

EVIDENTIALITY AND MIRATIVITY IN MAGAR

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The goals of this paper are two-fold: first, to describe evidentiality and mirativity in Magar, a Tibeto-Burman language of Nepal; second, to bring this data to bear on relationships between evidentiality, mirativity and epistemic modalities. In most earlier scholarship evidentiality has been subsumed under the category ‘epistemic modality’ and as such has been understood to express the speaker’s commitment to the veridical force of an utterance. However, recently, scholars such as Aikhenvald (2003, 2004) present evidentiality as an independent grammatical category, the core function of which is to encode source of information. Likewise, mirativity, which is defined by DeLancey (1997, 2001) as the marking of new and unexpected information, also merits classification as an independent category. The analysis of mirativity and evidentiality in Magar across dialects (Syangja and Tanahu) supports the classification of evidentiality and mirativity as categories in their own right.

Keywords: Epistemic, evidentiality, hearsay, Himalayish, inferential, Magar, mirativity, reportative, Tibeto-Burman.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Himalayas are, according to Sun (1993: 947), one of the “evidentially ‘hot’ regions of the world”. Sun is speaking specifically of Amdo-Tibetan, and of the Bodish languages in general, a group which grammatically encodes evidentiality and mirativity. In this language group, evidentiality is closely intertwined with epistemic notions of certainty and verity. Magar is a Central-Himalayish language, which

also exhibits evidentiality and mirativity; however, unlike Bodish languages, in Magar evidentiality and epistemics are separate and distinct systems. This paper will, first, describe evidentiality and mirativity in two dialects of Magar: Syangja and Tanahu; second, it will bring this data to bear on the relationships between evidentiality, mirativity and epistemic modalities, and assert the separate status of these categories in Magar.

Evidentiality and mirativity have often been subsumed under the category of epistemic modality (Frajzyngier 1985; Palmer 1986; Mithun 1986; Chafe and Nichols 1986; Willett 1988). However, recent scholarship (Comrie 2000, Aikhenvald 2003, 2004) separates them from epistemics and contends that the latter expresses the veridical force of a statement and the degree of conviction the speaker has for the proposition, whereas evidentiality deals with information source—whether it is, for example, direct or indirect, seen, inferred or heard—and mirativity expresses new and unexpected information. To view evidentiality or mirativity as a sub-category of epistemic modality is to obscure their independent status. Aikhenvald (2003: 19) observes that “one of the current misconceptions concerning evidentiality is to do with the gratuitous extension of this term to cover every way of expressing uncertainty, probability and one’s attitude toward to the information.” It is possible for source of information to be taken as evidence and to impute reliability; for example, direct-perception-source of the type ‘I saw it with my own eyes’ is universally considered to be more reliable than hearsay. Thus, it is possible for these categories, epistemic modality, evidentiality and mirativity, to overlap, as they do in Bodish languages. However, expression of information-source need not entail judgement as to the truth of a proposition. As Comrie (2000: 2) observes, “evidential systems [...] do not necessarily involve any casting of doubt on the reliability of information conveyed, although a form that indicates an indirect source for information may receive such an interpretation, but crucially not as its invariant meaning.”

DeLancey, writing of mirativity, notes that though it has been considered “a minor subcategory of evidentiality, [it] is sufficiently different and sufficiently widespread to merit its recognition as a distinct (though indubitably related) phenomena” (1997: 33). In light of work by Aikhenvald (2004), Comrie (2000) and DeLancey (1997, 2001,

it is important to establish that both evidentiality and mirativity are grammatical categories in their own right and separate from epistemic categories. To accomplish this, in-depth studies of evidentiality and mirativity across languages need to be carried out. This analysis of evidentiality and mirativity in Magar contributes to this end.

Data from Magar supports the view that evidentiality and mirativity are discrete categories, independent of each other and of epistemic modalities. The criteria whereby it is determined whether these are subtypes of a single category, or independent categories, are their distinct meanings and their combinatory possibilities. If epistemics, evidentials and miratives can co-occur and if, when they do so, they contribute an additional and independent level of meaning, they are considered to be separate categories.

The paper will first briefly introduce Magars and their language in section 2, and will then proceed to examine evidentiality and mirativity in sections 3 and 4. This examination will define the terms and analyse manifestations of evidentiality and mirativity. Section 5 will look at evidentiality and mirativity together and section 6 at proposed diachronic developments of evidentials and the mirative in Magar.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MAGAR

Magar is a Central Himalayish language spoken primarily in the hill regions of central Nepal. According to the 2001 national census, there were 1,622,421 ethnic Magars, of whom 770,116 declared Magar as their mother tongue, a number which is undoubtedly inflated, given that there are many ethnics who claim Magar status and to speak the language, but, in fact, do not. This stems from the fact that adoption of the Magar name by non-Magars has traditionally been an attractive and profitable recourse. The position of Magar tribes in the Nepali caste system—they are touchable but not enslavable—affords them the privilege and profit of recruitment for military service. Magars are one of the indigenous groups of Nepal who can serve in the Gurkha regiments of the British and the Nepali armies, a privilege not accorded to lower castes.

According to Noonan (2006: 6), lower caste tribes in Nepal which were too small and/or too remote to be classified by the *Muluki Ain* (the

first national code of Nepal, which formulated the social hierarchy), “had license to call themselves Magars” and appropriated the ethnonym. Among these tribes are: the Kham, the Kaike, the Kusunda, the Raute, the Raji and the Chantyal¹. Furthermore, “....until recently there was little sense of a larger Magar ethnicity and hence no core Magar community which could challenge these claims” (Noonan 2006: 6). Adoption of the name ‘Magar’ by other ethnic groups persists despite a growing sense of Magar identity. Therefore, Magar speakers are, in fact, far fewer than is estimated. Moreover, Magar has the third lowest mother-tongue retention rate of Nepal’s ethnic languages; Gurung (2003: 6) reported it at only 47.5%². As is the case for most of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal, Magar faces obsolescence.

The dialects under discussion are both spoken in the Ghandaki administrative zone of Nepal which is west of Kathmandu (see map). Syangja is spoken in the area south of Pokhara in the western Magar region, and Tanahu is spoken in the eastern region near Damauli. The dialects represent eastern and western variants³, which though mutually intelligible, are distinct. Most conspicuous among the distinctions is subject agreement marking on the verb which occurs only in the western dialects. Syangja Magar marks agreement for first and second person, in a manner similar to the Kiranti languages of Nepal (so-called ‘pronominalizing languages’). Tanahu has no such agreement marking.

¹ Kham, Kauke, Kusunda, Raji and Raute are within the Kham-Magar language family (Watters 2002) and Chantyal is Tamangic.

² Magars’ first concerns are extreme poverty and disenfranchisement, not language preservation. According to the Nepal Human Development Report, NESAC (1999: 7), Magars rank ninth on a scale of 1 - 14 among the ethnic tribes of Nepal in terms of their development and income, and 58% live below the poverty line. Poverty, low adult literacy rates, minimal education (on average 2 years of schooling), and little or no representation or participation in governance, all combine to mean that ethnic groups such as the Magars, do not have the wherewithal, or the access to legal necessary representation, to exercise their rights to cultural and linguistic promotion and preservation.

³ The SIL Ethnologue (Grimes 1996) recognises two separate dialects of Magar, eastern and western, with codes [mrd] and [mgp] respectively.



Map of Nepal

Data was gathered during two periods of fieldwork 1998 and 2006⁴. Data found only in one dialect is indicated by an upper case letter in parentheses following the entry: (T) indicates data from Tanahu, (S) from Syangja. If no indication follows then the data is found in both dialects. Examples appearing with alphabetical and numeric codes preceding the dialect indication ('T' or 'S') refer to a body of transcribed texts which will appear in "A descriptive grammar of two Magar dialects" (Grunow-Hårsta, in preparation).

3. EVIDENTIALITY

Evidentiality encodes source of information; primarily it encodes whether or not the information is based on direct, first-hand evidence or is indirect and second-hand. Within these two broad categories, languages can make finer distinctions in their grammatical marking of source information, for example whether a source is visual or non-visual, inferred or hearsay. This section introduces categories of grammatical evidential marking in Magar (3.1). Evidential marking across tense, mood and aspect is also described (3.2). Sections 3.3 and 3.4 are dedicated to the inferential and the reportative. The quotative, used to report speech, though it conveys source of information, is not a

⁴ Fieldwork on Magar was supported by NSF Award Number: SBR-9728369 and NSF 05-574 as well as SOAS FTG0104.

grammatical evidential; thus outside the scope of this paper⁵. It is discussed only insofar as it contrasts with the reportative. The combinatory possibilities of evidentials, with each other and with epistemic markers, are discussed in section 3.5, and how Magar fits into a typology of evidentials in 3.6.

3.1 Evidential Categories

Not all languages grammatically mark all of the possible evidential categories. With respect to indirect information, Magar distinguishes only:

- (i) inferred evidence
- (ii) hearsay / reported evidence

Inferred evidence is marked with the morpheme *sa*, as in (1); reported evidence (or hearsay) is encoded with *ta* (2).

- (1) hose tarafi-**sa**
 D.DEM arrive-**INFR**
 ‘He has arrived.’ (I see his bag.)

