
Complex perspectives in Arwako languages: comparing epistemic marking in Kogi and Ika

Henrik Bergqvist

Proceedings of Conference on
Language Documentation & Linguistic Theory 3

Edited by Peter K. Austin, Oliver Bond, Lutz Marten &
David Nathan

19-20 November 2011 School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project
Department of Linguistics
School of Oriental and African Studies
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG
United Kingdom

Department of Linguistics:
Tel: +44-20-7898-4640
Fax: +44-20-7898-4679
linguistics@soas.ac.uk
<http://www.soas.ac.uk/academics/departments/linguistics>

Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project:
Tel: +44-20-7898-4640
Fax: +44-20-7898-4349
elap@soas.ac.uk
<http://www.hrelp.org>

© 2011 Henrik Bergqvist

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, on any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author(s) of that part of the publication, except as permitted by UK copyright law.

ISBN: 978-0-7286-0398-1

This publication can be cited as:

Henrik Bergqvist. 2011. Complex perspectives in Arwako languages: comparing epistemic marking in Kogi and Ika. In Peter K. Austin, Oliver Bond, Lutz Marten & David Nathan (eds) *Proceedings of Conference on Language Documentation and Linguistic Theory 3*, 49-57. London: SOAS.

or:

Henrik Bergqvist. 2011. Complex perspectives in Arwako languages: comparing epistemic marking in Kogi and Ika. In Peter K. Austin, Oliver Bond, Lutz Marten & David Nathan (eds) *Proceedings of Conference on Language Documentation and Linguistic Theory 3*. London: SOAS. www.hrelp.org/eprints/ldlt3_06.pdf

Complex perspectives in Arwako languages: comparing epistemic marking in Kogi and Ika

HENRIK BERGQVIST

Department of Linguistics, Stockholm University

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the shared functional motivations underlying two distinct, but related, epistemic marking systems found in Kogi and Ika, two Arwako-Chibchan languages spoken in northern Colombia (ISO 639-3: kog; arh). Bergqvist (forthcoming) accounts for conjunct/disjunct marking (CNJ/DSJ; Hale 1980) in Ika and concludes that it conforms to other known attestations of CNJ/DSJ marking in terms of being a form of epistemic marking that is centered on the involvement of the speech participants (cf. Bickel & Nichols 2007, Hargreaves 2005). Prototypically, conjunct marks first person subjects in statements (declaratives) and second person subjects in questions (interrogatives) as opposed to all other combinations of subject person and sentence type, which are marked disjunct. The functional motivation for this pattern has been argued to reside in an alignment of subject person and speech participant (Creissels 2009), which would explain conjunct marking with first person and second person, given that the speaker is the (natural) epistemic authority in statements and that this role is reversed in questions where the addressee assumes the role of speaker, epistemically. Conjunct marking is thus used to mark the ‘informant’ (Bickel & Nichols 2007) in terms of epistemic authority and cannot be considered to index person, comparable to agreement marking strategies.

A difference between CNJ/DSJ marking in Ika and canonical instances of the pattern as seen in e.g. Akhvakh (Creissels 2009) is that conjunct marking with second person subjects in Ika fail to meet the requirements of an interrogative speech act/sentence type. In Ika, conjunct with second person subjects can only occur when the speaker and the addressee **share the epistemic authority** with regard to some event involving the addressee, which is also *directly accessible* to the speaker. Although the speaker may mark utterances referring to past events involving him/herself as conjunct, this is not possible in cases where reference to a past event directly involves the addressee; these are disjunct. This scenario suggests two possibilities for analysis: either the pattern in Ika should not be viewed as a variant of CNJ/DSJ marking because of these attested discrepancies to the general pattern, or the role of questions in CNJ/DSJ marking has not been properly accounted for in explaining the motivations for the CNJ/DSJ marking, cross-linguistically. The origin for the CNJ/DSJ pattern in Ika, however, may be found in comparison with a formally distinct, but semantically related set of epistemic markers in the genetically and geographically (closely) related language Kogi.

In Kogi, epistemic marking is not immediately tied to subject person as in Ika. The primary semantic feature of epistemic markers in Kogi is to situate information with regard to the speech participants as symmetrically or asymmetrically accessible, a feature that closely resembles the requirements for CNJ/DSJ marking in Ika (Section 2,

below). Distributional patterns in Kogi epistemic marking are also suggestive of the similar functional motivations of both systems although Kogi has a more developed set of semantic contrasts in this regard.

