

The *hows* and *whens* – as well
as *whys* – of evidentiality in
Bulgarian and Albanian

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Workshop

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The origin of a grammatical category

- The question of the origin and development of evidentiality in Balkan Slavic and Albanian has been discussed in two directions:
 - the mechanisms of emergence of evidentials
 - their chronology
 - in other words, **how** and **when** evidentiality arose
- Within the Balkan *Sprachbund* evidentiality is a bilateral correspondence between Balkan Slavic and Albanian
 - **why** did the category develop precisely in these languages?
 - **why** is it absent in the other languages of the *Sprachbund*?

Questions, answers...

- To answer all *hows*, *whens* and *whys*, several factors should be considered:
 - the language contacts on the Balkans
 - the verbal systems as an intralinguistic factor
 - the typological features of evidentiality across languages

Evidentiality systems in modern Bulgarian and Albanian

Evidentiality system in Bulgarian

- A1 type: firsthand vs. non-firsthand (Aikhenvald 2004: 288)
- Three morphologically marked non-firsthand evidentials that emerged from the perfect tense (*chel e* ‘he/she has read’)
- Weak morphological marking, strong obligatorification

	Reportative/ Admirative	Inferential	Dubitative
PRES/IMPERF	<i>chetyal</i>	<i>chetyal e</i>	<i>chetyal bil</i>
AOR	<i>chel</i>	<i>chel e</i>	<i>chel bil</i>
PERF/PLUPERF	<i>chel bil</i>	<i>chel e bil</i>	<i>chel bil</i>
FUT/FUT.PRAET.	<i>shtyal da chete</i>	<i>shtyal e da chete</i>	<i>shtyal bil da chete</i>
FUT.EX./FUT.EX.PRAET	<i>shtyal da e chel</i>	<i>shtyal e da e chel</i>	<i>shtyal bil da e chel</i>

Evidentiality system in Albanian

- A2 system: non-firsthand vs. everything else (Aikhenvald 2004: 197)
- Grammaticalization: inversion of the perfect and phonetical reduction
 - *kam punuar* 'I have worked' > *punuakam* '(surprisingly/supposedly) I work'
- One form, several values
- Temporal paradigm
 - synthetic tenses
 - present: *punuakam*
 - imperfect: *punuakësha*
 - analytic tenses
 - perfect: *paskam punuar*
 - pluperfect: *paskësha punuar*
- Strong morphological marking, weak obligatorification

Previous studies

Hypotheses for Bulgarian

- Turkish influence
 - Benyo Tsonev (1911) was the first to notice the connection between Turkish and Bulgarian evidentiality and to launch the hypothesis for Turkish influence
 - in the 1950s, this was the leading idea supported by prominent linguists (Andreychin 1951, 1952; Mirchev 1952; Georgiev 1952) who pointed out the semantic resemblance between Turkish and Bulgarian evidentiality and the opposition between the aorist (=firsthand) and the perfect (=non-firsthand), dating the emergence of the category to the 17th – 18th c.
- Independent development
 - the category should be dated much earlier, since the Old Church Slavonic period, i.e. before the contact with Turkish (Mladenov 1926)

Hypotheses for Bulgarian

- A compromise view: the emergence of evidentiality in Bulgarian was possible due to the specific development of the verbal system, but Turkish played the role of “catalyst”
- Ivanchev (1973/1976): syntactic condensation

Toy kazva, che Ivan e chel knigata. > Ivan (e) chel knigata.

he say-Pr3Sg that Ivan read-Pf3Sg book-Def Ivan read-RepAor3Sg. book-Def

‘He says that Ivan has read the book.’ > ‘(reportedly) Ivan has read the book.’