- (2) hose tarafi **ta**
 D.DEM arrive **REP**
 ‘He has arrived.’ (They say.)

Statements made based on direct, factual and first-hand evidence are unmarked as in (3) and (4).

- (3) hose tarafi-a
 D.DEM arrive-PST
 ‘He has arrived.’ (I see him.)

- (4) mi-ja rap-m Δ le
 POSS-child weep-NOM IMPF
 ‘The baby is crying.’ (I hear her.)

⁵ The quotative is discussed in Grunow-Hårsta (in prep.).

Likewise, gnomic statements or generic factials ‘I know this because everyone knows it’ are direct and unmarked in Magar as in (5).

- (5) mi-ja sefi-cyo chanfi-le
 POSS-child good-ATT become-IMPF
 ‘A child is a good thing.’

It must be noted that morphological evidential marking is not obligatory in Magar, i.e. not every indirect utterance must be encoded for source. Therefore, it cannot be presumed that an unmarked utterance is based on direct, first-hand information, though it most often is. In this respect, Magar lacks the precision of grammatically encoded direct evidentials found in other Tibeto-Burman languages such as Qiang (LaPolla 2003) or Amdo Tibetan (Sun 1993).

Qiang (LaPolla 2003: 27)

- (6) the: ʒdzyta: fia-qə-(w)u
 3SG Chengdu+LOC or-go-**vis**
 ‘He went to Chengdu.’ (The speaker saw it.)

Amdo Tibetan (Sun 1993: 953)

- (7) tʂaɕ^{hi}-kə ^htæ n̩u-t^hæ
 Bkra.shis-ERG horse buy:(**COMPL**)-**DIR.EVID**
 ‘Brka-shis bought a horse.’ (The speaker saw it.)

3.2 Evidentiality, tense, mood, and aspect

In Magar, evidentials occur in both irrealis (8) and realis moods (9, 10) and can combine with all tense-aspect forms including, for example: the simple-past (9a, 10a) marked with suffix *-a*, the simple-habitual-present (9b, 10b) followed by the imperfective marker *le* (which is grammaticalised from the existential copula), the progressive (9c, 10c) nominalised with *mɿ* and followed by the imperfective marker; and the habitual past (9d, 10d), which is nominalised with *-o* and followed by the imperfective marker in past tense. (By contrast the mirative, as shall be seen, is restricted to non-past-imperfective.)

- (8) (a) η a-o dai hong-kong-a η a-nu η -e-sa
 1S-GEN older.brother Hong-Kong-LOC IRR-go-IRR-INFR
 ‘Apparently, my older brother might go to Hong Kong’
 (b) η a-o dai hong-kong-a η a-nu η -e ta
 1S-GEN older.brother Hong Kong-LOC IRR-go-IRR REP
 ‘They say my older brother might go to Hong Kong’
- (9) (a) b η im tarafi-sa
 B η im arrive-INFR
 ‘Apparently, B η im arrived.’
 (b) b η im kathmandu-a η mu-le-sa
 B η im kathamndu-LOC sit-IMPF-INFR
 ‘Apparently, B η im lives in Kathmandu.’
 (c) b η im rafi-m Λ le-sa
 B η im come-NOM IMPF-INFR
 ‘Apparently, B η im is coming.’
 (d) b η im kathmandu-a η mu-o le-sa
 B η im kathamndu-LOC sit-NOM IMPF-INFR
 ‘Apparently, B η im used to live in Kathmandu.’
- (10) (a) b η im tarafi-a ta
 B η im arrive-PST REP
 ‘B η im arrived, they say.’
 (b) b η im kathmandu-a η mu-le ta
 B η im kathamndu-LOC sit-IMPF REP
 ‘B η im lives in Kathmandu, they say.’
 (c) b η im rafi-m Λ le ta
 B η im come-NOM IMPF REP
 ‘B η im is coming, they say.’
 (d) b η im kathmandu-a η mu-o le-a ta
 B η im kathamndu-LOC sit-NOM IMPF-PST REP
 ‘B η im used to live in Kathmandu, they say.’

The paper will now proceed to consider each of the grammatically marked evidentials in turn: the inferential *sa* in section 3.3, and the reportative *ta* in section 3.4.

3.3 Inferential Evidential: *sa*

3.3.1 Form and meaning

Formally, the inferential *sa* is part of the verb complex. It follows the verb stem, as well as nominalisers (11) and aspect markers if present (12), and it precedes tense inflection in both dialects (9a). In Syangja Magar, *sa* also precedes the verb final pronominal affixes, as seen in (13).

- (11) moi gan phinfi-**ma** le-**sa**
 mother spinach cook-**NOM** IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, Mother is cooking spinach.’
- (12) meno dasa jhion-cyo paranta ya si-ke
 own plight clear-**ATT** after or die-**NOM**
 rih-**le-sa**
 mark-**IMPF-INFR**
 ‘Whether his plight clears up later or he is to die, evidently, it is written.’ (E.030T)
- (13) ajakal-ca ŋa-mfiyak-le-**sa-aŋ**
 nowadays-**ATT** 1PRO-forget-**IMPF-INFR-1PRO**
 ‘Nowadays, apparently, I have forgotten.’ (O.O.005S)

The suffix *sa* expresses inferred or deduced opinions. It conveys that a proposition is based on circumstantial evidence perceived from sensory data. The inferential translates into English as ‘apparently’ or ‘evidently’. In narratives, *sa* can also express inferences based on evidence from the story. When used with first-person, it displays what Aikhenvald (2004: 219-233) calls ‘first person effect’ and can have mirative overtones. The Magar inferential system has only a single term, i.e. it does not differentiate between visual and non-visual sources of inference nor between inferences based on immediate senses or those deduced from results as other more complex evidential systems do⁶. In Magar, all of the following sources of information are encoded with *sa*:

⁶ Systems which do make more distinctions are, for example, Akha (Thurgood 1986) and East Tucanoan languages in north-west Amazonia which distinguish between visual and non-visual evidence (Aikhenvald 2004: 51).

- (i) visual evidence
 - immediate evidence
 - deduced from results
- (ii) non-visual evidence
 - immediate evidence
 - deduced from results

In (14), the speaker infers that Kumari is staying at Bhim's home, having seen her belongings there, and the inferential *sa* is used to express this. This contrasts with (15) which is not marked for source of information and expresses first hand experience, i.e. the speaker has seen Kumari in residence at Bhim's.

- (14) kumari bhim-o im-aŋ mu-mΛ le-**sa**
 Kumari Bhim-GEN house-LOC sit-NOM IMPF-**INFR**
 'Apparently, Kumari is staying at Bhim's house.'
 (I infer this because I see evidence.)

cf.

- (15) kumari bhim -o im-aŋ mu-mΛ le
 Kumari Bhim-GEN house-LOC sit-NOM IMPF
 'Kumari is staying at Bhim's house.' (I have seen this.)

In (16) the master of a notorious 'chicken-killing' dog, on seeing his neighbour's dead fowl, makes an inference from the visual evidence and (in classic under-statement) announces that: 'Apparently, my dog has been at your house.'

- (16) ŋa-o cyu naŋ-o im-aŋ le-le-**sa**
 1S-GEN dog 2S-GEN house-LOC COP-IMPF-**INFR**
 'Apparently, my dog has been at your house.' (N.37T)

Example (17) is a response to seeing a friend whose grandfather had been on death's door and who is very upset; the speaker infers the grandfather's death.

- (17) hoce-o baju si-le-**sa**
 D.DEM-GEN grandfather die-IMPF-**INFR**
 'Apparently his grandfather has died.' (I see that he is upset.)
 (N.40T)

In (18), seeing that a theft has taken place, and that the thieves have not been apprehended, the speaker infers their escape.

- (18) khus-ca jofi-le-**sa**
 theft-ATT flee-IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, the thieves have escaped.’ (N.39S)

In the previous examples, the evidence has been visual, either immediate evidence (Kumari’s belongings), or a result (the dead chickens, upset young man, no apprehended thieves). Evidence for inferential statements, cross-linguistically, is generally visual, but not strictly so⁷. Non-visual evidentials are found in Magar. In example (19), the evidence is heard and felt.

- (19) petrɒl ka-ke ŋa-mfiyak-le-**sa**-aŋ
 petrol put-NOM 1PRO-forget-IMPF-**INFR**-1PRO
 ‘Apparently, I have forgotten to put in petrol.’ (S)
 (I think this because I sense the evidence/result.)

This contrasts with (20) which is a non-inferential statement of fact.

- (20) ŋa-i petrɒl ma-ŋa-ka-a-aŋ
 1S-ERG petrol NEG-1PRO-put-PST-1PRO
 ‘I did not put in petrol.’ (S)
 (I know this, because I did (not) do this.)

3.3.2 Inferential and person

The inferential evidential *sa* combines with all persons; however propositions concerning third person are most common, and those concerning second person are more common than first person inference. Certain circumstances permit second and first person evidential constructions, as for example, when the car stutters to a stop and this prevails upon the driver to announce that he has apparently forgotten to fill up with petrol, as in (19) above (from Syangja) and (21a) (from

⁷ Non-visual evidentials are found in Shipibo-Konibo (Valenzuela 2003), Cherokee (Pulte 1985), Yukaghir (Maslova 2003), and East Tucanoan (Aikhenvald 2003).

