SENTENCE ADVERBIALS AND EVIDENTIALITY

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Abstract
The paper deals with expressions of evidence (originating in perception, inference or reported information) and their role in sentence/utterance pragmatic modification. It concentrates on the role of the so-called sentence adverbials, showing them as scoping / focussing elements the main function of which is a/ to mark focus of an utterance b/ to support speaker´s reasoning. Formal properties of evidential expressions are dissimlar to that point that they cannot be comprised into a unified category.

Keywords: evidentiality, semantics, pragmatics, Chech

1. Introduction

The goal of this paper is to explore the role of sentence adverbials within the realm of evidential meanings. The language in question is Czech, nevertheless, extensions to other European languages will appear, too. The paper is anchored in the semantic-pragmatic interface.

Main topics to be discussed are the following: a/ The links of sentence adverbials and evidentiality; b/ Functions of sentence adverbials with evidential meanings; c/ Status of evidentiality in a Slavic language like Czech.

2. Sentence adverbials and evidentiality

As sentence adverbials, mostly two groups of expressions are presented: (a) *určitě/certainly*, *upřímně frankly*, *překvapivě/ surprisingly*, *k mému překvapení/ to my surprise*, *pravděpodobně/ probably*, *předpokládatelně/ presumably*, *podle mě, podle mého/ in my opinion, viditelně visibly, vážně seriously* etc.; (b) *jen, pouze/ only, také/ also, ještě/ still/yet/in addition to/further, již/už /already/yet/as early as.* Group (a) includes expressions exhibiting full lexical semantics, many of which are derived from verbs (deverbal adjectives) and have a form of (morphological) adverbs. Their most prominent features: Their semantics can be related to the whole sentence (they are not mere adjuncts within a VP) and, they are paraphrasable (and logically representable) by predicates. In Czech, though, many of them, e.g. *vážně (seriously), nepochybně (undoubtedly), určitě (certainly), logicky (logically)* are homonymous with "real" (qualitative) adverbs modifying only predicate; the difference of their functions can be

recognized on the basis of functional sentence perspective: In a sentence *Celý večer mluvil vážně* 'The whole evening he talked seriously', *vážně* (seriously) is a verb modifier, because it is the focus/rheme of the sentence, while in *Vážně mluvil celý večer* 'Seriously, he talked/kept talking the whole evening' *vážně* is a sentence adverbial modifying (in the epistemic sense) the whole sentence, paraphrasable as "I say seriously/I mean that ..."). Expressions in the group (b) do not exhibit full lexical semantics, they cannot be paraphrased by predicates (and, in Czech grammars, they are classified as particles, so basically they will not be dealt with in this paper). The scope of b/group expressions is related to a part of a sentence, i.e. they work as focussing expressions / rhematizers: *Jenom Karel udělal tu zkoušku* '(It was) only Karel (who) passed the exam' – *Karel udělal jenom tu zkoušku* 'Karel passed only the exam'. On the other hand, as we will see, the function of a rhematizer can be seen also at some of the expressions of the group (a).

3. Evidentiality in its own sense

As for evidentiality, it is mostly defined as marking one´s information source, indicating the way in which an information conveyed by a predicate was acquired. In about a quarter of world´s languages indicative verbal forms include a morpheme telling (in addition to other grammatical meaning/s) the "evidence" (specificating it as a result of a direct perception, speaker´s assumption, hearsay etc.). Forms of indicative mood simultaneously express one´s information source, i.e. they express evidence for speaker´s assertion. Since some kind of means expressing an evidence is always a part of the indicative form, in the languages exihibiting this feature such a specification can be considered a grammatical category called "evidentiality". For example, in Tariana, an Arawac language (northwest Amazonia), the sentence *José played football* can occur in the following forms:

(1)
Juse irida di- manika-ka
José football 3sg - play- Rec.P. VIS
-ka = recent past + visual evidence
"José played football (we saw it)"

(2)
Juse irida di-manika-mahka
José football 3sg - play Rec.P. NONVIS
-mahka = recent past + non-visual (hearing) evidence
"José played football (we heard it)"

The same sentence can occur in three more variations expressing inference/deduction, assumption and hearsay (cf. A.Y. Aikhenvald 2004:2-3). Not all the languages with evidentiality as a grammar category express all the mentioned meanings, some languages differentiate between one (any kind of) evidential and no evidence, or visual evidence vs. no evidence at all, visual vs. all the others vs. reported, firsthand or reported etc.

