THE WAY COCA "SPEAKS". PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF ANDEAN DIVINATION

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Abstract

In this paper I will describe and interpret some data from Southern Quechua and Southern Aymara spoken texts recorded during traditional divinatory sessions. This analysis is aimed to show that divination can be considered as an example of how ritual speech, often described as a phenomenon based on fixed sequences, is characterized by variable elements too, being the relationship between a particular "context of situation" and the divinatory speech event very strong. In particular, the analysis focuses on a specific kind of speech acts, which seem to be built with the help of morphological devices that are normally used to indicate the source of information in the Quechua and Aymara language families. The same devices are used with a specific performative function in the context of divination: To "officialise" the message of the oracle and to oppose this to the speech acts of the diviner.

Keywords: Quechua; Aymara; Ritual language; Evidentiality; Intentionality.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to describe some specific characteristics of the language of divination. In particular, I will describe the use of two indigenous Andean languages during the rituals of divination with coca leaves, focusing on the concepts of "evidentiality" and of "intentionality".

The most important reason for the choice of divination as a linguistic scientific object is perhaps that the verbal communication used during divinatory sessions shows typical features of everyday conversation as well as of ritual language. The study of divinatory language could help linguists to understand about both textual types and about how they are intertwined; the interlace between everyday speech and ritual communicative patterns seems to make language of divination a type of text which possesses precise characteristics, distinct from those belonging to other kinds of ritual language.

Perhaps the most evident feature is the fact that diviners and their customers must exchange, at different moments, a relatively high amount of information in order to develop the ritual session itself (for example, diviners and customers must communicate about the details of the matter that has to be analysed). This phenomenon makes divination a very complex kind of ritual activity, different if compared with

rituals typified by a low degree of "informativity" or variation (for example, a christening).

In the following discussion the issues of "evidentiality" and "intentionality" will be stressed, as well as the fact that these concepts could be seen as strongly interdependent in the language of divination.
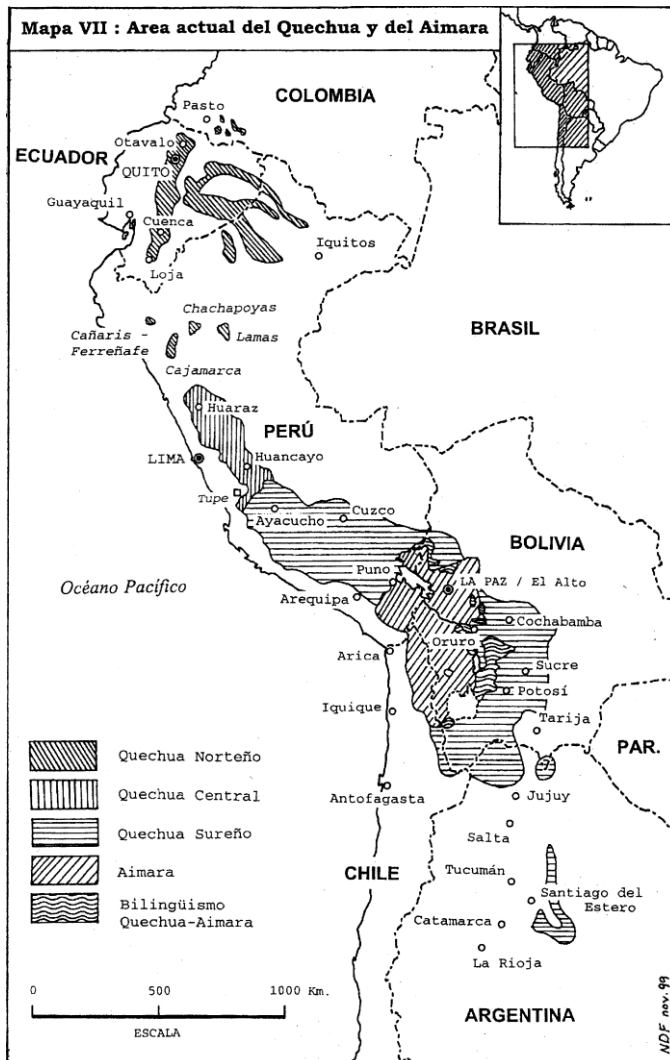

Image 1: *Distribution of the Quechua and Aymara linguistic families. The Southern sub-groups are identified by horizontal lines and diagonal lines respectively* (Cerrón-Palomino, 2000: 379).

1. Quechua and Aymara evidentiality

Quechua and Aymara texts are strongly characterized by the use of what has been defined "evidentiality" in Linguistics: "a linguistic category whose primary meaning is source of information" (Aikhenvald 2004: 3). In the Quechua language family, as well as in the Aymara, one set of suffixes is used to indicate both:

1)   source of information;
2)   degree of truthfulness.

Each of these sub-categories allows three choices, depending on A. who is perceived as the source of the information contained in a text (1. the speaker himself; 2. his inferences or 3. an impersonal source, such as in "they say that", pragmatically defined – for example, in the oral tradition this choice seems to correspond to the sentence: "the ancestors said that…"; on the contrary, in everyday speech this choice seems to mean "people say that...") or on B. the degree of truthfulness, going from 1. certain to 2. probable to 3. a neutral position, characterized by the fact that the speaker takes no responsibility for what is communicated (in Quechua the system concerning the "degree of truthfulness" can be even more nuanced, thanks to the use of additional suffixes). As it is known, evidentiality systems of other world's languages vary from two-choice systems to five-choice systems (Aikhenvald 2004: 25-63).