2. CONJUNCT/DISJUNCT MARKING IN IKA

Conjunct/disjunct marking in Ika consists of a binary contrast between conjunct *-w*, and disjunct *-y/-Ø*.¹ Conjunct marking is hypothesized to encode *the speaker's direct access to an event that involves either of the speech participants*, a requirement that aligns instances of conjunct marking (mainly) with active predicates (e.g. 'spin yarn', 'go', 'do', 'dance', etc.). The internal states of the speaker and the addressee are always disjunct (e.g. 'know', 'feel', 'think', 'like', 'want/desire'). CNJ/DSJ marking in Ika interacts predictably with a set of three epistemic markers, *-in*, *-e*, and *-o*, which denote the speech participant's *a/symmetric epistemic authority* with respect to an event. *-in* is labeled 'declarative', *-e*, 'suspensive' and *-o*, 'interrogative'. The markers *-in* and *-e* may combine with conjunct, whereas *-o* is always disjunct. Below are combinations of subject person and CNJ/DSJ marking with the predicate *bunsi* 'spin yarn'²:

- (1) *bunsi-w-in*
spin.yarn-CNJ-DECL
'I am spinning yarn.'
- (2) *nə=bunsi-k-w-e*
2SG=spin.yarn-K-CNJ-SUSP
'Are you spinning yarn? (you look like you are)'
- (3) *nə=bunsa-y-in*
2SG=spin.yarn-DSJ-DECL
'You are spinning yarn (I tell you).'

¹ My current understanding is that disjunct marking is *-Ø* and that *-y* is limited to certain phonological contexts. However, this analysis is not conclusive due to limitations in the language materials and an incomplete phonological analysis of those materials. I follow Landaburu (2000a) in this respect, although my analysis of CNJ/DSJ marking in Ika differs from Landaburu's analysis of the same set of markers (*-w/-y/-Ø*; cf. Landaburu 1992, *ibid*).

² Abbreviations used in the examples are: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, BEN = benefactive, CNJ = conjunct, CNT = contrary to expectation, COP = copula, DAT = dative, DECL = declarative, DSJ = disjunct, FUT = future, HYP = hypothetical, IMP = imperfective, IND = independent, INTERR = interrogative, K = *-k*, LIM = limitative, NEG = negative, NOM = nominalized, OBL = oblique, P = perfective(participial), PARTC = participial, PERF = perfective, PL = plural, PST = past, REFL = reflexive, SG = singular, SUSP = suspensive, SW = switch, TOP = topic

- (4) *bunsə-y-in*
spin.yarn-DSJ-DECL
'He is spinning yarn.'
- (5) *bunsi-Ø-e*
spin.yarn-DSJ-SUSP
'Is he spinning yarn?'
(Landaburu 1992: 9-10 [my translation and glossing])

The examples in (1)-(5) match the canonical conjunct/disjunct pattern perfectly with conjunct reserved for first person statements (1) and second person questions (2), and all other subject/sentence type combinations disjunct. However, there are also some exceptions to the basic pattern that concern both first and second person subjects and CNJ/DSJ marking. Although questions with the interrogative *-o* are disjunct with first person they are also disjunct with second person³:

- (6) *eiγ chuá-k-Ø-o*
this see.PERF-K-DSJ-INTERR
'Have I seen it?'
(Ika Field notes 090823_Eli)
- (7) *nə=zoy-a n-Ø-o*
2SG=go-PARTC be-DSJ-INTERR
'Are you going? (will you go?)'
(Landaburu 2000a: p.738 [my glossing])

The construction in (7) is contrasted with what appears to be a question in (8), but it turns out to be a rhetorical question, i.e. one where the answer is obvious to both the speaker and the addressee (Pope 1976: 36).

- (8) *ma nə=zwei-k-w-e*
2SG.IND 2SG=go-K-CNJ-SUSP
'Are you going? (you look like you are)'
(Ika Field Notes_090821_Eli)

Another discrepancy between first and second person is that past events with second person always are disjunct:

- (9) *nə=bunsi-k-w-e*
2SG=spin.yarn-K-CNJ-SUSP
'Are you spinning yarn?'