Tanahu). Examples in second and third person follow in (21b, c) and (d) respectively.

- (21) (a) $\eta a-i$ $petr\lambda l$ $ka-ke$ $mfiyak-le-sa$
 1S-ERG petrol put-NOM forget-IMPf-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, I forgot to put in petrol.’ (T)
- (b) $na\eta-i$ $petr\lambda l$ $ka-ke$ $mfiyak-le-sa$
 2S-ERG petrol put-NOM forget-IMPf-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, you forgot to put in petrol.’ (T)
- (c) $petr\lambda l$ $ka-ke$ $mfiyak-d\lambda-le-sa$
 petrol put-NOM forget-2PRO-IMPf-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, you forgot to put in petrol.’ (S)
- (d) $hose-i$ $petr\lambda l$ $ka-ke$ $mfiyak-le-sa$
 D.DEM-ERG petrol put-NOM forget-IMPf-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, he forgot to put in petrol.’

Examples (19) and (21a), the inferential with first person, exhibit what Aikhenvald (2004: 219-33) has called the ‘first person effect’. This is the addition of overtones of lack of control or volition when non-first hand evidentials and first person combine and which can lead to a mirative extension of evidentials. In Magar, though there is a separate mirative construction, there is some semantic overlap between mirativity and first-person inferentials. The latter can express consternation and surprise and have thus extended their meaning to imply mirativity. Aikhenvald (2004: 208) has described the pathway from evidential to mirative as one from: lack of first-hand information → speaker’s non-participation → lack of control → an unprepared mind and new knowledge → mirative.

3.3.3 *Inferential in Interrogatives*

If an inferential is used in a question, assumptions will have been made by the interrogator about the information source of the addressee, that is, if the question is couched with an inferential, it is expected that the answer will be a response deduced or inferred from indirect evidence (22a). This is opposed to a non-inferential question, where the respondent is presumed to have the facts available (22b). In other words, the speaker uses, in the question, the form s/he anticipates in the answer, as seen in the following contrast:

- (22) (a) kus-kat kitab a-laŋ mu-le-**sa**
 which-one book R.DEM-LOC sit-IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘Which book (do you think) is left there?’
 (The speaker believes the respondent must infer.)
- cf. (b) kus-kat kitab a-laŋ mu-le
 which-one book R.DEM-LOC sit-IMPF
 ‘Which book is left there?’
 (The speaker believes the respondent knows.)

This presupposition of information source (first-hand versus inference) is not unlike what Aikhenvald has observed for Quechua (2004: 247), wherein the use of the inferred evidential implies that the speaker “‘sets the stage’ for conjecture on the part of the addressee”.

3.3.4 Inferential in Narrative

In narratives, the reportative is typically used; however, the inferential *sa* is used if narrating from a picture book⁸. In this case, the pictures are treated as visual evidence from which the plot of a story is deduced as shown in (23).

- (23) babu-ja-i jħa-aŋ dulo darħi-mo jħa-o
 boy-child-ERG ground-LOC hole see-SEQ ground-GEN
 dulo bħitre nu-a ki de-mo dulo-aŋ ŋos-a
 hole inside go-PST or say-SEQ hole-LOC look-PST
 tʌrʌ byu dulo le-**sa** hosa hosa bħitre-iŋ
 but rat hole COP-**INFR** D.DEM D.DEM inside-ABL
 byu khyoħi-a
 rat emerge-PST
 ‘The boy having seen a hole in the ground went into the hole to
 see whether (the frog was there) but, apparently, it was a rat’s
 hole; a rat emerged from it.’ (A.014 T)

LaPolla (2003: 70) observed for Qiang that inferentials may be used to recount from television. In Magar, if the source of information from the television is visual (someone sees the image but does not hear or understand the audio), the inferential is used as in (24). If the source of information is verbal, the reportative is used (see 3.4.4).

⁸ The text used was Mayer (1974) *Frog, where are you?*.

- (24) maob^Λdi d^Λ raja-o phauji-ko punfi-m^Λ le-**sa**
 Maoists and king-GEN troop-PL fight-NOM IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘Apparently, the Maoists and the king’s troops are fighting.’

The inferential *sa* is also used in narratives and folk stories when a character makes a deduction and expresses it in direct speech. In (25), from *How the crow became black*, the owl, a character in the story, infers the moral character of the crow by his actions, and proclaims:

- (25) achya ho-te-aharj-ca^Λ narj jati-ca^Λ ale-**sa**
 EXCLM DEM-say-COND-ATT 2S good-ATT COP-**INFR**
 ‘Well, if it is so, you are a good one, apparently.’ (DD.051. S)

The inferential may also be used by the narrator to express their own voice. In these cases the narrator manipulates the inferential as a stylistic device to engage the audience. The listener is invited to join in making inferences either about actions or states from their results or, conversely, to infer results from states or events in a story. In (26), the state of mind of a character is inferred from the resultant act, and is glossed with ‘apparently must have’.

- (26) hatai saddhai j^Λ hairan par-di-s-le-**sa**
 then always EMPH vex must-LN-INTR-IMPF-**INFR**
 hot-in uruwa par-lak patti le-le-**sa** kowa
 D.DEM-ABL owl side-CIR shore COP-IMPF-**INFR** crow
 war-lak patti
 side-CIR shore
 ‘Then as always, (the crow), apparently, must have vexed the owl, and as a result, apparently, the owl is on this side of the river and the crow the other.’ (D.D.009S)

In (27), from a story of how a girl came to marry a frog, the actions leading up to the marriage are deduced by the narrator from the result. Specifically, the girl had promised to go away with the frog if he stopped muddying the water. She ends up married, thus the narrator infers:

- (27) hatai rΛ di ma-dun-ak-le-**sa** ta
 then and water NEG-muddy-CAUS-IMPF-**INFR** REP
 ‘They say that then, apparently, he did not muddy the waters.’
 (G.G.007S)

In (28) and (29), the inferential is used when a narrator calls up a scene or series of actions as evidence for a result, and from them deduces that result. The ‘deduction’ is feigned for effect—the narrator knows full well what the result is (who the victor is and that a heap of twigs is gathered)—but by using the inferential, the audience is involved in the process of story telling. This is not unlike the use of ‘you see’ in English.

- (28) uruwa-i hosa kauwa-kun mi-khar bΛfiri cet-ak
 owl-ERG D.DEM crow-GEN.PL POSS-wing all cut-CAUS
 cet-ak bħaraŋi-mo yaŋi-le-**sa** hatai kauwa-ke
 cut-CAUS snap-SEQ give-IMPF-**INFR** then crow-DAT
 jut-le-**sa**
 win-IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘The owl chopped off the crow’s wings, apparently, snapped them right off for him; then, you see, he, won over the crow.’
 (DD.019 -20 S)

- (29) hatai da-rafi-naŋ da-rafi-naŋ thupria jat-le-**sa**
 then put-come-SIM put-come-SIM pile do-IMPF-**INFR**
 ittar-cΛ ittar te-naŋ dħaŋi jΛ jat-le-**sa**
 few-ATT few say-SIM very EMPH do-IMPF-**INFR**
 ‘Then coming and bringing, coming and bringing, evidently, he piles up a few; a few in this way, you see, makes many.’
 (DD.061- 062 S)

3.3.5 *Inferentials, evidentials and epistemics*

The inferential *sa* collocates with other evidential and epistemic particles, for example, *man*. It is this particle which imparts veridical force and translates into English as ‘believe me’ or ‘truly’, as seen alone in (30a) and with *sa* in (30b).

- (30) (a) bhim lfes-m_Λ rafi-a **man**
 Bhim return-NOM come-PST **truly**
 ‘Bhim returned, believe me.’ (I saw him.)
 (b) bhim lfes-m_Λ rafi-**sa** **man**
 Bhim return-NOM come-**INFR** **truly**
 ‘Apparently, Bhim returned, believe me.’
 (I’ve seen evidence.)

In (31) *man* combines with *sa* in the utterance about a Brahmin who has impregnated a cobbler-woman. In this example, though the identity of the father cannot be proven, it has been deduced from the cobbler’s pregnant state and her relationship with the Brahmin. The clause-final particle *man* conveys that the speaker sets store by this evidence and believes it to be true.

- (31) aci hosa bahn-e sark-ni-ke
 then D.DEM brahmin-ERG cobbler-FEM-DAT
 mi-tuk bus-ak-le-**sa** **man**
 POSS-stomach carry-CAUS-IMPF-**INFR** **truly**
 ‘Then, apparently, the Brahmin had got the female cobbler
 pregnant, believe me.’ (W.07S)

This combination of evidential *sa*, which conveys only source of information, with an epistemic particle, lends support to the separateness of the two systems; i.e. that evidentials are independent and not to be subsumed under epistemic modality.

In (32) *sa* combines with *ra*, likely an adoption from Nepali meaning ‘also’ which can function as an epistemic particle as seen in (33). The use of *sa* conveys that there is physical evidence of B_{him}’s arrival. The combination of *sa* and *ra* adds another nuance; it conveys slight doubt or exasperation at the evidence, rather like the ironic and heavily intoned use of ‘actually’ in English.

