

Evidentials with attitude!

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In this paper, I discuss mirativity and its relation to exclamatives and evidentiality in Bulgarian, and propose that (i) miratives are a subtype of exclamatives, and (ii) the function of evidentials in exclamatives is intensification/negation.

Evidence for (i) comes from the fact that the evidential verb form (the **-I** suffix) used in miratives is also used in WH-exclamatives:

- (1) Ivan pee-**I** mnogo xubavo!
Ivan sing.IMP-**EV** very nicely
'*I am surprised that Ivan sings great.*' (regardless of evidence)
- (2) *Kolko* xubavo pee-**I** Ivan!
how-much nicely sing.IMP-**EV** Ivan
'How nicely Ivan sings!' (regardless of evidence)

I adapt the analysis of WH-exclamatives in Zanuttini and Portner (2003): factives that encode sets of alternative propositions thanks to the WH-operator, and derive surprise from widening: "exclamatives widen the domain of quantification for the WH-operator, which gives rise to the set of alternative propositions denoted by the sentence" (Zanuttini and Portner, 2003, p. 40). While I agree that surprise is derived from alternative propositions, this analysis is not applicable to exclamatives without a WH-operator. I propose instead that focus gives rise to alternatives, and is present in all exclamatives and miratives.

Second, I discuss the difference between exclamatives with and without evidential or WH morphology. I argue that the use of an evidential adds another layer of meaning, unrelated to evidentiality (as the translation shows). This can be either (a) an **intensification** of the surprise or attitude (more expressiveness), or (b) a negation of the proposition (sarcasm). Further evidence for this claim comes from exclamative sentences with **two overt evidential forms** (one **-I** on the future auxiliary and one on the copula):

- (3) **Context:** While reading a newspaper in which it is written that the candidate for Prime minister promises to lower the taxes, the Speaker exclaims:
Toj (bil) shtja-**I** da svali danŭtsite!
he be.**EV** will-**EV** to lower.PRES.3SG taxes.DEF
'[*reportedly (but I don't believe it)*] He is going to lower the taxes!'

This sentence has both reportative (from *shtja-I*) and a negative meaning (from *bil*), i.e. the evidential and the intensifier are realized separately. Example (3) also shows that the intensifier OP is, contra Sauerland and Schenner (2007), syntactically higher than the evidential one (in-line with its illocutionary function of emotive and exclamative OP).

In sum, miratives are part of the larger category of exclamatives, which includes also Wh-exclamatives. Exclamatives can be either intensified or rendered negative with the use of an operator without evidential meaning. When paired with a reportative evidential, this operator is higher than the evidential in the syntax and means negation of the reported proposition. These facts and analysis can be extended to other languages, like Turkish (Şener, 2011), other languages with evidentials Aikhenvald (2004).

References

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