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L'ÉNONCIATION MÉDIATISÉE

II

Le traitement épistémologique de l'information:
illustrations amérindiennes et caucasiennes



ÉDITIONS PEETERS
LOUVAIN - PARIS - DUDLEY, MA
2007

BEYOND EVIDENTIALITY AND MIRATIVITY: EVIDENCE FROM TSAKHUR¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study concerns evidentiality and mirativity in Tsakhur (< North Caucasian, Nakh-Daghestanian, Lezgian).

Evidentiality is generally recognized as a category that “shows the kind of justification for a factual claim which is available to the person making that claim” (Anderson 1986: 274). Evidentiality involves the semantic distinction between “attested”, or “direct” and “non-attested”, or “indirect” evidence, the latter being further subdivided into “inferred” and “hearsay” (reported) evidence (see Willett 1988 for discussion).

Mirativity has been treated for a long time as an instance of evidentiality, in particular, as a contextual effect evidentials produce under certain semantic-pragmatic conditions. However, as DeLancey (1997, 1998) has shown, there exist cross-linguistic observations that mirativity should rather be viewed as a notion separate from (although related to) evidentiality. In DeLancey’s view, mirativity involves a grammaticalized distinction between “information which is part of the speaker’s integrated picture of the world and information which is new and not yet part of that integrated picture” (DeLancey 1997:49).²

In what follows we discuss data from Tsakhur, in which both mirative and evidential meanings are expressed grammatically but in a rather unusual and complicated way; evidential and mirative markers in Tsakhur do not count as instances of what is commonly regarded as a prototypical realization of these categories.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The verbal system of Tsakhur is characterized in section 2. In sections 3-4 two main morphosyntactic carriers of evidentiality and mirativity are discussed.

¹ Data for this study were collected during two field trips to the village of Mishlesh (Daghestan Republic, Russia) carried out by the group of researchers from the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Moscow State University. The authors are very grateful to the inhabitants of Mishlesh who served as informants on Tsakhur, especially to Ismail Mamedov. The financial support from Russian Foundation for the Humanities (RGNF No 98-04-06198a) and Research Support Scheme (No 1474/1999) is gratefully acknowledged.

² See also Lazard’s (1999) critical comments on DeLancey’s suggestions.

Tsakhur, like many other languages spoken in and outside Daghestan, possesses a verbal form that can be characterized as a general indirect evidence marker. It comprises “inferential” and “reportive” meanings; diachronically, this form originates from the perfect.³ The peculiarity of Tsakhur, however, is that the carrier of evidential-like distinction is not the Perfect itself but rather the opposition between what is known as ATTRIBUTIVIZED and NON-ATTRIBUTIVIZED FORMS of the auxiliary (see 3.1-3.2 for details about this opposition). Another characteristic feature of Tsakhur, absent in languages with perfect-based evidentials, is that marking evidential meanings is not restricted to the Perfect but involves every periphrastic verbal form containing the non-attributivized auxiliary. The semantic characteristics of these forms are dealt with in 3.2-3.4.

Apart from non-attributivized periphrastic forms, Tsakhur possesses an epistemic particle *jī*, which allows for a variety of interpretations that are closely related to the semantic domains of both evidentiality and mirativity. At the same time, the distribution of *jī* is considerably different from that which can be expected from genuine markers of either non-attested evidence or mirativity. Some puzzling properties of this particle are discussed in 4.2-4.3; in particular we will demonstrate that the distribution of *jī* suggests a strong correlation between ‘new knowledge’ and ‘non-attested evidence’ as opposed to ‘assimilated knowledge’ and ‘attested evidence’.

2. OVERALL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VERBAL SYSTEM IN TSAKHUR

Verbs in Tsakhur are inflected for aspect, mood and class/number agreement. Here is an example of the morphemic structure of the verb *giRalas* ‘begin, start’, also illustrated in (1):

<i>gi-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>R-</i>	<i>a-</i>	<i>l-</i>	<i>as</i>
prefix	class/number agreement marker	root	marker of aspect	“determinant”	marker of mood

- (1) *iči ginej qež-e gi-r-Ril-Ø.*
 girl.2 bread.4 4.bake-IPFV PRF-2-started.PFV-IND

The girl started baking bread.

³ See Guentchéva (ed.) (1996): Part I for perfect-based evidentials; among languages of this kind Balkan Slavic, Turkic and Iranian languages have received the greatest attention; see, among many others: Friedman 1986, Aksu-Koç & Slobin (1986), Guentchéva (1996), Duchet & Pěrnaska (1996), Meydan (1996), Johanson & Utas (eds) (2000). ‘Inferred evidence + reported evidence’ clustering is discussed briefly by de Haan (1998). For Daghestanian languages see Kibrik (1977) on Archi, Comrie & Polinsky (1999) on Tsez, Maisak & Tatevosov (2001) on Bagwalal, and Tatevosov (2001) on the diachronic development of Nakh-Daghestanian evidentials.

The *root* is typically a monoconsonant. The position for the *class/number agreement marker* is before the root, agreement being triggered by a NP in the Absolutive case. Diachronically, *verbal prefixes* that occupy the leftmost position in the stem are markers of spatial relations but synchronically they are strongly lexicalized. *Markers of aspect* – imperfective *-a/e* or perfective *-i/u* follow the root. Some verbs also occupy the position for the semantically empty “*determinant*”, one of the sonorants *r, l, n*. The rightmost position is reserved for the *markers of mood* (indicative \emptyset , potential *-as/es*, irrealis *-i*, imperative *-e*).⁴

There are three basic synthetic verbal forms: PRESENT, AORIST, and POTENTIAL, cf. the corresponding forms of the verb *gi-r-Ral-as* ‘start’: *girRil* (Aorist), *gīRā* (Present), *gīRālas* (Potential). Each of them optionally attaches the attributivizing marker *-na*⁵ producing *attributivized* forms, e.g. *girRil-na* (Aorist), *gīRā-da* (Present), *gīRālas-na* (Potential). Both attributivized and non-attributivized forms can head not only finite but also non-finite clauses; in the latter case, non-attributivized forms are used as converbs, while attributivized forms are used as participles (generally, *-na* is a morphological marker of any dependent of a nominal), as shown in Table 1. There seems to be no essential semantic difference between attributivized and non-attributivized forms of the Present, Aorist and Potential when used as heads of finite clauses.

Table 1. Main verbal forms in finite and non-finite clauses

TYPE OF THE FORM	FUNCTION IN FINITE CLAUSES	FUNCTION IN NON-FINITE CLAUSES
Non-attributivized	Present Aorist Potential	Imperfective converb Perfective converb Purposive converb
Attributivized	Present Aorist Potential	Imperfective participle Perfective participle Purposive participle

Periphrastic verbal forms are composed of converbs with the auxiliaries *wō-d* (present time reference), *ixā* (past time reference) and *ixes* (hypothetical modality)⁶.

⁴ For more details concerning the Tsakhur verbal morphology, see Dobrushina (1999).

⁵ The allomorphs of *-na* (for forms of 1-3 nominal classes in the singular) are *-da* (after *-s*) and *-in/-in/-un* (for forms of the 4th nominal class and for the plural forms)

⁶ The auxiliaries *ixā* and *ixes* are the Aorist and Potential tenses of a regular verb *ixes* ‘be, become’ (the Present form *exxe* ‘is (habitually)’ is only marginally used as an auxiliary and will not be discussed here). The auxiliary *wō-d* is a stative verb which also functions as a present copula, and has no other stem. Auxiliaries can either follow the verb or be attached to a focused constituent.

The paradigm of main synthetic and periphrastic forms is presented in Table 2; the optional attributivizing marker is in brackets:

Table 2. Main synthetic and periphrastic forms of the verb *aqas* 'open'.

