

On the development of epistemic, evidential and attitudinal marking in Malay

Foong Ha Yap
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Introduction: Stance in Discourse

2

- Stance—or stancetaking—is the expression of the speaker’s mood, feeling, perspective, evaluation, attitude, etc.
- It is often subjective, and in interactional contexts, often intersubjective (i.e. interpersonal) as well.
- Stancetaking is pervasive in human communication.

Objectives (1): Analyzing stance markers in Malay

3

- To examine how some stance markers in Malay develop over time.
 - Epistemic marker *kut* ~ *kot*
 - Evidential marker *nampaknya* (cf. *rasanya*, *agaknya*)
 - Negative attitudinal marker *entah* ~ *tah* (cf. *tak tahu*, *enggak tahu*)

Objectives (2):

Analyzing stance markers in Malay

4

- To further compare the development of these Malay stance markers with those in other languages
 - **Epistemic** (Yap, Chor & Wang 2010; in press):
 - ✦ Mandarin *kongpa* ‘fear-fear’ > ‘probably’ > pragmatic hedger
 - ✦ Cantonese *taipaa* ‘see-fear’ > ‘probably’ > pragmatic hedger
 - **Evidential** (Yap & Ahn 2011):
 - ✦ Mandarin *tingshuo* ‘hear-say’ > ‘People say’, ‘It’s said’
 - ✦ Cantonese *tenggong* ‘hear-say’ / *tengwaa* ‘hear-say’ > ‘People say’, ‘It’s said’
 - ✦ Cantonese *waa/wo* > EVIDENTIAL > COUNTEREXPECTATION, REMINDER, ETC.
 - **Attitudinal** (Wong & Yap 2011):
 - ✦ Mandarin *bu zhidao* ‘don’t know’ > *buzhidao* ‘(I) don’t know’ > ‘who (the hell) knows’
 - ✦ Cantonese *m zi* ‘don’t know’ > *mzi* (I) don’t know’ > ‘who (the hell) knows’

Kot – ‘lack of certainty’ marker in Malay

- An interesting post recently appeared on the internet, see Encik Udang:
- <http://encikudang.wordpress.com/2011/02/04/how-to-use-the-word-kot-in-bahasa-malaysia-rightfully/>). The discussion focused on the Malay ‘slang word’ *kot*. The author, pseudonymed *Encik Udang* (i.e. ‘Mr. Shrimp’), was commenting on the uses of the particle *kot* in Malay, and identified its meanings with a marker of uncertainty or probability that could occur in utterance-final position, as in (1), or in utterance-initial position when reduplicated as *kot kot*, as in (2).

Kot – as epistemic marker indicating probability

6

(1) A: *Awak dah bayar bil air?*
2SG already pay bill water
‘Have you paid the water bills?’

B: *Ye kot?*
yes PRT
‘Yes, probably???’

Epistemic marker *kot* ‘probably’ in utterance-initial position

7

- (2) A: *Awak rasa siapa tumbuk anak saya?*
2SG feel who punch child 1SG
‘Who do you think punched my son?’
- B: ***Kot kot** anak Haji Kassim tak ...?*
PRT PRT child Haji Kassim NEG.Q
‘Probably it was Haji Kassim’s son ...?’

Grammaticalized use of *kot* – from epistemic marker to counterexpectation marker

- Encik Udang also noted an underlying sense of deviation (or “non-conformity”) to some expected norm in examples such as (3) and (4).
 - (3) *Panas kot!*
hot PRT
‘It’s hot!’
 - (4) *Dua ratus kot!!!*
two hundred PRT
‘It’s two hundred!!!’
- The author, Encik Udang, went on to remark that there is now flagrant misuse of *kot*, with loss of its original meaning to indicate uncertainty, such that it has become “meaningless” and “redundant”.

Kot – inferential marker and pragmatic hedger (sometimes with mirative use)

- In (3), *kot* can be used as an **inferential marker or pragmatic hedger** when an addressee seeks to clarify his/her actions (e.g. why he/she declined an offer).

(3) *Panas kot!*

hot PRT

‘It’s hot!’ (in the sense of ‘It’s probably too hot!’)

- The context can be reconstructed as follows: Say a friend offers A a banana fritter (*pisang goreng*), and A declines, and another friend makes the comment: ‘*Panas kot!*’ What she means by this is that she is inferring that A is declining because the banana fritter may be too hot (temperature-wise) to eat. By doing so, she is downplaying any potential face-threat to the friend who is offering A the banana fritter.
- If A himself/herself utters ‘*Panas kot!*’, then he/she may be declining the offer by giving his/her inferred reason.
- In this sense, *kot* is **not primarily used as a counterexpectation marker** to express a speaker’s response to an unexpected situation.

Kot – as pragmatic hedger in mirative contexts

10

(3) *Panas kot!*
hot PRT
'It's hot!'

- Encik Udang (“Mr Shrimp”) discusses that *kot* in (3) is sometimes used in contexts that cannot logically refer to the speaker’s uncertainty about the temperature, since the intended meaning is *Panasnye* (lit. hot=3SG.GEN ‘It’s hot!’) or *Panas!!!* (lit. ‘(It’s *hot!*)’), which is a clear case of mirative use.
- Mirativity is defined as a speaker’s involuntary response to deviations from his or her expectations.
- But even so, note that *kot* in (3) is not a mirativity marker. Mirative effect can be achieved via prosody. What *kot* does is to mitigate the strong reaction (often involuntary) on the part of the speaker as he/she declines an offer.
- So instead of directly and bluntly saying *Panas ’tu!* ‘No, that’s too hot!’, the use of *kot* helps to mitigate a potentially face-threatening act by producing an utterance with the meaning, ‘No thanks, it’s **probably** too hot (for me)!’ In (3), then, *kot* is used as a **pragmatic hedger**.

Kot – counterexpectation marker

11

- Example (4) clearly expresses counterexpectation.

(4) *Dua ratus kot!!!*
two hundred PRT
‘It’s two hundred!!!’

- The counterexpectation reading emerges via a negative interrogative construction, with the epistemic marker *kot* used to (politely) mitigate the speaker’s incredulity:

○ *Tak-kan dua ratus kot?!!!* > *Dua ratus kot?!!!* > # *Dua ratus kot!!!*
NEG-NEG two hundred HEDGER two hundred CE two hundred CE
‘Surely it can’t be two hundred, can it?’ ‘Two hundred, is it?!’ ‘Two hundred?!’