Evidentiality morphemes, as it will be described in the VI part of this article, are also used in ritual language. They seem to be characterized by meanings strongly dependent on a particular context of situation. The way evidentiality is used in the language of divination seems to illustrate two main topics of Pragmatics:

A)   the absence of "intentionality" and
B)   a particular class of speech acts, which John Austin called "verdictives" (Austin 1962: 152).

I will analyse these two issues, trying to underline their relationship.

2. Absence of intentionality and divination

"Intentionality" as it is known has been defined as one of the seven principles of textuality by Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Dressler (1981b: 118-144); intentionality is also fundamental in the model of communication based on the cooperation maxims as originally proposed by Grice. For Grice intentionality is recognizable in the fact that who produces a text wants to produce an impression on an audience, making this intention be recognized (Grice 1971: 58).

The concept of intentionality has been discussed from different disciplines and perspectives during the last three decades. Some authors have also questioned intentionality as an element of textuality – a brief resume of the debate concerning the types of texts characterized by the "absence of intentionality" has been given from du Bois (1993: 48-53). It has been underlined for example that some ritual speech acts can be perceived as sentences which carry a meaning, and at the same time do not show any intention of the speaker. The clearest example of this is the Yoruba soothsayer who expresses the result of a divinatory process – after casting and interpreting some objects – without having the possibility to choose the ritual words or utterances that are to be used. Generalizing about Ifa divination ("Sixteen Cowrie divination", Nigeria), it could be said that the chance determines the text actually expressed and not the soothsayer or the deities associated to the oracle; indeed, the same Yoruba people seem to perceive these deities just as supervisors of the ritual, not as producers of the oracle's texts (du Bois 1993: 59-62); this fact (that the soothsayer speaks "on behalf of the chance", a concept that du Bois has defined as "apersonality") even legitimates as true the message of the oracle (du Bois 1993: 59, 63-65).

In the examples proposed from du Bois about Ifa divination as it is used in the Yoruba culture of Nigeria (du Bois 1993: 54-56; Bascom, 1969, has described Ifa divination in detail), the soothsayer must cast some cowrie shells. Each throw corresponds to different figures (according to the number of shells facing mouth up), and each figure corresponds to different possibilities and standard utterances (some of which are originally expressed from a deity – du Bois 1993: 55), among which the customer must choose the one who fits with his particular situation (love, building a house, etc.). The principle of "meaning without intention" found in the Yoruba divination is not different, even if more complex, from the ritual activity which can frequently be observed in "western" society: That of a lover throwing flowers' petals and saying, every time, "she/he loves me" or "she/he loves me not". At the end of the ritual and after observing the result corresponding to the remaining petal, the final utterance ("she/he loves me" or "she/he loves me not") will be determined from the chance and not from the intention of the person who threw the petals. In the case of the Yoruba divination, the soothsayer has to remember thousands of expressions and, after casting the shells, he has to tell them in a sequence, until the customer identifies the one corresponding to his own situation (du Bois 1993: 55). In particular, and relevantly from a cultural point of view, the fact that the chance determines the utterances expressed is interpreted from the participants as a guarantee of truthfulness and of a correct ritual performance; it could be argued that, in the same way, in the "western" society the method of carrying out an experiment reducing the human intention and influence as much as possible can make a result "scientific" (du Bois 1993: 60-61).

The phenomenon of the absence of intentionality can be also found in other types of divination throughout the world (some examples from African countries are given in du Bois 1993: 54-59). Even if "speaking non-intentionally" can be observed in other kinds of ritual speech (for example, during "in trance speaking"; du Bois 1993: 53), the etiquette of "meaning without intention" seems to be evident in divination; perhaps, this etiquette could be defined as a "divinatory mode of meaning production", what could be resumed as following: "divination is a process for obtaining information which is (typically) unavailable by ordinary means...viewed in its social aspect, however, divination is...a means of establishing social facts...Admittedly, because the oracle cannot in a direct sense vocalize, it may be left to the diviner (or the petitioner) to carry out the uttering of the words. But which words are selected, and which meanings, are in principle outside the utterer's volitional control" (du Bois 1993: 53-54). Based on field research, I would like to add a further suggestion to the question of "intentionless meaning": That speech acts of Andean divinatory language are based on a "non-prototypical" use that diviners do of evidentiality morphemes. Before showing how these suffixes act as "clues of intentionality", I will briefly describe divination as a textual type, referring to the kind of textual analysis proposed by Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Dressler.

3. Text planning in ritual language

The perspective of de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981a, 1981b) implies that who produces a text gradually plans its content and form as a net, building relationships between elements according to seven general principles (1981b: 1-14, 32-49). While "net-like planning" can be easily imagined for everyday conversation, in which speakers

have to solve the problem of a correct expression (of what has been planned to be communicated and performed) or the problem of interpretation (of the linguistic sequences heard in a specific context), the same model can successfully be applied with a greater effort to the description of ritual language. Here, the fixity of the syntactic structures and of the morphological and lexical choices would in theory exclude planning. However, some phenomena seem to lead to the contrary.

The first ascertainment regards the simple fact that the ritual specialist has to put his greatest care and attention onto the performance. This must be almost perfect, if the intention is to produce some effects (Cardona 1976: 226; Rappaport 1998: 198, 1999: 36-37; Staal 1990: 182-190). Aside from perfection of formal structures (phonetic details and suprasegmental effects seem to be the most common manifestation of the speaker's care – Staal 1990: 178-182; Gnerre 1996 [1986]: 196), also the ability of the ritual specialist to "attach" the text to a context could in some cases be considered a condition of a perfect performance.

