ANTHROPOLOGICAL FACTOR OF INFORMATION ACCESS AND CATEGORY OF EVIDENTIALITY: COMPARATIVE ANALYSES OF ENGLISH AND TATAR LANGUAGES

Alsu N. Makhmutova[1] and Gulnara F. Lutfullina[2]

The importance of this research problem is attributable to deficiency of studies on interrelationship between linguistic categories and lingual-cultural factors. The article focuses on identifying evidential systems and strategies as an anthropological marker of nations' attitude to various information sources. Methods of structural-functional and comparative analysis revealed evidential strategies in the English language and evidential system in the Tatar language. The research shows that at anthropological level, syntactic representation of perception category in English reflects importance of personal perception of information; in Tatar grammatical representation of "non-firsthand" meaning or "reported evidential" emphasizes the absence of direct perception. Thus, personal perception is of great importance for English speakers whereas Tatar speakers tend to highlight absence of immediate access to information.

Keywords: anthropological factor ; information ; evidentiality ; evidential language system.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is the subject of cultural anthropology. Cultural anthropology studies phenomena of material and intellectual culture in all its aspects: worldview, mentality, national character, results of spiritual, social and industrial activities. Cultural anthropology investigates the unique human ability to develop culture through dialogue and communication, considering a great variety of human cultures, their interactions and conflicts. As a branch of general linguistics, cultural linguistics has recently received much attention in the research of language categories.

Evidentiality is a linguistic category with a primary meaning of source of information. (Aikhenvald, 2004). Establishing categorical status of evidentiality is problematic, being a complex category it is manifested at grammatical (Plungian, 2001; Lazard, 2001), functional (Mustajoki, 2006), communicative-pragmatic (Gurajek, 2010; De Haan, 2001) and anthropological levels. *Mode of knowing / obtaining information* is the method of accessing information, depending on the degree of the speaker's participation, and specified in the opposition: direct/indirect, personal/impersonal. Evidential meaning is the most common one manifested in the language.

[1]   Assistant Professor of the Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia, *E-mail: alsu.03@mail.ru*

[2]   Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages, Kazan State Power Engineering University, Kazan, Russia, *E-mail: gflutfullina@mail.ru*

In this paper we analyze evidential strategies and systems in English and Tatar languages as two different approaches to information sources, and, thus, specifying anthropological aspect of linguistic evidentiality.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The article focuses on identifying evidential systems and strategies as an anthropological indicator of speakers' attitude to various sources of information. The objectives of the research are as follows: 1) to prove that at anthropological level evidentiality reflects the importance of different modes of access to information; 2) to determine original features of English evidential strategy and Tatar evidential system. The hypotheses of the study are: 1. Evidentiality is associated with anthropological factors related to information sources. 2. The English language is characterized by evidential strategy, whereas the Tatar language – by evidential system.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research amounts to fundamental studies of lingual evidentiality in recent language studies (Plungian 2011; W³odawskie 2000, Aikhenwald, 2004; Lazar, 2001; Jacobson, 2001). Our research involves methods of mental-logic and descriptive analysis. Moreover we employed semasiological methods for the study of linguistic expression of evidentiality, and contrastive analysis method to reinforce our comparative approach to this interlingual phenomenon. Our study materials comprise examples from Tatar media websites and British National Corpus (20 examples).

RESULTS

Evidential Strategy of English

Our definition of *evidential strategy* relies on Aikhenvald's work (2004), which assumes a broad stance on the notion comprising all means of linguistic expression, even syntax, potentially admitting the interpretation 'having to do with truth, commitment, or the speaker's authority'. In contrast to restricted approach, this 'all-inclusive' framework benefits from focusing on some universal features of linguistic expression. And at this stage, our focus is to justify English evidential strategies related to syntactic structures representing perception category. For the purpose of this, we study Complex Object (CO) in its main function, that is, expression of perception situations.

CO combines a noun in common case or personal pronoun in objective case with infinitive or participle *riding (1), making her way (2), leaving (3)* and expresses perceived or observed situations. Subject and predicate in active voice represent a perception situation *I saw (1), he watched (2), I heard (3).* The pronoun in objective case or a noun in common case represents a person or thing that performs an action of perceived situation *him (1), (3), her (2).* Infinitive or participle expresses

the perceived situation. A small number of sensory verbs function in this structure: *to see, to hear, to watch* etc. Absence of *to*-particle indicates a high degree of grammaticalization in CO structures.

(1) Then suddenly *I saw him riding* towards me; (2) He *watched her making* her way through the crowds on the pavement; (3) I *heard him leaving* because I hadn't been in bed very long, and I *heard him coming back* because I had a bit of indigestion and I couldn't sleep.'

Only these verbs do not alter their semantics at CO structures, while in complex sentences sensory verbs can express mental processes: *to hear – to know* (new information about something) (4), (5); *to see – to understand* (6); and their semantics is not limited to the expression of perception category.

(4) He was born around the Darlington area and *I heard that his family once had money*, but lost it in some way; (5) *I heard you had a very good doorman*; (6) Now that you point it out, *I see that I may have acted* rashly.

