



# Speech reports and ideophones in Maxakalí

MÁRIO COELHO DA SILVA 

CARLO SANDRO DE OLIVEIRA CAMPOS 

ANDREW NEVINS 

\*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

COLLECTION:  
QUOTATIVES IN  
INDIGENOUS  
LANGUAGES OF  
BRAZIL

RESEARCH ARTICLE



## ABSTRACT

In this paper we describe quoting expressions in Maxakalí, an indigenous Macro-Jê language spoken in Brazil, and their relation to the categories of ideophones and loanwords. We show that in spontaneous speech, only direct quotes occur in the language, a phenomenon that diverges from earlier descriptions claiming that both direct and indirect speech were possible. We discuss the grammatical status of the particle *kaxĩy* and show that it patterns in at least three different ways: as a verbal modifier, as a verb participating in fossilized expressions, and as a canonical verb that shows similarities with unergative verbs. We argue that the latter similarity is due to the co-occurrence of *kaxĩy* with a light verb that enables the occurrence of quotes. The optional use of *kaxĩy* and its interaction with ideophones and loan verbs suggests that *kaxĩy* is not a verb, but a modifier/operator to a null *dicendi* verb.

## RESUMO

Neste artigo, descrevemos expressões de citação em Maxakalí, uma língua indígena do tronco Macro-Jê, falada no Brasil, e suas relações com as categorias de ideofones e empréstimos. Mostramos que, na fala espontânea da língua, ocorrem apenas discursos diretos, um fenômeno que diverge de descrições anteriores que diziam que tanto o discurso direto quanto o indireto poderiam ser encontrados. Discutimos o estatuto gramatical da partícula *kaxĩy* e mostramos que ela se alinha de pelo menos três diferentes maneiras: como um modificador verbal, como um verbo em expressões fossilizadas e como um verbo canônico que mostra semelhanças com verbos inergativos. Argumentamos que essa última semelhança é devida à co-ocorrência de *kaxĩy* com um verbo leve que possibilita a ocorrência de citações. O uso opcional de *kaxĩy* e sua interação com ideofones e verbos emprestados sugerem que *kaxĩy* não é um verbo, mas um modificador/operator de um verbo *dicendi* nulo.

## CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

**Mário Coelho da Silva**

Universidade Federal de Goiás, BR  
mario.andrecs@ufg.br

## KEYWORDS:

quoted speech; Maxakalí; direct speech; ideophones; modifiers

## PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

citação; Maxakalí; discurso direto; ideofones; modificadores

## TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Silva, Mário Coelho da, Carlo Sandro de Oliveira Campos & Andrew Nevins. 2023. Speech reports and ideophones in Maxakalí. *Language Documentation and Description* 23(2): 8, 1–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25894/ldd.359>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are many issues to cover in the study of quotation. For example, how does one distinguish direct speech from indirect speech? What is the nature of the quoting verb (including verbs of thought or knowledge)? What can be quoted—including loanwords and ideophones—and how does this interact with phenomena such as argument structure and switch reference? How do quotative particles function within a clausal spine that involves higher-level propositional operators?

This paper describes quoted speech and related phenomena in the Maxakalí language, an SOV ergative language belonging to the Macro-Jê stock (Nikulin 2020; Rodrigues 1999) with approximately 2,000 speakers in Minas Gerais, Brazil (SIASI 2014). Initial descriptions of Maxakalí quoted speech can be found in Popovich (1985, 1986). We have collected data with speakers over the last decade, including spontaneous speech recordings, to verify data collected in elicitation and in less-monitored speech.

## 2. QUOTED SPEECH

According to Clark & Gerrig (1990), quotations are a special form of language use, through which the speaker can report in the present conversation what someone has said in a preceding conversation. The authors define three types of quotation: direct, indirect, and free indirect (with this third type of quotation indicated by # marks instead of quotation marks). To illustrate these three types of quotation, we reproduce some examples in (1–3) (Clark & Gerrig 1990: 786):

- (1) Direct quotation  
*And I said ‘Do you mean for lunch or dinner?’*
- (2) Indirect quotation  
*And I asked her whether she meant for lunch or dinner.*
- (3) Free indirect quotation  
*And I said #Did she mean for lunch or dinner?#*

The three quotation types differ in vantage point; that is, the speaker decides which ‘role’ he/she is demonstrating. The main difference between these three quotation choices involves the manner of the speaker’s perspective denotation. That is, in direct quotation (1), the speaker uses the pronoun ‘you’ with the referent being the source interlocutor and thus directly reproduces the source statement for the current interlocutor. In indirect quotation (2), the speaker reports a paraphrased version of what was said, changing pronouns as necessary to maintain referents in the present conversation. Finally, the third type of quotation, free indirect quotation (3), is also said from the speaker’s perspective but, differently from simple indirect quotation, partially reproduces the source dialogue with an interrogative embedded clause. As explained by Clark & Gerrig (1990: 787):

In the direct quotation, the vantage point is [the] original one, and it dictates the choice of *you* and the present tense of *do*. In the indirect quotation, the vantage point is [the speaker’s] current one, which leads to *she* and the past tense *meant*. In the free indirect quotation, the vantage point is also [the speaker’s] current one, as reflected in *she* and *meant*, but the embedded clause is interrogative (‘Did she ...’) rather than an indirect question (‘whether she ...’).

Indirect quotations are descriptions, while direct and free indirect quotations are *demonstrations*. Distinct from descriptions or indications, the function of a demonstration is to enable others to more clearly envision or imagine depicted events or previous conversations. Quotations are usually introduced by *verbum dicendi* verbs and constitute the direct object of such verbs. As will be presented later, direct quotations in Maxakali appear as the internal arguments of a null verb (in a similar way to what was proposed by Hale & Keyser 1993, 2002), alongside the presence of an external argument identified by the ergative postposition *te*. Quotations, under this analysis, are semantically incorporated as the internal argument of an active null verb, leading to the outward appearance of an unergative construction.

### 3. BACKGROUND: THE MAXAKALÍ PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND PREVIOUS WORK ON QUOTATION

The Maxakalí language is the only extant language from the family of the same name, which is itself a branch of the Macro-Jê stock (see Nikulin 2020; Rodrigues 1999). It is spoken by approximately 2000 people (SIASI 2014) in the northeastern region of the Minas Gerais state in Brazil. Their traditional lands covered the valleys of the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri rivers, but nowadays are restricted to five villages (*Pananiy*, *Kônãg Mai*, *Ïmmoknãg*, *Apne Yïxux*, and *Apne Ixkot Hãmhipak*) near tributaries of the Mucuri river. They still preserve their traditional religious practices, and the language continues to be passed on to newer generations, assuring language survival for at least the next generation.<sup>1,2</sup>

The most comprehensive work about Maxakalí syntax is the doctoral thesis of Campos (2009). He demonstrates in it that Maxakalí is an active ergative language due to a split between agentive and non-agentive intransitive verbs.<sup>3</sup> A and S<sub>A</sub> arguments are identified by an ergative marker *te*, and are differentiated from S<sub>O</sub> arguments, which are unmarked. This is illustrated in the examples in (4).

- (4) a. Arguments (A)  
Kokex **te** pãmãg putxok.  
dog ERG trap disarm  
'The dog disarmed the trap (unintentionally).'
- b. Arguments (S<sub>A</sub>)  
kokex **te** pũn.  
dog ERG jump  
'The dog jumps.'
- c. Arguments (S<sub>O</sub>)  
kokex mōyõn  
dog sleep.REAL  
'The dog sleeps.'