- This analysis is provided by Malay speakers of the Kedah dialect.

Grammaticalization of *kot*

12

- Native speakers of Malay identify the **lexical verb *takut*** ‘fear’ or ‘be afraid’ as the etymology of *kot*.
- Lexical verb *takut* > Epistemic marker *(aku) takut* ~ *kot*
> Pragmatic hedger *kot*.
- Inferential and counterexpectation (or mirative) readings emerge in certain contexts.
- Epistemic and pragmatic hedger *kot* is productive in the northern dialects of the west coast of West Malaysia (e.g. Kedah, Penang and Perak).

Malay *kot* as utterance tag and sentence-final particle

13

- Reanalysis of a higher (matrix) clause with emotion verb ‘fear’ reinterpreted as an epistemic marker ‘probably’ in utterance-tag and sentence-final positions:

(1) a. *Aku takut dia nangis nanti.*
1SG fear 3SG cry FUT(<wait)
‘I’m afraid (s)he will cry.’

Matrix clause

b. *Dia nangis nanti, (aku) takut.*
3SG cry FUT 1SG fear
‘(S)he may cry, I’m afraid.’

Utterance-tag

c. *Dia nangis nanti kot.*
3SG cry FUT maybe
‘(S)he may cry, perhaps.’

Sentence final particle
Clausal integration – a
single intonation unit

Facilitated by elision of
subject and complement

Sentence-final and sentence-initial *kot*

14

- Reanalysis of a higher (matrix) clause with emotion verb ‘fear’ reinterpreted as an epistemic marker ‘probably’ in utterance-tag and sentence-final positions:

(1) c. *Dia nangis nanti kot.*
3SG cry FUT maybe
‘(S)he may cry, **perhaps.**’

d. *Dia nangis kot nanti.*
3SG cry maybe FUT
‘(S)he may cry, **perhaps.**’

e. *Kot (or Kot kot) dia nangis nanti.*
probably 3SG cry FUT
‘Perhaps (s)he will cry.’

Sentence-final particle
Clausal integration – a
single intonation unit

Sentence-initial particle
‘probably’ > ‘perhaps’
Epistemic > Pragmatic
hedger

Comparison between Malay *kot* and Mandarin *kongpa* / Cantonese *taipaa*

15

- Both Malay and Chinese have ‘fear’ verbs that have developed epistemic functions, and within the pragmatic domain, these ‘fear’ epistemic markers are also often used as pragmatic hedgers in discourse.
- Malay *kot* has grammaticalized further than Mandarin *kongpa* /Cantonese *taipaa*. Malay *kot* appears as a particle in sentence final position, while Mandarin *kongpa* /Cantonese *taipaa* occurs as an utterance tag that is prosodically detached from the matrix clause.

OED definition of ‘fear’ /fiə/

16

[mass noun]: an unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain, or harm:

e.g. I cowered in fear as bullets whizzed past

[count noun]:

- a feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety of someone:

e.g. police launched a hunt for the family amid fears for their safety

- the likelihood of something unwelcome happening:

e.g. she observed the other guests without fear of attracting attention

OED definition of ‘fear’ /fiə/--contd.

17

[verb]: be afraid of (someone or something)
as likely to be dangerous, painful, or harmful:

[with object]

e.g. I hated him but didn't fear him any more

[with clause]:

e.g. farmers fear that they will lose business

Grammaticalization of 'fear' verbs in Chinese

18

'Fear' verb > Epistemic marker > Pragmatic hedger



Indicating
'lack of certainty'

Diachronic

- The Centre for Chinese Linguistics PKU Corpus
- (477 million characters/Old and contemporary Chinese)

Conversations

- CCTV programme xiǎocuīshuōshì 小崔說事 (Talk to Xiao Cui)
- CCTV programme Shíhuàshíshuō 實話實說 (Talk the Truth)
- CCTV programme Miànduìmiàn 面對面 (Face to Face)

Lexical verb *kongpa* ‘fear’



20

兩 個 王子 都 恐怕 對方 會 抑制
liǎng gè wángzǐ dōu kǒngpà duìfāng huì yìzhì
two CL prince all fear opposite.party FUT restrain

馬 速 或 用 卑鄙 的 手段 致 勝
mǎ sù huò yòng bēibì de shǒuduàn zhì shèng
horse speed or use mean ATTR way achieve victory

‘Both of the two princes **fear** that the other would restrain his horse speed or win with dirty tricks.’

(*Hāfúguǎnlǐpéixùnxiàlièquánjī*, 哈佛管理培训系列全集,
The collection of Harvard Business Management Training)

Epistemic *kongpa* ‘probably’



21

抻麵， 你 知道 嗎 ？
chēnmiàn *nǐ zhīdào ma*
hand-pulled.noodle 2SG know Q

這 個 外地 人 恐怕 也 不 知道。
zhè gè wàidì rén kǒngpà yě bù zhīdào
this CL non-local people fear also NEG know

‘As for the Beijing hand-pulled noodles, you know what, non-locals **probably** don’t know about it either.’

(Data from *1982 Běijīng Dialectal Survey* 1982 年北京話調查資料)

Epistemic *kongpa* ‘probably’



我們 當然 最 希望 能夠 直航，
wǒmén dāngrán zuì xīwàng nénggòu zhíháng
1PL of.course most wish able direct.flight

如果 從 廣州 直 飛 台北，
rúguǒ cóng guǎngzhōng zhí fēi táiběi
if from Guangzhou direct fly Taipei

恐怕 一 個 多 小時 就 可以 到 了，
kǒngpà yī gè duō xiǎoshí jiù kěyǐ dào le
fear one CL many hour just able arrive PERF

那 該 有 多 好 。

nà gāi yǒu duō hǎo
that should EXST how good

‘Of course we prefer a direct flight best, then **probably** it’ll only take an hour or so from Guangzhou to Taipei; that would be ideal.’ (Lit. ‘if that should be the case, how wonderful it would be.’)

