Egophoric attitudes and questions in Kathmandu Newari
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Kathmandu Newari (Sino-Tibetan) has an egophoric (or conjunct/disjunct) verb marking system. This paper examines the distribution of egophoric marking in reports of speech and attitudes, extending to this domain the analysis of egophoric marking as indicating self-ascription (Coppock & Wechsler, to appear).

Background. Egophoric verb marking systems display a special kind of interrogative flip, where an egophoric (or conjunct) verb form co-occurs with first person in declaratives and second person in interrogatives (I drank-EGO a lot; Did you drink-EGO a lot?), and a non-egophoric (or disjunct) form is found elsewhere (You/He drank-NON-EGO a lot; Did I drink-NON-EGO a lot?). However, declaratives marked with reportative evidenti marks can appear in the non-EGO form despite a first person subject (cp. ‘Apparently I drank a lot last night.’). In speech reports, EGO-marking on the embedded verb indicates that its subject is coreferential with the reported speaker (from Hargreaves in press, ex. (8) and (11)):

(1) a. Syam-a wā [a:pwa twan-ī] dhakā dhā-a
    Syam-ERG 3.ERG much drink-PST.EGO COMP say-PERF
    ‘Syam, said that he drank too much.’

b. Syam-a wā a:pwa twan-a dhakā dhā-a
    Syam-ERG 3.ERG much drink-PERF.NON.EGO COMP say-PERF
    ‘Syam, said that he drank too much.’

EGO-marking appears only in reports of true reference de se, where the agent knowingly self-refers. If Syam does not know that it is himself that he refers to, then NON.EGO would replace EGO in (1a).

Speech versus attitude reports. In reports of questions, it is coreference with the reported addressee that determines EGO-marking in the subordinate clause ((2)). Like de se speech reports, reports of de se attitudes trigger EGO-marking ((3)).

(2) Rām-a: wa-yā [wā: gāka jyā yān-ā / yā-a dhakā] nyan-a
    Ram-ERG 3SG.DAT 3SG.ERG enough work do-EGO / do-NON.EGO COMP ask-PFV
    ‘Ram asked him, whether he_{ij} (EGO/NON-EGO) did enough work.’

(3) Rām-a: gāka jyā yān-ā / yā-a dhakā (wā:) siu:
    Ram-ERG enough work do-EGO / do-NON.EGO COMP 3.ERG know.IMPF
    ‘Ram, knows that he_{ij} (EGO/NON-EGO) did enough work.’

Negating a speech report has no effect on the EGO-marking (4). But a factive attitude verb, when negated, can only take a NON-EGO-marked complement clause, even if its subject is coreferential with the matrix attitude holder (5):

(4) Syam-a wā a:pwa twan-ā / twan-a dhakā ma-dhā:
    Syam-ERG 3.ERG much drink-PST.EGO / drink-PERF.NON.EGO COMP NEG-say.IMPF
    ‘Syam, didn’t say that he_{ij} (EGO/NON-EGO) drank too much.’

(5) Rām-a: gāka jyā *yān-ā / yā-a dhakā (wā:) ma-siu:
    Ram-ERG enough work do-EGO / -NON.EGO COMP 3.ERG NEG-know.IMPF
    ‘Ram, doesn’t know whether he_{ij} (NON-EGO) did enough work.’
Analysis. We adopt the analysis of ego as a marker of self-ascription, that is, as the content of a de se utterance or attitude (Hargreaves, in press; Wechsler, in press). Following Coppock & Wechsler (to appear), we assume that an ego-marked VP denotes a centered proposition, that is, a set of agent-world pairs (a, w) such that a drank too much in w.

Ego-marking, when attached to a verb, signifies that the phrase headed by the verb is to be predicated of the agent a. We define the extension of an expression \( \phi \) relative to model \( M \), context \( c \), variable assignment \( g \), world \( w \), and agent \( a \), and write it as follows: \( [\phi]^{M,g,c,w,a} \). To get an ordinary intension, one must in addition specify an agent.

We designate the logical constant self as an egophor, i.e. its extension with respect to agent a is: \( [\text{SELF}]^{M,g,c,w,a} = a \). The Newari ego marker -\( \partial \) is a partial identity function on predicates that takes a predicate \( P \) and returns a predicate that holds of \( x \) if \( P \) holds of \( x \) and is defined if \( x \) is self: -\( \partial \) translates to \( \lambda P_{et}. \lambda x.P(x) \land \partial(x = \text{SELF}) \). (The \( \partial \) operator implements presupposition by yielding undefinedness when the formula in its scope is not true.) So the individual denoted by the subject of the ego-marked verb is the center.

Main clauses. The interrogative flip in main clauses follows from the interaction of this self-ascription semantics with the discourse pragmatics. The Kaplanian context of utterance includes an (epistemic) authority parameter, which is by default the speaker in a declarative and the addressee in an interrogative, but may be deferred to a third party with an evidential marker. We treat speech acts as updates on a discourse context that includes: an individual commitment state for each interlocutor, which we take to contain centered propositions; and a common ground containing ordinary (uncentered) propositions. A declarative utterance pushes a centered worlds proposition onto the ‘table’ as conceived by Farkas & Bruce (2010); an interrogative utterance pushes a set of centered worlds propositions corresponding to possible answers. In passing from the table to the common ground, the centered worlds proposition is saturated by the authority, yielding an uncentered proposition. Since ego-marking indicates that the agent at the center is expressed by the verb’s subject, and the authority must saturate that center, it follows that an ego-marked declarative requires a first person subject and ego-marked questions requires a second person subject. Evidential markers invite the non.ego form because they relegate authority to a third party.

Speech and attitude reports. Speech reports like (1) describe modal accessibility relations, which we take to be relations among centered worlds, following Stalnaker (2014). A centered world \( (a, w) \) stands in \( R_{say} \) to \( (a', w') \) iff it is compatible with what a says in \( w \) for \( a \) to be \( a' \) in \( w' \). The verb say and its Newari equivalent dhál- are defined in terms of \( R_{say} \). The \( R_{say} \) relation connects the individual in the sayer role to the center of the proposition she expresses, hence the obligatory de se interpretation seen in (1a).

The indirect question serving as the complement of the verb nyan- ‘ask’ denotes a set of propositions, which are centered if the subordinate verb bears ego-marking. For a question to be answerable, the addressee must accept some proposition in that set. Since ego-marking sets the verb’s subject as the center, we predict that the reported addressee and the subject of the complement clause are coreferential (see (2)).

Much as evidentials affect the assignment of authority in main clauses, negating an attitude verb impacts the relegation of authority in an embedded context. The reported attitude lacker (Ram in (5)) cannot serve as the authority on the content of an attitude that s/he lacks. (Factive verbs in particular can invite the deferring of the authority, since the complement is presupposed to be true.) But negating a verb of speaking has no influence on who plays the role of the authority: an agent may neglect to say something even if she has full authority to do so.