Person and Knowledge: Introduction

Abstract: The relation between person and epistemicity has been a topic of investigation throughout the humanities, including linguistics, but has mostly been focused on how conceptualisations of these two notions overlap, or diverge. This paper reviews some of these conceptualisations, but also adds a finer-grained picture of how they intersect in the world’s languages. Purported categories such as egophoric marking and lesser known expressions such as non-selected arguments (i.e. "ethical datives") are compared to evidentials and modals from a synchronic and diachronic perspective in order to explain how the roles of the speech-act participants as specific arguments relate to their respective function as epistemic authorities. The aim of the paper is to introduce separate contributions relating to such systems as they are found in various parts of the world.

Keywords: agreement, epistemic authority, Jakobson

1 Introduction

The speech-act participants (SAPs; the speaker and the addressee(s)) are in a privileged position against non-speech-act participants (third person) in the grammars of the world’s languages. This is apparent in the way person forms develop (diachrony/grammaticalization), the status of SAPs as indexicals (Silverstein 1976b), and in various alignment and agreement systems, especially those that are subject to referential animacy hierarchies (e.g. Silverstein 1976a; Givón 1990). From a diachronic perspective, third person pronouns often evolve from demonstratives where that one becomes ‘third person subject’. Pronouns referring to SAPs have different evolutionary paths. If the origin of SAP-forms is not irretrievable, they commonly have kinship/relational origins, occasionally drawing on notions such as “master” for second person and “servant” for first person (Siewierska 2004: 247). Despite a sometimes indexical origin as demonstratives, third person pronouns are not indexical in the sense that their meaning is grounded in the deictic center occupied by the speaker and the addressee. They are simply referential expressions, like other nouns, albeit with qualities that distinguishes pronouns from nouns, of course. I and you, on the other hand are indexical terms par excellence, with referential meaning content that can only be determined from the grounding context, i.e. the origo occupied by the speaker and the addressee (e.g. Hanks 1990, 2009). The speaker and the addressee, as signaled by respective subject marker, commonly outrank third person in animacy hierarchies, e.g., in languages with “direct-inverse marking”. In these languages first/second person ranks above third person
(1/2 > 3) and a misalignment between this hierarchical order and the semantic roles associated with subjects (A > P) results in inverse marking. A sentence such as, *she saw me*, is marked inverse as a result of assigning a Patient-role to first person *me* (see e.g. Bickel 2008b).

The grammatically privileged status of the SAPs against third person is also visible in the context of epistemic marking, as instantiated by evidentials (e.g. Curnow 2002b, 2003) and epistemic modals (Lehmann 2011; Section 2, below). The meaning attributed to evidentials may, for example, change when the subject of the clause is first person, sometimes producing an intentional reading where in third person contexts the same evidential form signals visual perception. A non-visual evidential may in the same context produce a reading of non-intentionality:

Tucano
(1)  
*bapá bope-api*
plate break-REC.PAST.NON3.VISUAL

‘I broke the plate (of my own will, e.g., because I was angry).’

*bapá bope-asi*
plate break-REC.PAST.NON3.NONVISUAL

‘I broke the plate accidentally (I didn’t see it on the table).’
(Ramirez 1997:133, in Curnow 2002b: 190)

A related expression that may constitute a separate category in some languages, is “egophoric marking” (a.k.a. conjunct/disjunct; Hale 1980, Tournadre 2008; Bickel & Nichols 2007, *inter alia*). The egophoric marker is reserved for contexts that feature one of the SAPs as an involved participant, although the precise status of the SAPs as a specific kind of participant is subject to modification (e.g. Creissels 2008, for a discussion). Egophoric marking is discussed in detail in Section 3.1, since it plays an important role in the investigation of person and epistemicity in language. We’ll hold off discussing instances of this purported category until then, but also note that what has been called “ethical datives” (also referred to as “non-selected arguments”; Camilleri & Sadler 2012; cf. Haddad 2013), share this referential restriction in being reserved for first and second person contexts albeit as “attitude holders” or “affected experiencers” (Bosse et al. 2012; Bergqvist and Kittilä, in prep). Taken together, these observations warrant a discussion of how person and epistemicity may intersect in the grammars of the world’s languages. This introduction to the papers of the present Special Issue details how the two notions are related in attested forms of epistemic marking with an eye towards the pragmatics of verbal interaction in grammar (Section 2), and how markers of person relate to forms expressing a speech-act participants’ epistemic perspective (Section 3). The diachronic development of person forms into epistemic markers is briefly discussed in Section 4 (cf. Zemp, this Special Issue), before summarizing some of the main points in Section 5. We will not provide an editorial account of the papers featured in this Special Issue, but instead aim to discuss issues relevant to situating the separate contributions, which target the issue of person and knowledge in various languages from related research perspectives.

