the declarative/interrogative distinction in terms of which participant is “in charge of the assertion”, merits a closer look. Although Creissel’s functional explanation stems from his work on Akhvakh, the account suggests a more general applicability given that a key property of egophoric marking lies in the correspondence between subject person and sentence type. The explanation offered in the quote further implies a state of *symmetry* between egophoric marking in declarative and interrogative contexts; the one who is in charge of the assertion shifts between speaker and addressee by a trading of epistemic positions according to sentence type. Although there is an appealing systematicity to this proposal, it is not applicable to all instances of egophoric marking; Ika being one exception.

3. Egophoric marking in Ika

Prima vista, the system for egophoric marking in Ika appears to map perfectly onto the canonical pattern from Newar above:

- (6) a. *(ən=)bunsi-w-in*
spin.yarn-EGO-DECL
'I am spinning yarn.'
- b. *nə=bunsi-k-w-e*
2S=spin.yarn-DIST-EGO-SUSP
'You are spinning yarn?'
- c. *nə=bunsa-y-in*
2S=spin.yarn-NON.EGO-DECL
'You are spinning yarn./You spin yarn.'
- d. *bunsa-y-in*
spin.yarn-NON.EGO-DECL
'He is spinning yarn.'
- e. *bunsi-Ø-e*
spin.yarn-NON.EGO-SUSP
'Is he spinning yarn?'

(Landaburu 1992: 9-10 [my translation and glossing])

From the examples above, we may deduce that *-w* is egophoric and *-Ø/-y*⁵ is non-egophoric. The egophoric marker is reserved for first person subjects in declarative sentences (*-in*) and second person subjects in what appears to be interrogative sentences⁶ (*-e*). However, it quickly becomes apparent that the pattern has exceptions that must be accounted for in analyzing the system. Creissels' proposal for the functional motivations of egophoric marking in Akhvakh, as quoted above, is not applicable to egophoric marking in Ika without substantial modification.

The most important feature of egophoric marking in Ika that separates it from the canonical pattern, concerns the correlation between sentence type and subject person. There are three mutually exclusive suffixes (*-e*, *-o*, *-in*) that signal sentence type with clear epistemic connotations (cf. Bergqvist 2012: 159; Landaburu 2000: 738). The *-e*-suffix is labeled 'suspensive'; the *-o*-suffix, 'interrogative'; and the *-in*-suffix, 'declarative'. Both *-in* and *-e* combine with egophoric marking, whereas *-o*, by contrast, is always non-egophoric regardless of subject person. Compare the examples in (7):

- (7) a. *nə=bunsi-k-Ø-o*
2S=spin.yarn-DIST-NON.EGO-INTERR
'Were you spinning yarn?'
- b. *nə=bunsi-k-w-e*
2S-spin.yarn-DIST-EGO-SUSP
'You are spinning yarn? (you look like you are)' (ELI_090823)

⁵ The non-egophoric marker is zero. *-y*, as an instance of the non-egophoric marker, is phonologically conditioned.

⁶ Co-referential quotative constructions do not feature egophoric marking in Ika. Egophoric marking in quotatives is accompanied by explicit reference to a first person subject as in non-embedded clauses.

Given that we expect egophoric marking to occur with second person subjects in questions, (7a) is an exception to the pattern. (7a) represents a “true” interrogative with low speaker expectations regarding possible answers and could thus be characterized as “information-seeking”. (7b), by contrast, maps quite well onto English tag-questions, with high speaker expectations on possible answers, or it may alternatively be viewed as a rhetorical question, without expectations of an answer, altogether (cf. Pope 1976; Rohde 2006). An utterance with the suspensive *-e*, may thus be regarded, by form, as a declarative. This proposal is supported by the absence of interrogative connotations when *-e* combines with first person subjects, as in (8):

- (8) *bunsi-k-w-e*
 spin.yarn-DIST-EGO-SUSP
 ‘(When) I spun yarn/(that) I spun yarn.’ (ELI_090823)

The translation suggests a change in the syntactic status of the sentence towards a subordinate clause, when compared to (7b), above. There is, however, no evidence to support this; the sentence in (8) is fully inflected and does not act as a complement to a main predicate. The translation results from the function-meaning of *-e*, which also allows for an interpretation as a marker of rhetorical questions:

- (9) *eya nuku-w-e*
 this hear-EGO-SUSP
 ‘(Do) I understand this? (Of course!) (ELI_120507)

The interpretation of (8) and (9) as either declarative or interrogative, is very much sensitive to subject person. If an utterance with the sequence *-w-e* features a second person subject, then it is understood as a question for the same reason that we might interpret an utterance like *you’re going*, as a question despite its syntactic form as a declarative. When the subject of an utterance featuring the same sequence (*-w-e*) is first person, it will generally receive a declarative interpretation (see discussion directly below; Labov & Fanshel 1977).

Information-seeking interrogative sentences (signaled by *-o*) with first person subjects are always non-egophoric and never produce rhetorical readings:

- (10) *bunsa-k-Ø-o*
 spin.yarn-DIST-NON.EGO-INTERR
 ‘Do I (know how to) spin yarn?’ (i.e. in your opinion; Bergqvist 2012:174)⁷

In Ika, egophoric marking with second person subjects is only possible when the speaker assesses an act that is equally accessible to the speaker and the addressee, i.e. common access/knowledge of an event that involves the addressee may not be asserted by the speaker alone. Egophoric marked sentences with first person subjects and *-e*, while formally no different from ones with second person subjects, offer additional support for this analysis given the resulting interpretation effects.

⁷ The translation in (10) is meant to reflect discussions and speaker commentary on utterances with first person subjects and the “true” interrogative *-o*. If the speaker requests information about whether he/she is presently spinning yarn, this (rather strange) question would have to entail asking for the opinions/judgments of the addressee, since the question hardly would make sense otherwise (unless the speaker is blind, perhaps). The conscious, on-going actions of the speaker are only possible to question when the addressee’s judgment regarding these is called upon.

