

Coding of participant-internal possibility modality in Kazakh

Gulzada Salmyrzakzy Yeshniyaz, Kussaiyn Tynysbaiuly Ryssaldy

Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Muratbaev Street, 200, Almaty, 050022, Republic of Kazakhstan

Abstract. This paper deals with expression of participant-internal possibility modality and its coding in Kazakh with *-A al* analytical formant. It will be shown that *-A al* expresses all semantic properties of participant-internal possibility modality such as inherent/ learnt and mental/physical. Therefore constitutes the core of the functional-semantic of the given modality. The paper also accounts for the relation of *-A al* in modal usage with other category operators such as aspect and voice.

[Yeshniyaz G.S., Ryssaldy K.T. **Coding of participant-internal possibility modality in Kazakh.** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(11):334-337] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 53

Keywords: modality, ability, participant-internal, converb, functional approach

Introduction

The domain of modality is one of the controversial issues of linguistics in general as well as Kazakh linguistics. This paper will focus on one of the subcategory of modality, participant-internal possibility modality (henceforth PIPM) which refers "...to a kind of possibility internal to a participant engaged in the state of affairs. In the case of possibility we are dealing with a participant's ability (capacity)" [1, p. 80] and its expression with analytical verb *-A al* in Kazakh, a south Kipchak Turkic language.

Our central hypothesis is that *-A al* belongs to the core of the 'functional-semantic field' of participant-internal possibility modality and expresses all semantic meanings of ability like inherent/learnt and mental/ physical.

There are only few works done to define modality and its means of expression in Kazakh language. Most of them do not consider modality as a separate category, but investigate separate language units which express modality in general. For instance, Mamadilov Q. and Zhanpeyisov E. analyze modal verb constructions and their meanings [2, p.4-15], [3, p. 4-35], Tolegenov O. deals with mood as one way of expressing modality [4, p.1-163]. As these works concern with formal properties of a language they are considered to be structural studies, which treat language as a grammatical system consisting of rules. But the primary function of the language is communication and it is best seen and can be analyzed in its functions. Thus, functional approach is carried out in this paper to identify language units which express participant-internal possibility modality and ability meaning constitutes "functional-semantic field" of PIPM.

The only work on modality in the sense of functionalism in Kazakh is done by Qulmanov S. He explores modality as a functional-semantic category

and their means of expression in Kazakh. He defines possibility, probability, obligative, volitive, prohibitive and preventative modality meanings in Kazakh and language units which express these meanings [5, p.525-655]. But in the literature it was pointed out that possibility or dynamic modality can be internal, which constitutes ability meaning and external which gives root possibility meaning, which is not considered by Qulmanov S. As a result of our investigation we found out that in Kazakh these meanings are mostly given by different means except the case when *-A al* can express both participant-internal and external possibility modality. In this paper we will concentrate on participant-internal possibility and show what triggers ability meaning of *-A al* analytical formant.

The data in this paper was drawn from 10 novels in Kazakh which comprise 3500 pages and 140 sentences or passages were collected with ability meaning. In 41% of cases ability meaning were given by *-A al* analytical formant.

The structure of the paper as follows. In Section 2 we will briefly look at the theoretical issues on the topic. Section 3 contains the core of our analysis, i.e. peculiarities of *-A al* in giving ability meaning. Section 4 discusses semantic properties of participant-internal possibility expressed by *-A al*. Section 5 outlines relation of PIPM with other categories as aspect, voice.

Theoretical issues

According to Bybee J. and Fleischman S. "modality - ..., is the semantic domain pertaining to elements of meaning that language expresses. It covers a broad range of semantic nuances – jussive, desiderative, intentive, hypothetical, potential, obligative, dubitative, hortatory, exclamative, etc. – whose common dominator is the addition of a supplement or overlay of meaning to the most neutral

semantic value of the proposition of an utterance, namely factual and declarative” [6, p. 2]. We understand modality as an additional meaning to the proposition of the sentence. The overlaying meaning can be explained in terms of possibility and necessity as the action or situation described in the proposition can be 1) necessarily/possibly true/false from the point of speaker (epistemic modality); 2) necessary/possible to do from the point of speaker (deontic modality); 3) necessary/possible to do for the subject of the sentence (dynamic modality). The latter meaning covers PIP modality.