- (32) bhim rafi-le-**sa** **ra**
 Bhim come-IMPF-**INFR** **also**
 ‘Apparently, Bhim has actually come.’

Nepali (Michailovsky 1996: 111)

- (33) khalak-lāi ghar kharca-ko ali muškil cha **re** ho
 family-DAT house expense-GEN short difficult be.3SG **part** is
 ‘The family, it is said, has money problems, is it true?’

3.4 Evidential Reportative/ Hearsay: *ta*

3.4.1 Form and Meaning

The reportative marker indicates that the speaker has no first-hand experience of what she or he is recounting, but has come by the information second-hand via a verbal report. It would translate into English as ‘they say’, ‘it is said’ or ‘I heard’. Formally, the reportative/ hearsay marker *ta* is a clause final particle. In (34), in the first clause, *ta* follows the subordinated verb *jya-ke* [eat-NOM] and *yafi-o* *le-a* [give-NOM IMPF-PST] which is the main verb (and inflected for tense, mood and aspect), and in the third clause it follows *te-o* *le-a* [say-NOM IMPF-PST].

- (34) jauli-cho jya-ke yafi-o le-a **ta**
 gruel-rice eat-NOM give-NOM IMPF-PST **REP**
 “rokotyak-e hi jya-ke yafi-le ma-de-haŋ”
 frog-ERG what eat-NOM give-IMPF NEG-say-COND
 te-naŋ jauli-cho yafi-le te-o le-a
 say-SIM gruel-rice give-IMPF say-NOM IMPF-PST
ta te-o le-a ale -a ki ma-le-a
REP say-NOM IMPF-PST COP-PST or NEG-COP-PST
 ‘They say that Frog used to give the rice gruel offering to his wife to eat. (Her mother) would wonder “what if the frog does not give you anything to eat?” They say he gave her rice gruel to eat. This is what is said. Was it so, or was it not?’ (G.G.021 S)

The reportative marker is distinct from the quotative in both form and function. In form *ta* is a particle. As such it is not independent, nor does it conjugate or index subject-verb agreement, and it must combine with a clause containing another finite verb. The quotative, used to report speech, is a full and finite verb *de* (T) ~ *te* (S), meaning ‘say’ or ‘tell’ and occurs in bi-clausal constructions. In (35) both *de* and *ta* occur.

- (35) hosa bñormi-e de-a ta “ña-i na-ke dinfi-le
 D.DEM man-ERG say-PST **REP** 1S-ERG 2S-DAT find-IMPF
 de-a”
 say-PST
 ‘They say the man said, “I will find you”.’

Their functions differ: the verb *de* is used to quote directly and usually overtly, as in (36) and (37a). If *ta* is used, the source of a report cannot be directly or explicitly stated. The particle *ta* reports hearsay, it does not quote; compare the quotative in (37a) with the reportative in (37b). The hearsay marker cannot appear instead of *de* in a sentence with an overt direct quotation as in (37c). The quotative can also combine with the reportative as in (37d).

- (36) hosa-i dfiodfiar-añ khefi-a nΛ hosa-ko
 D.DEM-ERG log-LOC emerge-PST EMPH D.DEM-PL
 rΛ hos cyu chahin hos lenja ja-ja
 and D.DEM dog well D.DEM boy child-child
 kΛtha ñak-ke pa-nañ hos **lenja ja-ja-i**
 with talk-NOM try-SIM D.DEM **boy child-child-ERG**
 “na-ñak-na” **de-a**
 NEG-talk-IMP **say-PST**
 ‘They came out at a hollow log and, well, the dog that was with
 the boy was going to bark and the boy told it “Do not bark!”’
 (B.B.032S)

- (37) (a) “cho dfialiq jyap-mΛ le” **bahini**
 rice.meal very savour-NOM IMPF **little.sister**
de-le
say-IMPF
 ‘Little sister says “The meal is delicious”.’
 (b) cho dfialiq jyap-mΛ le **ta**
 rice.meal very savour-NOM IMPF **REP**
 ‘They say the meal is delicious.’
 (c) *cho dfialiq jyap-mΛ le **bahini ta**
 rice.meal very savour-NOM IMPF **little.sister REP**
 ‘Little sister says the meal is delicious.’
 (d) cho dfialiq jyap-mΛ le **bahini**
 rice.meal very savour-NOM IMPF **little.sister**

‘They say, little sister says “The meal is delicious”.’

(38) chinij chinij-cyo “dakto^r-ko” **de-le** “lama-ko” rΛ
 today today-ATT doctor-PL **say-IMPF** priest-PL and
 de-le “jaysi-ko” rΛ **de-le** Δbo ku-lak
 say-IMPF fortune.teller-PL and **say-IMPF** now how-CIR
 ale ku-lak ale
 COP how-CIR COP
 ‘Nowadays, some say “doctors” and some say “priests” and
 some say “fortune tellers”, now, where to go, where to go?’
 (E.003T)

As would be expected, the reportative is used in third person accounts and in narratives; no examples of first person or second person reportative were recorded. In such contexts, the quotative is used (39, 40).

- (39) i-da jat-ke par-di-s-le asa
P.DEM-INDEF do-NOM must-LN-INTR-IMP R.DEM
uruwa-o par-lak patti aŋ-nfiak-iŋ mfiak-aŋ
owl-GEN this.side-CIR side go-front-ABL down-LOC
me-kun im-aŋ mfiak-aŋ mu-dekiŋ rʌ ŋa
3S-GEN house-LOC down-LOC sit-after and 1S
“haya babai haya babai” te-le-aŋ
groan father groan father say-IMP-1PRO
‘The thing we must do is this, after going over to the owl’s side
and after sitting below their nest, I will groan saying “oh father,
oh father”.’ (DD.029S)

- (40) **de-o** me-lafi nΛ rafi-a rΛ jik-a
say-IMP 3S-self EMPH come-PST and sting-PST
 ‘Tell me! Did it come all by itself and sting you?’ (A.036T)

3.4.3. Reportative in Interrogatives

Like the inferential, questions with the reportative presume an information source. The particle *ta* can be used in questions when an individual is asked to recount reported events as in (41).

- (41) kusa-ke waŋsalap jya-ke yaŋi-o le-a **ta**
 how-DAT caterpillar eat-NOM give-NOM IMPF-PST **REP**
 ‘To whom do they say they used to give the caterpillar to eat?’
 (Q.Q.031S)

3.4.4 Reportative and epistemic particles

In Magar, the reportative *ta* (like the inferential *sa*) conveys source without an implicature of commitment to the truth of the proposition or lack thereof. It is not used by the speaker to disassociate themselves from the responsibility of the report or to express doubt. If doubt is expressed it is done overtly with *ma-dihi* ‘not believe’, as in (42), where it also combines with *rΛ*, which conveys doubt (as was seen in (31)). Without an overt expression of doubt via a full lexeme or an epistemic particle, the reportative expresses only that the source of information is hearsay (43).

- (42) ŋa-i **ma-dihi**-mΛ nΛ le hosa nuŋ-ke
 1S-ERG **NEG-believe**-NOM EMPH IMPF D.DEM go-NOM
 le ta **rΛ**
 IMPF REP **also**
 ‘I doubt what they say, that he is about to go Pokhara.’

cf.

- (43) hose pokhara nuŋ-ke le **ta**
 D.DEM Pokhara go-NOM IMPF **REP**
 ‘They say he is about to go Pokhara.’

Furthermore, a clause ending in the particle *ta* frequently combines with a second clause ending in *de-o le-a* (T) ~ *te-o le-a* (S) [say-NOM IMPF-PAST], which means ‘have always said’ or ‘used to say’, with this

followed by the epistemic particle *man* ‘truly’. This combination with *man*, conveys ‘I am reporting what they have always said and I believe it to be true’, as in (44) and (45). Its collocation with *ta* supports the view that *ta* is neutral as to truth value. Furthermore, in example (44) (and 33 above) the narrator, after using *ta* and *de ~ te-o le-a*, explicitly states, that she makes no claims about the truth of her account saying: *ale-a ki ma-ale* ‘it may or may not be so’; *ta* encodes only a reported source.

