

B.8: Epistemic categories in Uralic and beyond: evidentiality, intersubjectivity, epistemic authority and engagement

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In recent years, the research of evidentiality, a category that is primarily associated with information source, has explored new avenues into the direction of semantics and pragmatics (cf. Bergqvist & Grezch 2023). At the same time, new concepts and categories have been established in connection with knowledge, which often exceed the traditional morphology-based approaches that have been typical of the research on Uralic languages in this regard. Categories like intersubjectivity, epistemic authority, epistemic stance and engagement concerns the speaker's relationship in respect to acquiring, accessing and processing information in interaction with other discourse participants. We aim to apply a broader understanding of these concepts and thus, subject a wide array of linguistic elements, not exclusively morphological markers, to discussion.

We primarily follow the definitions found in Bergqvist & Kittilä (2020) and Bergqvist & Grezch (2023): an approach based on pragmatics, as function of evidentials are conditioned by interaction. The key notions and the relationship between these are illustrated by the following definitions. We also consider these definitions to be justified because research on evidentiality in Uralic languages has reached similar conclusions (e.g. Kugler 2015, Kubitsch 2023, Spets 2021):

- **Evidentiality** typically concerns the signaling of information source, however, the use of evidential markers in discourse shows close connections to other epistemic categories, e.g., evidentials are prone to develop intersubjective semantics.
- **Intersubjectivity** concerns forms including the point of view of the addressee in discourse (e.g., in terms of epistemic authority and access).
- **Epistemic authority** is an inherently relative notion that relates to rights over knowledge (e.g., my own actions), as well as responsibility for knowledge.
- **Engagement** concerns asymmetries in the mental disposition of the speech-act participants (Evans et al. 2018: 118). Engagement refers to intersubjective configurations of knowledge/access, which can be exclusive to the speaker or shared with the addressee.

At the workshop we intend to have contributions addressing the following questions:

1. How are these categories expressed in the Uralic languages?
2. How do these categories intertwine (if they do so) with each other and with other parts of grammar?
3. What are the limitations of researching these categories in Uralic? What kind of sources should be used and what kind of methodology could advance research?
4. Are there any consequences, possible new avenues of research in connection with ethnolinguistics and/or cognitive linguistics?

5. How have these categories evolved in language history?
6. Can areal connections be outlined within and across these categories?

We primarily invite contributions that tackle the above-mentioned phenomena from a functional point of view, especially in regard to minor Uralic languages.

Literature

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