EPISTEMIC MODALITY AND RELATED CATEGORIES IN NIVKH

Ekaterina Gruzdeva

University of Helsinki

Epistemic modality deals with the speaker's evaluation of the truthfulness of the proposition expressed by an utterance. This category is known to be closely connected with other qualificational categories, such as evidentiality and mirativity. The paper explores the semantic and morphosyntactic properties of various modal, evidential, and mirative grammatical markers (particles, clitics, and suffixes) in the Amur and East Sakhalin dialects of Nivkh (Paleosiberian). It also discusses different patterns of semantic and grammatical changes underlying the development of verbal mood in Nivkh and the effect of these changes on the structure of the Nivkh clause.

Эпистемическая модальность характеризует оценку говорящим истинности пропозиции, выраженной в высказывании. Эта категория тесно связана с другими квалификационными категориями, такими как эвиденциальность и миративность. В статье исследуются семантические и морфосинтаксические свойства различных модальных, эвиденциальных и миративных маркеров (частиц, клитик и суффиксов) в амурском и восточно-сахалинском диалекте нивхского языка. В ней также обсуждаются различные модели семантических и грамматических изменений, которые лежат в основе развития категории наклонения в нивхском языке, а также влияние этих изменений на реструктуризацию нивхского предложения.

1. INTRODUCTION

Epistemic modality is typically defined as a semantic category or conceptual domain that deals with the expression of the degree or nature of the speaker's (or someone else's) commitment to the truth of what (s)he says (Palmer 1986: 121). Epistemic modality is concerned with the speaker's evaluation/judgment of, degree of confidence, or belief in, the knowledge upon which a proposition of an utterance is based. Various degrees of commitment form an epistemic scale going from certainty that a state of affairs applies to certainty that it does not apply, via a neutral stance towards its occurrence (Nuyts 2001: 21–22).

Epistemic modality has been grammaticalized in Nivkh (Paleosiberian) to a varied degree. The language employs four grammatical devices for marking epistemic modal meanings, namely particles (Section 2), clitics (Section 3), verbal

mood suffixes (Section 4), and a verbal modal suffix (Section 5). These modal markers tend to cover different segments of the epistemic scale. The modal clitics and the modal suffix for the most part mark different grades of uncertainty, the mood forms primarily express various levels of certainty, while the modal particles may indicate both of these epistemic meanings. Although this correlation between modal semantics and its formal expression is rather obvious, it is not absolute and displays certain variation due to the ongoing processes of grammaticalization of some of the modal elements involved.

This paper explores the semantic and morphosyntactic properties of all aforementioned linguistic tools, as used for expressing epistemic modality in the Amur (A) and East Sakhalin (ES) dialects of Nivkh (Sections 2–6). As a part of the analysis, it investigates the interaction between this category and other closely related qualificational categories, such as evidentiality and mirativity (Section 3). Thereafter, it gives an overview of the various semantic and grammatical changes that underlie the development of the grammatical markers of epistemic modality in Nivkh (Section 6). Finally, it summarizes the results of the analysis and discusses the effect of the observed grammatical changes on the structure of the Nivkh clause (Section 7).

2. MODAL PARTICLES

In this paper the term "particle" is used with respect to a closed class of functional words that do not inflect, do not have any specific lexical meaning and are not syntactically obligatory. The main function of modal particles is to modify the epistemic content of a phrase or a clause. As in many other languages, modal particles in Nivkh originate from different lexical categories and form a rather heterogeneous group. From a semantic point of view they may be divided into two groups: (i) categorical particles and (ii) probabilitative particles.

Categorical particles

Categorical particles express the speaker's confidence in the truthfulness of the expressed utterance. Both dialects of Nivkh have several particles with this epistemic meaning. All of them are usually translated rather inconsistently as 'certainly', 'assuredly', and so on.

The first group consists of particles derived from the functional verb *ha-* 'do so'. In the Amur dialect, these are the particles *habar(a)* (1–2) and *hayitla*, which according to various sources have a more or less identical function of streng-

thening the existing assumption. The corresponding particle in the East Sakhalin dialect is *haxtna* (3–4).

(1)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 216)

təɟ + utku   habar.[1]
this.one + male   certainly

'This is certainly a man.'

(2)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 122)

siɟ-ŋa   ɲ-vixkʰutə + řav-ɟ?
what-INTER   1SG-nostril + catch-IND

'What caught my nostrils?'

camra   habar   cʰ-vixkʰutə + řav-ɟ.
carrying.pole   certainly 2SG-nostril + catch-IND

'It's certainly a carrying pole that caught your nostrils.'

(3)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 4)[2]

j-e-d=la?   haxtna   j-e-d.
3SG-boil-IND=Q   certainly 3SG-boil-IND

'Did [she] boil it? – [She] certainly boiled it.'

(4)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 85)

ku + řəv + ivŋ + ɲiɣvŋ-gun   řəv + aj-d-ɣun=eqŋař.
that + wound + have + man-PL   wound + make-IND-PL=PROB

'People having that wound probably treated the wound.'

haxtna.   ra-ta   jaŋ-ta   ha-d-gun=eqŋař.
certainly   drink-COORD:3PL   do.sth-COORD:3PL   do.so-IND-PL=PROB

'Certainly. [They] drank and probably did something.'

---

1 All Nivkh examples are given in IPA transcription, except for the voiceless trill/fricative, which is pronounced as [ɣ] in the Amur dialect and as [rʃ] in the East Sakhalin dialect. In the examples cited in this paper this sound is indicated by the letter *ř*. The components of (poly)synthetic complexes are separated by the symbol "+".

2 When referring to the author's fieldnotes, the first number after the year refers to the notebook and the second number to the page.

The final segments of the aforesaid categorical particles, that is, -*bar*(*a*), -*ɣitla* (A),[3] and -*xtna* (ES), are also used as adversative or categorical mood suffixes with lexical verbs, cf. *habar* 'certainly' and *vi-bar* [go-ADVERS₁] '[s/he] certainly went' (A). Given that the categorical particles, at least in the Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 216), can be used only with nominal predicates, they should diachronically be analyzed as various mood forms of the functional verb *ha-*. Thus, in example (1), *habar* in fact functions as a finite existential copula.[4] Syncronically these forms, nevertheless, behave as particles, since they can occur with a noun in a non-predicative function, as *habar* in (2), with a verbal predicate, as *haxtna* in (3), or as an independent word, as *haxtna* in (4).

Another categorical particle,[5] namely *məkskir* (A), *maχtuřkiř* or *maχtuřkis* (ES), is derived in a different way. It is formed on the model of adverbs and originates from the verb *məkr-* (A), *maχtu-* (ES) 'be correct' which is nominalized with the suffix -*s* (A), -*ř* (ES) and is inflected for the instrumental case with the suffix *kir*/-*ɣir*/-*gir*/-*xir* (A), -*kiř*/-*ɣiř*/-*giř*/-*xiř*/ or -*kis*/-*ɣis*/-*gis*/-*xis* (ES)[6] respectively. This particle is very common in the speech of modern speakers and is used in the same context as Russian modal word *конечно* 'certainly' (5–6).