**2 Interactions between person and epistemicity**

The relation between person and epistemicity has been a topic of investigation in philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics (see Curnow 2002b, for an overview). It has tended to intersect discipline boundaries, something that can certainly be said for Erving Goffman’s work on the sociology of interaction (e.g. Goffman 1974, 1981), which has had a significant influence on linguistic research and how linguists...
approach various aspects of verbal interaction (Heritage 2001; Kockelman 2004; Levinson 1988, *inter alia*). For the present paper, Goffman’s division of the speaker into three distinct roles, namely that of *author, animator, and principal*, appears especially important as it bridges purely interactional components to structures of grammar. These grammatical structures are person markers in the form of pronouns and agreement marking, and epistemic markers, encompassing modal, evidential, and egophoric forms.

Goffman’s division of the speaker into speaker-roles may be summarized as follows: the *author* is the one who composes the words; the *animator* is the one who speaks the words; the *principal* is the one who commits to what is being said. As stated, a prototypical speaker occupies all three roles; I may say, *I’m going to the party tonight*, which is an utterance that I formulated, stated, and which I furthermore commit to. If I say, *Peter said, “I’m going to the party tonight”*, then I am still the animator, but the words of the quoted part of the utterance (*I’m going to the party tonight*) were composed by Peter, who then is the author and principal. A separation between the animator and principal can be seen in indirect reported speech such as, *allegedly, there is a party tonight*, which places the responsibility for the information with a non-specified source, reducing the speaker’s (animator/author) commitment with respect to the propositional content of the utterance. What is especially relevant in the present context is noting that one of the speaker-roles concerns the speaker’s commitment (as principal) and that this role is separable from that of saying something (as animator). The “subjectivity of speaking” is thus separated from the speaker’s choice to signal his/her subjective evaluation of a state of affairs through the use of available epistemics (Lehmann 2011: 5). There remains a Q-implicature, however, which states that unless explicitly marked otherwise (e.g. by using a modal or a reportive evidential), the speaker commits to what s/he says just from adhering to the maxims associated with the cooperative principle (Grice 1957) where a speaker is expected to say what s/he believes to be true and to know enough about what is said in order to say it. This implicature may go some way in explaining why modal and evidential systems can have several forms that signal a hedging on the speaker’s behalf in terms of reduced commitment, but sometimes no form that expresses the speaker’s full commitment; this is simply the default case. In fact, if a language has only one evidential form, then it is a reportative evidential (Aikhenvald 2004). When explicitly stated, the speaker’s full commitment is commonly expressed through different means, such as prosody, adverbs, or discourse particles (e.g. Simon-Vandenbergen & Aijmer 2007). It could also entail that there is an opposite commitment that the speaker wishes to contradict by explicitly stating his/her full commitment, as in *I do like the Eagles’ first album*, where the auxiliary *do* serves to assert the speaker’s expressed commitment (cf. Kockelman 2004).

Levinson (1988) points to some analytical deficiencies in Goffman’s initial formulation and attempts to amend these from an interactional and a grammatical perspective. Levinson’s critique mainly concerns an oversimplification of speaker-roles and audience-types that fails to capture more fine-grained distinctions arising in everyday speech. Levinson argues for the close connection between language use and language structure and also emphasizes the well-established fact that a construction/feature only visible on the level of language use in one language, may be seen in the grammar (i.e. morpho-syntax) of another. Grammatical constructions that encode the range of potential participant roles (with respect to both the speaker and the addressee) include sentence-type distinctions, evidentials, modal forms, and various forms of deixis (person, spatial, temporal).

