

CLASS MEETING #3: EVIDENTIAL SYSTEMS

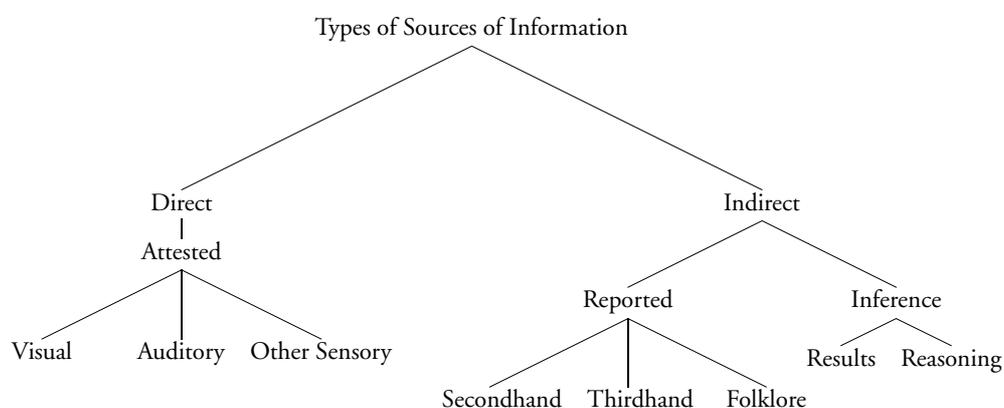
Main Reading: Chapter 2 of Faller's Thesis (Faller 2002)

Goals: There are three agenda items today.

1. Learn more about the different kinds of evidential systems that there are
2. Learn about typological analyses of cross-linguistic variation
3. Start thinking about factors governing choice of evidential marker by a speaker

Typological Space

Willet's taxonomy of evidentials (Willet 1988):



Two uses:

- Predict possible meanings for evidential markers in any given language
- Predict speaker preference when faced with a choice of evidential marker

Task: Discuss in class how the taxonomy can be used.

Some sample inventories:

Turkish: DIRECT – INDIRECT

Tuyuca: VISUAL – NONVISUAL – APPARENT – SECONDHAND – ASSUMED

Kashaya: PERFORMATIVE – $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{FACTUAL} \\ \text{VISUAL} \end{array} \right\}$ – AUDITORY – INFERENCE¹ – QUOTATIVE

Plungian's Alternative (Plungian 2001):

Indirect Evidence		
Direct Evidence	Reflected Evidence	Mediated Evidence
Personal Evidence		

[Excursus on Faller's problem on the bottom of p.49]

Faller's Personal Evidence Cline:

- (1) performative \succ visual \succ auditory \succ other sensory \succ reasoning
 \succ assumption

“One can now hypothesize that only those evidentials that cover a contiguous area on this cline are possible evidentials.”

Croft's Semantic Map Connectivity Hypothesis (Croft 2001):

- (2) any relevant language-specific and construction-specific category should map onto a connected region in conceptual space.

Faller's Mediated Evidence Cline:

- (3) (direct \succ) secondhand \succ thirdhand \succ hearsay/folklore

More on semantic maps: Haspelmath (2000).

Speaker Choice and Implicatures

The following evidential scale is proposed by Barnes (1984) for Tuyuca.

- (4) Visual \succ Nonvisual \succ Apparent \succ Secondhand \succ Assumed

The ordering relation $x \succ y$ in (4) is a relation of speaker preference, such that evidential x will be preferred over evidential y where possible. Barnes does not explain, however, why a speaker prefers certain evidentials over others.

But in Tuyuca the preference for certain evidentials, in particular the Visual, has, according to Barnes, more complicated effects: a speaker prefers a somewhat more indirect proposition if that allows her or him to use a Visual.

For Kashaya, Oswalt (1986) proposes the hierarchy in (5), which is also based on speaker preference.

- (5) Performative \succ Factual-Visual \succ Auditory \succ Inferential \succ Quotative

Oswalt (1986) only discusses preference of the simple kind: what evidential is chosen for the same proposition, when the speaker learned of the event through various sources of information. Like Barnes (1984), he treats the preference relation as primitive, that is, he does not state why a speaker prefers certain evidentials over others.

“[B]y using an evidential lower on the hierarchy, the speaker implicates that (s)he could not have used a higher evidential, and thus indirectly negates that (s)he has a higher type of evidence (de Haan 1998).”

For example, a Tuyuca speaker who uses a Nonvisual evidential implicates that (s)he does not have visual evidence.

With respect to the relative ordering of Inference and Quotative, de Haan (1998) states:

Within the area of indirect evidence, Inference is closer to direct evidence than Hearsay because by using a Quotative, the speaker relies wholly on evidence that comes from another source. The Inferential is used when the speaker is involved him- or herself with the evidence to a certain degree. The speaker makes deductions

on the basis of evidence. This evidence has been collected by the speaker, which makes him or her more of an active partner than in the passive act of receiving information from another source.

Faller's case of Pedro's Hen

"The speaker of (56) prefers the eyewitness report over his or her own inference."

"[A] speaker may sometimes prefer to base a statement on INFERENTIAL evidence, sometimes on REPORTATIVE and sometimes might not give preference to either. Furthermore, in none of the cases described above can the speaker be said to implicate that (s)he does not have the other type of evidence."

Faller's mechanism:

"the speaker evaluates all evidence available to him or her, decides which proposition to believe in the case of conflicting information, and then chooses to mark the type of evidence that (s)he considers to be the strongest."

Excursus on Conversational Implicature: Grice's System

The Cooperative Principle

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice 1989)

The Maxims

Quantity Amount of Information:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality Quality of Information:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation Be relevant.

Manner Manner of Expression:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief.
4. Be orderly.

Working out an implicature

He has said that p , there is no reason to suppose that he is not observing the maxims, or at least the Cooperative Principle; he could not be doing this unless he thought that q ; he knows (and knows that I know that he knows) that I can see that the supposition that he thinks that q is required; he has done nothing to stop me thinking that q ; he intends me to think, or is at least willing to allow me to think, that q ; and so he has implicated that q .

— END OF EXCURSUS —

“the implicatures are not triggered by entailment relations or degrees of informativeness, but by degrees of strength of evidence.”

“How [...] can we account for the implicatures [...] associated with Indirect evidentials cross-linguistically? Intuitively, they arise because a speaker should indicate the best evidence they have for making an assertion!not because this is more informative, but because this will strengthen the point (s)he is trying to make. Given this assumption, the addressee can reason in standard Gricean fashion that a speaker who uses an evidential lower on the scale was not in a position to use one higher on the scale.”

A new submaxim: “Base what you say on the strongest evidence available to you.”

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- PLUNGIAN, Vladimir A.: 2001. "The Place of Evidentiality within the Universal Grammatical Space". *Journal of Pragmatics* 33(3): 349–357.
- WILLET, Thomas: 1988. "A Cross-Linguistic Survey of the Grammaticalization of Evidentiality". *Studies in Language* 12(1): 57–91.

Some web destinations about Grice

1. Gauker's on Grice in the online Dictionary of the Philosophy of Mind:
<http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~philos/MindDict/grice.html>
2. Bach on Grice in the MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences:
<http://online.sfsu.edu/~kbach/grice.htm>

Reading for next week: Chapter 2 of Garrett's Thesis.