A consequence of this analysis is that egophoric marking only occurs with declaratives in Ika. By comparison, tag-questions and rhetorical questions in English have declarative force and similar “interrogative” strategies have been attested for a number of languages, e.g. Russian (Comrie 1984), Georgian (Harris 1984), and Swedish (Lindström 2008). If, as in the case of Ika, the interrogative reading with *-e* disappears with a change of subject person, then analyzing it as a declarative form appears warranted. The modal semantics of *-e* as a marker of “suspended belief” (suspensive) produces an overlap with corresponding conventions for interrogative speech acts, as discussed by e.g. Givón (1990), but it is not clear that this overlap motivates an analysis of *-e* as an interrogative.

The conventions for asking questions in English reflect the two distinct functions of *-e* and *-o* where pragmatically appropriate questions concerning the psychological and cognitive states of the addressee usually are void of speaker expectations (as with the non-egophoric marker and *-o*). A speaker may not assume and plainly state knowledge concerning the addressee’s opinions, intentions, or desires, unless very specific circumstances apply. Similarly, one cannot ask for the reasons/intentions behind a person’s behavior without conveying an authoritative stance. Conversational conventions of this kind are related to the notions of A and B-events (see Labov & Fanshel 1977) and are discussed further in Section 5, below.

Bergqvist (2012) proposes that the sentence type markers *-in*, *-o*, and *-e* are markers of ‘epistemic authority’ and that they encode different symmetry relations between the knowledge states of the speaker and the addressee. Bergqvist identifies three distinct symmetries for *-in*, *-o*, and *-e*, namely “speaker asymmetric” (*-in*); “addressee asymmetric” (*-o*); and “speaker-addressee symmetric” (*-e*). This tripartite division of epistemic authority has direct bearing on the analysis of egophoric marking since only utterances that encode the speaker’s authority, either as exclusive (speaker asymmetric) or shared (speaker-addressee symmetric) take egophoric marking. Instances where epistemic authority is in effect “handed over to the addressee” are non-egophoric regardless of subject person.

There are also restrictions on egophoric marking with second person subjects in certain temporal contexts. Although, tense marking in the strict sense has yet to be demonstrated for Ika, egophoric marking with second person subjects are always interpreted as “present”. A past context rules out egophoric marking with second person subjects, but not with first person subjects, which may combine with egophoric marking in both past and present contexts. This asymmetric feature of the system is illustrated in examples (11) (present) and (12) (past):

- (11) a. *nə=bunsi-k-w-e*
 2S=spin.yarn-DIST-EGO-SUSP
 ‘You are spinning yarn?’ (you look like you are; Bergqvist 2012: 167)
- b. *(ən=)bunsi-w-in*
 (1S=)spin.yarn-EGO-DECL
 ‘I am spinning yarn.’ (Landaburu 2000: 742)
- (12) a. *nə=bunsi-Ø-e*
 2S=spin.yarn-NON.EGO-SUSP
 ‘Were you spinning yarn?’ (Bergqvist 2012: 167)

- b. (*ən=*)*bunsi-k-w-in*
 (1S=)spin.yarn-DIST-EGO-DECL
 ‘I spun yarn.’ (Landaburu 2000: 742)

What formal component produces a present or a past reading in the examples above? A prime candidate in the search for a tense indicator is the *-k*-suffix, glossed DIST, (‘distal’). However, this suffix does not allow for an analysis in terms of tense given its availability in both present and past readings (compare 11a to 12b), nor is it limited to only occur with the egophoric marker (see example 10, above).

Based on the observation that *-k* occurs in present and past contexts with both the egophoric and the non-egophoric marker, as well as the fact that the egophoric marker *-w* must be accompanied by the *-k* in utterances with second person subjects (ibid: 165), it is hypothesized that *-k* signals a *distancing from the speaker* in terms of reduced (but not void) epistemic access to an act/event involving the speaker or the addressee (cf. Bergqvist 2012: 173-174). From this hypothesis, the *-k*-suffix ties in with the overall workings of the system as a gradient marker to indicate a degree of removal from the first-hand experience provided by the personal involvement of the speaker. The past/present readings of (11) and (12) can only be understood as a combinatory effect that includes egophoric marking, the *-k*-suffix and subject person. A consequence of this is that second person subjects may not combine with egophoric marking in what is regarded as “past” contexts.

It was argued in Bergqvist (2012) that egophoric marking only applies to observationally accessible actions/events (ibid: 155). The analysis presented directly above is one piece of that argument. Another has to do with what predicates may inflect for egophoric marking in Ika. Any action/event/accomplishment may take egophoric marking as long as the subject is in first or second person, accompanied by the congruent sentence type marker. States involving either of the speech participants, as indicated by subject person, do not inflect for egophoric marking with the exception of predicative attributes (see example 14, below). In Ika, egophoric marking is therefore not exclusive to ‘volitional’ or ‘controllable’ actions, which is the case in Newar and Akhvakh. In example (13) both volitional (‘jump’) and involuntary (‘fall’) actions are egophoric:

- (13) a. *re'kich-ən* *nuk-w-in*
 jump-IMPf be.loc-EGO-DECL
 ‘I am jumping.’
- b. *ka'-se* *wa'na* *u-k-w-in*
 floor-LOC fall.PERF do-DIST-EGO-DECL
 ‘I fell to the floor.’

