

## A-2 On the functions of evidential markers in Tuvan narrative texts

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### Abstract

The study is devoted to the analysis of some evidential markers in Tuvan (Turkic) based on four genres of discourse including three different genres of narrative discourse: (i) a self-narration; (ii) a third-person narration; and (iii) a fairy tale. As a result, the evidential markers in Tuvan can be divided into two subgroups, whether they are bound to the speech situation or not, and the perspective shifting in narrative discourse manages the occurrence of these markers.

### 1. Introduction

The aim of the presentation<sup>1</sup> is to discuss the functions of some evidential markers in Tuvan (Turkic) based on three different genres of texts including narratives. Tuvan has several markers denoting evidentiality (including mirativity, Oorzhak 2014, 2018). However, the distinction of these forms is still not described well. This is perhaps due to the fact that the function of evidential markers are related to how the speaker acquired the information, and especially for firsthand evidential markers how the speaker recognized the event, and sometimes it is difficult to decide on them.

On the other hand, it is well known that evidential markers can function as the means to indicate the perspective shifting in narrative<sup>2</sup> texts (Mushin 2000, 2001, Aikhenvald 2004, 2012). For instance, reportative evidential markers denote the perspective of the speaker who heard about the events. In other cases the markers of mirativity can also be used in narratives as the markers of perspective shifting. The analysis of each occurrence of evidential markers in all the genres of texts is necessary for the better understanding of their functions. Thus, the present study intends to analyze the meanings of these markers in different genres of narration.

### 2. Frameworks and Previous analyses

#### 2.1 Frameworks

##### 2.1.1 Evidentiality and mirativity

Evidentiality is a linguistic category whose main function is to denote the source of information (Aikhenvald

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<sup>2</sup> The definition of narrative for the distinction between narrative and non-narrative is based on that in Toolan (2012): “A narrative is a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events, typically involving, as the experiencing agonist, humans or quasi-humans, or other sentient beings, from whose experience we humans can ‘learn’.” (Toolan 2012: Section 1.3)

2004:1). However, sometimes it is difficult to decide whether a certain marker is an evidential one, mainly because the marker has several functions and it is difficult to say which is the main function of the marker. For example, mirativity (the speaker’s unprepared mind, DeLancey 1997) in some cases has been seen as an independent category from evidentiality (DeLancey 1997), but in some cases it has been seen as the secondary function of the markers denoting source of information (Lazard 1999). The present study deals with evidentiality as a broad category including mirativity, and the evidential markers mentioned in this paper include markers whose main function is to denote mirativity.

### 2.1.2 Perspective and perspective shift in narrative

Various studies of different languages have revealed that the speaker (narrator of a story) makes use of perspective shifting in narrative, and some grammatical devices including evidentiality indicate the perspective shift.

Perspective shifting is a mental process which can’t be directly observed. Therefore, it is necessary to set some indicators to discuss it. In Zubin et al. (1995) and Mushin (2000, 2001) it is assumed that the shift of the deictic center is the indicator of perspective shifting. Thus, deictic elements such as personal pronouns and suffixes, demonstratives and other elements which denote spatial notions, and tense forms and other elements which denote temporal notions, can be seen as the indicators of perspective shifting.

### 2.1.3 Evidentiality, mirativity and perspective shifting

It is known that the perspective shifting in narration is related to evidentiality and mirativity in terms that the same form is used as the indicator of perspective shifting in narratives, and the marker of mirativity in general discourse. For instance, Slobin and Aksu (1982) mention that the verbal suffix *-mİş*, whose main function is the indication of indirect perception, denotes mirativity, and is also used in narrative discourse. Aikhenvald (2012) provides a typology of the semantics of mirativity, in which mirativity can be distinguished between the speaker (or narrator) and the character in the narrated story. According to Kogura (2018), an evidential marker *biXeİ* is used to manage the perspective shifting between the characters in the story and the teller of the story. In the following example (1), the marker *biXeİ* occurs in the main clause, which is described from the perspective of the speaker, and doesn’t occur in the embedded direct speech, which is described from the perspective of the character in the story.

