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Refracting views: how to construct complex perspective in reported speech and thought in Ungarinyin

This paper analyses reported speech, thought and epistemic modality in the North Western Australian Aboriginal language Ungarinyin. It demonstrates how these grammatical domains interact in the language to encode multiple perspective meanings. The paper concludes by discussing some implications of the Ungarinyin patterns for expressions of complex perspective elsewhere.¹

1. Introduction

Although perspective taking has been a topic of linguistic interest at least since BENVENISTE (1966), recent studies of underdescribed languages have greatly enriched our understanding of its grammatical expression (e.g. BERGQVIST, 2012; SAN ROQUE and LOUGHNANE, 2012; GAWNE, 2013; VAN DER WAL, 2013; BRUIL, 2014). Typological exploration of complex perspective types, following EVANS (2005) has coincided with a rise in interest in perspective meanings in (formal) pragmatics (POTTS, 2005; GARCÍA-CARPINTERO, 2011), analysis of the category of ‘stance’ in discourse studies (ENGLBRETSON, 2007) and of the grammaticalisation of (inter)subjectivity in historical linguistics (e.g. DAVIDSE et al., 2010). Drawing on these recent developments, in this paper I will introduce newly collected field data from Ungarinyin, an Aboriginal language of North-Western Australia and illustrate the main strategies for encoding epistemic modality and reported speech and thought, which under specific syntactic conditions may be combined to express complex perspective (see BERGQVIST and SAN ROQUE, this volume).

The paper is structured as follows: I will start out in section 2 with a description of a modal marker that will prove central to the encoding of multiple perspective, more particularly complex perspective, in Ungarinyin, the clitic *-karra* ‘maybe’, the most productive strategy in the language for expressing epistemic modality. After illustrating several different uses of *-karra* ‘maybe’, I will present the Ungarinyin reported speech construction and its functions in section 3. With these building blocks in place, section 4 introduces the strategies for encoding complex perspective in Ungarinyin reported speech and section 5, finally, consists of a brief discussion and conclusion, considering

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some implications of the Ungarinyin data for the cross-linguistic examination of complex perspective.

2. The modal clitic *-karra* ‘maybe’

The Ungarinyin modal marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ is interesting for at least three reasons: (1) it is one of the very few grammatical features that can be used as an indicator of clausehood in the headmarking and non-configurational language, (2) it has a surprisingly broad specter of modal meanings and (3) it plays a crucial role in the encoding of multiple perspective. The third aspect will form the subject of the last part of this paper. This section will introduce the first two aspects: the general semantic and syntactic properties *-karra* ‘maybe’ in section (2.1) and the specifics of its modal semantics in section (2.2).

2.1. Scope and position

The marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ represents the most prominent non-inflectional strategy for encoding modality in Ungarinyin, an Australian Aboriginal language belonging to the Worrorran family (MCGREGOR and RUMSEY, 2009) of the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The language is non-configurational in the sense that ‘phrasal units above word level are not obviously well-defined’ (HEATH 1986: 375), which is reflected in ‘free’ word order and phrasal discontinuity. The language is also headmarking (NICHOLS, 1986) with an elaborate verbal template, which includes slots for subject and object prefixes and indirect object suffixes and has limited nominal inflectional morphology: there is a small set of about six optionally marked cases, including a dative and a genitive, but Ungarinyin has no case forms to mark subjects and objects. Most verbal constructions are complex, consisting of an inflecting verb and a minimally inflecting ‘coverb’ that belongs to a semantically heterogenic class (cf. BOWERN, 2010). In (1) below, the verbal construction *marduwa biyarri* ‘they two are going’ illustrates this combination of a coverb (*marduwa* ‘walk repeatedly’, iterative aspect is the only verbal category that can be expressed on Ungarinyin coverbs) and an inflecting verb (*biyarri* ‘they two go’), which is the part of the verbal construction that expresses referential, temporal and potentially inflectional modal categories such as the irrealis.²

These properties present a considerable degree of structural variation and ambiguity for syntactic analysis in Ungarinyin, amidst which the marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ forms a beacon of constancy. In a large majority of instances the marker is expressed in ‘Wackernagel position’, cliticising on the first lexical word of a clause.³ The utterance in (1) shows a typical example.

² For further details of Ungarinyin grammar, see RUMSEY (1982).

³ In a random sample of 100 occurrences, *-karra* is found in second position 81 times, attaching to the first lexical word of the clause. The marker may occasionally appear on non-bound grammatical elements

- (1) *damburakukarra* *marduwa* *biyarri*
dambura-ku-karra *mardu-wa* *birr-a-rri*
home-DAT-maybe walk-ITRV 3pl-go-DU⁴
‘Maybe they two are walking home’ (090813AJMJSMPDe, 2:25-2:27)

Example (1) has been taken from a transcript of the Family Problems picture task (SAN ROQUE et al., 2012) and represents an interpretation by the speaker of an image in which two figures are walking along a path. The speaker speculates about where the two are going, which motivates the use of *-karra* ‘maybe’. The marker is in second position, following the dative case marker *-ku-* (inflectional nominal morphemes can never follow *-karra* ‘maybe’) and this feature allows it to signal the beginning of clauses in Ungarinyin. The end of a clause is formed by the final construction that *-karra* ‘maybe’ as used in (1) has scope over. I adopt the definition of scope BOYE (2012: 183) suggests: ‘The scope of a given meaning is defined as the meaning to which the meaning at hand applies’. In (1) the marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ applies to the entire meaning of ‘they two are walking home’. Based on these observations I understand clausehood in Ungarinyin as in (2).