The second element is associated with the fact that ritual itself can be considered an adaptation of performative patterns to a specific situation (Bell 1997). The best way to clarify the concept consists perhaps in mentioning the use of proverbs. The fact that proverbs have to be understood linking the "surface structure" to a particular context of situation shows that communicative fixity (a phenomenon which ritual language represents too) does not exclude "situation oriented" meanings or performative possibilities. For example, proverbs may be used as legal texts in different African traditional communities, every time referring to a specific context (Cardona 1989). While the linguistic counterpart of most types of ritual activity only require the appropriate "felicity conditions" in order to be expressed, in the case of divination a great part of the text of the entire speech event depends on a context "attached" to a specific situation. In other words, diviners must consider several contextual variables in order to vocalize the answer of the oracle to the petitioner's problem or doubt.

The third element regards the specific linguistic characteristics of divination. Rites of divination often involve at the same time fixed as well as non-fixed elements. These are those sentences with which "the oracle" expresses her own version of the reality answering the particular question of the petitioner (the result of a battle, success in love or in hunt, human relationships, illness, etc.). As it is easy to imagine the ways in which fixed and non-fixed elements are interwoven vary according to the different types of divination which can be found in the world's cultures. However, as we will see in the following examples, there are different reasons to think that a sort of interdependence between text planning and the context of situation also characterizes the language of divination.

I will clarify what has been affirmed above with the help of one magic text and, then, describe how the language of divination can be seen as an example of planning.

The text which follows is in Latin. It comes from the ancient city of Minturnae (nearby Latina, Italy) and has been written (probably around the beginning of the Christian era) in italic on a lead bar; this was found together with a little statue representing a woman. Even if the language of the text represents a written rather than an oral variety, it is to presume that it is near to a spoken form of Latin. Some phonological elements are unquestionable indexes in this direction (fall of /n/ before fricative consonant – "iferi" instead of "inferi"; absence of casus morphemes: Accusative "quicqua" instead of "quicqua+m"):

1.
Popular Latin:
Dii iferi, vobis comedo, si quicqua sactitates habetes, ac tadro Ticene Carisi: quodquod agat, quod incidat omnia in adversa. Dii iferi, vobis comedo ilius memra, colore, figura, caput, capilla, umbra, cerebru, ...Dii iferi, si illa videro tabescete, vobis sacrificiu libens ob anuversario facere...

Classical Latin:
Dii inferi, vobis commendo, si quicquam sanctitatis habetis, ac trado Tychenem Carisi: quodquod (= quidquid) agat, quod (= ut) incidant omnia in adversa. Dii inferi, vobis commendo illius membra, colorem, figuram, caput, capillos, umbram, cerebrum, ... Dii inferi, si illam videro tabescentem, vobis sacrificium libens ob anniversarium facere ... (voveo)...
(Stolz / Debrunner / Schmid 1993: 105-106).

English translation:
Gods of the underworld, I entrust Ticene Carisi to you, if you have some magic power, and I entrust (her): Whatever she does, her actions must turn out unfavourable. Gods of the underworld, I entrust you her limbs, her face, her appearance, her head, her hair, her shadow, her brain, (many other body parts follow; they are omitted in order to transcribe the example in a concise way)... Gods of the underworld, if I will see her consumed, I (promise to) offer with pleasure a yearly service for you...

In this formula some elements have probably to be considered the realization of fixed patterns or sequences. Among these, the "felicity conditions" of the speech event which are named in the introductory part, i.e. the proper participants and the correct ritual actions. In particular, the names of the deities who are supposed to support the speaker's request ("Dii iferi" – Gods of the underworld) and the person who is cursing, represented in the suffix of first person present indicative (+o in "tadr+o" – I entrust; the present indicative mood itself typically enables an explicit illocutionary speech act); furthermore, the first period also contains the appropriate circumstances ("si quicqua sactitatis habetes" – if you have some magic power), named under the letter "A.2" in the Austin's scheme as a part of the speech act's felicity conditions (Austin 1962: 14-15). The "opening" position of "Dii iferi" could indirectly confirm the intuition of Finnegan (1969) about the function of naming "super-human" beings as an audience of performative utterances in "non western" cultures (Finnegan's examples regard significantly everyday conversation: "I am sorry", "you are welcome").

On the contrary, other elements of the text depend on the specific context of situation. A clear example of "procedural attachment" of the text to the context of production ("Prozeduranschluss": de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b: 178) is represented from the proper name "Ticene Carisi", "goal" of the curse. If the position of the "goal" seems to have been stable in the Latin curses, its actual realization was context-oriented and had to correspond to the person whom the author wished to become paralysed or dumb (Stolz / Debrunner / Schmid 1993: 104-110). I adapt the net scheme described by de Beaugrande / Dressler (1981b: 50-87) to the Latin text, as this model has largely been accepted (the model should represent both the result of the interpretation of a text from the hearer as well as the underlying communicative aims of the speaker – de

Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b: 46; for other possible models of text production and reception: Schwarz 2008: 167-237). Furthermore, this kind of visual representation has the advantage to give an immediate idea of the importance of an element in a text structure (an example is "Dii iferi"; this "text knot" is directly linked to four elements).

