

On the possible origins of evidential function and the case of Udmurt evidentiality

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The presentation argues that the evidential function is a language-internal innovation in Udmurt (Uralic, Finno-Ugric, Permic), presenting the possible semantical development of the Proto-Finno-Ugric participle **-m* that later developed into the non-eyewitness past tense form.

Regarding the origin of evidentials in the languages of the world, three types can be distinguished: an inherited feature from the proto-language, an innovation occurring in the separate life of a given language, geographical influence of neighbouring languages.

It is not clear yet how evidentiality has developed to encode indirect evidential meaning in Permic languages that use the so-called 2nd past tense form, which can be reconstructed to the participle **-m*.

According to Aikhenvald (2005: 288–289) and Bereczki (2003: 91), the usage of the 2nd past as an evidential marker has been adopted from the neighbouring Turkic languages. This claim has not been adopted by all researchers (Serebrennikov 1963; Honti 2001; Csúcs 1979). I claim the evidential readings are language-internal innovations in Udmurt, and the neighbouring Turkic languages have only consolidated the language-internal developments. It is well-known that anteriors can develop into evidentials, but this development is not so straightforward. Usually, anteriors develop first into resultatives or perfects, which then develop into an evidential meaning (Siegl 2004: 163). That kind of development is likely to have occurred in Udmurt as well. Serebrennikov gives a short sketch of the possible grammaticalization and semantic change that led to evidential marking and Honti and Csúcs argue that the Udmurt evidential function can be a language-internal innovation. Siegl collected its functions but neither of them arranges the semantical stages into an evolutionary path.

The talk will demonstrate the semantic developmental path of the 2nd past distinguishing the following stages:

1. Stative or passive participle without an auxiliary develops into **anterior**. A stative or passive expresses a state of a thing without implication of its origin. Anterior expresses the action itself but without any direct result in present time.

(1) *mil'am d'oz-jos-len adž-em-zy övöl ta*
our peer-PL-DAT see-PST2-3PL NEG this
pal-aś gondyr-jos-yz.
area-ELA bear-PL-DET

'Our peers have not yet seen bears in this area.' (Siegl 2004: 137)

2. Anterior develops into **resultative**. The resultative meaning indicates that a state exists due to a past action; it has a direct result in the speech time, and it expresses a state and the preceding action it has resulted from at the same time.

(2) *Pešanaj-len perešmy-sa nyr-yz no*
grandmother-DAT get_older-CVB nose-ACC.3SG and
pińtem ym dorožaz ošiškem ni.
toothless mouth onto.3SG dangle-PST2.3SG already

'Grandmother as gets older her nose has already dangled on her toothless mouth.'
(Siegl 2004: 147)

3. Resultative develops into **inference**, i.e., reasoning without a direct result in the speech time.

(3) *Ažlo tatyn kladovka vylem, suisa.*
 earlier here little_room EXIST.2PST that

'It seems that this here must earlier have been a little room.' (Siegl 2004: 36)

4. Inferentiality develops **non-eyewitness meaning**

(4) *Važen dyrja tatyn puk-oz vylem krežči.*
 long_time_ago here sit-PST.3SG COP.PST2 musician

'In olden times, the musician used to sit here.' (Siegl 2004: 38)

5. Those anteriors that develop into indirect evidentials do not take over all the earlier functions (simple past, perfective etc.) (Bybee 1994: 97). In current Udmurt **perfect** forms also exist but as the participle *-emyn*.

(5) *ukno ušt-emyn.*
 window open-PTCP.PST

'The window is opened.' (Horváth 2021)

6. Indirect evidential has developed into **mirative**. The difference is that mirativity needs a personal involvement. The development of 1st person forms can be related to this additional function.

(6) *vot ved' kyče ton ad'ami vylem-ed.*
 PTC(rus) PTC(rus) what_a you man be.PST2-2SG.

'Well, well, such a man you are!' (Siegl 2004: 36)

The first grammatical sketches, like Mogilin 1786 or Wiedemann 1851, did not mention the 2nd past form as a verbal category. Then the suffix *-m* was identified as a participle with possible verbal use in Wiedemann 1884 and Aminoff – Wichmann 1896. Emel'javn 1927 mentions the 2nd past form as a verb, but he did not list first person forms at all. The only academic grammar of Udmurt, the GSUJ from 1962, presents a verbal paradigm including forms for every person. According to the grammar primary function of the form is to present the result of an action, but also reports non-eyewitnessed cases. Winkler's Udmurt grammar from 2001 identifies the function of the form as evidential proper, inferential and mirative (Siegl 2004: 41–56).

The primary focus of the analysis is the process of the semantic development of evidentiality, as I investigate the connection between the grammatical functions of the perfect and evidentials. The paper would like to provide historical-typological evidence against the widespread view of Turkic origin regarding to Udmurt evidential function.

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