- (2) Iff the marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ applies to an element E that
- is a verbal construction, or
 - a non-verbal predicate, or
 - consists of a verbal or non-verbal predicate construction and one or more nominal constructions
- and *-karra* has the widest possible scope, not partially or fully overlapping with the scope of another instance of *-karra*
then element E is a clause.

As the list of constructions in (2) implies, *-karra* ‘maybe’ may sometimes also have scope over elements that are smaller than clauses, an interpretation of the marker I will refer to as ‘narrow scope’. The utterance in (3) illustrates an example.

- (3) *ondolankarra* *linba* *on*
ondolan-karra *lin-ba* *a₁-w₁u-n*

immediately following the first lexical word, such as anaphoric demonstrative pronouns, cf. example (10) below. In these instances *-karra* seems to attach to the first constituent in the clause rather than the clause initial word, but in contemporary Ungarinyin this pattern is subject to considerable variation (see SPRONCK 2015).

⁴ Ungarinyin grammatical elements that are glossed with lexical words in English, such as coverbs and modal markers are glossed using lower capitals. This is in addition to the conventional use of lower and upper case for grammatical glosses.

clouds-maybe see-ITRV 3msg.O:3sg.S-act.on-PRS
(090813AJMJSMPDe, 7:48-7:50)

Narrow scope interpretation: 'He might see clouds'

Wide scope interpretation: 'Maybe he is looking at the clouds'

Under the narrow scope reading of (3), reflected by the first translation above, the act of seeing is not contested, but the nature of the object seen is in doubt, i.e. *-karra* 'maybe' only applies to the meaning expressed by the nominal construction *ondolan* 'clouds'. This specific meaning is suggested by the discourse context, but out of context there is no way of distinguishing between this narrow scope interpretation and a wide scope reading reflected by the second translation of (3): the two are formally indistinguishable, because the construction narrow scope *-karra* applies to happens to be in clause initial position. However, since the marker in narrow scope specifically attaches to the element it applies to, narrow scope *-karra* need not be in clause second position. Example (4) illustrates such an instance.

- (4) *andu jirri yila nongarrikarra ama*
andu jirri yila nongarrij-karra a₁-ma
m.AMBIPH m.ANAPH child run.off-maybe 3msg-do
'This kid there, it might be the case that he has run off' (090813AJMJSMPDh,
10:25-10:27)

Example (4) shows a rare instance in which a verbal construction is modified by *-karra* 'maybe'. The marker *-karra* 'maybe' in (4) specifically applies to the meaning expressed by *nongarrij ama* 'he runs off'. In this case the semantic difference between wide and narrow scope of the modal clitic are subtle, but the relevant observation with respect to the definition in (2) is that (4) would allow for a wide-scope reading if *-karra* 'maybe' were placed in clause second position. These observations will prove important for the analysis of multiple perspective constructions in Ungarinyin.

2.2 Functions of *-karra*

The main function of *-karra* 'maybe' was illustrated in section 2.1: the marker is used to express doubt, uncertainty, epistemic possibility, which in most instances is sufficiently translated into English with 'maybe' or similar epistemic modal adverbs. Except when used in utterances of reported speech, the marker always represents an epistemic evaluation *by the current speaker*.

Although this broad epistemic meaning is certainly the most common one, *-karra* has two additional functions, one associated with a wide-scope reading of the marker and the other with a narrow-scope reading. The infrequent wide-scope interpretation is illustrated by (5), where *-karra* is incompatible with a 'doubt' translation.

- (5) Context: A man tells the narrator about having found some meat, but the narrator then discovers that this is untrue and confronts him:

jirrkalkarra nyininyi
jirrkal-karra nyin-y₂i-nyi
 lie-maybe 2sg-be-PST
 ‘You must have lied’ (100722-04NGUS, 7:48-7:50/100722-05NGUS, 0:36-0:40)

As the context sketched above the example in (5) indicates, the speaker is certain of the allegation she is making. In (5) *-karra* may be characterised as having an ‘epistemic necessity’ meaning, similar to e.g. English ‘must’, Dutch *moeten* ‘must’ (CORNILLIE 2009: 54–57) and Catalan *deure* + infinitive ‘must’ (SQUARTINI, 2012: 2117). Given that examples as in (5) are formally indistinguishable from ‘regular’ epistemic *-karra* ‘maybe’ I will not gloss epistemic necessity differently in the morphemic glosses in the examples, but this specific interpretation will be reflected in the respective English translations. For another example of *-karra* ‘maybe, must’ with an epistemic necessity interpretation, see (10) below.

The second, alternative use of *-karra* only occurs with the narrow scope reading of the marker and may be labeled ‘indefinite’. Example (6) illustrates this case.

