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## CHAPTER 5

# The cultural bases of linguistic form

## The development of Nanti quotative evidentials\*

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Culture-driven grammaticalization theory posits that cultural influence on linguistic form is mediated by the emergence of communicative practices which increase the frequency of particular lexical items, pragmatic inferences, and patterns of discourse, thereby putting in place a crucial pre-condition for their grammaticalization. The goal of this chapter is to contribute to the development of culture-driven grammaticalization theory by developing an account of the cultural basis for the grammaticalization of quotative evidentials in Nanti, an Arawak language of lowland southeastern Peru. In particular, it is argued that Nanti quotative evidentials grammaticalized from inflected verbs of speaking that achieved high discourse frequencies due to communicative practices that link respectful communicative conduct towards others with the avoidance of speculation about others' actions and internal states. As part of this communicative practice, Nantis largely restrict their discussion of others' actions and internal states to two domains: reported speech regarding others' actions and internal states, and actions that they witnessed themselves, which can also serve to index internal states.

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\* This chapter is dedicated to Migeró, the leader of the community of Montetoni, who died unexpectedly in 2010. I am grateful to all of the residents of the Nanti community of Montetoni for their good will and inexhaustible patience in teaching me about their language and their lives. I owe special thanks to Migeró, Bikotoro, and Tekori, for the special interest they took in me and my work. Christine Beier has been my research partner in the Nanti communities since the beginning, and has contributed much to my understanding of Nanti language and society. Part of this work was carried out in affiliation with the *Centro de Investigación de Lingüística Aplicada* (CILA), at the *Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos* (Lima, Perú), and I thank Gustavo Solís and Elsa Vilchez, the centre's directors at the time, for their support. The fieldwork on which this is based was funded in part by a Fulbright-Hays DDRA Fellowship, and an NSF DDRI grant.

## 1. Introduction

There can be little doubt that social practices and culture affect language; the interesting question is: in what concrete ways are linguistic form and structure shaped by culture, and what are the processes by which culture does so? One approach, culture-driven grammaticalization theory (Simpson, 2002; Evans, 2003), suggests that cultural influence on linguistic form is mediated by the development of conventionalized communicative practices that increase the frequency of particular lexical items, constructions, and pragmatic inferences in discourse, thereby putting in place a crucial pre-condition for their grammaticalization (see also LaPolla, this volume).

The goal of this chapter is to contribute to the development of culture-driven grammaticalization theory by developing an account of the cultural basis for the grammaticalization of quotative evidentials in Nanti, an Arawak language of lowland southeastern Peru. In particular, I argue that Nanti quotative evidentials grammaticalized from inflected verbs of speaking that achieved high discourse frequencies due to the emergence of communicative practices that link respectful communicative conduct towards others with the avoidance of speculation about others' actions and internal states. As part of this communicative practice, Nantis largely restrict their discussion of others' actions and internal states to two domains: reported speech regarding others' actions and internal states, and actions that they witnessed themselves, which can also serve to index internal states.

### 1.1 Culture and linguistic form

Even linguists committed to treating language as an autonomous cognitive faculty acknowledge that the lexicon of a language is influenced by the culture of its speakers (e.g. Pullum, 1989), and one does not have to look far to find grammatical phenomena that appear related to aspects of social interaction, cultural beliefs, and the local particularities of lived experience. We briefly consider examples of how each of these aspects of culture can come to be expressed in the grammars of particular languages.

To take a well-studied example, systems of honorifics (Agha, 1994, 2007, pp. 301–339) are reported for numerous societies organized on the basis of castes and social classes, but they appear to be quite rare among small-scale 'egalitarian' societies. Honorific systems extend from the comparatively simple European T/V systems (Brown & Gilman, 1960) to the considerably more elaborate systems of East Asia and parts of Oceania (e.g. Errington, 1988; Keating, 1998). The latter type is exemplified by the Korean honorific system, which has been described as expressing six politeness 'levels' by means of verbal suffixes, pronominal alternations, address terms, lexical alternations, and vocative

suffixes (Sohn, 1999; Strauss & Eun, 2005). It is presumably not a coincidence that such honorific systems are found in languages spoken in societies that are hierarchically organized into explicitly recognized groups and display language ideologies that link respect for hierarchically-positioned social others to patterns of language use (Irvine, 1998, p. 62).<sup>1</sup>

Aspects of religious and cosmological beliefs may also come to be encoded in grammar, as in the case of the productive ‘demonic’ nominal suffix, *-niro*, in Matsigenka (Arawak, Peru). Demons that take the form of animals play an important role in Matsigenka belief systems (see e.g. Johnson, 2003, pp. 208–212),<sup>2</sup> with the names of several important types of demons being derived from animal-denoting nouns with the suffix in question. Thus, in addition to demons that take the form of neotropical species, and are well-integrated into Matsigenka oral tradition, like *osheto-niro* (spider.monkey-demon) ‘spider monkey demon’, *pantyo-niro* (duck-demon) ‘duck demon’, demon names derived from more recently introduced domestic animals, such as *waka-niro* (cow-demon; *waka* < *vaca* ‘cow’, Sp.) ‘cow demon’ and *ovisha-niro* (sheep-demon; *ovisha* < *oveja* ‘sheep’, Sp.) ‘sheep demon’ (Lev Michael, field notes).

The locally variable particulars of lived experience can also come to be encoded in grammar, as in the case of grammatical resources related to spatial navigation of the local physical environment (see Palmer, this volume and Frowein, this volume). Thus we find that in the case of Iquito (Lai, 2009, pp. 346–352), for example, spoken by individuals living in the dense forest of the Amazonian floodplain, verbal associated motion suffixes express associated upriver and downriver motion, as in (1a–b), rather than the inclination-relative systems found in mountainous areas of the world (see e.g. Diessel, 1999, pp. 42–43).

- (1) a. *Nu-maki-wii-kura*  
 3SG-sleep-ASSOC.MOT:upriver-REC.PAST  
 ‘S/he slept upriver (and has since returned).’
- b. *Nu-maki-k<sup>w</sup>aa-kura*  
 3SG-sleep-ASSOC.MOT:downriver-REC.PAST  
 ‘S/he slept downriver (and has since returned).’

1. Yum (1988) argues that the deference systems found in East Asian languages can be traced to the influence of Confucianism, which is plausible, given the manner in which the intersection of religious identity and language ideology affected the English T/V system (Silverstein, 1985).

2. As Johnson (2003, p. 208) puts it: “[T]he Matsigenka world is populated by a host of horrible, lethal demons, who, being generally invisible, could be almost anywhere. Demons tend to be exaggerated versions of humans or animals, usually deformed, defective, and disgusting in some way.”

Although examples like these strongly suggest that social and cultural practices affect linguistic structure, progress beyond this basic observation depends on developing theoretical frameworks that help linguists generate explicit accounts of how social and cultural factors are implicated in linguistic structure. One promising approach of this type, the *culture-driven grammaticalization* (CDG) framework, relates linguistic form to social and cultural factors via processes of grammaticalization. The basic insight of CDG is that culture and social processes shape discourse (i.e. actual language use), and in doing so, affect the token frequency (and contingent syntagmatic relationships) of particular linguistic forms (Simpson, 2002), which plays a major role in their grammaticalization (Bybee, 2003, 2006; Bybee & Hopper, 2001). On this view, culture affects linguistic form and structure indirectly, through its capacity to influence grammaticalization processes.

