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PAST TENSE FORMS OF THE VERB 'BE'
IN MODAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN UDMURT[1]

In Udmurt the past tense forms of the verb 'be' (*val* and *vylem*) appear in different modal constructions and in the non-declarative moods. The paper focuses on the use of *val* and *vylem* in four modal constructions: two deontic, a desiderative and a permissive one. It is established that in such constructions *val* and *vylem* can have non-modal and modal use as well. In their non-modal sense *val* and *vylem* primarily modify the clause temporally and form the past tense equivalent of the given modal construction. The difference between the non-modal use of *val* and *vylem* lies in the difference between the first and second past tense in general.

In their modal use *val* and *vylem* decrease the degree of modal force (also called as modal attenuation) and should be analyzed as particles. In such cases modal constructions can be interpreted as counterfactual conditionals. Differences can be characterized between the modal use of *val* and *vylem*. The particle *vylem* is associated with greater mental distance between the speaker and factuality and expresses that the likelihood of realization is small or nonexistent. therefore, it can be considered epistemic. The particle *val* does not distance the events from factuality to such a high extent as *vylem*. Also, native speakers associated a higher probability of fulfilment with the utterances formed with *val*. In my opinion, the difference between the modal use of the particles originates from their verbal use and from the differences between the first and second past tense.

Keywords: Udmurt, past tense, modality, modal constructions.

The paper discusses the use of the past tense forms of the verb 'be' in modal constructions in the Udmurt language. The paper covers such constructions that comprise a modal construction and the past tense forms of 'be' (*val* or *vylem*). I argue that in such constructions *val* and *vylem* can have various functions, non-modal (usually temporal) and modal as well. Possible interpretations depend on the context. The illustration below does not comprehend the differences between the past tense forms of 'be'.

(1) *so-ly   tros užany   **kule   val   //   vyl-em***
     s/he-DAT lot   work-INF **have.to   be.1PST   //   be-2PST[3SG]**
     a) 'S/he had to work a lot.'
     b) 'S/he should work a lot.'

The paper focuses on the latter case, in which *val* and *vylem* should be analyzed as modal particles. In addition, a difference can be characterized between the modal semantic contents of *val* and *vylem*,

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which can be associated with their verbal use as an existential verb and the differences between the two synthetic past tenses in general.

The modal function of *val* and *vylem* is not unknown in Udmurt linguistics [cf. Tarakanov 1998, 174; Winkler 2011, 137], it is usually mentioned in relation to the imperative mood and some deontic constructions. However, in descriptive works this type of use is not discussed at all or only covered briefly. Furthermore, such works focus on the modal use of the form *val* and the other form, *vylem*, is not mentioned, or they are characterized the same way. A recent paper [Kubitsch 2020] reviews in detail the modal function of *val* and *vylem* in the non-declarative moods. It argues that in such moods *val* and *vylem* function as modal particles and they attenuate the modal force. Also, differences can be characterized between the semantic content of *val* and *vylem*. Still, a comprehensive analysis of such forms in modal constructions has not been carried out yet. In this paper I propose that the past tense forms of 'be' in modal constructions can convey the same modal content as in the non-declarative moods, but they have non-modal use (prevailingly to express temporal relations) as well.

The study is built up the following way: Section 1 briefly introduces the category of modality and some typological features in respect of the relationship of modality and the past tense. Section 2 introduces the examined constructions and the research data, while section 3 reviews the morphological features and the modal use of the past tense forms of the verb 'be'. Section 4 provides a discussion about the use of *val* and *vylem* in the modal constructions of Udmurt (4.1, 4.2). Both non-modal and modal uses, and the differences in the semantic of *val* and *vylem* are covered (4.2.1). The section also offers a possible explanation for these differences, and the distribution of non-modal and modal interpretation in the data under consideration (4.3). Section 5 provides a brief overview of the possible adversative function of *val* and *vylem*, not only in modal constructions, but in other structures as well.

1. Modality and its relationship with the past tense

Modality reflects on a possible state of the world and shows that the state of affairs expressed in the utterance are not factual [Kiefer 2007, 308; Kugler 2017, 480]. In the interpretation of Nuyts *"modality refers to one semantic subfield of a larger domain of qualificational categories which stands next to domains such as time and aspect"* [2016, 32]. There is no unanimity in the literature about the categories belonging to the concept of modality, but traditionally there are three or four basic modal categories: dynamic, deontic, epistemic and boulomaic modality [Nuyts 2016, 33–40].[2] From the point of view of this paper, deontic and epistemic modality have significance.

Deontic modality in its narrow sense can be linked to permission and obligation [Palmer 2001, 9–10]. In more general terms, it shows the degree of moral desirability of the given state of affairs expressed in the utterance. Therefore, deontic modality may involve a gradual scale from absolute moral necessity via degrees of desirability to acceptability. Furthermore, if we include polarity, the scale could involve the values of undesirability and absolute moral unacceptability [Nuyts 2016, 36].

Epistemic modality involves typically, but not exclusively the speaker's evaluation or estimation of the likelihood of the state of affairs expressed in the clause. Similarly to deontic modality, the category may involve a gradual scale which represents the degree of certainty [Kugler 2017, 486–488]. Considering modal strength, the scale may involve the degree of 'nearly certain' at one of its endpoints and 'nearly uncertain' at the other [Kugler 2015, 55].[3]

Dynamic and boulomaic modality are also considered basic modal categories. Dynamic modality is characterized as an ascription of the capacity or ability of the controlling participant (typically the agent). The category of boulomaic modality is not always part of the discussion of basic modalities. It concerns an indication of the degree of the speaker's (or someone else's) liking or disliking of the given state of affairs.

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[2] Boulomaic modality is not always considered a basic modal category.

[3] In the study the expressions 'modal force' or 'modal strength' reflect on the above-mentioned gradual scales of deontic and epistemic modality. In the case of deontic modality, the higher degree of modal force indicates higher degree of necessity, while in the case of epistemic modality it indicates a higher degree of certainty. Each value is relative. For further information on modal values see Hofmann [1993: 106, 109].

