

EVIDENTIAL STRATEGIES IN GARRWA

Full Presentation

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Evidential forms are those which express something about source of information. The use of evidentiality is also strongly connected with epistemic modality as the assessment of source of information may be associated with notions of reliability, validity and certainty. As evidential forms index a speaker's assessment of their information (and information source), they are an important part of stance-taking in discourse.

Evidential particles and clitics, especially those which express 'reportive evidentiality' (or hearsay) have been described for a number of Australian languages (eg. Warlpiri (Laughren 1982); Yanykuntjatjara (Goddard 1985); Mparntwe Arrente (Wilkins 1989); Ngiyambaa (Donaldson 1980)). Unlike languages with fully grammaticalised evidential systems (eg. of the kind found in parts of the Amazon and North America), speakers of these languages are not obliged to provide evidential modification. The use of such forms indicate a marked stance towards information. Indeed descriptions of the pragmatics of reportive evidential forms in Australian languages have shown that they are not used as just markers of hearsay, but also of irony, disbelief and criticism (as reported in Aikhenvald 2004: 182-3). These uses appear similar to the uses of reportive adverbs in English (eg. *apparently*, *supposedly*), which may serve to distance the speaker from the reliability of the information and as a consequence can also be used in contexts of irony and disbelief.

There are also numbers of Australian languages which appear to lack dedicated evidential forms. Garrwa is one such language. While it has number of clitics with epistemic modal functions, there are no forms which specifically index information to its source, and neither is there a requirement that speakers overtly provide epistemic modification.

In this paper I analyse evidential strategies (reportive, factual, experiential and inferential) in Garrwa narrative and conversational discourse to show the kinds of stance-taking strategies that ARE utilised by speakers. The Garrwa data will also be compared with the pragmatics of evidential strategies employed in Australian languages which do have evidential forms. This analysis thus contributes to our understanding of the pragmatics of evidentiality from a typological perspective, showing the extent of grammatical and lexical strategies that may contribute to the expression of epistemological stance across languages.

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