In this chapter I aim to build on previous work in culture-driven grammaticalization theory (CDG) in two ways. First, I seek to more explicitly ground the CDG framework in social theory by linking grammaticalization theory to practice theory, an important approach to social theory that exhibits certain deep similarities to grammaticalization theory. Both grammaticalization theory and practice theory are grounded in accounts of conventionalization and automatization of behaviour, providing the basis for a common framework for theorizing social and linguistic phenomena within CDG. Second, I present a case study, the grammaticalization of quotative evidentials in Nanti, cast in this common framework. Specifically, I argue that Nanti ideologies regarding the appropriateness of making claims about the actions and subjective stances of others serve as perduring structuring factors that favour communicative practices with a particularly high density of reported speech constructions. In particular, Nantis generally consider direct reference to others' internal states and speculation about others' actions to be inappropriate in most circumstances, motivating the use of reported speech to talk about others' intentions, emotional states, and evaluative stances, and the use of evidential strategies, including reported speech, to talk about their actions. The resulting high frequency of reported speech constructions in turn drives the grammaticalization of verbs of speaking into quotatives. In this way, Nanti communicative practices that disfavour direct reference to the internal states of others, or speculation about their actions, indirectly drive the grammaticalization of linguistic resources that facilitate indirect reference to these crucial dimensions of Nantis' social worlds. Nanti society and language present an especially valuable context for studying the social factors behind the grammaticalization of evidentials because Nanti quotatives and reportives are currently undergoing grammaticalization. As such, we can be optimistic that the broader communicative practices that gave rise to their grammaticalization are still present in the society,

and further, that the social factors driving the conventionalization of those communicative practices are still present.

## 1.2 Linguistic and ethnographic background

Nanti is an Arawak language of the Kampan branch, a group of head-marking agglutinative languages spoken in the Andean foothills of southeastern Peru, and in the adjacent lowlands of Peru and Brazil. Nanti is spoken by approximately 450 individuals who live in some ten settlements on the upper Camisea and Timpía Rivers. The Kampan varieties are involved in several dialect chains, posing difficulties for classification (Michael, 2008, pp. 212–219). Nanti itself is sometimes treated as a distinct language (e.g. Payne, 2002), and sometimes as a dialect of Matsigenka. Matsigenka itself is dialectally diverse, and I believe that Nanti may most accurately be thought of as an extreme point in a dialect chain linking the following dialects of Matsigenka: Upper Urubamba – Lower Urubamba – Manu – Nanti, where neighbours in the chain are more similar than non-neighbours. Mutual intelligibility between the Manu Matsigenka and Nanti varieties is relatively high, especially when speakers of these different varieties speak slowly and employ relatively simple grammatical structures, but is relatively low between Nantis and speakers of the Upper Urubamba River dialect. Nantis are overwhelmingly monolingual, although a handful of young men have developed a basic knowledge of Spanish in recent years.

Present day Nantis are hunter-horticulturalists, much as their parents were, although contact with non-Nantis has resulted in significant changes to Nanti material culture and social organization. According to Nanti oral history, significant interaction with non-Nantis dates to the 1970s (for details, see Michael 2008: 24–26). At that time, Nantis lived entirely on the upper Timpía river, in a dispersed settlement pattern of small communities of 10–30 individuals, which were typically separated by at least half-a-day's walk from their nearest neighbours. In the mid-1980s, Nantis began to migrate from the Timpía River basin to the neighbouring Camisea River basin, drawn by the richer land in the Camisea basin, and the prospect of metal tools. Nantis initiated contact with Matsigenkas in the early 1990s and soon thereafter the community of Montetoni was formed, which at its peak had 250 inhabitants – over half of the entire Nanti population. Since then, most of the Nantis living in the Camisea River basin have experienced a completely novel degree of contact with relative non-intimates (i.e. individuals who do not form part of their own extended families). I have argued elsewhere (Michael, 2008) that two new social institutions emerged in this context as social solutions to some of the challenges posed by the large, multi-family settlements: the position of community chief and large-scale manioc beer feasts. Nantis have avidly

incorporated metal tools into their subsistence practices, but there is considerable continuity with pre-contact practices: bow-and-arrow hunting and small-scale horticulture of manioc, other tubers, plantains, and corn remain important.

This chapter is based on twenty months of monolingual ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork between 1998 and 2006. I carried out the vast majority of this work in Montetoni, the largest of the Nanti communities. My work in these communities focused on the analysis of recordings of naturally-occurring conversation (~300 hours) and on systematic ethnographic observation grounded in intensive participant observation. During each of my visits I lived with my wife and research partner, Christine Beier, in one of the village's several 'residence groups', as we called the clusters of households whose residents cooperate in subsistence activities. As members of a residence group, we participated in subsistence activities with other members of the group, and I exchanged daily inter-household visits with households inside and outside the group, as male heads of households are expected to do. Our most intense social experiences, however, were the weekly multi-day manioc beer feasts, the most important context for social interactions beyond the bounds of each villager's residence group. In this intense monolingual environment we had little alternative but to develop a reasonable mastery of Nanti grammar and Nanti communicative norms, and this understanding underlies much of my description of Nanti communicative practices in this chapter.

## 2. Towards a sociocultural theory of linguistic form

The significant empirical and theoretical successes of linguistics over the last century are due in no small part to the adoption of a structuralist<sup>3</sup> perspective on linguistic phenomena. The insight that animates structuralism is the realization that many linguistic phenomena can be fruitfully analysed solely in terms of relationships between linguistic elements, without reference to the social contexts in which they are used, or the motivations of the people who employ those elements. Treating language as an autonomous system in this way has yielded a tremendously productive focus on linguistic form as an analytical object, but it has also had the less welcome collateral effect of inhibiting the development of theories regarding

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3. I construe the term *structuralist* broadly here, including self-identified forms of structuralist linguistics as well as later schools, especially the generative tradition, that further developed the notion of structural autonomy.

the role of social action and culture in the emergence of linguistic form.<sup>4</sup> My goal in this section is to show that although theories of the latter type are underdeveloped in comparison to structuralist theories, foundations have nevertheless been laid in both social and linguistic theory for a socially grounded theory of linguistic form. In particular, the parallel development of practice theory and grammaticalization theory in social and linguistic theory, respectively, has yielded converging perspectives on patterned regularities in human activity that constitute a promising basis for approaches to language that allow linguists to take advantage of the very real strengths of structuralist thought, without committing them to its asocial and ahistorical view of language.

One way to appreciate the utility of such an approach is to recognize that a significant obstacle to theorizing the role of social and cultural processes in the development of linguistic form is a simple lack of congruence between the phenomena, units of analysis, and explanatory mechanisms of social theory, on the one hand, and those of linguistic theory, on the other. In speaking of their objects, for example, social theories refer to phenomena such as (social) gender, taboo avoidance, and social conflict; units such as families, clans, and social classes; and explanatory mechanisms such as material and symbolic exchange, social power, and ideology. Linguistics, in contrast, is concerned with phenomena such as speech sounds, word structure, and word order; units such as phonemes, phrasal constituents, and sentences; and explanatory mechanisms such as feature assimilation, morpheme-ordering principles, and long-range syntactic dependencies. In part this lack of congruence has, to be sure, legitimate empirical roots – after all, vowel harmony and gift exchange are qualitatively quite different phenomena – but the structuralist elimination of *action* in structuralist linguistic theories, so central to our understanding of social processes, in favour of formal relationships between elements, introduces a conceptual gulf between linguistic and social theory that is difficult to bridge.

The convergent perspectives of practice theory and grammaticalization theory, however, present an opportunity for bridging this gap, grounded in the similar understanding of patterned regularities in human activity shared by the two theories, namely that they arise through time through the *sedimentation* of actions (some of which are novel or innovative). In practice theory, the focus lies on the sedimentation of activities into social practices, i.e. routinized ways of ‘doing and saying’ (Schatzki, 1996), while in grammaticalization theory the focus lies on

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4. Weinreich, Labov, & Herzog (1968) make a similar point, of course, and the variationist sociolinguistic tradition launched by their seminal work represents an important effort to overcome the isolation of linguistic form from social activity.



*grammaticalization*, i.e. the development of linguistic structure from patterns of language use immanent in discourse. Although divergent in their empirical concerns and disciplinary vocabulary, both theories are ultimately concerned with processes of routinization and automatization of activity, providing a common basis on which to theorize social and linguistic phenomena.