Considering the relationship of modality and the past tense it can be observed in the languages of the world that past tense forms often acquire modal meanings [Palmer 2001, 203]. A proposal has also been made that the past tense has a "distancing effect" – from a temporal point of view it distances the events from the present and from a modal point of view from factuality [de Haan 2010, 461]. Expressing counterfactuality with morphologically past tense forms is typologically a widely attested phenomenon. When past tense forms are used in a modal sense, they can lose their past time reference [Iatridou 2000, 244]. This can be observed when using morphologically past tense forms in counterfactual sentences, for example in English counterfactual wishes.

(2) *I wish I **had** a car!*

(3) *If you **did** this, I **would** be very happy.*

In Udmurt it also can be observed that in the protasis of conditional sentences (the clause containing the condition) the verb is inflected for the past tense [Bartens 2000, 313].[4]

(4) *Zakon-ez   tija-ś-len   bord-az   nokyče dokument-ez*
     law-ACC   break-PTCP.ACT-GEN   PP-INE.POSS.3SG   none   document-POSS.3SG

   ö-z   luy   ke, *poľicija so-je   kin*
   NEG-1PST.3   become.CNG.SG   if   police   s/he-ACC   who

   lu-em-ze   todon   ponna köńa   ke   dyr-ly
   become-PTCP.PRF-ACC.POSS.3SG   knowledge   PP   some   if   time-DAT

   žegaty-ny   no   bygat-e.
   arrest-INF   too   be.able-PRS.3SG

   'If the law-breaker has not got any documents on them, the police can even arrest them for a while for the purpose of identification.'

Past tense forms can also weaken the degree of modal strength. The modal auxiliaries of English are prominent examples of the modal use of past tense forms [Palmer 2001, 203–204], such as *could* (past form of *can*), *would* (*will*); *might* (*may*) and *should* (*shall*). Such forms make the utterance more tentative and express irreality or probability (cf. example 4).

(5) *I **will** do that for you vs. I **would** do that for you*

The phenomenon can be observed not only in English but in languages having influence on Udmurt. In Russian different forms of 'be' are grammaticalized to particles with modal functions [Timberlake 2004, 397], such as the modal particle *by* which is etymologically the aorist form of the verb *byt'* 'be'. The particle is used to express the irreal mood (with the past tense form of the verb) and can attenuate the modal force, expressing wishes, suggestions and polite requests.

(6) *lučše   by*
     good.COMP   **PTC**

   'would be better'

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[4] Furthermore, in Udmurt the conditional mood and the past tense are considered etymologically related. According to Tarakanov [1998, 176–179] the *-sal* marker of the morphological conditional mood historically includes the past tense form of the verb 'be' *val*. This proposition is reinforced by the negative forms in the paradigm of the conditional mood. Negation is formed with the *öj* particle which is also applied in the negation of the existential verb *val*.

(7) *nado*   ***by***
     need   **PTC**
     'needed'

(8) *ja*   ***χoťe-l-a***   ***by***   *zatknuť*   *uši,*   *no*   *ńe*   *reša-ju-ś*
     I   **want-PST-F**   **PTC**   pierce.INF   ear.PL   but   NEG   decide-1SG-REFL

     'I would like to pierce my ears, but I have not decided yet'

In Tatar, another language which has a significant influence on Udmurt, the past tense forms of 'be' is also used to express modal meanings [Zakiev 1992, 192–193]. The auxiliary *iďe* takes part in the formation of counterfactual sentences and can combine with irreal moods, participles and converbs [Poppe 1963, 103–104; Zakiev 1992, 195–196]. In the example below the auxiliary with the imperative mood expresses desire.

(9) *ťeatr-ga*   ***bar-syn***   ***i-ďe***
     theatre-ILL   **go-IMP[3SG]**   **be-PST**

     'it would be good if s/he went to the theatre'

Another past tense form of 'be' is *ikän*, which is diachronically in the resultative past tense. The particle *ikän* functions as an epistemic, evidential and mirative marker [Greed 2014], and in combination with the conditional mood it can express optativity [Zakiev 1992, 195]. Also, utterances with *ikän* are considered more polite [Greed 2014, 80].[5]

2. Research data

In this study the necessitive, the desiderative and the permissive constructions are examined. The below presented structure of the constructions are from the descriptive grammar by Winkler [2011, 143–145].

There are two constructions available to express necessity. One of formed with the uninflectable modal auxiliary *kule* 'have to, need' (1 a, b), the other with the necessitive participle (2). The two constructions are synonymous.

(1 a) agent-DAT, verb-INF + *kule* 'have to' 'sb has to do sth'
     mynym   *tros*   ***uža-ny***   ***kule***
     I.DAT   lot   **work-INF**   **have.to**

     'I have to work a lot.'

(1 b) (agent-DAT) noun (= subject) + *kule* 'need' 'sb needs sth'
     (soos-ly)   *vyľ*   *korka*   ***kule***
     they-DAT   new   house   **need**

     'they need a new house'

(2)   agent-DAT + verb-PTCP.NESS 'sb has to do sth'
     mynym   *tros*   ***uža-no***
     I.DAT   lot   **work-PTCP.NESS**

     'I have to work a lot'

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[5] The particle *ikän* functions as an epistemic, evidential and mirative marker [Greed 2018].

The desiderative construction is formed with the third person form of the verb *potyny* 'leave' inflected for the relevant tense. Below only the present tense form is presented (3).

(3) (agent-GEN) verb-PTCP.PRF-POSS + *pote* 'leave' 'sb wants/would like to do sth'
     (so-len)   ***uža-m-ez***   ***pot-e***
     s/he-GEN   **work-PTCP.PRF-POSS.3SG**   **want-PRS.3SG**

     's/he wants/would like to work'

The permissive construction is formed with the uninflectable modal auxiliary, *jara* 'may, allow' (4).

(4) (agent-DAT) verb-INF + *jara* 'may, allow' 'sb may do sth, sb is allowed to do sth'
     mynym   *pyry-ny*   *jara=a?*
     I.DAT   **come.in-INF**   **may=Q**

     'May I come in?'

In the study two hundred sentences were examined, 50 for each modal construction, 25-25 for their combination with *val* and *vylem*. Sentences had been selected randomly. The research data comprise entries of the online Udmurt corpora.[6] Searching corpora did not result in 25 entries for the combination of the permissive construction with *vylem*, so data were completed with instances from contemporary press not yet implemented in the corpora. In the study some evaluations of native speakers appear as well in respect of the examined constructions.