(5)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 202)

    if   məkskir   mu-inə-ɟ=ra.
    3SG   certainly   die-DES/INCH-IND=FOC

    'He is certainly ill (lit. is going to die).'

(6)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 85)

    cʰo + řom ha-vut   it-t   in-aχ   ra-gu-tʰa-d-ɣun.
    fish + oil   do.so-CVB:REP:3PL say-IND   3PL-ACC   drink-CAUS-ITER:3PL-IND-PL

    'They say [that] [they] drank them with fish oil.'

---

3 The suffix -*ɣitla* is also attested in the forms -*ɣitli* or -*ɣitle*, where the final *a* is raised to *i* or *e* for expressive purposes, cf. Panfilov 1965: 120; Otaina 1978: 76. Similar raising is also typical of many other modal particles and clitics discussed in the present paper.

4 Note that epistemically neutral clauses with a nominal predicate in Nivkh typically lack any copula.

5 Basing on its derivational pattern, this word may be alternatively treated as a modal adverb. However, it completely fits the definition of a particle adopted in this paper and therefore is considered to belong to this lexical category.

6 The choice between variants ending in *ř* and *s* depends on the subdialect, with the *s* variant prevailing in the innerland subdialect (Tymovsk/Chir-Unvd) and the *ř* variant in the coastal subdialects (Nogliki etc.).

maχtuřkiř ha-d-ɣun.
certainly   do.so-IND-PL

'[They] certainly did so.'

Probabilitative particles

The number of probabilitative particles in Nivkh is significantly higher than that of categorical ones. All probabilitative particles indicate various types of doubt in the truthfulness of the utterance. They may be translated as 'probably', 'possibly', 'apparently, 'perhaps', 'maybe', 'it seems', and so on.

In the Amur dialect, the most common probabilitative particles are *hajaqan*(*a*) (7), *hajra* (8–10), and *hanəɟ*, all of which are derived from the root of the functional verb *ha-* 'do so'. The final components of the first two particles, that is, *-jaqan*(*a*) and *-jra*, apparently once functioned as probabilitative mood suffixes. If this is so, it may easily be noticed that these probabilitative particles were formed on the same model as the categorical particles discussed above. However, unlike the categorical mood suffixes, the probabilitative mood suffixes have become synchronically obsolete and are no longer used with lexical verbs. For this reason, for instance, the particle *hajra* 'probably' has no counterpart of the type *vi-jra [go-PROB] '[s/he] probably came'. As for the third particle, *hanəɟ*,[7] it most likely represents the indicative future form *ha-nə-ɟ* [do.so-FUT-IND].

(7)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 227)

paj   pʰrə-ilo?
just   come-Q

'Will [he] come just [like that]?'

siɟ=lo + mra   jiv-r   pʰřə-ɟ   hajaqana.
something=PROB + business   have-CVB:MAN:3SG   come-IND   probably

'[He] probably came having some business.'

(8)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 216)

ətək   hajra   pʰrə-jvi-ɟ.
father   probably   come-PROGR-IND

'It's probably father coming.'

---

7 Unfortunately, I was not able to find any examples illustrating the use of this particle in either my field materials or in the published sources on Nivkh.

(9)   Amur dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2014: 14)

siɟlu   *u-ɟ*   *hajra.*
something   burn-IND   probably

'Something seems to burn.'

(10)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 128)

tu-r   *hum-ke*
go.upstream-CVB:MAN:3SG   be-CVB:DUR

'Going upstream,

kikun   *məɣ-r*   *tʰe-ɟ*   *hajra.*
eagle-owl   descend-CVB:MAN:3SG   hoot-IND   probably

[there] was [also] an eagle-owl, descending, [it] hooted, it seemed.'

Unlike the corresponding categorical particles, the probabilitative particles can be freely used with verbal predicates expressed by indicative verb forms, as in *pʰřə-ɟ hajaqana* '[he] probably came' (7), *u-ɟ hajra* '[it] seems to burn' (9), *tʰe-ɟ hajra* '[it] hooted, it seemed' (10). At first glance, such usage contradicts the assumption that probabilitative particles have originated from verbal mood forms because it would imply the presence of two successive finite verb forms in the same clause. However, there is evidence favouring the view that Nivkh indicative verb forms developed as a result of reanalysis of nominalized forms. If this is the case, then we are dealing with a diachronic situation similar to that of the categorical particles, meaning that the probabilitative mood forms of the verb *ha-* originally functioned as finite existential copulas following a nominalized form of the main verb. Synchronically these probabilitative forms should nevertheless be treated as lexicalized phrase-level or clause-level particles, as they can appear, for instance, with a noun phrase in the subject function (8). They also occur as single-word clauses (11).

(11)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 128)

cʰi   *pət*   *hə + vo-rχ*   *vi-nə-ɟ=la?*
2SG   tomorrow   that + village-DAT   go-FUT-IND=Q

'Will you go tomorrow to that village?'

hanəɟ / hajqan / jaɣalo / hajra.
'Probably.'

In the East Sakhalin dialect, the corresponding probabilitative particles *hadajaq* and *hadaqŋař* are also based on the functional verb *ha-* 'do so', however, not directly on its root, as in the Amur dialect, but on its indicative form *ha-d* [do.so-IND]. The final segments of these particles, that is, =*ajaq* and =*aqŋař*,[8] are productive probabilitative clitics. The short dialogue in (12) illustrates the use of both probabilitative and categorical particles.

(12)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 75)

maχtuřkiř cвem   *ɢavr-вar-d.*   *haxtna.*
certainly   light   NEG-COMPL/INT-IND   certainly

'Of course, there was no light. Certainly.'

солярка=eqŋař.   *hadaqŋař.*[9]
diesel=PROB   probably

'Probably, diesel. Probably.'

Both dialects have one more particle with a probabilitative meaning, namely *jaɣalo* (A) and *jaɣo/jeɣo/jaɣajlo* (ES).[10] Compared with the other particles discussed above, it has a different derivational and functional background. This particle obviously consists of the root of the interrogative verb *jaɣo-* 'be like what?' and (optionally) the interrogative suffix *-lo*. Apparently, it was originally used only in questions, as in (13), where it approximately means 'is it so?'. Nowadays its semantic scope has been expanded to the epistemic meaning of uncertainty, so that it can also be used in statements (14).

(13)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 2: 16)

ɲ-nanx   *tolvaj-vul*   *phřə-jnə-l*   *jeɣo?*
1SG-elder.sister   be.summer-CVB:when   come-DES/INCH-Q   probably

'My elder sister will probably come in summer.'
(lit. 'Will my elder sister probably come in summer?')

---

8 With expressive *a*-raising (see fn. 3), these clitics appear in the forms =*ejaq* and =*eqŋař* and the particles in the forms *hadejaq* and *hadeqŋař*, respectively.

9 The words *cвem* and *солярка* in this example come from Russian and are pronounced with regular Russian phonetics (code switching).

10 In the speech of some speakers the medial fricative [ɣ] is unvoiced to [x]. The quality of both sounds may vary between velar and back velar (uvular).