Assuming that readers are familiar with grammaticalization theory, I wish to briefly sketch some relevant key elements of practice theory. Although the roots of practice theory can be traced back to the ordinary language philosophy of Wittgenstein's later work and the phenomenology of Heidegger (Reckwitz, 2002), the emergence of practice theory is typically associated with Pierre Bourdieu (1977) and Anthony Giddens (1979, 1984), both social theorists who sought to overcome a number of dichotomies that persistently bedevilled social theory. These included the paradox of individual agency against the backdrop of overdetermining social structure, the distinction between intellectual meta-discursive knowledge and practical knowledge, and the difficulties in theorizing the relationship between micro- and macro-social organization, as well as between social synchrony and diachrony.

Practice theorists' response to these difficulties was to abandon the notion of social structure as a theoretically primary entity, but instead place the activities of embodied social agent, immersed in a web of interactions with other agents and with material objects, at the centre of social theory. Social 'structure', on this view, emerged from the regularities of the social practices in which social agents participate during their strategic navigation of the social and material world in the furtherance of their particular projects. 'Practices', from this perspective, are understood to be routinized ways of acting in the world, where 'action' encompasses both the physical and cognitive dimensions of action.

Practice theory posits that practices emerge through the interaction of individuals' predispositions to act in certain ways, and those individuals' socially situated, interested, and agentive pursuit of individual goals under the material and social circumstances in which they find themselves. In practice theory, these predispositions are attributes of the *habitus*, which is understood to be comprised of sets of flexible, schematic dispositions, a 'sense of the game' that guides the individual's action in given social and material contexts:

[...] habitus [consists of] systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72)

Several writers have compared the habitus to grammar – and even to generative grammars – as a set of productive schemas that underpin regularities in behaviour, while at the same time permitting creativity and flexibility (e.g. Wacquant, 2004).

Practice theorists have been hesitant to describe the habitus, or even parts of the habitus, to the degree of explicitness with which linguists are used to treating their subject matter, but the notion of scripts and schemas developed by artificial intelligence researchers, such as Schank & Abelson (1977), gives some idea of how the notion of habitus could be cashed out.

Crucially, and this is where the bridge to grammaticalization theory becomes evident, practice theorists understand the habitus to develop or accrete through activity itself – that is, as a result of repeated experience with particular trajectories of actions in concrete material and social contexts – thereby introducing a diachronic dimension to the production, reproduction, and transformation of social practices. It is this diachronic aspect of practice theory, namely, that habitus both generates practices in concrete social and material contexts, and results from the sedimentation of the activities comprising those practices, that allows practice theory to bridge a number of the thorny theoretical divides mentioned above.

The fact that language forms a part of many practices brings practice theory even closer to grammaticalization theory. Since speakers attempt to achieve similar socio-communicative goals in recurring social situations, particular *communicative practices* (Hanks, 1996), consisting of discursive routines and conventionalized communicative strategies, sediment as parts of speakers' *communicative habitus*. The communicative practices generated by the interaction of (multiple) speakers' communicative habitus in concrete social and material settings vary considerably in scale, from discourse genres (Hanks, 1987; Urban, 1991), to interactional routines such as commercial interactions (Clark, 1992) and ritual greetings (Beier, Michael, & Sherzer, 2002), to micro-interactional practices such as reference (Hanks, 1990). It is important to understand that these communicative practices are not to be understood merely as types of 'language use' in 'social context', but rather as integrated practices in which the deployment of linguistic form forms a piece with practical modes of social action, perception, and judgment aimed at achieving the interested goals of social agents. Communicative practice exhibits the practical integration of linguistic resources in social action in the pursuit of social goals, generated by and sedimented in the habitus in a manner that links particular dispositions for social action to the deployment of particular linguistic resources (e.g. lexical, discursive, and grammatical). And it is precisely here that the continuity between practice theory and grammaticalization theory is clearest, since both theories treat the emergence of patterned regularities in their respective domains of human activity as a consequence of routinization via the cumulative effects of repeated action and experience (Bybee & Hopper, 2001, p. 2; Evans, 2003, p. 16). Grammaticalization theory can in fact be seen as a special limiting case of practice theory, concerned with emergence of highly routinized aspects of communicative conduct (i.e. grammar) from the more contingent, yet nevertheless regular aspects, of discourse.

The unified picture, stretching from social activity to grammar, that emerges from the continuity between practice theory and grammaticalization theory thus centres on social practices – including communicative ones – and the processes of sedimentation in habitus formation that lead to the reproduction and transformation of social practices. Since language constitutes part of these practices, part of the sedimentation in question involves the sedimentation of patterns of deployment of linguistic resources in the context of broader social practices. The communicative practices that emerge from this process of sedimentation have as their limiting case of routinization and regularization the phenomena of concern to grammaticalization theory: the development of linguistic structure from regularities in discourse. Crucially, in the context of practice theory, grammaticalization processes are immersed in broader communicative and social practices, so that grammaticalization can be seen to be no less a ‘social’ process than any other aspect of habitus formation. On this view, then, ‘culture’ and the ‘social world’ are understood to affect grammar through social practices, and communicative practices in particular, that integrate the patterned and routinized deployment of linguistic resources with trajectories of social action, feeding grammaticalization. The routinization characteristic of communicative practices entails that certain elements and collocations become particularly frequent in the context of communicative activity, at which point frequency effects of the type that concern grammaticalization theory manifest themselves, including phonological reduction, loss of prosodic or morphosyntactic independence, semantic bleaching, and the like (Hopper & Traugott, 2003). In summary, the vision of the relationship between grammar and the social that emerges from this unified picture is less one of a process of *culture-driven grammaticalization*, which presupposes clearly distinct spheres of ‘culture’ and ‘language’, as much as one of sedimentation of activities that integrate communicative and non-communicative components, one consequence of which is the extreme routinization found in grammaticalization.

### 3. Quotative evidentials and reported speech constructions

This section is devoted to Nanti quotative evidentials<sup>5</sup> and the lexical reported speech constructions from which they grammaticalized.

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5. Since the term *quotative* is employed somewhat inconsistently in the literature, I here define *quotative evidentials* as reported speech constructions that provide information about the *source* of the reported speech but not its recipient (see Michael, 2012, for further discussion).

### 3.1 Lexical quotative constructions

Nanti lexical quotative constructions are complement clause constructions in which the matrix verb *kant* ‘say’ takes reported speech complements that can either precede the verb, as in (2), or follow it, as in (3).<sup>6</sup> The matrix verb typically appears in the minimally inflected realis imperfective form, as in (2) and (3), but can also bear additional morphology, as in (4). All deictic elements in lexical quotative constructions reflect the indexical parameters of the reported situation, which is characteristic of direct speech reporting (cf. Munro, Ludwig, Sauerland, & Fleck, 2012).

- (2) *Ikanti tsame, tsame, nonamanakempi.*  
*i=kant-Ø-i*                      *tsame tsame*  
 3MS=say-IMPF-REAL.I    lets.go    lets.go  
*n-am-an-ak-e=mpi*  
 1S=IRR-bring-ABL-PERF-IRREAL.I=2O  
 ‘He said, “Let’s go, let’s go, I will bring you there.”’
- (3) *Aka pimporohake ikanti maika.*  
*aka pi=n-poroh-ak-e*                      *i=kant-Ø-i*                      *maika*  
 here 2S=IRREAL-clear.land-PERF-IRREAL.I    3MS=say-IMPF-REAL.I    now  
 ‘“Please clear land here,” he said now.’