Popovich (1985: 36) states that the default word order in Maxakalí is SOV, based on evidence from phonological phrasing. He argues that a phonological phrase spans from the beginning of the clause to the end of the predicate, with each postposed grammatical phrase corresponding to a separate phonological phrase. Therefore, while SOV and SV orders are uninterrupted by any pause, other constituent orders like SVO or VS are marked by a pause between the verb and the following constituent. Silva (2020) analyses Maxakalí as a language with split ergativity conditioned by mood: on the one hand, the realis mood has the ergative argument (A) marked with the postposition *te* with an unmarked absolutive argument (S, O).<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the irrealis mood, used in most imperative constructions, in purpose clauses, and in clauses beginning with the inference evidential *pa* 'seem', shows a split where some intransitive verbs (inactive verbs) must express the subject (S<sub>O</sub>) the same way as O, while others (active verbs) do not (S<sub>A</sub>). This distinction is provided lexically; i.e., there is no way to tell in which group an intransitive

1 In this paper, we write the examples with the orthography used by the Maxakalí communities. The graphemes <p, t, x, k> represent the voiceless stops /p, t, c, k/. <m, n, y, g> are used to represent the voiced stops /b, d, j, g/ and their nasal allophones, respectively [m, n, j, ŋ]. Two other consonantal graphemes are <h, ʔ> which are used to represent /h/ and /ʔ/. This last segment is not considered as a phoneme by Silva (2020) but has phonological status for Gudschinsky, Popovich, & Popovich (1970), Wetzels (1993, 1995, 2009), Wetzels & Sluyters (1995), Araújo (2000), and Campos (2009). The presence or absence of <ʔ> in writing varies with individual preference. Oral vowels /i, i, u~o, e, a/ are written as <í, u, o, e, a> and their nasal counterparts are written with a tilde above them: <ĩ, ù, õ, ê, â>. In addition, we employ three symbols not used in Maxakalí orthography: the hyphen <-> to indicate morpheme boundaries inside a word, the equals sign <=> to indicate clitic boundaries to their hosts, and the symbol <∅> to indicate a zero-morpheme. We also use, in some examples, the subscript letters <<sub>i,j,k</sub>> for indicating coreferentiality, and an asterisk <\*> for indicating ungrammatical sentences.

2 The glossing conventions used within this paper are: 1 first person; 2 second person; 3 third person; CC cause and consequence relation; DAT dative; DS different subject; ERG ergative; EXCL exclusive plural; FOC focus; FUT future; HSY hearsay; IMP imperative; INCL inclusive plural; INS instrumental; IRR irrealis mood; LOC locative; NEG negation; NMZ nominalizer; PURP purpose; PL plural; REAL realis mood; REFL reflexive; SG singular; SS same subject; TOP topic change.

3 According to Campos (2009), Maxakali is morphosyntactically a tripartite language, distinguishing arguments A, S<sub>O</sub>, and O.

4 According to Silva (2020), there are four exceptions in which the subject of an apparent intransitive verb is marked with *te*: *tatxok* 'to bathe', *hãmyãg* 'to dance', *xupxet* 'to steal', and *kaxiy* 'to be this way/like this'. There is evidence, however, that the number of unergative verbs in Maxakalí may be higher. On this last verb—crucial for the understanding of quoting in Maxakalí—see Sections 4, 6, and 7. Verbs loaned from Portuguese and ideophonic verbs pattern differently from native ones, as discussed in Section 6.

verb belongs, outside of these alignment patterns. As we will discuss below, syntactic alignment and word order are critical for understanding quotation in Maxakalí.

Regarding quotes in Maxakalí, Popovich (1985: 41) says that

[q]uotations are introduced by the preceding quote formula in a fixed way by an upglide and brief pause. This pattern may accompany [tæʔ] ‘subject marker’... or a conjunction.... The word that functions as ‘unquote’ [kačĩñ] ~ [kah] literally means ‘like this’. It is used optionally. It has its own intonation pattern and does not follow the normal rules which function at the end of paragraphs or clauses....

The immediate question is thus whether *kaxĩy* (transcribed as [kačĩñ] by Popovich) is a quotative verb because of its final position in quoting sentences, or is a discourse marker indicating the end of the quote, or perhaps just an afterthought. As we will see in the next sections, determining the syntactic category of *kaxĩy* is difficult, as it may also be used in other constructions. It is nevertheless possible to make preliminary assumptions about it, and about quoting strategies in general, in a way that opens new research paths for a deeper understanding of this phenomenon and Maxakalí syntax.

#### 4. DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUOTING

Maxakalí has been described as having both direct and indirect quotation (Popovich 1986: 355). For direct quoting Popovich presents the schematic formulas reproduced in (5):

- (5) a. Speaker **te** quote  
b. Speaker **te** verb of speech **hu** quote

The marker *te* is argued in that work to be a “transitive subject indicator” (an ergative postposition in our analysis) and *hu* a “logical sequence” conjunction (a cause and consequence conjunction in our analysis). He posits that there is no verb of speech in the formula in (5a), which encompasses over 90% of the tokens of direct quoting. However, in his work from 1985, Popovich says that *kaxĩy* ‘to be this way’ can appear optionally after the quote. In this case, the intonation pattern, as mentioned in the last section, is different from that of a quote without *kaxĩy*. This structure indeed appears quite frequently in our data, so the structure in (5a) would be better represented as in (6):

- (6) Speaker **te** quote (**kaxĩy**)

The formula above differs from that in (5a) in that it includes *kaxĩy* as an optional element at the end of the sentence. When present, the pitch on *kaxĩy* is rather low compared to the rest of the sentence: when asked if the pitch in *kaxĩy* could be maintained with the same height, speakers tended to find it strange. Figure 1 below shows a prototypical example of this kind of pitch drop. It is a quote involving the lyrics of a ritual song in which the tinamou bird (*Tinamus sp.*, Portuguese *macuco*) is called.

We have found numerous examples with the structure in (6). Some of them are provided below:

- (7) Ñn     **te**   *kakxop*   *ũ-nãhã-Ø*.  
woman   ERG   child    3-fall-REAL  
The woman said: “The child fell”.
- (8) Ñn     **te**   *ũg=nãhã-Ø*   **kaxĩy**.<sup>5</sup>  
woman   ERG   1.SG=fall-REAL   this.way  
The woman said: “I fell”.

The most observable indication that the quotes in (7–8) constitute clauses distinct from the matrix sentence lies in the fact that the 1.SG clitic does not attach to the *te* postposition that precedes it, as it would in a simple clause. Compare (9a–b) with (8) above:

<sup>5</sup> The 1.SG marker is a clitic. According to Silva (2020: 230–242), it has an underlying form of / = k/ and selects as its host the word on its left if it ends in a vowel. If this vowel is front, palatalization occurs and thus it is realized as a coda [j] (orthographically written as <x>). In case that the clitic is preceded by a consonant, by silence, or by a different clause (as in (8)), it attaches to a host on its right. In this case, it is still syllabified as a coda consonant, as it is preceded by an epenthetic nasal vowel /ĩ/ and then undergoes nasalization, being represented orthographically as *ũg*. Here we represent these allomorphs according to the widespread orthographic usage in the community.

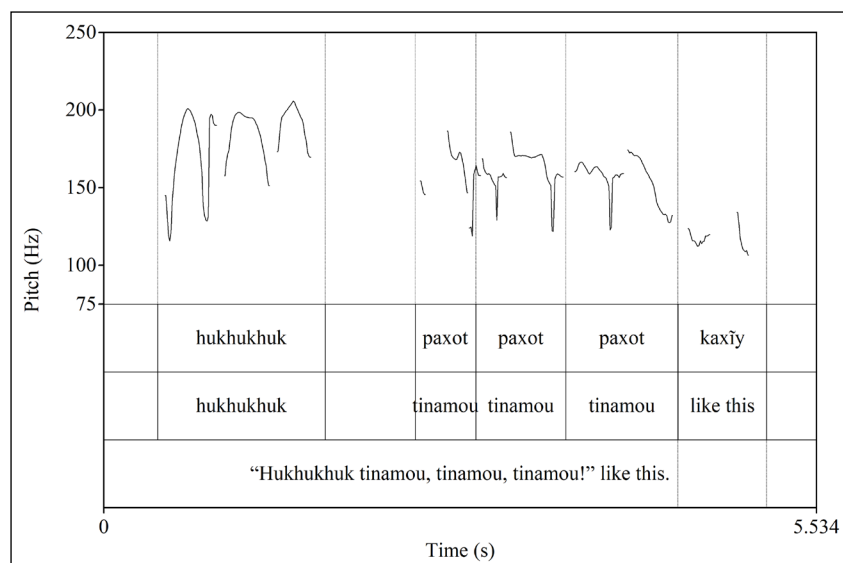


Figure 1 Pitch drop of *kaxīy* after a quote.