Hypotheses for Bulgarian

- Gerdzhikov (1984/2003): the meaning of the perfect – past situation with actual results – allows for the reconstruction of past events based on their consequences, i.e. non-firsthand
 - from 2 to 4 evidentials
 - temporal reinterpretation
 - in the Damaskins (17th – 18th c.) the category is fully attested, therefore it emerged much earlier
 - new interpretation of the Prayers of Cserged (16th – 17th c.) and the Vlach-Bulgarian Charters (14th – 17th c.)
 - early dating: 12th century or the beginning of the 13th century at the latest

Hypotheses for Albanian

- Problems to solve
 - the way and the time the category emerged
 - which was the initial value: evidential or admirative
 - late written attestation of Albanian: first inscription 1468, first printed book 1555

Hypotheses for Albanian

- Two hypotheses for the grammaticalization path
 - from the analytical perfect, with inversion of the auxiliary and the participle
kam punuar 'I have worked' > *punuakam* 'surprisingly I work'
 - from the Gheg *have*-future, with omission of the particle *me* and inversion, to express a presumption (Jokl 1927: 207)
kam me ba 'I will make' > *kam ba* > *bakam* 'presumably I make'

Hypotheses for Albanian

- The pros and cons of the Turkish influence
- Early dating
 - Demiraj (1971) analyzes 28 examples of admirative in Gjon Buzuku's *Missel* and concludes that if the admirative is attested in the 16th century, then the category emerged earlier, before the Ottoman conquest
 - the admirative is more frequent in mountainous regions where the Turkish influence is limited
 - the theory of the Turkish influence is unacceptable given that Turkish is not an Indo-European language and has a very different verbal system (Demiraj 1976: 158-159)
- Late dating
 - in Buzuku's *Missel* the inverse perfect is a formal construction and has not yet developed the meaning of an admirative as it has in modern Albanian (Çabej 1968: 387)

Hypotheses for Albanian

- Development during the Ottoman period
 - Friedman (2010) disputes Demiraj's conclusions
 - 25 out of 28 examples in Buzuku's text are in conditional sentences (10 in the protasis, 15 in the apodosis), only 3 in independent clauses but their meaning can hardly be interpreted as admirative
 - the emergence of the category in Albanian is both intralinguistically motivated and prompted by language contacts with Turkish and Balkan Slavic
 - the admirative arose around the river Shkumbin, probably before the splitting of Albanian into two dialects

Albanian dialects

Dialectal distribution in Albanian

- The Albanian diaspora: several significant movements of Albanian population during the Middle Ages
 - the Arvanites (Tosk dialect) settled in Greece in the 13th – 16th c.
 - the Arbëreshë (Tosk dialect) moved to Italy in several waves between the 15th and the 18th c., after Skanderbeg's death
 - in the 17th – 18th c., Albanians from the region of Korçë settled in South Bulgaria (Mandritsa)
 - in the 18th – 19th c., also from the region of Korçë, an Albanian population migrated to Ukraine, probably passing through Bulgaria
 - in the 17th – 18th c., Albanians (Ghegs) settled in Zadar (Zara), Croatia

Dialectal distribution in Albanian

- Even dialectal distribution, with two exceptions: the sub-dialects of the extreme south – Cham and Lab (Demiraj 1976: 154)
- The admirative is attested in the languages of the late migrants from the Albanian territories – the Albanians in Mandritsa, Bulgaria (Sokolova 1983: 141), in Zadar, Croatia (Ajeti 1961: 139-140), and in Ukraine (Voronina et al. 1996: 95)
 - only synthetic tenses in Albanian of Bulgaria and Ukraine, therefore in the time of migration (17th – 18th c.) the category was not fully developed as in modern Albanian (Friedman 2010: 36)
- No admirative in the languages of the early migrants – the Arvanites and the Arbëreshë (Demiraj 1976: 154; Altimari 1996)
 - however inverse perfect is attested in Arvanitika
 - the traces of admirative in Arvanitika show that it once existed and disappeared, and this may mean that it also existed in the speech of the Arbresh (Demiraj 1976: 154-155)

The case of Hydra Arvanitika

- Inverse pluperfects in Arvanitika of the island Hydra, formally equivalent to the admirative imperfect in modern Albanian, are found in the protasis of conditional sentences

t	i	márrəkəfə,	do	i	kéjə
Subj	they-Acc	take-AdmImp1Sg	will	they-Acc	have-Imp1Sg

‘If I had taken them, I would have them’

t	e	lətəkəfə,	e	rbárə
Subj	it-Acc	leave-AdmImp1sg	it-Acc	loose-Imp1Sg

‘If I had left it, I would have lost it’

tə	mos	arrətəkəfə
Subj	not	arrive-AdmImp1Sg

‘I wish I hadn’t arrived!’