- (6) Context: Talking about the bowerbird, a bird that snatches objects from people to decorate its nest with:

anjakarra rimijba inyi jinda
anja-karra rimij-wa a₁-y₂i-nyi jinda
 what-INDEF steal-ITRV 3msg-be-PST m.DEM
 ‘That one has been robbing something’ (100903-21NGUN, 1:07-1:09)

As in (5), modal doubt is not an appropriate reading of *-karra* in (6). Although in clause second position, which means that in principle it allows for a wide scope ‘maybe’ or ‘must’ interpretation, a translation such as ‘Maybe he was stealing what’ does not make much sense. Neither does a narrow scope reading such as ‘maybe what’. In (6) the marker *-karra* encodes indefiniteness, which is a function that is often realised in combination with interrogative pronouns. In this case, the combination *anja-karra* may be translated as ‘something’. In its function of an indefiniteness marker, *-karra* invariably has narrow scope and predominantly cliticises on (pro)nominal hosts. Both the preference for hosts of a particular word class and narrow scope are atypical for epistemic modal *-karra* ‘maybe’, and these distributional properties motivate the choice to gloss indefinite *-karra* differently from epistemic *-karra*.

3. The Ungarinyin framing construction

The modal marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ reflects the epistemic perspective of the speaker of the utterance which contains it in all discourse situations, except for one: when the speaker presents the marker as part of some speech or thought attributed to a discourse entity other than the current speaker. The typical way of representing these discourse situations linguistically in Ungarinyin is through a multifunctional ‘framing’ construction.⁵ This construction, exemplified in (7), represents a single grammatical strategy in Ungarinyin for expressing reported speech, reported thought and reported intentionality (‘want’-clauses) (RUMSEY, 1990).

- (7) [[*ngurrba nyungiminda*] *amayali jirri*]
 [[*ngurr-ba nya₂-nga₁-yi-minda*] *a₁-ma-yali jirri*]
 [[hit-ITRV 3fsg.O-1sg.S-FUT-take] 3msg-do-EMPH m.ANAPH]
 ‘He says: “I will hit you”, or: He says that he will hit her’
 ‘He thinks: “I will hit you”, or: He thinks that he will hit her’
 ‘He wants to hit her’ (090813AJMJSMPDc, 3:14-3:15)

Example (7) can be interpreted in any of the three (or five) ways reflected in the translation: either as direct or indirect speech/thought or as the Ungarinyin translations of any of the English complement clauses with ‘to say’, ‘to think’ and ‘to want’. The ambiguity between all three meanings of reported speech, reported thought and reported intentionality arises exclusively in framing constructions in which the framed clause (indicated by the double brackets) contains a first person future tense form (for a similar case in the neighbouring Nyulnyulan language Warrwa, see MCGREGOR, 2007). Reported speech and thought readings are often indistinguishable. The construction scheme in (8) represents the general form of the Ungarinyin framing construction and (9) lists its properties.⁶

- (8) [[reported message] ^{framed clause} [*x* DO] ^{framing clause}] ^{framing construction}

⁵ I borrow the notion ‘framing construction’ from RUMSEY (1982) and MCGREGOR (1994). Because the syntax of reported speech constructions has little to do with ‘regular’ subordinate clauses, MCGREGOR (1994: 77) writes, ‘the interclausal relationship involved in reported speech constructions can be modeled as per the relationship between a picture and its frame. [...] [The framing clause] delineates the clause from the surrounding clauses, and indicates that it is to be viewed and evaluated [...] as a demonstration, rather than a description’ (cf. CLARK and GERRIG, 1990).

⁶ In the schematic representation in (8) the framing clause is enclosed in square brackets in order to distinguish the framing clause from the framing construction. In the glossed examples such as in (7) the framing clause is not indicated separately, but this representation is intended to reflect the same structural analysis.

(9)

- The construction contains the general purpose framing verb *-ma* - ‘do’, which in this grammatical context may be translated as ‘say’ (reported speech), ‘think’ (reported thought) or ‘want’ (reported intentionality);
- The deictic elements in the ‘framed clause’ pattern as ‘direct speech’, i.e. they do not refer to the current speech situation;
- The framing clause follows the framed clause;
- The framed clause and framing clause may have quite distinct intonation contours and there often is a ‘reset’ at the beginning of a framed clause to a higher pitch level;
- The main verb in the framed clause of framing constructions that allow a reported intentionality interpretation has a first person subject future tense form.

Ungarinyin is not unique in having a polysemous reported speech construction. Similar multi-functional constructions have been described for languages in Papua New Guinea (REESINK, 1993; LOUGHNANE, 2005) and South America (VAN DER VOORT 2002; EVERETT, 2008). In many of these languages, however, these reported speech constructions have grammaticalised (or, as VAN DER VOORT, 2002 argues for Kwaza, degrammaticalised) further to cover functions such as ‘causation’ or aspectual meanings such as ‘begin to do *e*’ (‘inceptive action’). The Ungarinyin framing construction is only used to talk about other minds, whether speaking, thinking or wanting, i.e. to represent a perspective of a discourse participant other than the current speaker.⁷ Example (10) illustrates how the modal marker *-karra* ‘maybe, must’, which normally expresses the epistemic perspective of the current speaker, when occurring in a framed clause reflects the epistemic perspective of the discourse entity referred to by the subject of the framing clause. As in (7) and throughout this paper framing constructions are signaled with a double set of square brackets, with the framed clauses appearing within the inner set of brackets and framing clauses within the outer set of brackets.