(14)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1991: 3: 34)

ekkuř	*ra-ja!*	*cʰaj*	*ax*	*tuz-d*	*jaɣajlo.*
quickly	drink-IMP.2SG	tea	already	be.cold-IND	probably

'Drink quickly! The tea is probably already cold.'

In the Amur dialect, the particle *jaɣalo* is often used in sentences containing a verbal predicate with the concessive/probabilitative clitic *=uvr/=avr/=əvr* (15).

(15)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 216)

aɟ	*qʰotr=avr*	*jaɣalo.*
that	bear= PROB₂	probably

'That is probably a bear.'

3. MODAL AND EVIDENTIAL CLITICS

The elements discussed in this section are usually defined in Nivkh studies as "particles" (in Russian *частица*). In this paper, they are redefined as "clitics" or "enclitics", since they are bound morphemes that share both word-like and affix-like properties. Nivkh clitics: (a) have regular meanings, (b) are fairly short, consisting of only one or two syllables, (c) are bound to a word and can never occur in complete isolation, (d) occupy a final position in a word and prevent further affixation,[11] (e) follow morphophonological rules, (f) are not obligatory, and (g) operate either on clause or phrase level.

The main function of Nivkh clitics is to mark the informational focus of the sentence, that is, the part that the speaker marks out as the most informative (see, e.g. Lambrecht 1994: 218). In other words, the focus is the element of the sentence information structure that carries the main assertion. Clitics are used for various types of focalization, and depending on their function they may be classified into (i) modal, (ii) evidential, (iii) informational, (iv) interrogative, and (v) expressive clitics. The present paper focuses on modal clitics, but since modality is often seen as overlapping with, or even encompassing, evidentiality, evidential clitics are also discussed below.

---

11 There are a few very rare exceptions from this rule, as in the noun form *hutə=lo-rx* [middle-PROB₂-DAT] 'approximately to the middle' (Panfilov 1965: 213), where the probabilitative clitic *-lo* precedes the dative suffix *-rx*. Another example is *raju=əvr-ja* [write=CONC/PROB₂-IMP:2SG] 'at least write' (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 536), where the concessive/probabilitative clitic *=uvr/=avr/=əvr*, precedes the second person singular imperative suffix.

Clause-level clitics are always attached to the predicate of the sentence, whereas phrase-level clitics can be attached to other words as well. In either case, when combined with a clitic, the verb stands in the indicative mood form, marked by the suffix *-ɟ/-c* (A), *-(n)d/-t* (ES). The clitic occupies the very final position in the verb template after an optional plural number suffix:

transitivity-aspect-causativity-aspect/desiderative-tense-modality-mood-number=FOCUS

Modal clitics

Both the Amur and the East Sakhalin dialect have a whole set of modal clitics, most of which indicate the speaker's uncertainty as to whether the situation described in the utterance really took/takes/will take place. With few exceptions, the modal clitics express probability and may also be termed probabilitative clitics, corresponding in function to the probabilitative particles.

The most versatile probabilitative clitic in both dialects is *=lu/=lo* (glossed as PROB₁). It operates on the phrase level and can basically be attached to any word in the sentence. In combination with a verb, it denotes uncertainty of the speaker as to whether the specific matter spoken of really occurred, as opposed to any other alternative scenario (16). In such a case the speaker typically offers several alternative versions of the observed situation, each of which is described by a verb with the clitic *=lu/=lo* (17).

(16)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 125)

 hot   hur-ju-ta   vər   pʰ-erq + cχa-gu-ɟ=lu.
 so:3PL   make.noise-MULT-COORD:3PL   spearhead   REFL-side+turn-CAUS-IND=PROB₁

 'So [they] made noise, turned the spearhead in their own direction [or did sth. else].'

(17)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 127)

 hud   poz-ř   hunv-d.   qʰo-d=lu   mu-d=lu.
 that.one   lie-CVB:MAN:3SG   be-IND   sleep-IND=PROB₁   die-IND=PROB₁

 'That one was lying. Maybe he slept, may be he had died (or sth. else had happened).'

Etymologically, the probabilitative clitic *=lu/=lo* is connected with the interrogative clitic for polar questions *=l/=lu/=lo*. The connection with interrogation is particularly obvious from examples in which the clitic *=lu/=lo* modifies a noun phrase, as in (18−19).

(18) Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 244)

řaŋz + əřk=lu　　　　　*řaŋz + mu:v=lu*　　　*pəkz-ɟ.*
how.many + night=PROB₁　how.many + day=PROB₁　disappear-IND

'Some nights, some days [ago], [he] disappeared.'

(19) East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 133)

kuŋ　*ja-raf-lev-ux*　　　*ŋaks=lu*　　*plasq=lu*　　　　*pan-d.*
that　3SG-house-near-ABL　branch=PROB₁　dwarf.spruce=PROB₁　grow-IND

'Near his house a branch or a dwarf spruce (or sth. else) grows.'

Another modal clitic attested in both dialects may have both probabilitative and concessive meanings. In the Amur dialect, this clitic (glossed as CONC/PROB₂) appears as *=uvr/=avr/=əvr,* whereas in the East-Sakhalin dialect it has either the monosyllabic shape *=avř* or the bisyllabic shape *=avre/=avri.* An interrogative pronoun combined with this clitic acquires a concessive meaning 'WH-ever', like *aŋ=əvr* 'whoever' in (20) and *nud=avř* 'whatever' in (21).

(20) Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965:123)

aŋ=əvr　　　　　*řəpr-ʁozo.*
who=CONC/PROB₂　bring-IMP:3SG/PL

'Let whoever bring [it].'

(21) East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 118)

ɲi　*vi-g-roř*　　　　　*pʰeɣrdoχ*　*nud=avř + pʰur-ja!*
1SG　go-CAUS-CVB:MAN:2SG　let　　　what=CONC/PROB₂ + say-IMP:2SG

'After I go, say whatever you want!'

A similar concessive meaning is observed in the cases when this clitic is used in combination with noun phrases (22).

(22) Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 536)

if　*parv=əvr*　　　　　*pʰrə-ɟ.*
3SG　evening=CONC/PROB₂　come-IND

'He may come even in the evening.'

When combined with a verbal predicate in the indicative form, this clitic provides a probabilitative meaning. In the East Sakhalin dialect no other devices are needed for expressing the meaning of uncertainty (23), whereas in the Amur dialect the

clitic should always be reinforced by a modal particle, for instance *jaɣalo* (24). Nedjalkov & Otaina (2013: 127) note that besides "general" uncertainty this clitic may epress doubt about the general probability of the event.

(23)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 5: 31)

jaŋ   j-ajm-d=avre.
s/he   3SG-know-IND=CONC/PROB₂

'He probably knows.'

(24)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965:123)

kʰutə muɣv + me-qr   hum-r   kəŋ-nə-ɟ=avr   jaɣalo.
hole day + two-CL:GEN be-CVB:MAN:3SG freeze-FUT-IND=CONC/PROB₁ probably

'In two days the hole will probably freeze.'

At least in the East Sakhalin dialect a verb with this clitic cannot be used in a response to the addressee's question. In certain contexts the verbal phrase may acquire the meaning of warning or prevention (25).