The grammatical correspondence between person and epistemicity, viewed from how they are marked with respect to the verb, forms part of Jakobson’s (1990 [1957]) early attempt to provide a unified account of verbal categories in Russian. Jakobson introduced the well-known distinction between *narrated event* and *speech event*, which allows for a distinction between categories such as aspect and number, which only act on the level of the narrated event (the proposition), and tense and person, on the other hand, which must be analyzed with reference to the speech event (the utterance). The latter categories were according to Jakobson a species of “shifter”, borrowing this term from Jespersen (1922). A shifter makes simultaneous reference to the object of discourse and the speech participant(s) reference to that object. Typotypical shifters are demonstratives (*this, that*) and the pronouns *I* and *you*. The notion of shifter has retained its relevance in the exploration of categories associated with the verb although the term “deictic categories” is probably more commonly used. Jakobson’s definition of “person” (Pn/Ps; i.e. a participant of the narrated event with respect to a participant of the speech event) is quite similar to that of mood (PnEn/Ps; the relation between
the narrated event and its participants with reference to the participants of the speech event; Jakobson 1990 [1957]: 46) with the added complexity of the relation between the participant of the narrated event (Pn) and the narrated event itself (En). With respect to the role of a participant of the speech event (Ps), however, the two categories are very much comparable, something that has been noted in later accounts of mood and modality (e.g. Lyons 1977; Lehman 2011).

The interplay between person and modality can be illustrated in different ways. A factual statement featuring the modal verb *might* is perceived differently depending on subject person. The phrase *he might be Swedish* signals the speaker’s estimation of the chances that the person in question is Swedish. The phrase *I might be Swedish*, on the other hand, is a marked utterance (barring any contextual cues to accommodate it) that signals the speaker’s uncertainty concerning a fact that the speaker is expected to know, i.e. his/her nationality. This means that the alignment between speech participant and subject person, as in the case of *I*, has consequences for the meaning-in-use of a modal verb like *might*, which in the latter case (if permissible) signals ignorance, rather than an estimation of epistemic possibility. Another observable interplay between subject person and modals is the way interrogative sentences may produce a “handing over” of epistemic authority from the speaker to the addressee, as detailed by Lehmann (2011; cf. Heritage 2012). This effect can also be illustrated with the modal verb *might*. While the first person statement *I might go to the party tonight,* concerns the speaker’s own estimation of his/her chances of going to the party, the question, *might you go?* targets the addressee’s assessment of his/her probability of going, not the speaker’s. Such interpretation effects have played a role in research on evidentials and egophoric marking (see Curnow 2002b, 2003; San Roque et al. 2015), and appears to be a pervasive feature of modals and evidentials cross-linguistically (Section 3, below).

Jakobson’s structuralist account of how verbal categories relate to the speech event and the SAPs must be viewed in light of our current understanding of TAME systems, but it retains relevance in the ongoing exploration of the boundaries between categories as it makes explicit what sometimes is left implicit in contemporary (functionalist) accounts of modality and evidentiality. It is by the shared reference to the participants of the speech event (Ps) that an epistemic category such as mood relates to person, a feature that is arguably also what makes a categorical transfer possible between person and epistemicity, as seen in various forms of epistemic marking.

### 3 Egophoric marking, agreement, and participatory evidentials

How a participant’s identity and role in a given context relates to that participant’s (epistemic) perspective may be viewed from how the two map onto syntactic arguments (i.e. subjects and objects). From the point of view of alignment, certain semantic roles are commonly associated with certain arguments, such as agents and syntactic subjects, and experiencers/patients/recipients and syntactic (dative) objects (and subjects, which are common with experiencer verbs). This association is by no means generally applicable to any argument given the complexities associated with predicate-type and principles of alignment, but agency is nonetheless a strong criterion in demarcating the properties associated with subjects against those which are associated with objects in transitive constructions (cf. Næss 2007, regarding “maximal distinction of arguments”). Experiential and mental predicates may take “special” accusative or dative subjects in some languages reflecting precisely this lack of agency or volition (see, e.g., Bickel 2004). From the point of view of epistemic marking, the presence of “egophoric” (Tournadre 2008), “performative” (Oswalt 1986), or “participatory” (San Roque & Loughnane 2012) markers is often reserved for consciously performed actions by the speaker, thus implying (but not encoding) a first person subject (in declarative sentences). There is thus a convergence between semantic roles in agreement systems and some epistemic markers in terms of how these are associated with syntactic subjects. The prominence of subjects in this exploration, of course, stems from the fact that subjects usually correspond to a speech participant on the level of the utterance (cf. Dahl 2000). This convergence has grammatical consequences for the rise of epistemic markers that

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3 This example is borrowed (in slightly modified form) from DeLancey (2015)
evolve from person markers, i.e. the semantic role associated with the person marker echoes in the resulting epistemic form. Before we discuss such diachronic developments in Section 3.4, below, we introduce egophoric marking (3.1), how egophoric marking has been analyzed in terms of agreement (3.2), and the related notions of performative and participatory evidence (Section 3.3).