- (9) a.  $\tilde{U}n$  te=x penāhā  
 woman ERG=1.SG see  
 The woman saw me.  
 b. \* $\tilde{U}n$  te  $\tilde{u}g$ =penāhā  
 woman ERG 1.SG=see  
 The woman saw me.

As for indirect speech, Popovich (1986) does not offer a formula but an example, shown here as (10). He states that indirect speech is rarely used:

- (10) Xukux te hām’āgtux xa mōg  
 aunt ERG say that-2 go  
 Aunt said that you should go.

(Popovich, 1986: 355)<sup>6</sup>

In comparing our data with Popovich’s, we found similarities to the structures in (5) and (6). Though we have not measured the frequency with which each of the structures occur, it seems that Popovich’s claim (Popovich 1986: 355) mentioned above is correct in that the strategy in (6) appears to be by far more frequent than that seen in (5b) both in spontaneous speech and in elicitations. Despite this, we were unable to find indirect quotation in spontaneous speech. Almost every instance of elicited quotation in Maxakalí was direct, even if the given form in Portuguese was in indirect speech. Consider the following sentences given to the speaker in Portuguese in indirect speech: “*Juvenal said that this wood is strong and Paulinho said that it is revolver wood*” and “*Voninho asked Elismar if the house belongs to Elismar and Elismar said it wasn’t his*”. The corresponding sentences obtained in Maxakali were:

- (11) Yomenān te nūhū mīm mai xēēnnāg ha Papnīy te  
 Juvenal ERG this wood good really and.DS Paulinho ERG  
 nōōm hephot mīy ax.  
 that revolver make NMZ  
 Juvenal said that this wood is strong and Paulinho said that it is revolver wood.  
 (Lit.: Juvenal (said): “This wood is really good” and Paulinho (said): “That is wood [for making a] revolver”.)

<sup>6</sup> We have adapted the orthography in the example to better reflect the writing practices of the Maxakalí, rather than the usage by Popovich. The glossing of *te* has also been adapted in order to fit the glossing of the rest of the paper. In addition, the use of orthographic space in complex words varies among written texts. One specific example worth mentioning here is the morphologically complex sequence *hām’āgtux*. This is a morphologically complex item, *hām*=*ā-gtux*, but we do not indicate this in the gloss, since it is not relevant to the questions treated in this paper. The clitic *hām*= has two functions; the one here serves to change a relational lexeme (that is, which obligatorily has an internal argument) to an absolute one (that does not need an internal argument). In this example, it serves as a placeholder for the internal argument, with a pronoun-like function. The second morpheme *ā*- indicates that the verb has not moved away from its internal argument (in this case *hām*=) for prosodic considerations; that is, the internal argument is just adjacent to the verb’s left margin (Silva 2020: 242-244). Finally *-gtux* is the root for ‘say/tell’.

- (12) Toãyã Monĩ te *ã-pet òhõm?* ha Enixmã a yõg a.  
 brother.in.law Voninho ERG 2-home that and.DS Elismar NEG my NEG  
 Voninho asked Elismar if the house belongs to Elismar and Elismar said it wasn't his.  
 (Lit.: Brother-in-law Voninho (said): "Is that your home?" and Elismar (said): "It is not mine".)

If in fact there really are only direct quoting constructions in Maxakalí, one should reanalyze Popovich's example in (10) as follows:

- (13) Xukux te hãm'ãgtux xa mō-Ø!  
 aunt ERG tell 2.DAT go-IRR  
 Aunt told you: "go!"

The reanalyzed example in (13) contrasts with the Maxakalí in (10) in two ways. Firstly, *xa* should be considered the addressee of the original speech event, rather than a second person purpose subordinate conjunction in Popovich's description (1986: 354–355). Secondly, *mō*, the irrealis form of *mõg* 'go', is the actually grammatical and attested form, as the quote is an order to the addressee.<sup>7</sup>

To provide additional evidence for this interpretation, we asked a Maxakalí consultant how he would say the equivalent of the following sentence in Portuguese: *'The woman told you to go'*. This sentence was provided as indirect speech, and we hoped he would thus give us an indirect quotation as well. The answer he provided, however, was in direct speech: *Õn te hãm'ãgtux xa: mō!* 'The woman told you: "go!", just as in (13). This sentence confirms that the form *xa* '2.DAT' corresponds to the addressee and therefore the verb in such a construction should be in the irrealis mood (*mō*).

Verbs in the irrealis mood have no restrictions when occurring in quotes expressing orders or purpose clauses, which as mentioned before, are the two main contexts in which this mood is used. The sentence in (14) includes instances of both functions:

- (14) ta axa õm te nãy! ã-xetut ha mō-Ø nũy xupa-x.  
 TOP HSY that ERG wait.IMP 3-wife to go-IRR PURP.SS listen-IRR  
 And it is said that one said: "Wait! Go to his wife in order to listen (to her)".

Inside the quote in (14) there are two verbs in the irrealis mood: *mō* 'go' (whose realis form is *mõg*) and *xupax* 'listen' (whose realis form is *xupak*). The former is irrealis because it is an imperative, while the latter is irrealis because it is a purpose clause.

One may ask about whether the reanalyzed example in (13) includes a verb of speech (*hãm'ãgtux*). We must return to the structure in (5b): though infrequent, there is a type of construction in which there is a clear verb of speech. To verify if (5b) refers, in fact, to a direct quoting construction and not an indirect one, we present the example in (15):

- (15) Õn te tut pu hãm'ãgtux tu ãg = nãhã-Ø.  
 woman ERG mother DAT talk and.SS 1.SG = fall-REAL  
 The woman talked to her mother and (said): "I fell".

This example provides morphosyntactic evidence that this is a direct speech structure. The quotation includes a first person singular marker, therefore denoting that the subject of the quoted sentence is the same as the main clause. Moreover, the conjunction *tu* exhibits same-subject switch reference morphology, indicating that the subject of both sentences is coreferential (Popovich 1986, n.d.; Pereira 2020).<sup>8</sup>

Additional evidence in favor of a direct quotation analysis is the presence of an interjection in the following sentence:

- (16) tu õm hã mõxakux tu Ak nũhũ mĩmtut a xũyã mai a.  
 and.SS that INS enter.PL and.SS Ah this house NEG owner good NEG  
 And they entered the house and (said): "Ah, the owner of this house is not good".

<sup>7</sup> Here we must take into consideration the somewhat irregular inclusion of syllable codas in Popovich's works (cf. Silva 2020: 152), which would explain the different forms and consequently the different moods in the glosses (realis vs. irrealis).

<sup>8</sup> In this regard it is important to mention that, in a switch reference construction, the portion (speaker + *te*) in the quoting formula presented in (6) should be replaced by a conjunction that may or may not be coreferent with the subject of the main clause. As we will show, different conjunctions appear in these situations in the data.



The presence of the interjection *ak* ‘ah’ in the second clause of (16) strengthens the interpretation that the speech introduced by the conjunction *tu* in this example is direct rather than indirect, because interjections are not found in indirect speech, due to pragmatic reasons (Capone 2016: 62–65).

Although indirect speech as mentioned by Popovich was not generally found, we did document one indirect speech example from a Portuguese translation, registered during a grammar workshop we conducted in a Maxakalí village. It was considered grammatical by the speakers.