3. The past tense forms of 'be'

There are two existential verbs in Udmurt *vylyny* 'be.INF'[7] and *luyny* 'become.INF' [Bartens 2000, 265–267]. The paper does not concern the verb *luyny* 'become.INF' because its past tense forms do not acquire such functions in modal constructions (and in non-declarative moods) as the past tense forms of *vylyny* 'be.INF'.

3.1. Morphological features

The paradigm of *vylyny* 'be.INF' is highly incomplete, morphologically it has only past tense forms [Winkler 2011, 92].

In Udmurt there are two synthetic past tenses, therefore the paper examines two past tense forms. The form *val* is the so called first past form of the verb, while *vylem* is in the third person, second past tense. In the first past tense only the form *val* is possible. In the second past tense the paradigm of the verb is complete, but only the above mentioned form appears in modal constructions. Traditionally, the difference between the two past tenses lies in the notion of evidentiality, a category which concerns the information source and type [Aikhenvald 2004; Tarakanov 2011, 189; Skribnik–Kehayov 2018, 539].

Having a more elaborated analysis, the first past tense can be considered the default choice for narrating events happened in the past. However, contextually it can be associated with eyewitness and directness of evidence, as well as with integrated knowledge. The second past tense expresses non-eyewitness and indirect evidence (e.g. hearsay, inference, but it also reflects on degree of informativity (mirativity)[8] and possibly degree of certainty and commitment [Siegl 2004; Kubitsch 2018, 258–260].

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[6] Corpus data are from the main and one of the subcorpora of the online Udmurt Corpora. The main corpus has 9.57 million tokens and consists of texts of contemporary press, blogs, the Udmurt translation of the New Testament and some articles of Udmurt Wikipedia. The subcorpus has 2.66 million tokens and comprise open posts and comments of social media. (http://udmurt.web-corpora.net/index.html).

[7] The infinitive form does not exist is contemporary Udmurt, it can be attested only in phrasemes.

[8] Mirativity is the grammatical encoding of new information or speaker's (or the hearer's, or the protagonist's) surprise [DeLancey 1997, 33].

3.2. Past tense forms of 'be' as modal particles

The modal use of the form *val* is not unheard of in the descriptive literature of the Udmurt language [Tarakanov 1998, 174; Winkler 2011, 137]. Two functions are mentioned in relation to the imperative mood and deontic modal constructions: the weakening of the illocutionary force and the expression of desires and hypotheticality. The functions of *vylem* are less elaborated in such works and even if it appears, no difference is drawn between the two elements in this regard. In addition, there is no unanimity concerning the analysis of the forms in their modal function – some works describe them as modal auxiliaries [cf. Tarakanov 1998, 174; Kelmakov – Hännikäinen 1999, 196] while others as modal particles [Winkler 2011, 137]. I agree with the latter analysis – *val* and *vylem* can be considered modal particles in non-declarative moods and in modal constructions when they are used modally. In their modal use their function is to modify the modal strength of the original construction. This function also can be characterized as modal attenuation (for a more elaborated discussion see Kubitsch 2020). Therefore, in the case of the modal use of *val* and *vylem* the glossing of the forms will be ATT (as attenuator).

4. The forms *val* and *vylem* in modal constructions

The section covers the interpretation of modal constructions accompanied with *val* or *vylem*. Depending on context, the forms can have either a non-modal (almost always temporal) or modal interpretation in the above mentioned constructions. In addition, the form *vylem* can encode the realization of the given state of affairs, therefore in such cases it belongs to the conceptual domain of mirativity. A difference is characterized between the constructions formed with *val* and *vylem*, and a possible explanation is outlined as well. It also has to be mentioned that from a quantitative point of view, forms with *val* are more frequent (based on the data of the Udmurt online corpora).

Table 1

The number of occurrences of *val* and *vylem* in the examined modal constructions
in the Udmurt corpora (main corpus and social media subcorpus)

Modal construction	Number of entries	
	val	vylem
kule 'have to, need'	1828	260
necessitive participle	1927	461
pote 'sb want/would like to do sth'	1646	281
jara 'sb may do sth, sb is allowed to do sth'	79	22

4.1. Non-modal use of val and vylem

If *val* and *vylem* are not used modally, they primarily have a temporal interpretation, i.e. they encode the past tense forms of the modal constructions. The temporal interpretation can be observed in all modal constructions both with *val* and *vylem*. In the data under consideration the non-modal use of val is more common (cf. 4.3).

Examples 10 and 11 illustrate the temporal use of *val* and *vylem* in the necessitive constructions. The interpretation of *val* and *vylem* is also backed up by other verbs inflected for the first and second past tenses, respectively.

In example 10 the not inflectable modal verb *kule* appears. The *kule val* construction can be interpreted as 'needed' as the speaker describes situations in the 70's. Example 11 reflects on the death of the famous musician, Michael Jackson.

(10) *Iž-yś*   *avtozavod-e*   *kutsk-i.*   *1970-ti*   *ar-jos-y*
      PN-ELA   car.factory-ILL   start-1PST.1SG   1970-ORD   year-PL-ILL

otčy	*tros*	*užaś-jos*	***kule***	***val.***
there.ILL	lot	worker-PL	**need**	**be.1PST**

'I started at the car factory in Izhevsk. In the 1970's a lot of workers were needed there.'

(11) | So | og | 50 | pala | *plasťičeskoj* | *operacija* | *lešt-em.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| he | appr. | 50 | about | plastic | surgery | do-2PST[3SG] |

So-in	*valče*	*tros*	*emjum*	***ju-ono***	***vyl-em,***	*so*
that-INS	PP	much	medicine	**drink-PTCP.NESS**	**be-2PST[3SG]**	that

ik	*so-je*	*byron*	*kal-e*	*vutt-i-z.*
PTC	he-ACC	death	force-ILL	take-1PST-3SG

'He had approximately 50 plastic surgeries. Because of this, he had to take lots of medicine and that brought his death.'

In the case of the temporal use of the past tense forms of 'be' the difference between constructions with *val* and *vylem* lies in the difference between the first and second past. Since val is in the first past, it is used as a default past tense or as an indicator of general knowledge or directness. The second past form, *vylem*, usually encodes indirectness (i.e. the speaker has no direct experience about the events in question) or mirativity. Consider example 10, where the speaker cannot have direct evidence, there is presumably hearsay evidence in question.