- (1)    “*o-Xe=i*                      *o-Xe=i*                      *tutu*                      *o-ci,*                      *bi*  
to.become-PFV=IND    to.become-PFV=IND    such.as.that    to.become-COND    1SG  
*siN=de*    *gya-me*    *bu-ki.*”    *se-me*    *da*    *mo*    *sace-re*    *nane*  
2SG=DAT    to.get-CV    to.give-OPT    to.say-CV    FOC    tree    to.cut-IRR    person  
*aliN=de*                      *tawene-me*                      *gene-maqe*    *da*    *toro*    *emkeN*    *tate-me*  
mountain=DAT    to.climb.up-CV    to.go-CV    FOC    peach    one    to.pull-CV  
*gya-Xe*                      ***bi-Xe=i.***  
to.get-PFV    **to.be-PFV=IND**

““OK, I will bring a peach for you.” Then the lumberjack went up to the mountain, and got the peach.’ (Kogura 2018)

This marker is specific for fairy tales, and is generally not observed in other types of narration, like which the

speaker tells stories which the speaker experienced, or which the speaker tells stories which other people experienced. In addition, this marker doesn't occur in the texts in which the speaker tells about general knowledge.

## 2.2 Previous analyses

Evidentiality in Turkic languages was broadly discussed in several works by Johanson (2003), Aikhenvald (2012) and others as the opposition of the markers of indirect and direct evidentiality (Slobin and Aksu 1982; Isxakova et al. 2007). The study of grammatical modality and evidentiality in Tuvan is broadly discussed in recent works by Oorzhak (2012, 2018). She gave a detailed description of the Tuvan tense system in her dissertation (2002) and the resulting monograph (2014).

### 2.2.1 The forms

The Tuvan language deals with non-past and past forms. The marker *-Ar* generally expresses the non-past actions and events which coincide with the speech time or will take place in the future. Several auxiliaries depending on various markers express TAM accordingly.

The past tense markers are *-GAN* and *-Dĭ*. *-GAN* marker describes neutral and non-specified past actions and events. It usually expresses the actions in a remote past compared to the one by *-Dĭ*. The past by *-Dĭ* is definite and specified, it expresses the actions, which took place recently and are usually bound with the present. There are also three other rather specific past markers, but of them only *-ĭp=iĭr* is used in our data. Neither *-Bĭšaan*, nor expressive *-čĭk* occurred. Along with the mentioned markers the Tuvan discourse engages several assertive and narrative particles (*=Dĭr, irgin*).

### 2.2.2 Previous analyses

The latest and most detailed study of the Tuvan tense system by Oorzhak (2014) lists 10 tenses in the Tuvan language compared with the works of previous scholars, who described 9 tenses (Sat 1955; Isxakov, Palmbax 1961). According to Oorzhak 5 past tenses are formed by the markers *-Dĭ*, *-GAN*, *-čĭk*, *-p-tĭr*, *-Bĭšaan*; the markers of the present tense are “*Tv=p V(tur=, olur=, čor=, =čĭdĭr)=∅, Tv=p V(tur=, olur=, čor=, =čĭdĭr)=ar, -a-dĭr*”; and the markers of the future tense: *-ar*, *-galak* (Oorzhak 2014: 18-19). Particular meanings and semantics of complex predicates were analyzed and described in detail in her doctoral dissertation devoted to the system of grammatical modality in Tuvan, with a special attention to the forms expressing evidentiality and mirativity (Oorzhak 2018). Her description of *-GAN* as the neutral marker matches with the visions of the authors of present paper, as well as the interpretation of forms with *bol-* ‘to be’ which carry the mirative meaning (Oorzhak 2018: 166-169). However, although *-Dĭ* is the marker of direct evidentiality (Ibid: 104-108), but as the means of specified reliability Oorzhak tags it as the rare one (Ibid: 183), which contradicts with the present study and it will be shown further within the framework of perspective shifting in narrative.

## 3. Data collection and the results

### 3.1 Data collection

The present study is based on the data which the authors recorded themselves, or asked some consultants to

record in the field. The genres were chosen considering their characteristics in terms of evidentiality. In addition to narrative texts, we worked with non-narrative texts. The collected types of discourse are as follows:

- (i) Self-narration: The speaker (narrator) describes the events which he experienced himself.
- (ii) Third-person narration: The speaker (narrator) tells a non fictional story about other people. In some cases the speaker experienced the event, and in other cases the speaker just heard the event from the person who experienced the event.
- (iii) Fairy tale: The speaker (narrator) tells a fictional story with some character(s).
- (iv) Introduction: The speaker provides general knowledge to the hearer. The information is generally not about a particular event, therefore this genre is not narrative. Thus we distinguish (i)-(iii) as narrative and (iv) as non-narrative discourse.

During the data collection it was discovered that the speakers may switch from one type of the genre to another. We took a qualitative approach to the data, and defined such discourse as a mixture of multiple genres.

