

Directives express the existence of an obligation or prohibition. Together with Abilitives, which address ability, they constitute Event modality— references to events that have not yet happened (Palmer 2001). The directives of Iquito, a language of the Peruvian Amazon, form a continuum of strength from the Imperatives to the weakest of Obligatives. Within this modality paradigm Iquito speakers offer a variety of glosses, making it difficult to tease apart the various levels of Event modality. This variation in glossing belies a system of modality that has undergone extensive semantic shift and has unexpected consequences for realis and irrealis marking.

Thus utterances like example (1) are often glossed in what seems like an Abilitive sense (able to), when the intended modality is Weak-obligation (should). *Parii* ‘able to’ has shifted from strictly Abilitive to include Weak-obligation in the example below. This direction of modality shift follows that set forth by Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca (1994).

1. Juaa nu-pariyyaa Marii parijatani yamiácuji iinana t++ nu-taasa.
Juan 3s **able to** María help because heavy is 3s-pack
Juan **should** help María because her pack is heavy.

I also argue that the Strong-obligative has influenced the development of both the Future and Imperative structures. Strong-obligatives, like (2), were sometimes glossed by speakers as ‘going to’ rather than ‘have to’. The Future, however, does differ from the Strong-obligative in that while also using irrealis word order (SOV), the aspectual morpheme is inceptive rather than completive, as in example (3). Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca describe the typologically common development of verbs of obligation like ‘have’ and ‘be’ into verbs expressing future. Again, an indirect speech act arises from an implicature.

2. Qui-sinaaqu+ siquita-**qui**
Is -cloths wash -CMP
I **have to** wash cloths.
3. Iina m+saji nu-sinaaqu+ siquita-**r++**
DET women 3SG-clothing wash-INCP

iyarácata amicaaca
quickly one.day.away
The woman **is going to** wash the clothing quickly in the morning. (Anderson 2004)

Both the Imperative and the Strong-obligative use completive aspect which asserts the speaker’s assuredness that the action will be completed, however, the zero-subject Imperative in example in (4) stands apart from the previous structures in its use of the realis word order (SVO).

4. Siquita-**qui** nuu.
wash -CMP 3s
Wash it. (Beier 2003)

This alignment of Imperatives outside a well developed irrealis paradigm is contrary to typical typological patterning. Chafe (1995) calls such alignments inconsistent. This unconventional configuration may be related to developments from semantic shift. Chafe proposes that speakers may have the expectation that imperatives be obeyed, thus giving them the sense of assertion associated with realis. Obligatives, as mere suggestions of a course of action, are less certain and therefore align with irrealis.

In addition to broadening the documentation of Iquito, the research lends evidence to typological issues in the areas of semantic shift and alternative alignments of the realis-irrealis system. The literal glosses given by community informants showed that these shifts have carried over into the Spanish of the community, a fact which holds interesting possibilities for historical influence of the indigenous language on the colonial language in the community.