The non-modal use of *val* and *vylem* can be observed in the permissive construction as well. Example 12 discusses the rules of a music contest in Udmurtia, according to which each district delegated a member to the jury, but the members were not allowed to vote for the contestant of their own district. Example 13 is an excerpt from a story of the first decorated Easter egg, which was, allegedly, made by Maria Magdalena. Implicitly, the speaker has no direct access to the information below, hence the second past form of the existential verb.

(12) | *Soos* | *dunja-zy* | | *vań* | *joros-jos-ty* | | *no* | *aśse* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| they | evaluate[1PST]-3PL | | all | district-PL-ACC | | but | own.3PL |

joros-sy		*ponna*	*kʷara*	*śoty-ny*	*ug*		*jara*	*val*
district-POSS.3PL		PP	**voice**	**give-INF**	**NEG.PRS.3**		**may.CNG**	**be.1PST**

'They evaluated all districts, but it was not allowed to vote to their own district.'

(13) | *Soku* | *buš* | *ki-yn* | ***lykty-ny*** | ***ug*** | | ***jara*** | ***vyl-em,*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| then | empty | hand-INS | **come-INF** | **NEG.PRS.3** | | **may.CNG** | **be-2PST[3SG]** |

so-in	*Marija*	*kuregpuz*	*vaj-em.*
that-INS	PN	egg	bring-2PST[3SG]

'Back then it was not allowed to arrive with empty hands, so Marija brought an egg.'

In the case of the desiderative the non-modal use *val* and *vylem* is not as straightforward as in the previous constructions. The reason for this is that the verb *potyny*, unlike *kule*, *jara* and the necessitive participle, can be inflected for the past tenses (cf. example 14). However, the construction *pote val*

can also be interpreted temporally – it is the durative past tense form, one of the analytic past tenses available in Udmurt (cf. example 15).[9]

(14) *Tros-ges*   **tod-em-my**   **pot-i-z**
lot-COMP   **know-PTCP.PRF-POSS.PL1**   **want-1PST-3SG**

todmo   *böľak-my*   *śaryś.*
famous   neighbor-POSS.1PL   PP

'We wanted to know more about our famous neighbor.'

(15) *So-len*   *piči*   *dyryśen-yz*   *dyšetiś*   **lu-em-ez**
she-GEN   little   PP-POSS.3SG   teacher   **become-PTCP.PRF-POSS.3SG**

pot-e   **val.**   *So-in*   *ik*   *nyryś*
want-PRS.3SG   **be.1PST**   that-INS   PTC   first

jylpumj-a-z   *pedučiľišše-jez (…)*
graduate-1PST-3SG   pedagogical.school-ACC

'Since she was little, she wanted to be a teacher. Therefore, she first graduated from pedagogical school'

In Udmurt the second past tense can have a mirative connotation (in other words, it functions as a mirative strategy)[10] [cf. Siegl 2004, Kubitsch 2019], and the second past form of 'be' has a prominent role in encoding mirativity. It is also a characteristic of the mirative use of *vylem* that the utterance can have present time reference (while other second past forms always refer to the past). The form *vylem* can have a mirative interpretation in modal constructions as well. In example 16 the speaker talks about how they had to deal with animals in the circus. They must be trained so they would be harmless. But the trainer themself had to endure a lot because the animals often wounded him/her. In this specific case *vylem* encodes that the piece of information in question is unexpected or surprising.

(16) *So*   *ponna* *as-ly-d*   *no*   *köńa*   **čida-no**   **vyl-em!**
that   PP   self-DAT-2SG   PTC   much   **endure-PTCP.NESS**   **be-2PST[3SG]**

'But you, yourself, have to endure a lot for that!'

This section gave an overview about the non-modal use of the past tense forms of 'be' in modal constructions. In such cases *val* and *vylem* usually modify the constructions temporally. Also, *vylem* can reflect on the degree of informativity, therefore encodes mirativity in some instances.

4.2. Modal use of val and vylem
As it was mentioned before, the modal use of *val* and *vylem* has been already attested in the descriptive literature of Udmurt to some extent. I propose that if they are used modally, their function is to attenuate the modal force of the original construction. As a result, the events are distanced from factuality and considered conditional. Since all the discussed constructions are within the sphere of deontic modality, in these cases the deontic modal force is attenuated. Up to this point this type of

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[9] It is also possible that not only temporal relations drive the use of *pote val* and *pote vylem*. They are often (but not exclusively) used if the protagonist's desires had not been or could not be fulfilled for some reason (cf. section 5).

[10] A mirative strategy is when a primarily non-mirative marker has mirative meaning as a contextual pragmatic enrichment [Aikhenvald 2012, 472].

use of *val* and *vylem* has only been attested when the particles accompanied verb forms with an already existing modal content (e.g. imperative, optative and the modal constructions under discussion).

In connection with the attenuator function of the particles, if the utterance has an addressee, (i.e. it is a directive),[11] modal constructions accompanied with the past tense forms of the existential verb are more polite compared to the basic constructions, thus in such cases they weaken the illocutionary force as well.[12] In this way an order is interpreted as a suggestion or polite request. Generally, constructions accompanied with *val* are more common (cf. section 4), but the examination of the two hundred randomly selected sentences shows that *vylem* is more often used in a modal sense than in a non-modal one (cf. section 4.3). The difference between the constructions formed with *val* and *vylem* will be discussed in section 4.2.1.

Examples 17 and 18 illustrate the modal use of *val* with the necessitive constructions. It is clear from the context that the construction has no past time reference but reflects on the current state of affairs. The particle attenuates the modal force of the constructions expressing necessity. Also, example 17 shows how the particle can be used for forming polite requests.

(17) - *Vož-des*   *en*   *vaj-e,*   *miľem-ly*   *tuž*
anger-ACC.POSS.2PL   NEG.IMP   take-CNG.PL   us-DAT   very

čeber   *śerviz*   ***kule***   ***val.***
beautiful   service   **need**   **ATT**

- *Kyče*   *śerviz?*   *Tiľed-ly*   *čaj*   *śerviz=a?*
what.like   service   you-DAT   tea   service=Q

'- Excuse me, we needed a really beautiful service.
- What kind of service? Tea service?'