### 3.2 The distribution of the forms

The analysis shows that 27 narrations contain the markers *-GAn*, *-Dĭ* as for past, *-Ar* as for non-past. Along with them the authors distinguished the forms of the verbs *bol-* ‘to be’ and *čor-* ‘to go away’, which are used as auxiliaries for periphrastic forms, expressing aspect and modality. As it was mentioned, some discourse markers were also observed for the study, however their usage has nothing to do with the source of information, rather express the attitude of the speaker to the proposition and only in one genre.

#### 3.2.1 Narrative and non-narrative discourse

*-GAn* provides the tense marking for all the genres. However, the marker of definite past *-Dĭ* can not be used in introductory texts, in which a general knowledge is provided, especially when introducing customs. Thus, *-Dĭ* is used only when telling the experience of the speaker. As for other evidential markers, our data introduce such forms as inferential and mirative *=dĭr*, *-GAn=dĭr*, mirative *bolgan* and *boldu*, *čoraan* and *čordu*, which generally can not be used in introductory texts.

#### 3.2.2 Markers specific for fairy tales

As for the fairy tale, the markers specific for this genre occur in our texts too: *-ĭp=tĭr*, the assertive marker *irgin* and *evespe*. While *-ĭp=tĭr*, and *evespe* are used by the speakers of both younger and older generations, the assertive marker *irgin* is used only by the elder one, moreover it doesn’t occur in a Russian fairy tale narrated in Tuvan. The authors assume that its usage depends also on the ability of the speakers to tell fairy tales in general.

- (2) *onu*            *kež-ip*            *bar*    *čid-ir-da,*            *ulug ak*    *šari-zī-niŋ*  
 3.SG.ACC    to.cross-CV1    to.go    to.lie-NPST-LOC    big    white    ox-POSS.3-GEN  
*čavaa*            *čar-il-gaš*            *öl-üp*            *kal-gan*            ***irgin.***  
 crotch.POSS.3    to.break-PASS-CV3    to.die-CV1    to.put-PTCP.PST    **PTCL**

‘When he was crossing it, his big white ox’s crotch broke and the ox died’.

It was mentioned previously that the particle *irgin* is assertive and does not carry any evidential meaning and can actually be omitted without any loss in the meaning. However it often appears in traditional fairy tales, as if expressing that ‘what I am telling is true and it happened a long time ago’.

### 3.2.3 Extraordinary occurrence of markers as mixture of genres

There are several examples of mixing the genres, when the speaker tells the biography of the third person, but includes some actual events, which were experienced by the character or the speaker himself. The same goes with the introduction of the speaker’s curriculum vitae, when he gets distracted with the events experienced at that time:

- (3) *muŋ tos čüs sezen iji čil-dij avgus-tuŋ čeerbi čedi-de*  
 thousand nine hundred eighty two year-GEN august-GEN twenty seven-LOC  
*törü-t-tün-gen men. bo čil-in ižen tos*  
 to.give.birth-CAUS-REFL-PTCP.PST 1SG this year-T thirty nine  
*har-la-p-ti-m.*  
 year-VBLZ-PRF-PST-1SG  
 ‘I was born in 1982, August 27. This year I turned 39’.

Or as in the following example the speaker recollects the chronologically missed passage and adds:

- (4) *bis oon / baštaj bis šuj-ga čurt-ta-p tur-gan=dır bis.*  
 1PL then / first 1PL NPROP-DAT country-VBLZ-CV1 to.stand-PTCP.PST=EVID 1PL  
 ‘We then... first we lived in Shuj’

The multifunctional particle *-dır* does not occur in introductory texts sharing general knowledge, like the marker *-Dİ*, however, it is not always possible for the speakers to follow only one genre. In our data the *-dır* marker only occurs with *-GAn* form or as the part of nominal predicates. Both forms are used to express inference or unexpectedness of the event. Other forms to express surprise and counter-expectation are the past forms of the auxiliary verb *bol-* ‘to be’. In our materials *boldu* characterises the events “I saw or experienced an unexpected event myself”, “what I was told was unexpected and surprising” and *bolgan* is for “I saw or experienced an unexpected event myself”, “the character happened to have found out something unexpected, etc”. Other than that, *bolgan* may occur as the part of a complex predicate carrying its lexical meaning of existence. Beside the forms with *bolgan* and *boldu*, our data shows the occurrence of forms with the verb *čor-* ‘to go away’: *čoraan* and *čordu*, which also can be seen in introduction (or third person narration). These forms share the unexpected findings of the speaker with the hearer and require an active involvement of the hearer. Thus, *bol-* and *čor-* introduce a new and unexpected information to the speaker and the hearer.