Some languages use more terms naming evidence, e.g. "verificational" or "validational" information. (The presence of an evidence in a sentence is not connected with its truth-value.) Also, in languages with evidentiality as a grammar category, sentences like *vidím/viděl jsem; je/bylo vidět, že ...; slyším/slyšel jsem; bylo cítit, že ...* ('I can see/ I have seen; It is / was visible that ...; I can hear / I have heard; I could smell that ...') can occur. In Aikhenvald´s book, similar sentences are described as "lexical reinforcement", paraphrases or metalinguistic expressions of evidentiality (p. 339-343).

3. Expressing evidentiality in European languages

In most European languages (incl. Czech), evidential meanings are expressed by lexical items, specifically by (deverbative) adverbs *viditelně/visibly, slyšitelně/audibly, zdánlivě/apparently, údajně/allegedly*; related adjectives (from which the adverbs are derived) *viditelný/ visible*, *slyšitelný/ audible*, *zdánlivý* /apparent; adverbial case forms *podle BBC/according to BBC, podle předpovědi/according to the forecast*; particles *prý/"reportedly"*, verbs *zdá se/it seems, vypadá to/it looks, jeví se/it appears*); syntactic constructions, mostly matrix sentences with verbs of perception and cognition – *vidím /viděl jsem – I have seen, slyším – I have heard, soudím – I believe/think, domnívám se, že – I assume, that ...* etc. (Cf. also Polish *podobno* 'apparently', *rzekomo* 'allegedly', *widać* 'it can be seen/visibly', *mojim zdaniem* 'in my opinion'; Russian *očevidno* 'visibly', *jakoby* 'as if/allegedly', *kažetsja* 'it seems/seemingly'; English *visibly*, *reportedly*, *apparently*, *allegedly*, *supposedly*. All the means of expression conveying evidences are sometimes considered one group called evidential markers. Whether or not such a claim is legitimate will be questioned in the following parts of this paper.

4. Evidentiality and epistemic modality

Expressing evidentiality is not identical with epistemic modality. Evidential meanings specify the source, the knowledge of which authorizes the speaker to assert something, gives the speaker grounding to present an information while epistemic modality expresses evaluation, (momentary, subjective) conviction, belief of the speaker towards the truthfulness of his/her assertion. Even though these two fields are close and sometimes are not strictly differentiated, they cannot be considered identical. In Palmer (1986), both subjective evaluation of the sentence proposition (judgements) and stating the evidences (prominently hearsay) are subsumed in the realm of epistemic modality because they both include speaker´s commitment towards the status of the sentence proposition (cf. Palmer 1986: 51-76). In Simon Dik´s Theory of Functional Grammar, evidential meanings are treated as "modalities", (Dik 1997/1: 242, 296) as long as they are expressed by grammatical means. When expressed by lexical means, they are rated among "attitudinal satellites" (1997/1: 297). However, in the speech of native speakers, these two domains overlap and, many of the expressions pertaining both to evidentials and to epistemic modality can be considered ambiguous (modal verbs *muset*, *moci*, *mít*) and often reading either the evidential or the modal meaning is only context-bound. For instance, the sentence with Czech verb *mít* (have/presume, Germ. sollen)

(3)
Minulý čtvrtek měl navštívit N. v jeho kanceláři
Last Thursday he ("měl" – 3Sg Preterite) *visited N. in his office.*

can have the following readings depending on the context of an utterance:

a/ "he was told/asked to visit N. ...", i.e. with the verb *mít* expressing deontic meaning;
b/ "he may have visited N. ...", where *mít* expresses epistemic meaning ("I do not know for sure");
c/ "he allegedly/reportedly visited N. ...", i.e. hearsay (reported information as a source).

4.1. Lexical variations and evidence

The lexical expressions with the evidential meaning can cover all the semantic variations of "evidence":

