

Workshop  
Information structure and discourse in the minority  
languages of the Russian Federation

Friday 2nd December, SOAS University of London  
T102, 22 Russell Square

14.00-14.30 Welcome, Introduction

14.30-15.00 Gwen Eva Janda and Stefanie Andrea Eckmann: Reference Tracking mechanisms and automatic annotation based on Ob-Ugric Information Structure – Workshop on Information Structure and discourse

15.00-15.30 Chris Lasse Däbritz: Topic and Passivization in Eastern Khanty Dialects

15.30-16.00 András Bárány: On the syntax of differential object agreement in Ob-Ugric

16.00-16.30 break

16.30-17.00 Nadezda Christopher: Kazakh multi-functional particle ğoj: the first description

17.00-17.30 Katalin É. Kiss and Orsolya Tánzos: Possessive agreement grammaticalizing into a topic marker

17.30-18.00 Alexey Kozlov: Futurum pro habituali: interaction of aspect and information structure

## Reference Tracking mechanisms and automatic annotation based on Ob-Ugric Information Structure

Dr. des Gwen Eva Janda, LMU Munich, Stefanie Eckmann, B.A., LMU Munich

Research on Information Structure of the past twenty years has led to new insights and revision on several topics in Ob-Ugric linguistics, such as the notion of definiteness, the use of the objective conjugation (see Nikolaeva 2001) or the passive (see Kulonen 2007). With regard to the latter, it has been shown that the correlation between syntactic and pragmatic role overrules that of syntactic and semantic role. Thus, the Ob-Ugric passive voice is used as a Reference Tracking mechanism: it sustains the realization of the highest referent in the pragmatic hierarchy - the primary topic - as the subject of the sentence (cf. Kibrik 2008), regardless of its semantic role. In example (1) the primary topic, being the patient of the action, appears in subject position and is indicated by zero anaphora ( $\emptyset$ ). The agent of the action is not realized in a syntactic core role but in an adverbial case (LOC) due to its lower position in the pragmatic hierarchy.

- 1)  $\emptyset$  nəŋnə βə:jəŋtə-min pə əntə təj-t-əjəm  
[1SG] 2SG.LOC disoblige-CVB EMPH NEG have-PRS-PASS.1SG  
,Don't disoblige me' (Surgut-Khanty text 737; [www.oudb.gwi.uni-muenchen.de](http://www.oudb.gwi.uni-muenchen.de))

Another feature recently described in the light of Information Structure is the so-called Dative Shift (see Givón 1984). Unlike in most languages, it is neither lexically nor semantically restricted in Ob-Ugric, but another kind of Reference Tracking mechanism that is used in order to maintain the correlation between secondary topic and direct object (see Nikolaeva 2001). In example (2) the recipient of the action is the direct object (marked with ACC), the patient is not in a core semantic role. The position in the pragmatic hierarchy is again decisive.

- 2)  $\emptyset$  t'u: ɛ:rit-ət nəŋet mə-t-əm  
[1SG] DEM how much-INSC 2SG.ACC give-PRS-1SG  
,[I] give you all of this.' (Surgut-Khanty text 737; v.s.)

In Northern Mansi, objective agreement on the verb serves additionally as obligatory marker of the Dative Shift (Skribnik 2001), the direct object is thus as well indicated with zero anaphora:

- 3)  $\emptyset$   $\emptyset$  n'a:l-əl wa:r-i-lum  
[1SG] [2SG] arrow-INST make-PRS-SG<1SG  
,[I] will make [you] an arrow.' (Northern Mansi text 781; v.s.)

Resulting from the interaction between Information Structure and Reference Tracking certain regularities can be observed, such as:

- the pragmatic word order is primary topic – secondary topic – comment / focus;
- it is syntactically realized as subject – direct object – indirect object / adverbial – predicate;
- the combination of pragmatic and corresponding syntactic role is maintained with referential mechanisms throughout the whole text, semantic roles are involved to a much lesser extent;

We will also illustrate, how a model on the interaction between Information Structure

and Reference Tracking mechanisms can be developed and used for automatic annotation in Ob-Ugric languages.

