

Evidentiality and information structure in Sibe (Xibe)

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This talk examines the relationship between evidentiality and information structure in the Sibe (Xibe). Evidentiality is defined as a category denoting the source of information (Aikhenvald 2004), yet debate persists over whether peripheral categories such as mirativity are included within it (Aikhenvald 2003, 2012). While defining evidentiality narrowly as a category exclusively denoting the source of information is reasonable, the question of how categories excluded from this narrow definition—such as mirativity—should be positioned within the grammatical system remains unresolved. This presentation therefore surveys the forms related to (broad sense) evidentiality and information structure in Sibe, discussing what kind of category the grammar concerning information (its processing and transmission) constitutes in Sibe, based on Kogura (2018, 2021). The main claim of the talk is as follows:

(i) Finite verbs distinguish informative/non-informative clauses, and clauses conveying main and background information. The following table shows the paradigm of finite verbal forms, and the sentences from (1) to (3) show the functions of each form. Indicative presents information as main one toward the hearer (1), verbal noun presents as backgrounded ones. Participles just verbalize admiration of the speaker, and it does not present information.

Table. Finite verbal forms in Sibe

		Indicative (=i)	Verbal Noun (=ηe)	Participle
Irrealis (-re)		-mi	-re=ηe	-re
Realis	Perfective (-Xe/-Ke)	-Xe=i (-Ke=i)	-Xe=ηe (-Ke=ηe)	-Xe (-Ke)
	Imperfective (-maχe)	-maχe=i	-maχe=ηe	-maχe

- (1) bi Gulja=de siwe' gisuN taci-Xe=i.
1SG [PLACE]=DAT Sibe language study-PFV=IND
'I studied Sibe language in Gulja.'

(2) A: *eneŋe laŋe#eweN gya-mi na.*
 today na'an get-IRR.IND Q
 'Shall we get a na'an today?'

B: *gya-Xe=ŋe.*
 get-PFV=VN
 'I got one. (So we don't need to get more.)'

(3) *syaN je-Ke.*
 good eat-PFV
 'I ate so much.'

(ii) The auxiliary *bi-* (indicative: *biXe=i*, verbal noun: *biXe=ngge*, participle: *bi-Xe*) verbalizes operations occurring in the speaker's mind. Indicative *biXe=i* denotes the speaker has just got a (new) information (4). Verbal noun *biXe=ŋe* denotes the speaker has just recalled a memory for inference (5). Participle *biXe* denotes no operation has occurred in the speaker's mind (6). In discourse, these forms serve meta-information regarding the speaker's knowledge. That is, *biXe=i* serves to indicate that the speaker did not know the information (mirativity), *biXe=ŋe* serves to indicate that the information differed from the speaker's assumption, and *biXe* serves to indicate the speaker already knew the information.

(4) *tere jaqe žibeN nane bi-Xe=i.*
 that person (lit. thing) Japan(ese) person AUX-PFV=IND
 'I found that) That person is Japanese.'

(5) *oi, teraŋe na. tese bei#jiŋe=de gene-mi se-Xe bi-Xe=ŋe.*
 INTJ like.that Q 3PL [PLACE]=DAT go-IRR say-PFV AUX-PFV=VN
 'Is that right? They said they will go to Beijing.'

(6) (The speaker is scolding his/her child.)
yeli#bira=de efse-me oju=qu seme ale-Xe bi-Xe.
 [PLACE]=DAT swim-CVB AUX=IRR.NEG COMP tell-PFV AUX-PFV
 '(I remember that) I have told you not to swim in the Yili river.'

(iii) The auxiliary *o-* (indicative: *o-Xe=i*) and *yela-* (indicative: *yela-Xe=i*) denote marked modes of registration of information opposed to unmarked mode which rewrites contradicting information the interlocutor has. *o-Xe=i* presents new information which does not deny the information which the interlocutor has. In sentence (7), the speaker presents information that the pants are small for the speaker without denying that they are big on a general scale.

(7) *ere faqare meji' ajige o-Xe=i.*
 this pants a.bit small AUX-PFV=NINF
 'These trousers are a bit tight (and I cannot wear them.)'

The auxiliary *yela-* presents information as an exception without denying the information which

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