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6. The orthography employed in the examples in this chapter is phonemic and largely self-explanatory; coda nasals assimilate to the place of articulation of the following voiceless stop, and the *i*-class realis suffix *-i* surfaces as *-e* following the perfective *-ak*. The first line of interlinearized examples shows the effects of morphophonological processes, including vowel hiatus resolution and epenthesis; the epenthetic consonant *t* and epenthetic vowel *a* are included in this line but are not segmented or glossed in other lines. The following morpheme abbreviations are used: 1S, 1st person subject; 1O, 1st person object; 2S, 2nd person subject; 2O, 2nd person object; 3MS, 3rd person masculine subject; 3MO, 3rd person masculine object; 3FS, 3rd person feminine subject; 3FO, 3rd person feminine object; 1P, 1st person possessor; 2P, 2nd person possessor; 3MP, 3rd person masculine possessor; 3FP, 3rd person feminine possessor; ABL, ablative; ADL, adlative; APPL:PURP, purposive applicative; CAUS, causative; CL, classifier; CNTE, counterfactual; COND, conditional; DEONT, deontic; DIRREAL.I, doubly irrealis, I-class verb; DSTR, distributive; FRUS, frustrative; HAB, habitual; IMPF, imperfective; IRREAL.A, irrealis, A-class verb; IRREAL.I, irrealis, I-class verb; LOC, locative; MAL.REP, malefactive repetitive; NEG.IRREAL, irrealis negation; NEG.REAL, realis negation; PASS.IRREAL, irrealis passive; PASS.REAL, realis passive; PERF, perfective; PL, verbal plural; REAL.A, realis, A-class verb; REAL.I, realis, I-class verb; REG, regressive; SUB, subordinator.

- (4) *Ikantahigakera hara tsinane apahiri.*  
*i=kant-hig-ak-i=ra*                      *hara*                      *tsinane*  
 3MS=say-PL-PERF-REAL.I=TEMP NEG.IRREAL woman  
*a=p-ah-i=ri*  
 1.PL.INCL=give-REG-REAL.I=3MO  
 ‘At that point they said, “We will not give him a woman.”’

### 3.2 Quotative evidentials

Nanti quotative evidentials are transparently grammaticalized from inflected forms of the verb *kant* ‘say’, as evident in Table 1. These evidentials retain in frozen form the person prefixes borne by the inflected verb from which they grammaticalized; this person information indexes the source of the quoted utterance, as in (5) and (6). Quotative evidentials are clausal proclitics that immediately precede the speech report with which they are associated, and unlike the verb of saying from which they grammaticalized, they cannot follow the speech report.

Table 1. Nanti quotatives and their lexical sources

quotative	gloss	source	gloss
<i>nóka</i>	QUOT.1	<i>nokánti</i>	‘I say’
<i>píka</i>	QUOT.2	<i>pikánti</i>	‘you say’
<i>íka</i>	QUOT.3m	<i>ikánti</i>	‘he says’
<i>óka</i>	QUOT.3f	<i>okánti</i>	‘she says’

- (5) *Oka ipokahi.*  
*oka*    *i=pok-ah-i*  
 QUOT.3f 3MS=come-REG-REAL.I  
 ‘She says, “He has returned.”’
- (6) *Ika tera nogote.*  
*ika*        *tera*        *no=ogo-e*  
 QUOT.3m NEG.REAL 1S=know-IRREAL.I  
 ‘He said, “I don’t know.”’

Since Nanti quotative evidentials so closely resemble the verbs from which they grammaticalized, it is important to specify the semantic and syntactic evidence for their grammaticalization, especially since one might wonder whether they are simply truncated fast speech forms of the corresponding inflected verbs.

Important evidence that Nanti quotatives are not truncated fast speech forms comes from the stress pattern of quotatives. Crucially, truncated fast speech forms in naturally-occurring Nanti discourse preserve the stress pattern of the

non-truncated forms, as if truncation occurred subsequent to stress assignment. Quotatives, however, exhibit the stress pattern of disyllabic words, and not the stress pattern we would expect of truncated disyllabic versions of the verbs from which they grammaticalized.

Nanti exhibits a stress system of default left-to-right iambs with final extrametricality (Crowhurst & Michael, 2005), as exhibited in the non-truncated form in (7a).<sup>7</sup> Truncated fast speech forms generally involve the deletion of unfooted syllables, as in (7), and as we can see, truncated forms retain the stresses of the corresponding full forms, and not the stress pattern that would be assigned to the truncated form on the basis of its surface form, given in (7).

- (7) a. (non.ká)(mo.sò)⟨te⟩  
       ‘I will visit’  
       b. nonkámosò  
       c. \*(non.ká)mo⟨so⟩

The truncated form of the first person inflected form of the verb, given in (8b), exhibits final stress, as expected from the full form given in (8a), while the quotative exhibits initial stress, as in (8c). Quotatives thus exhibit the stress pattern of free disyllabic forms, rather than that of a truncated disyllabic form of a longer word, indicating that they are now distinct from the verbs of saying from which they grammaticalized.

- (8) a. (no.kán)⟨tí⟩  
       ‘I say’ (full form)  
       b. noká  
       ‘I say’ (truncated fast speech form)  
       c. (nó)⟨ka⟩  
       QUOT.1

It should also be noted that in fast speech, quotatives are often completely destressed, as in (9), suggesting that they are on their way to becoming phonologically dependent on adjacent elements, evidence of their continuing grammaticalization.

- (9) *Ika tera.* [ikatéra]  
       ika           tera  
       QUOT.3m NEG.REAL  
       ‘He says “No.”’

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7. In the following examples, parentheses indicate foot boundaries, while angle brackets indicate extrametrical syllables.

Nanti quotatives also differ semantically and syntactically from the lexical items from which they grammaticalized, in that they have different scopal properties and are developing complementizer functions. It has been found that cross-linguistically, evidentials, unlike lexical verbs, typically cannot fall under the scope of negation (Aikhenvald, 2004; Willett, 1988). Helpfully, we find that in Nanti, verbs of saying can be in the scope of negation, as in (10), but that quotatives cannot, as in (11), suggesting that Nanti quotatives are evidentials, and are grammatically distinct from their original lexical sources. Note that negation can be within the scope of quotatives, as one would expect, as in (12). Nanti quotatives and the inflected forms of *kant* ‘say’ from which they grammaticalized have also developed subtly different pragmatic properties, with the inflected verbs now yielding implicatures of illocutionary commitment (Michael, 2012).

- (10) *Tera nonkante nohate.*  
*tera no=n-kant-e no=ha-e*  
 NEG.REAL 1S=IRREAL-say-IRREAL.I 1S=go-IRREAL.I  
 ‘I do not say “I will go.”’

- (11) \**Tera noka nohate.*  
*tera noka no=ha-e*  
 NEG.REAL QUOT.I 1S=go-IRREAL.I  
 Intended: ‘I did not say “I will go.”’

- (12) *Noka tera nohate.*  
*noka tera no=ha-e*  
 QUOT.I NEG.REAL 1S=go-IRREAL.I  
 ‘I say “I will not go.”’

Nanti quotatives are also developing complementizer functions, as evident in constructions where they intervene between reported speech complements and verbs of communication. Most verbs of communication which serve as matrix verbs in such constructions, such as *kenkitsa* ‘narrate’ in (13) and *kahem* ‘yell’ in (14), cannot take reported speech complements without a quotative, suggesting that the quotative licenses the reported speech complement. Note that it is ungrammatical to replace the quotative in its complementizer function with an inflected form of the lexical verb *kant* ‘say’.

- (13) *Nokenkitsatake noka nagonkehata Shampinkihari.*  
*no=kenkitsa-ak-i noka*  
 1S=tell.story-PERF-REAL.I QUOT.I  
*no=gonke-ha-Ø-a Shampinkihari*  
 1S=arrive-CL:water-IMPV-REAL.A place.name  
 ‘I narrated, “I arrived in Shampinkihari by river.”’

- (14) *Ikahemake ika tahena aka.*  
*i=kahem-ak-i ika tahena aka*  
 3ms=yell-PERF-REAL.I QUOT.3m come.IMP here  
 ‘He yelled, “Come here!”’

Interestingly, one also finds occasional naturally-occurring instances of *kant* ‘say’ taking quotative-marked reported speech complements, as in (15), suggesting that the reported speech complement licensing function may be generalizing to all verbs of communication.