(25)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 6: 70)

pocivoci-g-ŋ + qla-jvu-fke
be.various-CAUS-NMLZ + speak-DES/INCH-CVB:when

pʰe-rχ   əki-gu-inə-t=avri
REFL-DAT   be.bad-CAUS-DES/INCH-IND=CONC/PROB₂

'Saying various things, [you] may do harm to yourself.'

Additionally, the East Sakhalin dialect has a whole set of probabilitative clitics with the phonetically interrelated shapes =*aq*, =*ajq*, =*ajaq*, and =*aqŋař* (glossed as PROB₃),[12] indicating the speaker's uncertainty about the validity of the situation. All of these seem to function at the clause level and can be attached either to a verbal (26–27) or a nominal (28) predicate.

(26)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1991: 3: 34)

ɲi   polaɣ-ʁaj   cʰi   ŋ-au   mə-i-d=ajaq
1SG   shout-CVB:COND 2SG   1SG-voice hear-FUT-IND=PROB₃

'If I shout, you will probably hear my voice.'

---

12 With expressive *a*-raising (see fn. 3 & 8), these clitics appear in the forms =*eq*, =*ejq*, =*ejeq* and=*eqŋař*, respectively.

(27)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 3: 90)

ɲi   pʰrə-inəɲanke   jaŋ   sik + ai-ʁar-i-d=eqɲař
1SG   come-CVB:before 3SG   all + make-COMPL/INT-FUT-IND=PROB₃

'He will probably do everything before I come.'

(28)   East Sakhalin dialect (fieldnotes 1989: 3: 141)

nana   i-də-ba   ɲi   kəmlə-d   řaŋGeɣlŋ=eqɲař
as.soon.as   3SG-see-CVB:as.soon.as   1SG   think-IND girl=PROB₃

'As soon as I saw [someone], I thought [that it was] probably a girl.'

Evidential clitics

Evidentiality, as a semantic category which concerns the speaker's indication of a source of information (see, e.g. Aikhenvald 2004: 3), is known to be closely connected with modality. Thus, Palmer (1986: 53–54) believes that evidentiality may be considered as a subtype of epistemic modality, since the main purpose of evidential forms is to qualify the validity of information offered by the speaker in terms of the type of evidence s/he has. According to another view, however, evidentiality and epistemic modality should be treated as distinct categories, since they differ in their semantics: "evidentials *assert* the nature of the evidence for the information in the sentence, while epistemic modals *evaluate* the speaker's commitment for the statement" (de Haan 1999).

From the semantic point of view, the Nivkh evidential clitics are clearly different from the devices expressing epistemic modality, since they indicate the way in which the information was acquired, without necessarily relating to the degree of the speaker's certainty concerning the truthfulness of the statement. At the same time, there are at least two formal similarities between Nivkh evidential and modal markers. First, evidential and clause-level modal clitics share the same distributional properties, in that they are attached to the predicate. Second, as will be shown below, some evidential and modal clitics are formally related. In both dialects of Nivkh there are two evidential clitics, corresponding to two basic types of evidential meanings, as suggested by Willett (1988: 57): (i) direct (sensory) evidentiality and (ii) indirect (reported) evidentiality.

Direct evidentiality in Nivkh is based on the speaker's visual experience and is strongly linked to mirativity, which involves the marking of information as new and unexpected (see, e.g. DeLancey 1997: 35–36). An event that is witnessed and takes place unexpectedly is expressed by the clitic =*hari*. This clitic can

be attached either to a verbal predicate in the indicative form (29–30) or to a nominal predicate (31–32).

(29)   Amur dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2014: 4)

caŋgi   nəmr   pʰrə-ɟ=hari.
boss   yesterday come-IND=EVID:DIR

'The boss came yesterday (unexpectedly, the speaker witnessed the fact).'

(30)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 133)

čʰi   taf + pʰi-d=hari!
2SG   house + be-IND=EVID:DIR

'You turn out to be at home! (the speaker did not expect to see the addressee)'

(31)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 216)

mer + pila-ŋ   pʰu-r   j-ajma-ɟ.
1PL:INCL + be.big-NMLZ go.out-CVB:MAN:3SG 3SG-look-IND

'Our foreman went out and looked.'

ənəje   ənəje   ɲəŋ + vo=hari.
oh   oh   1PL:EXCL + village=EVID:DIR

'Oh, oh, it turns out to be our village.'

(32)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 113)

in + daf-toχ   j-uɣ-ř   it-t.
3PL + house-DAT 3SG-come.in-CVB:MAN:3SG say-IND

'Coming into their house [she] said:

ənja   pocurl-kař + eɣlŋ-gun=hari   cin.
oh   be.beautiful-AUG + child-PL=EVID:DIR 2PL

Oh, it turns out that you are very beautiful children.'

As pointed out by Panfilov (1965: 216), the clitic =*hari* is of the same origin as the categorical and probabilitative particles derived from the verb *ha-* 'do so' (see Section 3). However, unlike the latter, it can never be used as a separate word but is always bound to some lexical item. The final element *-ri* is most likely an expressive variant of the suffix *-ra*, which occupies the same slot as a mood suffix. The suffix *-ra* is used when the speaker wishes to attract the interlocu-

tor's attention to an action, for example, *pʰrə-jvu-ra* [come-PROGR-EMPH] '[s/he] is coming!' (see Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 113).

Indirect (reported or hearsay) information is conveyed in both dialects by the evidential clitic =*furu*/=*pʰuru* (33−34), which is derived from the root of the quotative verb *fur-/-pʰur-* 'say, tell' (Panfilov 1965: 123). Sentences containing verb forms with this clitic do not allow direct explication of the source of information: it cannot be named. Verbal predicates with the clitic =*furu*/=*pʰuru* are often attested in folkloric texts, when the narrator wants to emphasize that s/he himself did not witness the situation described in the sentence (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 199−200).

(33)   Amur dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2014: 3)

pət	*ɲəŋ-doχ*	*caŋgi-ɣu*	*pʰrə-nə-ɟ=furu.*
tomorrow	1PL:EXCL-DAT	boss-PL	come-FUT-IND=EVID:REP

'They say that tomorrow bosses will come to us.'

(34)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2013: 8: 141)

milk	*pʰrə-jvu-ŋa*	*qaŋ*	*aɣ-ř*	*ha-d=furu*
devil	come-PROGR-CVB:when	dog	bark-CVB:MAN:3SG	do.so-IND=EVID:REP

'When a devil is coming, they say that a dog is barking.'

Besides verbal predicates, the reported evidential clitic may also be combined with other types of predicates, as in (35), where it is used in combination with an adverbial predicate.

(35)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 200)

ə:rə	*pʰrə-ɟ=hata?*	*nəmr=pʰuru*
when	come-IND=Q	yesterday=EVID:REP

'When did [he] arrive? − They say, yesterday.'

4. MOOD SUFFIXES

According to the classical definition suggested by Palmer (1986: 21), mood (or, in some linguistic traditions, "mode") is identified as a verbal morphosyntactic category that expresses modality. As a formally grammaticalized category, it is typically expressed through inflection in distinct sets of verbal paradigms (Bybee & Fleischman 1995: 2). The semantic scope of modality is rather broad and usually includes, apart from epistemic modality, also deontic modality, which indicates

whether the proposition expressed by an utterance is obligatory or permissible (see, e.g. Bybee 1985).