SYNTHETIC FORMS	FORMS WITH AUXILIARIES		
	<i>wo-d(-un)</i> 'is'	<i>ixa(-na)</i> 'was'	<i>ixes(-da)</i> '(probably) will; is'
Aorist <i>aqi(-na)</i> 'opened'	Perfect <i>aqi wo-d(-un)</i> 'has opened'	Pluperfect <i>aqi ixa(-na)</i> 'had opened'	Perfective potential <i>aqi ixes(-da)</i> 'probably opened'
Present <i>aqɑ(-na)</i> 'opens'	Durative <i>aqɑ wo-d(-un)</i> 'is opening / opens'	Imperfect <i>aqɑ ixa(-na)</i> 'was opening / used to open'	Imperfective potential <i>aqɑ ixes(-da)</i> 'is probably opening'
Potential <i>aqas(-da)</i> 'will open'	Prospective <i>aqas-o-d(-un)</i> 'is going to open'	"Nevertheless" <i>aqas ixa(-na)</i> 'nevertheless opened'	(? <i>aqas ixes</i>)

Semantically, indicative verbal forms in Tsakhur are organized in what is known as a tripartite system (see Bybee & Dahl 1989): the time reference of perfective verbal forms is restricted to the past, the tense distinction being relevant only to imperfective forms. The forms of potential mood encode hypothetical modality, including the future time reference as a particular case. The discussion below is limited mostly to the indicative synthetic verbal forms (Aorist and Present), and to the indicative periphrastic forms with the auxiliary *wo-d* (Perfect and Durative).

3. PERIPHRASTIC FORMS WITH THE AUXILIARY *wo-d*

3.1. Attributivized vs non-attributivized distinction

In Tsakhur, the Perfect, like its counterparts in other languages, signals that the situation occurred in the past but is relevant to the moment of speech⁷. It allows for two main readings. Under the first reading, it is interpreted as a *perfect of result* proper, referring to a situation that terminates producing a resultant state (as in 'John has just come'). Under the second reading, the Perfect renders a resultative meaning, referring only to the resultant state of the situation but not to its preceding development⁸. The Durative describes ongoing

⁷ See, e.g., Dahl & Hedin (2001) for some refinements of the notion of relevance.

⁸ See Nedyalkov (ed.) (1988) for extensive data and discussion.

situations obtaining at the moment of speech; it also allows for the *habitual* reading and can thus be characterized as a general imperfective verbal form (in the sense of Comrie 1976 and Bybee *et al.* 1994).

The behavior of the auxiliary *wo-d* is exceptional in one respect: although all the other synthetic or periphrastic forms show no semantic difference between “attributivized” and “non-attributivized” variants (which are easily interchangeable⁹), this, however, is not the case with *wo-d* and periphrastic forms of the Perfect, Durative, and Prospective containing this auxiliary. Forms with attributivized (i.e. unmarked, *wo-d*) and non-attributivized (i.e. participle-like, *wo-d-un*) variants of the auxiliary differ considerably in their semantics and distribution. Below, we examine the nature of this distinction in detail (hereafter, AF stands for “attributivized form” and NAF for “non-attributivized form” of the auxiliary *wo-d*).

To begin with, NAF, in contrast to AFs, can hardly occur in first person clauses, unless the LACK OF CONSCIOUSNESS EFFECT emerges. Consider examples (1)-(2) with Perfects: (2b) is only possible if the speaker’s knowledge about a situation is a knowledge *ex post facto*, while at the moment the event actually took place s/he was unaware of it.

(1a) *malhammad_j-ē aḱa āq-i wo-d-un.*
 Mohammed-ERG door.4 4.open-PFV AUX-4-A
 Mohammed **has opened** the door.

(1b) *malhammad_j-ē aḱa āq-i wo-d.*
 Mohammed-ERG door.4 4.open-PFV AUX-4
 {I see that} Mohammed **opened** the door.

(2a) *zi aḱa āq-i wo-d-un.*
 1SG.ERG door.4 4.open-PFV AUX-4-A
 I **have opened** the door.

(2b) *zi aḱa āq-i wo-d.*
 1SG.ERG door.4 4.open-PFV AUX-4
 {I see that} I **opened** the door {but I don’t remember it}.

The same restriction holds for the two other periphrastic forms with *wo-d*, namely the Durative (see (5), (7a), (8)-(9), (12a, b), (15), (17)-(19), (21) below) and the Prospective (not discussed in the present paper), as well as for the use of *wo-d* as a copula in nominal clauses (see (10), (16), (19), (20) below)¹⁰.

Cross-linguistically, the context of the first person singular actor is recognized as a reliable diagnosis for identifying evidentials, especially those marking

⁹ A tentative formulation of the pragmatic conditions governing the choice between “attributivized” and “non-attributivized” variants of basic synthetic forms is presented in Kalimina & Toldova (1999: 394-419).

¹⁰ It is worth noting that periphrastic forms with the auxiliaries *ixa(-n)* and *ixes(-in)* shows no difference as to the presence/absence of the attributivizer.

non-attested evidence (inferential and/or reported). The lack of consciousness effect emerges because a person is normally aware of a situation in which s/he participates (*cf.* English “I was told I killed him” and “I see I killed him”). Furthermore, the first person test produces the same result if applied to the markers of mirativity: as DeLancey (1997: 42) mentioned, the mirative shares this lack of consciousness effect with evidentials.

First person clauses are often mentioned as a diagnosis for evidentials, and in fact examples (1)-(2) apparently support the claim that we are dealing with the opposition between attested and non-attested evidence. However, the semantic analysis of periphrastic forms with *wo-d* in terms of evidentiality does not seem to be completely adequate; in the rest of section 3, we will demonstrate what seems to be a more accurate description of their function.

The discussion below is limited mostly to attributivized (with *wo-d-un*) and non-attributivized (with *wo-d*) forms of the Perfect and of the Durative. In section 3.2 we will discuss why the opposition between AFS and NAFS cannot be analyzed in terms of evidentiality; in section 3.3, we will reject the hypothesis that this opposition has to do with mirativity; more examples are presented in section 3.4, and a general account for the function of non-attributivized forms is given in section 3.5.

3.2. NAFs and evidentiality

Forms of non-attributivized Perfect and Durative are commonly used to express non-attested evidence, of both “reported” and “inferred” type.

3.2.1. Non-attributivized Perfect and reported evidence.

Example (3) demonstrates the use of non-attributivized Perfect referring to a situation recognized by the speaker via reported speech several years after it really happened:

- (3) *Context:* It happened one day that we all went to the shop, except Mohammed, who had broken his leg and stayed home. It is only many years after that we came to know (he told us), that

<i>malhammad-i-s</i>	<i>d-ik̄ikin-o-r</i>	<i>magazin_y-ē-qa</i>	<i>ajr-es,</i>
Mohammed-OBL-DAT	NEG-want PFV-AUX-1	shop-IN-ALL	1.come-PT
<i>hamančiše</i>	<i>almal-bi</i>	<i>wo-d</i>	<i>haʔ-u</i>
therefore	ruse-PL	AUX-NPL	NPL.make-PFV
		<i>Gej</i>	<i>ha-t'-q'ur-wi.</i>
		leg.4	4-break.PFV-CIT

Mohammed **didn't want** to go to the shop, and that is why he **pretended** he had broken his leg.

Given such a context, the distribution of the non-attributivized Perfect in narratives is particularly significant. It is well known that perfect forms are almost never used in the main line of a narrative (that is, in sentences matching the sequence of events), because, by definition, such forms mark the relevance of the described situation to the present moment, while in the narrative dis-

course the moment of speech is irrelevant to the temporal sequencing of events (cf. also Dahl 1985: 112-113, 138). Therefore, perfect forms can only occur “to point to a prior event that is now relevant to the main narrative sequence” (Bybee *et al.* 1994: 62). However, in languages in which the perfect also expresses non-attested evidence, it often functions as a narrative tense, describing events which are communicated orally from one generation of speakers to another (in narratives like folk-tales, legends, etc.)¹¹.

The same pattern is found in Tsakhur. The Aorist is used as a main narrative tense which can occur both in stories describing the narrator’s personal experience and in “hearsay narratives”. At the same time, the non-attributivized Perfect can also be used in the main narrative sequence, but only in the latter type of story. Consider, for example, the following sentences from a humorous story about unlucky hunters:

(4) *Context*: A group of hunters went to the forest in order to catch the only bear that lived there:

(4a) *i-m-mi Ga-w-žē-mē so hi-w-X-u wo-b aXn-ē-qa.*
 that.H-A-PL HPL-see PFV-POST bear.3 PRF-3-run-PFV AUX-3 lair-IN-ALL
 After it saw them, the bear **ran** to (and inside) its lair.