(18) *Kin-ly*   *18*   *ares*   *tyrm-i-z*   *ińi,*   *kin-len*   *mylkyd-yz*
who-DAT   18   year   fill-1PST-3SG   already   who-GEN   mood-POSS.3SG

vań   ***gožt-ono***   ***val***   *Udmurťi-yś*   *ďeputat-jos-ly*   *gožtet*   *udmurt*
exist   **write-PTCP.NESS**   **ATT**   PN-ELA   deputy-PL-DAT   letter   Udmurt

kyl-ez   *vań*   *škola-os-yn*   *med*   *dyšet-o-zy*   *šuysa.*
language-ACC   all   school-PL-INE   OPT   teach-FUT-3PL   CONJ

'The ones who have already turned 18 and have the motivation should write a letter to the deputies of Udmurtia so that the Udmurt language should be taught in all schools.'

The particle *vylem* in the necessitive construction is typically used in connection with situations in which the protagonist deems it necessary or desirable that the propositional content be true but has no influence on its actual realization. Such situations usually involve judgements about how institutes, the society should work or how people should behave, in one word: how things should be done (or how should have been done). In example 19 the speaker says that despite it is understandable that their country cannot pay much more for sportsmen, the golden mean should be found. In example 20 the speaker says that, among other difficulties, their farm needs a new computer.

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[11] Directives are a class of speech acts. They are attempts by a speaker to get a hearer to do something (e.g. commands, requests, suggestions, prohibition).

[12] This function of val has been earlier characterized by Winkler in relation with the imperative mood [2011, 137]. There is a strong relationship between the imperative mood and deontic modality [Malchukov – Xrakovskij 2016, 200] and it is often considered to be part of deontic modality [Chung – Timberlake 1985, 245–249; Palmer 2001, 64].

(19) *No*   *zarńi*   *šor-ze*   **šeďt-ono**   **vylem.**
      but   golden   middle-ACC.DET   **find-PTCP.NESS**   **ATT**

'But the golden middle way should be found.'

(20) *Oźy*   *ik*   *tatćy*   **kule**   **na**   **vylem**
      so   PTC   here.ILL   **need**   **more**   **ATT**

      odig   *ke*   *no*   *kompjjuťer.*   *Aźvyl-ez*   *tijaśk-i-z.*
      one   if   PTC   computer   former-DET   break-1PST-3SG

'Moreover, some kind of a computer would be needed here as well. The former one got broken.'

The modal interpretation of *val* and *vylem* can be observed in the desiderative (cf. example 21 and 22) and the permissive (cf. example 23 and 25) constructions well. Just like in the previous examples, the particles weaken the modal, and in some cases the illocutionary force too.

(21) **Kure-m**   **pot-e**   **val**   *Aľona*   *T'imerχanova-leś*
      ask-PTCP.PRF   **want-PRS.3SG**   **ATT**   PN   PN-ABL

      „Memije"   *kyrʒan-źe.*
      PN   dal-ACC.POSS.3SG

'I would like to ask Alyona Timerkhanova's Memije song.'

(22) *Tuž*   **pot-e**   **vylem**   *gaźet-jos-yn,*   *žurnal-jos-yn*
      very   **want-PRS.3SG**   **ATT**   newspaper-PL-INE   journal-PL-INE

      aźvyl   *pot-em*   *recenźi-os-me,*   *staťja-os-me*
      former   appear-PTCP.PRF   review-PL-ACC.POSS.1SG   article-PL-ACC.POSS.1SG

      ńimyśtyz   *kńiga-jen*   **potte-m-e.**
      separate   book-INS   **publish-PTCP.PRF-POSS.1SG**

'I really would like to publish a separate book with my reviews and articles appeared earlier in newspapers and journals.'

The modal use of *val* in the permissive construction is considerably rare in the data (cf. example 25). In comparison to the other constructions, the modal use of *vylem* is not as of high account either (cf. section 4.3). In the context of example 23 the speaker talks about anaerobic bacteria, which can be found in the soil. Because of this he proposes that soils should not be ploughed. The utterance can be interpreted as a polite suggestion – the speaker is not in the position to straightforwardly tell other farmers how to run their farmstead. The use of the particle attenuates the force of the utterance.

(23) *Mur-yn*   *ul-iś-jos-yz*   *šundy*   *śi-os*   *ul-yn*   *kul-o.*
      soil-INE   live-PTCP.ACT-PL-DET   sun   beam-PL   PP-INE   die-PRS.3PL

      Noš   *taźy*   **ug**   **jara**   **vylem**   **uža-ny.**
      PTC   so   **NEG.PRS.3**   **may.CNG**   **ATT**   **work-INF**

'The ones (bacteria) living in the soil perish under the sunlight. So, it may not be done this way.'

Even if *val* and *vylem* are used modally, the whole construction can have past time reference (i.e. past conditional). In the example below the construction can be characterized as a past counterfactual – the speaker should have stopped drinking sooner, but they had not.

(24) *Žaľa-śko og-ze: vaź-ges **kušt-ono** **vylem***
   sorry-PRS.1SG one-ACC.DET soon-COMP **finish-PTCP.NESS** **ATT**

   ta vina juon-ez, köńa už-e   kyľ-i-z,
   that liquor drink-acc much work-POSS.1SG remain-1PST-3SG

   köńa końdon tölja-burja košk-i-z!
   much money wind   leave-1PST-3SG

'I am sorry one thing: I should have stopped drinking sooner, I had so much to do and so much money had gone by the wind!'

A crucial feature of Udmurt in this regard is that there is no formal differentiation between present and past counterfactual utterances [Kozmács 2002, 94; Winkler 2011, 104]. This poses the question whether the particles lose their past time reference in such cases or not, in other words, that past time reference is conveyed by the context or by the morphologically past tense particles. Based on the data, *val* and *vylem* do not systematically convey past counterfactual meaning, thus the interpretation of the sentences depends on the context. Therefore, the constructions can be ambiguous in respect of their time reference. Consultation with native speakers also support this observation. Ambiguity is illustrated in the following example in which both present and past counterfactual interpretation is possible of the modal construction.