On the basis of semantic criteria Nivkh moods may be divided into three classes: (i) the indicative mood (neutral to any modal evaluation), (ii) epistemic moods, and (iii) deontic moods. The present study centres around epistemic moods, which are contrasted with the epistemically neutral indicative mood. Deontic moods (imperative, preventive, permissive, optative, etc.) are not discussed in this paper.

The number of epistemic moods and their composition in Nivkh varies depending on the dialect. The Amur dialect has three types of epistemic moods: (a) several fully grammaticalized moods that express various levels of the speaker's certainty about the truth/falsity of the proposition of an utterance, (b) an under-grammaticalized probabilitative mood denoting a corresponding meaning of uncertainty, and, finally, (c) an undergrammaticalized evidential mood rendering direct evidentiality. In the East Sakhalin dialect only moods of the types (a) and (b) are attested. According to their function the type (a) "certainty" moods can be further divided into: (ai) categorical moods, which strengthen the assumption expressed in the utterance, and (aii) adversative moods, which express contradiction or antithesis to the previous assumption.

In Nivkh, mood suffixes are usually located in the final obligatory slot of the finite verb template. Only the indicative mood suffix can be followed by the optional plural number suffix and/or a focus clitic:[13]

transitivity-aspect-causativity-aspect/desiderative-tense-modality-MOOD-number=focus

The same final slot may be occupied by an interrogative suffix or by an expressive marker dealing with intensification, or more precisely attenuation of an utterance. In some Nivkh studies (e.g. Kreinovich 1979), verb forms with these suffixes are treated as mood forms, apparently on the basis of their distributional properties. However, from the functional perspective, interrogative and expressive forms are usually treated outside the category of mood, since their semantic domains are not directly associated with modality. For that reason the forms concerned are not examined in this paper.

---

13 Basing on Kreinovich (1979: 315), one may assume that at least some of the Nivkh mood forms are able to take focus clitics. However, I have not been able to find any examples confirming this assumption.

Indicative mood

The indicative (or declarative) mood indicates that "the speaker is making a state-ment that he believes to be true" (Palmer 1986: 26). The indicative mood may be seen as epistemically unmarked or neutral in terms of modality, since it expresses a proposition with no direct indication of its epistemic status (Palmer 1986: 29). In Nivkh, the indicative is marked by the suffix *-ɟ/-c* (A), *-(n)d/-t* (ES), as exem-plified in (36–37).

(36)   Amur dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2014: 6)

qan   mur-doχ   vi-r   pʰrə-ɟ.
dog   horse-DAT   go-CVB:MAN:3SG   come-IND

'The dog ran to the horse.'

(37)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 3: 106)

cʰχař-kun   taf + taʁv-t   pan-d-ɣun.
tree-PL   house + be.around-CVB:MAN:3PL   grow-IND-PL

'Trees grow around the house.'

Categorical moods

There are two categorical moods in the Amur dialect of Nivkh. Both of them signify that the speaker is committed to the truth/falsity of the proposition of an utterance. There is, however, a difference in the degree of the speaker's confidence rendered by these moods.

The categorical mood marked by the suffix *-(ja)ʁan(a)/-(ja)qan(a)* (glossed as CATEG₁) as in (38–39), is relatively neutral with respect to the epistemic meaning of certainty. For this reason, Panfilov (1965: 115) considered the suffix *-ʁan(a)/-qan(a)* as another marker of the indicative mood, though with the note that the meaning of the corresponding verb form is more categorical than that of the proper indicative form.

(38)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 116)

luř   megi + tʰo-r   vi-na-ʁana.[14]
ice   1DU + carry-CVB:MAN:3SG   go-FUT-CATEG₁

'The ice will surely take the two of us away.'

---

14 Note a rare example of vowel harmony in the verb form *vi-na-ʁana*, where the future marker

(39)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 523)

hə +dəv-uin　　　　　*ɲivx*　*ɲi-n + park*　　　　*humi-ɣan.*
that + house-LOC　　　man　one-CL:human + only　live-CATEG₁

'Only one man lives in that house.'

The categorical mood marked by the suffix *-ɣitla/-kitla/-xitla*[15] (glossed as CATEG₂), as in (40–41), indicates that the speaker is absolutely certain in his/her evaluation of the proposition of the utterance. This suffix is also present in the categorical particle *haɣitla* (as discussed in Section 2 above).

(40)   Amur dialect (Otaina 1978: 76)

panɟi-jvu + o:la　　*ha-ɲan*　　　*tə + lark*　*ərk*　*mχaq-xitla.*
grow-PROGR + child　do.so-CVB:when　this + shirt　already　be.small-CATEG₂

'Because the child is growing, this shirt is already too small [for him].'

(41)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 522)

j-uin　*mu*　*jiv-ɣitle.*
3SG-LOC　boat　have-CATEG₂

'He certainly has a boat.'

In the East Sakhalin dialect, there is currently only one categorical mood expressed by the suffix *-xtna* (glossed as CATEG). This is the same element as is also attested in the categorical particle *haxtna* (as discussed in Section 2).[16] The suffix *-xtna* often occurs in the speaker's responses to the addressee's questions and its main function is to confirm the hypothesis expressed in this question, as in (42–43).

(42)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 2: 17)

ɲin-xrəř　　　　*vi-j-d=la?*　　　*vi-j-xtna.*
1PL:EXCL-WITH　　go-FUT-IND-Q　　go-FUT-CATEG

'Will [you] go with us? – [I] shall certainly go.'

---

appears in the form *-na-*, not the usual *-nə-* (Panfilov 1965: 116).

15 This suffix is also attested in the forms *-ɣitli/-kitli/-xitli* and *-ɣitle/-kitle/-xitle*, where the final *a* is raised to *i* or *e* in the same way as in the corresponding modal particle (fn. 3). Kreinovich (1979: 315) gives also the variants *-ɣitlo/-kitlo/-xitlo*.

16 According to Kreinovich (1979: 315), the suffixes *-ɣitlo/-kitlo/-xitlo* have also been used in the East Sakhalin dialect. However, there are no examples of these forms in my data.

(43)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 2000: 8: 7)

qʰoɤl   ur-d=la?   qʰoɤl   ur-xtna.
nature   be.good-IND=Q   nature   be.good-CATEG

'Is [his] nature good? – [His] nature is certainly good.'

Adversative moods

There are two adversative moods in the Amur dialect. The form in *-bar(a)/-par(a)* (glossed as ADVERS₁) is typically used in reaction to the addressee's statement. The same element is also present in the categorical particle *habar(a)* (as discussed in Section 2). The use of this form is related to an explicit or presupposed refutation of the addressee's allegation (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 115, see also Otaina 1978: 77). This is illustrated by the final verb *jiv-bara* '[you] certainly have' in the following dialogue (44).