Thus, specified past *-Dİ*, inferential and mirative *-dır*, mirative *bolgan*, *boldu*, *čoraan* and *čordu* can not occur in the introduction text, sharing general knowledge and factual information.

### 3.2.4 Two types of markers for perspective shifting

The markers can be divided into mainly two types based on their occurrence in the texts:

- (i) Forms can occur in direct speeches but scarcely occur in the narration of first and third-person narration (= *dĭr*, *-Dĭ*, *boldu*, *čordu*)
- (ii) Forms can occur both in DSs and the narration of first and third-person narration (*-GAn*, *bolgan*, *čoraan*)

Not all the narrations include the marker *-Dĭ*, and its occurrence can not be attributed as specific to a certain genre: self-narration, third-person narration or fairy tale. The sentence (5) shows that in fairy tales the marker *-Dĭ* is used only in direct speech:

- (5) *čor-up-kaš*                      *baži-i-nga*                      *ke-er-ge*                      *ool-dar-i*  
to.go.away-PRF-CV3    house-POSS.3-DAT    to.come-NPST-DAT    son-PL-POSS.3  
*hal-č-ip*                      *kel-geš*                      *čü-nü*                      *ekkel-dĭ-ŋ*                      *ava-j*                      *de-en*  
to.run-RECP-CV1    to.come-CV3    what-ACC    to.bring-PST-2SG    mother-VOC    to.say-PTCP.PST  
‘When she came home, her sons ran to her and asked: “What did you bring, mother?”’

From the framework of perspective shift, the difference is due to the fact that some forms are bound to the speech situation, in other words, they can describe the events (including the surprise of the speaker), which take place at the speech time, however to describe the events in the past, they need the perspective shift, as in the example (6).

- (6) <...> *baž-im-dan*                      *tura*                      *but-tar-im-ga*                      *čedir*                      *silgi-p-silgi-p*  
                    head-POSS.1.SG-ABL    from                      foot-PL-POSS.1.SG-DAT    until                      shake-CV  
*ködür-geš*,    *okta-p-kan*.                      *Dop-doraan*                      *tur-a*                      *halĭ-dĭ-m*  
lift-CV                      throw-PRF-PTCP.PST    RDPL-right\_away    stand-CV                      run-PST-1.SG  
‘<We haven’t noticed at all how that cloud came above us. When it (the lightning) played with me:> shook from head till feet, lifted and threw (to the ground). I stood up right away. (and went to check on others)’ [Instagram 2020, 1a].

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Subdivision of mirative markers

The studies on Tuvan have proved that there are more than one forms denoting the surprise of the speaker: *bolgan* and *-dĭr*. The present analysis shows that these forms can be classified to different groups proposed in 3.2.4. That is, *-dĭr* can just denote the surprise of the speaker at the time of the events and used in events which are described from the perspective of the speaker in the event world, and *bolgan* denotes the surprise of the speaker in the past, and is used to describe the events from the perspective of the speaker in the speech time. This analysis proposes that there can be more than one marker denoting the surprise of the speaker (mirativity) according to the perspective which he chooses to take.

### 4.2 Evidentiality of *-Dĭ*

The distribution of the past indicative marking *-Dĭ* in the data shows that, although the occurrence of the form is conditioned by the source of information, its function is not the marking of the source of information itself. The *-Dĭ* form can be used only when the speaker directly experienced the event and has firsthand knowledge of the event, but the *-GAn* form can be used to describe the same events.

## 5. Concluding remarks

In the present paper we discussed the functions of the evidential markers based on their distribution in different genres of texts including narratives. As a result, it was discovered that in Tuvan the main distinction is based on (i) Whether the form describes the event in the speech situation or in the past, and (ii) Whether the form is used in the narrative part of the text to describe the events which the speaker experienced. The function of the perspective shift in Tuvan is controlling the use of the markers in (i).

## Abbreviations

1: first (person); 2: second (person); 3: third (person); ACC: accusative; ADVLZ: adverbializer; CAUS: causative; COND: conditional; CV: converb; CV1: converb 1 (simultaneous); CV3: converb 3 (sequential); DAT: dative; EVID: evidential; FOC: focus; GEN: genitive; IND: indicative; IRR: irrealis; LOC: locative; NPROP: proper noun; NPST: non-past; OPT: optative; PFV: perfective; PL: plural; POSS: possessive; PRF: perfect; PST: past; PTCL: particle; PTCP: participle; RDPL: reduplication; RECP: reciprocal; REFL: reflexive; SG: singular; VBLZ: verbalizer; VOC: vocative

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