(10) Context: During the dry season, some people hear a frog croaking and conclude that there may/must be water:

[[	<i>ngabun</i>	<i>dikarra</i>		<i>wi</i>	]	<i>budmara</i>	]	[[	<i>jino</i>	<i>jedmern</i>
[[	<i>ngabun</i>	<i>di-karra</i>		<i>wa₂-y₂i</i>	]	<i>burr-ma-ra</i>	]	[[	<i>jino</i>	<i>jedmern</i>
[[	water	nw.ANAPH-maybe		3nw-be	]	3pl-do-PST	]	[[	m.DIST	frog

⁷ The Ungarinyin framing construction does have a subclass of uses RUMSEY (1982: 162ff) labels ‘causative-intentional’, but this construction always includes a meaning of reported intentionality.

wurla wirriyangarri ngabunkarrayali di] budmara]
wurla wirriyangarri ngabun-karra-y₂ali di] burr-ma-ra]
 talk where water-maybe-indeed n.w.ANAPH] 3pl-do-PST]
 ‘“There must be water,” they said. “This frog over there [is making] some noise,
 there must be water,” they said’ (120920-11PNNGUD, 0:08-0:15)

A framing construction often only frames one single clause, but as (11) illustrates framed clauses do not necessarily have to correspond to single clauses or even single ‘turns’ of reported speakers (the lines 11a, 11b and 11c correspond to the respective intonation contours in figure 1).

(11) a. [[*nyingankarra rimij wunjumanira*] (.14)
 [[*nyingan-karra rimij wu-nja₂-ma-ni-ra*]
 [[2sg-maybe steal 3nw.O-2sg.S-take-PST-1sg.IO]
 ‘Maybe you’re the one stole my things’

b. *anjaku rimij nginkenungarri ngin maji*
anja-ku rimij nginka₂-y₂i-nu-ngarri ngin maji
 what-DAT steal 1sg.IRR-be-2sg.IO-SUB 1sg must

buluk ba wura jadan] (.21)

buluk ba₂-a wura jadan]

look.around IMP-go how properly]

‘Why would I steal from you? Why would I rob you? You should look around properly’

c. *bidningengerri*] (.08)

birr-ninga-y₁i-ngka₂-yirri]

3pl-put-REFL-PST-CONT]

‘they said to each other’ (100903-24NGUN, 00:11-00:20)

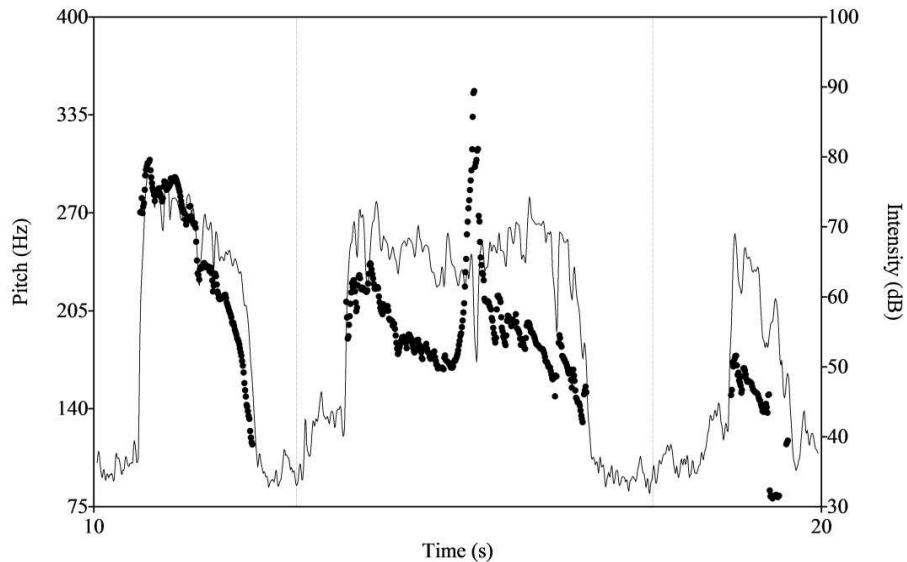


Figure 1: The intonation (speckled) and intensity (solid line) contours of lines (11a-11c).

As indicated in (9), prosodic clues are important for recognising perspective shifts in framing constructions, as the pitch and intensity contours of (11) in figure 1 show: the thin vertical lines demarcate the respective clauses/intonation units (11a-11c) and the change in perspective is reflected by a pitch ‘reset’.

