Studies in Evidentiality

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Evidentiality in Qiang*

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1. Introduction

The Qiang language is spoken by about 70,000 (out of 200,000) Qiang people, plus 50,000 people classified as Tibetan by the Chinese government. Most Qiang speakers live in Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture on the eastern edge of the Tibetan plateau in the mountainous northwest part of Sichuan Province, China.[2] The Qiang language is a member of the Qiangic branch of the Tibeto-Burman family of the Sino-Tibetan stock. Within Tibeto-Burman, a number of languages show evidence of evidential systems,[3] but these systems cannot be reconstructed to any great time depth. The data used in this chapter is from Ronghong Village, Chibusu District, Mao County in Aba Prefecture.

Qiang is a verb-final language, with complex agglutinative morphology on the verb, including direction marking prefixes, negation marking prefixes, aspect marking prefixes and suffixes, person marking suffixes, and evidential marking suffixes. There is no tense marking, only perfective, experiential ('already'), continuative ('yet, still'), change of state, and prospective aspect marking. The full set of prefix and suffix types and their positions is given in Diagram 1 (not all of these affixes can occur together), and a few examples are given in (1)–(4) (see LaPolla in press, LaPolla to appear, for other aspects of Qiang grammar).

(1) *qa tsə   tu-χsu-ʐ-ja.*   (< *ji-a*)[4]
     1SG water OR-boil-CAUS-CSM+1SG
     'I brought the water to a boil.'

(2) *tə-wa-jə-ji-ji   jə.*
     OR-big-RA-CSM-2PL say
     'He said you(pl) have gotten big again.'

(3) *pana-lc ha-χà-k-an.*
thing-DEF OR-broken-INFR-2SG
'It seems you broke the thing.' (inference from seeing the broken pieces in the person's hands)

(4) *xsa me'ẓa-la-m i-pa-l-ja-k-ui.*[5]
again look.for-come-NMLZ OR-arrive-come-RA-INFR-HS
'Again someone came looking (for him).' (lit. 'One who was looking for him came again, it is said.') (from a traditional story)

Diagram 1. The structure of the Qiang verb complex

prefixes	1. intensifying adverb
	2. direction/orientation prefix or 3rd person indirect directive marking prefix (or the two combined as one syllable)
	3. simple negation /ma-/ or prohibitive /tca-/ prefix
	4. continuative aspect marking prefix /tci-/
	VERB ROOT
suffixes	5. causative marking suffix /-ʐ/
	6. prospective aspect marking suffix /-a:/
	7. auxiliary directional verb /ka/ 'go' or /la/ 'come'
	8. repetition marking suffix /-ja/
	9. change of state /-ji/ aspect marking suffix
	10. 1st or 2nd person indirect directive marking suffix
	11. inferential evidential and mirative marking suffix /-k/
	12. visual evidential marking suffix /-u/
	13. non-actor person marking
	14. actor person marking (1sg /-a/, 2sg /-n/, 1pl /-ə'/, 2pl /-i/, 3pl /-tci/)
	15. hearsay evidential marking /-i/

2. Organization of the system

The evidential system in Qiang basically has three terms, visual, inferred/mirative, and reported marking (the B1 type discussed in Chapter 1), but it does not necessarily involve marking of the evidential category on all clauses, and there are complications related to verb types and combinations of forms. The inferential can appear together with the hearsay or visual marker, therefore it may be seen as two systems rather than three paradigmatically related items in one system. The actor person marking, when used without the inferential/mirative marker, also is involved in expressing an evidential meaning, in that it implies direct observation, and cannot be used with the hearsay marker.

In general, an unmarked clause is assumed to represent knowledge that the speaker is sure of, most probably, but not necessarily, from having seen the situation or event first-hand, and so, for witnessed events, the evidential marking is not obligatory, as in (1) and (2). If the overt visual marker, [-u ~ -wu] is used (see (5a) below), then the source is definitely visual. This marker is actually rarely used, and is difficult to elicit from linguistically naive speakers. It is used only when the actor of the clause is animate, and usually only when it is necessary to emphasize that the speaker actually saw the other person(s) carry out the action. This form is used together with the actor person marking suffixes, but use of the person marking suffixes alone can also imply visual observation, as in (5b).