(4b) *aXn-ē-qa i-w-č'-u-mē, i-m-mi gi-b-Ril-o-b*
 lair-IN-ALL 3-enter-PFV-POST that.H-A-PL PRF-HPL-begin PFV-AUX-HPL
i-na qiRāh-a.
 that 3-A 3 take out-IPFV

When it went into its lair, they **began** (to try) to get it out.

The choice of the narrative Perfect is not obligatory since the same types of narratives (e.g. folk-tales) can be communicated entirely in the unmarked Aorist forms; in particular, in (4a-b) the Aorist can be easily used instead of the Perfect. Thus the Perfect functions as a marked narrative tense, and its choice is determined by the speaker’s intention to mark his experience as indirect, mediated by oral tradition.

A special case of mediated experience is dreams; note that NAFs are appropriate in the description of a speaker’s dream, as in (5) with the Durative:

(5) *Context*. Let me tell you about the strange dream I had last night:

(5a) *zi allhā wo-r č'alag-a-nče. birdan za-k'le Gaže-n ..*
 1SG.1 1.go.IPFV AUX-1 forest-IN-EL suddenly 1SG OBL-AFF 3.sec.IPFV-A
 I'm walking through the forest. Suddenly I see that...

(5b) *.. so wo-b dama-k-e aIRāh-a.*
 bear 3 COP-3 river-CONT-EL 3.cross-IPFV
 ...a bear **is crossing** the river.

¹¹ The use of perfect as a narrative tense is reported, for example, for Udmurt in (Bybee *et al.* 1994: 97). Evidential perfects (normally composed of perfective converb and the auxiliary 'be' in the present tense) are also widely used as “narrative presents” in many Daghestanian languages

Although the dream is, in a certain sense, SEEN by the person, it cannot be regarded as a direct perception of information, and the speaker indicates this by using NAFs.

3.2.2. NAFs and inference

Another context where NAFs can be used is that of the INFERENTIAL: here the speaker is aware of the situation referred to via its consequences. Consider (6) which shows the non-attributivized Perfect:

- (6) *Context:* The speaker observes a man who standing on the top of a hill and who is shouting to a boy, standing below, to climb up. The boy seems not to hear his shouts; but at last he begins to climb up the hill. The speaker:
— Thank God,

Gajx-i *wo-d!* (He) has heard!
4.hear-PFV AUX-4

Generally, the inferential reading of the non-attributivized Perfect is quite common for verbs describing perception and thought. In fact, the speaker cannot be a direct witness to a situation like ‘*X* knows’, ‘*X* remembers’, ‘*X* likes’, etc.: a person’s mental state cannot be subject to direct observation and the only way of knowing it (apart from the person’s own report) is inference on the basis of the person’s behavior. (7a), with the non-attributivized Durative containing the negative copula *deš-o-d*, is another example of this kind:

- (7a) *Context:* Isa, the main character of a story, thought that his friend had betrayed him; suddenly the friend shows up and they both join to fight enemies. The friend says to Isa:

“*wa-k’le* *ac’a* *deš-o-d* *hižō* *kar* *ixa-j*
2SG.OBL-AFF 4.know.IPFV AUX.NEG-AUX-4 what.4 thing.4 4.be.PFV-MSD
dostwalla, *agar* *Ru* *fikir-ha-w-ʔ-u-xe* *zi* *Ru*
friendship if 2SG.ERG thought.3-3-make-PFV-COND 1SG.ERG 2SG.1
maša *hiwo-wi!*”
betrayal 1.give.PFV-CIT

“{It seems that} you **don’t know** what (thing) friendship is, if you thought I had betrayed you!”

The Perfect of the verb *ac’a* ‘to know’ typically comes in NAF, the AF of this verb is only appropriate if somebody’s state of mind is assumed to be commonly known. Compare (7a) above with (7b), where the attributivized Durative *ac’a wo-d-un* is used:

- (7b) *Context:* Isa is surrounded by the enemies while sleeping; his friend has gone somewhere. The enemies’ commander shouts:

“*wa-k’le* *ac’a* *wo-d-un* *jiR-ni* *dostj-ē* *Ru* *maša*
2SG.OBL-AFF 4.know.IPFV AUX-4-A your-A.OBL friend-ERG 2SG.1 betrayal

hiwo *ixa-j*, *taslimx-e!*"
 1.give.PFV 1.be.PFV-MSD 1.surrender-IMP

"You **know** (very well) that your friend has betrayed you; surrender!"

In (7b), although the enemies' commander knows that Isa's friend did not in fact betray him (since he was taken prisoner), his aim is to persuade Isa of his friend's betrayal in order to make him surrender. This explains the choice of the attributivized *ac'a wo-d-un* here: the use of non-attributivized *ac'a wo-d* would imply that the commander's words are merely a suggestion.

Apart from the (observable) results of the situation, inference can involve the speaker's *reasoning* based on some general assumptions. In this case, NAFs refer to a state of affairs which is only assumed by the speaker to be true, because, given his general knowledge of the world, it is very likely to be true. Cf. (8)-(9):

- (8) *Context: X*: Is it really so that the sum of 20 million rubles is spent on a wedding? *Y*:

ilqa *wo-d* *i-n* *Ru* *hale* *sa* *st'enk'a* *alēt'-e*.
 4.go.IPFV AUX-4 that-A 2SG.ERG at.least one set.4 4.take-IMP

{I suppose that} it is **spent** (*lit.* it goes). Take into account at least one set of furniture.

- (9) *Context: X*: A considerable sum is also needed for food, isn't it? *Y*: You are right,

jic'i-ni *dawar-i-n* *miljon-i* *q'ol-d-walš* *āzir*, *i-na-b*
 ten-A.OBL sheep-OBL-A million-and two-4-hundred thousand that.3-A-3

jixi-d-walš *āzir*. *q'ol-I-le* *miljon* *čura-ni-s* *ža-d* :
 six-4-hundred thousand two-4-CARD million.4 meat-OBL-DAT SF-4

wo-d ikan.

AUX-4 4.need.IPFV

the price of ten sheep is one million two hundred, and six hundred thousand also (for six more sheep). {So, I see that} two millions **are needed** for meat alone.

In these examples, after approximate calculations, the speaker assesses the amount of money needed for a wedding ceremony: he takes into account the cost of one set of furniture, meat, etc. What we have here is a procedure of logical reasoning in the literal sense of the term.

On the contrary, well known and undoubted facts, which, as such, can be readily asserted, are rendered by AFs (cf. (10) with *wo-d* as a copula):

- (10) *Context: X*: What is a cradle? *Y*:

rōc *ušaR* *Galja?-a-n* *kar* *wo-d-un* (??*wo-d*).
 cradle.3 child.4 4.put-IPFV-A thing.4 COP-4-A COP-4

A cradle **is** a thing where the child is put (into).

3.2.3. Examples beyond evidential meanings

The distribution of NAFs is, however, broader than demonstrated so far; these forms can also be used referring to situations attested by the speaker, as in (11):

- (11) *Context*: According to the wedding ritual, during the ceremony relatives and guests of the bridegroom are given presents (usually clothes). One of the relatives describes a wedding where the presents given were not in accordance with the guests' social status:
- Just look: I'm a close relative, but
- | | | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>za-s</i> | <i>jāluR</i> | <i>wo-b</i> | <i>qa-b-i;</i> | <i>turs-ubi</i> | <i>qal-es-di</i> |
| 1SG.OBL-DAT | shawl.3 | AUX-3 | PRF-3-bring.PFV | woollen.sock-PL | NPL.bring-PT-A.OBL |
| <i>ʒigj-ē</i> | <i>jāluR-o-b</i> | <i>qa-b-i.</i> | | | |
| place-IN | shawl.3-AUX-3 | PRF-3-bring.PFV | | | |
- (they) **brought** me a shawl; instead of (*lit.* in place of bringing) woolen socks, (they) **brought** a shawl. (Woolen socks are considered to be more valuable than a shawl.)

This example shows that NAFs cannot be characterized as expressing reported or inferred evidence, because the situation in (11), as DIRECTLY WITNESSED by the speaker, does not require any inference. What is important in (11) is that it describes an UNEXPECTED situation; it goes against the appropriate order of things (namely, against the traditional wedding ritual). The information given about this situation is therefore new to the speaker and not yet integrated into his picture of the world. Thus, the NAF here is used with a clear mirative meaning.