- Alternation -ə-/-tə-: márr-ə-kefə / lə-tə-kefə – mixing of participial and optative stem
- Conditional scale realis – potentialis – irrealis:
indicative – subjunctive – optative – "admirative"
- Admirative existed in (at least some of the) Arvanitika varieties, but it lost its admirative value and developed counterfactual meaning (Liosis 2010)

The case of Hydra Arvanitika

- Friedman (2010) uses Losis's data but offers a different interpretation
 - the Hydra examples correspond to the use of the admirative in Gjon Buzuku
 - at the time of the migration of the Arvanites from the Albanian territories, the inversed imperfect had a counterfactual value, and later developed the non-confirmative (evidential) meaning in Albanian (Friedman 2010)

Primary meaning in Albanian

Admirativity vs. evidentiality in Albanian

- Which value arose as primary in Albanian?
- Due to the dominant use of the admirative in contemporary Albanian, researchers look for admirative semantics in old texts
- The evidential value is with limited use in contemporary Albanian, but it occurs regularly in the folklore:
 - tales: ***Kâkan kanë** tre vllazën ...* (Anton Çetta, *Nga folklori ynë*) ‘Once upon a time there were three brothers...’
 - folk songs
 - the Albanian heroic epic cycle (*Kângë Kreshnikësh*)
- Difficulties in dating the folklore – theories for the heroic cycle
 - first collected in written form in the beginning of the 20th c.
 - created during the Ottoman period – most of the names are Ottoman
 - after the Slavic invasion – battles against Slavs for territories and women
 - connection with a presumable Illyrian epics – many mythological elements
- In any case, the dating of a folklore text does not completely illuminate the linguistic phenomena in it

*Të lumt na për t'madhin zot,
qi **s'jem'** kenë e zoti na **ka falë!**
Dritë **ka dalë** e diell **ka ra.**
Ça **ka ba** Gjeto Bashko Muji?
Se n'Krajli Muji **paska dalë**
edhe 'i nuse e **paska zanë.**
Zanë e **paska** t'binë e krajlit.
Kur **ka dredhë** Muji n'Jutbinë,
i ka mbledhë treqind dasmorë,
veshë me ar, shpatat flori,
shqjetë e mzdrakë krejt n'ari ngri,
të tanë gjogat pullali,
të tanë **ishin** agë të ri,
posë nji plakut qi u **ka pri,**
aj **asht** Dizdar Osman Aga.*

(Song of Frontier Warriors, edited by Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck, "Gjeto Bashko Muji – The wedding")

*Мори Недо, бела Недо,
бел трендафил неразпукнат,
неразпукнат, неразцъфтен!
Пречула се бела Неда,
пречула се, марчула се
по 'съ земя околиа,
Вардарската Вардариа.
На сон мома **се открала**
мегю майка, мегю татка, [...]
Открал я е рус войвода,
дренлиата, сам агата;
префърли я през бел Дунав
в чаурето, в ливагъето.
Там **опна'а** три чадира,
три чадира, три миндера; [...]
Три дни Неда мъртва **лежа,**
разбуди се в четвърти ден,*

(Bulgarian folk songs, collected by Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov, "White Neda and blond hero")

Cotrastive approach

Two factors

- Two factors boosted the emergence of the new category
 - internal
 - external
- It is likely that they acted in parallel

Intralinguistic factors

- The meaning of the perfect
 - resultative > indirect information
- The position of the perfect in the temporal system
 - a Balkan type of temporal system
 - perfect vs. aorist in Bulgarian and Albanian
 - in Romanian and BCMS this opposition is lost and the perfect replaced the aorist
- The opposition between perfect and aorist
 - *non-localization: localization* of the event in the past
 - *actualization: non-actualization* of the event in the present (Asenova 1996)
- Presumptive in Romanian

Va fi având *treabă undeva la câmp.* (M. Sadoveanu, *Baltagul*, in Mihăileanu 2006)
'He must have work somewhere on the field (but I doubt it).'