³ There are two verbal templates in Ika: one single verb and one two-verb auxiliary construction. What the choice between the two consists of, remains to be determined. What is clear is that inflections and qualifications are present on both with presumably identical meanings.

- (10) *nə=bunsi-Ø-e*
 2SG=spin.yarn-DSJ-SUSP
 ‘Were you spinning yarn?’
 (Landaburu 2000a: 740 [my adjusted glossing and translation])

First person, on the other hand, can combine with conjunct *w-* in present and past contexts.

- (11) *chor-w-in*
 enter-CNJ-DECL
 ‘I enter.’

- (12) *chun-k-w-in*
 enter.PST-K-CNJ-DECL
 ‘I entered.’
 (ibid. 742 [my adjusted glossing and translation])

In comparing examples (9)-(10) to (11)-(12), it is obvious that the change in translation from present to past in (9-10) results from disjunct marking since a change to the verb stem that indicates past tense in (12) is absent in (10). This means that direct access to an event in the case of second person subject (conjunct) sentences implies a ‘present’ event. In the case of first person subject sentences, both presently observable events and remembered events (i.e. past) are subject to conjunct marking. There is also an unpredictable semantic consequence when combining first person conjunct and *-e* (compare to example (9) above):

- (13) *bunsi-k-w-e*
 spin.yarn-K-CNJ-SUSP
 ‘When I spun (yarn)/that I spun (yarn).’
 (Ika Field notes 090823_Eli)

The weakened connotations of a rhetorical question in first person contexts suggests that *-e* lacks important properties of an interrogative marker, such as ones displayed by *-o*, and that its rhetorical status makes *-e* an ‘in-between’ form that semantically bridges the gap between the (asymmetrical) declarative and interrogative forms as a marker of symmetry. Syntactically, example (13) appears to be an example of ‘modal insubordination’ as discussed by Evans (2007a). However, this fact has limited relevance for the present argument. Consider the distribution of CNJ/DSJ marking with subject person and the epistemic markers in Table 1:

Table 1

Distribution of conjunct/disjunct marking with non-internal state predicates

	<i>-in</i> ‘declarative’	<i>-e</i> ‘suspensive’	<i>-o</i> ‘interrogative’
1SG	CNJ	CNJ	DSJ
2SG	DSJ	CNJ/DSJ(PST)	DSJ
3SG	DSJ	DSJ	DSJ

-in signals the speaker’s epistemic authority with respect to an event and consequently only combines with conjunct marking in first person contexts where the speaker is the natural authority. With second person subjects *-in* combines with disjunct and reflects the authority of the speaker in producing a quasi-imperative form (14; see also example 3, above):

- (14) *nə=bunsə-y-in*
 2SG=spin.yarn-DSJ-DECL
 ‘You, spin yarn!’
 (Ika Field notes 090823_Eli)

Affix *-o*, conversely, signals the addressee’s epistemic authority and denotes requests/inquiries. Any combination of subject person and *-o* is disjunct, i.e. inaccessible to the speaker.

Lastly, *-e* signals a common ground between the speaker and the addressee, i.e. an epistemic symmetry. The use of *-e* in rhetorical questions and its incapacity to convey questions with first person subjects, suggests a form that avoids placing the epistemic authority with either of the speech participants, but instead contains both the speaker’s assumptions and the addressee’s perspective, simultaneously, a ‘complex perspective’ (Evans 2007b, Bergqvist, forthcoming).

3. EPISTEMIC MARKING IN KOGI

Kogi is regarded as the most conservative of the three spoken Arwako languages (Adelaar & Muysken 2004: 67) and features a set of ‘modal’ (Ortiz Ricaurte 1994) or ‘speech-act’ (Hensarling 1991) prefixes that encode asymmetries in the epistemic authority between the speech participants (Bergqvist in prep.). Kogi does not display a version of the conjunct/disjunct pattern in its verb morphology, but has an active-stative case alignment (i.e. depending on the semantics of the predicate) and makes frequent use of auxiliary two-verb constructions featuring the epistemic prefixes, which are in part cognate to the epistemic status suffixes found in both Ika and Damana (above; cf. Trillos Amaya 1999). The prefixes are displayed in Table 2:

Table 2
Epistemic prefixes in Kogi (after Ortiz Ricaurte 1994).