- (15) *Tera nonkante noka nohate.*  
*tera no=n-kant-e noka no=ha-e*  
 NEG.REAL 1S=IRREAL-say-IRREAL.I QUOT.1 1S=go-IRREAL  
 ‘I did not say “I will go.”’

There is also evidence of an incipient extension of the complementizer function to verbs of cognition, such as *pintsa* ‘decide’, as in (16).

- (16) *Nopintsatake noka nontime aka.*  
*no=pintsa-ak-i noka no=n-tim-e aka*  
 1S=decide-PERF-REAL.I QUOT.1 1S=IRREAL-live-IRREAL.I here  
 ‘I decided to live here.’ (lit. ‘I decided ‘I will live here.’’)

Finally, it is important to note that Nanti quotatives have clearly grammaticalized recently. Nanti quotatives show relatively little sign of phonological erosion, even retaining in frozen form the person marking borne by the verbs from which they grammaticalized. And tellingly, closely-related Matsigenka dialects do not exhibit quotative evidentials (Mary Ruth Wise, p.c.; Lev Michael, field notes). Since Nanti and the Manu dialect of Matsigenka (the dialect most closely-related to Nanti), separated at most 200–300 years ago, the emergence of Nanti quotatives presumably post-dates that split.

#### 4. Reported speech in Nanti communicative practice

In this section I discuss important social considerations influencing Nantis’ use of reported speech constructions, and argue that these constructions play a crucial role in Nanti communicative practice by allowing speakers to talk about others in socially appropriate ways. In particular, I argue that maintaining respectful stances towards interlocutors is an important thread running through Nanti communicative practice, and that this centrally involves avoiding verbal speculation about the actions and internal states of others. This practical understanding of appropriate communicative activity manifests not only in refraining from imputing



actions and internal states to others on the basis of conjecture or speculation, but in explicitly indicating the means by which one has knowledge of others' actions and internal states. This 'evidential ethic' leads to a significant reliance on reported speech constructions, since verbal reports are one of the principal means by which Nantis learn about others' actions and internal states.

It is important to note that Nantis do not avoid speculation regarding others' actions and internal states in a mechanical or rule-like fashion; the communicative practices I describe here reflect a practical understanding of respectful social conduct in a social field structured by asymmetrical relationships and intimacy. In fact, as I will show below, the circumstances in which the typical evidential ethic breaks down give us insight into the social motivations behind the ethic.

#### 4.1 Talking about others' actions

I begin by describing the Nanti evidential ethic as it applies to talking about others' actions. Conversations about subsistence activities are a staple of Nanti verbal life, and are a rich source of everyday examples of Nantis' reliance on reported speech as a means for talking about others' actions. It is rare in such conversations for anyone to talk about the subsistence activities of others without explicitly indicating the basis of their knowledge about that person's activities, typically by resorting to reported speech, as in the brief conversation presented in (17).

This interaction took place between me and Maroha, one of my nearest neighbours, when I dropped by one afternoon to visit Bikotoro, her brother and one of my closest friends in the community. The only action that Maroha attributes to Bikotoro without recourse to reported speech is the one she witnessed (his departure), and she conveys his intention, and information about his destination, by reporting his speech as he left the household. Note that this is a very mundane conversational exchange, and that Maroha is not being cagey or evasive by Nanti communicative standards.

- (17) a. Lev: *Ainyo Bikotoro?*  
'Is Bikotoro (here)?'
- b. Maroha: *Ma, ikena* [gesturing downriver].  
'He isn't (here), he headed (down there).'
- c. Lev: *Tya ihati?*  
'Where did he go?'
- d. Maroha: *Ika kara nontsagate.*  
'He said, "I'm going fishing over there."'
- e. Lev: *Ari ihatake?*  
'So, he went off?'
- f. Maroha: *Hee, ika nontsagate.*  
'Yes, he said, "I will fish."'

A similar reliance on reported speech can be found in most discussions of already realized activities. In the following exchange, an elderly man in my residence group, Hoshi, and a young man from a neighbouring residence group, Saoro, briefly discuss the young man's father, Hosukaro, who is known as one of the best hunters in Montetoni. Saoro reports on his father's newsworthy killing of a tapir exclusively through reported speech, first of his father, and then of his mother, Hororinta, who was with his father when they chanced upon the tapir.

- (18) a. Hoshi: *Pokahi piri?*  
'Is your father back?'
- b. Saoro: *Hee, ika nonehanake kemari.*  
'Yes, he said, "I saw a tapir."'
- c. Saoro: *Impo nonehake ina, oka ikentakero kemari.*  
'Then I saw my mother, she said, "He shot the tapir."'<sup>8</sup>

When Nantis have neither seen a person engaging in the relevant subsistence activity, nor have a speech report to rely on, they generally respond to inquiries by saying so, as in the brief interaction given in (19). In this interaction, Migero, the chief of the settlement of Montetoni, asks a young woman, Marota, about the location of her husband. Marota responds by saying that her husband did not indicate where he was going, and she does not speculate about where he went. Such avoidance of speculation is typical in interactions of this type, as is the fact that her interlocutor does not prompt her to speculate.

- (19) a. Migero: *Yoga pikoriti?*  
'Your husband?'
- b. Marota: *Ma.*  
'He's not around.'
- c. Migero: *Tya ihati?*  
'Where did he go?'
- d. Marota: *Te inkante.*  
'He didn't say.'
- e. Migero: *Te inkante? Te pinehe?*  
'He didn't say? You didn't see (him)?'
- f. Marota: *Te nonehe. Te inkante. Nokamosotake kara.*  
'I didn't see. He didn't say. I was visiting over there.'

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8. It might seem surprising that Hosukaro himself did not tell his son that he had shot the tapir, but taboos surrounding hunting require that Nanti hunters, having made a kill, distance themselves from it, neither carrying it back nor speaking directly about it until at least a day has passed.

My fieldwork in the Nanti communities uncovered relatively little metadiscursive commentary on the (in)appropriateness of speculation regarding others' actions (other than critiques of *parikoti* speech, discussed below), but one interaction that I initiated served to reveal the strength of Nantis' (typically unexpressed) attitudes towards this issue. I noticed the rarity of overt speculation in Nanti discourse early during my fieldwork in the Nanti communities, and in seeking to better understand the phenomenon, I invited people to speculate, typically to little effect. However, a conversation with my friend Teherina that touched on the subsistence activities of his various relatives on that day yielded a rather different outcome. In the course of this conversation, Teherina remarked that his brother Berene and his family were not at home, leading me to ask where they were. He indicated that he did not see them off, nor had anyone else told him what they were doing, and I – still not fully attuned to appropriate communicative conduct under those circumstances – encouraged him to speculate on their destination by asking if Berene might be off doing one activity or another, cycling through a number of possible – indeed probable – candidate activities. Teherina responded to each query by repeating that he did not know what Berene was doing, that he had not seen the family leave, and that no one had told him where they had gone. Teherina displayed mounting impatience as I continued to inquire until he finally, and quite uncharacteristically, snapped at me, saying that he couldn't tell me what Berene and his family had gone off to do until they returned and told him, and that he would tell me as soon as he knew. It was belatedly clear to me that my efforts to encourage Teherina to speculate were not welcome. Significantly, I found Nanti individuals to be extremely patient in responding to my inquiries on a wide range of topics, and this is one of the small number of instances in which a Nanti individual lost patience with me.

It is worth noting, in light of this discussion of the Nanti evidential ethic, that Nanti individuals are typically also careful not to lead others to believing that their knowledge of some state of affairs is more direct than it in fact is, as exemplified in the brief interaction given in (20). In this conversation with Habihero, I brought up the fact that I had seen his classificatory brother Pasotoro fletching arrows with eagle feathers, leading to the following exchange.