Many scholars tend to use different terms to refer to ability meaning. In this work we look at the classical works on modality. Bybee J., Perkins J, Pagliuca W. *treat ability meaning as one of the submeanings of agent-oriented modality and define it as “ability reports the existence of internal enabling conditions in the agent with respect to the predicate action”. Also add that ability meaning can generalize to “root possibility, which reports on general enabling conditions and is not restricted to the internal condition of ability, but also reports on general external conditions, such as social and physical”* [7, p.177-178].

Palmer F. *considers ability meaning is covered by sub-class of dynamic modality “subject-oriented” modality and defines that “... dynamic modality is subject-oriented in the sense that it is concerned with the ability or volition of the subject of the sentence, rather than opinions (epistemic) or attitudes (deontic) of the speaker (and addressee)”* [8, p. 36]. The reason for choosing the term “subject-oriented” lies in that fact that only animate creatures have an ability to do something, but the subject of the sentence can be inanimate which have power or quality to do the action in the predicate [9, p. 76-79].

Van Der Auwera J. and Plugian V. A. favors the term “participant-internal possibility” which means that inner qualities of the participant/subject of the sentence makes it possible to fulfil the action given in the proposition [1, p.80]. The term can also be contrasted to “participant external possibility” where because of the external circumstance it is possible to carry out the action. Terms used by Palmer F, Bybee J. *et al.* and Auwera J. *et al.* in some sense cover the same semantic domain. For instance, “subject-oriented possibility”, “ability” and “participant-internal possibility” refer to ability/capacity meaning, but we likewise side with Auwera J. *et al.* as “participant-internal possibility” is more specific, can be opposed to its counterpart, also it refers not only to the ability but also capacity of the participant. Also we exploit ability meaning in relation to animate subjects. According to The good English Guide «ability is an acquired skill: her ability

to speak several languages. A capacity is more an innate talent: her capacity for learning languages” [10, p.43]. Thus, participant-internal possibility can be further classified as inherent/ learnt and mental/physical.

-A al – participant-internal possibility modality operator

According to M. Erdal “a verb phrase can beside a fully lexical kernel, include another verb, which can be grammatical to varying degrees ... when only one of the verbs in a verb phrase is lexical to any degree the construction is called “analytical” [11, p.244]. In Kazakh Verb + CV + AUX construction is called “analyticalıq formalı etistikter” (analytical verb form) [12, p.292], “kürdeli etistikter” (complex verb) [13, p.51] or “descriptive verb construction” [14, p. 38], where CV+AUX comprises analytical format which adds a grammatical meaning (modal, aspectual) to the lexical main verb.

The most prominent operator of ability in Kazakh is *-A al* analytical formant. It is composed of present converb *-A* (with variants *-e* (used after stems ending in consonant) and *-y* (used after stems ending in vowels); this do not change the meaning) and auxiliary verb *al* which lexically means “take”, but in this format its meaning is bleached. According to Clauson G. the origin and development of the form is obscure [15, p.82]. The earliest usage of this form as a marker of possibility/ability seems to be in a Khwarezmian Turkic text from the first half of the 14th century [16, p.82]. Since then *-A al* “has developed into one of the most prominent possibility operator in the Turkic languages which is spread specially throughout the languages of the Northwestern and Southeastern subgroups” [17, p. 1-28] in “non-fused (e.g. Tatar, Kazakh and Kirghiz) and fused variants (e.g. Uzbek, Uyghur)” [16, p.83].

According to Eckmann J. *-A al* “expresses ability or possibility” [18, p.143]. Furthermore, Kirchner M. states that it “denotes ability” [19, p.325], while Johanson L. calls *-A al* “possibility marker” [20, p.43]. Mamanov İ. indicates that *-A al* “выражает возможность (в положительной форме) и невозможность (в отрицательной форме)” corresponding it with Russian modal verb “мочь” [13, p. 235-36] which can express not only participant-internal and -external possibility, but also deontic modality. Yuwldaşev A.A. also uses “форма возможности” to refer to *-A al* [21, p. 19]. Qulmanov S.Q. states that *-A al* expresses “mümkindik” (possibility) modality referring to both participant-internal and -external possibility [22, p.1-155]. In a Kazakh academic grammar book “Modern Kazakh language” *-A al* is said to express “возможность” without specification in general [23, p. 287]. Demirci

K. indicates that *-A al* “shows ability and sometimes probability” [14, p. 61].

So, what does *-A al* express: ability/participant-internal possibility or possibility/participant-external possibility modality (henceforce PEPM)?

