

Category of Evidentiality and Mirativity in Chechen.

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0. Introduction. Chechen belongs to the Nakh branch of the Nakh-Daghestanian family. Typologically, Chechen is a head-final, case-using, ergative and dependent-marking language. Basic word order is SOV; no person agreement. The simple verbs employ gender agreement that is marked by a consonant prefix, there are 4 of them.

A short outline of TAM system:

Each TAM form is based upon one of the three stems, namely the infinitive stem, the present tense stem and the recent past stem. The highest level of temporal and aspectual differentiation is represented in the past-reference tenses.

Table 1.

TENSE/ASPECT	MORPHOLOGY	eeca 'take'
Present	-u	oec-u
Present Progressive	CVBsim + cop.PRS	oec-ush vu
Simple Past	-i	ec-i
Past Progressive Witnessed	CVBsim + cop.PST	oec-ush vara
Past Witnessed	-ra	eci-ra
Perfect	-(i)na	ec-na
Pluperfect	-(i)niera	ec-niera
Imperfect	-ura	ec-ura
Inferential Progressive Unwitnessed Past	CVBsim + cop.PST	oec-ush xilla
Inferential Unwitnessed Past	CVBant + cop.PST	ec-na xilla
Inferential Unwitnessed Pluperfect	CBVant + cop.PPL	ec-na xilliera
Inferential Progressive Unwitnessed Pluperfect	CBVsim + cop.PPL	oec-ush xilliera

The phenomena of evidentiality in Chechen may be grouped into three types, namely the opposition of the witnessed/unwitnessed actions (Aikhenvald 2004), mirativity, and addressee-directed dative constructions.

1.1. Witnessed Past: The morphological marking of the Witnessed Past is the verbal suffix *-ra*. The Witnessed Past is used if the speaker directly witnessed the event.

1. Zaara hwa-j-ie-na.*/**
 Z.NOM here-J-come-PRF
 ‘Zara has come.’ (+> and she is still here) **[Perfect]**
2. Zaara hwa-j-ie-ra.
 Z.NOM here-J-come-PSTW
 ‘Zara came.’ (I saw her come and then go) **[Past Witnessed]**

1.2. Inferential Unwitnessed Past:

The Inferential Unwitnessed Past is the converb anterior plus the past form of copula. This tense denotes perfective actions which took place in the past and are still actual for the present moment; it also says that the speaker has not witnessed the action.

3. Zaara j-ie-na xilla
 Zara.NOM J-come-CVBant cop.PST
 ‘Zara has come, (e.g. I can see her shoes in the hall but I didn't see her come; expected/usual situation concurrent with my expectations).’
[Inferential Unwitnessed Past]
4. So naabariehw vohw-j-ozh-na xilla.
 1s.NOM sleep.LOC down-J-fall-CVBant cop.PST
 ‘I fell down (from the bed) in sleep (I didn't see that; in the morning I was lying on the floor).’
[Inferential Unwitnessed Past]
5. Zaara-s suuna kuoch iici-ra.
 Z.ERG 1s.DAT dress.NOM take-WPST
 ‘Zara bought a dress for me (I have seen that).’ **[Past Witnessed]**
6. Zaara-s suuna kuoch ec-na xilla.
 Z.ERG 1s.DAT dress.NOM take-CVBant cop.PST
 ‘Zara bought a dress for me (I didn't see that) (+> I have not seen this dress before).’
[Inferential Unwitnessed Past]

1.3. The Inferential Unwitnessed Pluperfect:

Indirect evidence is expressed by the past form of the copula *xilla*. The event happened in the past and the speaker didn't witness it.

7. Zaara so c'a qaach-lie dwa-j-ax-na xilliera
 Z.NOM 1s.NOM home arrive-CVBpost away-J-CVBant cop.PPL

‘Zara had left before I arrived (I didn’t see her and I was told about her visit, or I saw the cookies she had brought).’ **[Inferential Unwitnessed Pluperfect]**

8. Muusa-s quorash hwa-b-iax-na xilliera.
 M.ERG pear.PL.NOM here-B-pick-CVBant cop.PPL
 ‘Musa had picked the pears (I did not see the event, but I saw a basket full of pears that he had picked).’ [The speaker can confirm the result or vouch for it.]
[Inferential Unwitnessed Pluperfect]

9. Maliika-s qoor-ash hwa-b-iax-na xilla ael
 M.ERG pear-PL.NOM here-B-pick-na cop.PST QUOT

d-iici-ra soe-ga Muusa-s.
 D-tell-PSTW 1s.OBL-ALL M.ERG
 ‘Musa told me that Malika picked the pears.’ (The conversation with Musa is seen/experienced by the speaker, but not the very event.)

Types of inference:

- results of the event, the speaker has evidence for the event or has seen the visible traces of the event.
- hearsay, the speaker has the information from reliable source: (he has heard about the event a lot of times or an eyewitness has told him about what had happened).

Table 2.

