

Abstract

This dissertation explores the semantics and pragmatics of evidentiality through a detailed study of three evidential markers in Cuzco Quechua (spoken in Cuzco, Peru), the Direct *-mi*, the Conjectural *-chá* and the Reportative *-si*. I adopt a narrow definition of evidentiality as the linguistic encoding of the speaker's grounds for making a speech act, which in the case of assertions corresponds with his or her source of information. The meaning of each of the three Cuzco Quechua evidentials, as well as their absence, is described based on data collected by the author and from published sources.

One of the central cross-linguistic questions in the study of evidentiality is how it is related to epistemic modality. I argue that the two concepts are distinct, but overlapping categories. I show that the evidential enclitics in Cuzco Quechua differ from typical epistemic modals in that they do not contribute to the main proposition expressed, can never occur in the scope of propositional operators such as negation, and can only occur in illocutionary force bearing environments. Furthermore, the Direct and the Reportative are not analyzable in terms of epistemic necessity or possibility. In contrast, the Conjectural also encodes epistemic possibility, and it is therefore considered to be in the evidentiality/epistemic modality overlap.

It is argued that an evidential scale in terms of strength of evidence can be defined. Against previous proposals, I argue that this is only a partial ordering, since conjectural is not stronger than reportative evidence, or vice versa. For each ordered pair of evidentials the weaker one (e.g. Reportative) gives rise to the implicature that the stronger one (e.g. Direct) could not have been used in its stead.

The Cuzco Quechua evidentials are analyzed as illocutionary modifiers which add

to or modify the sincerity conditions of the act they apply to. The resulting act is assertion of the proposition expressed p for the Direct, and assertion of $\Diamond p$ for the Conjectural. For sentences with the Reportative, I propose a new illocutionary act: “presentation” of p . This analysis accounts for the afore-mentioned as well as other properties of these evidentials.