The completeness or incompleteness of perception process is differentiated by either infinitive or participle I of sensory verbs in CO. Thus, Infinitive Indefinite in CO with *see / hear / watch / notice + somebody do something* indicates that the observed situation is complete (we know how it ends) – complete perception process. This fact of completeness is morphologically determined in (7)-(9).

(7) I *saw her cross* the street; (8) I *watched him walk* towards Daffodil, who was waving to him vigorously, and take the place saved by her handbag; (9) We *heard John sing* our national anthem.

Participle I is used in *see / hear / watch / notice + somebody doing something* to emphasize uncompleted, continuing at speech moment, observable action, i.e. incomplete perception process (10)-(14). If participle replaces infinitive, e.g., *I saw her cross the street*, the observed situation is considered uncompleted and progressive.

(10) I *watched his silhouette moving* from seat to seat; (11) He *saw them laughing* carelessly together; (12) She *saw him beginning* to walk towards her; (13) She *saw the hotel porter preparing* to carry her bags from the post chaise; (14) About Peter Fleming, I *saw him walking down* Romney Road as I came here.

Although this rule is not unanimously recognized, Infinitive Indefinite Active, nonetheless, is used only with sense perception verbs; Infinitive Indefinite and Participle I CO structures grammatically express completeness of observed situation.

English also features grammatical differentiation of visual and auditory completeness of perceived situation. Smell perception process is expressed only by Participle I CO structures (15), as its completeness is not acceptable.

Indefinite Infinitive and Perfect Infinitive CO structures differentiate the relevance/irrelevance of perception process. Indefinite Infinitive expresses the perceived situation simultaneous with perception situation presented by predicate. Syntax structures *see/ hear/ watch/ notice + somebody have done something* express

irrelevant, completed perception process. According to grammar, complex forms of Infinitive Perfect (active) *to have + III form (-ed)* express precedent perceived situation. However, precedent perceived situation logically implies precedent perception situation because they are considered simultaneous (16). Perception category may be expressed by Complex Subject (17). These structures express different meanings and cannot be regarded as special means of expressing perception category: (15) Can I smell something burning? (16) He saw Frances had bought a dishwasher; (17) He was seen to be crossing the street.

Evidential system of Tatar

Evidentiality systems across the world vary in encoded meanings, quantity of expressed information sources and quality of language features. In a binary evidential system, as a rule, there is a small two-term system 'firsthand' and 'hearsay'. There are cases when there is only one marked form, opposed to evidentially neutral form meaning 'everything else'. Strictly speaking, such systems have only one evidentiality marker. They are included in a binary system because of semantic similarities and tendencies of historical development. In many Turkic languages, in particular in the Turkish language, evidential markers 'non-firsthand' have a wide range of meanings, implying that the speaker heard about the action from a secondary source, or made inferences about it, or participated in it directly but was not in control" (Johanson, 2003). Providing examples form Uzbek, Turkmen, Uyghur and Kazakh, Johanson (2003) reports that in some Turkic languages the *-dI* past, the 'non-evidential' counterpart of the non-firsthand *-mIv*, has acquired meanings associated with'firsthand' evidentials.

The problem of Past Perfect tense (PPT) in Tatar reflects typical analytical difficulties attributed to small evidential systems. Not all linguists recognize the expression of evidential meanings by Tatar PPT, arguing that it can express obvious and non-obvious actions (Ganiev, 2000; Khisamova, 2004; Zakiev, 1993). W³odawskie (2000), by contrast, indicates that PPT expresses the "non-firsthand" meaning. Let us consider the following statements:

(1) УзенеЈ ЩйтЇe буенча, ул Уральскида алты-—иде ел яши. ДимЩк, *ул* монда 1900 яки 1901 елда *килгЩн* булып чыга; (2) Уфф, яратмыйм да шул ТНВны, бер —Їнле программа юк анда. Гел кемгЩдер ялагайлану, *кемнеЈдер ЩйтЇe буенча* гына *эшлЩнгЩн* канал; (3) 24 яшьлек Эльмира КЩлимуллина ТЇбЩн Камадан. ®зенеЈ ЩйтЇe буенча ул 'Голос' проекты турында очраклы гына *ишеткЩн.*

Verbs *килгЩн* (1), *эшлЩнгЩн* (2) и *ишеткЩн* (3) present the event in the PPT form. This tense commonly describes biographies referring to some information source. 'Non-firsthand' meaning is consistent with anonymous information sources *кемнеЈдер ЩйтЇe буенча* (somebody said) (2) and authorized information sources *УзенеЈ* (he said) (1), (2) *Эльмира КЩлимуллина* (=УзенеЈ/she said that*) (3). In

this case the information source is excessive since PPT expresses non-firsthand meaning, implying presence of an intermediary in obtaining information, and non-firsthand access to information. The common term 'non-firsthand' marks grammatically expressed meaning of the absence of direct perception.

PPT is well-known to explicitly exclude direct personal perception, i.e. the phrase *Ул килгЩн/He came* implies absence of direct perception and admits this interpretation beyond the context. Thus, using PPT in *Мин кİрдем. Ул килгЩн / I saw. He came* is incorrect. Evidentially marked PPT form is a general form for non-firsthand meanings or indirect impersonal access to information.