1. Direct evidence – a/ visual evidence

Byl očividně / viditelně / zjevně vyčerpaný.
he was visibly exhausted
Ta nabídka ho viditelně zaskočila
he was visibly abashed by the suggestion

b/ non-visual evidence
sensoric evidence
Civilizaci nám zde slyšitelně připomínají vlaky na blízké trati.
we are audibly reminded of the civilization by the close railroad
Všechny ty cetky hmatatelně ilustrují vkus majitelů.
all the tinsels palpably illustrate their owners´ taste
Zítra se citelně ochladí.
tomorrow the weather will get noticeably /appreciably colder

internal evidence
Cítím / jsem si jist, že ... I can feel that / I am sure that

2. Non-direct evidence - a/ assumptions

Pravděpodobně / předstíraně / ostentativně se nudí /nudil/bavil.
he is/was presumably/professedly/ostensibly bored/amused

b/ deductions/inference
Nesporně / nutně / logicky / očekávatelně / nevyhnutelně / předpokládatelně to budí / budilo / rozruch.
the issue undoubtedly/necessarilly/logically/expectedly/inevitably /assumably

is/will be a source of excitement

c/ reported information

hearsay *Prý / údajně /chce kandidovat do senátu* (the source is anonymous)
reportedly / allegedly he wants to run for the Senate

quotative *Podle televizních zpráv chce kandidovat do senátu* (the source is actual)
according to TV news he wants to run for the Senate

Also, it is possible to simplify the overview of above mentioned meanings into three groups: experiential evidences (all the direct evidences), inferential evidences and hearsay evidences (Dik 1997/1: 296-297).

4.2. Evidential information in Chech

Most frequent Czech reported information expression, particle *prý/allegedly, reportedly* can be combined with all other lexical "evidentials" (except for itself):

(4)

a. *Byl prý viditelně vyčerpaný/He was allegedly visibly exhausted;*

b. *Mlha prý hmatatelně zhoustla/Allegedly, the fog got palpably denser;*

c. *Prý se pravděpodobně nudil/Reportedly, he was presumably bored;*

d. *Prý to logicky odmítl vysvětlit / Reportedly, he logically refused to explain it;*

e. *Prý údajně chce kandidovat do senátu /Reportedly allegedly he wants to run for the Senate;*

f. *Podle televizních zpráv prý chce kandidovat do senátu/ According to TV news he reportedly wants to run for the Senate.*

As for the last two sentences, while the combination *prý údajně/údajně prý* (Czech National Corpus shows both cases of such word order) can be seen as an example of a careless/inattentive formulation, each of the combinations *podle X.Y prý/prý podle X.Y.* ('according to X.Y. allegedly/allegedly according to X.Y.') can convey different meaning:

(4f) *Podle televize prý chce kandidovat do senátu* = 'the TV says that someone else says that ...',

but

(5) *Prý podle televize chce kandidovat do senátu* = 'Someone says that the TV says that ...'

i.e. it can mark the difference between the anonymous and actual source of the information.

4.3. Adverbial "markers"

The adverbs of the type *viditelně, slyšitelně* (perceptual evidence)*, údajně ,* particle *prý* (hearsay) and adverbial case forms can function as "markers". They are not parts of a sentence proposition and work as sentence adverbials/rhematizers/modifiers, i. e. scoping expressions - what is in their scope is the focus/rheme of an utterance (in other words, the speaker positiones them in front of what he presents as a focus/rheme):

(6)

(Eva´s hands were visibly shaky)	(Eva´s hands were reportedly shaky)
a/*Evě se viditelně třásly ruce*	a/ *Evě se prý třásly ruce*
b/ *Ruce se Evě viditelně třásly*	b/ *Ruce se Evě prý třásly*
c/ *Ruce se třásly viditelně Evě*	c/ *Ruce se třásly prý Evě*
d/ *Evě se třásly viditelně ruce*	d/ *Evě se třásly prý ruce*

In sentences like (a) to (d), the adverb's scope is not the whole sentence but they still can be paraphrased by a predicate ("It was visible, that...", "I have heard that ...").The crucial property enabling this group of evidential expressions to work this way is both their form making them an independent (not inflected, incongruent), therefore movable element and their meaning giving the speaker a chance to select a word in a sentence which is presented as a focusized (by being the evidence) constituent. Assumptive, inferential and reportive evidentials work in the same way if their form is the one of an adverb or an adverbial case form (with a preposition):

Assumptives: 'Yesterday, Jan got probably/undoubtedly drunk.'

a/ *Jan se včera pravděpodobně /nepochybně opil.*

b/ *Jan se opil pravděpodobně/nepochybně včera.*

c/ *Včera se opil pravděpodobně/nepochybně Jan.*

Inferentials: 'Yesterday, Jan got necessarily/logically drunk.'

a/*Jan se včera nutně/logicky opil.*

b/ *Jan se opil nutně/logicky včera.*

c/ *Včera se opil nutně/logicky Jan.*

Hearsay – quotative: 'According to Frank, Jan got drunk yesterday.'

a/ *Podle Franka se Jan včera prý opil.*

b/ *Jan se opil podle Franka včera.*

c/*Včera se opil podle Franka Jan*.

