Hierarchy effects in Northern Mansi
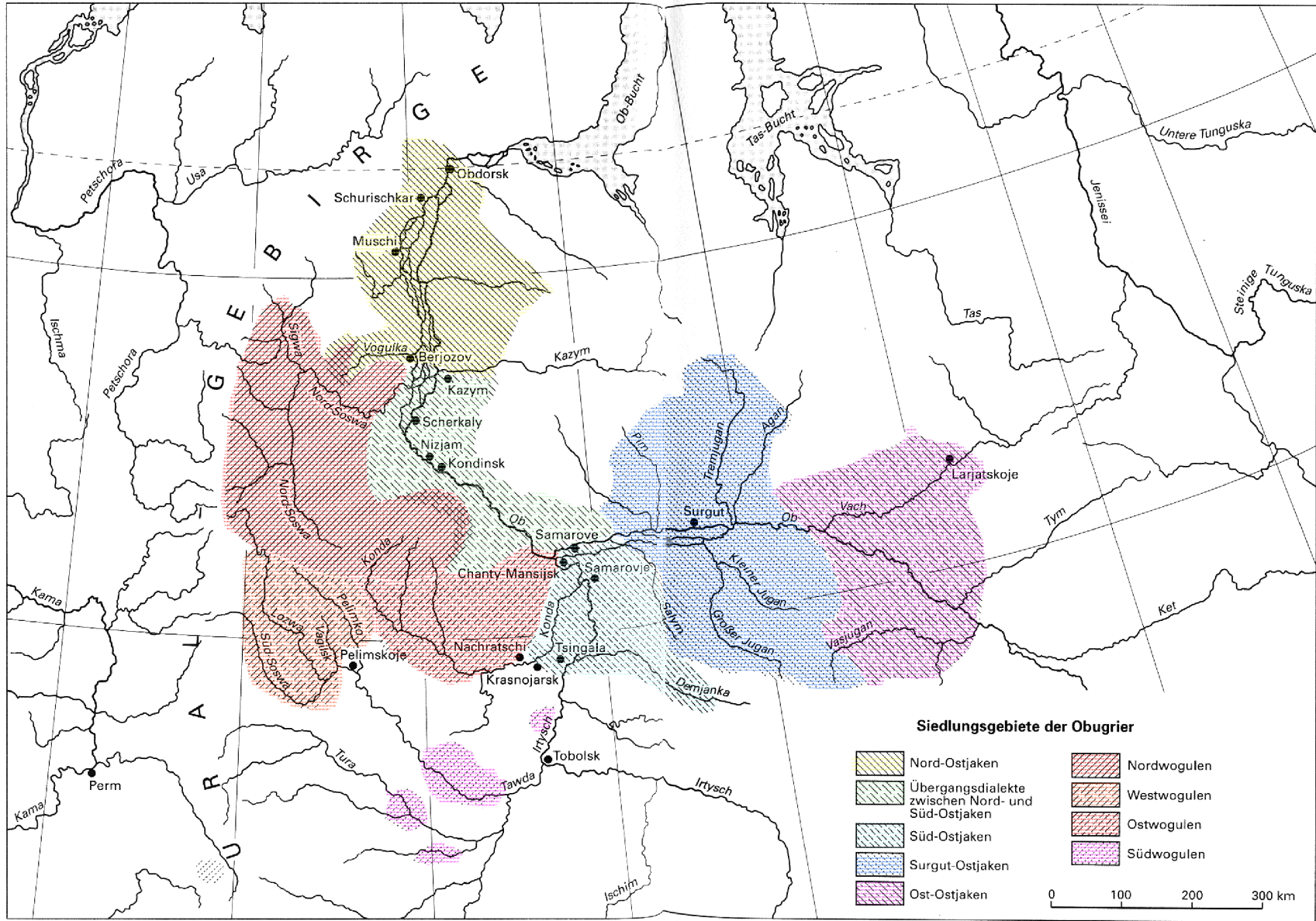
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Aim of this talk:

- Morphosyntactic behaviour of arguments in Northern Mansi and its motivation;

- Inventory of morphosyntactic devices available in Mansi to distinguish high-ranking and low-ranking arguments.