3.1 Egophoric marking

As stated, the speaker is in a privileged position to make assertions about events and states that primarily involve him/herself. For example, the speaker has the authority to say something like *I went to the party last night*, in which case the speaker’s own involvement in the event is the primary (and only) evidence needed to make that statement. Likewise, the speaker is required to concede authority to the addressee when involvement in an event is focused on the addressee, as in *Did you go to the party last night?* This is the functional basis for egophoric marking (a.k.a. conjunct/disjunct), a distinct grammatical expression attested and described for a small number of languages in different parts of the world (see Creissels 2008; San Roque et al. in press). Example (2) illustrates the basic distribution of the (past) egophoric marker (long vowel, ā) in Kathmandu Newar:

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

   b. Cha ana wanā là
    2S there go.EGO INTERR
    ‘Did you go there?’
    (Hale 1980: 95, [our adjusted glossing])

The egophoric marker coincides with first person subjects in statements and second person subjects in questions, marking an alignment between the speech-act participant who is charged with epistemic authority and the subject of the clause. This kind of alignment prototypically requires a specific kind of involvement on behalf of the speaker and the addressee, notably in terms of agency, control, or voluntary action. However, there is a high degree of attested variation in the type of involvement that conditions egophoric marking. Some languages restrict egophoric marking to occur with voluntary actions performed by one of the speech-act participants (e.g. Newar) while other languages permit egophoric marking to occur with any event that the speaker has authoritative knowledge of, including events that somehow affect the speaker, as seen in (3) from Awa Pit, where there is no overt marking of person:

(3) pɨna  alu kɨ-ma-ti-s
    very rain do-COMP-PST-EGO
    ‘It rained heavily [on me].’ (Curnow 2002a: 620)

Taking this observed variation at face value, egophoric marking appears to be a more complex phenomenon than what we find in canonical accounts, such as Hale (1980) and Creissels (2008), where egophoric marking is restricted to occur with volitionally acting subject referents. Aspects of this complexity is discussed in Bergqvist and Knuchel’s paper (this Special Issue), where variation in available accounts of egophoric marking is compared to related grammatical expressions such as “non-selected arguments”, commonly referred to as “ethical datives” in the literature, where first and second person datives forms

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4 Hale (1980) uses the terms “conjunct” and “disjunct” for egophoric and non-egophoric, respectively.
5 Creissels argues that “assertor’s involvement marking” (i.e. egophoric marking) in Akhvakh is restricted to occur with controllable predicates, thus restricting the distribution of the egophoric marker even further (Creissels 2009: 17).
only make reference to the speaker, or the addressee, as either affected participants, or attitude holders (Bosse et al. 2012). Not only do egophoric marking systems vary with regard to the SAP’s involvement, there are features of non-selected arguments that reinforces the view of egophoric marking as a notion that may best be represented as a cline where different forms can be placed, suggesting an analogy to the notions of “narrow” and “broad” evidentiality (Willett 1988; see Section 5, below).

Bergqvist and Knuchel note that all purportedly defining parameters of egophoric marking are subject to variation, namely, the role of sentence-type in indexing epistemic authority, the kind of SAP-involvement (in terms of volition, affectedness, etc.), as well as the required presence of a SAP-subject in the clause (e.g. Ex. 3, above). Most importantly, several languages with attested egophoric marking display more forms than the prototypical binary contrast warrants in terms of egophoric and non-egophoric. Using a canonical typological approach in the comparison of expressions of egophoric marking, they chart the range of variation that results from the functional pressure to signal the SAP’s epistemic authority in the context of an utterance that involves the SAPs in different ways.

It appears that the purportedly defining features of egophoric marking are relevant to several categories, including modality (Section 2, above) and evidentiality. The attested variation in languages featuring a version of egophoric marking with respect to the involvement of one of the SAPs, suggests that we should consider the signaling of epistemic authority (subject to SAP-involvement) as a key notion in the exploration of egophoric marking, cross-linguistically.