(*Xīnhuázàixiàn* 新華在線 Xinhua Online News, 09-03-2004)

Epistemic *kongpa* in inferential contexts

23



但 由於 今年 比賽 競技 水平 很高 ，
dàn yóuyú jīnnián bǐsài jìngjì shuǐpíng hěn gāo
but because this year match competition level very high

大多數 業餘 選手 恐怕 很難 通過 資格 選拔賽 。

dàduōshù yèyú xuǎnshǒu kǒngpà hěn nán tōngguò zīgé xuǎnbásài
majority amateur contestant fear very hard pass qualify trial

‘However, due to the fact that the level of the competition this year is extremely high, the majority of amateur contestants will probably not pass the trial.’

(*Rénmínrìbào* 人民日報 People’s Daily, 11-05-2004)

Conversation among the host interviewer and a group of academic researchers from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences



Epistemic *kongpa* used as a pragmatic hedger

IR: 給 您 提 個 意見 啊 。

gěi nin ti ge yìjiàn a
give 2SG.HON point.out CL suggestion SFP

‘A suggestion for you.’

IE: 好 的 。

hǎo de
good ATTR

‘Sure.’

IR: 這 個 是 多 好 的 知 識 啊 。

zhè gè shì duō hǎo de zhīshi a
this CL COP how good ATTR knowledge SFP

‘Such wonderful knowledge.’

Prior to this excerpt, the IE was talking about one of their latest research books on social security fund worldwide. In order to popularize the information, they created various flowcharts to illustrate their point rather than solely relying on words.

Epistemic *kongpa* used as a pragmatic hedger

干嘛 不 把它 做成 什麼 漫畫 版 啊 ，
gànmá bù bǎ tā zuò chéng shénme màn huà bǎn a
why NEG BA 3SG do become what comic version SFP

動漫 版 ， 讓 所有 的 人 都 看 ，
dòngmàn bǎn , ràng suǒyǒu de rén dōu kàn
animation.and.comic version cause all ATTR people all read

所有 的 人 都 知道 這 方面 的 知識 啊 ？
suǒyǒu de rén dōu zhīdào zhè fāngmiàn de zhīshì a
all ATTR people all know this factor ATTR knowledge SFP

‘Why don’t you create a comic version, an animation
or comic version, so that everyone will be attracted to watch and get this knowledge?’

Epistemic *kongpa* used as a pragmatic hedger

IE: 如果說能夠做成動漫版，
rìguǒ shuō nénggòu zuò chéng dòngmàn bǎn
if say able do become animation.and.comic version

這個，呃... 恐怕，呃...
zhè gè e kǒngpà e
this cl part fear part

就會失去它很多的科學內涵。
jiù huì shīqù tā hěnduō de kēxué nèihán
just FUT lose 3SG many ATTR science connotation

‘If we convert this into an animation or comic version, that...
well, I’m afraid, well, it would lose its scientific connotations.’

Epistemic *kongpa* used as a pragmatic hedger

IR: 它 說 不 準 ， 是 吧 ？

tā shuō bù zhǔn shì ba

3SG say NEG exact COP Q

呃 ... 用 漫畫 說 不 準 。

e yòng mànhuà shuō bù zhǔn

PART use comic say NEG exact

‘It can’t explain well, right? Well, using comics one can’t explain exactly (what one means).’

IE: 呃 ... 我 覺得 我們 這樣 做 已經 夠 濃縮 了 ，

e wǒ juéde wǒmen zhèyàng zuò yǐjīng gòu nóngsuō le

PART 1SG feel 1PL this do already enough concise PERF

‘Well, I think we’ve simplified it a lot.’

Epistemic *kongpa* used as a pragmatic hedger

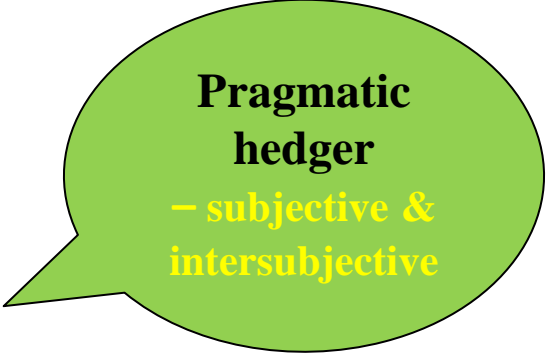
如果 再 濃縮 成 漫畫 版
rúguǒ zài nóngsuō chéng mànhuà bǎn
if further concise become comic version

恐怕 連 我們 自己也 看 不 懂 了 。

kǒngpà lián wǒmen zìjǐ yě kàn bù dǒng le
fear even 1PL self also read NEG understand PERF

‘If we further adapt it to comics, I’m afraid even we ourselves might not be able to understand it.’

(*Xiǎocuīshuōshì* 小崔說事 18-03-2011)



Pragmatic
hedger
– subjective &
intersubjective

Diachronic development of *kongpa*

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the various functions of utterance-initial Mandarin *kongpa* from the 7th to middle 20th century based on tokens from the Centre for Chinese Linguistics PKU Corpus (CCLC)

Functions of <i>kongpa</i>	Period in which <i>kongpa</i> was attested						Total no. of tokens of <i>kongpa</i>
	Tang & Five Dynasties (618 – 960)	Song (960 – 1279)	Yuan (1279-1368)	Ming (1368-1644)	Qing (1644-1911)*	Republican Era (1911-1949)*	
Lexical verb expressing anxiety ('I'm afraid')	20	16	155	578	603	302	1674
Epistemic marker 'probably'	0	1	1	2	92	287	383
Inferential marker 'it seems to be'	0	1	0	1	15	61	78
Total no. of tokens of <i>kongpa</i> sampled in the present study (out of the total 3495 tokens in the entire corpus)	20	18	156	581	710	650	2135

*Note: For the Qing period, we culled every other token of *kongpa* from the total 1,420 tokens, which thus yields 710 tokens for this analysis; for the Republican Era, we culled every other token of *kongpa* from the total 1,300 tokens, which thus yields 650 tokens for this analysis

Syntactic position of *kongpa* in Contemporary Chinese

Table 2. Frequency distribution of the various functions of Modern Mandarin *kongpa* in utterance-initial, utterance-medial and utterance-final position in the Centre for Chinese Linguistics PKU Corpus (CCLC)