- (17) Mano te Yitmet yikopit ya **mō-g** mĩmtutmōg  
 Badô ERG Gilberto ask where go-REAL car  
 hã ha Yitmet te hãm’ãgtux **ũ-mō-g** apne  
 INS and.DS Gilberto ERG tell 3-go-REAL village  
 tu nĩnãpa, payã putpu nũ-n nōyax.  
 LOC up.there but back come-REAL already  
 Badô asked Gilberto where he goes by car and Gilberto said he goes to the village up there  
 but will come back soon.

If the sentence (17) were direct speech, the first verb *mōg* would have included the second person marker *ã*: “*ya ãmōg mĩmtutmōg hã?*” ‘Where are you going by car?’. Further evidence is found in the second clause where the verb *mōg* ‘go’ should have the form *ũg = mōg* with the first-person singular clitic if it were direct speech. The present verbal form *ũ-mō-g* instead marks this speech as being indirect. The exceptionality of this construction is noteworthy, and unsurprisingly during that same workshop, another translation presented a related, more expected construction with direct speech:

- (18) Tik te ũn nua **pu** **mãm** **geex** ha  
 man ERG woman order 3.PURP.DS fish fry and.DS  
 tu te hãm’ãgtux **a** **mãm** **ũm** **pip** **a**.  
 3 ERG tell NEG fish some be NEG  
 The man told the woman to fry fish and she told him that there was no fish.  
 (Lit.: The man ordered the woman in order for her to fry the fish and she said: “There is no fish”.)

Therefore, we argue here that Maxakalí does not generally employ indirect speech, with the example in (17) being an exceptional case. (There may have been interference due to Portuguese being used as the elicitation language during the workshop.)

Within the current examples, the quoted clause acts as an argument within a null verb phrase. We argue that it is possible to recover the nature of this verb, and that it is in fact associated with the aforementioned optional element *kaxĩy*. Thus, the use of same subject switch-reference markers such as *tu* ‘and.ss’ and *hu* ‘cc.ss’ that accompany predicates do not trace the verb internally to the quote, but rather to a null external argument quoting verb.

The different markers in the structure in the formula in (5b) and the examples in (15–16) can be accounted for by the disparate semantic relations expressed by the conjunctions *tu* and *hu*. The former is found with coordinations of two clauses to indicate a temporal sequence of events, while the latter expresses a causal relationship between two clauses. In the examples so far, the conjunctions mark the same subject for both clauses, though this is not always the case, as illustrated in (19):

- (19) **tu<sub>i</sub>** nũgtu<sub>i</sub> xetut<sub>j</sub> hã mōnãhã-Ø<sub>i</sub> **yĩ<sub>j</sub>** **a**  
 and.ss coming.ss wife INS enter.SG-REAL CC.DS NEG  
**yã** **yũmũg<sub>i+j</sub>** **penã** **hok** **a** **kaxĩy**.  
 FOC 1.INCL see NEG NEG this.way  
 and (the man)<sub>i</sub> entered with the (other’s man)<sub>k</sub> wife<sub>j</sub> and (she<sub>j</sub> said): “(he)<sub>k</sub> is looking at us<sub>i+j</sub>.”<sup>9</sup>

The use of *yĩ* (the DS counterpart of *hu*) in (19), besides changing the subject from the man to the other man’s wife, also introduces the quotation by a different participant (the wife), with no overt verb of speech. In the example above, the use of *yĩ* rather than of *ha* (the DS counterpart of *tu*) implies that the married man is looking at his wife and that she warned the other man *because* (causal relation) she suspected her husband saw them entering the house.

<sup>9</sup> Negation in Maxakalí is usually realized by a circummorpheme *a ... a* (Campos 2009: 128–130; Silva 2020: 265–268). *Hok* also is a morpheme with negative semantics, but with other functions that are still not fully clear, one being a polite prohibitive marker (Campos 2009: 123–128; Silva 2020: 268–269). The double negative *a ... hok a* yields a positive statement (i.e., one negative cancels the other one), as in the example above.

To summarize, the evidence from a variety of phenomena, including switch reference marking, is consistent with our claim that Maxakali largely lacks indirect quotation.

## 5. EXPRESSING THOUGHTS AND KNOWLEDGE

Constructions that express thoughts are very similar to the direct quote formula expressed in (5b), but instead of using a verb of speech *hām'āgtux*, they employ the expression *hām pe pa xex* 'to think, to imagine' (literally 'to put the face on the side'):

- (20) Tik te **hām pe pa xex** hu kakxop yā nāhā-Ø.  
man ERG think CC.SS child FOC fall-REAL  
The man thinks that the child fell.  
(Lit. The man put his face on the side and thus (thought) "The child fell".)

There is another strategy to indicate thoughts and knowledge, restricted to the first person, using the particle *āmee*. The expression *hām pe pa xex* can be used for the first person as well: *hām pe = x pa xex*, in which the allomorph =x of the clitic / =k/ refers to 1.SG.

The thoughts expressed with *hām pe pa xex* are "direct" in nature in that they are, like direct speech, demonstrations and not descriptions. Examples (21) and (22) illustrate this:

- (21) Ũn<sub>i</sub> te hām pe pa xex hu pa tik<sub>j</sub> ā<sub>i</sub> hōm mīnnut.  
woman ERG think CC.SS seem man 1.DAT give flower  
The woman thinks: "It seems that the man gave me a flower".
- (22) Ũn<sub>i</sub> te hām pe pa xex *āmee* kakxop te nō xupxet  
woman ERG think 1.think child ERG 3.INS steal  
The woman thinks: "I think that the child stole it".

The fact that the "quoted thought" of the woman in (21) has a first-person dative pronoun *ā* coreferential to the subject of the main clause *ūn* 'woman' is an indicator that we are dealing with a "direct thought". Likewise, the thought clause in (22) begins with *āmee*, which can only be used to express the thought of the original speaker; thus, it can only be interpreted as a "direct thought" of the subject of the main clause, again *ūn* 'woman'.

Knowledge, on the other hand, is slightly different in that it is not "quoted". Constructions with *yūmūg* 'to know' are genuine indirect propositions, as can be seen in (23):

- (23) a. Ũn<sub>i</sub> te yā yūmūg ũ<sub>i</sub>-nāhā-Ø.  
woman ERG FOC know 3-fall-REAL  
The woman<sub>i</sub> knows that she<sub>i</sub> fell.
- b. Ũn<sub>i</sub> te yā yūmūg ũ<sub>j</sub>-nāhā-Ø.  
woman ERG FOC know 1.SG-fall-REAL  
The woman<sub>i</sub> knows that I<sub>j</sub> fell.

The examples in (23) indicate that the complement of the verb *yūmūg* is another clause that is postposed to the verb. The referentiality relationship between the subject of the main clause and of the complement is different from the constructions we have seen thus far: in the case discussed here, the third-person marker in the complement clause is used to point to the third person subject of the main clause (23a) while the first-person marker in the complement is used to point to the speaker (23b).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> In that sense, the verb *yūmūg* behaves just like perception verbs such as *penāhā* 'see' and *xupak* 'listen' such as in (i) and (ii) below:

- (i) Ā te penāhā tik te pox hīy.  
1.SG ERG see man ERG arrow tie.up.SG  
'I saw the man tie up the arrow.'
- (ii) Tu te xupa-k ūn te=x mănōg  
3 ERG listen-REAL woman ERG=1.SG scold  
'He listened to the woman scolding me.'



