

The things that nobodies tell us: Evidentiality and social meaning in Valley Spanish

The goal of this paper is to demonstrate that monolingual speakers of a contact variety of Spanish use evidentials in a systematic way to express a matrix of semantic, pragmatic, narrative, and social meanings. This research was conducted on the border of the culturally and linguistically distinct Cochabamba and Santa Cruz provinces of Bolivia. Spanish and Quechua, an indigenous language that has an evidential system¹, have been in contact for centuries in this region. While it has been demonstrated that L1 Quechua speakers appropriate Spanish constructions to express evidentiality in L2 Spanish², there is little information in the literature about L1 Spanish speakers. I will show that there are two evidential markers in the Spanish monolingual community: a lexical frame/particle, *dizque-dice*, and a verbal tense *había*. Speakers often employ a combination of these two constructions to express second-hand, third-hand, or mythical information. This is typologically termed *reportative* evidentiality³. I hold that these evidentials are not only triggered by sources of information in the literal sense, but also deployed by speakers to communicate degrees of commitment or responsibility towards the information being communicated.

Evidentiality has been described as marking sources of information. However, it may contain additional information about the speaker's strategies to move herself and her audience through frames of the story, as described by Mushin (2000). A more nuanced definition of evidentials references the relationship between the speaker and the information expressed. As such, evidentials constitute a liminal area between formal linguistics and sociolinguistics/linguistic anthropology. Speakers use reportative evidentials to blend literal 'sources of information' with an abstract evaluation of the relationship between the self and the proposition. They not only reference objects in the world⁴, but also actively create a subjective relationship between themselves and their construction of those sources⁵.

This paper relates research on evidentials in the semantic and pragmatic senses to research on reported speech and evidentiality in linguistic anthropology. My work also contributes to research on Andean Spanish by focusing on monolingual Spanish speakers who navigate a multiple, internally differentiated linguistic environment.

¹ Chafe & Nichols (1986); de Granda (2001); Faller (2003)

² Klee & Ocampo (1995); Escobar (1997); Sánchez (2004)

³ cf. Dendale & Tasmowski (2001)

⁴ See Nuckolls (1993) for a discussion of cultural biases in linguistic research

⁵ Hill & Irvine (1993)

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