3.3. NAFs and mirativity

3.3.1. Examples of mirative reading

Non-attributivized Perfect and Durative are often used to describe situations that were unexpected for the speaker, and as such caught him unawares. Typically, but not obligatorily (see (11)), mirativity is combined with one of the evidential readings, inferential or reportive.

Compare examples (12a) and (12b), in which the former refers to a situation expected (and wished) by the speaker, while the latter refers to a situation that is contrary to his expectations:

- (12a) *Context*: The speaker wants his son to go to the wedding party, but the boy tries to resist. The father:

— I will accept no objection,

Ru *šā-qa* *ulq̄-a* *wo-r-na!*
2SG.1 there-ALL 1.go-IPFV AUX-1-A

You **will go** (*lit.* are going) there!

- (12b) *Context*: The speaker doesn't want his son to go to the wedding party, but the boy secretly starts preparing for it. The father:

Ru šā-qa ulq̄-a wo-r! {I see that} you **are going** there!
 2SG.1 there-ALL 1.go-IPFV AUX-1

In addition to mirativity, (12b) involves inference. The speaker, who has seen his son preparing for the party, draws the conclusion that the boy has decided to go there in spite of his opposition, and this, in turn, is quite a surprise for the speaker.

In first person sentences where the speaker is himself a participant, we also encounter a mirative reading of NAFs; compare (13a) and (13b) with the Perfect:

- (13a) *Context*: The speaker went to bed and almost fell asleep; suddenly there came a knock at the door. The speaker shouts:

— Leave me alone,

zi Gajsin-o-r-na! I am sleeping!
 1SG.1 1.sleep.PFV-AUX-1-A

- (13b) *Context*: The speaker had to stay awake and watch the horses, nevertheless he fell asleep. Suddenly he wakes up:

— Oh, my God,

zi Gajsin-o-r! {It turns out that} I fell asleep!
 1SG.1 1.sleep.PFV-AUX-1

Consider also (14), where the situation is new to the speaker (hence the mirative reading), and, the information about the situation was obtained via the report of some other person (hence the reportive reading):

- (14) *Context*: My mother told me about my early years:

zi sa senj-ē wo-r Xalrq̄ixa hohar-as.
 1SG.1 one year-IN AUX-1 1.learn.PFV 1.walk-PT

{It turns out that} I learnt to **walk** at the age of one.

3.3.2. Examples beyond mirative meaning

Nevertheless, NAFs are still used in contexts where knowledge is neither non-attested nor unexpected. Consider (15):

- (15) *Context*: A thief stole money from a shop and ran away. The shop assistant is accused of being the thief's accomplice and is taken to court; but then the thief appears at the court and admits that he is the only person guilty of the crime:

šu ma-n-Gi-s sa-b-i injā şud-o-d ha?-a,
 2PL.ERG this.2-A-OBL-DAT HPL-gather-PFV here trial.4-AUX-4 4.make-IPFV

amma ma-n-Gi-kj taXsir deş-in.

but this.2-A-OBL-CONT fault.4 COP.NEG-A

You have all gathered here and **are putting (her) on trial**, but she's not guilty.

Example (15) is clearly neither a case of reported evidence nor of inference (since the thief attends the trial and sees what happens with his own eyes); nor does it represent a case of unexpected information (since he knew before coming to court that it was the shop assistant who was being accused). This shows that the distribution of NAFs covers a still wider range than can be described under the labels of evidentiality and mirativity, and we now move on to the more precise characterization of this distribution.

3.4. NAFs and the “speaker’s distancing”

3.4.1. NAFs and the “epistemic distancing”

As discussed above, non-attributivized periphrastic forms are used to refer to situations that have not been attested by the speaker, but perceived INDIRECTLY by him, i.e. to situations known via somebody’s report or inferred from their observable consequences, and/or from general knowledge.

The use of NAFs indicates a lower degree of the speaker’s commitment to what he says, as compared to that of AFs which refers to facts regarded as undoubted and certain. It is not even necessary for a speaker to SEE the situation referred to by an AF: it can just be a part of a general and indisputable knowledge shared by the community. Cf. for example (16), where the copula is used twice:

(16) *Context: X*: Do you know anything about people in Azerbaijan, whose language is similar to ours? Y:

sa wartašan rajon-ē niž Xiw, saji-b guržistan oktembri-wi ‘‘
one Vartashen region-IN Nij village.3 more-3 Georgia Oktomberi-CIT

Xiw wo-b-na, hama-ni sa miz-e-l jišon-ā?-a-m-mi,
village.3 COP-3-A this-A.OBL one language-OBL-SUP speak-HPL.make-IPFV-A-PL

haj-ni jiš-di miz-e-l-qa ejni ujRum-ba
this-A.OBL our-A.OBL language-OBL-SUP-ALL almost similar-ADV.3

qāl-m-mi q’ol-b-le Xiw-o-b.
come.IPFV-A-PL two-3-CARD village-COP-3

In the Vartashen region there **is** a village (called) Nij, and another village in Georgia (called) Oktomberi, where they speak one language; (the languages spoken in) these two villages {they say that} **are** similar to our language (*lit.* to our language these two villages are coming almost similar).

Note that the attributivized copula is used to refer to the state of affairs in which the speaker has no doubts (the existence of two villages), whereas the non-attributivized copula in the second case introduces a fact which is dubious. The speaker’s second statement according to which the language of Nij and Oktomberi is similar to Tsakhur is most likely based on hearsay. In any case, the use of NAF in (16) shows a kind of speaker’s DISTANCING from the described

state of affairs; the speaker does not take full responsibility for what he is saying.

Slobin & Aksu (1982: 196-197) have stressed the idea of “the speaker’s distance from the event” in the case of evidential and mirative forms in Turkish. In Tsakhur, this “distancing effect” is generally characteristic of the use of NAFs. It has to do with the indirect perception of some information (regarding the case of reported evidence and inference, see 3.2), or with the unexpectedness of the information (mirativity, see 3.3), or again with other, mostly pragmatic, factors which can be characterized in terms of the speaker’s attitude towards the situation.

Thus, both in (17) and (18) the non-attributivized Durative is used to refer to a situation where ‘that’s what people say about it’ (≈ “they say”):

(17) *Context*: *X*: Do you know how people cast spells? *Y*:

meşajan ejh-e wo-d čop-ā-ši-qa-b forma wo-b-na.
for.example say-IPFV AUX-4 lot-PL-OBL-POSS-3 type.3 COP-3-A

They say, for example, that there are several ways of casting spells.

(18) *Context*: Last sentence of the story about a horse-thief.

malX-b-u-na sa Xabar-o-b-xe hā?-a insan-ā-š-e
3-such-A one story.3-AUX-3-HAB 3.make-IPFV man-PL-OBL-ERG

ma-n-Gu-ni halkē.
this.1-A-OBL-A.OBL about

And that is the story people tell about him.

Undoubtedly, this is not the case with reported evidence since, here, what the speaker distances from is not SOMETHING THAT WAS SAID (compare with examples in section 3.2 above), but from THE VERY SITUATION OF TELLING. This is clearly not a case of unexpectedness either. In other words, the speaker distances not from the information obtained from other people, but from the situation of obtaining this information.

The reason for this may be that the situation where ‘people say’ is not specific; it is impossible to participate in a situation where ‘people say something’, because ‘people say’ is a generalization over a variety of specific situations. What the speaker wants to communicate by using the NAF is that he hasn’t really been involved in the situation, and is therefore not responsible for the information about the events he describes.

3.4.2. NAFs and the speaker’s attitude

In the above examples, the speaker does not express his commitment to the information that he conveys, but rather implies that what is said does not constitute undoubted and well-established facts; the proposition is, therefore, subject to epistemic evaluation. There are, however, cases representing distancing of another nature, in which axiological evaluation of the event is involved.

Consider (19) which relates the indecent behavior of the speaker's fellow villagers:

(19) *Context*: *X*: In our village, when women get together and begin to talk, this ends in a big quarrel. *Y*:

— This is how it happens with you,

ša-qa-d *saji-d* *aldat-o-d:* *dawat-b-iš-ē-qa*
1PL.OBL-POSS-NPL more-4 custom.4-COP-4 wedding-PL-OBL-IN-ALL

a-b-inGla, *gi-w-iRal-o-b-xe;* *sa bahna t'abalj-a-w-ʔ-u,*
HPL-come.PFV-TEMP HPL-begin.IPFV-AUX-HPL-HAB one cause.3 find-3-make-PFV

sa-na *sa-n-Gu-ka* *sacāXar-o-b-xe.*
one-A one-A-OBL-COMIT HPL.cling.IPFV-AUX-HPL-HAB

and with us there **is** one more custom: when (men) come to the wedding, they **begin** (the following): after having found some reason, they **fight** one another (*lit.* one clings to one other).