Functions of <i>kongpa</i>	Syntactic position of <i>kongpa</i>			
	Utterance-initial	Utterance-medial	Utterance-final (tag)	Total no. of tokens of <i>kongpa</i> sampled in the present study
Lexical verb expressing anxiety ('I'm afraid')	2	10	0	12
Epistemic marker 'probably'	428	512	0	940
Inferential marker 'it seems to be'	26	22	0	48
Total no. of tokens of <i>kongpa</i> sampled in the present study (out of the total 10,554 tokens in the entire corpus)	456	544	0	1000

Syntactic position of *wo kongpa* in Contemporary Chinese (subjective & intersubjective readings)

Table 3. Frequency distribution of the various functions of Modern Mandarin *wo kongpa* in utterance-initial, utterance-medial and utterance-final position based on tokens from the Centre for Chinese Linguistics PKU Corpus (CCLC)*

Functions of <i>wo kongpa</i>	Syntactic distribution of <i>wo kongpa</i>			
	Utterance-initial	Utterance-medial	Utterance-final (tag)	Total no. of tokens of <i>wo kongpa</i> in the corpus
Lexical verb expressing anxiety ('I'm afraid')	155	30	0	185
Epistemic marker 'probably'	45	13	0	58
Inferential marker 'it seems to be'	0	0	0	0
Total no. of tokens of <i>wo kongpa</i> in the corpus	200	43	0	243

*Note: Table 3 with tokens of *wo kongpa* is a subset extracted from Table 2 with tokens of *kongpa*

Diachronic: *kongpa* as a lexical verb (1)



33

Earliest attested token of *kongpa*: Tang dynasty

昨 來 新 拜 右 丞相，
zuó lái xīn bài yòu chéngxiàng
yesterday come new take.office right prime.minister

恐怕 泥 塗 污 馬 蹄。
kǒngpà ní tú wū mǎ tí
fear earth besmear dirty horse hoof

A strong
reading
involving
fear

‘The prime minister, who has just assumed office, arrived yesterday. There was **fear** (< ‘Government officials feared’) that the earth would besmear the horse’s hooves.’

(*Guānniú* 官牛 ‘Official Cow’, a poem by Bái Jūyì, 772-846 AD, Tang dynasty)

Diachronic: *kongpa* as a lexical verb (2)

34



婆婆 听 得 , 半晌 无 言 ,
pópo tīng dé bànshǎng wú yán
mother.in.law listen get a.long.time NEG word

欲 待 要 罵 , 恐怕 人 知 笑話 ,
yù dài yào mà kǒngpà rén zhī xiàohua
about wait need scope fear people know laugh

只 得 忍氣吞聲 。
zhǐ děi rěnqìtūnshēng
only able restrain.one's.temper

A weaker
sense of
fear

‘(Her) mother in law could not produce any word for a long time after hearing that. She restrained her temper when she was about to scold (Cuilian), *fearing* that the neighbor would laugh at them.’

(*Qīngpíngshāngtánghuàběn* 清平山堂話本 960-1279 AD, Song dynasty)

Diachronic: *kongpa* as a lexical verb (3)



35

如 此 用 功夫 ,
rú cǐ yòng gōngfu
like this use time

恐怕 輕 費了 時月 。
kǒngpà qīng fèile shíyuè
worry frivolously waste-PFV hour.month

‘If (we) spend time like this, I **worry** (we will just) frivolously waste our time.’

(*Thematic Discourses of Master Zhū* 朱子語類, 1270 AD, Song dynasty)

Worry
rather than
fear

Diachronic: *kongpa* as an epistemic marker



36

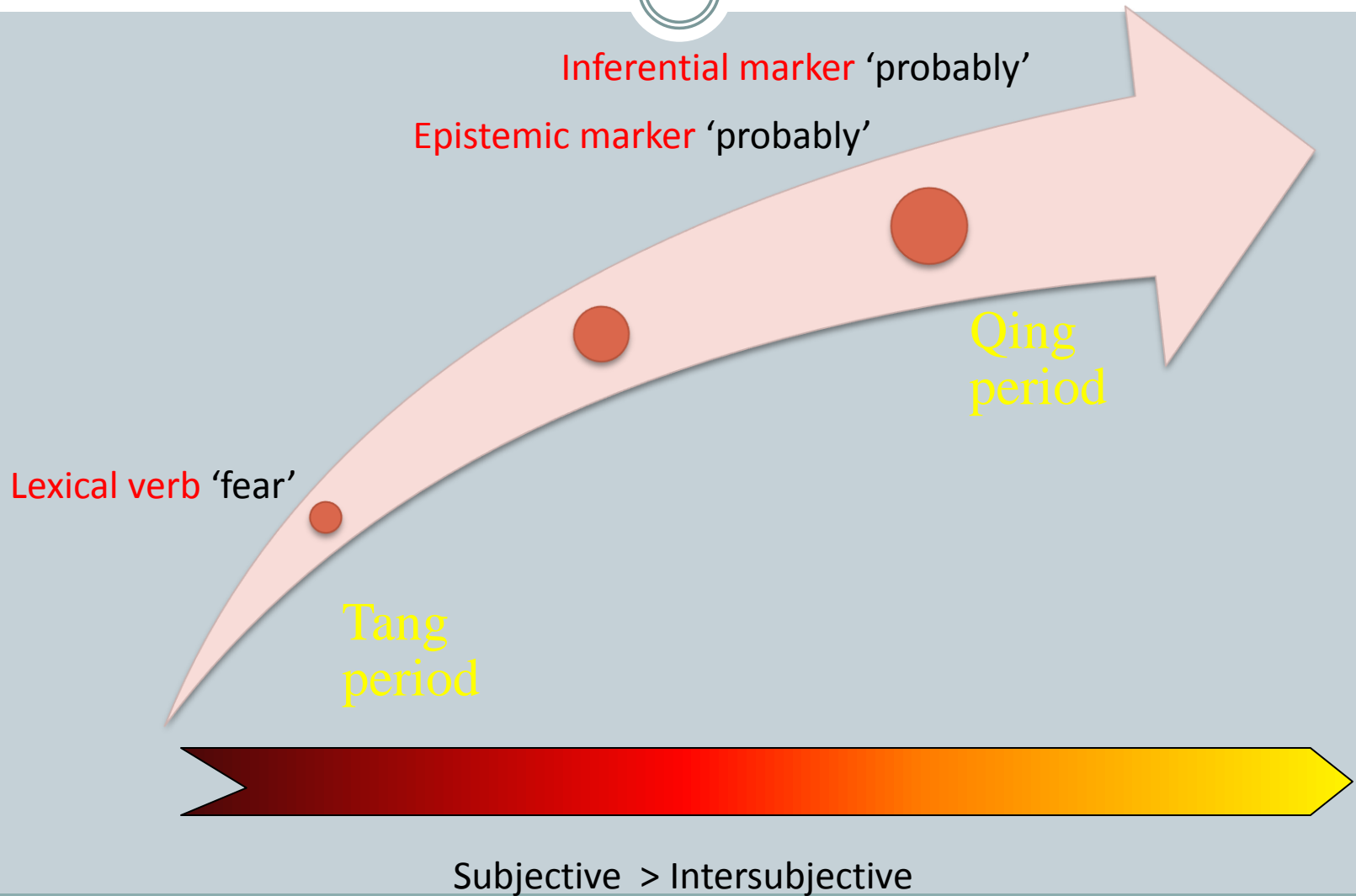
「 若 要 等 火 熄滅 ,
ruò yào děng huǒ xīmiè
if need wait fire extinguish