DIE FINNISCH-UGRISCHEN (URALISCHEN) VÖLKER

Nganasanen

Enzen

Saamen (Lappen)

Nenzen (Juraksamojeden)

Karelier

Selkupen

Finnen

Lüden

Komi (Syrjänen)

HELSINKI

Woten

Wepsen

SYKTYWKAR

TALLINN

Liven

Esten

Ingrier

Mansen (Wogulen)

Chanten (Ostjaken)

MOSKAU

Udmurten (Wotjaken)

Mari (Tscheremissen)

JOSCHKAR-OLA

ISCHEWSK (ISCHIKAR)

Mordwinen

SARANSK

BUDAPEST

Ungarn

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Siedlungsgebiete der Obugrier

GEBIRGE

URAL

Obdorsk
Schurischkar
Muschi
Vogulka
Berjozov
Kazym
Scherkaly
Nizjam
Kondinsk
Samarove
Chanty-Mansijsk
Samarovje
Nachratschi
Tsingala
Krasnojarsk
Pelimskoje
Tobolsk
Perm
Surgut
Larjatskoje

Ischma · Petschora · Ussa · Kama · Kama · Petschora · Ob-Bucht · Tas-Bucht · Untere Tunguska · Jenissei · Steinige Tunguska · Tas · Kazym · Nord-Sosva · Nord-Sosva · Sigwa · Konda · Pelimka · Lozwa · Wagilsk · Süd-Sosva · Tawda · Tura · Irtysch · Irtysch · Ischim · Demjanka · Salym · Konda · Ob · Ob · Pim · Tromjugan · Agan · Kleiner Jugan · Großer Jugan · Vach · Vasiugan · Tym · Ket · Tym

Legend — Siedlungsgebiete der Obugrier

- Nord-Ostjaken
- Übergangsdialekte zwischen Nord- und Süd-Ostjaken
- Süd-Ostjaken
- Surgut-Ostjaken
- Ost-Ostjaken
- Nordwogulen
- Westwogulen
- Ostwogulen
- Südwogulen

0   100   200   300 km

Sociolinguistic Situation

- Both languages are highly endangered;
- Mansi: only the Northern dialect survives, the percentage of native speakers is under 20% (among ca. 8000 ethnic Mansi);
- Khanty has a higher percentage of native speakers (about 30% among ca. 22,000), and some better preserved dialects, but the Southern dialects are already lost;
- In most Ob-Ugric speaker communities, transmission of the language to the younger generations has ceased.

Areal contacts:

- Eastern periphery of the Uralic area: contact zone with Palaeosiberian and Altaic (Tungusic) languages;

- Southern border: contact zone with Altaic (Turkic) languages;

- In the last three centuries: intensive contacts with Russian, bilingualism.

Northern Mansi RH devices

A complex system of morphosyntactic means of coding different statuses of discourse referents:

- zero anaphora (the highest status);
- "passive voice";
- object agreement ("objective conjugation");
- "dative shift".

(Northern Mansi RH devices)

- DOM in Southern dialects (*m*-accusative);
- Different object forms for nouns and pronouns;
- Nouns: Subj, DO and Attr in casus absolutus, the functions of Subj and DO being distinguished by SOV word order;
- Pronouns: Subj and Attr in casus absolutus, DO in so-called "accusative", IO in "accusative" + other case suffixes.

(Northern Mansi RH devices)

- "Accusative": actually forms of pronouns with possessive suffixes of the same person/number, sometimes slightly altered phonetically:
  - 1 sg *am – an-um*,
  - 2 sg *naŋ – naŋ-ən*,
  - 3 sg *taw – taw-e* etc.
- Zero anaphora, possessive suffixation, pronominal doubling of arguments, recently also word order.

- Thus, Mansi morphosyntax formally has many features typical of languages with a grammaticalized pragmatic DO, as formulated by GIVÓN (1984:174): it has a characteristic word order, a semantically neutral case marking for both Subj and DO, and pronominal agreement with both Subj and DO.

- On the other hand, Mansi is also a counterexample for some generalizations by GIVÓN:

- "almost always, the semantic case-role of the 'promoted' DO is morphologically marked in the verb" (1984:163) - this is not so in Mansi;

- "languages with a 'promotional' passive severely restrict the argument types that can become topics of the passive clause" (1984:165) – this is not so in Mansi.

As my material shows, the Ob-Ugrian clause structure is motivated discourse-pragmatically:

- Subj and DO are grammaticalized pragmatic roles of primary and secondary discourse topics;

- Subj and DO are indifferent to semantic roles of the agent and patient;

- "definiteness" as a secondary effect of topicality;

- RH as a linguistic by-product of communication psychology (what do we like to talk about).