- (20) a. Lev: *Chapi nonehake hanta Pasotoroku oga chakopi yoga ... yotugatakeru.*  
 'Yesterday I saw over there at Pasotoro's he was ... fletching an arrow.'
- b. Habihero: *Yotugataje, pinehake chapi Pasotoro yotugatake. Pinehahi?*  
 'Fletching, yesterday you saw Pasotoro fletching. Did you see (well)?'

- c. Lev: *Hehe. Onti ashi oga pakitsa ibanki.*  
‘Yes. They were eagle feathers.’
- d. Habihero: *Pakitsa oga, omarane kara* [gesturing].  
‘It was an eagle, big, here (gesture indicating wingspan).’
- e. *Ikentake, ikentahigake aka* [gesturing].  
‘He shot, they shot (it) here (gesture indicating where in the body the eagle was wounded).’
- f. *Chapi oga aka* [gesturing] *opoki.*  
‘It came here (gesturing towards the river) yesterday.’
- g. *Te nonehe inkente.*  
‘I did not see him shoot (it).’
- h. *Te nonehe inkente.*  
‘I did not see him shoot (it).’

It turned out that the eagle had been killed near the village the day prior, and that Habihero had arrived on the scene shortly after Pastoro had killed the eagle, and seen its body. Note that in this strip of talk, Habihero at no point asserted anything other than what he knew by virtue of seeing the eagle’s body, but nevertheless sought to clarify that he did not witness Pasotoro shooting the eagle.

#### 4.2 Talking about others’ internal states

Nantis rarely directly attribute internal states to others, relying instead on reports of actions which index internal states, or on speech reports by which individuals reveal their internal states to others. This phenomenon is nicely illustrated by the interaction in (21), in which I asked Esekera whether his brother, who had recently moved from the adjacent Timpia River basin, intended to live in Montetoni or in the smaller upriver settlement of Pirihasanteni. In his response, Esekera conveys his brother’s intentions and desires but at no time directly attributes them to his brother as internal states. His brother’s intentions are indexed by verbal commitments to particular courses of action, and his desires are revealed through reported speech in which he explicitly expresses his own desires.

- (21) a. Esekera: *Ikanti ika aka noka nokogantaka aka maika.*  
‘He (i.e. Esekera’s brother) says, “Here (i.e. in Pirihasanteni) I say is where I want (to live) now.”’
- b. *Nokanti yonta ainyo peresetente.*  
‘I say, there (in Montetoni) there is a leader.’<sup>9</sup>

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9. Esekera’s response here is to be understood as an argument in favour of living in Montetoni, rather than in Pirihasanteni.

- c. *Ika, ika, hara notimi aka.*  
'He says, he says, I will not live there.'
- d. *Ika nokantatsi Pirihasanteni.*  
'He says, 'I will remain in Pirihasanteni.'
- e. *Ari ikanti.*  
'Indeed he says (that).'
- f. *Hee, ari ikanti nontime Pirihasanteni.*  
'Yes, indeed he says, "I will live in Pirihasanteni."'
- g. *Ari maika nontimake Pirihasanteni.*  
"Indeed, now I will live in Pirihasanteni."'

One could easily imagine that in a speech community in which direct reference to internal states is more common, the desires and competing beliefs about the preferred courses of action would have been described as 'wanting', 'preferring', or 'believing', but as is typical of Nanti communicative interactions, these internal states were indexed by reported speech. Note that means do exist in Nanti for expressing internal states, principally the verbs *kog* 'want', *pintsa* 'decide', and, *sure* 'think, believe'. An example of the first person use of *sure* 'think, believe' is given in (22).

- (22) a. Tekori: *Pere ikanti tyatika kutagiteri nonkamosote Kirigeti.*  
'Pere said, "Someday soon I will visit Kirigeti."'
- b. *Impo nokantake nonkamosote, nosuretapahi nohate nonkamosote.*  
'Then I said, "I'll visit (too)," I had the idea that I would go and visit.'
- c. *Nosuretapahi ariorika nagabehake nonkamosote.*  
'I had the idea that perhaps I could visit.'

#### 4.3 Conflict, intimacy, and the evidential ethic

Communicative practices, like practices more generally, are not the outcome of rigid adherence to rules, but rather emerge from the embodied, practical sense of how the social-communicative game is played. In addition to the regularities described above, then, communicative practices also manifest improvised and strategic actions in the social field, requiring that an adequate description of communicative practices encompass an account of ways in which speakers strategically subvert the norms that typically guide them. Understanding how, and under what circumstances, Nantis deviate from the normative picture sketched above is crucial for developing an adequate analysis of the communicative practices described here.

Two kinds of socio-interactional configurations account for most of the cases I have witnessed in which the manner in which Nantis speak about others' actions and internal states diverges from the account presented thus far. The first such configuration involves contentious or adversarial interactions, in which one participant is considerably more socially powerful than the other.

An example of this type of interaction involved Migeró, the leader of Montetoni, and Ariponso, a visitor from another community who had visited briefly with the goal of obtaining valuable metal trade goods and then leaving. In this interaction, Migeró was very critical of Ariponso's behaviour, since it contravened a central political philosophy that Migeró had developed and explicitly articulated as a leader, namely, that the material benefits of living in Montetoni (e.g. metal trade goods) are intrinsically tied to a moral commitment to the community as a joint social project. In the strip of interaction in (23), Migeró not only directly refers to Ariponso's thoughts (*pisuretakaró* 'you thought it'), but he also actually overtly attributes to Ariponso thoughts that the latter never revealed as such, a striking divergence from typical Nanti communicative practice.

- (23) a. Migeró: *Chichata birompatyo pisuretakaró chichata pimpokake.*  
'Of your own will, be it on your head, you thought by yourself to come (here).'
- b. *Biro nonehake pipokake aka.*  
'I see that you have come here.'
- c. *Oka pisuretakaró, pisuretaka aka pashikarontsi, hacha, kotsiro.*  
'You thought of it, you thought of the blankets, axes, and knives here.'
- d. *Iro nokantake.*  
'That's what I say.'

A social and interactional configuration associated with a quite different relaxing of the evidential ethic involves reporting on mundane activities (typically subsistence activities) of very close social intimates, especially spouses, and to a lesser degree, parents and children living in the same household. In the vast majority of cases in which individuals in these types of intimate relationships report on the actions of their spouses, parents or children, the typical evidential ethic obtains, but in a minority of cases, speakers employ the inferential evidential clitic =*ka*.<sup>10</sup> This is the case in (24), where a man asks his daughter about his wife's whereabouts.

10. Interestingly, I found that in many cases when I subsequently probed for the evidential basis of the assertion about the other person's activities, the speaker was actually in a position to report speech that would have supported their claim.

- (24) a. Hoshi: *Tya ohatake piniro?*  
 ‘Where did your mother go?’  
 b. Marota: *Ohatakeka onkigera.*  
 ‘She presumably went to dig (i.e. harvest manioc).’

The two types of interactional configurations are both ones in which we might expect speakers to be more willing to infringe on another person’s autonomy by relaxing their adherence to the evidential ethic – in one case because it involves socially more powerful individuals exerting social power in the context of interpersonal conflict, and in the other because social intimates can be understood as having a greater right to speak for each other than non-intimates do. In slightly different terms, both of these interactional configurations are ones in which normal considerations regarding negative face threats fail to hold. These observations suggest that the evidential ethic represents, in significant measure, a communicative stance that seeks to respect others’ autonomy and negative face.

Evidence in favour of this conclusion can be drawn from contexts in which the use of reported speech constructions is strikingly high in comparison to normal use of these resources. These include interactions in which an individual is talking about the actions of a high-status third party in their presence; and ones in which an individual is reporting on an event or state of affairs that is significantly removed from their own recognized sphere of expertise or responsibility, such as women repeating men’s hunting stories. In such cases, it is common for almost every clause to bear a quotative; in contrast, in typical speech reports it is common for several sentences to pass between explicit uses of the quotative. The result, in the cases we are considering, is an extremely elaborated attribution of actions, involvement, or knowledge to a third party that makes it clear that the reported state of affairs or knowledge pertains to the *territory of information* (Kamio, 1994) of the quoted party. Nantis’ intensified use of quotatives in this context thus appears reminiscent of politeness or respect strategies which are based on pragmatic metaphors of social distance (Silverstein, 2003).