(5) a. *the: zdẓyta: ha-qa-(w)u.*
3SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-VIS
'He went to Chengdu.' (used in a situation where the speaker saw the person leave and that person has not yet returned)

b. *ʔü tccχun tu-pu-ji-n.*
2SG marry OR-do-CSM-2SG
'You got married.' (I saw you get married)

If the speaker is not completely sure of the information being presented in the utterance, which generally means s/he did not witness it, then one of the non-visual markers is obligatory. In reporting second-hand or third-hand knowledge of some situation or event the speaker is unsure of, the hearsay marking suffix /-i/ is used after the verb. Only one token of the hearsay marker is used in a clause; it cannot be repeated to show the number of sources between the speaker and the event, as in Tsafiki (Dickinson 2000).

Statements that represent 'just discovered' information (mirative) or information based on inference derived from some physical or other non-visual evidence take the suffix /-k/ after the change of state marker, if there is one, but before the prospective aspect and person marking (if there is any – 3sg animate and all inanimates are unmarked), a different position in the verb complex from the narrative evidential marking. In some contexts, this marker, particularly in combination with the hearsay marker, can be used to mark simple uncertainty (not necessarily inference).

3.   The semantics of the system

The unmarked verb form can be used for visual evidence, and for generally known facts and for observations that lead to a strong conclusion, such as if you say 'He is a strong man' when you see him do something that makes that obvious. In this latter case, use of the inferential marker would be optional, and would imply less certainty.

The visual and inferential evidential markers can be used for past events (as in examples (5a–b)) or ongoing events, but not future events. The visual marker [-u ~ -wu] is only used for visual sensory information, not other types of sensory information. If you hear some noise, such as the sound of drums in the next room, and you want to say 'Someone is playing drums next door', you would use the inferential marker, as in (6). Even if you feel something in your hand but can not see it, the inferential marker, not the visual marker, would be used.

(6)   *mi   ʐbə   ʐetc-k!*
     person   drum   beat-INFR
     'Someone is playing drums (it seems to me from hearing a noise that sounds like drums).'

The visual marker is used together with the actor person marking. In most cases the person marking reflects the person and number of the actor of the clause, the usual situation with the person marking, as in (7a), but in the case of a 3sg actor, which would normally have zero person marking, it is possible to add 1sg person marking in order to particularly emphasize that the speaker saw the person do the action, as in (7b) (the resulting form, [wa], is to be distinguished from the clause-final emphatic particle /wa/, which appears in (7a)).

(7)   a.   *themle jimi   dc-sc-ji-wu-tci-wa.*
        3PL   fertilizer OR-spread-CSM-VIS-3PL-EMPH
        'They spread the fertilizer.' (I saw them do it)
    b.   *the: jimi   de-se-ji-w-a.*
        3SG fertilizer OR-spread-CSM-VIS-1SG
        'She spread the fertilizer.' (I saw her spread it)

This same form is also used when the actor is 1sg, but then the meaning is one of unintentional action, as in (8).

(8)   *qa   the: ta   de-we-ʐ-u-a.*
     1SG   3SG   LOC   OR-have/exist-CAUS-VIS-1SG
     'I hit him (accidentally).' (The context for this was the speaker having hit the person while leaning back and stretching his arms back without looking behind him.)

The suffix /-k/ has both an inferential sense and a mirative sense. The inferential sense is primary when the action involved is an activity, as in (6) and (9a). The inference may be based on evidence obtained visually or by some other sense. If what is reported is a state or the resulting state of some action, as in (9b–c), then the meaning is mirativity ('just discovered').[6]

(9)   a.   *the: zdzyta: ha-qə-k.*
        3SG   Chengdu+LOC   OR-go-INFR
        'He went to Chengdu.' (Used in a situation where the speaker knew the person was supposed to go to Chengdu, but wasn't sure when, and then saw the person's luggage gone, so assumed he had left for Chengdu. /-k/ could not be used if the speaker saw the person leave.)
    b.   *the: ɕtɕimi   zdʑi-k!*
        3SG   heart   sick-INFR
        'He's unhappy!' (just discovered; relatively sure, not a guess)
    c.   *dzy   dc-ʐgc-ji-k!*
        door   OR-open-CSM-INFR
        'The door is open!' (just discovered; see that the door is open, but don't know who opened it)

If the speaker needs to express an inferential sense in talking about a state or perfective situation, then the speaker would use the adverbial phrase /χsuɲi/ 'seems' or the construction with [-tan] or [-lahan] for marking possibility (both discussed below), not the inferential marker. For example, if the speaker feels wind on her back and makes the assumption that the door is open, she could say (10).

