

Call for papers

Title: Workshop on ‘already’ markers, iamitives, and related expressions

We invite papers on the topics of ‘already’ expressions, so-called “iamitives” and related temporal-aspectual markers, with a focus on either (i) the analysis and classification of such items or (ii) discussions of their polyfunctionality. The workshop will take place virtually on Friday, 14 July 2023.

Related presentations will be grouped into thematic panels with each presentation taking 20 minutes. Each panel will be concluded by a discussion of the overarching topic.

Abstract Guidelines

- abstracts, including references and examples must not exceed two pages
- deadline for submission: 31 March 2023
- please submit abstracts to iamitivesworkshop@gmail.com

Description

Recent years have seen a renewed research interest in expressions from the domain of “phasal polarity” (van Baar 1997), which includes items for the notion of ‘already’; see, for instance, the contributions in Kramer (2021a), or studies such as Olsson (2013), or Dahl & Wälchli (2016).

Especially within research on languages from Papunesia and South-East Asia (see e.g. Gil 2015), Olsson’s (2013) study plays an influential role, positing the category of “iamitives”. This category is said to lie at the intersection of perfects and ‘already’ items, sharing the common characteristic that they usually go together with anticipated (expected) changes-of-state. For instance, François (2003: 120) suggests that the use of Mwotlap *mal* in (1) is motivated by a cultural expectation that people have offspring at some point in their life.

- (1) Mwotlap (Austronesian; François 2003: 120)
- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| <i>Inti-mōyō</i> | <i>mal</i> | <i>ae?</i> |
| son-2DU | IAMITIVE | EXIST |
- ‘Do you have children?’

Nevertheless, the proposal of this novel classification has not gone unchallenged and Krajnović et al. (2023) provide an in-depth discussion of several alleged “iamitives” together with their systemic embedding and propose that the markers in questions are better understood as members of more traditional categories (see examples below).

For the first thematic panel, we therefore invite talks that discuss the classification and semantic description of such markers, be it in individual languages or in genetic and/or areal groupings. This includes discussion whether the expressions in question are better understood as: (i) perfects, i.e. as viewpoint operators that signal that reference time is

fully contained in a situation’s post-time (see Klein 1994); (ii) ‘already’, i.e. adding a presupposition that at a preceding interval the situation described in the clause might not have obtained (see Kramer 2017, 2021b for overview discussions); (iii) purely temporal ‘now’; or (iv) its anaphoric counterpart ‘then’?

In addition, it is well known that many of the expressions in question are polyfunctional, i.e., next to what may be considered their “basic” functions, they possess a set of additional uses that can extend into a wide array of linguistic domains. For example, the French ‘already’ item *déjà*, amongst its many functions, can serve as a type of scalar focus particle (syntactically a phrasal adjunct), as in (2). In this use, it relates the denotation of the focus, i.e. its syntactic sister constituent, to alternatives that rank higher on a scale.

(2) French (Mosegaard Hansen 2008: 183)

[Déjà	[<i>son visage</i>] _{FOC}] _{NP}	<i>me</i>	<i>déplaît.</i>
already	POSS.3 face	1SG.ACC	displease.3SG
‘His very face displeases me.’			

Additionally, for several relevant markers in Austronesian as well as in geographically adjacent Papuan languages functions relating to discourse prominence (e.g. foregrounding, contrast etc.) have been reported, as in the Taulil example (3). In fact, Chen & Jiang (2020a, 2020b) suggest that a core function of so-called “iamitives” lies in updating the common ground as well as interactional functions, such as softening commands; the latter is illustrated in the Wooi example (4).

(3) Taulil (Baining; Meng 2018: 165)

<i>Kəməron=a</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>bə=iap</i>	<i>a-tu</i>	<i>mu.</i>
different=SG.CLF:M	TOP	IAMITIVE=3SG.M	3SG.M.NPST-IPFV	put
‘The devil, it was him who teaches these.’				

(4) Wooi (South Halmaher-West New Guinea; West Papua, Indonesia)

<i>Rua ma buampi</i>	<i>to!</i>
bu-ra ma bu-ang=pi	to
2SG-go hither	2SG-eat=thing PERF
‘Please, come and eat!’ (Sawaki 2016: 235)	

Considering this background, we invite papers that describe and discuss the various “additional” uses of the relevant items, both from a language-specific and from a comparative perspective. We specifically welcome submission of contributions that address the following questions:

- Which recurrent “additional” uses are found with ‘already’ expressions, “iamitives”, and the like?
- Do the items in question have discourse-pragmatic functions?
- What motivates certain patterns of co-expression?

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at iamitivesworkshop@gmail.com

References

- Baar, Theodorus M. van. 1997. *Phasal polarity*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Chan, Sihwei & Haowen Jiang. 2020a. Ways of talking about the past: The semantics of *-in-* and *=in* in Bunun. *Journal of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society* 25. 1-21.
- Chan, Sihwei & Haowen Jiang. 2020b. 'Iamitives' are discourse markers: evidence from Bunun. Paper presented at the 12th International Austronesian and Papuan Languages and Linguistics Conference, 18-20 June 2020, Oslo/Zoom Platform.
- Dahl, Östen & Bernhard Wälchli. 2016. Perfects and iamitives: two gram types in one grammatical space. *Letras de hoje* 51 (3). 325–348.
- Gil, David. 2015. The Mekong-Mamberamo linguistic area. In Nicholas J. Enfield & Bernard Comrie (eds.). *Languages of Mainland Southeast Asia: The state of the art*. 266–355. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Klein, Wolfgang. 1994. *Time in language*. London: Routledge.
- Krajinović, Ana, Jozina Vander Klok & Kilu von Prince. 2023. When (not) to establish a new category: The case of perfect, 'already', and iamitives. Unpublished manuscript.
- Kramer, Raija. 2017. Position paper on Phasal Polarity expressions. Hamburg: University of Hamburg. <https://www.aai.uni-hamburg.de/afrika/php2018/medien/position-paper-on-php.pdf>
- Kramer, Raija (ed). 2021a. *The expression of phasal polarity in African languages*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kramer, Raija. 2021b. Introduction: The expression of phasal polarity in African languages. In Raija Kramer (ed.). *The expression of phasal polarity in African languages*. 3–22. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Meng, Chenxi. 2018. *A Grammar of Taulil*. Victoria: La Trobe University.
- Mosegaard Hansen, Maj-Britt. 2008. *Particles at the semantics-pragmatics interface: synchronic and diachronic issues*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Olson, Bruno. 2013. *Iamitives. Perfects in Southeast Asia and Beyond*. Stockholm: Stockholms universitet.
- Sawaki, Yusuf Willem. 2016. *A grammar of Woi: An Austronesian language of Yapen Island, Western New Guinea*. Canberra: Australian National University.