

At the periphery of the verbal category: early-stage grammaticalization of quotative verbs

Katya Aplonova¹, Tatyana Nikitina¹, Izabela Jordanoska¹, Guillaume Guitang²,
Bethany Lycan³, Lacina Silué⁴, Olga Kuznetsova⁵, Abbie Hantgan-Sonko⁶

¹LACITO, CNRS; ²LADISCO; ³University of New Mexico; ⁴INALCO, ⁵[ILS RAS](#),

⁶Language Coservancy Group,

Outline

1. Our data
2. Definition of quotative verbs
3. Synchronic peripheral properties of quotative verbs
4. Diachronic peripheral properties of quotative verbs
5. Discussion: quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent
6. Conclusion

Outline

- Our data
- Definition of quotative verbs
- Peripheral properties of quotative verbs
- Discussion: quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent
- Conclusion

Discourse Reporting Dataset

- Corpora of traditional folk stories, annotated in the same way for a number of discourse phenomena using ELAN-CorpA software and tools (Chanard 2015; Nikitina et al. 2019)



© Abbie Hantgan-Sonko, 2019



© Ekaterina Aplonova, 2019

Our dataset for today's talk: languages that have different quotative indexes

Language	Family/Group	Where it is spoken
Bashkir	Turkic	Russia
Chuvash	Turkic	Russia
Dyula	Mande	Côte d'Ivoire
Gizey	Chadic	Cameroon
Macedonian	Slavic	Macedonia
Pahka'anil	Uto-Aztecan	USA
Wan	Mande	Côte d'Ivoire

Outline

1. Our data
2. Definition of quotative verbs
3. Peripheral properties of quotative verbs
4. Discussion: quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent
5. Conclusion

Quotative verbs

Chuvash (Turkic)

(1) *paṭṣa kal-atī: atia,*
tsar speak-PRS.3SG come.on

t-et ěṣkĕ töv-as t-et
say-PRS.3SG feast do-PC.FUT say-PRS.3SG
'The tsar says: Let us make a feast.'

Wan (Mande)

(2) *è gé blá glĕ pīlōŋ é èŋ dóō*
3SG. SUBJ say sheep male two DEF to QUOT

bāā mī zō yĕ
LOG+POSS person come:PST here
'He says to the two rams: Our person came here.'

- Verbs that introduce quotation
- Formally belong to verb part of speech but serve a grammatical rather than lexical function (Güldemann 2008: 13)
- Can be combined with other means of introducing the quote

Quotative verbs

Chuvash (Turkic)

- (1) *paṭṣa* *kal-ati:* *atĩa,*
tsar speak-PRS.3SG come.on

t-et *ëčkë* *töv-as* *t-et*
say-PRS.3SG feast do-PC.FUT say-PRS.3SG
'The tsar says: Let us make a feast.'

Wan (Mande)

- (2) *è* *gé* *blá* *glē* *pīlōŋ* *é* *èŋ* *dóō*
3SG. SUBJ say sheep male two DEF to QUOT

bāā *mī* *zō* *yè*
LOG+POSS person come:PST here
'He says to the two rams: Our person came here.'

- Verbs that introduce quotation
- Formally belong to verb part of speech but serve a grammatical rather than lexical function (Güldemann 2008: 13)
- Can be combined with **other means of introducing the quote**

Quotative verbs are peripheral

- Peripheral elements are supposed to have one deviant characteristic from a bigger class (Moravcsik 2011);
- This is the case in some languages from our dataset, where quotative verbs :
 - have restricted TAM paradigm;
 - are loosing their finite properties;
 - are loosing their lexical meaning.
- In some languages quotatives do not show any peripheral properties – they belong either to a verb class or to a complementizer class, however diachronic evidence suggests that initial they were peripheral too.

Outline

1. Our data
2. Definition of quotative verbs
3. Peripheral properties of quotative verbs
4. Discussion: quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent
5. Conclusion

Reduced TAM paradigm in Wan (Mande)

- The verb *gé* ‘say’ does not co-occur with negation, aspectual markers and does not have a special past tense form (all other verbs have past tense form marked with the midtone);
- In all contexts where the verb *gé* ‘say’ cannot be used (because of its reduced combinatorial potential), the transitive verb *pé* ‘tell’ appears instead;
- It co-occurs with a quotative marker (*doo*)

Reduced TAM paradigm in Wan (Mande)

6é àṅ gé dóó̄ klé bú má
then 3PL say QUOT stone powder it.is

‘And they say it was stone powder.’

6é àṅ gé gà à wò yā
then 3PL say go 3SG do with

‘And they say: Go do it!’

6aā̄ pē̄ dóó̄ lā̄ glò-ṅ kōlē̄ gē̄ ē̄
LOG+3SG tell:PAST QUOT 2SG marry-FUT man here Q

‘I said: Can you marry a man like that?’