(10)   *dzy   ʐgc-m-tan   ɲuə.*
      door   open-NMLZ-appearance   COP
      'It appears the door is open.' / 'Apparently the door is open.'

Generally the inference marker is used for single instances of an event, such as if someone was supposed to quit smoking, but then the speaker sees cigarette butts in an ashtray, the speaker could use the inference marker to comment that (it seems) the person had smoked. If it was discussed as a habitual action, then again generally the construction with [tan] or [lahan] would be used.

(11) *the: jan   tʂhc-m-tan   ŋuə.*
    3sG cigarettes smoke-NMLZ-appearance COP
    'S/he might smoke (seems s/he smokes / s/he has the appearance of some-
    one who smokes).'

(12) *the: jan   tʂhc-m-la-han   ŋuə.*
    3sG cigarettes smoke-NMLZ-DEF-kind COP
    'S/he might smoke (might be a smoker / is a smoking kind of person).'

The inferential/mirative marker is also used together with the person marking,
with the person marking always reflecting the person and number of the actor,
as in (3) and (13), but with first person actors the interpretation is not only that
the action was just discovered, but also that it was unintentional or originally
unknown, as in (14a–b).

(13) *themlc stuaha   sə-tcha-ji-k-tci.*
    3PL   food/rice OR-eat-CSM-INFR-3PL
    'They have already eaten.' (inference from seeing used dishes)

(14) a. *qa dzigñ   tcy-k-a-ɲi!*
       1sG money bring-INFR-1sG-ADVM
       'I have money!' (Used when the speaker originally thought he didn't
       have money, but then opened his wallet and found he did have
       money.)

     b. *(qa) dzy ha-mə-sua-k-a!*
       1sG door OR-NEG-lock-INFR-1sG
       'I didn't lock the door!' (Used in a situation where the speaker had
       thought he had locked the door.)

The suffix /-k/ can appear alone with a mirative sense (e.g. (9b–c)), but often in
these cases the particle [-ɲi] or [-wa] is added after the inferential marker. The
particle [-ɲi] is an adverbial marker used also to mark surprise and/or disbelief;
[-wa] is an emphatic marker. Its use with /-k/ gives the construction a stronger
mirative sense. Examples (15a–b) show the use of the suffix /-k/ together with
[-wa] and [-ɲi] respectively.

(15) a. *mc:' dc-ci-k-wa!*
       rain OR-release-INFR-EMPH
       'It's raining!' (just discovered; this clause could also mean 'it has
       rained', with the statement based on inference from having seen the
       ground wet)

    b. *the: zdzyta: ha-qə-k-ɲi!*
       3sG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-INFR-ADVM
       'He went to Chengdu!' (just discovered)

The suffix /-k/ is used with 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person actors, though with first
and second person actors, /-wa/ is not used to emphasize the sense of 'just
discovered'; instead /-ɲi/, /-ʂə/ or /-ɲiau/ is used for first person actors (of these
three, the latter is stronger) and /-ɲi/ is used for second person actors (/-ɲi/
can be used for other persons, but if the clause has a second person actor, then
/-ɲi/ must be used). The combination [-k-wa] is stronger (more certain) than
[-k] alone, but weaker than [-k-ɲi], which can have the sense that you can't
believe your own inference, that it is totally unexpected. The auxiliary verb
/ʁu/ 'willing, allow' can also be added after [-k] to weaken (make less certain)
the force of the statement. Following are examples of first and second person
actors ((16) and (17) respectively).

(16) *qa da-mə̀-k-a-ʂə̀!*   (if plural, then /k-ə'-ʂə̀/)
    1sG OR-forget-INFR-1sG-EMPH
    'I (just realized I) forgot!'