(44)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 121)

xevgun   vorkun-dox   cʰo + ek-r   vi-ɟ.
Hevgun   Vorkun-DAT   fish + ask-CVB:MAN:3SG   go-IND

'Hevgun went to Vorkun asking for fish.'

vorgun-erq   it-c.   ɲ-uin   cʰo + qʰau-ɟ-ra.
Vorgun-side   say-IND   1SG-LOC   fish + NEG-IND-FOC

'Vorkun said: I don't have fish.'

xevgun-erq-ux   e-rx   it-c.   tʰa   valt-ja.
Hevgun-side-ABL   3SG-DAT   say-IND   NEG   lie-IMP:2SG

'Hevgun said to him: Don't lie.

cʰ-uin   cʰo   jiv-bara.
2SG-LOC   fish   have-ADVERS1

'You certainly have fish.'

In folkloric texts, the corresponding form is often used when the speaker wonders how the current situation has come about and assumes that from his/her point of view it should have happened differently, compare the verb form *huɲɟi-bař* '[we] certainly left' in (45).

(45)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 121)

sək hukruk-uin   huŋɟi-bař.   jaŋdox   tu-in   hum-ɟ-ŋa?
all there-LOC   leave-ADVERS₁   why   here   be-IND-Q

'[We] certainly left everything there. Why is [it] here?'

When used in narratives, the form in *-bar(a)/-par(a)* indicates the speaker's certainty that a state of affairs took place (46). This function is similar to that of the categorical moods.

(46)   Amur dialect (Otaina 1978: 76)

rəmzuk + o:la-gu   sək   ra:mci kevkevz-bara.
Rymzuk + child-PL   all   fully   be.curly-ADVERS₁

'The children of Rymzuk are certainly all fully curly.'

The categorical function of *-bar(a)/-par(a)* can alternatively be performed by the categorical particle *habar(a)*, as in (47). Note that the particle *habar(a)* is typically not used in the adversative function.

(47)   Amur dialect (Otaina 1978: 77)

a. *o:la   kʰo-bar.*   b. *o:la   kʰo-ɟ   habar.*
   child   sleep-ADVERS₁   child   sleep-IND   certainly

   'The child certainly sleeps.'   'The child certainly sleeps.'

Another adversative mood in the Amur dialect (glossed as ADVERS₂) is marked by the suffix *-ʁar/-qar*.[17] It is usually used in replies to the addressee's questions "with a tinge of distrust, disbelief" (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 115), as in (48–49).

(48)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 115)

if   pʰrə-rla?   if   pʰrə-ʁar.
3SG   come-Q:NEG:3SG 3SG   come-ADVERS₂

'Has he really not come? – He has come.'

---

17 In Otaina (1978: 77) this suffix also appears in the form *-gar/-kar* with initial velar (rather than back velar or uvular) consonants.

(49)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 521)

if   imŋ + mu +vo-ɟi-ləɣə-ʁar.
3SG   3PL + boat + take-even-not.have-ADVERS₂

'He did not take their boats.'

The same form marked by the suffix *-ʁar/-qar*, or also *-χar*, is present in the East Sakhalin dialect, where it functions as the only adversative mood (glossed as ADVERS). This form is very rarely attested in the speech of modern speakers. Example (50) illustrates one of its infrequent uses.

(50)   East Sakhalin dialect (Kreinovich 1979: 315)

jaŋ   ra-χar.
3SG   drink-ADVERS

'He has really drunk.'

Probabilitative moods

Probabilitative moods, which signal that the speaker considers the statement as dubious, doubtful, or uncertain, are still in the process of formation in Nivkh. The morphological markers of these moods have been developing from probabilitative clitics and probabilitative particles. For instance, in the Amur dialect the probabilitative clitic *=lu/=lo* can apparently be used in the verbal mood slot as a mood suffix (glossed as PROB₁), in which function it replaces the indicative suffix *-ɟ/-c*, as in (51), where *vi:-lu* [go-PROB₁] < *vi-ɟ=lu* [go-IND=PROB₁] '[s/he] probably goes', *kəpr-lu* [stand-PROB₁] < *kəpr-ɟ=lu* [stand-IND=PROB₁] '[s/he] probably stands'. It is, however, unclear how productive this process is, since no other examples are attested in the available Nivkh data.[18]

(51)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 528)

hə + ɲivx   vi:-lu   kəpr-lu...
that + man   go-PROB₁   stand-PROB₁

'That man either goes or stands …'

As pointed out by Panfilov (1965: 124), in the Amur dialect the probabilitative particles *hajaqan(a)*, *hajra*, and *hanəɟ* often merge with the indicative verb forms

---

18 Note that the corresponding interrogative clitic *=l/=lu/=lo* is regularly attested both as a clitic (after a mood marker) and as a suffix (instead of a mood marker).

in -*ɟ*/-*c*. This yields the new bound morphemes -*cʰajaqana*, -*cʰajra*, and -*cʰanəɟ* (glossed as PROB₂). Since these morphemes occupy the same slot as other mood suffixes and express the epistemic meaning of uncertainty, they can be treated as markers of a gradually emerging probabilitative mood, as in (elicited examples:) *mu-cʰajaqana*, *mu-cʰajra*, *mu-cʰanəɟ* [die-PROB₂] '[s/he] probably died'. Another example is *pʰrə-nə-cʰajra* [come- FUT-PROB₂] '(s/he) will probably come', which is derived from *pʰrə-nə-ɟ hajra* [come-FUT-IND probably] (52).

(52)   The Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 124)

ətək   pʰrə-nə-cʰajra.
father come-FUT-PROB₂

'Father will probably come.'

In the East Sakhalin dialect, the corresponding probabilitative forms are emerging in a different way. The mood markers (glossed as PROB₃) are formally identical with the modal clitics =*aq*, =*ajq*, =*ajaq*, =*aqŋař*, but when used as mood markers they replace the indicative suffix -(*n*)*d*/-*t*. However, all attested probabilitative mood forms comprise the future tense suffix -*i*-/-*j*-, as in (elicited examples:) *mə*- 'hear' : *mə-j-aq* [hear-FUT-PROB₃] < *mə-j-d=aq* [hear-FUT-IND=PROB₃] '(s/he) will probably hear', similarly: *mə-j-ajq* < *mə-j-d=ajq*, *mə-j-aqna* < *mə-j-d=aqna*, *mə-j-aqnař* < *mə-j-d=aqnař*. Another example is *ajru-j-aqŋař* [swear-FUT-PROB₃] '(he) will probably swear', which is derived from *ajru-j-d=aqŋař* [swear-FUT-IND=PROB₃] (53).

(53)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1989: 5: 3)

cʰi	*ɣe-n*	*i-ɲ-inə-ʁaj*	*ajru-j-aqŋař.*
2SG	take-CVB:MAN:2SG:FUT	3SG-eat-DES/INCH-CVB:cond	swear-FUT-PROB

'If you take it and eat it, [he] will probably swear.'

Evidential mood

A morphologically marked evidential mood has been developing only in the Amur dialect and only with respect to direct evidentiality. Its marker originates from the direct evidential clitic =*hari*. Being attached to the verbal predicate, the clitic fuses with the indicative suffix -*ɟ*/-*c* and turns into the evidential mood suffix -*cʰari*, for example, (elicited example:) *tʰa-ɣət-cʰari* [roast-COMPL/INT-EVID:DIR] < *tʰa-ɣət-ɟ=hari* [roast-COMPL/INT-IND=EVID:DIR] '[I] had roasted (it turned out)'. Examples (54–56) illustrate the use of this form.