- (44) a-lak-aŋ mɔdebeni-aŋ thakal-ni-ko-ke
 R.DEM-CIR-LOC Madabeni-LOC Thakali-FEM-PL-DAT
 baga-di-s-ca **ta** **te-o** **le-a** **man**
 sweep.away-LN-INTR-ATT **REP** **say-NOM** **IMPF-PST** **truly**
 ‘They say that there around Madabeni, Thakali women were
 swept away in the flood, so it is said, truly.’ (W.05S)

- (45) swa te-naŋ aŋ-le **ta** bħormi ŋħadək
 ONO say-SIM go-IMPF **REP** person ONO
 ŋħadək ŋħadək thut le **ta** me-ŋer-aŋ bħasək
 ONO ONO scrub COP **REP** POSS-mouth-LOC ONO
 aŋ-le ta te-o le-a ale-a ki ma-ale
 go-IMPF **REP** say-NOM IMPF-PST COP-PST or NEG-COP
 ‘As it hisses, they say that a man stumbles and stumbles and is
 pulled slowly (with a scrubbing motion) into its mouth and, they
 say, and then he is suddenly gulped. That is what they used to
 say; it may or may not be so.’ (O.O.018S)

3.4.5 Reportative in Narrative

The reportative occurs frequently in the recounting of folklore, it conveys that the information has been handed down verbally. It has become a token of that genre. As noted, *ta* also frequently combines with the construction *de-o le-a* (T) ~ *te-o le-a* (S) [say-NOM IMPF-PST] which, as discussed above, can have epistemic value when combined with *man* ‘truly’. This construction in collocation with *ta* when interjected into a narrative frequently signals a pivotal event on the story-line; in the instance in (46), it is an exorcism. It can also signal an episodic juncture, as in (47), where it is interjected between the events leading up to a pivot, here between the engagement of a frog to an unwitting young girl and that frog’s following her home.

- (46) ya ban-ke lfi-et-ke pa-di-s-le
 and arrow-DAT return-NOM try-LN-INTR-IMPF
 de-mo **de-o** **le-a** **ta**
 say-SEQ **say-NOM** **IMPF-PST** **REP**
 ‘And, thus, the mystical-arrow-curse is thought to be exorcised,
 so they used to say.’ (E.012T)
- (47) di dun-ak-a mʌn hatai “ma-dun-ak-o”
 water muddy-CAUS-PST truly then NEG-muddy-CAUS-IMP
 te-naŋ “ŋa-ke rafi-de-haŋ
 say-SIM 1S-DAT come-say-COND
 ma-dun-ak-le-aŋ” mʌn **te-o** **le-a ta**
 NEG-muddy-CAUS-IMPF-1PRO truly **say-NOM** **IMPF-PST**
hatai rʌ nfiun nfiun rafi-a
REP then and back backcome-PST
 ‘(The frog) was really muddying the water, and (the girl) said to
 him “Stop muddying it!” and he said, “I will truly not muddy the
 water if you will come to me,” so they say, truly. Then, like that,
 he came following behind.’ (G.G.013-014S)

Accounts from radio broadcasts and television, if what is reported is verbal information, are made with the reportative, as in (48). If the source of information is the visual image then the inferential is used (see 3.3.4).

- (48) maobadi dʌ u-em-el men-o me-no dus
 maoists also UML 3-GEN 3-GEN help
 ma-jat-le **ta**
 NEG-do-IMPF **REP**
 ‘They say that the Maoists and the UML [United Marxist
 Leninists] will not cooperate with each other.’

3.5 *Evidentials Combined*

The inferential and the reportative combine. Aikhenvald (2004: 82), and LaPolla (2003: 64) for Qiang, have observed that in these cases, two different sources can confirm and complement each other. In Magar, as shown in (49) and (50), the inferential (*sa*) and the reportative (*ta*) combine to express two perceivers: 1. the speaker, whose source is a verbal report, hence *ta* and 2. those who observed evidence and inferred

the original report, hence *sa*. The two evidentials occupy different slots: the inferential is part of the verb complex and the reportative is a clause final particle.

- (49) rokotyak-ca nɦun nɦun rafi-le-**sa** **ta**
 frog-ATT back back come-IMPF-INFR **REP**
 ‘They say that, apparently, that frog followed after her.’
 (G.G. 008 S)

- (50) kat-yak-ca hi chanɦi-le-sa rokotyak-ca
 one-day-ATT what become-IMPF-INFR frog-ATT
 gekhekre si-le-**sa** **ta**
 ONO die-IMPF-INFR **REP**
 ‘One day, what evidently happened? They say that, apparently,
 the frog, stiffened and died.’ (G.G. 019 S)

Moreover, as Aikhenvald (2004: 83) states, “If two evidentials can occur together, they may well be considered as belonging to two different subsystems”. Evidentials in Magar, as seen above, also combine with epistemic particles, indicating that they also are a separate system.

3.6 Evidential typology

Aikhenvald (2004) presents a typology of evidential systems based on cross-linguistic data in which she delineates four types of evidential systems: those which have two, three, four or five evidential markers. The simplest systems are binary having only two terms; these she calls type A; type B systems have three terms, type C have four and type D five. These four types are further sub-categorised and specified according to the nature of the information sources, for example, the system may mark: first-hand versus non-first-hand, or reported versus inferred. Magar has a three term system within which there are two marked evidential terms: the inferential *sa* and the reportative *ta*. The third, and unmarked, term is a default ‘everything else’ category which includes all directly perceived information sources. Within Aikhenvald’s typology Magar would be a B-type language (2004:42-51).

4. MIRATIVITY

4.1 *Mirativity Defined*

DeLancey has defined mirativity as an independent grammatical category; specifically it is “the grammatical marking of unexpected information” (1997: 33) and of “new knowledge that has yet to be assimilated into one’s representation of the world” (1986: 212). Mirativity, DeLancey insists, is not “an exotic phenomenon found only in a few obscure languages; [it] has within recent years become recognized as a widespread and significant phenomenon” (1997: 33). Lazard (1999), contrary to DeLancey, questions the status of the mirative as a grammatical category in its own right. He prefers to subsume evidentials and miratives under the category of ‘mediative’, saying that more often than not languages lack grammatical marking of mirativity separate from that of evidentiality. DeLancey (1997: 49) argues that all languages have the ability to express mirativity, but languages differ (as they do for evidentials) in the degree to which mirativity marking is integrated into the grammar. Among Tibeto-Burman languages, there is evidence for the mirative as an independent grammatical category, for example in Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 1986, 1997, 2001; Tournadre 1994), Sunwar, Newari (DeLancey 1997), and Kham (Watters 2002). The latter three are all Himalayish languages. Magar also encodes mirativity independently of evidential morphology.

4.2 *Mirativity in Magar*

4.2.1 *Form and Meaning*

Unlike evidentiality, mirativity is not concerned with the directness or indirectness of information source. Rather mirativity conveys surprise at what is “newly acquired and unintegrated” (DeLancey 1997: 25) information regardless of the directness of the information source. In English, phrases such as: ‘quite to my surprise’ or ‘I realise to my surprise’ express the mirative (and are used in glosses). The following contrast (51a, b) demonstrates the difference between a non-mirative and a mirative respectively.

- (51) (a) thapa i-lan le
 Thapa P.DEM-LOC COP
 'Thapa is here.' (non-mirative)
- cf. (b) thapa i-lan le-o le
 Thapa P.DEM-LOC COP-NOM IMPF
 (I realise to my surprise that) 'Thapa is here!'

A non-mirative statement simply conveys information, making no claims as to its novelty or the speaker's psychological reaction to it. A mirative statement conveys that the information is new and unexpected and is as much about this surprising newness as it is about the information itself.

In form, the mirative in Magar is a complex verbal construction comprised of the verb stem plus nominaliser *o*, followed by *le*, a grammaticalised copula, functioning as an auxiliary and marker of imperfective aspect: Σ -*o le* [STEM-NOM IMPF]. It differs from the evidentials which are a suffix (inferential) and a particle (reportative). The Magar mirative is also formally different from those found in Bodish languages of the Himalayas, for example, Lhasa Tibetan (52) and Sunwar (53). These languages encode mirativity in their copular systems (DeLancey 1992). A particular copula will imply foreknowledge, intention and volition, thus is non-mirative; whereas another implies absence of foreknowledge and expresses a mirative meaning⁹. In Magar, by contrast, mirativity is not expressed through distinctive copulas, rather the mirative construction consists of a nominalised stem in combination with a single copula *le*.

Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 1992: 43-44)

- (52) (a) nga-r dngul tog = tsam 'dug
 I-LOC money some exist
 'I have some money!' (to my surprise)
- (b) nga-r dngul tog = tsam yod
 I-LOC money some exist
 'I have some money!' (non-mirative)

⁹ These copulas are part of a conjunct/disjunct system, terms coined by Hale (1980).

Sunwar (DeLancey 1997: 41)

- (53) (a) Tanka Kathmandu-m **'baâ-tə**
 Tanka Kathmandu-LOC **exist-3S.PST**
 'Tanka is in Kathmandu!' (to my surprise)
 (b) Tanka Kathmandu-m **tshaa**
 Tanka Kathmandu-LOC **exist-3S.PST**
 'Tanka is in Kathmandu!' (non-mirative)

Noonan (1997: 9) has observed that, in the Himalayan region, nominalised predicates are frequently found in mirative constructions, alone or in combination with a copula. The construction in Magar has parallels in, for example, Chantyal (Noonan 1997) and Kham (Watters 2002). In Chantyal, a nominalised predicate in conjunction with the quotative, encodes mirativity, as in the following:

Chantyal (Noonan 1997: 9)

- (54) gay palo myala-nhari **wõ-wa** **bfi-si-rə**
 cow as.a.result field-INES **go.in-NOM** **say-ANT-SEQ**
 tipatip pari-i
 hurry make-happen-PERF
 'The cow will go into the field!' having said, it made [me]
 hurry!'

The mirative in Takale Kham is a nominalised construction with a nominaliser identical in phonological form to that of Magar. Compare (55) and (56). In Kham, unlike Magar both the main verb and the copula are nominalised.