	TIME OF EVENT	TIME OF EVIDENCE	TYPE OF EVIDENCE	TIME OF REFERENCE
Present	<i>now</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>witnessed</i>	<i>now</i>
Recent Past	<i>past</i>	-	∅	<i>past</i>
Imperfect	<i>past</i>	-	∅	<i>past</i>
Pluperfect	<i>past</i>	-	∅	<i>past</i>
Perfect	<i>past</i>	-	∅	<i>now</i>
Past Witnessed	<i>past</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>witnessed</i>	<i>past</i>
Inferential UW PST	<i>past</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>inferential</i>	<i>now</i>
Inferential UW PPL	<i>past</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>inferential</i>	<i>past</i>

2. Mirativity:

Mirativity has often been considered as an extension of the evidential system rather than a category of its own. But DeLancey (1997) and Aikhenvald (2004) have shown that there are languages whereas the mirative does not depend on evidentials, for instance, in

Tsakhur, Wichita, Tariana, Makah, Cupeño. Moreover, in some languages, there is mirativity, but no evidentiality (Kham) (Aikhenvald) (2004).

Chechen has the category of mirativity. Mirativity is the grammatical marking of unexpected information (DeLancey; 2001). The mirative meaning can be expressed by suffix *-q*. The suffix *-q* is added to the verb stem or to the auxiliary verb in compound tenses.

10. Zaara j-ie-na.
Zara J-come.PRF
'Zara has come.'(and she is still here I expected her to come).

11. Zaara j-iena-*q*.
Zara J-come.PRF-MIR
'(Wow!) Zara has come!' (I didn't expect her to come).

The category of mirativity in Chechen does not depend on evidentiality, and therefore they can be combined within a verbal form.

12. Zaara j-ie-na xilla-*q*
Zara J-come-CVBant cop.PST-MIR
'Look! Zara was here!' (UWPST + MIR) (I can see her special cookies in the kitchen. (unwitnessed coming) unexpected/new situation (not concurrent with my expectations)).

13. *Zaara j-ie-na-*q* xilla
Zara J-come-CVBant cop.PST
'Zara was here!'

14. Muusa-s quorash hwa-b-iax-na xilliera-*q*.
M.ERG pear.PL.NOM here-B-pick-CVBant cop.PPL
'Musa had picked the pears.' (I did not see the event, but I saw a basket full of pears and I was surprised).

3. Addressee-directed forms: There is a special use of the dative, restricted to the addressee (2s/p, 1incl, *1excl), which can be combined with the evidential and mirative, and which denotes that the information is no news for the hearer. The evidential dative must immediately follow the sentence-final verb, a position, restricted for both indirect and direct objects.

Table 3.

	SG	PL exl/incl
1p	-	-/vain(a)
2p	hwuun(a)	shun(a)
3p	-	-

15. Muusa hwa-v-ie-na xilla *shun*
 Musa into-V-come-PRF cop.PST 2p.DAT
 ‘Musa has come.’ (I knew that you expected him, but I didn’t see him)
16. As suuna koch ec-na *hwuun*
 1s.ERG 1s.DAT dress buy-PRF 2s.DAT
 ‘I bought a dress for myself.’ (+> you already knew that I was going to buy something for myself).
17. As hwuuna koch ec-na *hwuun*
 1s.ERG 1s.DAT dress.NOM buy-PRF 2s.DAT
 ‘I bought a dress for you.’ (+> you already knew that I was going to buy something for you or myself.)
- hwuun* → *hwan*
18. As hwuuna koch ec-na *hwan*
 1s.ERG 2s.DAT dress.NOM buy-PRF 2s.DAT
 ‘I bought you a dress.’ (+> you already knew that I was going to buy something for you.) [Itum-Kala dialect]

Conclusions:

The phenomena of evidentiality in Chechen may be grouped into three types, namely the opposition of the witnessed/unwitnessed actions, mirativity, and addressee-directed dative constructions. They are self-sufficient and may work independently from each other.

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**The orthography in this handout was developed by Johanna Nichols for Ingush and Chechen. In the case, if it is unclear, I give the IPA equivalent below:

w	[ʋ]	ii	[i:]	ai	[ʌj]
hw	[h]	ie	[i:ɛ]	aa	[a:]
ch	[tʃ]	ia	[iɛ]	oi	[oj].
sh	[ʃ]	e	[ɛ]	ei	[ej]
gh	[ɣ]	u	[ʊ]	ai	[ʌj]

c	[ts]	oo	[o:]	uo	[u:ɔ]
chʔ, kʔ, tʔ, pʔ, r, qʔ, cʔ		ejective consonants		ee	[ɛ:]

Abbreviations:

ant	anterior	NOM	Nominative
CVB	converb	PRF	Perfect
DAT	Dative	PST	Past
ERG	Ergative	PPL	Pluperfect
J,V,D,B	Gender marker	PSTW	Past Witnessed
LOC	Locative	sim	simultaneous
MIR	mirative	UW	Unwitnessed

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