(17) *ʔū sə   i-tchi-k-ən-ɲi!*   (if plural, then /k-əi-ɲi/)
    2sG wood OR-bring.in-INFR-2sG-ADVM
    '(I saw) you brought the wood in!' (just discovered)

The inferential marker, the visual marker, and the person marking can all be
used together for ongoing or past events. This would be possible given a situa-
tion such as having guessed someone was playing drums next door the speaker
went next door and saw the person standing there holding a drum or drum-
sticks. When commenting that 'He WAS playing drums', adding (/-k/ + /-u/ >
[ku]) after the verb (see example (18a)) adds the sense of 'as I had guessed and
now pretty-well confirm'. This interpretation also holds when the clause has a
2nd person actor ([k-u-ən] 2sg, as in (18b), [k-u-i] 2pl) or 3rd person plural
actor ([k-u-ətçi]).

If upon opening the door in that situation the person was still playing
drums, the speaker could say (18c). Adding the 1sg person marking where the
actor is 3sg marks the clause very explicitly as representing information ob-
tained by direct visual observation. The forms with [-k-] and the visual and
person marking contrast with forms without [-k-] in that with the latter do
not imply a previous supposition.

(18) a. *oh, the: ʐbə   ʐcte-k-u!*
　　　oh 3SG drum beat-INFR-VIS
　　　'Oh, He WAS playing a drum!'

　　 b. *ʔǐ   zdzyta: ɦa-qə-k-u-ən.*
　　　2SG Chengdu OR-go-INFR-VIS-2SG
　　　'You went to Chengdu' (as I had assumed, I heard or guessed from
　　　some evidence).

　　 c. *oh, the: ʐbə   ʐcte-k-u-a!*
　　　oh 3SG drum beat-INFR-VIS-1SG
　　　'Oh, he IS playing a drum!'

If the actor is 1st person, use of the inferential, visual and person marking
together involves an implication not only that the action was done uninten-
tionally and just discovered, as with use of the inferential and person marking
alone, but also that the action was a mistake of some kind, as in (19) (if the
actor was 1pl, then the suffixes would be [k-u-əʲ]).

(19) *qɑ   ɑpə-tcə-iantu-le: tsɑ   tçy-k-u-ɑ.*
　　　1SG grandfather-GEN-pipe-DEF+CL here bring-INFR-VIS-1SG
　　　'I mistakenly brought grandfather's pipe here.'

Usually no marking of evidentials is necessary in retelling dreams, as long as
the speaker remembers the dream clearly, but if not, then the speaker would
use the adverbial phrase /χsu-ɲi/ 'seems' or the construction with [-tɑn] or
[-lɑhɑn] for marking possibility (both discussed below), not the inferential or
hearsay markers. When retelling some event witnessed on TV the unmarked
form can also be used, but often the hearsay marker would be used (the visual
marker cannot be used), as when retelling something heard on the radio. There
is no special marking for information that is not to be taken literally, such as
metaphors or sarcasm.

　　 The hearsay marking suffix /-i/, derived from the verb [jə ~ ji] 'to say', is
used to mark hearsay of future or presently ongoing events (e.g. 'I heard he's
leaving') or relatively recent past events, as in (20) (could be up to 40–50 years,
but generally not ancient history, though there are exceptions).

(20) *the: zdzyta: ɦa-qə-i.*
　　　3SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-HS
　　　'He went to Chengdu (I heard).'

The hearsay marker is used only for hearsay, and not for simple uncertainty,
when it is used alone. It can also appear in narratives recounting distant past
events (e.g. example (21), the first line in the traditional creation story), but

generally in distant past narratives (story-telling) it is used together with the
inferential marker, to show a greater degree of uncertainty, as in example (22),
the first line of another traditional story.[7] The hearsay marking is not used
together with 2nd person marking (e.g. (23)). Unlike in Jarawara (Chapter 7),
the hearsay particle is not used in clauses with a 2nd person actor to remind
the person of what they said.

(21) *qeʲlotşu-ʁa, mutu-la   mujuqű ʐguə-zi we-i.*
　　　before-LOC heaven-LOC sun   nine-CL have/exist-HS
　　　'(It is said) in the past there were nine suns in the sky.'

(22) *qeʲ:-qeːʲ-tu   ɦala kapatş kou   ŋuə-k-əi-tçu.*
　　　before-before-LNK INT orphan INDEF+one+CL COP-INFR-HS-SFP
　　　'(It is said) in the past there was an orphan.'

(23) *ʔǐ   tçcχun tu-pu-ji-i-ɲi!*
　　　2SG marry OR-do-ASP-HS-ADVM
　　　'(I heard) you got married!'