恐怕 還 要 一 周 時 哩 。 」
kǒngpà hái yào yī zhōu shí li
fear still need one week time SFP

‘I’m afraid / Probably it will take a week’s time to let the fire burn out.’
(*Qījiànshísānxiá* 七劍十三俠, a fiction by Táng Yúnzhōu,
1636-1911 AD, Qing dynasty)

A subjective
epistemic
reading

Grammaticalization process of *kongpa*



Entah—Attitudinal marker ‘I don’t know’

38

- 14th century Malay
 - 1370s (*Syair Bayan Budiman*) -- **entahkan**
 - *entahkan X entahkan Y*
(‘**who knows whether** it is X **or whether** it is Y’)
 - *akan suami hamba **entahkan** ke mana perginya*
(‘as for my husband, **who knows** where he’s gone’)
 - ... *kerana maut itu tiada dapat tentu datangnya; **entahkan** mana-mana masa dan ketikanya datang kepada kita*
(‘... because it’s not possible to ascertain Death’s approach; **no one knows** what time and hour it will come upon us’)

- **Kapampangan**

- *Tabalu nung mete ya tabalu nung mabie ya* (Note: =na + ya > ne)
don't.know COMP dead.PERF 3SG don't.know COMP alive 3SG
'I don't know if he's dead or if he's alive.'

(p.c. Mike Pangilinan, July 3, 2012)

- **Cebuano**

Ambot kung patay(=na) (sia) ambut kung buhi(=pa) (sia)
NEG.know COMP dead(=PERF) (3SG) NEG.know COMP alive(=CONT) (3SG)
'I don't know if he's already dead or if he's (still) alive.'

(p.c. Michael Tanangkinsing, July 3, 2012)

- **Manila Tagalog** (Tagalogin some places uses *aywan*)

Ewan(ko) kung patay=na (sia) ewan(ko) kung buhay=pa (sia)
NEG.know COMP die=PERF (3SG) NEG.know COMP alive=CONT (3SG)
'I don't know if he's already dead or if he's still alive.'

(p.c. Mike Pangilinan, July 3, 2012)

Entah—Attitudinal marker ‘I don’t know’

40

- 14th century Malay
 - 1380s (*Hikayat Amir Hamzah*) -- **entahlah**
 - *Adapun bapamu Amir Hamzah, akan ibumu **entahlah**, aku tiada tahu.*
(‘It is the case that your father is Amir Hamzah; as for your mother, **who (the hell/ in heavens/ on earth) knows**; I don’t know.)
 - *Maka sahut Amir Hamzah, **Entahlah**, berapa pun aku ingatkan, tiada juga aku ingat siapa ia itu*
(‘Thus replied Amir Hamzah, **Oh I don’t know**, however I try to remember, I still cannot remember who he is’)
 - *Pada fikiranku, **entahlah** kalau orang itu mati, maka tiadalah ia sedarkan dirinya.*
 - (‘In my opinion, **I don’t know**, if the person is dead, then he cannot be conscious.’)

Pragmatic hedger

- **Kapampangan**

A: *Ante i ima mu?*
 show P.NOM mother 2SG
 ‘Where is your mum.’

B: *Tabaluta!*
 NEG.know.NEG
 ‘Who knows!’
 (in the sense of ‘I don’t know and I don’t care!’)

(p.c. Mike Pangilinan, July 3, 2012)

- **Cebuano**

A: *Asa=ka dad-’on ni Juan?*
 where=2SG bring-PV.NOM GEN PN
 ‘Where will John take you?’

B: *Ambot lagi.*
 NEG.know INT
 ‘Who knows!’

(p.c. Michael Tanangkinsing, July 3, 2012)

Entah—Attitudinal marker ‘I don’t know’

42

- 14th century Malay
 - 1390s (*Hikayat Raja Pasai*) -- **entah**
 - *entah X entah Y*
 - (‘**I don’t know whether** it is X **or whether** it is Y’)
 - (‘**who knows whether** it is X **or whether** it is Y’)
 - (e.g. *entah kembali entah tiada*)
 - (‘I don’t know whether he returned or whether he did not’)
 - (‘who knows whether he returned or whether he did not’)
 - *rajanya pun sudah lari entah ke mana-mana perginya*
 - (‘their king has fled, **who knows** where on earth he’s gone’)

Extended meanings of *entah*

43

- I don't know
- Who knows
- Nobody knows
- Devil knows / Heaven knows
- **Who** {the hell/ in heavens/ on earth} **knows**

- *What the hell / *What in heavens / *What on earth
- *Where the hell / *Where in heavens / *Where on earth
- *When the hell / *When in heavens / *When on earth
- *Why the hell / *Why in heavens / *Why on earth

Evidence of lexical uses of *entah*

44

- 16th century Malay
 - 1520s (*Hikayat Pandawa Lima*) – ***entah***
 - *Entah* = ‘I don’t know’
 - ✦ *Maka sembah Sang Rajuna, “Entah tuanku, patik tiada tahu ...”*
(‘then Sang Rajuna replied, “**I do not know**, my Lord, I do not know ...”)
 - (‘then Sang Rajuna replied, “**Who knows**, my Lord, I do not know ...”)