"Passive"

Passive

- Suffix *-(a)w(e)-*;
- the object of extensive research, esp. two monographs, SCHIEFER (1985) and KULONEN (1989), also ROMBANDEEVA (1979) and SKRIBNIK (2001);
- several properties of the passive emerged as unusual in comparison with a "prototypical passive" – e.g., SHIBATANI (1985).

(Passive)

- high frequency;
- very active semantics; no evidence that the event is reframed as a resulting state;
- both with transitive and intransitive verbs;
- "promotional": Agent suppression is rare, the agent is usually present in the sentence in Dat and builds a narrow focus as in (1):

(Passive and Agents)

(1)   *ti   mā   χonχa-n   ōl-aw-e?*

this   land   who-Dat   live-Pass-Pres:Subj3Sg

'Who lives in this land?

(lit. this land is lived in by whom?)'

(R-79:113)

(Passive and Agents)

The absence of an agent NP is usually due to the zero anaphora (discourse topic):

(2)   *juj-əl*   *ta*   *joχt-aw-e-γ*

     back-Instr   Ptl   come-Pass-Pres-2Du

    [Context: The Por-woman was getting closer and closer to the two of them.]

    'Soon (she) will catch up (with them)';

    lit.: '(they-two) will be caught up' (K.WT 60).

Semantic roles open to passive:

- the scope of the passive's application in Ob-Ugrian languages includes not only patients, but also NPs with practically all other participant and circumstantial semantic roles;

- also NPs with no semantic relation to the passive verb (KULONEN: benefactives, actually just observers).

Passive: Patient & Recipient Subj

(3)   *śāń-e-n*   *taw*   *sās*   *āpa-t*
       mother-Px3Sg-Dat   he   birch.bark   cradle-Loc

       ńowit-awe-s,
       rock-Pass-Past:3Sg

       ūlilap-əl   *ūlil-awe-s,*
       lullaby-Instr   sing-Pass-Past:3Sg

       mōjt-we-s,   *āmśu-we-s*
       tell:tales-Pass-Past:3Sg   riddle-Pass-Past:3Sg

'His mother rocked him in a birch bark cradle, sang him
lullabies, told him tales, played riddle with him'
(lit.: By his mother he was rocked...etc.) (LS);

Passive: Goal Subj

(4)   *χūrum*   *χum-n*   *ōs*   *ti*
           three   man-Dat   again   Ptl

      śaltap-awe-s

      come-Pass-Past:3Sg

'Then three men came to her again'
(lit.: by three men is [Ø she] approached)
(K 1:213)

Passive: Source Subj

(5) *Ūsəŋ ōtər āś piɣ χumi-m-n*
Town prince father son husband-Px1Sg-Dat

χāp-iɣ os wār-awe-n

boat-Transl Ptl make-Pass:Pres-2Sg

'May my husband, the son of the town prince, make a boat from you'

(lit.: May [Ø you] be made to a boat by...) (K1:220).

Passive: Place Subj

(6) *saɣt-ət*   *ūj-n*   *jōm-āwe-t*

     forest-Pl   elk-Dat   go-Pass:Pres-3Pl

     ʿ(Large) forests are inhabited by elksʾ

Passive: Time Subj

(7)   *tōrum*   *lāws-um*   *ńila*   *ēt*
        God   say-Prt   four   night

      jonɣ-aw-e-t

      play-Pass-Pres-Subj3Pl

'People are playing (=celebrating) during all the four nights that God has ordered' (lit.: ...the four nights are played)

(K 1:260)

Passive: "observer" Subj

(8) *juw-jōm-i,*   *ēt'imt-awe-s*
      home-go-Pres:3sg   grow:dark-Pass-Past:3sg
      '(He) is going home, (he) is overtaken by night'
      (K 1:149);

Contextual functions of the passive:

- Together with the zero anaphora, it shapes the whole discourse/narrative structure;

- the continuous discourse topic (topic-1) must always be Subj; after the first introduction it switches on the zero anaphora of incredible strength;

Contextual functions of the passive:

- all clauses where valency patterns of predicates demand smth. else as Subj must be "passivized";

- A typical narrative consists of large segments with the same topic – "topic chains" – containing only VPs with IOs held together by the zero anaphora.