(ELI_120508)

Other examples of involuntary actions that take egophoric marking include, ‘(to) sink’, ‘get lost’, ‘trip over (something)’, ‘get stuck’, and ‘faint’. Personal attributes such as being ‘rich’, ‘poor’, ‘smart’, ‘fat’, ‘curly (hair)’, ‘thin’, ‘tall’, or ‘short’, also combine with egophoric marking as exemplified in (15):

- (14) *derniku* *na-w-in*
 thin be-EGO-DECL
 ‘I am thin.’ (ibid)

Bodily states, on the other hand, like being ‘tired’, ‘wet’, ‘sleepy’, ‘hungry’, ‘angry’, or ‘worried’ are not available for egophoric marking. Most of these are expressed by auxiliary constructions with the verb *zan* ‘feel/sense’, resulting in dative experiencer constructions (e.g. Bickel 2004; Bickel & Nichols 2009). Predicates of psychological and cognitive states, such as ‘want’, ‘like’, ‘feel’, ‘believe’, and ‘hope’, are also not available for egophoric marking, but have an accusative subject marker. Both constructions are exemplified in (15):

- (15) a. *mari na'-zən-Ø-in*
 hunger 1S.DAT-sense-NON.EGO-DECL
 ‘I am hungry.’
- b. *dze na-yun-Ø-in*
 water 1S.ACC-want-NON.EGO-DECL
 ‘I want water’ (i.e. I’m thirsty).

(ELI_120509)

However, a completely predictable mapping between what may be considered cognitive/psychological states in English and in Ika is not possible. An equivalent to the English verb ‘think’ is e.g. found with two distinct forms, *aruna* ‘think’, and *achu* ‘to opine/imagine’ (derived form of the verb *chu* ‘see’). Both are available for egophoric marking and must be regarded as actions rather than cognitive states:

- (16) a. *inə nə=waruna-k-w-e*
 what 2S=think-DIST-EGO-SUSP
 ‘What are you thinking (about)?’
- b. *azi n(ə)=achu-k-w-e*
 how 2S=opine/imagine-DIST-EGO-SUSP
 ‘What do you think?/How about it?’

(ibid)

Despite a degree of fuzziness in the system from an *ad hoc* point of view, as illustrated by (16), there is reason to account for predicate type vis-à-vis egophoric marking in Ika, in terms of “epistemic access”. Actions/events and personal features (permanent or temporary) that are possible to observe in an epistemic sense i.e. ones that are deemed public, are available for egophoric marking. “Private states” as instantiated by bodily, psychological, and cognitive state predicates are not available for egophoric marking. Of course, the notion of epistemic access is not sufficient in defining egophoric marking in the language given the already discussed properties of the system; it also requires an explicit signal of involvement by one of the speech participants in the form of subject marking. However, if the involvement of a speech participant is “off-stage” as evidenced by the non-availability of egophoric marking in past contexts with second person subjects and in the restrictions with regard to predicate-type, then egophoric marking is not available. In Section 5, these observations will be related to current views on epistemic marking in interaction in terms of epistemic stance and status (Heritage 2012, 2013).

To summarize the findings for egophoric marking in Ika, I propose the following features to be defining of the system:

1. Egophoric marking only occurs with declaratives featuring first or second person subjects; either ones that charge the speaker with exclusive epistemic authority (*-in*), or ones that share epistemic authority with the addressee (*-e*). Interrogatives that encode the speaker’s ignorance and where the epistemic authority resides with the addressee (*-o*) are not available for egophoric marking
2. The defining feature in (1) has the consequence of projecting a “present” interpretation on instances of egophoric marking with second person subjects. Actions/events that explicitly involve the addressee but which are inaccessible to the speaker’s immediate experience/observation, are marked non-egophoric and receive a “past” reading
3. ‘Volition’ or ‘control’ does not determine the availability of egophoric marking with certain predicates in Ika. Instead, epistemic/observational access imposes a division between actions/events and personal attributes that may take egophoric marking, and psychological/cognitive and bodily states that may not combine with egophoric marking

The possible instantiations of the egophoric marker are summarized in Table 1, where the relevant parameters sentence type and subject person are specified in an effort to clarify the formal requirements for egophoric marking to occur⁸:

	DECL (<i>-in</i>)	SUSP (<i>-e</i>)	INTERR (<i>-o</i>)
1S	+	+	-
2S	-	+	-
3S	-	-	-

Table 1. Distribution of egophoric marking across sentence type and subject person.

The “distal” marker *-k* combines with all instances of the egophoric marker, but only occurs with the non-egophoric (zero) marker when combined with the interrogative *-o*. The distal marker signals a reduced commitment on behalf of the speaker and constitutes a modal component of the system that is separate from the notion of speech-participant involvement and epistemic authority as key components of egophoric marking in Ika. Further work is needed to produce a more detailed account of the distal marker’s role in the grammar of Ika.

What implications does the proposed analysis of a singular instance of egophoric marking have for analyses of egophoric marking more generally? Existing proposals for the functional motivations underlying egophoric marking are of two distinct kinds. The first focuses on the alignment of speech-act role and subject person (Creissels 2008, 2009), and the conflation of speech-act roles (i.e. speaker in statements and addressee in questions) in terms of “informant” (Bickel & Nichols 2007). These overlapping formulations take their departure in formal observations and suggest an equal status between the role of speaker and addressee. In a similar vein, Bickel (2008) compares egophoric marking to person agreement systems and evidentiality using the variables ‘person’ and ‘scope’. In this comparison, egophoric marking is separated from person agreement systems by the notion of informant and from

⁸ An anonymous reviewer requested an account of all combinatory possibilities of subject person, sentence type, distal marking, and egophoric marking, adding these up to 36 logically possible combinations. While an account of all these combinations may be hypothetically interesting, only three of them include the egophoric marker as represented by the plus signs (+) in Table 1, above. These instances are the ones that require an explanation. All other combinations are only relevant if they may serve as a contrast to help explain the presence of the egophoric marker in those few combinations where it has been attested.

evidential systems in that the scope of egophoric marking is over the argument as opposed to the entire proposition in the case of evidential marking (ibid: 8).

A second kind of proposal relates egophoric marking to ‘mirativity’ and provides functional motivations from a semanto-pragmatic perspective. Proponents of this view are notably DeLancey (1992, 2001) and Dickinson (2000) who provide illustrations of the connection between egophoric marking and assimilated/non-assimilated knowledge by drawing on grammaticalization of mirative systems (Lhasa Tibetan; DeLancey 2001) and the semantic consequences of egophoric marking with different classes of predicates (Tsafiki; Dickinson 2000).