In (19), the situation referred to is unpleasant to the speaker, though it has certainly been attested by him (and not only once), and is by no means new to him. NAFs in (19) indicate that the speaker does not approve the situation and distances from it.

The same is true of (20), in which the speaker expresses his non-involvement and non-participation in other people's affairs:

(20) *Context*: They asked me if they could bring a bride to the wedding ceremony in a car, and not on a horse (in accordance with the rules). I reply:

"baš usteR, *ma-na wuš-da* *iš-o-b."*
head above this.3-A your-A business.3-COP-3

"I agree (*lit.* above the head), that is your own business".

Another example of the same kind is (15) cited above, where the situation 'you are putting her on trial' is not approved by the speaker: since it is *he* who stole the money, he is very well aware that what is happening at court is unfair to the shop assistant.

Marking a situation with NAFs does not necessarily imply that this situation is evil or unpleasant; it simply expresses the distancing of the speaker, who indicates thereby that there is no direct connection between him and the described state of affairs.

This suggestion is further evidenced by the fact that there is a correlation between NEGATION and the use of NAFs, at least with verbs of thought and perception. Talking about a state of mind which does not characterize the speaker at a given moment is likely to be performed using a NAF. In fact, not liking something (see (21)), or not remembering a fact (see (22)) are instances of mental distancing, or detachment:

- (21) *Context*: The shop assistant shows the customer a pair of shoes; the customer replies:

“*za-s i-m-mi q'abilēx-e deš-o-d / ?deš-o-d-un,*
 1SG.OBL-DAT that.N-A-PL NPL.like-IPFV AUX.NEG-AUX-NPL AUX.NEG-AUX-NPL-A
mansa-bi qal-e”
 other-PL NPL.bring-IMP
 “I don't like these, bring some others”.

- (22a) *Context*: The bear bit off the head of one of the hunters; unable to figure out whether there had been a head before, the dead man's friends ask his wife. She replies:

“*wallah, čuba, kalle ixa-j-ji d-exa-j za-s*
 I swear brother.PL head.4 4.be.PFV-MSD-and NEG-4.be.PFV-MSD 1SG.OBL-DAT
k'elj deš-o-d / ?deš-o-d-un...
 memory AUX.NEG-AUX-4 AUX.NEG-AUX-4-A
 “I swear, brothers, I **don't remember** if there was a head or not (*lit.* the head being and not-being)...”

Note that if we are dealing with a situation of REMEMBERING something, and that the corresponding verb is affirmative, an AF is more likely to be used; compare (22a) with (22b) which follows (22a) in the narrative:

- (22b) *amma sa kar za-s k'elj-o-d-un : ma-n-G_s-ē*
 but one thing.4 1SG.OBL-DAT memory-AUX-4-A this.1-A-OBL-ERG
Xink'al-bi o-t-xan-anGal, ma-n-Gu-n biR-ār iljojk'alj-I-xe!
 soup-PL 4-eat.IPFV-TEMP this.1-A-OBL-A moustache-PL NPL.jump.IPFV-JI-HAB
 “But there's one thing I **do remember**: when he was eating soup, his moustache would go up and down (*lit.* jumped)!”

We therefore see that a number of pragmatic and semantic nuances can influence the use of AFS and NAFs. The opposition between these two groups of forms is basically connected to the degree of the speaker's involvement in the situation, and to his wish to express his distancing or detachment from what is being said.

3.5. Conclusion

As we saw in sections 3.2-3.4, the function associated with the non-attributivized periphrastic forms with the auxiliary *wo-d* goes beyond evidentiality and mirativity.

The distribution of NAFs definitely correlates with that of genuine markers of non-attested evidence and mirativity. At the same time, assuming that the meaning of NAFs is restricted to “inferred evidence”, “reported evidence”, and “unexpected information” does not allow one to account for the whole range of their uses. Our claim is that NAFs have a more general function, namely, that of showing *the speaker's distancing*, or detachment from the event referred to. A

sentence with a NAF describes a situation in which the speaker is only slightly involved, both physically and psychologically.

Non-attested evidence (reported and inferred) and mirativity can be regarded as special cases of this very general attitude towards a given situation. The real value of NAFs is what Lazard (1999: 95) characterizes as an “abstract distance, not any consideration of the nature of the source of the speaker’s knowledge of the facts”. In this respect, the Tsakhur data confirm Lazard’s claim that the grammatical expression of reportive, inferential and mirative meanings within a single grammatical form may be subsumed under the more abstract concept of “an unspecified reference to the origin of the information between the speaker and his discourse” (*ibid.* 96). The notion of “mediative”, proposed by G. Lazard and adopted in Z. Guentchéva (ed.) (1996), therefore seems to characterize Tsakhur NAFs more adequately than evidentiality or mirativity.

4. THE PARTICLE *jī*

This section is devoted to semantic characteristics and distribution of *jī*, a particle which expresses evidential-like meanings. Section 4.1 concerns the most characteristic features of *jī*, section 4.2 explores the behavior of this particle in contexts of non-attested evidence. Other characteristics of *jī* in contexts of attested evidence are dealt with in section 4.3; section 4.4 gives an account of the distribution of *jī*.

4.1. Basic properties of the particle *jī*

4.1.1. *jī* and its distribution

In addition to NAFs, Tsakhur has a cliticized particle, *jī*, which conveys meanings associated with the speaker’s epistemic space.

jī normally follows the finite verb but it can also be attached to any focused constituent (as in (28) below)). The distribution of *jī* is totally independent of the temporal and aspectual characteristics of the verb: *jī* can co-occur with any indicative verbal form (either synthetic or periphrastic, see Table 2) and with the synthetic Potential.¹² Most often, *jī* is found in combination with the Present and Aorist, as in (23)-(24):

- (23) *malhammad qik'-u-jī* {I was told that} Mohammed had died [Aorist].
 Mohammed die-PFV-*jī*
- (24) *malhammad qek'-a-jī* {I was told that} Mohammed is dying [Present].
 Mohammed die-IPFV-*jī*

¹² It cannot be used in the context of other non-indicative forms. (See Maisak & Tatevosov (1999b) for discussion and examples).

In addition, *jī* is commonly attested in existential clauses in which it either co-occurs with the copula *wo-d* or is used in place of the copula, as in (25a-b):

(25a) *xjan mik'a-da wo-d_j-ī¹³* {I was told that} the water is [copula] cold.
 water cold-4 COP-4-*JI*

(25b) *xjan mik'a-da-jī* {I was told that} the water is cold.
 water cold-4-*JI*

4.1.2. *jī*: lack of consciousness

Like NAFs with the auxiliary *wo-d*, the particle *jī* occurring within first person clauses produces the lack of consciousness effect. Cf. (26)-(27):

(26) *Context*: Yesterday I was absolutely drunk and
zī allī-s īlX-ī-jī I beat Ali {as was reported to me later}.
 1SG.ERG Ali-DAT 4.beat-PFV-*JI*

(27) *Context*: I fell down and became unconscious.
zī Gaʔi-r-x_s-inGla zī haraj ha-w-ʔ-u-jī.
 1SG 1-fall.down.PFV-TEMP 1SG.ERG scream.3 PRF-3-make-PFV-*JI*

When I fell down, {as was reported to me later} I screamed.

The lack of consciousness effect observed in (26)-(27) is what the particle *jī* has in common with markers of non-attested evidence and mirativity. In this respect, (26)-(27) are strictly parallel to (2b) with a non-attributivized perfect.

4.1.3 *jī* and temporal ambiguity

A striking property of clauses in which *jī* co-occurs with stative predicates and imperfective forms (Present and Durative) is that they are ambiguous with respect to the time reference: such clauses may be interpreted as referring to situations in the past as well as to situations at the moment of speech. Cf. for example (28) under two different contexts:

(28) *Context*₁: Neither *X* nor *Y* see Mohammed. *X*: What do you think Mohammed is doing right now? *Y*: I was sure that he was sleeping, but...