(54)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 125)

əmək   it-c.   cʰo + tʰa-ɣət-cʰari.
mother   say-IND   fish + roast-COMPL/INT-EVID:DIR

'Mother said: "It turned out that [I] had roasted fish."'

(55)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 228)

o:la!   cʰi   pʰrə-cʰari.
child:VOC   2SG   come-EVID:DIR

'Child! It turned out that you came.'

(56)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 536)

qama-ve!   ləx   kə-cʰari.
run-IMP:2PL   rain   fall-EVID:DIR

'Run! The rain started.'

5. MODAL SUFFIX

Apart from mood suffixes, as discussed above, the Amur dialect of Nivkh has one other suffix expressing epistemic modality. This suffix has the form *-bəɲevo-*, and since it occupies the slot between the tense marker and the mood suffix it is here termed "modal suffix" and classified as belonging to a morphological category different from that of the actual mood suffixes. It has no analogue in the East Sakhalin dialect and, in general, it looks like a lonely exception in the system of Nivkh epistemic modal markers:

transitivity-aspect-causativity-aspect/desiderative-tense-MODALITY-mood-number=focus

The modal suffix *-bəɲevo-* conveys the epistemic meaning of the speaker's uncertainty about the truthfulness of the proposition (57–58). The origin of this suffix is unclear, though it is possible that it goes back to some lexical verb with a corresponding meaning.

(57)   Amur dialect (Nedjalkov & Otaina 2013: 141)

cʰi   peʁo-bəɲevo-ɟ=la?
2SG   be.in.a.hurry-apparently-IND=Q

'You are in a hurry, it seems?'

(58)   Amur dialect (Savel'eva & Taksami 1970: 521)

ɲi   cʰ-əjm-nə-bəɲevo-ɟ.
1SG   2SG-know-FUT-apparently-IND

'It seems that I don't know you.'

In all contemporary examples the suffix *-bəɲevo-* occurs only in indicative verb forms, in which it is followed by the indicative mood marker *-ɟ*. However, in an earlier work by Kreinovich (1934) there are examples of its use also as a part of adversative verb forms. Based on our current knowledge and without any further context the precise meaning of the sentence in (59) is difficult to establish, but it seems that the meaning of uncertainty indicated by the modal suffix overrides the meaning of certainty rendered by the mood suffix.

(59)   Amur dialect (Kreinovich 1934: 213)

ɲi   cʰ-sa-dox   qʰau-bəɲevo-ʁar.
1SG   2SG-beat-DAT   NEG-probably-ADVERS$_2$

'It seems, I didn't beat you.'

6. PATTERNS OF CHANGE

As has been shown in the previous sections, there is a whole range of semantic and grammatical changes that have been taking place in Nivkh in the realm of epistemic modality. These changes can be attributed to three basic processes:

(i) lexicalization, i.e. the reanalysis of a verb form consisting of two or more morphemes into a single lexeme; this process explains the diachronic background of the modal particles (Section 2);

(ii) cliticization, i.e. the change of a free morpheme into a clitic; this process explains the diachronic background of the modal and evidential clitics (Section 3);

(iii) suffixalization, i.e. the change of a free morpheme or a clitic into a suffix; this process explains the diachronic background of the mood suffixes (Section 4) and the modal suffix (Section 5).

Cliticization and suffixalization may also be understood as manifestations of the more general phenomenon of grammaticalization. Lexicalization, cliticization, and suffixalization may follow each other and may be accompanied by further semantic modifications. The present section summarizes the semantic and grammatical changes that have affected the Nivkh modal and evidential elements discussed in this paper.

Lexicalization

Several instances of lexicalization without further grammatical changes are attested in the Nivkh modal particles.

First, the adversative and categorical mood forms of the functional verb *ha-* 'do so', containing the still productive mood suffixes *-bar(a)/-par(a)*, *-ɣitla/ -kitla/-xitla* (A), and *-xtna* (ES), have been lexicalized into the categorical particles *habar(a)*, *haɣitla* (A), and *haxtna* (ES). This lexicalization has been accompanied by a minor semantic change in the particle *habar(a)*, resulting in the mood marked by the suffix *-bar(a)/-par(a)* primarily expressing an adversative meaning, while the corresponding particle indicates a categorical meaning.

Second, in the East-Sakhalin dialect, the indicative verb forms in *-(n)d/-t*, formed from the same functional verb *ha-* 'do so' and combined with the productive probabilitative clitics *=ajaq* and *=aqɲař*, have been lexicalized into the probabilitative particles *hadajaq* and *hadaqɲař*.

It may be added that there are several other forms of the verb *ha-*, notably the probabilitative particles *hajra* and *hajaqan(a)* (A) and the direct evidential clitic *=hari*, that also express modality, but they have subsequently undergone other processes and will be discussed separately below.

Finally, the instrumental form of the deverbal noun *mǝk-s-kir* (A), *maχtu-ř-kiř* or *maχtu-ř-kis* (ES) [be.correct-NMLZ-INSTR] 'by truth' has been lexicalized into the categorical particle *mǝkskir* (A), *maχtuřkiř* or *maχtuřkis* (ES) 'certainly'.

Lexicalization > cliticization > suffixalization

In the East Sakhalin dialect, two consecutive grammatical changes have produced the direct evidential clitic *=hari*. At the first stage the expressive form of the verb *ha-* 'do so' was lexicalized into the particle **hari*, which is no longer used as a separate word in the language. At the second stage this particle has been grammaticalized into a clitic.

A further step from clitic to suffix is exemplified by the Amur direct evidential suffix *-cʰari*, which represents the fusion of the indicative suffix *-ɟ/-c* and the evidential clitic *=hari*. A similar fusion has taken place, also in the Amur dialect, in the probabilitative mood suffixes *-cʰajaqana*, *-cʰajra*, *-cʰanǝɟ*, which are based on the combination of the indicative suffix with the probabilitative particles *hajra*, *hajaqan(a)*, and *hanǝɟ*, themselves representing various lexicalized forms of the verb *ha-* 'do so'. Very probably, in these cases also, the lexicalized particles underwent an intermediate phase of cliticization.

An interesting example of lexicalization and cliticization is offered by the marker of reported evidentiality =*furu*/=*pʰuru*. This marker is based on the root of the quotative verb *fur-/-pʰur-* 'tell', which, in combination with an unidentified vocalic element -*u*,[19] cliticizes to the finite predicate. The verb forms with this clitic are still highly productive.

Related to this, it can be added that the quotative verb *fur-/-pʰur-* also appears in the suffixalized form -*vur* (A), -*vuř* (ES), marking a quotative converb. This suffixalized form may have developed either directly from the verb root or indirectly from the cliticized form =*furu*/=*pʰuru*. Moreover, the converb marker was subsequently reanalyzed as containing the converb suffix -*r*/-*t* (A), -*ř*/-*t*/-*n* (ES), which has ultimately yielded the variants -*vur*/-*vut* (A), -*vuř*/-*vut*/-*vun* (ES), as used in the modern language. The use of the variants in -*r*, -*t*, and -*n* depends on the person and number of the subject as well as on the tense and mood of the verb according to a set of well-known rules (not discussed here). Reported converbs are always used as predicates of embedded clauses in combination with a finite verb of speech, as in (60–61).