Primary values

- Reportative in Bulgarian
 - frequency and obligatorification
 - past tenses are marked for witness stance
- Admirative in Albanian
 - inversion as an expressive/emphatic mechanism

E di unë çfarë duan meshkujt nga femrat. (Facebook)

it-Acc know-Pr1Sg I-Nom what want-Pr3Pl men-NomDef from women-NomDef

‘I know exactly what men want from women.’

Znam az kakvo pravite tam! (Facebook)

know-Pr1Sg I-Nom what do-Pr2Pl there

‘I know exactly what you are doing there!’

New functions of the perfect

- The use of evidentials in conditional sentences

- Hydra Arvanitika (13th – 16th c.) – in the apodosis

t i márrakefə, do i kéjə
Subj they-Acc take-AdmImp1Sg will they-Acc have-Imp1Sg
'If I had taken them, I would have them'

- Gjon Buzuku's *Missel* (16th c.) – in the apodosis or both in the apodosis and the protasis

As mu nuk më njihni, as Atënë tem: e ju në njihnitë
nor I-Acc not I-Acc know-Pr2Pl nor father-Acc my-Acc and you-Nom if know-Imp2Pl
Atënë tem të njohkishte. (Gjon Buzuku, *Meshari*)
father-Acc. my-Acc. SubjPart. know-AdmImp2Pl

'You don't know me, nor my Father: if you knew me, you would have known my Father.'

- Prayers of Cserged (16th – 17th c., reflect the language of the 13th c.) – in the apodosis

Da ne bände rodeno, sif sme shtele zagina. (Gerdzhikov 1984/2003: 259)
Conj not be-Fut3Sg born-PassPartNeutSg all be-Pr1Pl want-ActPartPl die-Inf
'If it wasn't born, all of us would have died.'

- During this period, the perfect began to develop new functions that were not purely temporal but rather modal

The external factor

- Two aspects to explore the possible Turkish influence
 - chronological, related to the time of the emergence of the category in Bulgarian and Albanian and the time of language contacts with Turkish
 - linguistic, related to the similarities and differences in the evidential systems of the source language and the influenced languages

The Ottoman invasion of the Balkans

- The conquest took more than a century
- The beginning: in 1362 the Ottoman Turks took Adrianople (modern Edirne, Turkey)
- Serbia fell after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389
- Bulgaria fell in 1396
- Constantinople in 1453, Bosnia in 1463, Herzegovina in 1482, and Montenegro in 1499
- In Albania, the conquest started in 1385 and ended in 1479, Albanian resistance under Skanderbeg 1443-68
- The integration of the Albanians into the Ottoman Empire was rapid through the adoption of Islam by a large part of the population

Dating evidentiality

- Attempts at early dating
 - 12th-13th c. in Bulgarian (Gerdzhikov 1984/2003: 259)
 - 13th-14th c. in Albanian (Demiraj 1971)
- The interpretation of examples is controversial
- Reliable evidential interpretation
 - Bulgarian: in the Damaskins from the 17th – 18th c.
 - Albanian: in Pjetër Budi's and Pjetër Bogdani's works from the 17th c.
- In the pre-Ottoman period, the perfect in Bulgarian and Albanian began to develop additional functions related to more specific (modal) meanings

Evidentiality systems: similarities and differences

- Formation: evidentials are based on the perfect
 - Turkish: *-miş* vs. *-di*
 - Bulgarian and Albanian: perfect tense, but with different mechanisms of formation
- Semantic values
 - Turkish: reportative, inferential, dubitative, and admirative (Slobin&Aksu 1982; Friedman 2003: 102), *-di* past is marked for firsthand
 - Bulgarian: reportative, inferential, dubitative, and admirative; the indicative mood is marked for firsthand
 - Albanian: admirative as a main value; dubitative, inferential, reportative; the indicative mood is unmarked

Formal correspondences between Turkish and Bulgarian?