Reduced TAM paradigm in Dyula (Mande)

- In Dyula, there are two omonimous markers with different syntactic properties:
first *kó* is a defective say verb, second *kó* is a clause linking marker

á kó kó dómíní ká já

3SG say QUOT food.DEF PERF much

‘He said that the food is much’

Reduced TAM paradigm in Dyula (Mande)

- *ko* is considered to be a defective verb, because it does not co-occur with negation and aspectual markers;
- In all contexts where the verb *ko* cannot be used, the transitive verb *fó* ‘say’ appears instead;

à kà à *fó* kó ò ká gbrí àlé mǎ
3SG PERF 3SG say QUOT 3SG PERF be_heavy LOG POST
'He said this is beyond his capacity [lit. that is heavy for him]'

Loosing of the finite properties in Macedonian (Slavic)

- In Macedonian, *reče*, a 3 singular perfective of a verb ‘say’, co-occurs with other finite forms of speech verbs

Sretnuva =go i mu= **kažuva**
meet.IPFV.PRS.3SG =3SG.ACC and 3SG.M.DAT= tell.IPFV.PRS.3SG

reče čovek ja kje= ti= ja=
say.PFV.3SG person 1SG FUT= 2SG.DAT= 3SG.F.ACC=

zema-m duša-ta.
take.PFV-PRS.1SG soul-DEF.F

‘He meets him and tells him, he said: ‘Human, I will take your soul.’

Loosing of the finite properties in Macedonian (Slavic)

i sea dvajca-va brakja **vika**ednio brgo
and now two-DEF.PX brother.PL say.IPFV.PRS.3SG one-DEF.SG.M brother.VOC

bate da vidi-š **reče** kolku par-i**reče**
quickly SBJ see-PRS.2SG. say.PFV.3SG how.much money-PL say.PFV.3SG

na-sra-lo magare-to
PFV-shit-AOR.PTCP.M donkey DEF.SG.N

And now the two brothers, one says: “Brother! Come quickly,” he said, “to see how much money,” he said, “the donkey shat.”

Loosing of lexical meaning in Bashkir

- In Bashkir, the most conventionalised way to introduce a quote is a converb of a semi-grammaticalized verb *ti-*, originally a verb ‘say’.

Rifat [häjbät bešer-ä-m] ti-p äjt-te.

Rifat good cook-IPFV-1SG say-CV tell-PST

‘Rifat_i said that he_i cooks well’. (Knyazev 2017:88)

- This verbal structure (converb + finite verb) is very common in Turkic languages (Shlouinsky 2021: 398) and occurs not only in reported speech construction:

Vasja qattir-ip al-di

Vasja laugh-CVB take-PST

‘Vasja laughed for a while’. (ibid. 415)

Loosing of lexical meaning in Bashkir

- In reported speech constructions, the delexicalization pattern is reversed: the converb is delexicalized, and the second verb carries the lexical meaning

(4a) *niŋ ja ʔəʃəq buŋ ɔl-hən ti-p aŋla-yan*
 1SG.DAT food be-POI-JUSS say-CVB think-PC.PST

“‘Let (the Hare) become a food for me” – (the Fox) thought’.

(4b) *ni kajɣ-əŋ bar ti-p hora-yan*
 whatgrief-P.2SG COP say-CVB ask-PC.PST

‘What is your grief?’ – (the bear) asked’.

(4c) *nisek-tär kil-är-gä kārāk ine bit ti-p aŋla-t-qan*

how-PL come-POT-DAT be.necessarybe.PST indeed say-CVB

understand-CAUS-PC.PST

Gizey (Chadic)

díjt dog	dí tell.PFV	ḡòrèjt hyena	là ní? QUOT2 DEM	ʔáá INTERJ	ḡòrèjó hyena	gùr children
máj our	lākṇ topic mkr	nèj 1plincl	dèj aux	dàf cook.ipfv	kúdf=zīj prep=3pl	dèw one
dèw-è? one-ppv						

‘Dog told Hyena: “INTERJ, Hyena, these children of ours, we could cook (and eat) them one after the other”’

- /a is a complementizer, *dí* is a lexical verb
- Grammaticalization hypothesis based on evidence from neighbouring languages is that quotative marker (a)la is derived from ʔá (purpose marking) + verb lāw ‘to speak’
- In neighbouring languages, where a verb la still exists, quotative marker has a different

Pahka'anil (Uto-Aztecan)

- In Pahka'anil, *pinggut* ('say' inflected with the durative aspect) is the source for =gut, a quotative clitic (Voegelin 1935: 171);
- Synchronically they can co-occur in the same sentence; *pinggut* is a lexical verb and it does not have any restrictions in its combinatorial potential

pic **pingg-üt** hac taawüg-üü=**güt** tüc=**küt**.

then say-DUR NEG see-IMP=QUOT bad=QUOT

Then he says, "Do not look," he says, "it is bad," he says. (Marean 2015)

Verbal origin of quotative impedes segmental similarity?