Both kinds of proposals identify important features of egophoric marking in the respective languages that they draw from, but the picture remains unclear partly because of attested inter-language variation that complicates a clear view of exceptions to, and variations of, the prototypical pattern. While first person contexts have been the focus of attempts to analyze egophoric marking, interrogative (i.e. second person) contexts have largely been ignored, or, alternatively assumed to mirror first person contexts despite the fact that sensitivity to sentence type is what warrants a separation between egophoric marking and systems of person agreement⁹ in the first place.

Pragmatic considerations such as the illocutionary force of an utterance play a role in egophoric marking and may override the formal patterning in terms of sentence type and subject person. Should this fact be regarded as an exception to the canonical pattern of egophoric marking, or is it an integral part of it? The analysis of egophoric marking in Ika considers the second possibility from a detailed mapping of subject person and sentence type rather than assuming *ad hoc* that the distributional pattern of egophoric marking with first person subjects is automatically applicable to instances with second person.

Before turning to a model for how some of these pragmatic considerations are represented by egophoric marking in Ika, we will briefly consider some existing accounts of interrogatives that may strengthen the idea that question-hood is a gradual notion that allows for different epistemic perspectives that involve both the speaker and the addressee.

4. Gradient speaker expectations in interrogatives

Markers of sentence type are highly grammaticalized resources for signaling differences in the speech participants’ idealized psychological states (Enfield et al. 2013; cf. Searle 1969). This creates an imbalance between a small set of markers that express such idealized states, on the one hand, and speakers’ acute sensitivity to fine-grained nuances in the attitudes, emotions, attention, and knowledge states of their interlocutors, on the other. In part, this imbalance is a consequence of grammaticalization; i.e. a reduction of available contrasts when compared to optional, lexical resources to signal the “same thing”. We see this in evidential systems, which although they may be quite complex with several semantic contrasts to choose from, are unlikely to compare to the corresponding lexical resources for expressing evidential notions such as adverbials, modal verbs and complement-taking mental predicates.

One way around this problem is to use multiple strategies for signaling a certain speech-act. There are commonly different coexisting interrogative constructions in a language that signal differences in the degree of commitment, level of expectation regarding an

⁹ While there are other aspects of egophoric marking, as pointed out by a reviewer, that contrast egophoric marking with person agreement (e.g. issues of obligatoriness and number of person contrasts in such systems), it is the distribution of identical forms to signal the perspective of the speaker and the addressee, respectively, that intrigues anyone attempting to account for such systems. The ‘I’ vs. ‘You’ contrast is commonly maintained in person agreement whereas this distinction is less apparent in egophoric marking systems, thus giving rise to notions such as ‘informant’ and ‘assertor’ to account for forms that signal both perspectives.

answer/possible answers, and other features that result from the pragmatics of reduced speaker certainty. Enfield et al. (2013) describe and analyze the functional properties of sentence final particles (SPF); a cross-linguistically frequent resource for encoding polar interrogatives. The investigation draws on the methodology of conversation analysis and employs the notion of “epistemic gradient” (cf. Heritage 2012), which allows for a gradual shifting between the speech participant’s commitments to the truth of a proposition either by lowering the speaker’s commitment or by raising the addressee’s (Enfield et al. 2013: 195). This perspective on interrogatives contrasts with the notion of an “interrogative flip” (cf. Lehmann 2011; Murray 2011; Speas & Tenny 2003), where the epistemic perspective/authority is “handed over” to the addressee, a notion that results from the idea that the speaker is ignorant in presenting the addressee with a request for information.

In this section, the notion of epistemic gradient is applied to interrogative strategies in Cheyenne (Algonquian; Murray 2011) and Kurtöp (Tibeto-Burman, Bhutan; Hyslop 2011) in order to illustrate the utility of the gradient notion in pinpointing the speech participants’ differing epistemic perspectives. In Cheyenne, there are morpho-syntactic resources to lower the speaker’s commitment to a proposition when compared to the (default) high gradient position associated with assertions¹⁰. Polar interrogatives are formed in two ways; with the interrogative mood suffix *-he*, and with the interrogative clitic *mó=* (a cliticized form of the particle *móhe*, ‘really?’). Consider (17), below:

- (17) a. *né-háeana-he*
 2S-hungry-Y/N
 ‘Are you hungry?’
- b. *mó=né-háéána-Ø*
 Y/N=2S-hungry-DIR
 ‘Are you hungry?’ (you look like you are)
- (Murray 2011: 35, after Leman 1980b: 47, 182)

Apart from having distinct morpho-syntactic properties, constructions with *mó=* have the same pitch contour as declaratives, in contrast to *-he*, which follows an interrogative intonation pattern. Murray explains the differences between (17a) and (17b) in terms of “observability”; the utterance in (17b) is appropriate in a situation “where the addressee is eating extremely quickly”, but if the speaker simply wishes to know if the addressee is hungry without any contextual clues or overt signs of hunger, then (17a) is more appropriate. It is clear that the difference in meaning between *mó=* and *-he* is one that concerns speaker expectations on the state-of-affairs subject to questioning.

From the point of view of epistemic gradients, *-he* features low speaker commitment and assumes a high commitment on behalf of the addressee, while *mó=* signals high speaker commitment with an equally high commitment assumed on behalf of the addressee.