Generally there is no difference between second-hand and third-hand reported
information, but if the hearsay marker is used in a clause with 1sg marking
on the verb, as in (24), the utterance must be interpreted as similar to a di-
rect quote (even though the actor is 3rd person), with the assumption being
that, for example in (24), that the referent mentioned in (24) himself told the
speaker of (24) that he (the referent mentioned in (24)) is unhappy.[8] If instead
the verb root is the third person form plus the hearsay marker (i.e. would be
[ʐdzi-i] in (24)), then the implication is that someone else told the speaker the
other person was unhappy.

(24) *the: ctcimi zdza-i*　　　　　　　　　(< zdzi-ɑ-i)
　　　3SG heart sick+1SG-HS
　　　'He's unhappy (he told me).'

4.　Evidential strategies

Two other types of marking might be considered evidential strategies rather
than evidential marking. The adverbial particle /χsu-ɲi/ can be added to the
end of the clause, after the verb complex (and so does not take person mark-
ing), to show uncertainty about some information. This adverbial functions
something like English 'seem', taking the whole clause in its scope. The (se-

mantically) main clause may or may not take the hearsay evidential marker /-i/ (compare (25) and (26)).

(25) *the: zdzyta: ha-qə-i   χsu-ɲi.*
      3SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-HS seem-ADVM
      'S/he went to Chengdu.' (guessing, unsure if true)

(26) *zdzyta: le   χsu-ɲi.*
      Chengdu+LOC exist seem-ADVM
      'It seems (he) lives in Chengdu.'

For expressing contingent ('it is possible that', 'perhaps') situations, often a construction involving a clause nominalized by /-m/, plus [la-han ~ la-hən] (definite marker + 'kind'), [ka-han ~ ka-hən] (indefinite marker + 'kind'), or /tan/ ('appearance'), and the copula is used. This is structurally similar to the Japanese *yoo-da* and *soo-da* constructions (see Aoki 1986). Following are examples of a direct evidential (27a) and a construction using the nominalizer /-m/ plus /tan/ (27b). The question particle [luʁua] can be added to the end of a [tan/lahan] clause to make the statement even more of an uncertainty (as in (47d) below).[9]

(27) a. *the: tha   ʐi.*
          3SG there exist
          'S/he is there.'

      b. *the: tha-ʐi-m-tan   ŋuə.*
          3SG there-exist-NMLZ-appearance COP
          'S/he might be there.'

An expression with [-m-tan] is more of a certainty than one with [χsu-(ɲi)] 'seems'. The former can also be used for non-past events.

To make a strong statement of certainty, or of information that was not recently discovered, but known for some time, then a clause nominalized by /-s/ is used without /tan/ or /la-hən/. This is an evidential strategy with epistemic extensions. This form can't be used for past/perfective actions.

(28) *pəs   ʐmu   tsu-s   ŋuə.*
      today meeting hold-NMLZ COP
      'There is a meeting today.' (set and known about beforehand)

(29) *the: tha-ʐi-s   ŋuə.*
      3SG there-exist-NMLZ COP
      'S/he is definitely there.'

5. Correlations with other grammatical categories

Use of evidential marking in a question is not obligatory, as long as no assumptions about the source of the addressee's information are made, but if it is used, in the case of the visual or hearsay marking it would imply the assumption that the hearer saw (visual, as in (30)), or heard about (hearsay, as in (31)), the action being questioned. It is the action that is questioned, not the source of the information.

(30) *the: ha-qə-u   ŋua?*
      3SG OR-go-VIS Q
      'Did he go?'

(31) *the: ha-qə-i   ŋua?*
      3SG OR-go-HS Q
      'Did he go?'

If the speaker of a question assumes the addressee of the question also does not have visual evidence of information about the situation being asked about (though knows more about the situation than the speaker), the inferential particle can be used in the question, as in (32):

(32) *the: ha-qə-k   ŋua?*
      3SG OR-go-INFR Q
      'Did he go?'

The form used by the one responding to the question would then depend on the source of that person's information, visual, inference or hearsay.

If the speaker is asking the addressee about his or her own actions, then the inferential marker can still be used, but in this case would not represent a presupposition that the addressee is also not clear about the situation. Instead it would represent a guess about some aspect of the question, for example in (33), the guess that Chengdu is the place that the person went to. (The question marker used in this example also differs from the usual second person question marker /-a/, in that it implies more of a guess about the situation.)

