On the Bulgarian evidential construction(s)

Elena Karagjosova

Freie Universität Berlin

It has become commonplace in formal semantic research on evidentiality in Bulgarian to assume the existence of a single evidential construction with various related interpretations. Thus Koev (2017) follows Izvorski (1997) who considers a single construction encoding indirect evidence (*hearsay* and *inference*). Similarly, Smirnova (2013) considers a single construction encoding next to hearsay and inference a third evidential category that she calls *direct evidence* and that is referred to in descriptive literature as (*ad*)*mirative.* An exception is Sonnenhauser (2013) who distinguishes between a *renarrative* (hearsay) and *conclusive* (inference) paradigm, however without considering the admirative interpretation.

Apart from the empirically unjustified assumption that the Bulgarian inferential forms share the same paradigm with the hearsay forms in terms of auxhiliary drop in the 3rd person (Smirnova 2013), little attention has been given in formal semantic research to differences concerning the morphological form of the participles involved in the realization of the three evidential functions. Thus, while it has been recognized that both the hearsay and the inferential interpretations use both present (imperfect) and past (aorist) *l*-participle stems (cf. Smirnova 2013; Sonnenhauser 2013), it has largely remained unnoticed that the admirative only allows for imperfect stems. The assumption of a single formal paradigm on which all three evidential functions rely contradicts the bulk of extensive descriptive work on the issue (e.g. Bojadžiev et al. 1999, Pašov 1999, Levin-Steinmann 2004) and is easily shown to be empirically inadequate. I suggest instead a distinction between three evidential paradigms illustrated in (1) for the verb *piša* ('to write'). The table includes for comparison the forms of the Bulgarian present perfect tense with which the evidential paradigms partly overlap. (I ignore for the time being future and perfect evidential forms.)

It has further largely escaped the attention of both formal and descriptive work that the evidential sources encoded by these forms are more versatile than previously assumed. Thus, the so-called admirative realized by zero-auxhiliary imperfect-stem *l*-participles can not only be used in the widely recognized exclamative contexts expressing direct evidence (c.f. e.g. Bojadžiev et al. 1999, Smirnova 2013), but also in assertions like (2) which may or may not be embedded under the predicate *okaza se, (če)* ('it turned out (that)'). In such contexts, these forms indicate that the speaker reports on some recent or still ongoing belief revision process caused by observable but not necessarily direct evidence. Examples like this suggest that the so-called admirative forms are not only used for encoding direct perception but also inference-based evidence. Finally, I show that the inferential forms claimed by Smirnova to only express "external" inferences based on observable evidence, may also indicate "internal", knowledge-based inferences as their evidential source. (I ignore for the time being the so-called *dubitative* interpretation of the renarrative construction, cf. e.g. Bojadžiev et al. 1999.)

Based on the above considerations, I propose the description of the properties of the three evidential constructions presented in (3). In addition to the evidential source encoded, the three evidential forms are characterized in terms of the degree of commitment to the truth of the proposition (in terms of a probability P), as well as in terms of the temporal relations expressed by the evidential constructions between *speech time* (ST), *event time* (ET) (cf. Klein 1994), and *evidence acquisition time* (EAT, Smirnova 2013). (I ignore for the time being aspectual differences, as well as the reference time (RT) shown by Smirnova (2013) to play an important role in the temporal analysis of the evidential).

In terms of the relation of evidentials to epistemic modality, I argue that the inferential and admirative express different degrees of speaker commitment (contra Smirnova's 2013 assumption that the speaker is equally committed to the truth of the proposition) – higher in the case of the admirative and lower in the case of the inferential – a difference supported by the compatibility

of epistemic adverbs like *maj* ('perhaps') with the inferential and their incompatibility with the admirative. At the same time, the commitment expressed by the admirative is weaker than knowledge, as also pointed out in Smirnova (2013). I further argue that the renarrative indicates complete lack of speaker commitment, yet agree with Smirnova (2013) who argues that the renarrative encodes a modal value in terms of the commitment of the reporting person. This is also supported by the behaviour of epistemic adverbs like *maj* ('perhaps') which modify the degree of the reporter's commitment, rather than of the speaker. If not epistemically modified, the reporter's commitment has the value P=1. To account for these properties of the epistemic modal component of the three evidential constructions more adequately, I employ Krifka's (2017) distinction between proposition, assertion and judgement, where assertion is a public act committing the speaker to the truth of what is asserted, whereas judgement is a private act expressing the confidence of a judge (speaker, addressee or reporter) in a proposition. The evidential constructions are then accounted for in terms of specifying the evidential source, the judge, as well as the judge's degree of confidence in the proposition, which is generally weakened by asserting a judgement rather than a proposition. This analysis is compatible with Nicolova's (1993) distinction between speaker and witness on the one hand and knowledge and assertion on the other, and with Sonnenhauser's (2013) analysis of evidentiality in terms of point of view.

(1)

		renarrative		conclusive		admirative	perfect
stem:	aorist	imperfect	aorist	imperfect	imperfect	aorist
	pisal sâm	pišel sâm	pisal sâm	pišel sâm	pišel sâm	pisal sâm
	pisal ∅	pišel ∅	pisal e	pišel e	pišel ∅	pisal e

(2) Ne bjah prava, kogato pisah, če [...] Košlukov ne raboti [...]. To se okaza ošte po-lošo - toj rabotel. (source: reduta.bg)
   'I was not right when I wrote that Košlukov didn't work. It turned out to be worse – he obviously is working.'

(3)

	evidential source	degree of commitment	temporal structure
renarrative	hearsay	reporter's commitment: P=1	ET < ST (aorist stem) ET = ST (imperf. stem) EAT < ST (both stems)
conclusive	inference from observable facts or from knowledge	speaker commitment: P>0.5	ET < ST (both stems) EAT < ST (both stems)
admirative	observation of (in)direct evidence causing belief revision	speaker commitment: P=1	ET = ST (imperf. stem) EAT ≤ ST (imperf. stem)

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