Glosses	Declarative	Interrogative
'certificative'	⁴ <i>na-</i>	<i>sha-/sa-</i>
'assertive'	<i>ni-</i>	<i>shi-/si-</i>
'dubitative'	<i>ska-</i>	-

The semantics of the prefixes in Kogi cannot be analyzed in terms of modality since their definition does not depend on the degree of certainty or the level of commitment by the speaker with regard to some discourse object. Instead, their semantics index the configuration of the indexical ground, i.e. the speaker's and the addressee's a/symmetrical epistemic stance with regard to some event, as estimated by the speaker. They can combine with all subject persons although, in the end, pragmatic restrictions apply to their distribution.

There are two asymmetric forms: *na-*, marking information as exclusive to the speaker, and *sha-/sa-*, which conversely, signals the exclusive access of the addressee. In using *sha-/sa-*, the speaker asks the addressee for first-hand information that s/he cannot access, which is commonly the personal opinion(s) of the addressee. Compare examples (15) and (16):

- (15) *ekíná* *nás-ki* *nukk-á-n-ug* *na-kldá*
 that.way 1SG-SW hear-PERF-PST-1SG ASYM.DECL-be
 '(You did not hear that story, and so) that is the way I heard it.'
 (Hensarling 1991)

- (16) *saki sha-hangwa-ba-law*
 what ASYM.INTERR-think-2SG-be
 'What are you thinking?'
 (Olaya Perdomo 2000)

The two symmetric forms are *ni-* and *shi-*. The former marks statements featuring information that is deemed accessible to the addressee from the perspective of the speaker and which the speaker lacks exclusive authority of. Furthermore, *ni-* is also the default marker of declarative statements that are not answers to inquiries/requests for information. In contrast *si-/shi-* features the epistemic authority of both the speaker and the addressee resembling closely the rhetorical question formed with *-e* in Ika. Consider examples (17) and (18):

- (17) *wanwa ni-zei*
 Heat SYM.DECL-happen
 'It's hot today.'
 (Ortiz Ricaurte 1994)

⁴ The phonology of Kogi (and the other Arwako languages) is found in Adelaar & Myusken (2004: 68).

- (18) *nei-hi shi-ba-kú*
 go-IMP SYM.INTERR-2SG-do
 ‘Are you on your way? (you look like you are)’
 (Olaya Perdomo 2000)

ska- is formally part of the same paradigm as *na-/sha-/ni-/shi-*, and signals the uncertainty/ignorance of the speaker and a lack of expectations regarding the addressee’s knowledge:

- (19) *nak ska(n)-gua-li*
 come NON.SYM-do-FUT
 ‘He may come.’
 (Olaya Perdomo 2000)

The resulting set of epistemic access contrasts in Kogi has four basic a/symmetry relations:

- (i) *na-* speaker > addressee (speaker knowledge, addressee excluded)
 (ii) *ni-/shi-* speaker = addressee (speaker knowledge, addressee included)
 (iii) *sha-* speaker < addressee (addressee knowledge, speaker excluded)
 (iv) *ska-* ¬ speaker ¬ addressee (neither speaker, nor addressee may assume knowledge)

The asymmetry relation in (i) is reversed in (iii) where speaker and addressee trade places. Equally, (ii) also contains characteristics of reversal with a preference of subject/speech act person attached to the use of *ni-* (speaker) and *shi-* (addressee). Both prefixes encode a symmetry between the speaker and the addressee with a difference in emphasis on either the speaker’s or the addressee’s perspective, respectively.

4. COMPARING EPISTEMIC MARKING IN IKA AND KOGI

There are striking similarities in the distribution and meaning of *-e* in Ika and *shi-* in Kogi. In elicitation of declarative forms, *shi-* commonly appears with second person subjects, resulting in a construction that draws on both statements and questions. The same is true for *-e* in Ika, where a reluctance to include phrases with second person subjects (disjunct) and *-in* (declarative/asymmetric) in the context of declarative paradigms, is understandable given the ‘quasi-imperative’ result that the combination produces, see Section 2, examples (3), (14). Second person subjects with conjunct and *-e* better match first person conjunct forms and *-in*. The obvious reason for this is that the alignment of speaker and first person subject produces a natural epistemic stance from the perspective of the speaker. In the case of second person subjects, however, the speaker cannot assume an identical stance (i.e. conjunct) without conceding part of the epistemic authority to the addressee, which is achieved by