Framed clauses in Ungarinyin form integral, continuous units. Under the heuristic test for clausehood described in (2), wide scope *-karra* ‘maybe’ in a framed clause applies to the entire framed clause up until the framing clause. In framing clauses *-karra* ‘maybe’ encodes the perspective of the current speaker ‘as per normal’. Both the clausal integrity in framing constructions and the relative rigidity of their internal word order (see 9) are somewhat surprising given the tendency for discontinuity and flexibility elsewhere in the language. For example, phrasal constructions in Ungarinyin may be discontinuous, in the sense that nominal elements before a verbal construction may be coreferential with nominal elements following it, a common feature of non-configurational languages. As MCGREGOR (1994: 68) observes, in many languages framing clauses are routinely interrupted by framing constructions (e.g. ‘“This framed clause,” some would say, “is discontinuous” ’). In Ungarinyin, framed clauses are not normally discontinuous in this way. The meaning wide scope *-karra* ‘maybe’ applies to in a framed clause closely corresponds to the structural boundaries of this framed clause. The scope of wide scope *-karra* ‘maybe’ in a framed clause does not include the

framing clause, and this is reflected in the order and structural cohesiveness of the framed and framing clauses.

There is one interesting deviation from the general observation that the scope of *-karra* ‘maybe’ in the framed clause may not extend to the framing clause, and that is with reported intentionality. In (12), which again has been taken from the Family Problems picture task and shows the speaker speculating about the intention of a man in an image shown to the speaker, the most likely interpretation is one in which *-karra* ‘maybe’ has the entire framing construction in its scope, as in the English translation of the example.

- (12) [[*wobakarra* *ngay*] *ama*]
 [[*wo-ba-karra* *nga₁-iy-a*] *a₁-ma*]
 [[cook-ITRV-maybe 1sg-FUT-go] 3msg-do]
 ‘Maybe he wants to cook’ (090813AJMJSMPDh, 2:18-2:20)

With examples of reported intentionality as in (12) the definition of clausehood as a property of the scope of *-karra* ‘maybe’ does not yield the same results as the clausal structure of framing constructions indicated in (8) as represented by the square brackets. I will leave aside the question whether the framed and framing elements in constructions of reported intentionality are actually separate syntactic clauses. As indicated above, there are independent reasons to assume that framing constructions expressing reported intentionality are syntactically more closely integrated, given that the inflecting verb in the framed ‘clause’ necessarily has a first person subject that is coreferential with the subject of the framing clause and is not ‘free’ to carry any other tense than future tense (although future tense is not encoded when the framed clause contains an imperative or irrealis prefix).⁸ Interestingly, RUMSEY (1982: 166ff) notes that in some instances of reported intentionality, these framing constructions do in fact allow discontinuous framed clauses. In summary, what these observations indicate is that the structural boundaries of framed clauses in Ungarinyin normally correspond to a shift in perspective: the clearly identifiable framed clause represents the perspective of the reported speaker/cognisant, the framing clause that of the current, reporting speaker. Framing constructions expressing reported intentionality appear to slightly blur this correlation between clausehood and perspective, but Ungarinyin has an even clearer

⁸ In Warrwa reported intentionality constructions MCGREGOR, 2007 observes that in addition to the tense and person reference restrictions in the framed clause, the order of the framed and framing clauses is also more rigid than in framing clauses encoding reported speech and thought. Given that Ungarinyin reported speech and thought constructions do not show a flexible placement order of the framed and framing clauses the opposition between reported speech/thought and reported intentionality is syntactically less evident in the language.

example of a construction in which multiple perspectives are expressed within the same syntactic unit. I will introduce this construction in section 4.

4. Multiple perspective in Ungarinyin reported speech and thought

The examples considered so far have illustrated two options for the interpretation of viewpoint in Ungarinyin: an utterance either expresses the perspective of the current speaker or it represents a *shift* in perspective, away from the perspective of the current speaker. A more interesting case, however, is formed by examples in which the distinction between these two extremes is diffuse, examples of multiple perspective. Ungarinyin has two strategies for representing the perspectives of some reported speaker and the current speaker in the same grammatical construction, a type of multiple perspective construction EVANS (2005) refers to as complex perspective.⁹

The first of these two strategies is the most straightforward way to express complex perspective in Ungarinyin: through apposition of a modal particle. More particularly, through a modal construction signaling an affective evaluation that has scope over a reported message. As observed by FIELD (1997) and others, expressing an affective evaluation of a reported event commonly leads to the implicature that this event is evaluated by the current speaker as one that occurred in the real world. In other words, by evaluating an event as e.g. undesirable, the speaker simultaneously signals that it is factive (KIPARSKY and KIPARSKY, 1970). RUMSEY (1982: 171) cites an example that illustrates this principle with an Ungarinyin framing construction, shown in (13) (glosses and spelling adapted).