## 6. IDEOPHONES, LOAN VERBS, AND TRANSITIVITY

Ideophones and loaned verbs from Portuguese pattern differently from native verbs regarding argument marking that might be expected from intransitive verbs. Silva (2020) shows that these two groups of verbs always mark their subjects (A and S) with the ergative postposition *te*. Meanwhile, the “absolutive” argument (O) of the transitive ideophones and loan verbs are marked with the postposition *hã*, which is used elsewhere to either mark instrumental case or various kinds of adjuncts (such as location, manner, and temporal phrases). Below, we provide examples of both intransitive and transitive ideophones (24) and loan verbs (25). We indicate ideophones by using small caps, and also try to convey the ideophonic nature of those words by glossing them with English ideophones whenever we can find an equivalent:

- (24) a.  $\tilde{A}$  **te** PŪN.  
 1.SG ERG BOING  
 I jumped. ~ I went BOING.
- b. Kutitta **te** KĒM.  
 pineapple ERG strong.shade.of.red  
 The pineapple is very red.
- c. Kokex **te** kakxop hã KANEP.  
 dog ERG child INS CHOMP  
 The dog bit the child. ~ The dog went CHOMP at the child.
- d.  $\tilde{A}$  **te** pa hã TŪG.  
 1.SG ERG eye INS SWISH  
 I blinked my eye. ~ I went SWISH with my eye.
- (25) a. Nanuy **te** takat  
 orange ERG expensive  
 The oranges are expensive. (*takat* < Portuguese *tá caro*)
- b. Payã tep mün **te** tapatãñ?  
 but what just ERG lack  
 But which one is lacking? (*tapatãñ* < Portuguese *tá faltando*)
- c. A xa **te** täyümak hã pixiya a.  
 NEG 2 ERG money INS need NEG  
 You don't need money. (*pixiya* < Portuguese *precisar*)
- d. Kõnãäg yã tu **te** mīmāti hã kunia  
 water FOC 3 ERG rain.forest INS create  
 xi yã xokxop xohi hã kunia.  
 and FOC animals many INS create  
 The water created the forest and it created the animals. (*kunia* < Portuguese *criar*)

This pattern, which diverges from other intransitives seen above in fact follows the general patterning of native verbs: both ideophones and verbs loaned from Portuguese behave as *quotations rather than as verbs*.<sup>11</sup> Before doing so, however, we must present some further data to strengthen our hypothesis that ideophones and loan “verbs” are distinct from actual native verbs.

While native verbs can undergo an alternation between short and long forms, ideophonic and loan verbs do not. Briefly, native verbs lengthen in the realis mood if their root ends in a vowel and if there are no modifiers after it. In the irrealis mood, only monosyllabic active verbs can lengthen, as they do not overtly express their  $S_A$  argument. This lengthening, according to Silva (2020), occurs to satisfy the prosodic requirement of a phonological word to be at least two syllables long.

In example (26a), the active verb *yüm* appears in its short form, as it is in the realis mood and does not end in vowel. (26b), on the other hand, shows the long form of the verb *yühüm* as it contains a (phonological) monosyllabic root of an active verb in the irrealis mood. In comparison, (27a) presents the long form of the inactive verb *ti*, as it ends in a vowel in the realis mood and is not followed by any modifier. Meanwhile, (27b) is in its short form because its  $S_O$  argument must be

<sup>11</sup> Native verbs have an ergative alignment in realis mood ( $A \neq S = O$ ), with a split in irrealis mood ( $S_A \neq S_O = O$ ) and ideophones and loan verbs have an apparently nominative alignment ( $A = S \neq O$ ). Examples (14) and (21) include verbs in the irrealis mood, thus showing this kind of split (see Silva 2020).

expressed, thereby already fulfilling the minimum requirement of the ideal phonological word length of two syllables.

- (26) a. S-V  
    Ā-yūm.  
    2-sit.SG  
    You sit.
- b. S<sub>A</sub> V  
    ∅ Yūhūm!  
    2 sit.SG  
    Sit!
- (27) a. S-V  
    Ā-tihi.  
    2-stand.PL  
    You (PL) are standing.
- b. S<sub>O</sub>-V  
    Ā-ti  
    2-stand.PL  
    Stand!
- (28) a. Xa te PŪN.  
    2 ERG BOING  
    You jump. ~ You went BOING.
- b. ∅ Pūn!  
    2 BOING  
    Jump! ~ Go BOING!
- c. \*∅ PŪHŪN!  
    2 BOING  
    Jump! ~ Go BOING!

The onomatopoeic verb *PŪN* in (28), conversely, has only a “short” form both in realis mood, where it was not expected to lengthen anyway due to its root-final consonant, and also in the irrealis mood, where it is the only morpheme phonetically expressed, thus violating the two-syllable minimum size requirement that would be expected if it was a native verb.<sup>12</sup>

To further differentiate ideophones from verbs, let us recall what is said about them by Popovich (1986: 47, our emphasis), treating onomatopoeia and ideophones together. He says:

Onomatopoeic expressions are one word in length and are often repeated. **They are introduced by the speech formula in the same way in which quotes are introduced,** by pitch upglide and brief pause. Sound effects are accompanied by pitch glides or unusually low pitch....

His description thus equates ideophonic constructions with direct quoting, at least regarding intonation (see Section 4 above). But the similarities between those two constructions extend further. Consider example (29):

- (29) tu ta mām ha YA kaxīy.  
    and.SS TOP get.up and.DS BAM this.way  
    and (Pukkutok) got up and (the larvae went) BAM!

In (29) we have an excerpt of a narrative in which *Pukkutok* (the Bee’s Child) is seated and counting larvae on his lap. When he realizes that there are few larvae, he stands up disappointed and lets the larvae fall with a ‘BAM!’. The structure is strikingly similar to those in (5–6) and those exemplified in section 4. There is no verb of speech (as it is not a speech quotation *per se*), but the clause with the ideophone is introduced by a switch reference conjunction *ha* and followed by *kaxīy*.

<sup>12</sup> Onomatopoeiae form a subclass of ideophones. While the larger group comprise words that broadly evoke sensory impressions, onomatopoeiae are more restricted, as they depict only sounds. Even though most ideophones in Maxakalí are onomatopoeiae, there are some of them that do not necessarily indicate sounds, such as *GOXGOXGOX* ‘zigzag’, *KANEP* ‘bite’ ~ ‘CHOMP’, *KĒM* ‘have a strong shade of red’, and *XĀG* ‘darken’, among others.

The final difference between ideophones and other items of the native Maxakalí lexicon lies in their phonological structure. In addition to abstaining from the lengthening alternation seen in native verbs, it is common for ideophones in Maxakalí to be reduplicated (*PŪN* ~ *PŪNPŪN* ‘jump’ (BOING ~ BOINGBOING), *GOXGOXGOX* ‘zigzag’, and many others) and/or to have phonotactics that are otherwise rare. Nikulin & Silva (2020: 9–10) show the scarcity of syllables with a voiceless consonant followed by a nasal rhyme. In a 24-minute-long monologue containing 2288 words, these authors counted just 70 tokens of words with this structure, just 3% of the total words. Nonetheless, this syllabic structure is rather common in ideophonic words like the aforementioned *PŪN* ‘jump’, *KĒM* ‘have a strong shade of red’, *TŪG* ‘blink’, *PŌGPŌG* ‘swim’ ~ ‘SPLASH’, *PŌYPŌY* ‘have sex’, and many others. Aberrant sound combinations can be found in ideophones in Portuguese as well, for example *NHAC* ‘bite’, as words starting with a nasal palatal consonant (written as <nh>) are rare; see also a similar description of phonotactic outliers for Xhosa ideophones (Andrason 2020). In summary, although voiceless consonants followed by nasal rhymes are generally rare in the Maxakalí lexicon, this phonotactic pattern is rather common in ideophones.

Bearing all this in mind, we argue that ideophonic verbs are not true Maxakalí verbs, but rather conventionalized or “frozen” quotes that express the actions described. As Clark & Gerrig (1990: 788–789) argue, conventional expressions of sound quotation (i.e., ideophones) are demonstrations in the same manner as direct quotations in that both provide depictive and supportive information: they highlight some aspects of the referent depicted (depictive aspects), as well as aspects that serve as a support to the demonstration performance that were not present in the original action. For example, a slow motion to show how one can serve a ball in a tennis match or how one can pretend to be holding a racket to depict such a serve (supportive aspects) (Clark & Gerrig 1990: 768).

