



Questionnaire/Considerations for research on quotative constructions (based on Aikhenvald 2008)

COLLECTION:
QUOTATIVES IN
INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES OF
BRAZIL

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

This questionnaire was created in 2019 as part of the project Complex Sentences in Brazilian Native American Languages: Experimental and Theoretical Studies (the “COSY” project). The aim was to provide a list of relevant questions in the domain of reported speech that researchers could explore in data elicitation and/or analysis of spontaneous speech. It was also hoped that if researchers could address similar issues and questions it would result in more comparable data sets. Material from Aikhenvald 2008 was incorporated into the questionnaire but revised and expanded upon.

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1. How many different quotative constructions?

How many quotative constructions are there in the language?

2. Direct/indirect quotes

Some languages use direct quotes, some use indirect quotes, and some use both. In English:

Direct quote:

- (i) He said, “She hates that man”.

Indirect quote:

- (ii) He said that she hates that man.

Differences between these two types may include:

Direct quotes are closer to exactly what was said.

Direct quotes may be short expressions such as:

- (iii) He said, “Rats!”

Indirect quotes may need to be clauses.

There may be a shift in person deixis, for example whether coreference with the matrix subject is marked inside the quote. This is more likely in indirect quotes:

- (iv) He_i said, “I_i didn’t sleep well last night”.

- (v) He_i said (that) he_i didn’t sleep well last night.

There may be changes in spatial reference or tense inside the quote, especially in indirect quotes:

- (vi) They said, “He will go there”.

- (vii) They said that he will come here.

- (viii) He said, “I didn’t sleep well last night”.

- (ix) He said that he hadn’t slept well the night before.

There may be a complementizer or its equivalent, for example, ‘that’ in English.

Direct quotes are more likely to be syntactic islands. But, for example, indirect quotes in English permit extraction from the quote:

- (x) It is me that she said she hates.

Other quote-internal changes may include alteration of intonation or tone, use of interjections and exclamations, constituent order, and behavior of demonstratives.

3. Boundaries and perception

How do speakers and hearers know where quotes begin and end?

Is there a standard position in the sentence or position in relation to an associated verb, auxiliary, particle, clitic, or inflection (i.e., quote framers; see below)?

Are there comma pauses or suprasegmental indicators?

4. Quotative framers

What can function as a quotative framer in the language (a verb of speech, a different verb, an auxiliary, a particle, a derivation, an inflection, an idiomatic expression)?

Do a quote and its framing verb, auxiliary, or particle form a construction? For example, can they occur as one syntactic unit in front of a second-position particle?

What is the category of the framers? Do they occur in non-quotative constructions or only with quotes? What is their distribution?

Can a quote occur with no framer?

5. Use of quotes to indicate various subjective states or actions

In some languages quote constructions may be used in constructions which translate into English as complements of specific verbs: *say/think/fear/imagine/know/believe/doubt that/want/intend...*, *wonder/ask if...*, *do in order to...*,

Do these occur and how are they distinguished from each other if so?

Is there a difference between quoted speech and quoted thoughts/intentions/fears/etc.? If so, how is it indicated?

6. Quote syntax

Can a quote be a predicate by itself, with or without a framer? Can another main predicate co-occur?

Can a quote be negated, nominalized, causativized, questioned, focused, or turned into a participle (gerúndio)? What is its distribution?

Are quote constructions a separate sentence type or are they a variety of some sentence type which needs to be recognized as a general pattern for non-quote sentences?

7. Obliques

How is the hearer indicated?

(xi) They said, “She hates you”, to him.

How is the topic referent indicated?

(xii) They said, “He is a thief”, about the president.

8. Distribution and continuity of direct quotes

Can a direct quote include more than one sentence?

Can a direct quote extend for more than one sentence?

9. Semi-direct quotes

There can be an apparent (but non-accidental) mismatch in speaker perspective due to incomplete shift under direct quotation.

Are there any instances of semi-direct quotes?

Type I, Original-Speaker oriented (nonexistent in English, translation of Manambu example from Aikhenvald 2008: 394):

(xiii) She_i said thus: “The things belonging to us_{j/os} two I_i put here”

Type II Current-Speaker oriented (in colloquial English, example from Aikhenvald 2008: 402):

(xiv) I_{cs} rang up Paul_p, and Paul_i said: “Come_{cs} and see him_i”

How do semi-direct quotes compare to direct and indirect quotes? Are they obligatory or optional?

10. Grammaticalization

Can you say anything about the grammaticalization patterns of the reporting verb and of (other) quotative framers and/or the quotative construction? Or the diachronic evolution of the quotative constructions?

11. Functional, stylistic, and discourse implications of quotative constructions

If a language has a choice between several quotative constructions, what are the conditioning factors for the preferential choice of one over the other?

Are there any differences in degree of commitment to the veracity of the statement, or correlations with the person of the narrator, or information structure?

Are direct and indirect quotes a feature of any particular style (e.g., historical narrative)?

12. Language contact

Have any of the quotative constructions in the language been influenced by a neighboring language or arisen as the result of areal diffusion and language contact?

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The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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