- (13) *menya* [[*ada ngima*] *nyumerri*]
 menya [[*ada nga₁-yi-ma*] *nya₂-ma-yirri*]
 too.bad [[*sit* 1sg-FUT-do] 3fsg-do-CONT]
 ‘Too bad she intends to stay’ (RUMSEY, 1982: 171)

By using the modal particle *menya* in (13), which roughly translates as ‘unfortunately’ or in other instances as ‘should not’ in conjunction with a framing clause, the current speaker not only evaluates the intention of the reported speaker/cognisant negatively, but also signals that the reported speaker actually ‘intends to stay’. The syntagmatic structure of (13) as signaled by the square brackets indicates that the framing construction represents a complete syntactic and semantic unit with the modal particle in left apposition being predicated over the entire framing construction. In present-day Ungarinyin, examples of this type are exceedingly rare and even the highly knowledgeable elderly speakers of the language I have discussed example (13) and

⁹ SPRONCK (2012) refers to this type of perspective in reported speech as ‘current speaker evaluative meaning’.

similar examples with associate these complex modal expressions more with neighbouring languages than with Ungarinyin. I will not consider this type of multiple perspective construction further here.

A complex perspective strategy that is prolific in Ungarinyin, on the other hand, is one using the epistemic marker *-karra* ‘maybe’. Before introducing this strategy, examples (14) and (15) recapitulate the use of the marker illustrated so far.

- (14) *wungaykarra nyawal nyangkandirri*
wungay-karra nyawal nya₂-a-angka-ndu-yirri
 woman-maybe stick.to 3fsg-go-PST-3pl.IO-DU
 ‘Maybe that woman had an affair with both of them’ (090813AJMJSMPDh, 4:08-4:09)

- (15) Context: Speculating about whether some people have caught up with a bushfire or not:

[[*bejakarra norl wudmanga*] *budmerndu*]
 [[*beja-karra nol wu-rr-ma-nga*] *burr-ma-rndu*]
 [[CMPLV-maybe get.close 3nw .O-3pl.S-take-PST] 3pl.S-do-3pl.IO]
 ‘They say about them: “They may have caught up with it already” ’ (111015-02PNNKDDJEUD, 11:38-11:40)

In the non-reported example (14) the modal marker *-karra* ‘maybe’ has scope over the entire utterance, i.e. expresses the epistemic perspective of the speaker, and in (15) it forms part of the framed clause, which means that it is shifted to the perspective of the reported speaker, similar to the example shown in (11a). Now consider (16).

- (16) Context: Talking about birds who mistake little stones for food:

[[*bidniyangarrikarra*] *budma* [*mangarri*]] *rarrki kanda*
 [[*birr-niyangarri-karra*] *burr-ma-∅* [*mangarri*]] *rarrki kanda*
 [[3pl-good-maybe] 3pl-do-PRS [food]] stone m.PROX
mara wurrengarri
mara wurr-y₂i-∅-ngarri
 see 3nw .O:3pl.S-be-PRS-SUB
 ‘They think it is good food when they see these stones [but they are not]’
 (100903-18NGUN, 3:10-3:12)

What is the scope of *-karra* ‘maybe’ in (16)? The clitic is in wide scope clause second position on an element of the framed clause, so would seem to form part of the perspective of the reported cognisant, but this interpretation is problematic since this

would mean the scope is ‘interrupted’ by the framing clause *budma* ‘they say’. Despite the observation in section 3 that discontinuous framed clauses are not normally found with framing constructions with a reported speech or though interpretation, the framed clause in (16) is clearly discontinuous: the coreferential nominal elements *bidniyangarri* ‘good (plural)’ and *mangarri* ‘food’ are non-adjacent. The wide and narrow scope interpretations of *-karra* ‘maybe/must/indefinite’ lead to possible readings of (16) such as ‘they think: “maybe it is/it must be good food”’ ‘maybe they think/they must think it is good food’ or ‘they think it is some good food’. But none of these interpretations are adequate, since semantically (16) stands out from the previous examples as well: it represents an instance of ‘mistaken belief’, or ‘false belief’.

Example (16) has been taken from a narrative about a bush turkey (*ardeotis australis*) –a particularly dimwitted bird in many Ungarinyin stories– in whose intestines often large amounts of small stones are found, which the birds presumably mistake for food. In uttering (16) the speaker not only unequivocally states that the birds do this but also makes clear that they are wrong in thinking the stones are food. All objects referred to are specific (which makes an indefinite reading of *-karra* unlikely) and none of the discourse entities in (16) are in doubt about their interpretation. False belief expressions such as (16) represent a discourse situation in which some event is presented from the perspective of some discourse entity (in this instance the bush turkeys), while the speaker explicitly evaluates this view as ‘not true’. Examples of constructions expressing a similar meaning are found widely in Aboriginal Australia (cf. EVANS, 2005: 94ff), example (17) illustrates a similar case in the Central Australian language Mparntwe Arrernte (Aranda).

- (17) *Arlenge-nge aherre-kathene ayenge itirre-ke, arleye-rle!*
 far-ABL kangaroo-KATHENE 1.sgS think-PC, emu-TOP
 ‘Hey! From afar I thought it was a kangaroo, but it turns out that it’s an emu’
 (WILKINS, 1986: 589)

The semantic similarities between (17) and (16) are clear: at some point in time the speaker or represented discourse entity assumed *e* was the case and at the current speech moment *s/he* evaluates *e* as untrue. Examples as in (17), in which the speaker self-reports mistaken belief, i.e. evaluates her/his earlier belief as incorrect are also found in Ungarinyin with the same form as in (16), i.e. with the clitic *-karra* ‘maybe’ in clause-second position and a discontinuous framed clause. Examples (18a) and (18b) demonstrate this type.