Phonologically nativized loan verbs from Portuguese further demonstrate the exact same patterning as ideophones, though we do not have data in which they are followed by *kaxĩy*. The main evidence for loan verbs and ideophones constituting their own natural class of predicates is that they have a different syntactic alignment, and never undergo lengthening even if in a favorable context. Consequently, loan verbs from Portuguese should also not be treated as true verbs in Maxakalí but rather as quotations, in the same manner as laid out above for ideophones: both are demonstrations, and although they are intransitive predicates, they co-occur with ergative marking on the subject, consistent with the light verb analysis.

## 7. IS *KAXĨY* A QUOTING VERB?

We now return to the question posed in Section 3 concerning the status of *kaxĩy*. Could it be a discourse marker indicating the end of the quote, a quotative verb due its final position in the sentences, or a mere adverb? Before providing an answer, we present some initial considerations. At first glance, this word could be interpreted as a verbal modifier akin to ‘like this’ in English, as it can be read in sentence (31) in a similar but not identical manner as the one in (7), repeated below as (30):

- (30) Ũn te *kakxop* ũ-nāhā-Ø.  
 woman ERG child 3-fall-REAL  
 The woman said: “The child fell”.
- (31) Ũn te *kakxop* ũ-nāhā-Ø *kaxĩy*.  
 woman ERG child 3-fall-REAL this.way  
 The woman said: “The child fell”, like this.

In fact, there are several examples of *kaxĩy* that could be interpreted as ‘like this’ or ‘this way’ (*assim* in Portuguese), presented below:

- (32) Payā xap hā *kaxĩy* topixxax  
 but sew INS this.way fabric  
 But they sew the fabric like this.
- (33) Xi kuhut hu nō mō = yāy = nīy nō *kaxĩy*  
 and cut CC.SS 3.INS cover = REFL = cover 3.INS this.way  
 And they cut (the fabric) and they covered themselves (with the pieces), like this.

- (34) Yūmūg? **Kaxīy!**  
 understand this.way  
 Did you understand? Like this!

*Kaxīy* also occurs in tandem with an argument marked by *te* (35), which leads us to suspect that *kaxīy* is at least acting as a verb in this case. It is noteworthy that another formally and semantically related word, *xīy* ‘how’, behaves identically to *kaxīy* (36–38):

- (35) hām te **kaxīy** hā  
 time ERG this.way INS  
 Yesterday (Lit.: At the time which was/happened this way)

- (36) Māyōn te **xīy?**  
 sun ERG how  
 What time is it? (Lit.: How is the sun?)

- (37) Tāyūmak xohi te **xīy?**  
 money many ERG how  
 How much does it cost? (Lit.: How much money is it?)

- (38) Tu te **xīy?**  
 3 ERG how  
 Why? (Lit.: How is it? / How did it happen?)

As we can see from examples (35–38), conventionalized constructions in Maxakalí using *kaxīy* (and *xīy*) are structured like sentences with transitive native verbs, or ideophonic and loan intransitive verbs in which the subject is marked with the postposition *te* and the object position is unfilled.<sup>13</sup> The fact that *kaxīy* and *xīy* have parallel syntactic structures is unsurprising: they have phonological material in common as well as semantic correlates that describe the manner of the event. We postulate that *kaxīy* is derived from *xīy*, preceded by the prefix *ka-*, whose original function remains unknown as it is apparently no longer a productive affix.

Although it is possible for *kaxīy* (and *xīy*) to occur following an argument with the postposition *te* as in the preceding examples, its use without being involved in a quote is less common. It appears at times in conventional expressions as seen in examples (35–38) or in expressions headed by the instrumental postposition *hā* as shown in example (35), now repeated as (39):

- (39) hām te **kaxīy** hā  
 time ERG this.way INS  
 Yesterday (Lit.: At the time which was/happened this way)

In this example, the whole clause *hām te kaxīy* is headed by the postposition *hā*. The resulting PP functions as a temporal adjunct, *hām te kaxīy hā* ‘yesterday’, suggesting that *kaxīy* in this sentence is most likely a fossil within a larger construction. Further evidence that illuminates this assumption is the occurrence of this kind of construction with the temporal conjunction *ihā* (‘in this time’, ‘then’). This grammatical element often occurs when a temporal expression is included in the sentence:

- (40) hāmxip **ihā**  
 later then  
 Later (as an answer to an invitation to talk)

When a temporal expression with *kaxīy/xīy* is used in a larger sentence, the temporal marker *ihā* must be used:

- (41) Māyōn te xīy **ihā** ūgmūg mō-g ax Ānātayit hām ax tu?  
 sun ERG how then 1.EXCL go-REAL FUT Anastasia work NMZ LOC  
 At what time are we going to Anastasia’s land (literally ‘work place’)?

The co-occurrence of *kaxīy/xīy* with the temporal expression *ihā* establishes that *kaxīy/xīy* do not always function as free words, and in these cases are fossilized in word chunks. Despite this peculiar use of *kaxīy*, it can also be found in more productive verbal uses as demonstrated by the examples (42a–b):

<sup>13</sup> We consider all verbs with an external argument to be transitive, on the assumption that transitive verbs may have a semantically incorporated object (Hale & Keyser 1993).

- (42) a. *Ũn te ũg=mõ-g kōmēn tu kaxīy.*  
 woman ERG 1.SG-go-REAL city LOC this.way  
 The woman (said): “I went to the city”, like this.
- b. *Ũn te kaxīy.*  
 woman ERG this.way  
 The woman (said) like this.

In (42a) we have a direct quote using the formula presented in (6) as discussed in the previous sections. In (42b), in contrast, the whole quote is suppressed while the structure of ‘Speaker *te* ... *kaxīy*’ is preserved. This is exactly the structure of a transitive native verb, specifically, the structure of an unergative verb: ‘A *te* [null object] verb’, which is quite common in Maxakalí:

- (43) *xi yā hāmxop popmāhā, nēnxōg nōm xexka te kaxīy.*  
 and FOC gift give.PL sheet that big ERG this.way  
 and (they) gave (the ancestors) gifts, a sheet that was big like this.
- (44) *Ā te kaxīy. Ā te mī-y nūhū.*  
 1.SG ERG this.way 1.SG ERG make-REAL this  
 I (make) like this. I make this.
- (45) *Yā xohi te kaxīy, yāmīy xop yā nū-n ax nūy yūhūm.*  
 FOC many ERG this.way spirit ASSOC FOC come-REAL FUT PURP.SS sit.SG  
 Everybody does this way, the group of spirits will come to stay (in the village).

In (43–45), *kaxīy* (meaning something like ‘do this way/like this’ or ‘make this way/like this’) seems to behave as an unergative verb, i.e., verbs that have an external argument headed by the postposition *te* and whose complement is a semantically incorporated object. In the specific case of *kaxīy*, the quote itself would be the incorporated object. Unergative objects are incorporated through the process of conflation according to Hale & Keyser’s (1993, 2002) proposal. They use the term *conflation* for the situation in a transitive structure where a noun is incorporated into an empty light verb to form a denominal verb, together yielding unergative verbs (see Figure 2).<sup>14</sup>

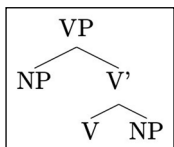


Figure 2 Conflation, according to Hale & Keyser (1993: 73).

The unpronounced denominal complement incorporated into V would be the unergative verb as the tree notation shows:

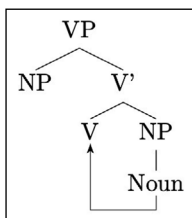


Figure 3 Noun incorporation into V.