4.4. Evidentials – variety in form and function

Evidentials with different form function in a different way even though their meaning is identical. In sentences

(7)

a) *Vidím/viděl jsem; Je/bylo vidět, že ...*'I (can) see/ I have seen ... /It is/it was visible that ...'; S*lyším/slyšel jsem, že ...* 'I (can) hear / I have heard...' ;

b) *Cítím, že ... ; Je/bylo cítit, že ..* 'I can feel that .../ It is/was perceptible that ...';

c) *Zdá se/vypadá to/soudím, že je Pavel unavený* – 'It seems/looks/I think that Paul is tired'; *Pavel se zdá unavený* – 'Paul seems to be tired';

the evidential element is a proposition predicate so the "evidence" is expressed by a sentence description of a situation. The adjectives related to verbs (and adverbs) conveying evidential meaning also become a part of the sentence proposition . They can occur both in the predicate (as a copula complement) or in an attributive position:

(8)

a) *Rozdíl mezi nimi je viditelný/slyšitelný* - 'The difference between them is visible/audible'

b) *Jeho viditelná/slyšitelná nervozita_všechny rušila* - 'His visible /audible nervousness disturbed everybody.'

5. Evidentials in argumentation and reasoning

As we have just seen, an evidential element with identical meaning (e.g., visual evidence) can be found in three (or four) different syntactic constructions. Examples (9a1) and (9a2) show an evidential as a scoping/focussing sentence adverb, (9b) presents a related verb in a matrix sentence and (9c) a deverbal adjective as a copula complement:

(9)

(a1) *(Nevěřím mu,) on viditelně lže* - 'I do not trust him, he is visibly lying';

(a2) (*Nevěřím mu), lže viditelně on* – 'I do not trust him, it is visibly he who is lying';

(b) *(Nevěřím mu,) vidím/je vidět, že lže* - 'I do not trust him, I can see / it is visible that he is lying';

(c) *(Nevěřím mu,) to jeho lhaní je viditelné* - 'I do not trust him, that lying of his is visible'.

It cannot be maintained that the style value of the sentences (a) to (c) is the same (e.g., adverbs of the type *viditelně, slyšitelně* are not very frequent in colloquial Czech, on the other hand, they are abundant in journalistic texts); what is the same, though, is the nature of the evidence presented. In this viewpoint, (a) to (c) can be considered pragmatic equivalents. In all the examples, the sentence containing the evidential element can serve as a substantiation / explanation for any sentence preceding or following it – *Nevěřím mu, protože viditelně lže – On viditelně lže, proto mu nevěřím* ('I do not trust him, because he is visibly lying – He is visibly lying, therefore I do not trust him'). In this viewpoint, presenting both direct and indirect evidence in one's statement /assertion can be compared to an element called 'warrant'– an integral part of the layout of an argument (cf. Toulmin 1958: 94-113):

D (datum)		C (claim)
I do not trust him		*He is a liar*
	"since"	
	W (warrant)	
	I can see it	
	It is visible	

Even though in Toulmin's treatise the "warrant" is a logical conjunction (represented as "*since*" subsuming an untold fact (proposition) in reasoning using evidentials it is exactly the evidential element implying the "*since*". The presence of an evidential element (the form of which is not the prominent factor) in one's speech is a part of reasoning, it supports the credibility and plausibility of the utterance.

6. Conclusions

As for the nature and status of evidential expressions we dare to conclude with the following remarks: In languages **not** expressing evidence as a grameme, the embodiment of this semantic element can occur in almost any sentence position. Expressing evidences overlap with expressing other speaker's attitudes towards the utterance content, i.e. with pragmatic modifications, or with expressing **communicative strategies** like reasoning or explanation, i.e. with the so-called **subsidiary illocutions**.

Formal properties of these modifications are dissimlar to that point that "evidentiality expressions" cannot be comprised into a unified category. What seems most adequate in

languages like Czech is to account for evidential meanings as a part multilayered semantic–pragmatic domain, merging with other pragmatic modifications of a sentence.

Put the very essence in the end crudely: lexical expressing of evidences overlaps with expressing other speaker's attitudes towards the utterance content, i.e. with pragmatic modifications. It is also close to communicative strategies describable as arguing, reasoning and explanation, which belong to the pragmatic dimension of a language entirely. In other words, if not being a grameme, evidentiality is one of the fuzzy pragmatic concepts, not a category.

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