The items that could be seen as adaptations of an abstract pattern to the context of situation are marked with italic. The left column corresponds to the temporal sequence (T = time) and to the syntactic features of each element. On the right box different kinds of semantic and syntactic relationships link the items to each other (the concepts corresponding to the etiquettes of the net are described in de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b, chap. V). The lines with one arrow represent the operation that the speaker probably does while assigning the specific function of an item in the net during the text planning – for reasons of space only the items of the main sentence are linked with the ones represented on the net. The little numbers at the very right of the table indicate a possible order during the text planning, if we consider that speakers first look for the most important concepts related to the main communicative aim, then for their grammatical and syntactic relationships and, at the end, for their possible linear disposition (these seem to be the most important mental operations used by speakers during the production of a text, according to de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b, chap. III).
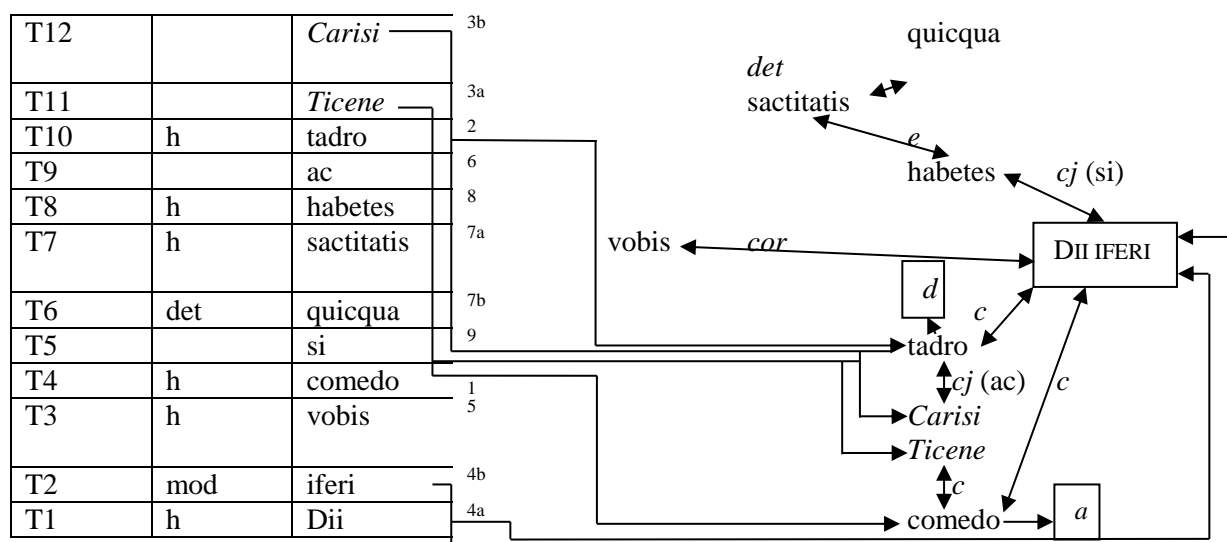

Table 1: *Left column: h = head; det = determiner; mod = modifier. Right net: a = action; b = object c = object of the action; d = equivalent action; e = possession; cj = conjunction; cor = coreference; det = determiner*

Aside from the proper name, also the sentence "si illa videro tabescete, vobis sacrificiu libens ob anuversario facere" (if I will see her consumed, I (promise to) offer, with pleasure, a yearly service for you) could represent an "attachment" to the situation. The pronoun "illa(m)" (her) has the function of binding the text to a particular (female) individual; furthermore, this sentence seems to be the actualization of one of the 12 "strategies" with which the speaker tries to reach a main purpose (de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b: 191-197), in particular of strategy number 3. This says: "to encourage planbox escalation, upgrade the object or event that you are being asked to give or perform".

Other strategies (2., 5., 6., and 12.) can be found in the same text. These strategies could better be seen as "crystallized" rhetorical devices of the fixed performative sequence ("performers of rituals...follow, more or less punctiliously, orders established or taken to have been established, by others" – Rappaport 1999: 32), while the realization of strategy number 3. seems to be oriented to a particular and current aim (offering a service should persuade the gods to destroy Ticene Carisi) and could eventually be seen as an "individual" contribution of the "performer". Strategies as those realized by 3. can be considered as a clear example of what has been called "situationality", one of the seven principles of textuality (de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b, chap. VIII); if we link the abstract formulation of the strategies to the text, we can see how sentences can "perform" or support actual aims of the speaker in the context of the curse.

Table 2 represents the strategies and sentences in a synoptic way. Strategy n. 3, "attached" to the specific situation context, is marked with italic.

The analysis of the text about Ticene Carisi and its comparison to the linguistic patterns of similar Latin rituals could eventually indicate that naming the participants is a stable element of ritual texts (Stolz / Debrunner / Schmid 1993: 104-110 about Latin curses; Cardona 1976: 226-227 about a Roman offering and about a text expressed by Scipio Africanus during the Roman conquest of Carthage; Cardona 1988: 49, about the foundation of a Roman city). Not surprisingly, this phenomenon seems to appear, with variables, in different cultural areas and in different ritual types, for example among Native Americans (Shuar: Gnerre 1996, with relation to ceremonial dialogue), Polynesians (Samoa: Duranti 1992, with relation to political-giuridical meetings) or Africans (Nigeria: Bascom 1969, with relation to divination).

From a pragmatic point of view, it could be interesting to focus on the relation between a text and its context of production in the specific case of divination. I will investigate this matter in the section VII paying a particular attention to the concept of "evidentiality" and to Quechua and Aymara divinatory sessions.