In Kurtöp, there are two interrogative particles, *yo* and *shu*, which contrast in terms of expectations of an answer, thus signaling a different kind of speaker expectation from the one in Cheyenne. The interrogative marker *yo* is used when the question directly concerns the addressee and therefore carries expectations of an answer, and *shu* is used when the question

¹⁰ Enfield et al. (2013) suggest that the original gradient position is one of symmetry (ibid: 195). A rivaling suggestion is to regard the starting position of the gradient as *asymmetric* given the unmarked status of declaratives in language and the clear association that declaratives have with providing (new) information. However, the default gradient-state must be locally motivated in order to map how speech-acts are positioned along the gradient and how different stances relate to the different positions.

involves someone else (e.g. the speaker or a third person), thus freeing the addressee of being expected to provide an answer (Hyslop 2011). Compare the examples in (18):

- (18) a. *wo* *zhâ* *yo*
 DEM:PROX what QP:COP
 ‘What is this?’ (ibid: 583)
- b. *ngai-ta* *zhâ* *lap-male* *shu* *da*
 1.ERG-EMPH what say-FUT DBT now
 ‘Now what should I say?’ (ibid: 508)

The tilting of the epistemic gradient associated with *yo* and *shu* may be thought of as involving the addressee’s gradient more than the speaker’s, given that the difference between (18a) and (18b) consists of a lowering of the assumed addressee commitment, while the low commitment of the speaker remains constant.

Interrogatives in Cheyenne and Kurtöp encode two different sets of expectations: one where the speaker has expectations on the state-of-affairs that the question concerns (Cheyenne) and one where the speaker has expectations on the addressee’s ability to provide an answer without expectations on what that answer may be (Kurtöp).

The kind of speaker expectation discussed for Cheyenne has been observed for polar questions in English as “inherent bias” (e.g. Bolinger 1957; Pope 1976). A strong bias on an expected answer is clearly visible in negative polar questions where an affirmative answer is expected, e.g. ‘Aren’t you already a member?’ (i.e. the speaker expects the addressee to be a member), but it is also found with positive polar questions, although there is a stronger pragmatic inference affecting the expected answer (cf. Bolinger 1978b for details). The simple fact that the questioner can be surprised by a given answer also suggests some prior expectations or beliefs with regard to possible answers.

It is clear that languages allow for a choice between several interrogative strategies that tilt the speaker-addressee epistemic gradient from “speaker-asymmetric” in declaratives to “addressee-asymmetric” in interrogatives, with a number of possible intermediate stops along the way. In the remaining sections, an attempt is made to formalize these observations into a clear representation of how the complex epistemic perspective of the speaker underlies the distribution of egophoric marking in Ika. The speaker’s perspective is an important component of the meaning-function of interrogatives and if the system described for Ika in Section 3 is analyzed as a version of egophoric marking, as I think it should be, then the role of interrogatives in such systems may not be analyzed *ad hoc* in terms of an epistemic reversal, but must allow for a scalar interpretation that considers stance-taking and a complex epistemic perspective featuring both speech participants as observer-actors.

5. Sentence type and speaker-stance

The discussed problem of mapping sentence type onto the pragmatics of interaction can also be addressed by using sentence type markers in “incongruent” ways to achieve effects that are not inherently found in the markers themselves. The use of one form to signal another speech-act than the one encoded in the form itself, is commonly called “indirect speech” acts, a notion that has been severely criticized (e.g. Levinson 1979, 1983). “Declarative questions” are very frequent in American English (cf. Stivers 2010) and the rhetorical use of interrogatives to signal assertions is equally well attested (e.g. Rohde 2006, cf. Heritage 2002).

Heritage (2012) investigates the complex distribution of declaratives and interrogatives as indicative of certain speech-acts and proposes an analysis in terms of the speech participants' *epistemic status* and *epistemic stance*. Heritage is concerned with investigating "talk as social action" and the problem of identifying actions "as actions of a particular kind" (ibid: 2). This concern directly involves the difficulties of utterance identification by form. Epistemic status denotes "relative epistemic access to a domain of information", where the speech participants occupy a more knowledgeable [K+] or less knowledgeable [K-] position (ibid: 4) relative to (i) the co-participant, and (ii) the domain of knowledge, in terms of A and B-events (Labov and Fanshel 1977; see Section 3, above). These are exclusive to one of the speech participants where A-events pertain to the speaker, excluding the addressee, while B-events belong to the addressee's domain. This division can be based in experience or be socially negotiated and in both cases constitutes a frame for an utterance wherein the speaker adopts an epistemic stance. Stance is "the moment to moment expression of epistemic status" and a speaker may adopt a stance that is either congruent or incongruent with their epistemic status. How epistemic status determines the illocutionary force of an utterance is summarized (simplified) in Table 2.

Utterance type	Speaker domain: K+	Non-speaker domain: K-
Declarative syntax	<i>Informing</i>	<i>Informing/requesting¹¹</i>
Interrogative syntax	<i>Rhetorical question; pre-informing question</i>	<i>Request for information</i>
"Tag-question"	<i>Mobilizing response for an assertion</i>	<i>Seeking confirmation</i>

Table 2. Interaction between epistemic status and utterance form (cf. Heritage 2012: 24)

The underlying function of sentence type (utterance type) to signal a (default) difference in the psychological states of the speech participants (see Section 4, above) may also be represented using the K+/K- convention, although Heritage does not explicitly state this possibility. While Heritage's model implicitly allows for an assessment of the speech participants' simultaneous perspectives, the present investigation requires a more explicit model for the addressee's perspective, or rather, the speaker's assumptions regarding the addressee's perspective in order to account for interrogatives in Ika egophoric marking.

5.1 The stance triangle

To meet the need for an explicit representation of the assumed perspective of the addressee, a three-dimensional structure is required that features (i) the domain of information, (ii) the speaker's position with regard to that domain, and crucially, (iii) the addressee's position, as conceived in the mind of the speaker. This three-dimensional structure is represented by the "stance triangle"¹² (cf. Du Bois 2007), which makes room for the perspective of the addressee as one of the three dimensions. Consider Figure 3, below:

¹¹ Heritage has "declarative/B-event question" in the corresponding box.