marking the phrase with *-e*. With respect to asymmetric forms, *sha-/sa-* in Kogi matches the distribution of *-o* in Ika by being reserved for non-accessible events such as the mental state of the addressee and ‘forgotten’ events in the case of the speaker, i.e. ones that the speaker cannot access by processes of memory. A semantic contrast that is less obvious in the case of Ika is the one found between the asymmetric *na-* and the symmetric *ni-* in Kogi. However, one could argue for a corresponding contrast in the combination of first person conjunct (*-w*) and *-in*, to produce a speaker-asymmetric epistemic stance, and first person conjunct with *-e* to yield a speaker-symmetric combination that semantically matches *ni-* in Kogi. These comparisons are summarized in Table 3:

Table 3
Comparison of epistemic marking in Kogi and Ika

	Kogi		Ika
‘Asymmetric’	<i>na -; sha-</i>	‘Spkr/adr authority’	<i>1SG.CNJ +in; DSJ+o</i>
‘Symmetric’	<i>ni-; shi</i>	‘Shared authority’	<i>2SG.CNJ+e; 1SG.CNJ+e</i>
‘Non-symmetric’	<i>ska-</i>	-	-

The system in Kogi is, in comparison with conjunct/disjunct marking in Ika, only weakly connected to specific arguments (and predicates) and features a fuller set of markers for positioning knowledge (involving, in principle, any person or event) to the speech participants by way of marking a/symmetric access, epistemically. In comparing the two systems, CNJ/DSJ marking in Ika is more grammaticalized than the Kogi markers, given that a choice of marking in the case of Ika is largely determined by the constraints of the CNJ/DSJ pattern, whereas a Kogi speaker has a range of options, where the choice is made from a pragmatic perspective. A comparison between the two systems may at this point only have relevance locally and does not suggest the origins of CNJ/DSJ marking cross-linguistically. However, the systems, as seen in the case of Arwako languages, serve to illustrate the importance of considering a complex epistemic stance in qualification systems focusing on the speech participants more generally.

REFERENCES

- Adelaar, Willem, F.H. & Pieter C. Muysken 2004. *The Languages of the Andes*. Cambridge Languages Surveys. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bickel, Balthasar & Johanna Nichols. 2007. Inflectional Morphology. In Timothy Shopen (ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description: Volume 3 Grammatical Categories and the Lexicon*, 169-240. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Bergqvist, Henrik. forthcoming. Epistemic marking in Ika (Arwako). To appear in *Studies in Language* (News from the Field).
- Creissels, Denis. 2009. Language documentation and verb inflection typology: the case of Northern Akhvakh (Nakh-Daghestanian). Paper presented at *Chronos* 9, Paris.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2007a. Insubordination and its uses. In Irina Nikolaeva (ed.), *Finiteness: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations*, 366-431. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2007b. View with a view: towards a typology of multiple perspectives. *Berkeley Linguistics Society*, 93-120
- Hale, Austin. 1980. Person markers: finite conjunct and disjunct forms in Newari. In R. Trail (ed.), *Papers in Southeast Asian Linguistics* 7, 95-106. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Hargreaves, David. 2005. Agency and Intentional Action in Kathmandu Newar. *Himalayan Linguistics* 5, 1-48
- Hensarling, Grace. 1991. The function of -ki 'switch' in Kogi. *Linguística Chibcha* 10, 7-27
- Landaburu, Jon. 1992. La langue ika ou Arhuaco: morphosyntaxe du verbe. *Amerindia* 17, 1-30
- Landaburu, Jon. 2000a. La lengua ika. In *Lenguas indígenas de Colombia : una visión descriptiva*. Bogota: Instituto Caro y Cuervo.
- Olaya Perdomo, Noel. 2000. Descripción preliminar del sistema verbal de la lengua kogi (o kawgi). In Gonzales de Pérez and Rodrigues de Montes (eds.) 781-787.
- Ortiz Ricaurte, Carolina. 1994. Clases y Tipos de Predicados en la Lengua Kogui. In Jon Landaburu (ed.), *Estructuras sintácticas de la predicación: lenguas amerindias de Colombia*, 377-99. Bogotá: CCELA.
- Pope, Emily Norwood. 1976. *Questions and answers in English*. Janua Linguarum, Series Practica, 226. The Hague: Mouton.
- Trillos Amaya, Maria. 1999. *Damana*. München: LINCOM EUROPA.