Evidence of place-holder use of *entah berentah*

45

- 16th century Malay
 - 1590s (*Hamzah Fansuri*) – ***entah berentah = anu***
 - *Situlah maqam **entah berentah**, Tahu tak tahu iakah bukankah |*
(‘There sits the mausoleum of **so and so**,
No one knows for sure’)

Uses of *entah* with *wh*-words

46

- 17th century Malay
 - 1650s (*Hikayat Tanah Hitu*) – ***entah* + *wh*-word**
 - *Karena di situ ada kota Wolanda, ia berhenti **entah berapa lamanya**.*
(‘Because there was a Dutch city there, he stopped by for **I don’t know how long**.’)

Weak epistemic uses associated with *entah*

47

- 18th century Malay
 - 1700s (*Hikayat Hang Tuah*) – **entah**
 - *Jika* lain daripada hamba, **entah** kembali **entah** tiada kembali, siapa tahu
(‘If it’s other than me, **I don’t know whether** they returned (alive) **or not**, who knows’)
 - ... *matilah aku dimurkainya. Entah* dibunuhnya, *siapa tahu?*
(‘... I’ll die from his ridicule. **I don’t know if** he’ll kill me, who knows’)
→ (‘... I’ll die from his ridicule. **I don’t know perhaps** he’ll kill me, who knows’)

Weak epistemic uses associated with *entah*

48

- 18th century Malay
 - 1700s (*Hikayat Hang Tuah*) – **entah**
 - *Jika* lain daripada Laksamana, **entah** kembali **entah** tiada
(‘If it’s other than the Admiral, **I don’t know whether** they returned (alive) **or not**’)
 - *Jika* lain daripada Bendahara, **entah** mati siapa tahu
(‘If it’s other than the Treasurer, **I don’t know if** he’s dead, who knows’)
→ (‘If it’s other than the Treasurer, **I don’t know maybe** he’s dead, who knows’)

Emphatic uses associated with *entah pun* ~ *entahpun*

49

- 19th century Malay
 - 1840s (*Hikayat Marakarma / Si Miskin*) – ***entah pun* ~ *entahpun***
 - *Adapun akan kita ini hanyut juga ke mari **entah** mati **entah pun** hidup*
(‘And it was that we thus drifted (downriver) to this place, **not knowing whether** would be dead **or** alive’)
→ (‘And it was that wethus drifted (downriver) to this place, **who knows if** we were dead **or** alive’)

Attitudinal uses associated with *entah*

50

- 20th century Malay
 - 1910s (*Syair Nyai Dasima*) – **entah**
 - *entah apa ia baca*
(‘I’ve no idea what he reading’)
→ (‘Who knows what he was reading!’)
 - 1940s (*Puisi-Puisi Kebangsaan*) – SFP **entah**
 - *tetapi belum mendapat ubat, masa bilakah gerangan entah ?*
(‘But I haven’t got the medication yet; I’ve no idea when I’ll get it’)
→ (‘But I haven’t got the medication yet; who knows when I’ll get it’)

Extended meanings of *entah*

51

- I don't know
- Who knows
- Nobody knows
- Devil knows / Heaven knows
- **Who** {the hell/ in heavens/ on earth} **knows**

- *What the hell / *What in heavens / *What on earth
- *Where the hell / *Where in heavens / *Where on earth
- *When the hell / *When in heavens / *When on earth
- *Why the hell / *Why in heavens / *Why on earth

Extended meanings of *entah*

52

- I don't know *Entah* *Mzi* ('don't know')
- Who knows *Entah ... siapa tahu* *Mzi bingo / Bingo zi*
- Nobody knows *Entah ... tiada (siapa) tahu* *Mou jan zi*
- Devil knows / Heaven knows *Gwai zi / *Tin zi*
- **Who** {the hell/ in heavens/ on earth} **knows** *Gwai zi / *Tin zi*

Context-induced
attitudinal *entah*

- *What the hell / *What in heavens / *What on earth
- *Where the hell / *Where in heavens / *Where on earth
- *When the hell / *When in heavens / *When on earth
- *Why the hell / *Why in heavens / *Why on earth

Syntactic issues

53

- **Entah** apa dia baca.
- Dia baca apa **entah**.
- **Entah** apa dia baca **entah**.

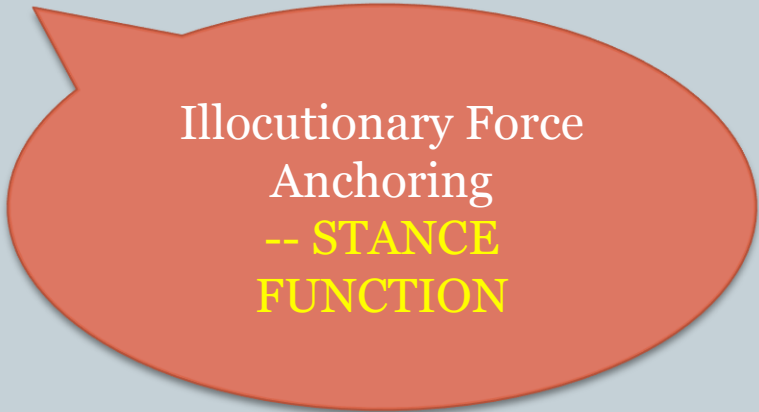
Right-dislocation

Comp-to-spec
raising

Syntactic issues

54

- **Tah** apa dia baca.
- Dia baca apa **tah**.
- **Tah** apa dia baca **tah**.