As a result of our investigation we have found out, as it was noted in the previous part, *-A al* is the only language unit which expresses both of these meanings as in other cases participant-internal and – external possibility meanings are coded by different means. It can be the answer that most scholars cited above used the term “possibility” generally in relation to *-A al* for both PIPM and PEPM without considering its sub-meanings.

Here arises another question: what triggers PIPM or PEPM meanings of *-A al*? As the present paper concerns with PIPM we will further discuss factors which influence on ability reading of *-A al* in detail.

As modality is a functional-semantic category, while studying the modality one have to consider semantics in its actual use. According to Bybee J. *et al.* “many of the functions of modality are inextricably embedded in contexts of social interaction and, consequently, cannot be described adequately apart from their contextual moorings in interactive discourse” [6, p. 3]. Contextual frame, i.e. surrounding which it occurs, plays a key role in differentiating possibility and ability readings of *-A al*. For instance, the phrase “can tear a spear to pieces” can be interpreted both PIPM and PEPM depending on the context. PIPM interpretation of this phrase shows that a person is physically strong, therefore can do it. PEPM interpretation presents that there was a favorable circumstance to make it possible for a person.

The next property which sets a boundary between possibility and ability readings of *-A al* can be explained in terms of its relation to the Iterative and Dynamic aspect. According to Coates J. Iterative aspect refers to habitual, repeated actions, whereas the main predication with Dynamic aspect refers to a single action. [24, p. 55]. However, we have to mention that it does not show the clear cut distinction, but shed light on the issue. If *-A al* occurs in present tense, it has only ability meaning, whereas *-A al* in past tense open to be interpreted as PIPM or PEPM. Nevertheless, *-A al+ PST* construction is most likely to be interpreted in ability sense, then possibility sense. Thus, if a person can do something habitually, it means he has general ability to do it. When a person was able to do it only once, then he could have had a favorable circumstance to carry out the action.

Semantic features of participant –internal possibility modality expressed by *- A al*

-A al analytical formant does not describe the action itself, but shows its state, i.e. a state of possible actualization. *-A al* can express inherent/learned and physical/mental participant-internal possibility meanings. Inherent participant-internal possibility meaning denotes that action is possible to be carried out because the subject has innate or born property such as talent, gift and capacity to do the action. Learned participant-internal possibility shows that because of acquired knowledge or skill the subject is able to fulfil the action. Physical participant-internal possibility displays subject’s strength to do the action, whereas mental participant-internal possibility is connected with subject’s intellectual ability. Sometimes the distinction between these meanings is not clear cut. For instance, physical ability meaning can overlap with mental ability of a person or inherent ability meaning can overlap with learned one. Nevertheless, in most cases these meaning are given separately. The semantic difference is determined mostly by the contextual frame and semantics of the verb. For example, the verb “lift” inflected by *-A al* always denotes physical PIPM, while the verb “read” with *-A al* means both/either learned and/or mental PIPM depending on the contextual frame.

Relation of participant-internal possibility modality with other grammatical categories

In *Verb+A al* construction, lexical verb in the construction takes a converb suffix, thus remains in a non-finite form, whereas auxiliary verb is inflected by the tense and personal markers. *-A al* inflected by present tense markers shows that person have general ability/capacity to carry out the action, by a past tense marker shows that a person had a general ability or was able to fulfill a certain single action. Therefore, *- A al+ PRES* refers to Iterative aspect and *-A al+ PST* refers to both Iterative and Dynamic aspect. In future form *-A al* shows, first, an ability in the future, on the other hand speaker’s belief that the subject of the sentence will be able to carry out a certain activity. In this sense, PIPM overlaps with epistemic modality.

If tense and personal markers are inflected to *-A al*, voice suffixes precede *-A al*, precisely, causative, cooperative-reciprocal and reflexive-middle voice suffixes, but not passive voice suffix. It can be explained that the ability meaning is not compatible with passive voice meaning. The former meaning “is crucially associated with agentivity, that is, the action referred to in the main predication is carried out by someone using their own energy” [24, p. 245], while in the latter meaning action is done by somebody else which is mostly unknown and unimportant. Palmer F. illustrates this feature in English which is also true for Kazakh: “the semantics would suggest that neutral dynamic modals ought to be voice neutral and that subject-oriented once ought not. If it is possible for

Bill to beat John, it is possible for John to be beaten by Bill, but it is not reasonable to suggest that, if Bill has the ability to beat him, John has the ability to be beaten.” [8, p. 101].