In Figure 3, a noun is incorporated into V, yielding a typical unergative verb. So one could argue that *kaxīy* is an unergative verb (at least in its version with a verbal reading) like ideophones, loan verbs, and some exceptional native verbs. Such an analysis was presented by Silva (2020; see also footnote 4). Although the quote is not a noun that could be incorporated and verbalized, one could

<sup>14</sup> Hale & Keyser’s (1993) light verb V has been subsequently replaced in much literature by the notion of a light *v* projection above VP itself (which in turn can condition the presence of ergative marking on the subject). For the purposes of discussion here, we maintain the original proposal with conflation into V.

assume that the whole quoted clause, meaning something as “it...”/“this...”/“that” (that was said) as a reference to the quote, would be incorporated into the light verb *v*, giving rise to a null verb of speech *V* meaning something like “to say *X*” (*X* would be the content of the quote) or “to say this” as shown in Figure 4:

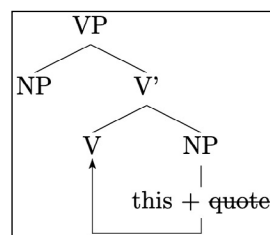


Figure 4 Quote incorporation.

As we can see in the tree representation in Figure 4, the quote or a null-reference to it as “this” is incorporated into *V* (and then verbalized as *kaxĩy*) due to the lack of an overt verb of speech.

There are other analytic possibilities, however. Although *kaxĩy* seems to share characteristics with unergative verbs in Maxakali, for example subjects headed by the postposition *te* and incorporated objects, there are also clear syntactic differences between unergatives and *kaxĩy*. The first of these dissimilarities is that *kaxĩy* is linked to the incorporated object, the quote itself. Although it is possible for *kaxĩy* to appear without a pronounced object (the incorporated quote or its correspondent “this”), the quote must be present either in a previous or in a following clause where *kaxĩy* occurs so that they can be bound. This binding of *kaxĩy* and its quote reference (“this”) can be observed in sentences (31) and (45), repeated here respectively as (46–47):

(46) *Ũn te [kakxop ũ-nāhā-Ø] **kaxĩy***  
 Woman ERG child 3-fall-REAL this.way  
 The woman said: “The child fell”, like this.

(47) *Yā xohi te **kaxĩy**, [yāmĩy xop yā nū-n ax] nūy yūhūm.*  
 FOC many ERG this.way spirit ASSOC FOC come-REAL FUT PURP.SS sit.SG  
 Everybody does this way, the group of spirits will come to stay (in the village).

In sentences (46–47), *kaxĩy* (in bold) is semantically bound to other constituents (delimited by square brackets). In (46), it is bound to *kakxop ũ-nāhā* ‘the child fell’ in the preceding clause; in (47), it is bound to the quote *yāmĩy xop yā nūn ax* ‘the group of spirits will come’ in the following clause. This binding phenomenon is not present in unergative verbs, which do not have this co-reference with other elements in a sentence. Another mismatch between *kaxĩy* and unergatives is the absence of subjects related to *kaxĩy* with an agentive theta-role and the lowered pitch associated with *kaxĩy* compared with other verbs, including unergatives. This may weaken the argument that *kaxĩy* is an unergative verb, but it seems to correlate to the *dicendi* verb omitted in the quoted clause.

Despite these differences compared to unergatives, *kaxĩy* seems to be related to the light verb just like the unergatives. Since the direct object (the quote or its null-reference “this”) is associated into the light verb similarly to the unergative verbs, the function of *kaxĩy* would be to signal the complex quote/light verb construction in the sentence. More data must be gathered to fully tackle these questions. One still needs to determine if *kaxĩy* is a true quotative verb or a simple discourse marker. On the one hand, we found that *kaxĩy* fulfills the syntactic requirement of a transitive verb in Maxakalí, that is, it requires an external argument postposed by *te*, and appears canonically at the end of a sentence. On the other hand, quotes (and ideophones for that matter) can occur without *kaxĩy*, as demonstrated in the previous sections. *Kaxĩy* also has a distinct prosodic nature from the other verbs (see Figure 1), at least when used after quotations and ideophonic verbs.

We argue that on typological grounds that *kaxĩy* is indeed a verb but also that when used after quotations and ideophones, it is grammaticalized into a discourse marker that notes the way the said quotes/ideophones were performed. That is, *kaxĩy*, as a discourse marker, is used as a deictic to reinforce the demonstrative nature of the quote/ideophone and to highlight the connection between



the quote and the null *dicendi* verb. Diessel (1999: 74) mentions that manner demonstratives can be used as discourse deictics and are often glossed as “in this/that way”, “like this/that”.

For example, in Tselal, onomatopoeic ideophones involve a demonstration operator embedded under a reported speech predicate *chi* ‘say’ (Henderson 2016). And in Xhosa, sentences with ideophones require the verb *thi*, which “apart from its speech/sound related meaning, [...] also communicates the set of meanings related to the idea ‘(do) like this, imitate’ [and] is often accompanied by a gesture or gesticulation.” Thus, the Xhosa verb *thi* derives either from a manner deictic (focal) element ‘thus, like this’ or from a generic action verb. Finally, it is important to note that the presence of Xhosa *thi* is not compulsory. In several cases, this verb is (or may be) omitted and, further, it is phonetically eroding through gradual change (Andrason 2018).

We therefore analyze *kaxĩy*, when present in quoting/ideophonic constructions, as a demonstration operator grammaticalized from the verb *kaxĩy* ‘to be this way/like this’. This conclusion is arrived at because of the unusual features of *kaxĩy* for a verb (optionality and different prosody). Unlike in Tselal, the presence of the operator in Maxakalí is optional.

The verb in quoting constructions is null, but its presence can be apprehended from the operator *kaxĩy*. We posit this null verb considering that, as said before, *kaxĩy* is not a quoting verb and from the fact that in other languages, as it is the case in Xhosa, the *dicendi* verb may phonetically erode. If our hypothesis is correct, the verb in Maxakalí has eroded completely but can be recognized from both the argument structure ([A *te* quotation]) and the presence of *kaxĩy*. This can be summarized with the formula in (48) and illustrated in the example in (49):

(48) Speaker *te* quote null.*dicendi*.verb (**kaxĩy**)

(49) [Ũn te]<sub>A</sub> [kaxop ũ-nāhā-∅]<sub>O</sub> [∅]<sub>V</sub> [kaxĩy.]<sub>OPERATOR</sub>  
 woman ERG Child 3-fall-REAL null.verb this.way  
 The woman said: “The child fell”, like this.

In the sentence in (49) above, there is a null *dicendi* verb that is transitive in nature, derived from the fact that it has an argument (A) that indicates the speaker and is syntactically marked by *te* and an argument (O) that is an unmarked clause. *Kaxĩy*, because of its nature in this kind of construction, cannot be considered a verb but rather a modifier/operator to the null *dicendi* verb. Its position on the right of the verb is due to verbal modifiers in Maxakalí often being placed after rather than before the verb. This may indicate that *kaxĩy* has an adverbial status due to its relative fixed position near the verb. Adverbs, which have lower positions (VP-Adverbs), are involved in the modification of the verbal predicate (Predicate Operators) in opposition to Propositional Operators or S-Adverbs (Cinque 1999; Jackendoff 1972), as seems to happen with *kaxĩy* when it takes scope over the predicate involved in the demonstration.

We have thus seen that *kaxĩy* is typically used in three ways: (1) as a verbal modifier following the quote, translated as “this way” or “like this” (as in 31–34); (2) as a verb in conjunction with an argument marked by *te* in fossilized expressions (as in 35–38); and (3) in prototypical verbal uses with an argument marked by *te* (as in 42–45).