*Context*₂: *X*: What did Mohammed do yesterday evening? *Y*: I was sure he took a walk in the forest, but...

malhammad-ē kaRīz_j-ī ojk'an.
 Mohammed-ERG letter.4-*JI* 4.write.IPFV

1. {I have just been told that} Mohammed is writing a letter.
2. {I was told that} Mohammed wrote a letter.

With a stative predicate *deš* 'not be, be absent', (29) has the same range of interpretations:

¹³ *jī* has two allomorphs /*jī*/ and /*ī*/, the former occurring after vowels, the latter after consonants.

(29) *Context*₁: *X*: I have run out of cigarettes. *Y*: Why don't you go to the shop and buy some? *X*:

*Context*₂: *X*: Yesterday I ran out of cigarettes. *Y*: Why didn't you go to the shop and buy some? *X*: I was about to go, but...

*magazin*₃-ē *papriž-bi* *deš-ī*
shop-IN cigarette-PL AUX.NEG-*Ji*

1. {I have just been told that} there are no cigarettes in the shop.

2. {I was told that} there were no cigarettes in the shop.

Cf. also (30) in which *ji* co-occurs with the resultative Perfect:

(30) *Context*₁: *X*: Today is Sunday. We won't get into the building. The door must be locked. *Y*: Yes, on Sundays it is normally locked, but today

*Context*₂: *X*: I have no idea of how the thief got in. *Y*:

aḱa *āq-i-ji* *wo-d*
door.4 4.open-PFV-*Ji* AUX-4

1. {I have been told that} the door is open.

2. {I have been told that} the door was open (Ali had forgotten to lock it).

The verb *aqas* 'open' is one of the verbs that permit RESULTATIVE reading of the Perfect, which in this case refers to the stative situation in the present as resulting from the preceding process in the past (see also 3.1 above). Not surprisingly, derived statives behave just like lexical statives and allow the same range of interpretations when co-occurring with *ji*.

Without *ji*, the Present *ojk'an* 'is writing', the resultative Perfect *aqi wod* 'is open', and the negative copula *deš* 'there is no' unambiguously signal reference to the present time. This temporal ambiguity of clauses containing *ji* will be accounted for in 4.2. below.

4.2. The particle *ji* marking non-attested evidence

4.2.1. *ji* in reportive contexts

(23)-(30) above are all examples of *ji* occurring in reportive contexts; these sentences may be uttered by a speaker who obtained information about the propositions 'Mohammed is dying/died' (23-24), 'the water is cold' (25a-b), as well as about other propositions from an oral report. Besides, in these examples, *ji* does involve THE SPEAKER'S COMMITMENT to the truth of a proposition, so the presupposition of (23a), for instance, is that Mohammed is in fact dead.¹⁴

¹⁴ In this respect, Tsakhur differs markedly from those languages in which evidentials occurring in reportive contexts merely indicate that the statement is based on second hand information. Sentences containing such evidentials tell nothing about the speaker's attitude towards the truth of a proposition, the interpretation being 'It is true that it was reported to me that P'. Not infrequently, one finds contexts in which such an interpretation reinforces a

4.2.2. *jī* in inferential contexts

IN INFERENCE contexts, the picture is more complicated. The majority of native speakers avoid *jī* in inferential contexts preferring the non-attributivized Perfect (see 3.2.1, 3.2.2). Others judge *jī* and the Perfect to be equally appropriate. Following the intuition of this latter group of speakers, one can observe two basic characteristics of *jī* in inferential contexts. First, *jī* is appropriate if the inference is based on tangible consequences of a situation in question. Second, inferential interpretation obtains if *jī* is combined with perfective verbal forms.

Examples (31)-(32) illustrate inferential reading of the Aorist co-occurring with *jī*.

- (31) *Context*: The speaker has gone to find Ali at his home. When he gets there, he finds out that Ali is not at home.

alli hašde-jī a-r-k'in. {I see that} Ali is gone.
Ali.1 already-*J* PRF-1-go.PFV

- (32) *Context*: The speaker takes a walk in the forest; there he finds Mohammed cutting up a dead bear.

malhammad-ē šo gi-w-k'-u-jī.
Mohammed-ERG bear.3 PRF-3-kill-PFV-*J*
{I see that} Mohammed killed the bear.

As is clear from these examples, the speaker had not personally witnessed the events about which he made the statements: here, his sources of information are the following observable situations 'Mohammed is not in' and 'Mohammed is cutting up a dead bear'. These situations have been caused, as the speaker is entitled to assume, by the fact that 'Mohammed went away' and 'Mohammed killed the bear', respectively.

Many researchers point out that the use of inferentials is connected to the resultant state of a given situation: "when a speaker sees the result of some action, s/he may use it as evidence to infer what the action was that produced the observed state of affairs" (Willett 1988: 61). On the other hand, inferentials often refer to sources of information other than the observable results of a situation, such as logic, intuition, previous experience, etc. For this reason, Anderson (1986) distinguishes between "experiential inferentials" and "inferentials" proper, the first one involving some kind of reasoning plus sensory evidence, the second one being concerned with reasoning only. If this distinction is to be taken into account, *jī* should be characterized as "experiential inferential": the inference must be based on the sensory evidence of some

pragmatically yielding dubitative reading 'It was reported to me that P but I don't believe it'. Evidential categories of this type are quite common cross-linguistically, but those implying (like Tsakhur *jī*) the truth of the proposition, are also attested; one example of this is Nepali (Michailovsky 1996).

consequences of the situation in question, in which case (31)-(32) cannot be interpreted as surmises based upon general assumptions.

The Present combined with *jī* exhibits different behavior. Native speakers judged inappropriate the inferential reading of (33), in which the Present of the verb *halzir-ha?*as 'prepare, cook' refers to an ongoing activity in the present or the past.¹⁵

(33) *Context*₁: It smells good here.

*Context*₂: It was smelling good here.

??jed-ē kar oxan-as halzir-ha?-a-jī
 mother-ERG thing.4 4.eat-PT prepare-4.make-IPFV-JI

1. {I see that} mother is cooking the dinner
 (lit. preparing (some)thing to eat).
2. {I see that} mother was cooking the dinner
 (lit. preparing (some)thing to eat).

The inferential reading can be occasionally obtained only if the Present is interpreted as habitual or if a clause refers to a stative situation. Cf. (34)-(35):

(34) *Context*: The speaker never had the chance to know that Mohammed studied at the university. One day, seeing Mohammed in a photograph among graduate students:

ma-n-G_e-ē uniwersit_e-ē qal-d-aq̄-a-jī
 3SG-A-OBL-ERG university-IN PRF-4-study-IPFV-JI

{I see that} he studied at the university.

(35) *Context*: The speaker criticizes the post-Soviet government of Russia and the Dagestani administration, saying that they are deceiving people:

njalXu-d-ē jalcin-ē obešat ha?-a, mamm-iš-c-d, sa
 like-4-Q Yeltsin-ERG promise.4 4.make-IPFV 3PL-OBL-ERG-4 one

tika ža-d deš-ī
 piece.4 SF-4 AUX.NEG-JI

Yeltsin promises (much), and so (do) they, but {I see that} (it is) to no avail (lit. any single piece).

In (35), the state of affairs referred to is not directly perceivable; the statement that authorities' activity produces no results inevitably involves some sort of deduction.

The fact that an inferential reading of evidentials is more likely to emerge in perfective/past contexts than in imperfective/present contexts is attested in a large variety of languages. DeLancey (1997) cites examples of an asymmetry of this kind connected to the aspectual characteristics of verbal forms in Hare and Sunwar; Woodbury (1986) reports about the absence of inferential reading

¹⁵ Note that in Tsakhur, as (33) shows, the restriction on inferential reading has to do with the perfective/imperfective distinction rather than with present/past distinction.

in the present tenses in Sherpa. The restriction demonstrated in (33) is therefore by no means unique.