Takale Kham (Watters 2002: 289)

- (55) ya-ba-duh-**wo** **o-le-o**
 3p-go-prior-PFV-NML **3sg-be-NML (MIR)**
 'They already left!' (quite to my surprise)

cf.

Magar

- (56) hose-ko **das-o** **le**
 D.DEM-PL **leave-NOM** **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) 'They are leaving!'

4.2.2 *Mirativity and Person*

The mirative is typically found in an exchange between speech act participants, i.e. first person and second person. The subject of what would be the matrix clause in English (the surprised first person speaker) is understood and consequently unstated. In (57-58) what is unstated is parenthetically represented in the free translations.

- (57) boi-e chitua-ke **ŋap-o** **le**
 father-ERG leopard-DAT **shoot-NOM** **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘Father shot the leopard!’

- (58) bñut **wña-o** **le**
 spirit **move-NOM** **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘The spirit is moving!’ (N.08T)

The subject of what would be the complement clause in English, the second person (who inspires the mirative response), may also be omitted if it is retrievable from context and it usually is. For example, two individuals are engaged in a conversation, the addressee lights up a cigarette and the speaker is surprised and exclaims ‘You smoke!’

- (59) (a) **ga-o** **le**
 smoke-NOM **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘(You) smoke!’ (T)
 (b) **ga-o-dΛ** **le**
 smoke-NOM-2PRO **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘(You) smoke!’ (S)

As DeLancey observes (1997: 42), first person miratives are not intuitive given that “information about the rest of the world may be surprising, but information about oneself should not be.” As with evidentials, first person miratives may have “odd interpretations” (DeLancey 1997: 42); nevertheless, they do occur as, for example, in Sunwar (60) and Nepali (61).

Sunwar (DeLancey 1997: 42)

- (60) go kathamandu-m ‘baâ-ti
 I kathmandu-LOC exist-1SG.PAST
 ‘I saw myself in Kathmandu.’(as in a dream)

Nepali (Michailovsky 1996: 113)

- (61) khāltī-mā po hālechu
 pocket-in but I.put.MIR
 ‘(I thought I had forgotten that paper), but (I see) I had put it in my pocket!’

First person miratives also occur in Magar. In the following instance, an individual looks at her empty plate and, learning what it was on it, realises that she has eaten a prohibited meat (62).

- (62) (a) ŋa-i i-din-ca sya **ŋa-jya-o**
 1S-ERG P.DEM-type-ATT meat **1PRO-eat-NOM**
le-sa-aŋ
IMPF-INFR-1PRO
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘Apparently I have eaten this type of meat!’ (S)
 (b) ŋa i-din-cyo sya **jya-o le-sa**
 1S P.DEM-TYPE-ATT meat **eat-NOM INFR-PST**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘Apparently I have eaten this type of meat!’ (T)

Third person miratives can also occur in narratives, where they can be used to express an unexpected realisation on the part of a character as told by an omniscient narrator as in (63).

- (63) ha dɦaliŋ jʌ jat-le-sa abo hos kauwa-i
 EXCL many EMPH do-IMPF-INFR now D.DEM crow-ERG
 hi **soch-di-o le** te-aɦaŋ ho-dik
 what **think-LN-NOM IMPF** say-COND D.DEM-QUANT
 jat-pyak uruwa-ko-ke thaha ma-ale
 do-after owl-PL-DAT awareness NEG-COP
 ‘Hah! After having done that much, apparently, what did the crow realise to his surprise? Although after doing so much, the owls did not even notice.’ (DD.063 S)

4.2.3 Mirativity and Interrogatives

The mirative in interrogatives functions as a rhetorical question, as in the utterance below, which is from a story of a Brahmin woman who would give away her child for a pomegranate.

- (64) hi kat-o **ale-o** **le -a** chena
 what one-GEN **COP-NOM IMPF-PST** don't.know
 bfiarmi-ko dΛ
 person-PL also
 'What kind of people are they!? I really don't know.'
 (L.L.007 S)

A mirative statement of surprise and incredulity, can, by extension, have the force of a question, as in (65b) of the following exchange. In (65c), though the information is not new to the speaker, the mirative is used because the situation is one she cannot mentally integrate.

- (65) (a) hatai taowa-khanbfa taowa-aŋ celos-nfiak-iŋ
 then haystack-pillar haystack-LOC hang-front-ABL
 si-le-sa mΛn sarki-ni
 die-IMPF-INFR truly cobbler-FEM
 'Then, like that, on a haystack pillar, apparently, she hung herself and died, truly, that cobbler woman.'
 (b) mi-ja **ma-phunfi-o** **le-a** si-cΛ ale
 POSS-child **NEG-give.birth-NOM IMPF-PST** die-ATT COP
 'She just died, undelivered!?'
 (c) ā **ma-phunfi-o** **le-a**
 yes **NEG-give.birth-NOM IMPF-PST**
 'Yes, undelivered!' (R.R.006-008 S)

4.2.4 Mirativity, Tense, Mood and Aspect

Mirative constructions are generally in the realis mood, but can occur in the irrealis, to express surprise at events which are believed may occur, as in (66).

- (66) kan-ko a-si-o le-e-iŋ
 1p-PL IRR-die-NOM IMPF-IRR-1pro
 (I realise to my surprise that) 'We might die!' (S)

Unlike evidentials, which can be expressed across the full range of tense-aspect combinations (past, non-past, perfective, imperfective), the mirative is generally expressed only in the non-past-imperfective aspect (though not without exception, as will be discussed below), and has the form: Σ -o le [STEM-NOM IMPF]. The same construction in the past-

imperfective generally expresses the habitual past; as can be seen in the contrast of (67) and (68).

- (67) ban-ke **lfiet-o** **le**
 arrow-DAT **return-NOM** **IMPF**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘The mystical arrow is exorcised!’

cf.

- (68) ya ban-ke lfiet-ke par-di-s-le
 and arrow-DAT return-NOM must-LN-INTR-IMPF
 de-mo **de-o** **le-a**
 say-SEQ **say-NOM** **IMPF-PST**
 ‘Then, the mystical arrow must, supposedly, be exorcised,
 or so they used to say.’ (E.012T)

Interactions of mirativity and evidentiality with tense and aspect have been attested in other languages, among them: Sunwar, Hare (Athapaskan) and Tibetan (DeLancey 1997), and Sherpa (Woodbury 1986). Woodbury (1986: 189) has observed in Sherpa (Tibeto-Burman), that evidential categories are skewed with respect to tense: “What marks a particular category in one tense takes on a different meaning in another”; specifically, what is inferred in one tense is directly experienced in another. DeLancey (1997) has observed parallels in Sunwar, in which mirativity interacts with aspect. The same copula in different aspects has a different meaning, for example, ‘*baa* in the perfect aspect has an evidential meaning and in the imperfective aspect, as in Magar, it has a mirative meaning¹⁰ as in (69a, b).

Sunwar (DeLancey 1997:43)

- (69) (a) kyarša ‘saî-šo ‘baa-tə
 goat kill-NOM exist:3SG-PST
 ‘He was killing a goat!’ (I discovered) (mirative)

- cf. (b) kyarša ‘sad-a ‘baa-tə
 goat kill-3SG exist-3SG-PST
 ‘He killed a goat.’ (I infer) (evidential)

¹⁰ Peterson (2000: 16) notes for Nepali that when an auxiliary appears in the non-past it will have a mirative/inferential meaning, the same construction with a past auxiliary has a meaning of ‘suddenness’.

The correlation of the mirative with imperfective-non-past is a logical consequence of its semantics, as, typically, it is on-going events or their existing results that would be newly discovered and surprising. It is also to be expected that past-habitual actions will be expressed in past tense. What is not expected is that two paradigmatically related forms should be so seemingly unrelated in their meanings.

Insights into this disparity may come from Takale Kham. Watters (2002: 353) has observed that, in discourse, nominalised forms can present both background information and new, unexpected information. The nominalised forms are marked forms in the Givonian (Givon 1990) and Jakobsonian sense, i.e. they are structurally and cognitively more complex and less frequent than unmarked forms. These marked nominalisations in Kham can be accounted for in terms of ‘communicative strategies’. According to Watters:

... the speaker at the time of production has specific intentions concerning how the hearer should build a mental representation of what is being narrated. This includes instructions on how to integrate new, incoming information with what is already held in memory store—among other things whether it is part of the narrative event line or something subsidiary to it.

(Watters 2002: 350)

Watters observes that the nominalised forms are usually used to set the stage and present background information (2002: 355), as in (70a). However, in Kham narratives, these nominalised forms do not always present background information. They can also present events on the main-event-line of the story; specifically: surprising and pivotal events (70b).

Takale Kham (Watters 2002: 357)

- (70) (a) b:ah-kə tubu rã:di o-le-o di
 long.ago-LOC one widow 3S-be-NOM REP
 ‘Long ago there was a certain widow woman.’¹¹

¹¹ Morpheme glosses are not provided in the original glosses provided by David Watters (p.c.). In the gloss, CON is an abbreviation for ‘contra-expectancy particle’.