### 3.2 Agreement and egophoric marking

Several accounts of egophoric marking compare it to agreement (e.g. Bickel & Nichols 2007; Creissels 2008; Hale 1980). Bickel (2008a) offers a detailed comparison of the two categories using data from languages of the Himalayas and the Caucasus. He identifies two parameters as especially important in this comparison: 1) **scope** and 2) **person** (i.e. the identity of the “knower”), and shows how these may be used to elucidate the functional and formal overlap between agreement systems and epistemic categories, as instantiated by mirativity, evidentiality, and egophoric marking (Bickel uses the terms “conjunct”/“disjunct”). Bickel’s use of scope allows for a binary opposition: the relation between the knower and an argument of the clause, on the one hand, and that of the knower and the proposition, on the other. He argues that some epistemic forms, like mirative markers in Tibetan, scope over an argument and that these can be differentiated from comparable forms in other languages, such as Turkish, where the scope of the mirative is over the entire proposition. With regard to person, or the identity of the knower, this can be the speaker, the addressee, or the **informant**, a term that indexes the speaker in statements and the addressee in questions. This term is generally applicable to egophoric marking as attested in Tibetan (DeLancey 1992) and Newar (Hale 1980; Hargreaves 1991), although competing terms have been offered, such as “assertor” (Creissels 2008) and “epistemic source” (Hargreaves 2005). Starting with these two parameters, Bickel attempts a typological survey of agreement and epistemic marking systems, but adds the knower’s relation to the argument/proposition as a specified argument, or an interested referent in order to be able to differentiate between egophoric marking in e.g. Tibetan and Newar. The aim of the survey is to delineate the boundaries of agreement against epistemic marking in order to uncover the territory where agreement ends and epistemicity begins in the languages of the sample.

The parameters identified by Bickel are termed slightly differently in our paper. Bickel’s use of ‘scope’ contrasts with the traditional use of the term to signal how a marker affects, or is affected by other operators associated with the verb (see e.g. Hengeveld & Dall’ Aglio Hatthner 2015). This latter use of the term does not indicate whether a marker is limited to occur in instances where there is a volitional agent, or not, but relates a categorical expression to other categories of the verb. Scope, in this sense, is clearly shaped by

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6 Due to limitations of space and the overall focus of the discussion, we will leave aside subject co-referentiality in complement-taking clauses involving third person as a feature of egophoric marking systems (see Hale 1980; Creissels 2008).

7 See also Section 3.3 below.
the diachronic origin of a form, which (partly) determines scope value, as observed for inter-categorical grammaticalization paths (Bybee et al. 1994; Cinque 1999). The present paper argues that egophoric markers have propositional scope just like evidential and mirative forms (see Bergqvist 2015b, for a detailed discussion), although the precise scope-value of a form with respect to other operators is subject to language specific analysis. This follows from the function of egophoric markers to index epistemic authority as a result of the involvement of one of the SAPs in the talked about event. We argue that this pragmatically conditioned meaning content necessarily corresponds to propositional scope. In Jakobson’s terms, it is “meaning” acting on the participants of the speech event. The connection between an egophoric marker and a certain argument of the clause is viewed here as stemming from the semantic feature of involvement in egophoric marking. Such involvement may concern volitional acts, but also attitudes held by the SAPs. The contrast between the Turkish mirative (propositional scope) and the Tibetan mirative (argument scope) is, in the present discussion, viewed in terms of whether a form is restricted to occur in utterances that target the involvement of a SAP, or not. Bickel’s added dimension of the “knower’s relation to the proposition” is about the kind of involvement that an egophoric marking system allows, i.e. if only conscious acts by a speaker-agent may take egophoric marking, or if other forms of involvement are also permitted to co-occur with the egophoric marker. In delineating agreement against epistemic marking, this goes back to the convergent properties of semantic roles and different kinds of SAP-involvement, in an epistemic sense. A language like Newar, as pointed out by Bickel, only permits egophoric marking in utterances featuring a volitional subject-agent, whereas this is not the case in a language like Awa Pit, where affected participants are also marked egophoric (Section 3.1, above).