STRATEGY	CONTEXT	AIM	TEXT
2. If someone else's monitoring does not match your own outlook (...) you may: (...) question it	Socially recognized standard activity (magic ritual: curse)	Supporting the felicity conditions by showing intimacy (e.g. knowledge of their qualities) with the superhuman audience	if you have some magic power
3. To encourage planbox escalation, upgrade the object or event that you are being asked to give or perform	Context of situation (cursing Ticene Carisi; magic-religious exchange: Carisi's death *versus* yearly service)	Supporting the utterances which "perform" the curse	*if I will see her consumed, I (promise to) offer with pleasure a yearly service for you*
5. Project your own	Socially recognized	Performing utterances	(Gods of the

desires and goals ("destruction of Ticene Carisi") onto other participants ("the gods") except when there is evidence of the contrary	standard activity (magic ritual: curse)	related to the speech act "to curse"	underworld) I entrust you (Ticene Carisi)
6. When the monitorings of participants fail to match ("performer's aims and, eventually, gods' aims"), negotiate the sense of the topic concepts involved ("I entrust")	Socially recognized standard activity (magic ritual: curse)	Performing utterances related to the speech act "to curse"	(I entrust you) her limbs, her face, her appearance, her head, her hair, her shadow, her brain
12. To encourage co-operation, downgrade the expenditure of time and resources ("whatever") that others must make to further your goal	Socially recognized standard activity (magic ritual: curse)	Cursing with an indirect speech act ("must turn out unfavourable")	whatever she does, her actions must turn out unfavourable

Table 2: *Aims and strategies of a Latin magic text*

4. The structural pattern of Andean divination with coca leaves

In the text described above, naming Ticene Carisi can be seen as representing an "attachment" to a situation context: The proper name of the person who has to be damaged is the element which has to be "planned" from the speaker and adapted to a fixed linguistic sequence in order to satisfy the felicity conditions of a specific speech act (to curse); this is, in turn, an important part of a complex speech event. In particular, the proper name is located at the end of a speech act, whose structure is based on 1) naming some PARTICIPANTS of the speech event (Hymes 1972) related to the tradition (the "god-audience"); 2) one EXPLICIT PERFORMATIVE VERB (repeated with a synonym); 3) stating (indirectly) the superhuman QUALITIES of the audience; 4) naming one HUMAN PARTICIPANT as the object of the ritual performance.

While 1), 2) and 3) might be seen as fixed elements of the sequence, 4) can be described as the "new element" which has to be adapted into an invariable text structure. This procedure is probably guided by a larger rhetorical strategy, whose main aim is to merge ritual sequences and "situation context oriented" items together; it could be imagined that the procedure develops according to two levels of "planning": The text can be built in a first moment as an abstract mental net which considers contextual variables (for example, the PARTICIPANTS of the speech event), then as a linear "surface" sequence.

In the language of divination many elements can be seen as directly depending on the context of situation, as it happens in other types of ritual speech. The standard pattern of a divinatory session with coca leaves can be considered the following conversational sequence (based on this author's own field research with Quechua and Aymara speakers as well as on bibliographical material: Fernández Juárez 1996; Allen, 1988. The meaning of the words "participants" and "act sequences" refers to Hymes 1972. Friends or relatives accompany the customers in most of the cases):

"Participants"	"Act sequences"
diviner	A. question to the customer about the main reasons of her/his visit
customer	B. answer
diviner	C. question about some details of the theme mentioned by the customer
customer	D. answer
diviner	E. formula of invocation (naming traditional superhuman beings)
diviner	F. exhortation to the coca oracle
diviner	*G. throw of some coca leaves onto a traditional cloth*
coca oracle	H. answer
diviner/oracle	I. repetition of the "E-H" sequence

Table 3: *Sequence of speech acts during a session of divination with coca leaves* (*G, marked with italic, is characterized by the silence of the participants*)

In this kind of ritual communication it can be noticed that both standard conversational patterns (sequences of question and answer between diviner and customer) and fixed structures (the invocations and the exhortations) are used. The answers of the oracle include invariable speech acts (like "the fortune will be good") and variable descriptions corresponding to each possible human doubt. As it will be shown in the section VII divinatory communication seems to represent a case in which criteria such as "problem solving", "planning", "strategies" can be useful instruments for the description of how texts are created and understood. Generally, it can be said that the main communicative aim of the diviners is to legitimate their own position as medium and the social behaviour of the customer and of her/his social net (Park 1963; Fernández Juárez 1996).

In the following sections it will be described how this aim can be reached with the help of evidentiality morphemes.

5. "Prototypical" and "non-prototypical" use of the evidential suffixes

In an essay about ritual language (Bongiorno, in press) the author suggests that the use of evidential morphemes in the Quechua and Aymara divination with coca leaves has the function of underlining the opposition between the oracle's message and the expressions of the soothsayer, together with other textual devices such as "adjacency" and the use of synonymic expressions.

The author proposes also that the utterances of the oracle should be interpreted with the help of the Speech Act Theory. In particular as a succession of speech acts which Austin already grouped into a general category with the name of "verdictives";

examples of explicit verdictives are: "I value", "I take it…", "I judge (as)", "I discharge", "I acknowledge (as) guilty", "I diagnose" and "I estimate" (Austin 1962: 152). Speech acts found in the divinatory language with coca leaves seem to fit very well into this class if we consider how Austin defined verdictives: "(verdictives) are typified by the giving of a verdict, as the name implies, by a jury, arbitrator, or umpire" (Austin 1962: 150); they "consist in the delivering of a finding, official or unofficial, upon evidence or reasons as to value or fact, so far as these are distinguishable" (Austin 1962: 152); significantly, Austin also affirms that "verdictives have obvious connections with truth and falsity as regards soundness and unsoundness or fairness and unfairness" (Austin 1962: 152).

In the case of Andean divinatory language, this is characterized by lack of explicit verdictive verbs. Nevertheless, some features can be considered as a strong clue in the direction of verdictive speech acts.

