

***Dizque* and *quesque* from evidentials to insufficiency markers in Spanish**

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It has been claimed that *dizque* ‘supposedly, allegedly’ and its alternative form *quesque*, have been extended from evidential to epistemic markers of modality encoding doubt (Travis 2006, Olbertz 2007).

Data from Mexican Spanish shows not only that the semantic change has already taken place but that the reportative-epistemic spectrum is complemented by *que* and *que dizque*. We argue that both forms *dizque* and *quesque* have become epistemic (insufficiency) markers questioning the veracity of the events (1) or providing an evaluative meaning (2) and (3):

1. a los nuevos los mandan a dormir/ *dizque* a dormir/ pero es para este/ agarrarlos/ en (titubea)/ cuando están en su/ en su cama
‘they tell the new ones to go to sleep/ “to sleep” / but is just to take advantage of them / while they are “in bed”’
2. Además ya sabemos que esos tipos *quesque* detectives pa lo único que sirven es pa seguir matrimonios pone cuernos
‘And we know that those guys, pseudo-detectives are only good for catching “cheating marriages”’
3. Ya nos vamos a la mina, papá (ríe), *quesque* a hacer como que trabajamos
‘We are heading off to the mine, dad (laughs), to pretend we work/ “to work”’

In contrast we provide evidence that in Mexican Spanish the evidential meanings are covered by *que* and *que dizque* as shown in (4) and (5):

4. En un principio las cosas estaban muy raras: nadie me quería decir una palabra, *que dizque* nadie sabía nada.
‘At the beginning things were weird: nobody wanted to tell me a word, allegedly nobody knew anything’
5. ¿*Que* te vas de viaje a India?
‘So you are traveling to India, they say?’

Crucially *dizque* and to a lesser degree *quesque* are becoming epistemic markers of insufficiency and falsehood. We show that *que* fulfills all reparative values meanwhile in *que dizque* the evaluative and the reportative meanings can be teased apart: *dizque* questions the veracity of the clause and *que* attests that what is being questioned was expressed by some unidentified source. We further argue that the forms *dizque* and *quesque* are losing their evidential content to specialize in encoding falsehood. These data show that the semantic change of *dizque* from an evidential into an insufficiency/falsity marker let the space for *quesque* to cover the evidential meaning of reported falsity that could be found in the root evidential use of XV Century Spanish.

References

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