(33) *ʔi   zdzyta: ha-qə-k-ən   dza?*
      2SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-INFR-2SG Q
      'Did you go down to Chengdu?'

Other examples of the use of the inferential marker in questions are given in (34)–(35). (Example (35) is actually a rhetorical question, from a traditional story.)

(34) *the: zdzyta:*   *ha-qə-k*   *ja?*
3SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go-INFR Q
'Did he go down to Chengdu?'

(35) *ʔũ ɲa qa a-qəs   we-k-a:ˈ*   *tçi?*
2SG COM 1SG one-form have/exist-INFR-PROSP+1PL Q
'(Could it be) yours and mine are the same?'

The evidential markers can be used with causatives, just as with simplex clauses (see (8) and (36)).

(36) *the: ha-qə-z̧-i*
3SG OR-go-CAUS-HS
'He was made to go (I heard).'

It is possible to use the evidential markers in some embedded clauses, with the acceptability of the marker depending somewhat on the matrix verb (contrast (37) and (38)).

(37) *the: pieye   tu-pu-ji-(u)   qa dzukũ   la.*   (< le + a)
3SG graduate OR-do-CSM-VIS 1SG knowledge have/exist+1SG
'I know he graduated.'

(38) *the: pieye   tu-pu-ji-i   qa ə-ma.*   (< mə + a)
3SG graduate OR-do-CSM-HS 1SG OR-hear+1SG
'I heard he graduated.'

With direct quotes, as in (39), different evidential marking can appear on the matrix and quoted clauses, e.g. in (39) the inferential marker appears in the quote, and the narrative marker appears on the verb of saying (from a traditional narrative).

(39) *"ta, qa ʔile ep   ŋuə-k-a,"   ikə ja-k-ui.*
INT 1SG 2PL father COP-INFR-1SG thus say-INFR-HS
'(It is said) he said (based on inference from what the two boys had just said), "Then, I am your father." '

In other types of complex sentences, evidential marking can appear either on only the final clause, when the initial clause has a hypotactic relation to the second clause, or on both clauses:

(40) *the: zdzyta:*   *ha-qa mc-tçhi,   pcitçin-la   da-tçə-qa-k-əi.*
3SG Chengdu+LOC OR-go NEG-want Beijing-LOC OR-yet-go-INFR-HS
'It seems he not only went to Chengdu, he also went to Beijing.' (I heard, not too sure)

(41) *the: ʁu-q-ta*   *ha-qə-k-əi*   *tu, tçi ke:*
3SG mountain-top-LOC OR-go-INFR-HS LNK bear INDEF+CL
tu-tsu-k-əi.
OR-meet-INFR-HS
'When he went up on the mountain, he ran into a bear.' (I heard but I'm not too sure)

(42) *the: dzoqu-le: dagə̃-k-(əi),   pitç sei   ma-lə̃-jy-k-(əi).*
3SG leg-DEF+CL break-INFR-HS now walk NEG-able-ASP-INFR-HS
'It seems he broke his leg and now can't walk.' (I heard but I'm not too sure)

There is no marking of evidentials in relative clauses (43), conditional clauses (44), or imperatives (45a), though the verb of saying can be added to an imperative to show that someone told the speaker to order the person to do something, as in a direct quote (45b).

(43) *qa-wu-panə-dele-m*   *mi*
1SG-AGT-thing-give-NMLZ person
'the person to whom I gave something'

(44) *the: mo-lu   tu,   qa-qəi   ka:.*   (< kə + a: + a)
3SG NEG-come LNK 1SG-self go+PROSP+1SG
'If s/he doesn't come, I'm going to go myself.'

(45) a. *ʔũ ə-zuə-n!*   b. *ʔũ ə-zuə-n   ji!*
2SG OR-sit-2SG   2SG OR-sit-2SG say
'You sit!'   'You sit!' (someone else told me to say that)

6. Negation, modality, person, and aspect

If the visual evidential marker is used in the negative, such as to say 'He didn't come', or 'It didn't rain', there is a presupposition that the speaker has visual evidence of the person not coming, that is, the speaker was in the place all day, and so would have seen the person if he had come, or the speaker was outside all day, and so would have seen it had it rained. When the inferential or hearsay markers are used with a negative clause (e.g. [ma-tci-kə-k] [NEG-yet-go-INFR] '(He) hasn't gone yet' (inferred from seeing his baggage still in the hallway)), the implication is that the negative proposition is an inference or hearsay, the same as with positive propositions. Unlike in Akha (Egerod 1985; Hansson, in

press), the evidential particles cannot be negated to express the idea that the speaker doesn't know what is happening.

