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Dissertation Proposal Abstract

### Evidentiality in Uzbek and Kazakh

Evidentiality is generally defined as the linguistic encoding of information source. Although information source may be expressed in any language, it has been claimed that approximately one-quarter of the world's languages possess a *grammatical* means of encoding evidentiality (Aikhenvald 2004:1). Much like other grammatical categories (GENDER, NUMBER ASPECT, TENSE), languages vary with regard to whether the speaker's source of information is obligatorily encoded and in how many different ways a particular language expresses this kind of information. Also like other grammatical categories, evidentiality interacts with other verbal categories, particularly STATUS/MODALITY, MOOD, TENSE, and ASPECT. The Turkic languages, and those which have grammaticalized evidentiality as a result of contact with the Turkic languages, possess rather unusual means of encoding evidentiality (c.f. Friedman 1981). Rather than having morphemes exclusively devoted to expressing evidentiality, these languages express evidentiality either through a speaker's commitment or non-commitment to confirmation (in which case evidentiality is merely a highly salient contextual meaning) or through more complex pluperfect-like constructions. Based on current descriptions of Uzbek and Kazakh, it is expected that they, too, will behave in certain respects like Turkish and other genetically or areally related languages.

This primary purpose of this study, then, is to analyze the use of evidentiality within the verbal systems of Uzbek and Kazakh, two Turkic languages spoken in Central Asia. Aside from a few mentions in grammars and typological works, evidentiality in these languages has never been fully examined. The bulk of the research to be undertaken will be concerned with describing the functions and uses of evidentiality in Uzbek and Kazakh. The results of this research will be placed within larger contexts: genetic (in comparison with other Turkic languages) and areal (in comparison with other languages of Central Asia). Further statements about the nature of evidentiality as a verbal category and its relationship to modality will follow.

### References

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2004. *Evidentiality*. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- Friedman, Victor. 1981. Admirativity and Confirmativity. *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 17.1: 12-28.