(25) *A eššo, tuž strannoj ivor, ćto Alnaš škola-yn ug*
   and more very strange news CONJ PN school-INE NEG.PRS.3

   leź-o   veraśky-ny udmurt kyl-en, udmurt-en urok-jos-yn
   allow-PRS.3PL[CNG] speak-INF Udmurt language-INS Udmurt-INS lesson-PL-INE

   *gine, pe, leź-o.   (Todi-śko, ta-je **gožt-yn** **ug***
   only QUOT allow-PRS.3PL know-PRS.1SG this-ACC **write-INF** **neg.PRS.3**

   jara   val, dyr, šuysa, no gožty-tek ug   lu-y.)
   may.CNG ATT maybe CONJ but write-CAR NEG.PRS.3 become-CNG.3SG

'And strange news, that in the school in Alnaš, it is not allowed to speak in Udmurt, it is allegedly only allowed in the lessons. (I know that maybe I should not write /should not have written this, but this can't be unwritten.)'

4.2.1. Differences between val and vylem in their modal use

Differences can be characterized between the modal function of *val* and *vylem*. As it was mentioned earlier, both particles attenuate the modal force, but, according to the evaluations of native speakers, *vylem* does this to a larger degree, while the particle val in comparison is associated with a larger degree of modal force.

In the case of directives, they can weaken the illocutionary force, and the above mentioned difference can be established as well. Therefore, with *vylem* the utterance is even more polite and respectful, they are often interpreted as suggestions and the execution of the actions uttered in the clause

are not considered obligatory. This is in accordance with the use of the particles in the imperative and optative moods as well [Winkler 2001; Kubitsch 2020].

Further difference between the modal use of *val* and *vylem* lies in how much they express a mental distance between the speaker and the propositional content. *Vylem* in its modal sense is associated with greater distance, it is typically connected to events, whose realization are outside the speaker's competence.[13] Moreover, based on the evaluations of native consultants, the use of *vylem* can also encode the speaker's estimation about the likelihood of the events in question – the speaker holds less probable or even improbable that the propositional content can or will realize, it can be characterized as an irreal wish. In this regard, *vylem* in its modal use can be considered epistemic. Native speakers often connect an emotional value to the constructions with *vylem* (such as pathos, pity, hope), whereas constructions with *val* are considered emotionally neutral.

As an illustration, here are some differences considering a specific example. The only difference between the two sentences is the use of past tense forms of 'be'. In the case of the sentence with *val*, the temporal interpretation appeared as well ('I wanted…') during the consultations, i.e. the morphological past tense form modified the sentence only in a temporal sense. Since this section focuses on the differences in the modal use of the particles, this piece of translation is not mentioned.[14]

(26) *Nu,* *tuž* **pot-e** **val,** // **vylem,** *so* *udmurt* *klub*
PTC very **want-PRS.3SG** **ATT** // **ATT** that Udmurt cultural.center

kyrʒan- *ekton* *inty-ly* *gine* *med-az* *pörmy.*
singing dance place-DAT only NEG.OPT-3 become.CNG.SG

'I would really like if that Udmurt cultural center did not turn out to be only a place for singing and dancing.'

The *pote val* construction was associated with a higher degree of modal force, involvement, and a higher chance of fulfilment. Informants characterized the utterance as "stronger" or „command-like", the speaker is somehow involved in the shaping of the cultural center (i.e. the realization of the propositional content is not completely outside the speaker's competence), the speaker really wants the place not only being used for singing and dancing and there is a chance that their desire will come true. On the contrary, the *pote vylem* construction was associated with lower degree of modal force, involvement, and lower chance of fulfilment. The utterance was described „weaker",[15] only as an idea or hope. The center has already started to become (or has fully changed into) a singing-dancing place, therefore the wish has a lower or no chance of fulfilment. An informant also noted that is seems like the speaker is not strongly committed to the case of the center. Furthermore, an emotional value was often connected to *vylem*, such as grievance (as the center has already started to change), envy (looking at other cultural centers) or hope (that maybe it will not change). So *vylem* expresses the speaker's attitude to the given speech situation, while *val* is considered neutral in this sense. The above-mentioned factors, of course, did not show up in the evaluations of all informants at the same time.

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[13] In other cases, a reason is often specified in the context why it is less probable that the propositional content will come true. For example, in the context of example 22 the speaker later notes, that maybe no one would be interested in his book of reviews and articles.

[14] The task was originally designed to examine evidentiality in Udmurt and was carried out on 27 informants. During the task speakers had to provide a possible speech situation in which, in their estimation, the given sentence can be uttered. Informants first were presented with the sentence including second past forms (in relation with modal construction the form *vylem*). After that the sentence with first past forms (in this case *val*) were given and speakers had to characterize the differences between the two versions of the sentence.

[15] Speakers often used the lexeme *ľab* 'weak, poor-spirited' in connection with such forms (not only in this specific case but considering other modal constructions and the imperative mood as well).

For the sake of completeness, it has to be mentioned that there were three informants who could not interpret the form *pote vylem* (as it was mentioned earlier *vylem* occurs in modal constructions considerably less often). Also, there were some speakers who did not establish a difference between the meaning of *val* and *vylem*. Based on the quantitative data and the inconsistency among the speakers regarding the acceptability of constructions with *vylem*, and its difference from *val*, it can be established, that the modal use of *val* is more widespread in Udmurt. Nonetheless, the modal use of *vylem* can clearly be attested and there are speakers who draw difference between the two elements. The nature of differentiation is systematic – even though in specific situations speakers characterize different aspects of the modal use of the particles, *vylem* is always less direct and distances the events from factuality at a greater extent. The modal use of *val* is more general, but as the above cited example showed, it is more direct and expresses a higher degree of modal force contrasting with *vylem*.

In my opinion, the modal content encoded by the particles, especially by *vylem*, can be linked to the fact that it is the indirect evidential form of the verb 'be'. Typologically, the markers of indirect evidence often have epistemic connotations [Aikhenvald 2004, 186] as the physical indirectness expressed by the indirect evidential markers (i.e. between the information source and, most often, the speaker) can be associated with mental indirectness. This could explain that, in comparison to the particle *val*, *vylem* distances the utterance from factuality to a greater extent. In addition, encoding the speaker's attitude is not alien from *vylem* – it can express the speaker's subjective point of view in other cases as well, for example in its mirative function.

Also, in my opinion, the modal interpretation of *val* is also connected to its temporal use. The first past tense in Udmurt is the default choice for describing events happened in the past, but contextually it can encode directness and the speaker's involvement as well. Involvement and directness associated with first past tense forms is reflected in the modal use as well: the speaker has influence on the realization of the propositional content. Also, in its modal sense in comparison with *vylem*, *val* is "closer" to factuality. First past tense forms are also used to express facts and general knowledge.