Illocutionary Force
Anchoring
-- STANCE
FUNCTION

References



- Du Bois, J. W. (2007). The stance triangle. In: R. Englebretson (Ed.), *Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction*, pp. 139-182. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Heritage, J. & Raymond, G. (2005). The terms of agreement: Indexing epistemic authority and subordination in talk-in-interaction. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 68(1): 15–38.
- Hunston, S. & Thompson, G. (2000). *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. New York: Oxford.
- Wu, R-J. (2004). *Stance in Talk: A Conversation Analysis of Mandarin Final Particles*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

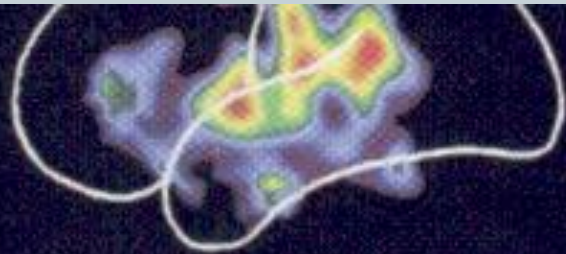
Acknowledgments



- This study is funded by the Research Grants Council of Hong Kong through a General Research Grant (GRF PolyU Project No. 551310, 2010-2013) entitled “Stance Marking Strategies in Asian Languages: Diachronic, Typological and Discourse Perspectives”.
- I wish to also thank the following for valuable discussions on Malay and Indonesian data:
 - Prof. Shameem Galea (Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang)
 - Wan Irham Ishak (Universiti Institut Teknologi Mara, Kedah)