(60)   Amur dialect (Panfilov 1965: 241)

əɣrku + *tʰəlgu* [*kins*   *əlɣi-vut*]   *ir-c=ra.*
be.old + tale   devil   be.a.lot-CVB:REP:3PL   say-IND=FOC

'Old tales say that there used to be a lot of devils.'

(61)   East Sakhalin dialect (Gruzdeva, fieldnotes 1991: 3: 1)

tʰulf   *ha-data*
winter   do.so-CVB:while

'In the winter

əcx=xun   [*qʰavla* + *tolf*   *ha-jnə-vut*]   *it-t-ɣun.*
old.man=PL   be.hot + summer do.so-DES/INCH-CVB:REP:3PL   say-IND-PL

old men said that the summer was going to be hot.'

There are also a few clitics in Nivkh for which no derivation from unbound morphemes exists synchronically. Some of these clitics have developed further into suffixes. Examples are offered by the probabilitative clitic =*lu*/=*lo*, which has replaced the indicative mood suffix and developed into the probabilitative

---

19 As a hypothesis, it may be suggested that the element -*u* in =*furu*/=*pʰuru* can possibly be traced back to the commonly attested transitivizing suffix -*u*-.

mood suffix *-lu/-lo* in at least a couple of cases (51). A similar development is observed in the East Sakhalin probabilitative clitics *=aq*, *=ajq*, *=ajaq*, and *=aqŋař*, which can also move to the verbal mood slot and function as the probabilitative mood suffixes *-aq*, *-ajq*, *-ajaq*, and *-aqŋař*.

7. CONCLUSION

This study has once again demonstrated that epistemic modality is a heterogeneous category not only from the semantic, but also from the formal point of view. In Nivkh, this semantic category is still being grammaticalized. As has been shown, Nivkh has a full spectrum of grammatical devices for expressing epistemic meanings. These devices (particles, clitics, and suffixes) are located at different points on the scale of grammaticalization, often competing with each other in the same modal domain. It may be concluded that mood is a diachronically recent category in Nivkh and is still in the process of formation. The categorical mood has already been established as a clear morphosyntactic feature, whereas the probabilitative and evidential moods are not yet fully grammaticalized and are just entering the morphological paradigm.

The observed trends of development give clues for the assumption that the whole structure of the Nivkh clause was once different from what it is today. The predicate of an epistemically marked clause was apparently originally formed by the nominal form in *-ɟ/-c* (A), *-(n)d/-t* (ES), accompanied by a modally marked form of the copular verb *ha-* 'do so'. Later, the modally marked copula was lexicalized into a modal particle. The suffix *-ɟ/-c* (A), *-(n)d/-t* (ES) was reanalyzed as an indicative mood suffix and the forms with this suffix started to be used as regular finite verb forms. Further developments involved the grammaticalization of several modal particles into modal clitics and/or mood suffixes. This proposed scenario is indirectly confirmed by the fact that several mood forms of the verb *ha-* are still used as finite predicates in sentences with non-finite converbs and coordinated verb forms. In epistemically neutral sentences with coordinated forms, the functional verb tends to be omitted, and, as a result, coordinated forms acquire a finite function.

One may speculate that if the Nivkh language had the possibility to develop further, both dialects would, after a certain period of time, have an elaborate paradigm of epistemic moods resembling the systems attested, for instance, in the neighbouring Tungusic languages.

ABBREVIATIONS

A   Amur dialect
ES   East Sakhalin dialect

1	first person		FUT	future
2	second person		GEN	general
3	third person		IMP	imperative
ABL	ablative		INCH	inchoative
ACC	accusative		INCL	inclusive
ADVERS	adversative		IND	indicative
AUG	augmentative		INSTR	instrumental
CATEG	categorical		INT	intensive
CAUS	causative		INTER	interrogative
CL	class		ITER	iterative
COMPL	complement		LOC	locative
CONC	concessive		MAN	manner
COORD	coordinative		MULT	multiple
CVB	converb		NEG	negative
DAT	dative		NMLZ	nominalizer
DES	desiderative		PL	plural
DIR	directive		PROB	probabilitative
DU	dual		PROGR	progressive
DUR	durative		Q	question
EMPH	emphatic		REFL	reflexive
EVID	evidential		REP	reported
EXCL	exclusive		SG	singular
FOC	focus		VOC	vocative

REFERENCES

AIKHENVALD, Alexandra Y. 2004. *Evidentiality*. Oxford: OUP.

BYBEE, Joan 1985. *Morphology: A Study of the Relation Between Meaning and Form*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

BYBEE, Joan & Suzanne FLEISCHMAN 1995. Modality in Grammar and Discourse: An Introductory Essay. In: J. BYBEE & S. FLEISCHMAN (eds), *Modality in Grammar and Discourse*: 1–14. (Typological Studies in Language 32) Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

DeLancey, Scott 1997. Mirativity: The Grammatical Marking of Unexpected Information. *Linguistic Typology* 1(1): 33–52.

de Haan, Ferdinand 1999. Evidentiality and Epistemic Modality: Setting Boundaries. *South-West Journal of Linguistics* 18: 83–101.

Kreinovich, Erukhim [Е.А. Крейнович] 1934. Нивхский (гиляцкий) язык. In: Е.А. Крейнович (ed.), *Языки и письменность народов Севера*, III: *Языки и письменность палеоазиатских народов*: 181–222. Moscow: Учпедгиз.

Kreinovich, Erukhim [Е.А. Крейнович] 1979. Нивхский язык. In: *Языки Азии и Африки*, III: *Языки древней передней Азии (несемитские). Иберийско-кавказские языки. Палеоазиатские языки*: 295–329. Moscow: Наука.

Lambrecht, Knud 1994. *Information Structure and Sentence Form: Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representation of Discourse Referents*. Cambridge: CUP.

Nedjalkov, Vladimir P. & Galina A. Otaina 2013. *A Syntax of the Nivkh Language: The Amur Dialect*. Ed. E.Š. Geniušiene & E. Gruzdeva. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nuyts, Jan 2001. *Epistemic Modality, Language and Conceptualization: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Otaina, Galina [Г.А. Отаина] 1978. *Качественные глаголы в нивхском языке*. Moscow: Наука.

Palmer, Frank R. 1986. Mood and Modality. Cambridge: CUP.

Panfilov Vladimir [В.З. Панфилов]. 1965. *Грамматика нивхского языка*, II. Moscow: Наука.

Savel'eva, Valentina & Chuner Taksami [В.Н. Савельева & Ч.М. Таксами] 1970. *Нивхско-русский словарь*. Moscow: Советская энциклопедия.

Willett, Thomas. 1988. A Cross-Linguistic Survey of the Grammaticization of Evidentiality. *Studies in Language* 12(1): 51–97.