Text example

a. _Akw χum at pokmat-i, Ø at śar-aw-e._

  '<u>One man</u> does not burst (from heat),
does not burn' (burn-Pass-Pres:3Sg)

b. _Kol χol-as, kol ala-te asiŋiγ jēmt-əs,_

  'The house burned down, its roof got
holes in it,'

c. _Taw siraj sisil kon poriγm-as,_

  '<u>he</u> jumped out with a sword on his back,'

d. *Ø kol lākw ūltta poriɣm-as.*

e. *Ø Kon pat-əs,*

   '[He] jumped over the whole house. [He] appeared outside,'

f. *Ø sossa māχum-n   ńāl-il*
   pāχt-uŋkwe   pat-we-s.

   Ø local people-Dat   arrow-Instr
        throw-Inf become-Pass-Past:3Sg

   'Local people started shooting arrows [at him]'

g. *Pēś-e ńāl-il ta χōj-we-s.*

'His hip is wounded with an arrow.'

h. *Ø Korta ūltta poriγm-as,*

i. *Ø wit-n min-as,*

j. *Ø wit-n śalt-əs.*

'He jumped over the whole settlement, went to the river (water), dived in the water.'

k. *Ø Sort χuril śalt-əs*.

 '[He] dived, turning into a pike'

l. *Ø   Tolγ-əl   lap-rēpiγt-awe-s...*

 Ø net-Instr   throw-Pass-Past:3Sg

 'A fishing net was thrown to catch him.' (Č.)

Facit

- Mansi "passive" = topicalizer promoting discourse topics to Subj irrespective of their semantic role;
- as compared to the "classic" passive – in Igor Melčuk's terminology "permutative 1/2" – it is the "permutative 1/1+x";
- Insular phenomenon limited to Ob-Ugric languages only;
- In other FU languages agent suppression is predominant ("impersonal constructions" – "suppressive 1");

Object agreement and "dative shift"

Object agreement

- not obligatory
- among the most discussed topics in Finno-Ugric studies for almost a century (LAVOTHA 1960; GULYA 1967; COMRIE 1975; PERROT 1985, 1990; MARCANTONIO 1993; NIKOLAEVA 1999, 2001; NIKOLAEVA et al. 1993; KOSHKAREVA 2002, and others)
- many attempts to formulate semantic or formal rules of its usage, recently IS explanations

Object agreement: definiteness

- Called also "definite conjugation", since it was established early that these affixes are mostly used with "definite" direct objects (WICKMAN 1970 traces it to the Castrén's "Grammatik der samojedischen Sprachen" 1854)

Object agreement: definiteness

How to define "definiteness" for languages without articles?

a. Formal approach (Hungarian tradition);

b. definiteness as a universal category that can be expressed by verbal morphology: "The category of definiteness can, however, also exist in languages which lack such an article, such as Ostyak, where the definiteness of a direct object is shown by the use of the definite conjugation" (COMRIE 1975:9; see also VOLODIN 1997, 1999).

Object agreement: topicality

- Russian tradition: the notion of "logical accent" (TEREŠCENKO 1956, 1973; ROMBANDEEVA 1979; et al.)
- reformulated: "Terešcenko suggests moreover that verb-object agreement is also susceptible to topic-comment structure: verbs tend to agree with thematic direct objects" (COMRIE 1975:11).

DO as secondary topic:

- Secondary topic (Topic-2) is the expression of a short term discourse referent that stands next to the continuous discourse topic in the information hierarchy of the given segment of the discourse/ narration (after NIKOLAEVA 2001);

- An important discourse category for Uralic and Altaic languages, possessing specific encoding strategies and controlling the zero anaphora.

E.g. marking of the Topic-2 through differentiation of topical and focal case forms of pronouns in Kazym-Khanty [KOSHKAREVA 2002]:

(9a)   What does he need?

λŭveλ   *wǫn*   *λaraś*   *mɔsλ*

he:DatT   large   box   necessary

'He needs a large box' ;

(9b) Who needs a large box?

Wǫn   *λaraś*   **λŭveλa**   *mɔsλ*

large   box   he:DatF   necessary

'HE needs a large box'

Object agreement

- Treating Subj and DO in a similar way = similar status
- The most typical and frequent constellation for using the object agreement is when the continuous discourse topic is the Subj and the paragraph topic (topic-2) is the DO;
- The second most frequent is the reverse;
- Also used for introducing new referents as future topics (definiteness…)

(10) *jūswoj-t*   *tān*   *os*   *māń*
      eagle-Pl   they also little

      pāsiɣ-kwe-t   *now-i-janəl*
      reindeer.calf-Dim-Pl   catch-Pres-ObjPlx3Pl

'Eagles, they hunt reindeer calves, too' (R-56:4).

