

Wait, where did you get this from?: Evidentiality in Gujarati.

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Introduction

Part 1

- Defining Evidentiality
- Classification of Evidentiality

Part 2

- Marking of evidentiality in Gujarati

Part 3

- Observations

Evidentiality: a Phenomenon

- “It is observed in about a quarter of the world’s languages, every statement must specify the type of source on which it is based—for example, whether the speaker saw it, or heard it, or inferred it from indirect evidence, or learnt it from someone else. This grammatical category, whose primary meaning is information source, is called ‘evidentiality’.”(Aikhenvald, 2004)
- Indo-Aryan Languages do not have a grammatical category of evidentiality, (Bashir, 2006) but is either morphologically encoded or the expression of evidentiality is distributed throughout the grammar as in compound verbs, tense, aspect, mirativity, modality, passives, nominalisations, person, demonstratives, negation etc. which develop overtones similar to some semantic features of evidentials.

Examples: English

1. John saw Mary cross(ing) the road. (De Haan 2005: 17)

2. John saw that Mary had crossed the road. (De Haan 2005: 17)

Sentence (1) indicates that the speaker has witnessed the event, has a direct, visual evidence. In (2), on the other hand, the speaker has only witnessed the result of the event, therefore the sentence has an inferential evidential overtone, rather than a visual one.

3. I heard France beating Brazil. (Aikhenvald 2003: 19)

4. I heard that France beat Brazil. (Aikhenvald 2003: 19)

In sentence (3) the verb hear is used in its primary auditory meaning while in sentence (4), hear is used with evidential hearsay meaning.

Classification of Evidentiality

Aikhenvald and Dixon (2003) divide evidentiality into two types:

- Type I- “states the existence of a source for the evidence without specifying it”
- Type II- “specifies the kind of evidence, be it visually obtained, based on inference or reported information”.

Parameters used in the classification of evidentials

A) Aikhenvald (2004: 63-64):

- I. VISUAL- which covers evidence acquired through seeing
- II. SENSORY- which covers evidence through hearing, and is typically extended to smell and taste, and sometimes also touch
- III. INFERENCE- based on visible or tangible evidence or result
- IV. ASSUMPTION- based on evidence other than visible results: this may include logical reasoning, assumption, or simply general knowledge
- V. HEARSAY- for reported information with no reference to whom it was reported by
- VI. QUOTATIVE- for reported information with an overt reference to the quoted source

B) Bashir (2006):

1. Source (of information)

- a) Internal
- b) External

2. Time (of obtaining the information)

- a) Past (old knowledge)
- b) Present (new knowledge)
- c) Future (presumption)

3. Directness:

- a) Direct- first-hand sensory knowledge, well established, hence speaker internal
- b) Indirect- second hand, reported knowledge, inferred

Points of Exploration

1. How is evidentiality marked in Gujarati in a purely synchronic aspect?
2. How is Gujarati placed with regard to Type 1 (evidential systems in which it is not necessary to specify the source of information) or Type 2 (evidential systems in which the source of information is specified) languages with evidentiality?

Marking of Evidentiality in Gujarati

Tense

a. Simple present tense

5. e loko av-e tʃʰe
DEM.DIST.3PL people come-PRS be.PRS
‘They are coming.’

Direct, visual evidential reading.

b. Simple past tense

6. a tʃʰokri bol-i
DEM.PROX.3SG girl talk-PST.3SGF
‘This girl spoke.’

Direct, sensory evidential reading.

c. Simple future tense

7. e mumbəi dʒə-s-e

3SGM mumbai go-FUT-3SGM

'He will go to Mumbai.'

Presumptive knowledge, indirect evidential reading.

d. Pluperfect

8. e av-el-o tʃʰe

3SGM come-PLU.PRF-3SGM be.PRS

'He has come.'

Can have either indirect or direct evidential reading.

(Note: While the Perfective aspect, can have only direct evidential reading.

Eg, 9. e av-j-o tʃʰe

3SGM come-PFV-3SGM be.PRS

'He has come.')

Aspect

a. Perfective

10. e-ŋe kam kər-j-u

3SG-ERG work do-PFV-3SGN

'He did the work.'

Direct first hand evidential reading.

b. Imperfective

11. e niʃaɖ-e dʒə-t̚-o hə-t̚-o

3.SG.M school-DAT go-IPFV-3SGM be-HAB-3SGM

'He was going to the school.'

Direct visual evidential reading (IPFV) v/s first hand knowledge, established knowledge (HAB)

c. Habitual

12. nirəv dərrodʒ səvar-e dud^h piw-e tʃ^he

Nirav everyday morning-LOC milk drink-HAB be.PRS

'Everyday, Nirav drinks milk in the morning.'

Direct, first hand knowledge, established knowledge.

d. Prospective

13. e mumbəi dʒə-va-n-o tʃ^he

3SGM Mumbai go-INF-PROS-3SGM be.PRS

'He is going to go to Mumbai.'

Presumptive knowledge, therefore indirect

Mood

a. Subjunctive

14. vørsad_ɹ pəɖ-j-o hæ-se
rain fall-PFV-3SGM be-SBJV.3SG

'It might have rained.'

Sensory, visual and inferred

15. ɛliko mes-mã gə-j-o hæ-se
Alico mess-LOC go-PFV-3SGM be-SBJV.3SG

'Alico must have gone to the mess.'

Non-sensory, inferred

b. Potential

16. evu lag-e tʃe ke e hæve ja-s-e

like this seem-IPFV be.PRS COMP he now go-FUT-3SG

'It seems like he will go now.'

Indirect, Assumptive, Inferred

Interjections

17. əre! keʃlo moʃo t̪hə-i gə-j-o

oh how much tall.2SGM happen-CP GO-PFV-3SGM

'Oh! He has grown so tall.'

Mirative- (visual, direct) or (hearsay)

18. oho! rina gita-ne pətrə lək^h-e tʃhe

oh Rina Gita-DAT letter write-IPFV be.PRS

'Rina is (seen to be) writing a letter to Gita. '

Mirative, visual, direct

Observations

- It was observed that Gujarati encodes evidentiality as it is spread across the grammar in a number of ways, namely via 1. Tense- simple past tense, simple present tense, simple future tense, pluperfect 2. Aspect- perfective, imperfective, habitual, prospective 3. Mood- subjunctive, potential 4. Interjections.

(Note: A lot other ways via which evidentiality can be marked in grammar is via complementizers, compound verbs, quotatives, evidentials in negation, evidentials in interrogation, epistemic modality and evidentials etc)

- Thus based on the data observed, Gujarati belongs to the Type I (evidential systems in which it is not necessary to specify the source of information) languages.
- Direct evidential readings- simple present tense, simple past tense, pluperfect, perfective, imperfective, habitual, mirative.
- Indirect evidential readings- simple future tense, pluperfect, prospective, subjunctive, potential, mirative
- Evidential readings of 1. PLU.PERF v/s PFV 2. IPFV v/s HAB 3. SUBJ v/s PFV v/s FUT
- This study was done in a limited synchronic perspective, and it listed ways in which Gujarati encoded evidentiality spread across grammar.

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Thank you 😊