¹² What Heritage calls the "domain of information", may be directly compared to Du Bois' "(intersubjective) alignment" dimension. Du Bois defines this dimension in terms of "aligning with other subjects, with respect to *any salient dimension of the sociocultural field* (Du Bois 2007: 163, my italics).

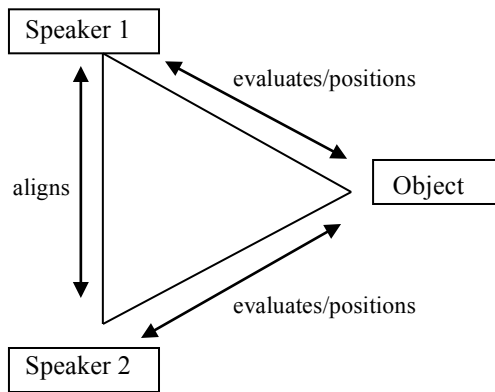


Figure 3. The stance triangle (ibid: 163)

Du Bois views the speaker’s positioning with respect to an object in terms of both “position” and “evaluation”. By evaluating something, the speaker at the same time positions him/herself, so the two may conflate. Du Bois states what he means by the two concepts in the following quote:

“In general terms, evaluation can be defined as the process whereby a stancetaker orients to an object of stance and characterizes it as having some specific quality or value. [...] Positioning can be defined, provisionally, as the act of situating a social actor with respect to responsibility for stance and for invoking cultural value.” (ibid: 143)

Du Bois illustrates the three-dimensionality of the stance triangle by the use of discourse strategies that speech participants employ, ranging from discourse particles to intonation and pauses in the dialogue; “stance is a property of utterances, not of sentences, and utterances are inherently embedded in their dialogic contexts.” (ibid: 148).

In constructing a way to account for epistemic forms that encode the perspectives of the speaker and the addressee, we must modify the stance triangle to specifically represent a complex epistemic perspective rather than one that allows for any possible position that speech participants may occupy in dialogic engagement, although this more specific version may be subsumed by the more encompassing dialogical stance triangle.

5.2 Complex epistemic perspective

Evans (2005) investigates constructions that encode “potentially distinct values, on a single semantic dimension, that reflect *two or more distinct perspectives or points of reference*” (ibid: 99). He calls these “multiple perspective” constructions and discusses instances of these on different levels of grammar with a subdivision of the notion multiple perspective into “double perspective”, “meta perspective”, and “complex perspective”. A complex perspective crucially contains the speaker’s embedded assumptions about someone else’s view/perspective regarding some discourse object in stating his/her own perspective (see also Bergqvist 2009, 2012). Following this definition of a complex perspective, the evaluation and positioning of Speaker 2 (see Figure 3), is not equivalent to Speaker 1 when compared to exchanges between two speech participants in dialogical stance-taking. In forms such as Kurtöp *shu* (Section 4, above), the evaluation and positioning of the addressee (i.e. Speaker 2) is non-assumed and calculated from the perspective of the speaker (Speaker 1). The stance triangle accounts for structures that arise from dialogical interaction, and is therefore modified for the purposes of the present study, which aims at determining the epistemic status of the

speaker in interrogatives with special reference to egophoric marking in Ika. A three-dimensional structure that meets the needs of the present investigation is in Figure 4, below:

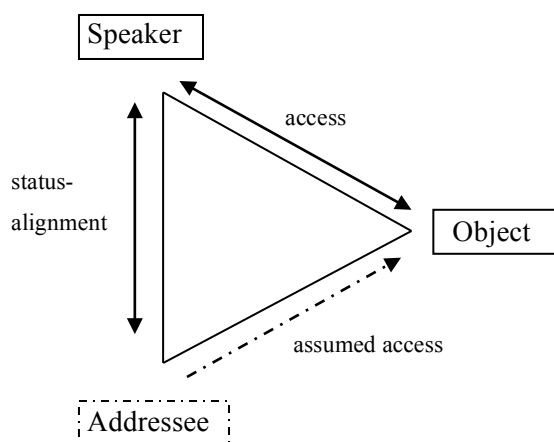


Figure 4. The complex-epistemic stance triangle

The evaluative/positioning arrows that start from the speaker and the addressee signal the speaker’s stance in agreement with the status-alignment dimension. The positioning-arrow starting with the addressee is dotted and one-directional, meaning that it is calculated from the perspective of the speaker and not by the addressee, directly.

The status relation that the speaker and the addressee have to the object plays a role in the adopted speaker stance in terms of *access* with reference to the object. This exactly parallels Heritage’s account of how epistemic status determines the speaker’s choice of speech act. When the opinions or desires of the addressee are at stake (i.e. B-event), the speaker will employ an “interrogative” form if the utterance is to be congruent with such status-alignment. When the opinions or desires of the speaker are at stake, then a statement qualifying the statement as private/personal (i.e. A-event) is the default choice.

A complex epistemic assessment encodes speaker-stance in terms of binary asymmetries of epistemic authority/access where there is a (+/-) value attached to the perspectives of speaker and addressee, respectively. The idea is that a specific marker in the system for egophoric marking in Ika has a distinctive +/- signature. In addition, the status-alignment continuum between the speaker and the addressee has three positions: ‘Speaker+’, ‘Addressee+’, and ‘Observable’ to signal the private/non-private distinction in events that are available, or unavailable, for egophoric marking. The “Observable” position is taken to signal acts that constitute part of the ‘common ground’ and are publicly accessible to both speech participants. A representation of egophoric marking in Ika is attempted by applying the complex-epistemic stance triangle, below.

6. Egophoric marking in Ika as speaker stance: a complex perspective

Taking the observed variations in patterning between sentence type and subject person in Ika egophoric marking at face value, the notions of “subject-speech act alignment” and “informant” (see Section 2) are more problematic than they appear to be. Declaratives with first person subjects must not be asserted in order to be available for egophoric marking; this is evident from the possibility of egophoric marking with first person subjects in constructions with *-e*. Interrogatives that feature the ignorance/non-expectation of the speaker (ones with *-o*) are unavailable for egophoric marking with second person subjects in Ika, counter to what we would expect from the point of view of the canonical egophoric pattern.