We now consider an example of this type in which Bikotoro reports some recently-acquired information from Pebero, a Nanti visitor to Montetoni, about Pebero’s brother, whom none of the Montetoni Nantis had seen since they migrated to the Camisea River basin in the mid-1980s. The information thus lies solidly in Pebero’s *territory of information*, and we see that Bikotoro’s use of quotatives is very dense as he relates this information.

- (25) a. Lev: *Ainyo maika?*  
 ‘Is he there now?’  
 b. Bikotoro: *Chapi noke ikanti ainyo irirenti.*  
 ‘Yesterday I heard he said, “His brother is (there).”’

- c. *Ika ainyo.*  
‘He said, “He is (there).”’
- d. *Hee, chapi ikanti ainyo.*  
‘Yes, he said, “He is (there).”’
- e. *Ikanti irirenti inehaati.*  
‘He said, “He went to see his brother.”’
- f. Lev: *Arisano?*  
‘Really?’
- g. Bikotoro: *Ika ainyo.*  
‘He said, “he is (there).”’
- h. Lev: *Ihatuti?*  
‘He went and returned?’
- i. Bikotoro: *Ika nohatuti, karankika karanki.*  
‘He said, “I went and returned, a while ago.”’
- j. *Ika nohati.*  
‘He said, “I went.”’
- k. *Ika chapi nonehage ainyo aka.*  
‘He said, “Yesterday I went to see, and he is there.”’
- l. *Ika ainyo.*  
‘He said, “He is (there).”’
- m. *Hee, chapi, irota ikanti ainyo aka.*  
‘Yes, yesterday, as I was saying, he said, “He is there.”’

Although most of the communicative practices I have described here do not rise to the level of explicitly formulated social principles or ideologies regarding social and communicative conduct, it is worth noting that there is one form of explicit meta-discourse in the Nanti communities regarding talk that is deemed to contravene the principles of proper communicative conduct described above; that is, talk that is characterized as *parikoti*.<sup>11</sup> Construing utterances as *parikoti* – what we might call ‘loose talk’ – is to assert that they rest on evidentially unsourced attributions of actions, speech, or internal states to others, thereby constituting a breakdown of proper relations of respect between individuals. Significantly, speaking *parikoti* is quite distinct from lying (*tsoheg* ‘lie’), and while a speaker may also

11. The adverb *parikoti* indicates that the state of affairs that it modifies is outside of the typical, expected, or desired space for that state of affairs. Thus, if a piece of manioc falls outside of a pot, as manioc roots are being chunked for cooking, instead of inside the pot, it is said to have fallen *parikoti*. Likewise, someone who has gone somewhere, or lives somewhere, completely outside of the realm of experience of their interlocutors can appropriately speak of going or living *parikoti*.



criticize *parikoti* speech as factually inaccurate, inaccuracy is not the defining feature of *parikoti* speech.

The strip of talk in (26) includes an evaluation of talk as *parikoti*. This strip is drawn from a longer conversation on a two-way communications radio between Migero and the leader of another community about the events surrounding a visit by a young Nanti man from the community of Marankehari, Erobakin, to the community of Migero's interlocutor. Erobakin's presence in the latter community led to some social discord, which led the leader of that community to contact the leader of Marankehari by radio and criticize him for allowing Erobakin to visit his community. The leader of Marankehari disavowed knowledge of Erobakin's visit and speculated that Migero must have approved the visit, since Erobakin's route would have taken him by Montetoni, where Migero lives. In defending himself, Migero both denies that he gave Erobakin permission and criticizes the residents of Marankehari for their evidentially unsources speculation, i.e. their *parikoti* talk.

- (26) a. Migero: *Maika nonihake; pinkemake nonihake.*  
'Now I am going to speak; please listen to what I say.'
- b. *Pinkamantahirira kara pinkante maika ikantake te maika  
nompahigakerime peremisa.*  
'Please tell them there, say now, he (i.e. Migero) says, I did not give him permission (to visit your community).'
- c. *Chichata ihatake kara, ihatashitake biroku.*  
'He (i.e. Erobakin) went there of his own will, he went to your place (i.e. community) of his own volition.'
- d. *Yoga maika Marankehariku ikanti ... yogabisahigakeri.*  
'Those (people) in Marankehari say ... they (i.e. the residents of Montetoni) let him (i.e. Erobakin) go by (i.e. failed to stop him).'
- e. *Hame yoka ikanti ... onti hanta parikoti inihake.*  
'They should not say (that) ... they are speaking parikoti there (i.e. in Marankehari).'

Assessment of talk as *parikoti* is, in my experience, most often made by men about the speech of women, but not exclusively so. Nevertheless, there is an overwhelming tendency for criticism of speech as *parikoti* to flow in the direction of social asymmetries: from men to women, from more socially prominent men to less socially prominent men, and from mature adults to younger adults. One could say, then, that *parikoti* talk is speech that contravenes the evidential ethic of Nanti discourse, but is not justified either by intimacy or appropriate social asymmetry, as discussed above.

In this section I have argued that Nanti communicative habitus embodies a practical understanding that respectful communicative conduct towards others is grounded in not infringing on others' autonomy, which crucially relies on not imputing actions or internal states to them without an explicit evidential basis. This understanding of respectful communicative conduct underlies the *evidential ethic* characteristic of Nanti communicative practice, and is one of the major factors responsible for the high frequency of reported speech in Nanti discourse.

### 5. A practice-based account of the grammaticalization of Nanti quotatives and reportives

I now turn to an account relating the aspects of the Nanti communicative habitus described in the previous section to the grammaticalization of Nanti quotative evidentials. Before doing so, however, it is important to note that, in the general case, it is not plausible to equate the social and cultural factors that influence the present-day distribution and frequency of grammatical morphemes in a language with those that governed the distribution of the elements from which those morphemes grammaticalized. In other words, it is not plausible to simply project modern communicative habitus into the past. It seems unlikely, for example, that the social and cultural factors that govern the use of T/V deference indexicals in European languages in the early 21st century are the same as those that influenced their development between the 12th and 14th centuries (Brown & Gilman, 1960, p. 255). In this light, it is crucial for the account that I develop in this section to recognize that Nanti quotative evidentials appear to have grammaticalized in Nanti from inflected verbs quite recently, as I argued in Section 3. The recent grammaticalization of Nanti quotative evidentials means that it is likely that the social and cultural factors responsible for the high frequency of reported speech constructions in present-day Nanti discourse do not differ greatly from those responsible for their high frequency in the initial stages of their grammaticalization.

If this assertion is correct, the following culture-driven grammaticalization account emerges for the development of quotative evidentials in Nanti. We first assume that prior to the split between the ancestral groups that became the modern Manu Matsigenkas and the Nantis, the *evidential ethic* that we find in modern Nanti society was not a particularly salient aspect of communicative habitus in that ancestral group. Indirect evidence that this first assumption is correct comes from the extensive body of ethnographic research on modern Matsigenka society (Baer, 1984; Johnson, 2003). In the first place, there are no mentions in the Matsigenka ethnographic literature of anything resembling the *evidential ethic* that I describe for modern Nanti society. Secondly, speculation about others' internal states (e.g.

attributing desire and envy to others) appears to be central to witchcraft accusations in Matsigenka society (Izquierdo & Johnson, 2007).<sup>12, 13</sup> Likewise, in my personal experience, I have found Matsigenkas perfectly willing to talk about others' actions and internal states in a manner strikingly different from that of the Nantis I know.<sup>14, 15</sup>

We then assume that at some point following the split between the ancestral groups, which subsequently became the Manu Matsigenka and the Nantis, Nanti communicative habitus changed such that Nanti communicative practices came to restrict the respectful ways of talking about the actions and internal states of others to those involving reporting their speech or witnessed actions, as described in Section 4. This change in Nanti communicative habitus resulted in a significant increase in frequency of reported speech constructions, which involved inflected forms of the verb *kant* 'say' (although with a slight shift in the pragmatics of the construction). This increase in frequency then led to the grammaticalization of the Nanti verbs of saying into the set of quotative evidentials described in Section 3, which are still transparently related to the verbs from which they grammaticalized.