- (18) a. [[*goannakarra*] *ngamara* [*nyalangkun* *kuno*]]
 [[*goannakarra*] *nga₁-ma-ra* [*nya₁-langkun* *kuno*]]
 [[*goanna-maybe*] 1sg-do-PST [fsg-head nw-DIST]]

'I thought it was a goanna's head over there' (100903-30NGUN, 0:47-0:49)

- b. [[*wulinakarra* *limba ayirri*] *ngadmerri*
 [[*wulina-karra* *limba a₂-a-yirri*] *ngarr-ma-yirri*
 [[ordinary.eye-maybe look3 msg-go-CONT] 1pl.INCL-do-CONT

[*barnmarn jirri*]]

[*barnmarn jirri*]]

[magician m.ANAPH]]

'We think the magician is looking with his ordinary eyes' (Coate, 1966:122, lines 359-360)

In (18a) the narrator recounts a story in which she saw a reptile's head and assumed it was a goanna's, before realising it was in fact the head of the highly poisonous King Brown snake. In (18b), taken from a story about a *barnmarn* 'a witch doctor' or 'magician', the narrator indicates that he and others thought that the protagonist witch doctor was seeing with his 'ordinary eyes', whereas in fact witch doctors can watch with their magic third eye. Even more clearly than (16) the self-reports in (18a) and (18b) demonstrate that it is unlikely that the clitic *-karra* epistemically 'hedges' any part of the utterance: after all, the current speaker is not uncertain or drawing inferences about whether s/he had the thought at the earlier time, nor was s/he uncertain then. In fact, it would seem that certainty about the fact that the belief was held at the earlier time is central to the information value of a mistaken belief utterance, since there would be very little use in stating that a certain thought was incorrect if it is unclear if anyone subscribed to it at some point in time. In each of the instances of mistaken belief above there is also no reason why the subject referent would doubt his or her interpretation of the events: in (16) the bush turkey simply assumes the stones are food, in (18a) the protagonist supposes that there is nothing extraordinary about the reptile's head and that it is just a goanna and in (18b) the group of people does not question that the protagonist (whom they do not know to be a magician) is looking with anything else than his ordinary eyes.

So what do the clitic *-karra* and the discontinuous framed clauses do in utterances of mistaken belief such as (16) and (18)? My interpretation is that they form an elegant and transparent way of encoding complex perspective. Examples (16) and (18) are framing constructions, but unlike in the other examples of framing constructions expressing reported speech and thought, it is unclear if the subject of the framing clause and the modal marker *-karra* in the framed clause express the same perspective. Rather than showing the clausal 'syntactic integrity' that is typical of the sequence of framed and framing clauses elsewhere, the framed and framing clauses are apparently more integrated than in other framing constructions representing reported speech and thought. As shown in the translations, this results in an interpretation in which some aspects of

the utterance are presented from the perspective of the reported speaker/cognisant, viz. the 'belief that *e*', and some others from that of the current speaker, viz. the qualification that '*e* is untrue'. Ungarinyin achieves this complex meaning through minimal structural means: a generic modal marker and a syntactic pattern.

5. Discussion and conclusion

VOLOŠINOV (1973), perhaps the most often cited study of reported speech, contains the following passage: In reported speech,

‘the author’s utterance, in incorporating the other utterance, brings into play syntactic, stylistic and compositional norms for its partial assimilation– that is, its adaptation to the syntactic, compositional, and stylistic design of the author’s utterance, while preserving (if only in rudimentary form) the initial autonomy (in syntactic, compositional, and stylistic terms), which otherwise could not be grasped in full’ (VOLOŠINOV, 1973: 116)

In other words, whereas in other utterances it is often impossible to clearly separate style from syntax, to demarcate where the pragmatics of an utterance starts and where the conventional meaning of a construction ends, reported speech constructions present these properties on a plate. As MCGREGOR (1994) notes, a framing construction ‘delineates’ the reported message from the surrounding discourse and expresses those and only those elements of the reported message that are relevant for the current speaker’s utterance. There are two events in reported speech, a current speech event (A in figure 2) in which the reporting speaker demonstrates a reported message and a reported event (B in figure 2), which for the addressee (typically) only exists as a representation by the current speaker. Involving two interpersonal relationships over two events (represented in figure 2 by the two striped ovals), reported speech constructions necessarily express some type of complex perspective (VOLOŠINOV, 1973; JAKOBSON, 1957).

In multiple perspective constructions such as the Ungarinyin framing constructions of mistaken belief shown in section 4 this complex perspective is made explicit. These constructions at once reflect the way in which the current speaker relates to the utterance/thought of the reported speaker (viz. the current speaker presents the reported belief as something the reported speaker/cognisant held true) and adds her/his own perspective by signalling to the current addressee that this belief according to the current speaker in fact was not true. Note that since Ungarinyin does not distinguish reported speech from reported thought, the represented belief may either be a thought or an expression.