Below are graphic representations of egophoric marking in Ika that utilizes the complex epistemic stance triangle, introduced in Section 5.2. An arrow marks one of three positions on the status alignment dimension: Speaker +, which marks an event as private to the speaker; ‘Addressee +’, which marks an event as private to the addressee, and ‘Observable’, marking an event as accessible/public, in terms of (potential) observation, to both speech participants. As stated in Section 3, only non-private/observable events may take egophoric marking. Consider Figures 5-7:

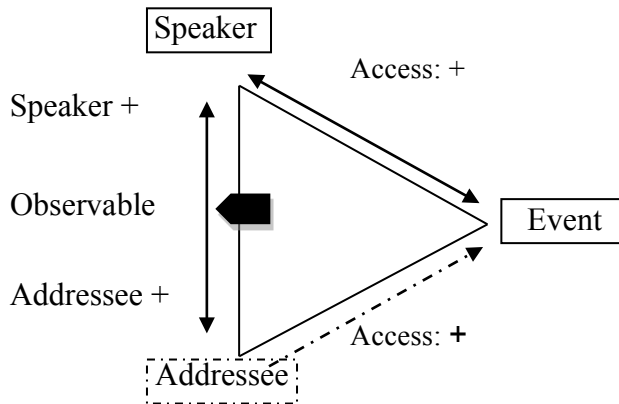


Figure 5. Epiphoric marking with first person (*-in*, *-e*) and second person subjects (*-e*)

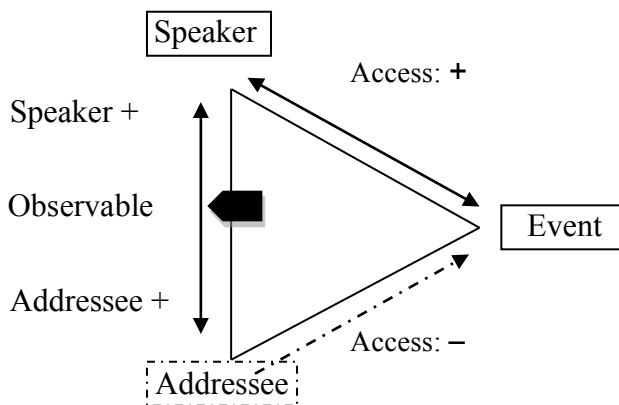


Figure 6. Epiphoric marking only with first person subjects (*-in*, *-e*)

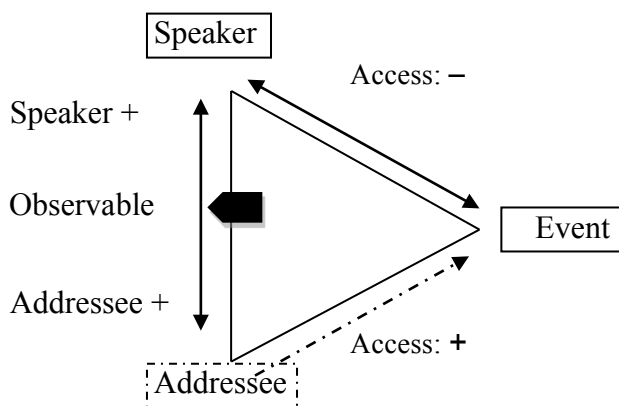


Figure 7. Non-egophoric marking with first person and second person subjects

Figure 5 represents the canonical pattern of egophoric marking with sentences such as, ‘I am spinning yarn’ (1S+*in*; example 6a) and ‘You’re spinning yarn (you appear to be)?/You’re spinning yarn, right?’ (2S+*e*; example 6b). These are all interpreted as denoting a present context.

Figure 6 represents observable past actions such as ‘I spun yarn.’ (1S+*in*; example 12b) and ‘(You know) that I spun yarn.’/‘(So) I spun yarn, right?’ (1S+*e*; example 8), whereas a corresponding construction with a second person subject is unavailable for egophoric marking and thus not represented by Figure 6.

Figure 7 represents instances of non-egophoric marking with second person subjects in “past” contexts i.e. ‘You were spinning yarn, right?’ (2S+*e*; example 12a) and with the declarative (2S+*in*), and the interrogative (2S+*o*) in “present” ones (examples 6c; 7a). Figure 7 also includes one instance with first person subjects, namely with the interrogative -*o* (example 10). A minus on the access dimension of the speaker always results in non-egophoric marking. In addition, only acts that are open to “public” scrutiny and that involve the speaker or the addressee are subject to egophoric marking. Any other scenario is non-egophoric as illustrated by Figure 8, which is a representation of an event that is potentially observable, but which does not involve the speech participants as indicated by (–) along both access dimensions (Speaker and Addressee). Figure 8 represents examples (6d) and (6e), above:

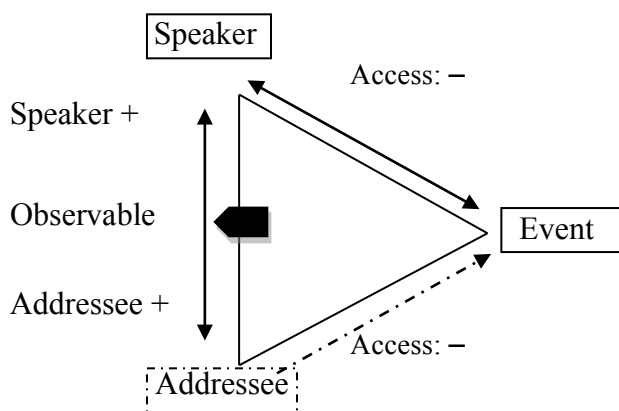


Figure 8. Non-egophoric marking with third person subjects

If we move the status marker up, or down, on the status-alignment dimension, this signals non-observable/private states (marked + for either speech participant). These are always non-egophoric:

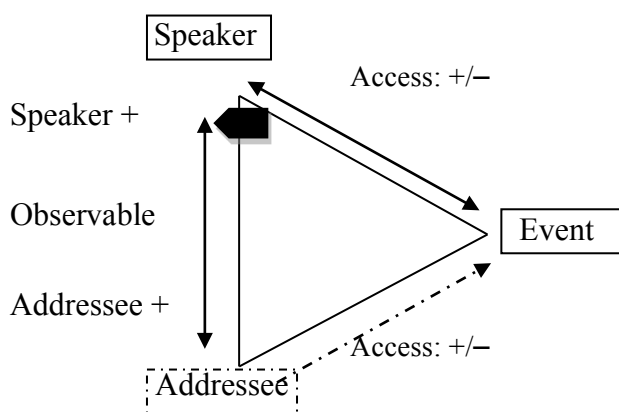


Figure 9. Non-egophoric marking of states with first person subjects

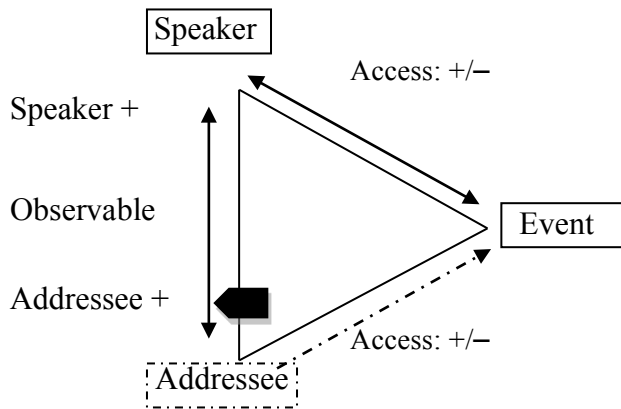


Figure 10. Non-egophoric marking of states with second person subjects

When the status alignment of an act is marked + for either speech participant, the access-stance marker has no relevance for determining egophoric marking in Ika. These instances are always non-egophoric as demonstrated in example 15, above. This fact should not be regarded as an automatic consequence of states involving a speech participant, but viewed against the backdrop of conversational conventions (cf. Givón 1990) and the ways speakers may address the inner states of their interlocutors, which depending on level of familiarity and topic will require “hedging” and softening of an interrogative to make it seem less intrusive to the addressee. Structures resulting from these conventions are assumed to be language specific while their existence may be universal, pragmatically.

The analysis of egophoric marking in Ika allows for the possibility that egophoric marking only occurs with declaratives as signaled by *-in* and *-e* and not with the interrogative *-o*, which signals speaker ignorance and is called addressee-asymmetric in the present context. What the graphic representations in Figures 5-10 show is that egophoric marking in Ika is encoded along three dimensions: events that are (1) public (i.e. available for observation); (2) accessible to the speaker; (3) that involve (at least) one of the speech participants. While it is not assumed that this form of graphic representation is suited to explain all systems of egophoric marking, it purports to identify key aspects of egophoric marking that are complex and unobvious *prima vista* and which have escaped the discussion of the functional motivations of such systems.

7. Conclusion

Perspective-taking is a prerequisite for language and modeling assumptions about the perspective of others, most notably the addressee, is essential to this activity (e.g. Tomasello 1999, 2008; cf. Carpenter et al. 1998). To adopt a certain perspective requires a matching of the model that the speaker has formed of the perspective of the addressee to the communicative goals that the speaker has in mind for an utterance. While this is an exceedingly complex undertaking, speakers of all languages perform this feat automatically and effortlessly; effective communication depends on it. Egophoric marking in Ika offers one instance of how a local understanding of conversational restrictions and the universal apparatus of assigning epistemic authority between the speech participants may intersect in face-to-face interaction.

Ika is one of a handful languages that have a version of the egophoric pattern and while the demonstrated features of egophoric marking in Ika may be specific to the language in detail, it is likely that the functional motivations underlying some of those features are common to several of the languages that display a version of egophoric marking. While the

least explored aspect of egophoric marking in the literature is egophoric marking with second person subjects (prototypically in the form of interrogatives), this is also the most intriguing feature of the system given its role in assigning epistemic authority and marking knowledge asymmetries in a way that closely resembles participant tracking systems such as verbal agreement marking.

This investigation has focused on the relationship between sentence type and subject person as two integral parts of egophoric marking in Ika. Arguments for the need to examine this relationship come from recent studies of polar interrogatives and the discrepancies between the formal properties of speech act signals and the use of those to signal other speech acts than those encoded by form. From an interactional perspective, interrogatives are more than an epistemic flip that reverses the (epistemic) roles of the speaker and the addressee, something that warrants a closer look at the epistemic relationship between the speaker and the addressee in interrogatives. The notion of “complex perspective”, while not yet entrenched in the literature, is a useful tool in identifying the role of perspective taking and knowledge access in analyzing epistemic marking systems such as egophoric marking.

Egophoric marking in Ika can only occur with declaratives where the speaker either assumes the role of epistemic authority or where s/he shares this privilege with the addressee. True questions are non-egophoric with all subject persons as they do not feature speaker assumptions about possible answers, but leave these to another participant. This restriction together with ones that pertain to predicate type and temporal frame of reference, point to the prominent role of epistemic/observational access in a system where public acts and personal attributes involving the speaker or the addressee are the only ones available for egophoric marking.

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Abbreviations

1, first person; 2, second person; 3, third person; AGT, agent; ACC, accusative; COP, copula; DAT, dative; DBT, doubt; DECL, declarative; DEM, demonstrative; DIR, directional; DIST, distal; EGO, egophoric; EMPH, emphatic; ERG, ergative; FUT, future; INTERR, interrogative; NON.EGO, non-egophoric; PROX, proximate; QP, question particle; S, singular; SUSP, suspensive; Y/N, polar question