It must be acknowledged that this account does not address the *social actuation* question, namely, *why* did Nanti attitudes about respectful communicative conduct change? I doubt that it will ever be possible to answer this question with certainty, but I suggest that the practical Nanti concern with respectful communicative conduct forms a piece with broader, explicitly articulated social ideologies

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12. Izquierdo & Johnson (2007) argue that there has been a sharp rise in witchcraft accusations in recent decades as a result of social strife and cultural changes resulting from colonization and modernization in most Matsigenka areas. This may very well be the case, but it should be noted that belief in witchcraft is also documented among Matsigenkas in the 19th and early 20th century (e.g. Eberhardt, 1910; Ferrero, 1866, pp. 356–360), and among neighbouring Kampan peoples (Santos-Granero, 2004), suggesting that belief in witchcraft is not a modern innovation among the Matsigenkas.

13. It is worth noting in this regard that Nantis did not have any beliefs regarding witchcraft prior to their encounters with Matsigenkas in the early 1990s, and I have been witness to a number of interactions in which Nantis reacted to Matsigenka ideas about witchcraft with incredulity and mirth, apparently finding the notion of witchcraft difficult to believe.

14. Although I have not carried out intensive ethnographic work in Matsigenka communities, I have made numerous visits to several of the Matsigenka communities nearest to the Nanti communities between 1993 and 2010, and also worked closely with several Matsigenka linguistic consultants over a three-month period in 2010.

15. It is also worth noting that Johnson (2003, pp. 91, 101, 226) emphasizes the importance of autonomy and individualism in Matsigenka society (which also holds for Nanti society), which likely reflects the shared historical origin and basis for the Nanti communicative practices with which we are concerned here.

that are highly critical of social discord, conflict, and violence. It is evident from public discourses surrounding manioc beer feasts, for example, that Nantis are often anxious about the possibility of ill will or violence emerging in those social settings, and it is not unusual for socially prominent individuals to intercede in escalating social interactions to ameliorate any conflict. Likewise, the term *matsigenka*, which at one level can be simply glossed as ‘person’ (in both Nanti and Matsigenka), can also be understood in common Nanti usage as ‘moral person’, and individuals who are guilty of displays of anger and rare instances of physical violence are typically chastised as not behaving like a *matsigenka*. Even more radically, murderers are talked about by Nantis as considering other people to be game animals, with murderers being identified with cannibals.<sup>16</sup> In short, there are explicit discourses that strongly critique anger, disputation, and violence in the Nanti communities, which clearly reflect a concern with, and active preventative monitoring of, these social ills. If I am correct in identifying the Nanti concern with respectful communicative conduct as part of a wider set of practices aimed at maintaining peaceful social relations, it is plausible that the changes in Nanti communicative practice we are concerned with here emerged as part of a broader shift in Nanti society that not only rejects violence but also works to head off its emotional and interactional antecedents.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The culture-driven grammaticalization account for the development of Nanti quotative evidentials presented in this chapter relates the emergence of an evidential category to norms of respectful communicative conduct embodied in Nanti communicative habitus. In particular, I have argued that Nantis demonstrate respect for others by avoiding speculation about others’ actions and their internal states. The result is an *evidential ethic* that restricts discussions of others’ actions to those that the speaker has witnessed themselves, or via reported speech, actions which were reported to them by witnesses. Likewise Nantis’ discussion of others’ internal states are largely restricted to quoting speech that reports on those internal states – generally reports by those experiencing those states – or reporting on actions that index those states.

These observations suggest that evidentials, and quotative evidentials in particular, are likely to arise in societies in which communicative practices are

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16. The most recent incident of which I am aware, in which one Nanti murdered another, dates to the 1960s (Michael, 2008, pp. 23–24).

informed by attitudes towards respectful communicative conduct similar to those found in Nanti society. Data relevant for evaluating this claim – and especially, the relevant information about communicative practices in particular societies – is scarce, but there are cases of correlations between communicative practice and grammatical structure similar to the Nanti case to be found in the literature.

Perhaps the most striking parallel to Nanti communicative practices and evidentials is de Reuse's (2003, pp. 95–96) discussion of evidentials in Western Apache. De Reuse suggests that the high frequency grammaticalized, but non-obligatory, evidentials in Western Apache stem from “[...] Athabaskan attitudes about the autonomy of the person [...] resulting in a reluctance to speak for another person, or to impute feelings to another person.” Like Nanti, Western Apache exhibits a quotative grammaticalized from an inflected verb of speaking.

We find an Amazonian parallel to Nanti in Basso's (1995, pp. 295–296) discussion of the remarkably high frequency of reported speech in Kalapalo (Carib, Brazil) narratives, which she attributes to the fact that “in all Kalapalo stories [...] the emotions and motives of the speakers [...] are realized through their quoted speech, rather than through labels or a narrator's more direct description of feelings and motives.” Likewise Basso remarks that “[a] character's subjective version of reality emerges from an interactive, interpersonal field of interpretation, planning, and formulation of goals [...] Such interpretations are constituted as speech-centred events [...] rather than, for example, ‘thought’ [...]” As in Nanti interaction, then, Kalapalo narrators do not generally attribute internal states to others, and although Basso does not report a grammaticalized quotative *per se* for the language, she does describe a large set of evidential, epistemic modal, and intersubjective markers (Basso, 2008), supporting the proposed relationship between communicative practices that avoid reference to others' internal states and the grammaticalization of evidentials.

These cases in the Americas suggest that it may be fruitful to cast a broader net that examines the relationship between evidentiality and communicative practices informed by opacity of mind *doctrines* (Robbins & Rumsey, 2008). Described for a number of societies in New Guinea and Oceania, opacity of mind doctrines are explicit articulations that others' internal states are, to varying degrees, unknowable. Stasch's (2011) description of Korowai (Trans-New Guinea, Irian Jaya) understanding of opacity of mind, for example, as a “moral emphasis on respecting others' mental autonomy” is reminiscent of my characterization of Nanti communicative practice. Schieffelin's (2008) description of Kaluli (Trans-New Guinea, Papua New Guinea) communicative practices indicates that similar principles are at play in Kaluli society, and we also find that Kaluli exhibits an elaborate evidential system (Schieffelin, 1996).

A handful of comparative cases exemplifying an association between grammaticalized evidentials and communicative practices informed by a dispreference for attributing internal states to others is merely suggestive, of course. Nevertheless, they are consistent with the CDG account of Nanti quotatives and indicate a possibly fruitful direction for future comparative research.

It is important to point out, in this light, that there is no reason to believe that all evidentials, or even all evidential systems, arise for the same reasons. Aikhenvald (2004, p. 358) and Fortescue (2003, p. 301), for example, suggest that the emergence of evidentials may be related to culture-specific understandings about the assignment of responsibility for communicative activity or events in the world. In a similar vein, I have argued that one of the interactional uses of evidentials in Nanti society, especially inferentials, is to distance speakers from mishaps and other unfortunate states of affairs (Michael, 2008, pp. 115–156).

The formulation of CDG articulated in this chapter builds on the theoretical continuity between practice theory and grammaticalization theory, which together provide a common framework for discussing the conventionalization of social practices and communicative ones. From this perspective, grammaticalization constitutes a particular extreme of conventionalization and structuration, but one that is embedded in broader social practices by virtue of the mediating role of communicative practices. This formulation suggests that there is much to be gained by the integrated study of grammar, communicative interaction, and social action, and not least, a better understanding of the cultural and social basis of linguistic form.

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