

Rebeka Judit Kubitsch
Evidentiality in Udmurt
Résumé of PhD-thesis

The aim of the thesis is to describe the evidential system of Udmurt from a functional-typological point of view. The research focuses on the morphological markers of the category. The relationship between evidentiality and other related concepts, such as mirativity and epistemic modality is also discussed. Interactions of evidential markers with other grammatical categories are included as well.

In Udmurt the morphological marking of source of information is possible only in the past tenses. Because of this, two types of past tenses are distinguished: the first past and second past tense. The status of the first past is unclear in previous studies and grammars – it is either considered a direct evidential (or witnessed past tense) or an evidentially neutral, default past tense. Second past tense is associated with indirect evidence and mirativity, as well as with perfectivity.

The research is based on contemporary language material. Research data comprise blog texts, interviews conducted with native Udmurt speakers, and a questionnaire. Primary research questions of the thesis are the following:

1. Based on the research data what types of evidence are expressed with the first and second past tenses?
2. What types of interactions can be established between evidentiality, mirativity and epistemic modality in Udmurt?
3. What factors can have an impact on the use of the first and second past tenses?
4. How does the second past tense interact with some grammatical categories considered relevant in the typological literature?

Results show that the first past should be considered a default, evidentially neutral past tense which contextually can be associated with direct evidence, factuality, known information and with a higher degree of certainty. The second past primarily expresses indirect evidence, hence it should be treated as a grammatical evidential marker. It has extensions to new information and can imply a lower degree of certainty. Considering the relationship between the two tenses it can be concluded that it is more complex than the previously postulated direct – indirect evidence opposition and the following factors can take role in their use: types of evidence, degree of informativity, degree of certainty, degree of commitment, temporal and aspectual notions, genre, and style.