4.2.3. Non-attested evidence and mirativity

The mirative signals that knowledge of the proposition is not integrated into the speaker's picture of the world, that is, the proposition constitutes a new experience of which the speaker has no premonitory awareness (the term used by Aksu-Koç & Slobin (1986: 160). This is exactly the case with *jī* in non-attested evidence contexts: MIRATIVE READING OF *jī* IN SUCH CONTEXTS IS OBLIGATORY. Accordingly, *jī* is odd in contexts similar to Slobin & Aksu's 'Nixon example'.¹⁶ Cf. (36)-(38) corresponding to (23), (28), and (31) above:

(36) *Context*: It is reported to the speaker, who knows that Mohammed had been sick for a long time, that he had died.

??*malhammad qik'-u-jī*. {I was told that} Mohammed had died.

(37) *Context*₁: *X*: Mohammed has to write a letter to Ali. *Y*: Yes, I know.

*Context*₂: *X*: Yesterday Mohammed had to write a letter to Ali. *Y*: Yes, I know. It was yesterday evening

??*malhammad-ē kaRizj-i ojk'an*.

1. {I was told that} Mohammed is writing a letter (right now).

2. {I was told that} Mohammed was writing a letter.

(38) *Context*₂: *X* and *Y* are approaching Ali's home. *X*: Do you think Ali is at home? *Y*: I guess he is not, he has to work in the field. (Having reached Ali's home):

??*alli a-r-k'in-jī* {I see that} Ali is gone.

The common feature of these examples is that the situations described are not completely new and unexpected. In contrast with (23), (28), and (31) above, in (36), (37), and (38) the speaker's mind is not unprepared for the knowledge received through an oral report or by inference: the speaker expects that these situations to occur in the real world, and *jī* in such cases is odd.

4.3. *jī* marking attested evidence

jī is appropriate in contexts of ATTESTED EVIDENCE regardless of the verbal form at the head of the clause. (39) is a non-elicited example from a narrative containing a sequence of three existential clauses headed by *jī*:

¹⁶ Slobin & Aksu (1982:196) observe two different ways of reporting the resignations of President Nixon and of the Turkish Prime minister Ecevit. Both reports were based on non-attested evidence, but while Ecevit's unexpected resignation was described with the mirative form in *-mɨs*, Nixon's expected resignation was referred to by means of the form in *-di* which is neutral with respect to mirativity.

- (39) *Context*: The horse-thief stole a very valuable horse. Having met the owner of the horse, the thief says that it was he who stole the horse. The owner does not believe him. In order to convince the owner, the thief gives him details of the theft:

“balkan-nī Gel-i-lj buXaw-ī, kuklak-ē a-b-ī, gardan zinžir-ē
 horse-A.OBL leg-OBL-SUP shackles-3I lock-IN in-3-3I neck.3 chain-IN
a-b-ī...”
 in-3-3I

“There were shackles on the horse’s legs, there was a lock (on the shackles), and there was a chain on the horse’s neck.”

As is clear from the preceding part of the narrative, the protagonist of the story, a horse-thief, did see all the details which he reports in (39). Cf. also (40) containing *jī* combined with the Aorist.

- (40) *X*: What happened here? *Y*:

malhammad-ē allī-s ilX-i-jī. Mohammed beat Ali {I saw it}.
 Mohammed-ERG Ali-DAT 4.beat-PFV-3I

In (40), the speaker has personally witnessed the situation ‘Mohammed beat Ali’, including its initial, intermediate and final phases. In the same way, (41)–(43), corresponding to (23), (30), and (31) discussed above, can be interpreted as follows:

- (41) *malhammad qik’-u-jī. Mohammed died {I saw it}.*
 (42) *allī halšde-jī a-r-k’in. Ali is gone {I saw it}.*
 (43) *malhammad-ē šjo gi-w-k’-u-jī. Mohammed killed the bear {I saw it}.*

In these examples *jī* has therefore a radically different interpretation to that discussed in 4.2: in (39)–(43), it involves DIRECT AWARENESS of the state of affairs in question. More interesting are the interpretations that the Present combined with *jī* may have. Referring to a situation in the past, the Present + *jī* combination easily allows for an ‘attested evidence’ reading, as is the case in (44):

- (44) *Context*: The narrator and his friends had decided to go to a shop. One of the friends pretended that his leg was hurting and stayed at home. After their visit to the shop, the others returned.

ši Xa-qa e-p’-č’-inGal, malhammad-ē oxan-as
 1PL home-ALL PRF-HPL-reach.PFV-TEMP Mohammed-ERG 4.eat-PT
kar-ī halzir-ha?-a.
 thing.4-3I prepare-4.make-IPFV

When we came home {I saw that} Mohammed was preparing the dinner (*lit.* (some)thing to eat).

In (44), the speaker has a direct evidence of the ongoing situation ‘Mohammed is cooking the dinner’ located in the past. Cf. also (45), (46), and (47) with

the Present, negative copula *deš*, and the resultative Perfect corresponding to (28), (29), and (30) above:

(45) *Context*: — What was Mohammed doing when you came to see him yesterday?
 — *malhammad-ē kaRiz₃-I ojk'an*.
 — {I saw that} Mohammed was writing a letter.

(46) *Context*: *X*: — Did you buy cigarettes yesterday?
Y: — I went to the shop, but
magazin₃-ē papriz-bi deš-I.
 {I saw that} there were no cigarettes in the shop.

(47) *Context*: *X*: — How did you get into the building yesterday? *Y*:
 — *aḱa āq-i-jī wo-d*. — {I found that} the door was open.

These examples, in which the whole clause refers to the situation in the past, show that imperfective and stative verbal forms combined with *jī* allow for an 'attested evidence' interpretation in the same way as Aorist does.

The range of interpretations of the combination *jī* + Present referring to the moment of speech is nevertheless very restricted. Compare (45) and (48) which is appropriate in *Context*₁ but not in *Context*₂:

(48) *Context*₁: *X*: — What is Mohammed doing right now?
Y: — I don't know. Let me have a look (*Y* goes to have a look and then comes back)

**Context*₂: *X*: — What is Mohammed doing right now? *Y* sees Mohammed:
 — *malhammad-ē kaRiz₃-I ojk'an*.
 — {I have seen that/*I see that} Mohammed is writing a letter.

(48) is not appropriate if the speaker sees Mohammed writing the letter at the moment of speech. It is nevertheless perfectly acceptable if the statement is based on the attested evidence the speaker had received before he uttered (48).

The same is true of (49) which is only appropriate if the speaker obtains information about the situation 'there are no cigarettes in the shop' before the moment of speech:

(49) *Context*₁: *X*: — Let us go to the shop and buy cigarettes.
Y: — I have already been to the shop.

**Context*₂: *X* and *Y* stand at the counter in the shop. *Y*:
magazin₃-ē papriz-bi deš-I.

{I have found/*I see that} there are no cigarettes in the shop.

Given the fact that in contexts of non-attested evidence, *jī* obligatorily gives rise to a mirative interpretation, one might predict that it behaves in the same way if the situation in question is personally witnessed by the speaker. In fact, some languages are reported to possess categories that produce a mirative inter-

pretation in contexts of attested evidence¹⁷. Nevertheless, such a prediction is wrong: in contexts of direct evidence, *jI* only has a non-mirative reading.

Consider (39) again. As is clear from the preceding part of narrative, the protagonist who stole the horse had been told that the horse was carefully guarded by the owner; he was psychologically prepared to find the chain on the horse's neck, the shackles on his legs, and the lock on the shackles. Moreover, by uttering (39) the protagonist does not merely assert that he actually saw all these details, he also tries to convince the owner that it was he who stole the horse. Evidently, by using such a proposition as an argument supporting a claim, one does not mark it as new and unexpected. Conversely, s/he either introduces the proposition as referring to permanent, well-assimilated, and stable knowledge or leaves it unmarked with respect to the novelty of knowledge.

Likewise, we find other examples above which do not indicate that the speaker has just obtained new knowledge but rather that s/he reports on an already assimilated experience. For instance, example (46) expresses the speaker's factual claim that there were no cigarettes in the shop and that s/he knows this from personal experience; it does not indicate that the speaker has made an unexpected discovery as to the absence of cigarettes.

4.4. Use of the particle *jī* : semantic motivation

4.4.1. *jī* and the information event

Let us take stock of what we have seen so far.