- To prove or reject the Turkish influence on Bulgarian evidentiality, some linguists look for similarities (Andreychin 1952) or differences (Gerdzhikov 1984) in form structure
 - adding two evidential markers
 - Turk. *gelmişmiş* 'had supposedly come', *gelmişti* 'had come'
 - Bulg. *bil sãm se bil napil* 'I allegedly got drunk'
 - adding or dropping the copula
 - Turk. *okumuştur* / *okumuş* 'supposedly read'
 - Bulg. *chel e* 'he has read' / *chel* 'he reportedly read'
- Such arguments are fruitless as the two phenomena in Turkish and Bulgarian are not comparable

Areal approach

- The area of the Balkans and West Asia
 - languages with grammaticalized evidentiality: Turkish (T), Bulgarian (IE), Albanian (IE), Azerbaijani (T), Tajiki (IE), Western Armenian (IE), Nepali (IE), Georgian (Kart), etc. (Guentcheva 1996: 12; Aikhenvald 2004: 279)
 - grammatical coding based on the perfect
 - similar evidential values: reportative, inferential, dubitative, and admirative (Nitsolova 2008: 332)
- Western European area
 - evidential strategies based on modal forms
 - modal verbs in many of the Germanic languages and in Finnish (de Haan 2013)
 - *devoir* 'must' or subjunctive in French (Hassler 2002: 163)

Cross-linguistic approach

- Explain the origin of the category through areal diffusion
 - isoglosses of the reportative in Eurasia (Haarmann 1970)
 - WALS visualizes the distribution of evidentiality across languages: it is concentrated in several areas in Europe, Asia, North and South America and absent in Australia and Africa (de Haan 2013, Aikhenvald 2004: 288-296)
 - <https://wals.info/feature/78A#2/18.0/149.9>
 - areal grouping according to morphological and semantic features (de Haan 2013)
 - the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Baltic area, Amazonia, the Andes, etc. (Aikhenvald 2004: 288-296)
- Evidentiality is easily transferred from one language to another, regardless of whether the languages are genealogically related (de Haan 2013)

The Turcic languages as source of diffusion

- The evidential opposition between the suffixes *-di* and *-miş* is attested in the earliest written record of Turkish from the 8th century (Friedman 2004: 118)
- The category of evidentiality is central to the Turkic languages and they are largely accepted as the source of the category's distribution in a wide area: South-West and Central Asia, South-East and North-East Europe
- Bulgarian, Albanian, Kurdish, Western Armenian, Georgian, Tajik, Eastern Finno-Ugric languages, etc. are believed to “have copied” the Turkic evidential system (Johansson 2003: 288)
- Counterexamples
 - Armenian – contacts with both Turkic and Iranian languages
 - Svan (Kart) – influenced by Megrelian (Kart) which was influenced from Turkish (Aikhenvald 2004: 289)

Further spread on the Balkans

- The areal theory finds confirmation in the further spread of evidentiality in the Balkans
 - Frasheriot variety of Aromanian in Gorna Belitsa (near Struga, North Macedonia)
 - avuska* 'he/she reportedly has' = Alb. *paska*
 - avuska avuta* 'he/she reportedly has had' = Alb. *paska pasur*
 - Megleno-Romanian – inverse perfect, reportative value
 - Ladin dialect of Istanbul – pluperfect with reportative value
 - Romani dialect of Sliven (Bulgaria) – the participle formant *-l* is used to express reportative (Friedman 2004: 110-114)

Conclusions

- The Balkan linguistic situation turned out to be favourable for the development and spread of evidentiality
- Why Balkan Slavic and Albanian?
 - the perfect tense
 - the language contacts with Turkish
- Why not in Greek?
 - linguistic explanation: aorist vs. perfect = neutral vs. emphatic (Asenova 1996)
 - extralinguistic explanation (socio-historical factors): the attitude towards language, the literary tradition of Greek, the identification of the language with religion (Joseph 2003: 317)
 - *just because there are conditions for something to happen does not mean that it will happen* (de Haan 2013)

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