More tests to verify the status of *kaxĩy* must be undertaken. One possible test is to check if quotations with other verbal modifiers such as *mai* ‘good/well’, *tix* ‘twice’, or *hok* ‘prohibitive’ are grammatical. That is, one should examine the structure of sentences like ‘He said X well’, ‘He said X twice’, and ‘Do not say X!’: if similar to the structure in (48) but with other modifiers being used instead of *kaxĩy*, then it would support the analysis as a modifier.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS AND OPEN QUESTIONS

In this paper we examined quoted speech in Maxakalí and a related phenomenon, the use of the expression *hām pe pa xex* ‘to think’. We showed that although Maxakalí has been described as having both direct and indirect quotation, indirect quotation is absent in spontaneous speech, indicating that Maxakalí does not have indirect speech, *pace* Popovich (1986). Direct speech is introduced by means of *kaxĩy* used in three different possible ways: as a verbal modifier and as

a verb in typical verbal uses or in fossilized expressions. We described the use of ideophones and loan verbs from Portuguese and showed that both are not treated as true verbs in Maxakalí, but rather more akin to quotations, with a null light *dicendi* verb.

Though we now have a broader understanding of *kaxĩy* and its various functions, more investigation needs to be pursued in order to better understand its idiosyncratic behavior. Its status as a verb modifier with the function of a demonstration operator in quotations should be confirmed, alongside investigating whether its distinct prosodic pattern is due to a grammaticalization process, or additional factors.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the Maxakalí people for always welcoming us in their villages and for all the years of research collaboration. We would also like to thank Suzi Lima and Tonjes Veenstra for the opportunity to take part in the “Speech and attitude reports in Brazilian languages” project, to Françoise Rose, to Sara Hockett, and to all participants who commented and shared their insights with us at the project workshop in Belém in December 2019.


## FUNDING INFORMATION

Some of the data for this paper was collected in a field trip funded by the COSY Project (DFG-GZ:SA 925/14-1), Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft Berlin.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

## AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

**Mário Coelho da Silva**  [orcid.org/0000-0002-4882-1567](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4882-1567)  
Universidade Federal de Goiás, BR

**Carlo Sandro de Oliveira Campos**  [orcid.org/0000-0001-9362-3917](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9362-3917)  
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, BR

**Andrew Nevins**  [orcid.org/0000-0001-5318-5596](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5318-5596)  
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro/University College London, BR

## REFERENCES

- Andrason, Alexander. 2018. Ideophones as linguistic “rebels”: The extra-systematicity of ideophones in Xhosa (part II). Manuscript.
- Andrason, Alexander. 2020. Ideophones as linguistic “rebels”: The extra-systematicity of ideophones in Xhosa (part I). *Asian and African Studies (Slovak Academy of Sciences)* 29(2): 119–165.
- Araújo, Gabriel A. 2000. *Fonologia e morfologia da língua Maxakalí* [Phonology and morphology of the Maxakalí language]. Campinas: Universidade Estadual de Campinas masters thesis.
- Campos, Carlo S. O. 2009. *Morfofonêmica e morfossintaxe do Maxakalí* [Morphophonemics and morphosyntax of Maxakalí]. Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais doctoral thesis.
- Capone, Alessandro. 2016. *The pragmatics of indirect reports: Socio-philosophical considerations* (Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology 8). Cham: Springer. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-41078-4>
- Cinque, Guglielmo. 1999. *Adverbs and functional heads*. New York: Oxford University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195115260.001.0001>
- Clark, Herbert H. & Richard J. Gerrig. 1990. Quotations as demonstrations. *Language* 66(4): 764–805. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/414729>
- Diessel, Holger. 1999. *Demonstratives, forms, functions and grammaticalization* (Typological Studies in Language 42). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1075/tsl.42>

- Gudschinsky, Sarah C., Harold Popovich & Frances Popovich. 1970. Native reaction and phonetic similarity in Maxakali phonology. *Language* 46(1): 77–88. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/412408>
- Hale, Ken & Samuel J. Keyser. 1993. On argument structure and the lexical expression of syntactic relations. In Ken Hale & Samuel J. Keyser (eds.), *The view from Building 20: Essays in linguistics in honor of Sylvain Bromberger*, 53–109: Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hale, Ken & Samuel J. Keyser. 2002. *Prolegomenon to a theory of argument structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/5634.001.0001>
- Henderson, Robert. 2016. A demonstration-based account of (pluractional) ideophones. *Proceedings of SALT* 26: 664–683. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v26i0.3786>
- Jackendoff, Ray. 1972. *Semantic interpretation in generative grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Nikulin, Andrey. 2020. *Proto-Macro-Jê: Um estudo reconstrutivo* [Proto-Macro-Jê: A reconstructive study]. Brasília: Universidade de Brasília doctoral thesis.
- Nikulin, Andrey & Mário A. C. da Silva. 2020. As línguas Maxakalí e Krenák dentro do tronco Macro-Jê [The Maxakalí and Krenák languages within Macro-Jê stock]. *Cadernos de Etnolinguística* 8(1): 1–64.
- Pereira, Sílvia S. 2020. Switch reference in Maxakalí. In Marcelo Silveira, Maria J. G. F. Garcia & Ludoviko C. dos Santos (eds.), *Macro-Jê: Língua, cultura e reflexões*. Londrina: EDUEL.
- Popovich, Harold. 1985. *Discourse phonology of Maxakalí: A multilevel, multiunit approach*. Arlington: University of Texas doctoral thesis.
- Popovich, Harold. 1986. The nominal reference system of Maxakali. In Ursula Wiesemann (ed.), *Pronominal systems*, 351–358: Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Popovich, Harold. n.d. *Conjunções em Maxakalí* [Conjunctions in Maxakalí]. Manuscript.
- Rodrigues, Aryon D. 1999. Macro-Jê. In Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald & R. M. W. Dixon (eds.), *The Amazonian languages*, 164–206 (Cambridge Language Surveys). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SIASI – Sistema de Informação da Atenção à Saúde Indígena. 2014. *Dados populacionais indígenas por diversos parâmetros de análise* [Indigenous population data by diverse parameters of analysis]. Online at <http://portalsaude.saude.gov.br/index.php/o-ministerio/principal/leia-mais-o-ministerio/70-sesai/9518-siasi>
- Silva, Mário A. C. 2020. *Tikmũin yĩ ax tinã xohi xi xahĩnãg – Sons e pedaços da língua Maxakalí: Descrição da fonologia e morfologia de uma língua Macro-Jê* [Sounds and pieces of the Maxakalí language: A description of the phonology and morphology of a Macro-Jê language]. Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais doctoral thesis.
- Wetzels, Willem L. 1993. Prevowels in Maxacali: Where they come from. *Boletim da Associação Brasileira de Linguística* 14: 39–63.
- Wetzels, Willem L. 1995. Oclusivas intrusivas em Maxakalí [Intrusive stops in Maxakalí]. In Willem L. Wetzels (ed.), *Estudos fonológicos das línguas indígenas brasileiras*, 85–102: Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ.
- Wetzels, Willem L. 2009. Nasal harmony and the representation of nasality in Maxakali: Evidence from Portuguese loans. In Andrea Calabrese & Willem L. Wetzels (eds.), *Loan phonology*, 241–270 (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 307). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.307.11wet>
- Wetzels, Willem L. & Willebrord Sluyters. 1995. Formação de raiz, formação de glide e ‘decrowding’ fonético em Maxakalí [Root formation, glide formation, and phonetic decrowding in Maxakalí]. In Willem L. Wetzels (ed.), *Estudos fonológicos das línguas indígenas brasileiras*, 103–149. Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ.

#### TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Silva, Mário Coelho da, Carlo Sandro de Oliveira Campos & Andrew Nevins. 2023. Speech reports and ideophones in Maxakalí. *Language Documentation and Description* 23(2): 8, 1–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25894/ldd.359>

**Submitted:** 30 June 2021

**Accepted:** 30 September 2022

**Published:** 19 December 2023

#### COPYRIGHT:

© 2023 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons AttributionNonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC-BY-NC 4.0), which permits unrestricted distribution, reproduction and adaptation in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and that the material is not used for commercial purposes. See <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.

*Language Documentation and Description* is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Aperio.