

On the mirative semantic feature of Udmurt evidentiality

The aim of the presentation is to introduce the mirative semantic feature of Udmurt non-firsthand evidentiality.

The primary meaning of mirativity is related to unprepared mind, new information, speaker's surprise. (DeLancey 1997) The speaker's mind is not prepared to process the information, "feel distanced from the situation they describe. (Slobin & Aksu 1982: 198)

Udmurt distinguishes grammatical evidentiality only in the past tense. There are choices of firsthand and non-firsthand evidential available in its system (Aikhenvald 2004: 28). In the correspondent literature of Udmurt language, the firsthand evidential is called as first past while the non-firsthand evidential as second past. Such evidential systems with two choices typically cover several semantic parameters (Aikhenvald 2004: 154). Udmurt second past covers parameters related to the information source such as reportative and inferential, and also has other functions that are not related to source of information: 'token' of genre, mirativity, expressing of non-volitionality. (Winkler 2001, Siegl 2004, Kubitsch 2017)

The material for research was taken from blogs (150 texts, ca. 46000 words) Texts from blogs are selected as their language is closer to the spoken varieties of Udmurt. On my investigation, I focused on the mirative usage of non-firsthand evidential which seems to be the most common function of the so called second past, beside the reportative and inferential usage.

On my research I divided the examples for mirative usage into two subcategories according to the source of unexpectancy. The mirative meaning can arise from the newness of the information or from the speaker's deferred realization about the situation. The semantic feature of deferred realization implies that full information on the situation was obtained and fully interpreted post factum, no matter whether the speaker saw it or not. (Aikhenvald 2004: 202) Example (1) presents when mirative meaning arises from new, unexpected information. The speaker writes about the Bible published in Udmurt. It is surprising for her, that it is easy to read, and this fact contradicts her expectancies.

(1) krestyaninova.blogspot.ru; 2014. 01. 10.

Lǐžžǐnjǐ kapći vǐl -em, kuddirja gázet -ez śekjt -ges lǐžžǐnjǐ.
read.INF easy be 2PST sometimes newspaper ACC difficult COMP read.INF
'It was easy to read, sometimes newspapers are more difficult to read.'

Example (2) presents when mirative nuance arises from the deferred realization of the speaker. In the context of this example the speaker notices that one of her friend behaves unusually. Later she realizes that the reason for his behavior is that the man came with a woman

to this meeting. However, she saw as the man arrived she was not aware of the woman, hence she realizes this fact at a later point of events.

(2) muketulon.tumblr.com; 2016. 06. 04.

Niłaš *-en* *kiče ke* *vu* *-em* (...)
girl INST some come 2PST
'He came with some girl(...)'

I considered the examples for deferred realization as a subgroup of semantic feature of mirativity, but it cannot be totally separated from inferentiality, because post-factum realization might be considered as a subtype of inferentiality as well. (Aikhenvald 2004: 102) However in my opinion the evidential verb form primarily does not express inferential processes, but the feeling of being 'distanced' from the described situation (i.e. Slobin & Asku). The dual nature of deferred realization gives reason for separate this subgroup within the mirative usage of second past. Furthermore, these examples might illustrate a possible semantic path of the emergence of mirative overtone in Udmurt evidential system. (Aikhenvald 2004: 208–209)

It is also important to highlight that even though the Udmurt second past is used in such situations when the primary meaning of the evidential verb form is not related to source of the information, the function of expressing of non-volitionality and 'token' of genre appeared in significantly less occasions in the corpora than mirative usage. Based on this I assume that expressing of non-volitionality and 'token' of genre are rather occasional, the usage of evidential form is not obligatory according to the rules of language in these kind of situations, while mirativity is a more or less steady function of Udmurt non-firsthand evidentiality.

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