PET scans of different language activities

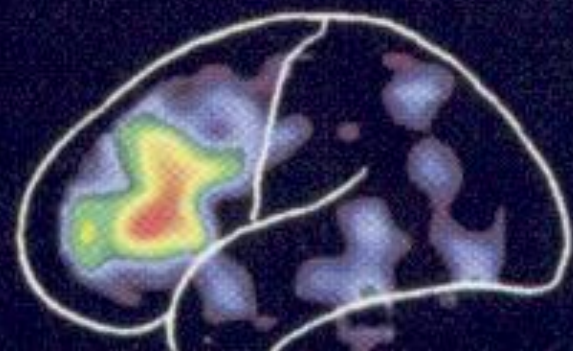
57



Hearing Words

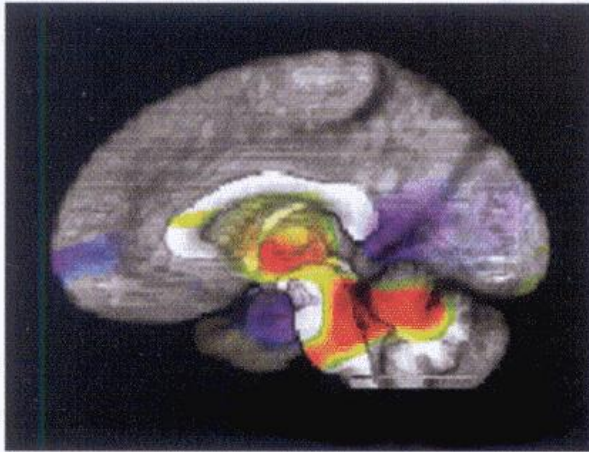


Seeing Words

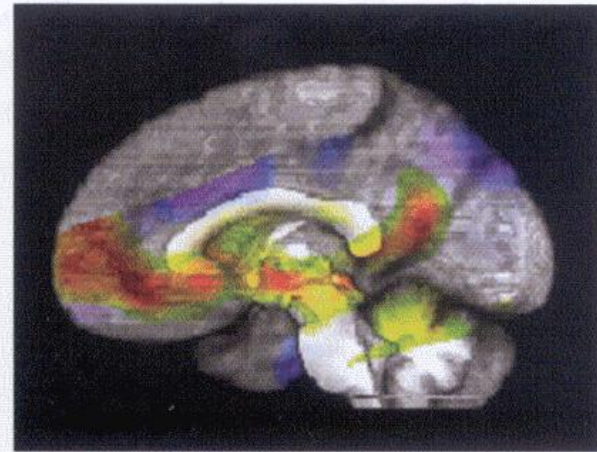


Four different emotions: a comparison

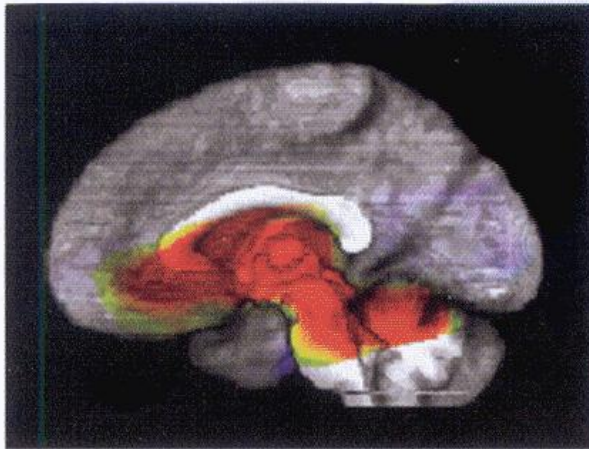
58



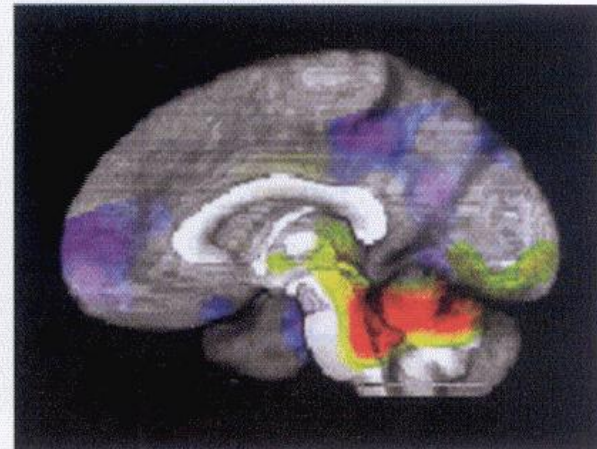
Anger



Happiness



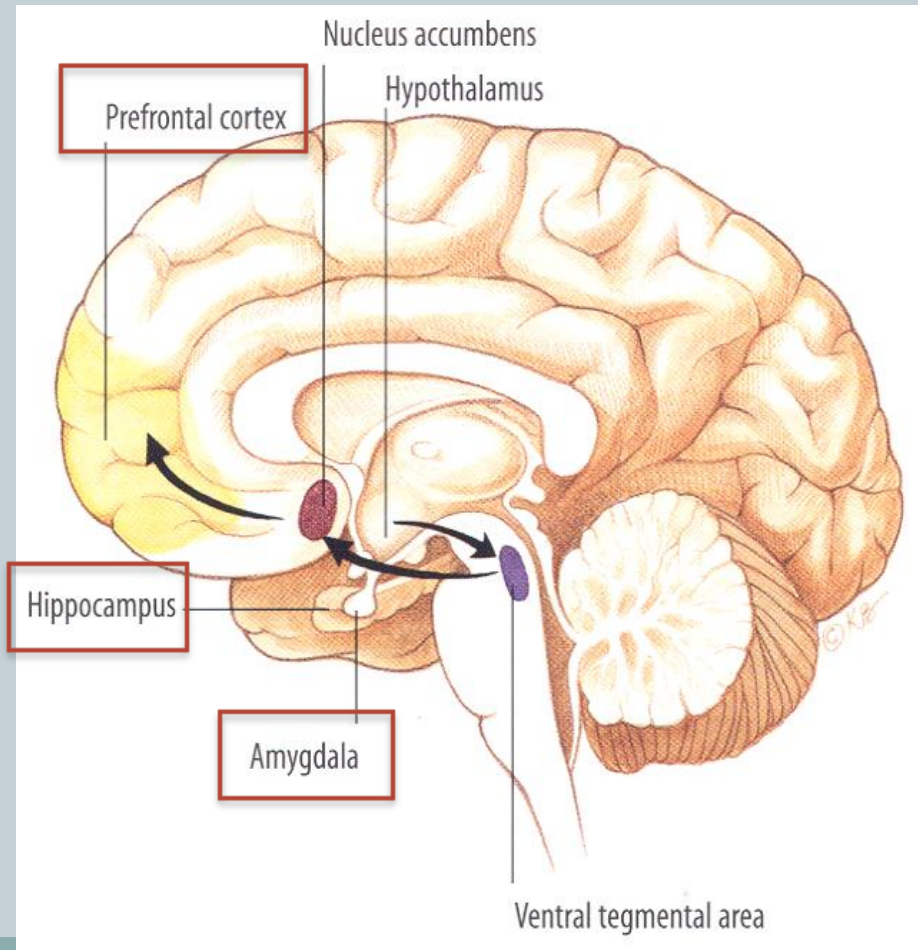
Sadness



Fear

Strong connections between the hippocampus, the prefrontal cortex and the amygdala

59

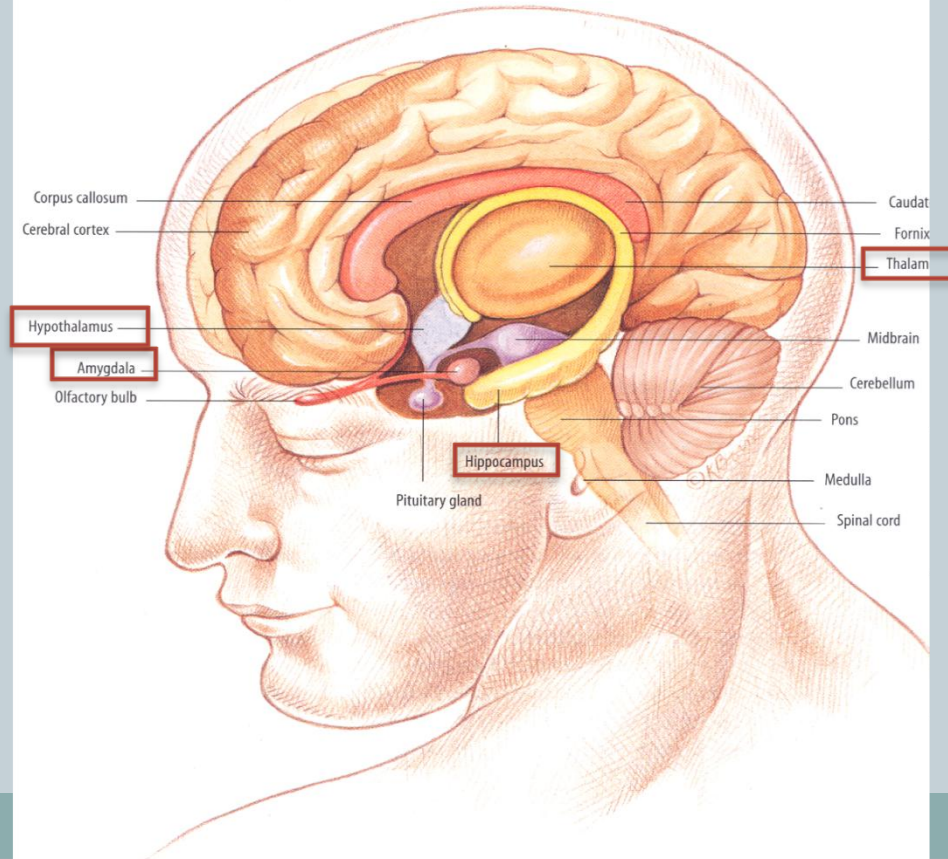


Neocortical and subcortical areas of the brain

A view of one-half of the brain reveals some of the many structures that govern our daily lives. The hippocampus, for example, is involved in memory formation. The amygdala and fornix play important roles in emotions. The expression of the endocrine and autonomic nervous systems are the responsibility of the pituitary and hypothalamus, while the thalamus handles sensation. Key to the integration of the two cerebral hemispheres is the corpus callosum. Below these structures, the midbrain and pons control the nerves responsible for eye movements,

the size of the pupils, facial sensation and movement, hearing, and wakefulness. The cerebellum receives input from many parts of the nervous system and sends signals to those parts important for the control of movement. The medulla contains centers for the control of breathing, swallowing, and blood pressure, among other vital functions. Below the medulla is the spinal cord, which conveys motor signals from the brain to the rest of the body and carries sensory information from the body to the brain.

Hypothalamus
Amygdala



Thalamus
Hippocampus

Some other stance marking strategies

61

- **Kot**
- **Kan vs. ya**
- Sabit = sebab 'tu > patut
- Awat vs. kenapa
- **Sat =sekejap (> sat sat dia kat sini tadi)**
- Sat lagi > sat gi ('afterward)
- Sat ni > 'later'
- Entah > tah (tak tahu > tak tau)
- Punya
- Katanya vs. **orang kata**
- **Nampaknya**
- Rasanya
- Maksudnya
- **Agaknya**