

Ungarinyin as a stance model

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The recent surge in interest in the encoding of perspective and viewpoint in Cognitive Linguistics (e.g. Liebert et al., 1997; Verhagen, 2005; Englebretson, 2007; Vandelanotte, 2009; Dancygier and Sweetser, 2012), coincides with a growing number of grammatical and typological accounts of complex modality across a range of construction types (e.g. Evans, 2006; Bergqvist, 2012; San Roque and Loughnane, 2012; Spronck, 2012).

In this paper I discuss data from the North-West Australian Aboriginal language Ungarinyin (Worrorran, non-Pama-Nyungan), a language that is particularly explicit in its encoding of different stance types. The data has mostly been drawn from newly recorded spontaneous speech and partly from the picture elicitation task 'Family problems' (San Roque et al., 2012). I start the paper with the analysis of a narrative text in which the narrator masterfully coordinates several discourse perspectives and discuss their structural realization. I then move on to present the results of a multivariate analysis of 2000+ Ungarinyin intonation units using GoldVARB, demonstrating the correlations between several tense/aspect and referential devices and perspective encoding.

Focusing on reported speech constructions and modality, two central stance categories (Englebretson, 2007), I argue that the grammatical system of Ungarinyin has clear implications for our understanding of the encoding of stance cross-linguistically. The demonstrated correlations between grammatical categories and stance in Ungarinyin can be applied in a cognitively realistic model of stance. I conclude by drawing a broad-brush picture of what this model could look like.

References

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