- (b) bahrlap ni borhrlap nam-kə ci o-teh-wo
 crash and bang ground-LOC CON 3S-fall-NOM
 ‘With a crash and a bang he fell to the ground.’

This unexpected function, one not coherent with the function of presenting background material, is not unlike what occurs in Magar, where the nominalised forms in the non-past have a mirative function and those in the past an habitual (background) function.

According to Watters, what links these seemingly at odds functions is ‘discontinuity’. He explains (2002: 353) that both the presentation of new information and background information are discontinuous functions. Specifically, background information is temporally discontinuous with the main-event-line, and the mirative function is discontinuous in that it presents an unexpected event, often pivotal, which breaks the continuity of the main-event-line.

In Magar, the shared nominalisation of the past habitual Σ -o *le-a* [STEM-NOM IMPF-PST] and in the mirative Σ -o *le* [STEM-NOM IMPF] can be viewed in the same way. The habitual past, in both natural discourse and narrative, is temporally discontinuous, i.e. not part of the main-story-line. It presents background or ancillary information and sets the stage by describing an event which has held in the past, at the time another event occurred, as in (71) where the boy, the dog and the frog had been living together *ŋu-o le-a* [sit-NOM IMPF-PST], when the frog escaped. The escape is on the main-story-line and not nominalised.

- (71) kat im-aŋ kat babu-ja cyu rΛ
 one house-LOC one boy-child dog and
 rokotyak **ŋu-o le-a** hose rokotyak-ke
 frog **sit-NOM IMPF-PST** D.DEM frog-DAT
 hose rokotyak-ke babu-ja-i sisi bfiitre ka-mo
 D.DEM frog-DAT boy-child-ERG bottle inside put-SEQ
 da-le-a kat-yak babu-ja rΛ cyu mis-mΛ
 keep-IMPF-PST one-day boy-child and dog sleep-NOM
 ŋu-naŋ rokotyak sisi-aŋ bahire **khyoŋi-mo nu-a**
 sit-SIM frog bottle-LOC outside **emerge-SEQ go-PST**
 ‘In a house lived a boy, a dog and a frog. The frog had been put in a bottle and was kept there. One day while the boy and the dog were sleeping, the frog emerged from inside the bottle and got away.’ (A.001-003 T)

A nominalisation in the non-past presents information which is unexpected and surprising, thus thematically discontinuous, in other words, the mirative, as in (72).

- (72) hatai rokotyak si-ca te-ca lekha
 then frog die-ATT say-ATT seem
ŋa-se-o le-aŋ ŋa-i jʌ
1PRO-sense-NOM IMPF-1PRO 1S-ERG EMPH
 ‘Then, to my surprise, I heard that the frog was as if dead, I heard it was so!’ (G.G.022 S)

By viewing the Magar data from Watters’ perspective of discontinuity, the two functions of the nominalised form in Magar can be reconciled. This perspective has explanatory power for the use of these nominalised constructions in natural discourse, and even more so in Magar narratives, where, as we shall see, the separate semantic distributions of past/habitual and non-past/mirative are blurred.

4.2.5 Mirativity and Narrative

In Magar narratives, the possibility of expressing discontinuity via nominalisations can be exploited by a narrator to signal that the event, or information, is marked as either temporally discontinuous, (background and/or ancillary), or it is thematically discontinuous, (unexpected and surprising). The story-teller can manipulate these nominalisations for stylistic and rhetorical effect in order to lend immediacy to the story. Magar narratives are generally set in the past, often having interjections of direct speech in the non-past. A character who is reacting in surprise to new and unintegrated information can speak ‘in the mirative’, as in (73):

- (73) kan-ko rʌ katha ma-punfi-ke pa-ca le-a tʌrʌ
 2P-PL and with NEG-fight-NOM try-ATT IMPF-PST but
 naŋ-o phauji rak-dekiŋ kan-ko rʌ kathai
 2S-GEN troop bring-from 2P-PL and with
 punfi-rafi-ak **le-o le**
 fight-come-CAUS **COP-NOM IMPF**
 ‘We did not try to fight with you, but after you brought your troops, to our surprise, we also had to come and fight.’ (DD. 052 S)

The mirative can also be used in third person by the narrator to express an unexpected realisation on the part of a character, as in (74) and (75).

- (74) hatai aŋ-dekiŋ hatai uruwa-i uruwa-o im-aŋ
 then go-after then owl-ERG owl-GEN house-LOC
 alfi-dekiŋ ku-laŋ da-le-sa te-aŋaŋ
 carry-after where-LOC put-IMPf-INFR say-COND
 uruwa-ko bhitre-iŋ mu-ke **ale-o le**
 owl-PL inside-LOC sit-NOM **COP-NOM IMPF**
 ‘Then, the owl, after going and carrying (the crow) to the owl’s nest, evidently, he put him there. What did (the crow) realise to his surprise? That the owls were inside.’ (DD.056 S)

- (75) ha dɦaliŋ ja jat-le-sa abo hos
 EXCLM many EMPH do-IMPf-INFR now D.DEM
 kauwa-i hi **soch-di-o le** te-aŋaŋ
 crow-ERG what **think-LN-NOM IMPF** say-COND
 ho-dik jat-pyak uruwa-ko-ke thaha ma-ale
 D.DEM-QUANT do-after owl-PL-DAT awareness NEG-COP
 ‘Hah! after having done that much, apparently, what did the crow realise to his surprise? That after doing so much the owls did not notice.’ (DD.063 S)

The mirative can be used in an authorial comment by a narrator who may interject her or his own voice to register (feigned) surprise at the actions of a character or event, as in (76).

- (76) kauwa-ke da-le-sa i-laŋ dɦoka-tuŋ
 crow-DAT put-IMPf-INFR P.DEM-LOC door-SUP
 hos maŋ kauwa-o da mantri ale-a maŋ
 D.DEM truly crow-GEN also minister COP-PST truly
ale-o le kauwa-ke dɦoka-tuŋ da-le-sa
COP-NOM IMPF crow-DAT door-SUP put-IMPf-INFR
 ‘The crow was apparently put there on the (owl’s) doorstep, truly, he, the minister of the crows was (put there), truly. Surprisingly, this crow was put on the doorstep.’ (DD.057 S)

In narratives, as in conversational discourse, a nominalisation in the past tense can present background information, as for example in (71) above. It can also present an iterative in the past, as in (77). It can

provide ancillary information, as in (78), in which a story is being told of a young girl who must marry a frog and the narrator digresses to talk about what the girl might have eaten as a frog-wife.

- (77) hatai rΛ hos aŋ-o le-a ban-aŋ
 then and D.DEM go-NOM IMPF-PST forest-LOC
 aŋ-o le-a ittar-o siŋ-ko rak-o
 go-NOM IMPF-PST few-NOM branch-PL bring-NOM
 le-a me-ŋer-aŋ hatai rΛ dŋoka-tuŋ
 IMPF-PST POSS-mouth-LOC then and door-SUP
 da-rafi-o le-a
 put-come-NOM IMPF-PST
 ‘There upon he would go into the jungle, he would go and bring a
 few twigs in his mouth and then he would come and put them at
 the door.’ (DD.059 S)
- (78) bfiarama bfieret-rafi-cΛ churu a-ale-e jauli-cho
 offering sprinkle-come-ATT rice IRR-COP-IRR gruel-rice
 jauli-cho jya-ke yaŋi-o le-a ta
 gruel-rice eat-NOM give-NOM IMPF-PST REP
 ‘They say, it might have been the offerings scattered (to the water
 god) that (the frog) would give to her to eat.’ (G.G 018 S)

In narrative, the tense distinctions which are observed in discourse can be blurred and, as in Kham, nominalised verbs in the past tense (the form usually reserved for habitual/background information) can introduce pivotal and unexpected events on the story-line. This occurs when a story is recounted in the past by a distal narrator (i.e. not in the direct speech of a character) and expresses, not background information, but new and surprising information, as in (79) and (80).

- (79) hatai rokotyak kathai mu-o le-a ta
 then frog with sit-NOM IMPF-PST REP
 ‘They say that (the girl), surprisingly, went to live with the frog.’
 (G.G017 S)
- (80) hatai im-aŋ rafi-o le-a ta
 then house-LOC come-NOM IMPF-PST REP
 ‘Then, they say, the girl, just, unexpectedly, went back home.’
 (G.G.024 S)

5. MIRATIVITY AND EVIDENTIALITY

Mirativity, as observed by Aikhenvald (2004: 195-209), can be an extension of an evidential system. Heine and Kuteva (2001: 213) note that evidentials can develop out of miratives, as for example occurs in Korean, where *-kun*, a mirative suffix, developed into an inferential evidential. In Sunwar, *baak*, the mirative existential copula, has developed inferential/hearsay meaning. Nevertheless, as DeLancey (2001) has demonstrated, mirativity can be an independent grammatical and semantic category distinct from evidentiality.