While Bickel identifies the relevant parameters in a comparison between agreement and epistemic marking, we note that a crucial difference between the two lies not in differences of scope, or the knower’s relation to the proposition, nor even in the diachronic origin of forms (although this is not discussed in detail by Bickel), but simply in terms of whether reference to a specific participant is entailed or implied. The perspective of a SAP in terms of epistemic authority is encoded in egophoric marking, but only implied in agreement markers. Conversely, the identity of a SAP is encoded in agreement forms, but their epistemic authority is only implied.

Going back to Goffman’s speaker-roles, a volitional actor (subject-agent) stems from a participant-role that can also be charged with epistemic authority over (and knowledge of) a performed action that s/he is responsible for; i.e. a principal. The separation of the animator from the principal is not visible in person and agreement-marking except by the implicature just pointed to where a volitional actor is expected to be knowledgeable about his/her own actions. In egophoric marking and comparable epistemic marking systems, these roles are unfolded and may allow for a number of nuances in the way such forms relate to participants as a volitional agents, experiencers, or attitude holders. The defining role of the principal in egophoric marking reverberates in the terms “assertor” (Creissels 2008), “informant” (Bickel 2008a; Bickel & Nichols 2007), and “epistemic source” (Hargreaves 2005), which all refer to the defining semantic property of the egophoric marker in different languages, namely the epistemic authority of an utterance referring to an event that involves one of the SAPs.

### 3.3 Performative and participatory evidentials

Egophoric forms may be compared to “participatory-factual” (Rule 1977; San Roque & Loughnane 2012), or “performative” (Oswalt 1986; cf. Mithun 1991) evidentials found in languages of Papua and the Americas. While a consensus to regard such forms as proper evidentials is still lacking, they undoubtedly form part of evidential paradigms (see e.g. San Roque & Loughnane 2012). A definition of participatory-factual forms in the Papuan language Foe is given by Murray Rule (1977: 71):
The speaker is either participating actively and consciously in the action, or is making a statement of known fact without regard to the way the knowledge has been gained. Hence this aspect is nearly, but not always, used when the speaker is participating in the action.8

The participatory-factual forms represent the strongest form of accountability in the evidential system of Foe and is part of a larger set of evidential forms, including ones denoting ‘visual’, ‘auditory’/’tactile’, and ‘inferential’ access (Rule 1977: 71-73). Participatory evidentials are not limited in their distribution to occur with specific arguments, but given Rule’s definition above, one would expect these forms to be highly frequent in utterances with first person subjects. Foe evidentials combine with tense markers to form portmanteau morphemes as seen in (4):

(4) a. na mini wa.bubege
    1S today come.PARTICIPATORY.PRES
    ‘I am coming today.’

    b. na davi ubi’ae
    1S two.days.ago go.PARTICIPATORY.PST
    ‘I went two days ago.’
    (Rule 1977: 74-75 [our glossing])

It is not entirely clear from Rule’s description if the participatory form targets the addressee’s participation in questions, similar to an egophoric marker, but from example (5), this appears to be the case:

(5) na’a noma i.bubege?
    2S what do.PARTICIPATORY.PRES
    ‘What are you doing’?
    (Rule 1977: 36 [our glossing])

Rule does not explicitly state whose participation is at stake in (5), but it would seem counter-intuitive to regard the participatory perspective as the speaker’s given the targeted actions of the addressee in the utterance.

Performative-factual evidentials resemble the already introduced participatory-factual forms, but are attested for Pomoan languages (Mithun 1991; Oswalt 1986; Walker 2013). In Central Pomo, -la denotes “personal agency” and there is also a form, -wiya that denotes “personal affectedness” (Mithun 1991: 181):

(6) a. da-ché-w=la
    pulling-seize-PRF=PERSONAL.AGENCY
    ‘I caught it.’ (I know because I did it)

    b. da-ché-w=wiya
    pulling-seize-PRF=PERSONAL.AFFECTEDNESS
    ‘I caught it.’ (I know because it happened to me)

According to Walker (2013), Southern Pomo conflates factual and visual evidential contrasts in the suffix -wa. From the illustrating example Walker provides, however, a separation between factuality and personal experience/affectedness appears difficult to make:

(7) si:ma=ʔt:o pʰi-ʔta-wa
    sleep=1SG.PAT by.sight-discover-FACTUAL
    ‘I feel sleepy/getting sleepy’ (Walker 2013: 321)

8 Rule’s use of the term “aspect” follows from early conceptions of evidentiality, but clearly targets what in the contemporary literature would be called evidential.
The forms exemplified in (4-7) conflate the speaker's participation in an event with the speaker's assertion of a known fact that does not necessarily involve the speaker; hence the labelling of such forms as performative/participatory-factual. As suggested above, we may view this conflation of meaning as a consequence of the participatory/performative forms' primary function, viz. to signal the epistemic authority of the speaker in statements, and the addressee's authority in questions, although such latter examples are not always provided in the available sources.