Indeed, Austin identifies several devices that have the function to show a performative speech act (Austin 1962: 73-82). Aside from suprasegmental effects, adverbs, use of connecting particles, circumstances and consequences of an utterance, as well as the mood of verbs being a relevant criterion for recognizing performative speech acts. Quechua and Aymara evidentiality morphemes correspond, in part, to the function that mood and some adverbs have in the European languages; their prototypical meaning, related to the source of knowledge, can also be used to perform verdictive speech acts during divinatory sessions, as the examples below (VII) seem to show.

Andean ritual language can be classified as a context in which evidential morphemes are used in a "non-prototypical way". Quechua and Aymara evidentiality categories are characterized by sets of suffixes which mark the opposition among different sources of knowledge; as mentioned at the beginning, they also indicate different degrees of certainty. It is perhaps useful to briefly sum up the system of oppositions in the mentioned languages:

Southern Quechua	Southern Aymara	degree of certainty	source of information
+mi	+wa / +χa	certain	senses (view, taste, smell, touch)
+si	(free form after a quotation) s+i+wa	absence of responsibility	hear-say
cha	+pacha / +0	probable	logical/deductive thinking

Table 4: *"Prototypical use" of Southern Quechua and Southern Aymara evidential morphemes*

The two languages share a very similar system, if compared to other indigenous languages of South America, such as Guaraní (de Granda 1996: 467). For example, the system is based on three categories rather than four. Additionally, Quechua and Aymara share the fact that evidentiality is represented by bound morphemes. With relation to the semantic level, Floyd (1997) observed that, aside from a "prototypical meaning", expressing "source of information" or "degree of certainty", the meaning of the Quechua evidential morphemes could in some cases be considered as "non-

prototypical" (an intuition that could be eventually extended to Aymara, as it will be proposed in the section 7): They can be used to perform an illocutionary force such as that expressed with the imperative mood, for example; similarly, they can also suggest the expectations of the speaker with relation to the answer of the hearer in interrogative sentences. Furthermore, they can be used in interrogative sentences. Following sentences from everyday conversation can be considered as instances of "prototypically" (2. and 4.) and "non-prototypically" (3. and 5.) used evidentiality (Wanka dialect +chr = Southern Quechua +cha):

2. (Floyd 1997: 147)
kuti-mu-n'a-ña-CHR ni-ya-a-mi
to come back-far-fut.IIIpers.-now-HYPOTHESIS to believe-imperfect.-Ipers.-direct evidence
I think after my experience (that) it is probable (that) they will come back

Here +chr corresponds to the inference of the speaker that a specific event will occur. On the other side, in the following sentence +chr does not seem to convey the information of an inference:

3. (Floyd 1997: 156)
pero ¿ima-nuy-pa-CHR walmi-i daañu-kaa-chi-la?
but what-analogy-genit.-HYPOTHESIS woman-Ipers. to damage-pass.-causat.-past
how could it be that my wife allowed (that) they damaged the field?

The sentence, in its whole, does not expect any real answer; +chr functions to suggest an hypothesis (wife's lack of attention?), or, perhaps, expresses a great surprise as the event was not expected. The morpheme +m/+mi is opposed to +chr. An example of its prototypical use is following:

4. (Floyd 1997: 94)
trabaja-a-ña-M li-ku-n
work-movement(with-intention)now-DIRECT EVIDENCE to go-reflex.
he went to work (I saw him while he was going)

The morpheme +m/+mi, as +chr, can also be used in a non-prototypical way, that is, without a reference to the source of information or degree of certainty:

5. (Floyd 1997: 114)
kaada bis-ña-M falta-kuku-ya-nki
each time-now-"DIRECT EVIDENCE" to miss-?-imperfect.-IIpers.
you are missing (class) all the time

In the reported sentence, said from a father to his daughter, +m indicates a certain degree of criticism. In this case, the goal of the evidential is to communicate that "the daughter should go to school", not to give evidence for something that already is a part of the experience of the hearer. Indeed, "the speaker cannot pretend authority on states / events in which the hearer and not the speaker has been a conscious participant, because a) the evidence basis of the hearer is stronger and b) there is no need to inform the hearer about what he knows better than the speaker" (Floyd 1997: 115). In such cases, nor the speaker neither the hearer (could) think that the speaker wishes to suggest

he knows the reality better than the hearer. It seems more probable that the speaker wants to express a sort of criticism, evaluating what the hearer is doing (Floyd 1997: 114-115).

Another evidential, +shi, is prototypically used in Quechua Wanka (as in Southern Quechua) during reported speech and story-telling; similarly to +chr and +m/+mi, +shi is also used with non-prototypical meanings; +shi, anyway, is not occurring in the corpus that will be analysed and is not relevant to the present discussion; for this reason I will not bring any example of this morpheme. It can be more helpful to observe how the mentioned morphemes can be used non-prototypically in the Quechua ritual language.

6. "Non-prototypical" use of the evidential suffixes and ritual language

Quechua and Aymara evidential suffixes are used in ritual texts too. As it happens in some cases during everyday conversation, the meaning of evidential morphemes in ritual texts does not seem to convey elements of validation or information about the source of knowledge (Floyd 1997: 115). Rather, "non-prototypical" meanings, pragmatically determined, can easily be identified (Floyd 1997: 116-124). In particular, speakers tend to use evidentials as a rhetoric means or to enable performative functions, suggesting ideas and feelings such as criticism, disappointment, respect and wonder (depending on the context conditions). For example in prayers:

6. (Floyd 1997: 116)
An-MI yachra-la-nki yaa-pa shrun'u-lla-a-ta taytá-y
You-"DIRECT EVIDENCE" know-past simple I-genit. heart-politeness-Ipers.-accusat. father-vocat.
You knew my heart oh Father (God)

Direct evidence or certainty can here be considered only with difficulty as the essential meaning carried from the morpheme +mi; indeed, the speaker seems to affirm something about the emotional or psychological state of another being – a supernatural being (Floyd 1997: 116). Non-prototypically used, +mi could rather have the function of supporting a change in the "status quo" of the social relationships which exist between speaker and hearer: In this case it could indicate a great respect of the speaker to God, by expressing the conviction that God knows about the person who prays (Floyd 1997: 116); this information should, in turn, perform a social change, marking a hierarchical state in which the speaker is recognized as a preferred interlocutor of a superhuman being. From this position the speaker could express explicit requests or supplications to God, asking for help in some tasks or in changing his condition (Floyd 1997: 116).