Adopting Aikhenvald's (2004) two-term evidential systems, we can state for the Tatar language: system **A1:** *firsthand* vs. *non-firsthand* is inapplicable, as its unmarked counterpart Past Definite Tense (PDT) expresses a wider range of meanings and not limited by firsthand; system **A2:** *non-firsthand* vs. '*everything else*' is applicable, since meanings expressed by PPT cover the meaning of 'non-firsthand'; system **A3:** '*hearsay'* vs. '*everything else'* is inapplicable, since meanings covered by PPT are not limited by '*hearsay'*.

Thus, PPT is evidentially marked tense constituting the evidential system of the Tatar language. The Tatar language fits in languages with evidential systems in which PPT expresses the basic meaning of 'non-firsthand'. This binary system of reduced type is the most common one in the world linguistic map. According to existing common types, evidential system of the Tatar language is classified as binary, reduced, with general semantics of 'non-firsthand'. *Binary* means the first component, PPT, covers the meaning of 'non-firsthand'. *Reduced* implies unmarked counterpart PDT expresses '*everything else*', even though it is often misinterpreted as 'firsthand' counterpart. *Basic "non-firsthand" meaning* means PPT expresses the most generalized meaning of indirect impersonal access to information. *Modalized* suggests that the Tatar language has a special particle *-der* expressing evidential and modal meanings.

DISCUSSIONS

This paper contributes to anthropological study of evidentiality category highlighting significance of information obtaining modes for different nations.

This category was previously analysed at semantic, morphological, syntactic and contextual levels. At semantic level, categorical perception meaning incorporated in semantics of various words has been identified. At morphological level, Durst-Andersen (1995) analyzes the impact of evidentiality on functioning of Tense systems, and defines it as a core category with grammatical manifestation in aspectual and temporal systems with the 'focus on the speaker'. At syntactic level A. Mustayoki (2006) writes about "authorization category" and considers it a statement modifier functioning as a semantic structure expander. At context level, Moeschler J. (2000) identifies ways of expressing evidentiality in narration.

Anthropological aspect of evidentiality reflecting two different approaches to information sources, which has been focus of this paper, has not been studied yet. The analysed interaction between evidentiality and anthropological factors related to information sources revealed existence of English evidential strategy and Tatar evidential system and, accordingly, testifies national specifics in assessment of information obtaining modes.

CONCLUSION

Thus, Complex Object structures realize evidential strategy of English. In these structures sensory verbs, first, form the majority; second, feature full grammaticalization (no *to*-particle); third, are mostly in direct meanings; and, fourth, are combined with Indefinite Infinitive and Participle I, expressing completeness of observed situation. These structures are special means representing perception category. According to evidential system types, the Tatar language has a binary, reduced evidential system with general semantics 'non-firsthand'. At anthropological and lingual-cultural levels, English evidential strategy testifies the importance of personal perception; Tatar evidential system reflects the importance of focusing on 'non-firsthand' information access.

Recommendations

From theoretical perspective, the results of research considerably advance study of anthropological facets of linguistic categories, development of evidential systems and strategies in language typology. Practical results are applicable in teaching perception, direct and indirect evidentiality categories in Tatar and English grammar courses.

Acknowledgments

References

Aikhenvald, A.Y. (2004). 'Evidentiality'. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Haan, F. (2001). 'The cognitive basis of visual evidentially', Conceptual and discourse factors in linguistic structure (pp.91-106). Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Durst-Andersen, P. (1995). 'Mental grammar and linguistic supertypes' Questions of Linguistics, 6: 30-42.

Ganiev, F.A. (2000). 'Tatar language: problems and research'. Kazan: Tatar Book Publishing House.

Gurajek, B. (2010). 'Evidentiality in English and Polish'. Website: *https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/ bitstream/handle/1842/5313/Beata%20Gurajek%20thesis_full.pdf?sequence= 1&isAllowed=y (accessed on 16.1.2016)*.

Johanson, L. (2003). 'Evidentiality in Turkic'. Studies in Evidentially (Typological Studies in Language 54) (pp. 273-290). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Khisamova, F.M. (2006). 'Morphology of the Tatar language' Kazan. Megarif.

Lazard, G. (2001). 'On the grammaticalization of evidentially', Journal of pragmatics, 33: 359-367.

Moeschler, J. (2000). 'Inférences directionnelles et autres objets temporels. Recueil d'articles publiés et non publiés'. Paris: Département de linguistique.

Mustajoki, A. (2006). 'The theory of functional syntax from semantic structures to language means'. Moscow: Languages of Slavic culture.

Plungian, V.A. (2001). 'The place of evidentiality within the universal grammatical space', Journal of pragmatics, 33: 349-357.

Plungian, V.A. (2011). 'Introduction to the grammatical meanings and grammatical system of languages of the world. ' Moscow: Russian State Humanitarian University.

W³odawskie, N.V. (2000). 'Irony and evidentiality'. Website: http://www.dialog-21.ru/en/digest/archive/2000/?year=2000&vol=22724&id=6253 (accessed on 16.1.2016).