Finally, a comparison between participatory/performative evidentials and egophoric marking is also made in Tournadre (2008) for Tibetan languages. He notes the similarities between disparate labels used by different authors to denote egophoric marking and evidentials with participatory character in several Tibetan languages. Some of these terms, noted by Tournadre, are “personal knowledge” (DeLancey 1990), “self-person” (Sun 1993), “personal experience” (Huber 2002), “ego evidentiality” (Garrett 2001), and “speaker’s involvement” (Hein 2007, in Tournadre 2008: 296).

4 Person to epistemic marking: diachronic development

The transparent origins of epistemic forms as pronouns is clearly visible in Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru (Schultze-Berndt, this Special Issue) where absolutive first person (ngarndi) and first person inclusive (mirndi) forms have become markers of epistemic authority. In Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru, the function of the absolutive as P-argument (i.e. object) in transitive clauses aligns with the epistemic function, which is to signal epistemic authority over an event that involves the speaker and/or the addressee as observers and experimenters. In such events, the speaker can claim either exclusive (ngarndi), or shared (mirndi) epistemic authority.

The diachronic development of egophoric and participatory forms from markers of person agreement, while not a widely attested development in languages featuring such forms (see San Roque et al. for a discussion), has been observed for languages of the Tibeto-Burman family. Widmer (2015) details such a development for the language Bunan, where the first person subject agreement marker has developed into the egophoric marker -ek and the third person marker has become non-egophoric. Widmer also hypothesizes that a similar development is under way in Dolakha Newar where aspects of epistemicity (i.e. SAP-intentionality) resides with person indexation in the agreement system (Widmer 2015: 58).

In Ika and Kogi, two Arwako-Chibchan languages spoken in northern Colombia, the epistemic authority of the speaker is signaled in comparable, but formally different ways. A notable difference between forms in the two languages is how their diachronic origin as agreement markers is reflected by their respective function as epistemic markers. Ika features a version of egophoric marking that differs slightly from canonical systems, notably in the distribution of the egophoric -w with respect to the familiar alteration of sentence-type (see Bergqvist 2012, in press, for details). Kogi, on the other hand, displays a different system where (assumed) asymmetries in the epistemic authority of the SAPs are signaled by a paradigmatic set of four forms that may be divided in speaker-perspective and addressee-perspective forms (see Bergqvist 2016, for details). While not an egophoric marking system in the narrow sense, there is reason to consider the Kogi data in the current discussion given its focus on how agreement becomes epistemic marking.

Below, the egophoric suffix -w in Ika (8a) and the asymmetric speaker-perspective prefix na- in Kogi (8b) are exemplified in comparable contexts that feature salient, volitional actions by the speaker:

(8) a. re’kich-an nuk-w-in
   jump-IMPF COP-EGO-DECL
   'I am jumping.'

b. kwisa-té na-nuk-kú
   dance-IMPF SPKR.ASYM-COP-1S
   'I am dancing.'
The distribution of the egophoric -w in (8a) is restricted to utterances concerning publically accessible events (i.e. non-private predicates that are considered public in a social sense; see Bergqvist in press, for details) and states that feature first and second person subjects (see Bergqvist 2012). The syntactic subject is, however, only optionally marked by a pronoun since the egophoric -w implies a first person actor, but does not encode one. The diachronic origin of -w is the first person subject marker -ku, a cognate of which can be seen in (8b) from Kogi. In (8b), the epistemic prefix na- signals the speaker’s claim of epistemic authority and the speaker’s assumption that the addressee is unaware of the talked about event (a “complex epistemic perspective”, Bergqvist 2016; cf. Bergqvist 2015a, b). It is cognate to the first person object marker na (‘accusative’) and has been reanalyzed as a prefix signaling the epistemic perspective of the speaker without any known distributional restrictions related to subject person, or predicate type. Both forms thus occur in contexts involving other subject persons than first person, although the egophoric marker in Ika only occurs with first and second person subjects. What the forms do encode, is the SAPs exclusive status as principal (epistemic authority) of the expressed propositional content, making these two disparate systems comparable as instantiations of egophoric marking (see Bergqvist and Knuchel, this Special Issue).