There is an interesting body of literature analysing reported speech constructions as expressions of evidentiality (e.g. JAKOBSON, 1957; DE HAAN, 1999; HÄBLER, 2002;

CORNILLIE, 2009). Like reported speech, all evidential constructions consist of two notional events: an event at which something has (allegedly) been perceived and one at which on the basis of this perception something is relayed or inferred (JAKOBSON, 1957, SAN ROQUE and LOUGHNANE, 2012: 117). Approaches analysing how reported speech constructions express evidential meanings foreground the relation between the current speech event (A) and the reported speech event (B). More detailed accounts of reported speech in under-described languages and a better understanding of the grammatical structures involved in characterising the relation between the events AB in figure 2 are beginning to allow a better insight into what aspects of this relation are linguistically relevant. This is the research program set in motion by VOLOŠINOV (1973).

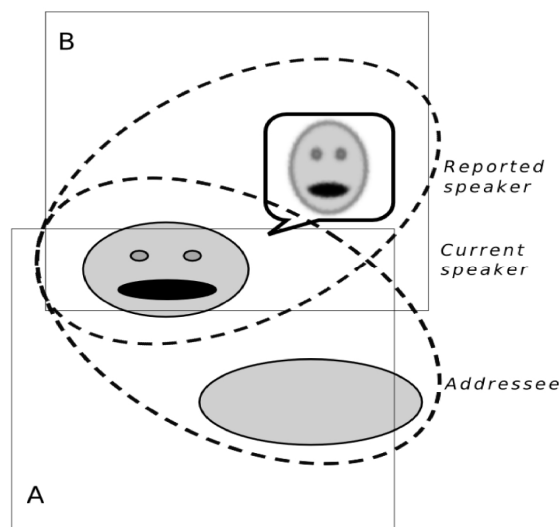


Figure 2: The reported speech event (B) and the current speech event (A)

For reported speech constructions the concept of syntactic integration has always been closely linked to the interpretation of speaker perspective. After WIERZBICKA (1974) it has become uncontroversial that in those languages that distinguish direct from indirect speech, the meaning of direct speech (often characterisable as consisting of identifiable clauses with limited tense/pronominal interdependencies) is to reflect the reported message in a way that is true to the perspective of the reported speaker, whereas the function of indirect speech (often resembling subordinate constructions) is to bring a reported message into the perspective of the current speaker. The Ungarinyin data shed a surprising light on this cross-linguistic pattern, by reserving framing constructions with discontinuous framed clauses, in which framed and framing clauses are structurally less discrete, for speech/thought reports qualified from the current speaker's perspective

(in constructions of mistaken belief) or framed meanings that are an interpretation by the current speaker of non-verbal behaviour (in reported intentionality).

Constructions expressing complex perspective are crucial for a comprehensive account of reported speech. The explicit modal meaning in multiple perspective framing constructions as in Ungarinyin expresses an evaluation of the reported message in the current speech event (i.e. B in figure 2). Therefore, for a complete understanding of reported speech both the modal meaning of a multiple perspective construction, representing the perspective of the current speaker at the speech moment and the evidential meaning, representing the way in which the current speaker represents, ‘refracts’, the intersubjective relation with the reported speaker, yield important linguistic clues. BUCHSTALLER (2011: 63–64) succinctly summarises this view as: ‘whereas the modal meaning of [reported speech] constructions evaluates the content of the message and thereby hedges on the basis of subjectivity [...] the evidential meaning marks the access of the reporting speaker to the reported material’. Multiple perspective constructions consist of the complex interaction of these two meanings (cf. SPRONCK, 2012).

Ungarinyin reflects the perspectives of the current speech event and the reported speech event through an elegant minimal set of grammatical means: a striking syntactic pattern and a general subjectivising modal marker. Developing a more accurate typology of such grammatical patterns is an exciting next step for research into reported speech. Taking this step will not only result in a better understanding of reported speech constructions, which as MCGREGOR (1994) remarks are grammatically highly curious structures. But if we accept the view that intention reading (perspective taking) and pattern recognition (identifying grammatical units) are the two single most fundamental prerequisites for humans to developing a language (TOMASELLO, 2003: 3–4), understanding the grammar used to encode complex perspective and reported speech may be the most significant contribution linguistics can make to cognitive science.

Abbreviations:

1 (first person), 2 (second person), 3 (third person), ABL (ablative case, Mparntwe Arrernte), AMBIPH (ambiphoric pronoun), ANAPH (anaphoric pronoun), CM-PLV (completive), CONT (continuative aspect), DAT (dative case), DEM (demonstrative pronoun), DIST (distal), DU (dual number), EMPH (emphatic), f (feminine gender), FUT (future tense), IMP (imperative mood), INCL (inclusive), INDEF (indefinite), IO (indirect object), IRR (irrealis mood), ITRV (iterative aspect), LAT (lative/translative case), m (masculine gender), nw (w-neuter gender), O (object), pc (past completive, Mparntwe Arrernte), pl (plural number), PROX (proximal), PRS (present tense), PST (past tense), REDUP (reduplication), REFL (reflexive), S (subject), sg (singular number), SUB (subjunctive), TOP (topic, Mparntwe Arrernte).

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