Generally actions performed by oneself do not need to be overtly marked with evidentials, but the visual evidential can be used with inadvertent actions, as mentioned above. In the case of one's mental or physical states, if one is not sure about some particular state, for example, whether one has caught a cold or not, usually the construction with [-tan] or [lahan] 'seems' would be used, e.g. 'It seems like I caught a cold', as in (46).

(46)   *qa   tə-lian-tha-m-la-han*   *ŋuə.*
       1SG OR-catch.cold-AUX-NMLZ-DEF-kind COP
       'I might have caught a cold.' (cf. English 'It's kind of like I caught a cold.')

7.   Conclusion

We have seen that Qiang basically has three evidential terms, but the interpretation of these forms relies on the type of activity or situation involved, the person of the actor, and the combination of markers used. Following is a set of examples showing the same basic clause with some of the main evidential possibilities:

(47) a. *the: tshinpi   wa-(u).*   (certain)[10]
          3SG intelligent very-VIS
          'She is intelligent.'

      b. *the: tshinpi   wa-k.*   (just discovered)
          3SG intelligent very-INFR
          'She is intelligent.'

      c. *the: tshinpi   wa-i.*   (hearsay)
          3SG intelligent very-HS
          'She is intelligent.'

      d. *the: tshinpi   wa-k   luʁua.*   (guess)
          3SG intelligent very-INFR Q
          'She is intelligent.'

      e. *the: tshinpi   wa-m-tan*   *ŋuə.*   (possibly)
          3SG intelligent very-NMLZ-appearance COP
          'She possibly is intelligent.'

      f. *the: tshinpi   wa-m-la-han*   *ŋuə.* (possibly)
          3SG intelligent very-NMLZ-DEF-kind   COP
          'It seems she is intelligent.'

Notes

1. The term 'Qiang' is an exonym given by the Chinese. Roughly 50,000 of the Qiang speakers are classified as Tibetans by the Mainland authorities, though both groups use the same name for themselves (/ʐme/ or a dialect variant of this word) when speaking the Qiang language, which is called /ʐmeʐ/ in that language.

2. E.g. Rawang, which has a distinction between hearsay and non-hearsay, the former marked by the particle *wā* (derived from the verb 'say'; LaPolla & Poa 2001), Tibetan (DeLancey 1986; Woodbury 1986; Sun 1993; Hongladarom 1993; Haller 2000; Huber 2000), Newar (Hargreaves 1983), Meithei (Chelliah 1997), and Akha (Egerod 1985; Thurgood 1986; Hansson, in press).

3. A form given in parentheses to the right of an example is the uncombined form.

4. Where an epenthetic vowel is required when a suffix is added, it is represented as part of the suffix. In this case the [u] in [ui] is epenthetic (a variant of [ə], the usual epenthetic vowel).

5. This is reminiscent of the systems in Hare and Sunwari discussed by DeLancey (1997), where perfective contexts yield an evidential interpretation, and imperfective contexts yield a mirative interpretation. See also Zeisler (2000) for discussion on the relationship between tense/aspect and interpretation as mirative or not.

6. The combination of inferential and hearsay marking is sometimes pronounced [kui] in stories, as in (4), but there is no difference in meaning between [kəi] and [kui] in that context.

7. This form contrasts with a direct quote, which would involve a 1st person pronoun and a full verb of speaking (i), and an indirect quote, which would involve third person forms (ii):

(i)   "*qa   ctcimi zdza*"   *ja.*   (ii) *the: ctcimi zdzi ja.*
      1SG heart   sick+1SG say   3SG heart sick say
      'He said "I'm unhappy".'   'He said he's unhappy.'

8. [luʁua], when used alone, marks a type of tag question, but when used with /-k/ or the construction in (27b), it simply marks the clause as less certain.

9. In this case, the visual marker is marking certainty based on observing the person do intelligent things, but would actually generally not be used. I had difficulty eliciting the visual evidential with this verb in other dialects, as generally an unmarked form would be used, hence the parentheses around the visual marker.

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