First, *jī* exhibits an intriguing peculiarity as to the possible combinations of evidential and mirative readings. *jī* may not be regarded as a marker of either attested or non-attested evidence, as it is compatible with both readings. It cannot be treated as a marker of mirativity either, because the mirative interpretation in contexts of attested evidence is not available. As is clear from 4.2.3. and 4.3, *jī* tends to couple attested evidence with assimilated knowledge and non-attested evidence with new knowledge; in this respect, the particle is ambiguous between two opposite readings. Two other logical possibilities: non-attested evidence plus assimilated knowledge and attested evidence plus new knowledge are inappropriate. The question, then, is how these restrictions are semantically motivated.

Secondly, we have to determine the source of temporal ambiguity of the present tense forms combined with *jī* (see 1.3).

Thirdly, the restriction on the "attested evidence" interpretation of these forms demonstrated by (48) and (49) in section 4.3 also requires an explanation: why is the interpretation of attested evidence only possible if the speaker observes a situation referred to *before* the moment of speech?

¹⁷ See DeLancey (1997) for discussion and literature.

Our account for the distribution of *jī* is based on the idea underlying descriptions of evidential and mirative categories in many languages, as first explicitly formulated by Woodbury (1986:195). Having encountered the evidential category in Sherpa, ambiguous as to “attested” and “non-attested” readings, Woodbury suggested that evidentials may have their own time reference (unfortunately, he did not elaborate further on this idea). Along the lines of Woodbury’s analysis one can go a step further and say that clauses containing evidentials or markers of mirativity refer to two different events:

- the event represented by the proposition P, and
- the event ‘the speaker acquires information about P’ (hereafter “information event” (IE)).

This idea seems to be directly applicable to the Tsakhur material; moreover, it provides a clue to the problems discussed above.

As clauses with *jī* are ambiguous as to “attested” and “non-attested” readings, on the one hand, and to “mirative” and “non-mirative” readings on the other, there is every reason to suggest that *jī* codes neither source nor novelty of information. This denotes that its meaning is in a certain sense more basic than that of markers of mirativity and evidentiality:

(50) *jī* refers to the IE in the past

The generalization (50) seems to account for the whole range of uses of *jī*.

4.4.2. Explaining temporal properties of *jī*-clauses

The generalization in (50) claims that the IE takes place in the past. From this assumption, the question as to why *jī* combined with present tense forms is inappropriate if the speaker perceives the situation at the moment of speech is an irrelevant question. This restriction is a trivial consequence of the past time reference of *jī*. In (48) above, for example, the past time reference condition is met in Context₁, but not in Context₂.

The generalization in (50) further implies that clauses in which *jī* co-occurs with present tense forms provide two different angles for viewing the situation. One option is that the temporal location of the situation is determined by the information event: an interval at which the situation takes place contains the moment at which the speaker acquires information about this situation, the resulting interpretation being a past time reference. Another option is that a verbal form embedded under the particle *jī* retains its own time reference, and the situation is regarded as taking place at the moment of speech.

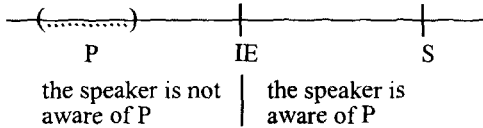
Thus, for example, for both (28.1) and (28.2) it is true that the IE ‘the speaker was told that Mohammed is writing a letter’ occurred at the moment t_1 in the past. What the speaker actually knows about Mohammed is not that he is writing a letter at the moment of speech t_s , but that he was writing a letter at t_1 . Example (28.2), with the past time reference, is therefore a statement informing that at t_1 the speaker has received information that the proposition ‘Mohammed was writing a letter’ is true. Example (28.1) with the present time

reference, involves the speaker's additional assumption that the situation he was informed about at t_1 did not terminate until t_2 . Not surprisingly, (28.1) implies that the temporal distance between t_1 and t_2 is not too long. As our informants commented on (28.1), this sentence is good if "the speaker has just been told" about the situation, whereas (28.2) produces no effect of this kind¹⁸.

4.4.3. Explaining the relations between non-attested and mirative readings

A crucial parameter determining the distribution of the particle *ji* represented is the location of the IE with respect to the situation referred to (P). Evidently, two options are available. First, the IE may be located at some distance (temporal or at least spatial) from P; secondly, it may occur at the same time and place as P. The first possibility is represented in Figure 1.

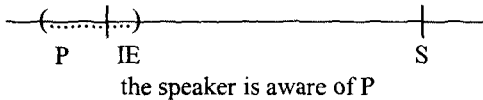
Figure 1. Non-attested evidence plus new knowledge reading of *ji*



As Figure 1 shows, when the IE is located at some distance from P, the situation is not personally witnessed by the speaker, hence the statement based on reported or inferred evidence. Besides, since the IE does not coincide with P, a change of state in the speaker's knowledge occurs, which yields a mirative reading.

Another possibility is given in Figure 2:

Figure 2. Attested evidence plus assimilated knowledge reading of *ji*



In Figure 2, the situation is personally witnessed by a speaker, and the phase "the speaker is not aware of P" is absent. In this case, the meaning of the clause does not involve the change in knowledge (hence the non-mirative reading) but rather a result of this change, that is, the speaker's experience.

Example (50) suggests that *ji* denotes an event in the same way as verbal predicates do. It can be observed that the particle *ji* has properties similar to those of a specific verbal category, namely that of the Perfect. As was mentioned in 3.1, the Perfect allows two considerably different readings: it can be interpreted as a *perfect of result*, and as a *resultative*. Similarly, *ji* can represent

¹⁸ Note that *ji* combined with the Aorist does not produce any temporal ambiguity, as both *ji* and the Aorist have the past time reference.

the IE either in a perfect-like manner (involving both resultant state of this event and its preceding development, Figure 1) or resultative-like manner (resultant state only, Figure 2). In the former case *ji* emphasizes a *change* in the speaker's knowledge, while the latter case highlights a *resultant state* of this change, that is acquired knowledge itself.

The choice between the interpretations in Figures 1 and 2 is determined by a number of factors. Semantically, the "attested evidence plus assimilated knowledge" interpretation is not available if the event referred to happened long ago and may not be part of the speaker's personal experience. Thus, the "non-attested evidence plus new knowledge" interpretation is possible only in (51):

(51) *Context*₁: I was sure that the Daghestani people had always been friends with the Georgians. But

*Context*₂: I would like to tell you how the Daghestani people lived a hundred years ago.

daRistanni-bi gurži-b-iš-ka da/w?a ha?-a-ji w-ejxe-m-mi
 Daghestani-PL Georgian-PL-OBL-COMIT war 4.make-IPFV-JI HPL-be.IPFV-A-PL

1. (I acknowledged that) they fought constantly against the Georgians. (Yesterday I read a book on the history of the Caucasus).
2. *They fought constantly against the Georgians.

Pragmatically, the context normally helps the listener evaluate whether the speaker's intention is to relate a fact in itself, or rather his/her discovery of the fact. With an evaluation of this kind, the source of information is also unambiguously identified.

4.5. Conclusion

As the above discussion has shown, the particle *ji* in Tsakhur specifies neither the source of information relating to a given situation, nor the presence or absence of the premonitory awareness of this situation. Nevertheless, it refers to the speaker's epistemic space by referring to an event resulting from some acquired information about a given situation, and it shares many properties with genuine evidential and mirative categories.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A	attributive marker	IN	localization 'in'
AFF	ffective case	IE	informative event
ALL	allative	IND	indicative
A.OBL	oblique attributive marker	IPFV	imperfective
AUX	auxiliary	MSD	masdar (nominalized verb)
CARD	cardinal numeral	NEG	negation
CIT	citation marker	OBL	oblique
COMIT	comitative case	PFV	perfective
COND	conditional	PL	plural
CONT	localization 'in contact with'	POSS	possessive
COP	copula	POST	posterior
DAT	dative case	PRF	verbal prefix
EL	elative	PT	potential
ERG	ergative case	Q	question particle
ESS	essive	SF	scalar focus, SUP localization 'on'
HAB	habitual	TEMP	temporal converb 'when'.
IMP	imperative		

Unmarked categories (the Absolutive case and the singular number) are not represented by abbreviated category labels. Nominal classes are referred to by Arabic numerals 1-4, and by the labels HPL ("human" 1-2 classes in the plural) and NPL ("non-human" 3-4 classes in the plural). Infix markers of class/gender agreement are represented as prefaces in morpheme-by-morpheme interlinear translation.