- In our dataset we observe that in the majority of languages resist to have segmentally similar quotative that co-occur in the same sentence;
- The only exception is Dyula, where both quotative are homonymous

á kó kó dómíní ká fá

3SG say QUOT food.DEF PERF much

‘He said that the food is much’

- It might have a diachronic explanation, as in all other languages we know that the sources of the quotative is a say verb, but in Dyula the source is unknown

Outline

1. Our data
2. Definition of quotative verbs
3. Peripheral properties of quotative verbs
4. Discussion: quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent
5. Conclusion

Quotative verbs are peripheral but frequent

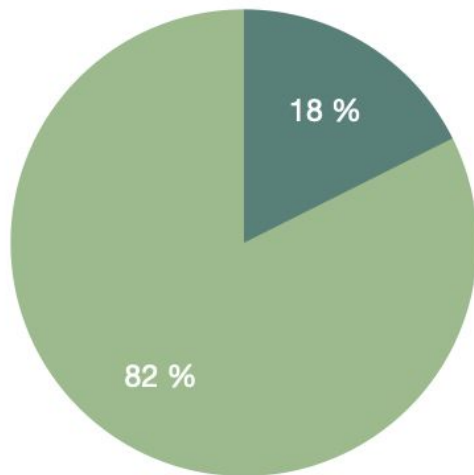
- A closer look at the stages of the grammaticalization of quotative verbs shows that the verbs involved in this change show exceptional morphosyntactic properties;
- In some languages, these properties distinguish them synchronically from other verbs in the same language and put them at the periphery of the “verb” category;
- In other languages, we have a diachronic evidence about the verbal sources of quotative markers that presupposes a peripheral state during the grammaticalization;
- It is remarkable that the exceptional behaviour is associated in this case not with peripheral members of a category (as suggested, for example, in [Uspensky & Zhivov \(1977\)](#); [Joseph \(1997\)](#)), but with highly frequent verbs, which can be assumed to belong to the category’s core.

Speech introducing verbs vs. other verbs in some languages from our dataset

Wan

Total number of verbs: 3009

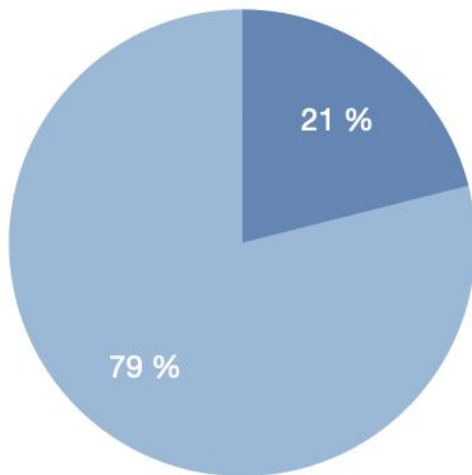
● speech verbs ● other verbs



Chuvash

Total number of verbs: 5520

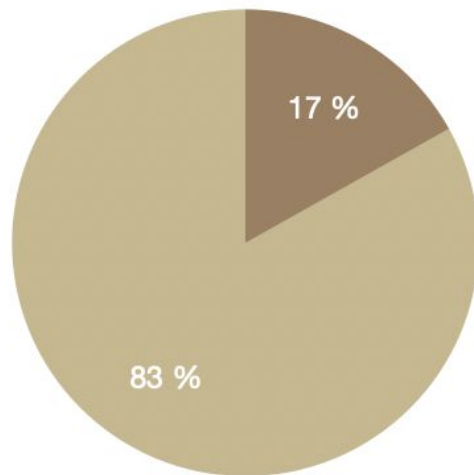
● speech verbs ● other verbs



Bashkir

Total number of verbs: 3909

● speech verbs ● other verbs



Conclusion

- According to Diessel (2007), there are two opposite tendencies in diachronic change
 - Frequent elements become shorter and grammaticalised (Zipf's law)
 - Frequent elements resist change (e.g. English irregular verbs)
- Despite their peripheral properties, quotative verbs are examples of the first, more widely attested tendency;
- “Irregular grammatical instance has a critical impact on approaching more “central” phenomena” (Boas & Ziem 2018: 15)

Thank you for your attention!

References

(Boas & Ziem 2018: 15)

Chanard 2019

Diessel (2007)

Joseph (1997)

(Knyazev 2017:88)

(Marean 2015)

(Moravcsik 2011)

Nikitina et al.

Uspensky & Zhivov (1977);

(Voegelin 1935: 171)