In Magar, the inferential, the reportative and the mirative contrast in meaning as in:

- (81) (a) kumari bñim-o im-aŋ **mu-o** **le**
 Kumari Bhim-GEN house-LOC **sit-NOM** **IMPF**
 (I realised to my surprise that) ‘Kumari lives at
 Bñim’s house.’
- cf. (b) kumari bñim-o im-aŋ **mu-mΛ** **le-sa**
 Kumari Bhim-GEN house-LOC **sit-NOM** **IMPF-INFR**
 ‘Apparently, Kumari lives at Bñim’s house.’
- cf. (c) kumari bñim-o im-aŋ **mu-mΛ** **le** **ta**
 Kumari Bhim-GEN house-LOC **sit-NOM** **IMPF** **REP**
 ‘They say that Kumari is lives at Bñim’s house.’

Moreover, because their senses are different, evidentials and the mirative can combine and add a new dimension of meaning when they do so. As already demonstrated, the mirative can be a response to direct experience; it can also be induced by inference, for example, surprised to find no one home, the speaker says:

- (82) hose-ko-ko **das-o** **le-sa**
 D.DEM-HON-PL **leave-NOM** **IMPF-INFR**
 ‘(I realise to my surprise that) ‘Apparently, they left.’

In (83) the speaker has seen evidence in the form of footprints of a tiger, infers that the animal has been there, and is surprised by this revelation.

- (83) ranghu **le-o** **le-sa**
 tiger **COP-NOM** **IMPF-INFR**
 (I realise to my surprise that) ‘Apparently, the tiger has been here.’ (N.32S)

The mirative can also combine with the reportative, as in (84), where the speaker finds what she reports unexpected.

- (84) hatai jogi-e jʌ men-o mi-ja jʌ
 then yogi-ERG EMPH 3-GEN POSS-child EMPH
 nunfi-o le-a ta
 take-NOM IMPF-PAST REP
 ‘Then, they say, indeed, the yogi (surprisingly) took her own child from her!’ (L.L005 S)

All three—the mirative, the inferential and the reportative—may combine, as in (85).

- (85) cituwa-i rha-o mi-hyu jya-le-sa
 leopard-ERG goat-GEN POSS-blood eat-IMPF-INFR
 sya das-o le-sa ta
 flesh leave-NOM IMPF-INFR REP
 ‘They say that the leopard has apparently eaten [sic] the goat’s blood, but, surprisingly, it has apparently left the meat.’ (N.51)

Aikhenvald (2004) has observed that, cross-linguistically, evidentials and mirative systems are formally heterogeneous, an observation with which Magar complies. The evidentials of Magar comprise a suffix within the verb complex, *sa*, and a clause final particle, *ta*. The mirative is a nominalised verb construction. The mirative and the evidentials in Magar, though they may be conceptually related, are distinct in meaning and form. Furthermore, the mirative and evidentials can combine, underscoring their discrete status. The mirative and evidentials also have different distributions: the mirative is restricted to imperfect-non-past and is in a paradigmatic relationship to the past-habitual aspect, whereas the evidentials are not restricted. The independent systems are diagrammed in Figure 1.

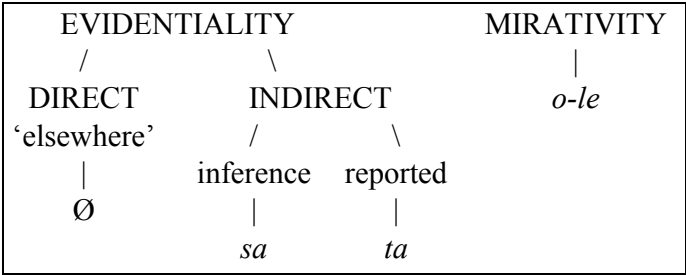


Figure 1. Magar Evidential and Mirative systems

6. POSSIBLE DIACHRONIC SOURCES OF EVIDENTIALS AND MIRATIVES IN MAGAR

In this section, I will venture some preliminary observations as to the origins of evidentials and the mirative in Magar. I will look briefly at both the external pressures of language contact from which the evidentials and mirative may result and the internal processes of grammaticalisation.

Inferentials and miratives are both are highly diffusible (Aikhenvald 2004: 296). Languages of the Himalayas demonstrate a proclivity which supports this observation. Evidentials and/or miratives are found in: Sherpa (Givon 1982; Woodbury 1986), Chepang (Caughley 1982), Newari (Hargreaves 1991), Akha (Egerod 1985; Thurgood 1986), Tibetan (DeLancey 1986, 1997, 2001; Sun 1993; Hongladarom 1993; Haller 2000; Huber 2000), Sunwar (DeLancey 1997), Ladhaki (Bhat 1999), Kinnauri (Saxena 2000), Kham (Watters 2002), Dulong-Rawang (LaPolla and Poa 2001) and Qiang (LaPolla 2003). Evidentiality is marked, as well, in Nepali (Michailovsky 1996; Peterson 2000). Given the ease with which miratives and evidentials diffuse, areally, the stage is set for their development.

I propose that Magar has developed evidentials and miratives following well documented pathways. Willet (1988: 79-84), Aikhenvald (2004: 271-275) and Heine and Kuteva (2001: 267) have observed that grammaticalised verbs, specifically verbs of speech and perception, are a common source for evidentials. The development of reportative and quotative markers out of the verb ‘say’ is a widespread process in

Tibeto-Burman languages¹². In Magar, the verb ‘say’ is transparently the source for the quotative and it may also be the source for the reportative. In Syangja dialect, a de-voiced variant of *de*, namely *te*, is used, as in (86).

- (86) Bfim langha-aŋ raf-ke **te-a**
 Bfim village-LOC come-NOM **say-PST**
 ‘Bfim said he is coming to the village.’

The reduction of *te* or *te-a* [say-PST] to *ta* is phonologically plausible. More support for this position comes from Takale Kham, which has likely borrowed the Magar verb ‘say’ as its reportative (Watters 2002: 296-300 n.2). Thus, it is probable that the reportative *ta* in Magar is also a grammaticalisation of the full verb *de*.

Verbs of general perception can develop into inferentials (Aikhenvald 2004: 273-74). In Magar, the inferential *sa* may be a grammaticalisation of the verb *se* meaning ‘sense’ and encompassing the meanings ‘hear’ (87) and ‘feel’ (88).

- (87) kan-uŋ gau-uŋ ghar-aŋ pahila pahila cahine
 2P-GEN village-GEN home-LOC first first well
 hoŋspital ya daktor de-cyo calan na
 hospital or doctor say-ATT tradition EMPH
 ma-se-mo-a ma-dhaŋ-mo-a
 NEG-sense-SEQ-PST NEG-see-SEQ-PST
 ‘In our villages, long before, well, such a tradition of hospitals
 and doctors neither having been heard of nor seen.....’ (E.003T)
- (88) ga-ga se-le
 drink-drink sense-IMPF
 ‘I feel thirsty.’

The pathway by which full lexical verbs of perception or speech become grammaticalised into evidential particles involves the reanalysis and reduction of a bi-clausal construction (matrix and complement) into a single clause. The subordinate clause de-subordinates and the verb of

¹² This has been observed by Saxena (1988, 1995) for a sample of South-Asian languages, and by Tournadre (1994: 152) for Tibetan, by Thurgood (1986) for Akha, and by Sun (1993) for Amdo-Tibetan.

the matrix clause (in these cases *de* and *se*) is reinterpreted as an evidential, either clause-finally or as part of the verb phrase.

The mirative construction is nominalised, and also likely a reduction of a bi-clausal construction. Nominalisers often function as markers of complement clauses. Thus, the Magar nominalised mirative may be a de-subordinated complement clause. The matrix clause ‘I am surprised that...’, would in most cases have been retrievable from the context and via intonation or other para-linguistic cues; thus, this clause was rendered irrelevant and disappeared, leaving only the nominalised verb of the complement clause as the mirative.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The evidential and mirative systems in Magar are independent of each other and of the epistemic system. The evidentials encode indirect information-source, be it reported or inferred, and are neutral with respect to the truth value or reliability of the information in the utterance. The mirative encodes surprise at new and unassimilated information and is also independent of truth value. Evidence for the independence of the systems comes from their combinatory possibilities with epistemic particles and with each other. When combined, each morpheme contributes an additional and autonomous level of meaning. The two evidentials—the inferential and the reportative—and the mirative are also formally different from one another. In all of these respects the Magar data supports Aikhenvald’s and DeLancey’s analyses that mirativity and evidentiality are independent grammatical categories. In addition, with respect to the development of these grammatical categories, Magar appears to have followed expected pathways of grammaticalisation.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABL	ablative	LN	loan word
ADS	adessive	NEG	negative
ATT	attributive	NOM	nominaliser
CAUS	causative	ONO	onomatopoeia
CIR	circumulative	P.DEM	proximal demonstrative
COP	copula	PART	particle
D.DEM	distal demonstrative	PL	plural
DAT	dative	POSS	inherent possession
EMPH	emphatic marker	PST	past
ERG	ergative	R.DEM	remote demonstrative
EXLM	exclamation	REP	reportative/hearsay
GEN	genitive	SEQ	sequential converb
HON	honorific	SIM	simultaneous converb
IMP	imperative	SUP	superessive
IMPF	imperfective	1PRO	first person pronominal
INDEF	indefinite	2PRO	second person pronominal
INFR	inferential	1S	first person singular
INTR	intransitive	2S	second person singular
LOC	locative	3S	third person singular

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