Emerging engagement: descriptive and theoretical issues

Organizers: Henrik Bergqvist (Stockholm University) and Dominique Knuchel (University of Bern)

The proposed workshop explores the category of engagement in small number of languages with an aim to explain its diachronic development, ontogeny, and function. Engagement is a recently proposed category/notion that targets the potentially diverging (epistemic) perspectives of the speech-act participants (Evans et al. in prep; cf. "complex epistemic perspective"; Bergqvist 2015a, 2016, accepted; Evans 2005). As such, it concerns the distribution of knowledge and attention between the speech-participants, where the speaker asserts assumptions about the addressee's knowledge of/attention to a state-of-affairs as either shared with the speaker, or non-shared. Languages where instantiations of the proposed category have been attested are found in South America, the Himalayas, and Papua New Guinea (Bergqvist 2015a, b).

Engagement in this sense, was used by Landaburu (2007) to account for forms in Andoke (Isolate, Colombia) that signal contrastive configurations of the speaker's and the addressee's perspective in an epistemic sense (i.e. sensory access and attention). Example (1) illustrates the basic contrast between one scenario where both speaker and addressee are aware of "the day dawning" (1a) and another where the speaker assumes that the addressee has yet to notice what the speaker is already attending to (1b):

(1) a. *páa*   *b-ʌ*   *ʌ-pó'kɚ-i*
       already   +SPKR+ADDR.ENGAG-3SG.INAN   3SG.INAN-light-AGR
       'The day is dawning.' (as we can both see)

    b. *páa*   *kẽ-ø*   *ʌ-pó'kɚ-i*
       already   +SPKR-ADDR.ENGAG-3SG.INAN   3SG.INAN-light-AGR
       'The day is dawning.' (as I witness, but which you are not aware of)

(Landaburu 2007: 26, after Evans et al. in prep)

Bergqvist (2016) draws on Landaburu's study in his analysis of epistemic marking in Kogi (Arwako-Chibchan, Colombia) where five prefixes are shown to encode the speaker's commitment with regard to an event alongside assumptions regarding the addressee's commitment to the same. Kogi has a form *na-* that means "The speaker knows *x* and expects the addressee to be unaware/ignorant of *x*" and a form *ni-* that means "The speaker knows *x* and expects the addressee to know/be aware of *x* too". These forms are in turn contrasted to *sha-/shi-*, which encode a corresponding distinction in terms of non-shared/shared from the addressee's perspective. *sha-* means "The speaker expects the addressee to know/be aware of *x* while the speaker is unaware/ignorant of *x*", while *shi-* means that "The speaker expects the addressee to know/be aware of *x*, and the speaker knows/is aware of *x* too". A fifth form, *ska-* encodes the simultaneous ignorance of both speech participants. Ika, a language closely related

to Kogi, features a version of egophoric marking that mirrors some of the semantic contrasts found in Kogi, but by way of a distinct system that signals the involvement of the speech participants in relation to their respective epistemic authorities (Bergqvist 2012, forthcoming, accepted). Research on Kogi and Ika has provided key insights into how a (culturally salient) functional pressure to express engagement in closely related languages develops into distinct systems.

In another part of the world, Duna (Trans New Guinea, Papua) shows engagement semantics, but embedded in evidential paradigms (San Roque 2015, San Roque et al. 2015, San Roque et al. forthcoming), exemplifying a categorical overlap between engagement and evidentiality. Comparable, but distinct systems have also been (tentatively) described for Angal (Trans New Guniea, Papua New Guinea; Sillitoe 2010) and Foe (Trans New Guinea, Papua New Guinea; Rule 1977). In a South American context, evidentials with engagement semantics are described for South Conchucos Quechua (Quechuan; Hintz and Hintz 2014) and Southern Nambikwara (Nambikwaran; Kroeker 2001) and may possibly be a salient feature of several other systems in the Andean-Amazonian region including ones that do not specifically express evidentiality (e.g. Kakataibo, Panoan; Zariquiey 2011, 2015).

Engagement thus signals (a)symmetries in the speaker-hearer dyad that concern various aspects of the attention, knowledge, authority, and expectations of the speaker and the speaker's assumptions about the hearer's perspective with respect to the same. Because of this, engagement may be thought of in terms of *intersubjectivity*, a notion that extends the subjective perspective of the speaker to encompass the speaker's attention to the hearer/addressee (Traugott and Dasher 2002; cf. Benveniste 1971). However, intersubjectivity arguably exists on at least two levels in language: a primary intersubjectivity (Trevarthen 1979) that underlies language as a conventionalized system of communication, and a secondary intersubjectivity that develops later, and which is more closely associated with resources for aligning perspectives by means of coercion, argumentation, and deference. If engagement is to be compared to the notion of intersubjectivity, then it's the secondary intersubjectivity that is at issue.

Key issues and questions to be explored in the proposed workshop are:

1. With respect to the correspondence between encoded meaning and meaning-in-use: how do the encoded semantics relate to communicative intentions and pragmatically implied meaning, such as rights to knowledge, epistemic authority, deference, mitigation, and politeness?

2. With respect to the intersection of engagement with other categories: how do markers of engagement relate to/intersect other categories, such as tense, evidentiality, and sentence-type?

3. With respect to grammaticalization: How is the grammatical status of forms as inflections, particles, or auxiliaries connected to meaning content, semantic scope and level of obligatoriness?

4. With respect to the diachronic development of engagement: what are the evolutionary paths that give rise to engagement markers?

5. With respect to language development: at what age do markers of engagement emerge and how are they used in children's speech?

The proposed workshop contributes to the exploration the world's linguistic diversity and our understanding of social cognition as it is encoded in the grammar of the world's languages. More specifically, it aims to chart how socio-cognitively grounded verbal behavior emerges in the language of the child, what the possible/attested grammaticalization paths are, and how the diachrony of forms relate to communicative pressures. Engagement, in essence, echoes what is most important to us, namely our social reality.

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