

Intersubjectivity in Vedic Sanskrit: Is the particle *aṅgá* a marker of shared knowledge?

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The Vedic particle *aṅgá* has been assigned the function of a focus particle (Lühr 2017:286f.) or a ‘reassuring’ discourse particle (Mayrhofer 1992–2001:I, 48) in the literature. However, no comprehensive analysis has been conducted to this day. The aim of my talk is to present such an analysis for the Rigveda, the oldest attested text in Vedic Sanskrit. Even though it is particularly difficult to determine the functions of particles in this corpus, I will argue that *aṅgá* is used as a discourse particle that marks shared (non-)knowledge of speaker and addressee. I will start my analysis with the observation that when the particle occurs in questions, these are not information-seeking but e.g. rhetorical or self-directed, which leads me to assume that *aṅgá* is used to overtly mark them as such. By comparing *aṅgá* to discourse particles in other languages, e.g. German (unstressed) *ja*, I will argue that this function is compatible with its occurrence in other clause types as well. After discussing the Rigvedic data, I will attempt to locate *aṅgá* in the typology of complex perspective markers (Schultze-Berndt 2017).

References

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