4.3. Distribution in the data

As section 4.1 and 4.2 covered, the past tense forms of 'be' can have either non-modal or modal use in modal constructions. The table below shows the distribution of interpretations in each construction with *val* and *vylem*. The proportion between the non-modal and modal use of *val* is either equal (cf. the construction with *kule* and the desiderative construction) or the dominance of non-modal use can be observed (the construction with the necessitive participle and the permissive construction). Data about *vylem* show that the modal use is prevailing with the necessitive and the desiderative constructions. The non-modal use is dominant with the particle only with the permissive construction. This implies that the modal use of the particles is in general not as common with *jara* as with other modal constructions, which they seem to have a solid modal interpretation with.

Table 2

The distribution of non-modal and modal use of the particles *val* and *vylem* in each construction

	Non-modal use	Modal use
kule val	13 (52%)	12 (48%)
kule vylem	7 (28%)	18 (72%)
NESS.PTCP val	16 (64%)	9 (36%)
NESS.PTCP vylem	3 (12%)	22 (88%)
pote val	13 (52%)	12 (48%)
pote vylem	4 (16%)	21 (84%)
jara val	21 (84%)	4 (16%)
jara vylem	15 (60%)	10 (40%)

In the data under consideration *val* was more frequently used non-modally (i.e. temporally), while *vylem* occurred modally to a larger extent. This is summarized by Table 3 below.

The non-modal and modal use of the particles in all modal constructions[16]

	Non-modal use	Modal use
modal construction + val	63	37
modal construction + vylem	29	71

The dominance of the modal use of *vylem* may be explained by the fact that its non-modal use is quite restricted compared to that of *val*. The non-modal use of *val*, being the first past tense form of the verb 'be', is more widely applicable, since the first past is the default past tense in Udmurt. While *vylem*, the second past tense form of 'be' is either used to convey evidential meanings or show surprise, new information (cf. section 3.). In addition, the use of second past forms is not obligatory in Udmurt even if the speaker has indirect evidence. This contextual restriction may be an explanation for the prevailing occurrence of the modal use of *vylem* in the data. However, it is important to highlight, that the statistics above are distorted from a point of view, because, as it was mentioned earlier, modal constructions with *vylem* are overall much rarer compared to collocations with *val* (cf. Table 1). Even though the occurrence of *vylem* in modal constructions is rare, its modal interpretation is prevailing.

5. The forms *val* and *vylem* as markers of adversativity?

It can be observed that the forms *val* and *vylem* often occur in utterances when there is a contrast between two propositional contents. The contrast can be between the protagonist's desires, needs, previous beliefs and the actual facts or can be observed between two factual events. Based on this it is possible that the forms *val* and *vylem* can mark adversativity. In the data this type of use is primarily observed in the desiderative construction (example 27). Although the use *val* and *vylem* with the imperative mood is not the subject of this study, similar adversative situations are attested (example 28).[17]

(27) *Tuž*   ***pot-e***   ***vyl-em***   *dyšetiś*   ***lu-em-ez,***
     very   **want-PRS.3SG**   **be-2PST[3SG]**   teacher   **become-PTCP.PRF-POSS.3SG**

     no   nyryś   *ik*   *köt-ez*   *tyr-on*   *śaryś*
     but   first   PTC   stomach-ACC   fill-NMLZ   PP

     śulmaśk-ono   *lu-em.*
     take.care-PTCP.NESS   become-2PST[3SG]

     'S/he really wanted to be a teacher, but first had to think about filling the stomach.'

(28) *Kyče*   *ke*   *syče*   *penžak*   ***zolty***   ***val,***
     what.like   if   such   jacket   **form.IMP**   **be.1PST**

     no   *gurt-amy*   *vuriśkiś-my*   *övöl.*
     but   village-INE.POSS.1PL   tailor-POSS.1PL   NEG

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[16] Since each past tense form occurred in one hundred sentences, the number indicates the percentage as well.

[17] A verb in the imperative mood accompanied by the particles can either express a polite request, suggestion, or, as in the example above, wishes, desires and can be interpreted as counterfactual conditionals [Tarakanov 2011, 176; Kubitsch 2020]. Tarakanov [1998] also suggests that constructions with *val* and *vylem* are analytic ways of expressing the semantics of conditionals, as the morphological conditional mood is a later development in the Udmurt language.

'I would have a jacket made something like this, but there is no tailor in our village.'

Interestingly, adversativity does not only appear with modal elements, but in the analytic past tenses as well,[18] especially in the pluperfect tenses [cf. Saraheimo forthcoming]. In the examples below (29, 30) temporal relations cannot account for the use of pluperfects. It is important to mention that Russian *bylo*, the neuter singular past tense form of 'be', has a similar function – it can express that an action was planned or begun, but it has not been followed to its conclusion [Timberlake 2004, 397–398].

(29) *Aľoša   košky-ny   **berytsk-i-z   val,   no   dugd-i-z (...)***
     PN   leave-INF   **turn-1PST-3SG   be.1PST   but**   stop-1PST-3SG

'Aljosa turned to leave only to stop.'

(30) *So   dyr-e   ik   Japońi-je   no   **čorti-ľľ'am   vyl-em,***
     that   time-ILL   PTC   PN-ILL   too   **invite-2PST[3PL]   be-2PST[3SG]**

     no   *kyrźaś-jos-sy   ug=ges   tyrm-o,   pe.*
     but   singer-PL-POSS.3PL   NEG.PRS.3=COMP   be.enough-CNG.PRS.PL3   QUOT

'In that time they were even invited to Japan, but allegedly they did not really have enough singers. '

Further analyses are required for establishing the possible adversative function of *val* and *vylem* and providing an adequate description of it. It is also necessary to examine how this function is related to modal attenuation in non-declarative moods and in modal constructions, and to temporal relations otherwise expressed by the pluperfects. The use of *val* and *vylem* for expressing contrast in the analytic past tenses also poses the question if such forms still should be analyzed as compound tenses or *val* and *vylem* should be handled separately.

6. Summary

The paper revised the functions of the past tense forms of 'be' in some modal constructions. In the discussed constructions the non-modal and the modal use of the forms *val* and *vylem* can be attested.

