

Ultimately, *tan* was phonologically reduced to *n-* and completely supplanted Colonial *t-* as a marker of imperfectivity, while the latter is only used in Modern Kaqchikel as an imperative/hortative marker.

This shift further set the stage for the emergence of a progressive marker. According to Maxwell & Hill (2006: 54), Modern Kaqchikel has recourse “to a paraphrastic [*sic*] construction with the verb *-ajin* ‘to be in progress, to be happening’ ” as illustrated in (5).

- (5) *Tajin n-(k)i-tzib'an täq x-Ø-kip nu-tz'ib'ab'äl*
 PROG IMPF-B1S-draw when PRFV-A3S-break A1S-pen
 ‘I was drawing when my pencil broke.’

However, *-ajin* is also to be found in Colonial Kaqchikel.

- (6) *tan ti-Ø-t-aj-in q=aq=-aläj lab=al chi ri= Pan Aj Chi Jolom*
 IM PRS-3A-e-be-AP fire-int war PR D PR cane PR head
 ‘There was an intense war raging there at Pan Aj Chi Jolom.’

(Maxwell & Hill 2006: 161)

We present evidence from speakers of Modern Kaqchikel in the Sololá region of Guatemala suggesting that in at least some dialects of Modern Kaqchikel, this Colonial form has been reanalyzed as a monomorphemic progressive marker, *tajin*, whereas the stem *-ajin* is no longer used productively.

We conclude by formalizing our analysis of the various markers of imperfectivity in Colonial and Modern Kaqchikel. We adopt Discourse Representation Theory (Kamp & Reyle 1993) as a semantic framework; it is particularly suited to this investigation in that (i) it has been previously developed to deal with a wide range of temporal phenomena in a variety of languages, and (ii) its dynamic properties allow certain pragmatic inferences to be captured formally, and thus it allows us to model the grammaticalization process with a degree of precision lacking in many diachronic studies.

References

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