A development from dative pronouns to epistemic marking is reported by Molochieva (2012) for Chechen. In Chechen, the second person dative (hwuun ‘2SG’ and shun ‘2PL’) has become an epistemic clitic signaling the speaker’s assumption that a proposition is of interest to, or expected by, the addressee:

(9)  Muusa  hwave’ana  shun
Musa.ABS  into.come  2PL.ADD
‘Musa has come.’ {I knew that you expected him/I know you are interested in this information.}

It is unclear from Molochieva’s account if datives for first person have developed comparable semantics. Such a development would be expected from a cross-linguistic stand point, where “ethical datives”, or non-selected argument forms (see Section 1, above), are commonly restricted to occur as first and second person dative forms (e.g. Haddad 2013 for Lebanese Arabic).

We will end this section by briefly considering the opposite development, i.e. a development from epistemic marking to person/agreement marking. Such a development is discussed by Walker (2013) for Southern Pomo, where a nascent agreement system may be developing from a set of (participatory-)factual evidentials. Whether this is in fact what is going on has yet to be confirmed, but such a scenario would then constitute an example of de-grammaticalization, given that agreement markers are more referentially salient than epistemic markers, which are usually viewed as less concrete semantically. In addition, epistemic markers commonly have scope over agreement and other operators, such as tense and aspect, which are positioned closer to the verbal core (Bybee et al. 1994). It is well known that such operators tend to move towards the periphery of the verb clause, while an opposite movement towards the center is much less common (cf. Bergqvist 2015b, for a discussion).

5 Summary and discussion

This introduction to the present Special Issue has attempted to tie together some of the conceptual and grammatical properties of person and epistemicity in language. The interactional and structural properties of the two categories were traced back to Goffman and Jakobson, who observe from their respective perspectives how person and epistemic authority overlap when attempting to analyze these notions. Egophoric marking and participatory/performative evidentials constitute bona fide examples of how this connection is realized in grammatical form. In the discussion of the overlap between agreement and egophoric marking, it was hypothesized that the key difference between egophoric marking and agreement (as an instantiation of ‘person’), is that the indexation of person is implied in egophoric marking and encoded in agreement. The reverse is also true, i.e. the epistemic authority of the (SAP) subject is implied in agreement but encoded in egophoric marking.
With regard to egophoric marking, it may be useful to conceive of this proposed category in a broad and a narrow sense, akin to what has been argued for evidentiality in order to distinguish between different forms and paradigms (cf. Willett 1988). In doing so, one would need to consider the grammatical status of expressions as inflections, clitics/auxiliaries, or periphrastic constructions (e.g. I see that), as well as the attested paradigmatic semantic contrasts. It is possible that the semantic richness of a paradigm (e.g. the number of semantic contrasts) co-varies with the grammatical status of the category, although this is a question open to empirical confirmation and one that we only mention as a possibility here.

A narrow egophoric marking system is exemplified by Newar, where the semantic contrast appears binary (ego/non-ego) and is distributionally restricted to occur in past contexts with a volitional actor. Newar notably signals egophoric marking with vowel lengthening on the finite verb. A broad egophoric marking system can, in turn, be exemplified by Standard Tibetan where there are several forms that accommodate a number of contexts where the SAPs may occupy different roles. Egophoric marking in Tibetan is signaled by a set of auxiliary forms that formally make up a loose paradigm reflecting the semantic richness of the system.

Finally, we may note an inter-subjective component in epistemic forms that signal the epistemic authority of the SAPs. The dialogic nature of language is clearly reflected in deictic forms like I and you that signal a shift in the focus of the origo by reference to one of the SAPs. This inter-changeability is also present in egophoric marking systems where one form (i.e. the egophoric) refers to the epistemic authority of a SAP (usually) depending on an alteration of sentence-type. Statements belong to the speaker; questions to the addressee. Person forms that have come to signal the attention, attitude or affectedness of a SAP, show an even stronger inter-subjective function, as exemplified by Kogi and Chechen. In these languages, the speaker’s assumptions concerning the attention/attitude of the addressee are encoded together with the epistemic authority of the speaker.

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