The non-modal use of *val* is exclusively temporal, while *vylem* can express mirativity too besides its temporal interpretation. The differences between the non-modal use of the past tense forms root in the differences between the first and second past tense in general. The two past tenses can be differentiated in terms of evidentiality and other notions (degree of informativity, certainty and commitment) closely related to the category. Therefore, *val* is the default choice for expressing the past tense version of the discussed modal constructions. However, depending on the context and speech situation, *val* (and basically first past tense forms) can reflect directness and integrated knowledge. Non-modally, *vylem* is either used to encode indirect evidence (or in other words, non-witnessed events) or it can mark unintegrated knowledge, new or surprising information. Based on the data, the non-modal use of *val* was more frequent in all the examined modal constructions.

If *val* and *vylem* are used modally, they can be analyzed as modal particles. The use of morphological past tense forms to encode modal meanings is a common phenomenon across languages. The Udmurt data fits in the typological descriptions, as past tense versions of modal constructions are modally weaker than their present tense equivalents, and morphological past tense forms can lose their past time reference. Also, some similarities can be observed with Tatar (cf. section 1), such as the use of past tense forms of 'be' in combination with other modal forms in order to express counterfactuality

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[18] There are four analytic past tenses in Udmurt that are formed with a finite verb form and with *val* or *vylem*. They are the following: pluperfect 1 (verb in the 1st past tense + *val*), pluperfect 2 (verb in the 2nd past tense + *val/vylem*), durative (verb in the present tense + *val/vylem*) and frequentative (verb in the future tense + *val/vylem*) [Kelmakov – Hännikäinen 1999, 244–246].

or optativity. Similarities with Tatar are noteworthy because Tarakanov [1998: 179] supposes that the modal use of the past tense forms of 'be' developed under the influence of Turkic languages spoken in the Volga-Kama area. Considering the strong influence of Turkic languages (especially Tatar) on Udmurt, the assumption seems to be plausible. But it must not be forgotten, that there are similar functions of the past tense forms of 'be' in Russian as well, and also, there is a typological tendency to use past tense forms to maintain modal meanings.

The modal function of *val* and *vylem* in the discussed constructions corresponds to the function observed in the non-declarative moods, that is modal attenuation. Because of this, constructions accompanied with the particles can be interpreted as counterfactual conditionals, and they express hopes, wishes, desires and suggestions. In the case of directives, the weakening of the modal force means the weakening of the illocutionary force at the same time. Consequently, directives formed with *val* and *vylem* are more polite. Differences with various aspects can be established in the modal use of particles too. Considering the distribution of functions in the data, the modal use of *vylem* is prevailing. The particle is associated with a greater mental distance between the speaker and factuality. It is typically used in speech situations, in which the protagonist deems it desirable that the propositional content be true, but its realization is outside their competence. In relation to this, *vylem* can express that the likelihood of realization is small or nonexistent. In this sense *vylem* is epistemic. Furthermore, the particle can reflect the speaker's attitude and an emotional value is often connected to utterances with *vylem*. The particle *val* does not seem to reflect the speaker's attitude and it is considered emotionally neutral. In contrast with *vylem*, native speakers associated a higher probability of fulfilment with the utterances formed with *val*, and also a higher degree of modal force. The latter phenomenon can be detected in the case of directives – with *vylem* the utterance is more polite and respectful compared to utterances with val. In my opinion, the difference between the modal use of *val* and *vylem* originates from their verbal meaning. Since *vylem* is the indirect evidential form of 'be', it seems to be plausible that it is associated with an epistemic connotation and a lower degree of modal force.

It is possible that there is an adversative function of *val* and *vylem* in the desiderative modal construction, in the imperative mood and in the pluperfect tenses. However, further analyses are required in order to establish this function of the past tense forms of the existential verb and characterize its relation to their temporal use and modal attenuation.

ABBREVIATIONS

1, 2, 3: first, second, third person
1PST: first past tense
2PST: second past tense
ABL: ablative
ACC: accusative
ATT: attenuator
CAR: caritive
CNG: connegative
COMP: comparative
CONJ: conjunctive
DAT: dative
DEM: demonstrative
PN: proper noun
PRS: present tense
PST: past tense
PL: plural
POSS: possessive
PP: postposition
PTC: particle
PTCP: participle

ELA: elative
F: feminine
FUT: future tense
GEN: genitive
IMP: imperative
INF: infinitive
INE: inessive
INS: instrumental
ILL: illative
NEG: negation
NMLZ: nominalizer
OPT: optative mood
PTCP.ACT: active participle
PTCP.NESS: necessitive participle
PTCP.PRF: perfect participle
REFL: reflexive
SG: singular
Q: question clitic
QUOT: quotative particle

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ФОРМЫ ПРОШЕДШЕГО ВРЕМЕНИ ГЛАГОЛА 'БЫТЬ' В МОДАЛЬНЫХ КОНСТРУКЦИЯХ УДМУРТСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

В удмуртском языке формы прошедшего времени глагола 'быть' (*вал* и *вылэм*) появляются в различных модальных конструкциях и в недекларативных наклонениях. В статье основное внимание уделяется использованию *вал* и *вылэм* в четырех модальных конструкциях: двух деонтических, желательных и разрешительных. Установлено, что в таких конструкциях *вал* и *вылэм* могут иметь как немодальное, так и модальное использование. В их немодальном смысле *вал* и *вылэм* в первую очередь модифицируют предложение во времени и образуют эквивалент данной модальной конструкции в прошедшем времени. Разница между немодальным использованием *вал* и *вылэм* заключается в различии между первым и вторым прошедшим временем в целом.

В их модальном использовании *вал* и *вылэм* уменьшают степень модальной силы (также называемой модальным затуханием) и должны рассматриваться как частицы. В таких случаях модальные конструкции можно интерпретировать как контрфактические условные предложения. Можно охарактеризовать различия между модальным использованием *вал* и *вылэм*. *Вылэм* частица связана с большей психологической дистанцией между говорящим и фактами и выражает то, что вероятность реализации мала или отсутствует. Следовательно, ее можно считать эпистемической. Частица *вал* не настолько отдаляет события от фактов, как *вылэм*. Кроме того, носители языка связывали более высокую вероятность исполнения с высказываниями, сформированными с помощью *вал*. По мнению автора статьи, разница между модальным использованием частиц проистекает из их вербального употребления и из различий между первым и вторым прошедшим временем.

Ключевые слова: удмуртский язык, прошедшее время, модальность, модальные конструкции.

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