The Aymara evidential suffix +χa seems to have similar rhetorical functions, aside from that of direct evidence; it is used, for example, in ritual offerings (Fernández Juárez 1996: 295), maybe suggesting an "intimacy" with the superhuman beings.

Quechua interrogative and imperative sentences seem to confirm that rhetorical strategies are considered by the speakers while assigning evidential morphemes non-prototypical meanings. By imposing the hearer a particular interpretation of what is said

in a determinate situation, speakers tend to give evidentiality the pragmatic value of control of the speech-situation (Floyd 1997: 124, 134).

7. Evidentiality in Quechua and Aymara divination

The association between rhetorical strategies and evidentiality can also be recognised in the Quechua and Aymara language of divination; as it can easily be expected after the discussion and examples given above, evidential suffixes used in non-prototypical ways occur as an important element of these strategies.

The following examples belong to a corpus of ethnographic and linguistic data coming from my own field research. This was carried out with Peruvian and Bolivian native speakers of Southern Quechua and Aymara during the years 2008 and 2012. The sentences that I am going to describe and interpret are part of larger digitally recorded divinatory sessions. The details of these are provided in a text of the author about Quechua and Aymara divination (Bongiorno, in press). The most important information concerning the context of the field research can be summed up as follows: Sentences 7-11 were produced as parts of divinatory sessions carried out by ritual specialists (diviners and traditional medicine men). The author or a third participant asked the diviner some questions, followed by the latter's interpretation of the coca leaves. The questions concerned different topics, among which: The relation between a woman and her husband (sentences 7 and 10), the couple temporarily living separate and the wife being perhaps unfaithful; the future of the author's own research about divination (sentence 8); the profession of the customer's (a Quechua speaking woman) husband, who lived and worked in a distant place (sentence 9); the effects of the climate change on the Andean mountains (sentence 11).

Sentence n. 7. shows the relation between the specific context of divination with coca leaves and a non-prototypical use of the Aymara evidential suffix +χa:

7.   don Mateo (La Paz, Bolivia, 2nd April
                                                           2008)
cheqa-X(A) parl-(i)ta
truth-"DIRECT   EVIDENCE"   to   say
imperat.IIpers.sing.>Ipers.sing.
tell me the truth

This sentence was expressed during a divinatory session, after the customer had described the reason that lead her to the coca oracle; the ritual specialist requested the support from several superhuman beings (the mountain spirits) and asked the coca leaves for "saying" the truth. The evidential morpheme +χa*, normally used for direct evidence, helps the soothsayer to suggest that he can control the speech event during an interaction with a superhuman being (the coca leaf). In other words, the sentence could be interpreted as an indirect performative speech act with which the eventual messages of the coca oracle should be recognized as trustworthy.

* Aymara /χ/ = voiceless uvular fricative consonant (Cerrón-Palomino 2000: 13). +χa as an evidential suffix (implying "attenuation of personal knowledge") is discussed in Hardman 2001: 171 and Hardman 1986: 122.

A more complex rhetorical "play" of evidentiality can be found in the answers of the coca oracle. Here the meaning of the evidential suffixes is to seek in two directions. With the Quechua suffix +m/+mi and the Aymara +wa / +χa native ritual specialists seem to indicate that they speak "on behalf of the coca"; on the contrary, other morphological possibilities probably help them to mark they own opinions. An example of explicitly encoding the oracle's voice could be found in the following Aymara sentence:

8.   don Francisco Yuxra (Huatajata, La Paz, Bolivia, 13th October 2010)

jupa-X(A) s-i-X(A)
she-"DIRECT EVIDENCE" say-indicat.IIIpers.sing.-"DIRECT EVIDENCE"
she (mother coca) says (that...)

In this sentence what the coca oracle answers after the necessary ritual preparation seems to be related with information normally considered as "taken for granted" (expressed by +χa or +wa). Significantly, the same morpheme is used twice in the same sentence.

The voice of the oracle can also be implicitly encoded. Other examples seem to show how evidential morphemes enable the speakers to reach this aim. For instance, the following Quechua sentence:

9.   don Juan Quispe (Cuzco, Peru, 3rd March 2012)

allillan-MI allillan-MI ka-sha-n
good-"DIRECT EVIDENCE" good-"DIRECT EVIDENCE" to be-contin.-indicat.IIIpers.sing.
(his luck) is good (is) good at the moment

The soothsayer expressed this while interpreting the coca leaves for a woman who wanted to know about her family, in particular about her husband, who was living far from home. Don Juan, speaking on behalf of the coca, said that everything was going good. He used the morpheme +mi to mark the utterances of the oracle. A similar procedure can be found in an Aymara utterance:

10.   don Mateo (La Paz, Bolivia, 15th March 2008)

warmi chacha-pa-ru makhata-ni-WA
woman man-possess.IIIpers.-motion to come-future IIIpers.sing.-"DIRECT EVIDENCE"
the woman will come back to her husband

In this case "the oracle" said that the wife of the customer's uncle was going to come back to him after temporarily going away with another man. By answering 9. and 10., speakers link their texts into a specific ritual conversation. In particular, the use of evidential suffixes gives them the possibility to control a communicative situation and to try to reach aims which are very similar to the strategies described in III. In fact, speakers could wish to project their own "desires and goals" onto other participants (this can correspond to strategy n. 5 described in de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981b, chap. 8). The specific goals could consist in presenting the information (diviners' answers to the customers' questions) as a verbal representation of the oracle's message (being the coca leaf a "participant" who cannot vocalize).