Object agreement + dative shift

- What happens if the topic-2 is not the P? The same, but without any additional (~voice)marking on the verb! (Agreement obligatory!)

- In most languages where "dative shift" occurs, it is limited lexically (closed lists of verbs like *give, bring, send, spray/cover, give/supply, fill/pour* etc.) or semantically (e.g. Recipients).

- In Ob-Ugric languages, IO promotion as a regular grammatical device practically independent of lexical or semantic limitations.

Encoding Topic-2 through promotion to object + object agreement, Recipient DO:

(11a)   Neutral:

    Am   **tawe-n** *mōjt*   *mōjt-eɣ-***um**

    I   he-Dat tale   tell-Pres-1Sg

'I tell him a tale';

(11b) Topical:

    Am   **tawe**   *mōjt-əl*   *mōjt-i-***lum**

    I   he:Acc tale-Instr   tell-Pres-ObjSgx1Sg

'I tell him a tale' (< 'What will you do with him?')

Topic-2 – benefactive DO:

(12a) *Am* *mis-um-n* *pum* *sāγr-ēγ-um*

    I cow-Px1Sg-Dat hay cut-Pres-Subj1Sg

'I make hay for my cow';

(12b) *Am* *mis-um*

    I cow-Px1Sg

    pum-el *sāγr-i-lum*

    hay-Instr cut-Pres-ObjSgxSubj1Sg

'It is for my cow that I make the hay';

Topic-2 – Instrument DO:

(13a) *Am*   *tul ʿōwl-um-əl*   *rātaśl-ēγ-um*

      I   finger-Px1Sg-Instr   tap-Pres-1Sg

      'I'm tapping with my finger';

(13b) *Am*   *tul ʿōwl-um*   *rātaśl-i-lum*

      I   finger-Px1Sg   tap-Pres-ObjSgxSubj1Sg

      'I'm tapping with my finger';

Topic-2 – Goal DO

(14a) *Taw   χāp-ən   joχt-əs*

He   boat-Dat   come-Past:3sg

'He came to the boat';

(14b) *Taw   χāp joχt-əs-te*

He   boat come-Past-ObjSgxSubj3Sg

'He reached the boat';

NB: an intransitive verb!

Topic-2 – Place DO:

(22)   *āńtəŋ*   *uj*   *jomas jir-əl*

        horn-with   animal   good   sacrifice-Instr

        naŋən   *ti*   *l'ūl'-as-lum*

        you:Acc   now   stand-Past-ObjSgxSubj1Sg

'Now I stand here before you with a good sacrifice of a horned animal (M 2:367)'.

KULONEN explains it as "absence of constituents hierarchy by three-placed verbs", so that the choice of the object "can be made according to the requirements of the situation and, e.g., the common principles of the animacy hierarchy" (1989: 197).

Contextual functions of object agreement

Ø Lōŋχal' ta min-as.

Ø ūs lui-owəlt wit totne χajtəp pōxan χuliγtaχt-as.

<...> *āγi wit totuŋkwe min-as,*

Ø Ø kāsal-as-te. Ø Ø χańśi-s-te.

'Now (he) swam (lit. went) downstream. (He) surfaced near the bridge where (women) take water at the end of the village. <Location's description.> A girl came to take water, noticed (him), recognized (him).

<...> Ań Ø āɣi jot ēlmxolas χuril pāɣ ta min-as.

Ø Ø Pāɣ joχt-s-iɣ (Dual!),

āɣi Ø takwi kol-n χot-tūjt-əs-te,

Ø Ø pusmalt-i-te.

Ø Ø Xūrəm χōtal ōńśi-s-te.

Ø Ø Pusmalt-as-te.

\<Dialog> Now (he) went with the girl away from the riverbank in his human form. (The two of them) went away from the riverbank, the girl hid (him) in her own house, began to take care (of him). Three days (she) kept (him). (She) healed (him)' (Č).

Facit:

Classical "dative shift" = "permutative 2/3";

In Mansi - "permutative 2/2+x", promotion of any topical element to DO irrespective of its actual semantic role [Skribnik 2004].

Conclusions

- Mansi morphosyntax codes primarily the pragmatic status of referents;
- topic-1 > topic-2 > non-topic; (NB: focus!)
- Topic-1 is always Subj (if necessary, through the "passive" voice);
- Topic-2 is always DO (if necessary, through the "dative shift"), marked by the object agreement (similar treatment = similar status);
- Both trigger the zero anaphora;
- Changes under the influence of Russian.

Thank you for your attention!