Conclusion

The analysis of modality in Kazakh revealed the existence of sub-meaning of possibility, participant-internal possibility modality which deals with the ability and capacity of the subject of an action. We have identified that *-A al* is a prominent operator of PIPM in Kazakh as it has an ability to express it from different semantic facets and frequently used in expressing PIPM.

The analysis describes the relation of PIMP with voice, tense and aspect. When *-A al* is inflected by present tense it refers to iterative aspect showing a general ability of the subject, whereas with past tense marker refers to both iterative and dynamic aspects, indicating subject's general ability and ability to do a single action the past. In Future tense form PIPM overlaps with epistemic modality, *-A al* speaker's commitment to the truth value of the proposition.

PIPM can go with all voice markers except passive voice, as ability requires a subject of the sentence.

Abbreviations

PIPIM	-	participant-internal possibility modality
PEPM	-	participant-external possibility modality
CV	-	converb
AUX	-	auxiliary
PST	-	past tense
PRES	-	Present tense

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Yeshniyaz Gulzada Salmyrzakzy
Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages
Muratbaev Street, 200, Almaty, 050022, Republic of Kazakhstan

References

1. Van Der Auwera, J. and V.A. Plugian, 1998. Modality's semantic map. *Linguistic Typology*, 2: 79-124.
2. Mamadilov, Q., 1996. Etistiktiñ modal'dilïq qurılımdarı. Astana: Elorda, pp: 4-15.
3. Zhanpeyisov, E., 1958. Modal'nye slova v sovremennom kazaxskom jazyke. Almatı: Ğilim, pp: 4-35.

4. Tölegenov, O., 1968. Qazirgi qazaq tilindegi žalpi modal'diq žäne maqsat mändi žay söylemdler tiypteri. Almatı: Mektep, pp: 1-163.
5. Qulmanov, S., 2010. Modal'dilïq kategoryasınıñ funkcionaldı-semantikalıq öristeri. Qazaq tiliniñ funkcionaldı grammatikası, Almatı: Anuwar KZ, pp:225-265
6. Bybee, J. and S. Fleischman, 1995. Modality in Grammar and discourse. Amsaterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins publishing company, pp: 2.
7. Bybee, J., R. Perkins and W. Pagliuca, 1994. The evolution of grammar: Tense, aspect and modality in the languages of the world. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp: 177-178.
8. Palmer, F.R., 1990. Modality and the English modals. London: Logman, pp: 36, 101.
9. Palmer, F.R., 2001. Mood and modality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp: 76-79.
10. Howard, C., 1993. The good English Guide. Kent: Mackeys Ltd, pp: 43.
11. Erdal, M.A., 2004. Grammar of Old Tukić. Netherlands: Brill NV, pp: 244.
12. Qasımova, B., 1989. Qazirgi qazaq tili. Almatı, pp: 292.
13. Mamanov, İ., 2007. Qazaq til biliminiñ mäseleleri. Almatı: Arıs, pp: 51.
14. Demirci, K., 2006. Kazakh Verbal Structures and Descriptive Verbs. Dunwoody Press, pp: 38-41.
15. Clauson, G., 1972. An etymological dictionary of pre-thirteenth-century Turkish. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp: 124.
16. Rentzsch, J., 2011. Modality in the Baburnama. *Turkic languages*, 15: 82-83.
17. Schönig, C., 1987. (Un)Möglichkeitformen in den sogenannten Altaischen Sprachen. *Materialia Turcica*, 13: 1-28.
18. Eckman, J., 1966. Chagatay Manual. The Netherlands: Mouton and Co, pp: 143.
19. Kirchner, M., 2006. Kazakh and Karakalpak. *The Turkic languages*, Johanson L. and Éva Á. Csató, pp: 325
20. Johanson, L., 2006. The Structure of Turkic. *The Turkic languages*, Johanson L. and Éva Á. Csató, pp: 43.
21. Yuwldaşev, A., 1977. Sootnoşenie deepričastnyx ličnyx form glagola v tjurkskix jazykax. Moskva: Nauka, pp: 19.
22. Qulmanov, S., 2006. Qazaq tilindegi mümkindik modaldiliginiñ funkcionaldı-semantikalıq öristeri. Almatı, pp: 1-155.
23. Sovremenny kazaxskji jazyk, 1962. Alma-ata: Izdatel'stvo akademii nauk kazaxskoj SSR, pp: 287.
24. Coates, J., 1983. The semantics of the modal auxiliaries. London & Canberra: Croom Helm, pp: 79-124, 245.

6/28/2014