The hypothesis of performing the speech acts of the oracle with the help of the morphemes +mi and +wa/+χa could be supported from the fact that soothsayers also use other morphemes related to evidentiality; in particular, those which normally express own inference, as Quechua +cha and Aymara +pacha/+0:

11.   don Victor Castro (La Paz, Bolivia, 28th September 2010)

waq-manta rit'i kapu-n-CH(A) kordillera-pi-qa
other-adv. snow to be-"INFERENCE" mountains-locat.-topic
Again will probably fall snow on the mountains

This sentence was said during a divinatory session in which the other oracle's speech acts, marked with the Quechua evidential +mi, affirmed that "it will rain / snow on the Andean mountains" with several synonymic expressions. At the end of the ritual interpretation of the leaves, the soothsayer marked the same topic with the evidential suffix +ch(a), which typically means "information obtained through one's own logical thinking". This device could let the customer think that the sentences containing the morpheme +mi represent the message of the source (the oracle) perceived as trustworthy and that, in contrast, the morpheme +ch(a) marks the personal deductions of the soothsayer; this possibility could also be supported from the fact that the sentences containing +ch(a) were expressed at the end of the divinatory text.

Indeed, it is probable that the diviners wish to underline that their own thoughts are opposed to the oracle's message. Park (1963) suggests that this is to keep a certain degree of vagueness and ambiguity (which, in this case, could be built with the opposition between two evidential morphemes and, eventually, between two different degrees of truthfulness), as soothsayers are exposed to the proof of the facts: False predictions could let them be criticized within a group. For this reason it is also difficult to imagine that the Quechua and Aymara diviners use the morphemes associated to direct evidence, to communicate the certainty of her/his own "intentional" words.

Image 2: *The Aymara medicine man Don Mateo (left side) during a session of divination with coca leaves*. Photo: Vito Bongiorno, La Paz, Bolivia (2008).

8. The language of divination as a type of text

The language of divination could be considered as an example of the fact that ritual texts are also the result of complex communicative procedures in which speaker and hearer try to work out a problem together. In particular, divination seems to be an evident "ritual link" between a problematic starting state, represented by a condition of uncertainty, and a state of arrival, in which the hearer feels "safe" if relieved of a doubt. As for all other kinds of text, both participants have to carry out "projects" linking what is said and heard to a particular context.

In order to do this, they have to "attach" their speech acts (mostly questions and answers) to the context of situation by planning the relevant and plausible utterances. In the case of the ritual specialist, it could be presumed that a high level of attention is used to plan how intentions (and their "absence") can and have to be communicated: The oracle's "intentionless" (determined by the case) utterances (indicated by Quechua +mi and Aymara +wa/+χa) opposed to the diviner's intentional utterances (indicated by Quechua +cha and Aymara +pacha/+0); similarly to everyday speech, the participants have to build topic ideas, develop these and build a grammatical "synthesis" among them (de Beaugrande / Dressler, 1981b, chap. III). As the degree of informativity is high (questions of the customer and answers of the oracle), these processes make divination different with respect to other kinds of ritual activities characterized by "fixed" linguistic sequences.

Conclusions

Divination makes clear an important pragmatic characteristic of everyday speech: Acceptability of the texts depends more on their "believability" and "relevance** to the participant's outlook regarding the situation" than from "reference to the real world" (de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981a: 179). In the case of Andean divination, the use of evidentiality makes the oracle's speech acts acceptable, obviously together with contextual conditions such as the ritual invocations of the traditional superhuman beings. The ability to indicate different types of "intentionality" and to "let the oracle speak" also enables the soothsayers to "negotiate" their own social status (normally high in the Andean societies), which, differently from that of a person whose position is recognized "once and for all", is built every time according to the performance.

** The word "relevance" is here used in its Gricean meaning, i.e. as a concept related to the conversational maxims, in particular to the maxim of "relation" (Matthews 1997: 220). De Beaugrande and Dressler resume this maxim in the following way: "The maxim of relation is simply: 'be relevant' ", the concept of "relevance" concerning both A. the topic of the conversation and B. the specific goals of the speaker (de Beaugrande / Dressler 1981a: 119).

In the case of divination with coca leaves, "relevance" could be used to associate the diviner's texts with some aims. These can be imagined as follows: 1. to identify, to analyse and to discuss the most important themes related to the customer's request; 2. to find a solution to the problem of "making known the unknown", i.e. to learn what both diviner and customer have no knowledge of with the help of the oracle; 3. to express this solution in the form of one or more verdictive speech acts by using the appropriate grammatical devices (the evidential suffixes).

List of abbreviations

Accusat   accusative
adv.   adverbial suffix
causat.   causative
contin.   continuous
fut.   future
genit.   genitive
imperat.   imperative
imperfect.   imperfective
indicat.   indicative
locat.   locative
pass.   passive
pers.   person
possess.   possessive
reflex.   reflexive
sing.   singular
vocat.   vocative

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