References:

Givón, Talmy 1984. "Direct Object and Dative Shifting: Semantic and Pragmatic Case". *Objects. Towards a theory of grammatical relations* London: Academic Press p. 151-182

Kibrik, Andrej. 2008. "Reference maintenance in discourse". *Language Typology and Language Universals* p. 1123-1141

Kulonen, Ulla-Maija. 2007. *Itämansin kielioppi ja tekstejä*. Helsinki: SUS

Nikolaeva, Irina 2001. "Secondary topic as a relation in information structure". *Linguistics* 39:1 p. 1-49

Skribnik, Jelena. 2001. "Pragmatic Structuring in Northern Mansi". *Congressus IX Fenno-Ugristarum* p. 222-239

## TOPIC AND PASSIVIZATION IN EASTERN KHANTY DIALECTS

Chris Lasse Däbritz, University of Hamburg

The Khanty language is a Uralic language which is spoken along the River Ob' in Western Siberia, Russia (Honti 1986: 13). It is spoken by some 10,000 people (VPN 2010) and its dialectal division is highly developed (Honti 1986: 13). Therefore, only the Eastern Khanty dialects, i.e. Surgut, Vakh and Vasyugan dialects (Honti 1986: 13) are under consideration here.

The here given understanding of *topic* is that of an *aboutness topic* in an aristotelic sense, i.e. the topic is that pragmatical unit of a sentence on which something is predicated (Molnár 1991: 58; Junghanns/Zybatow 2009: 688). Eastern Khanty dialects (here: Vasyugan) show a morphological passive which can be used with every kind of verb, not only with transitive verbs (Filchenko 2010: 266ff.):

(1) *Titi qulən jiyəl sayı mənli.*

titi qulən jiyəl sayı mən-l-i  
Det Kulen-Yogal way go-Prs-Pass.3Sg

'So they go along the river Kulen-Yogal.'

(Filchenko 2010:

269)

Apparently, the passive voice is used here to raise the adverbial phrase *qulən jiyəl sayı* into the subject position, because in this sentence it is topical, i.e. something is told about it, in this case that some people go along it. Interestingly, this adverbial phrase is not the most activated and referentially most anchored entity in the sentence – the covert agent ('they') is even more activated, but not topical in the above-mentioned sense.

In this talk, I will discuss the mechanisms of topicalization within the passive voice in Eastern Khanty dialects and will also deal with the question, why the topic in Eastern Khanty should rather be analyzed as an *aboutness topic* and not as a referentially anchored and activated entity.

### References:

Filchenko, Andrey. 2010. *Aspects of the Grammar of Eastern Khanty*. Tomsk: TSPU-press.

Honti, László. 1986. *Chrestomathia ostiacica*. 2. kiadás. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó.

Junghanns, Uwe; Zybatow, Gerhild. 2009. Grammatik und Informationsstruktur. In: Gutschmidt, Karl et al. (ed.). *Die slavischen Sprachen*. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft. Bd. 32, 2. Berlin: De Gruyter, 684-707.

Molnár, Valéria. 1991. *Das TOPIK im Deutschen und Ungarischen*. Lunder germanistische Forschungen 58. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell. VPN 2010 = Federal'naja služba gosudarstvennoj statistiki (ed.). 2010. *Vserossijskij perepis' naselenija*. Tom 4. Nacional'nyj sostav i vladenie jazykami, graždanstvo. Čast' 5. Vladenie jazykami naseleniem Rossijskoj Federacii. Available online at:

[http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-05.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-05.pdf), last access: 29.04.2016.

## On the syntax of differential object agreement in Ob-Ugric

András Bárány, Research Institute for Linguistics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

In some languages with differential object marking (DOM), the exponent of DOM matches that of case (Spanish, Hindi, Basque, etc.). Manzini & Franco (2016) suggest that this homophony is due to syntactic identity: they argue that in DOM=DAT languages, DOM objects are introduced by the same functional head that introduces indirect objects (IOs).

**Problem** I show that the predictions of this analysis are wrong for these languages: DOM objects and IOs are consistently different w.r.t. passivisation, their case-marking in nominalisations, reduced relative-formation, and other tests, contrary to what we would expect if they are syntactically identical.

In the Ob-Ugric languages Khanty and Mansi, there is an analogous overlap: object agreement in these languages is **differential with ACC theme arguments**, and **obligatory with ACC recipient objects** (DN2011, Virtanen 2015, Sipőcz 2016). DOM/agreement correlates with an alternation in alignment in Khanty and Mansi, but not in DOM=DAT languages. Agreeing objects in Khanty and Mansi are syntactically identical, but DOM objects/IOs are not in DOM=DAT languages.

**Analysis** (1) illustrates agreement with mono- and ditransitives (in Khanty; Mansi shows the same pattern with different case-marking). In (1a), the single internal argument is a theme — whether it agrees depends on its information structural status. In (1b), a ditransitive, the theme is realised with the same case-marking as in (1a) and the recipient is oblique (so-called indirective alignment). Object agreement still depends on information structure. In (1c), the **recipient** is morphologically unmarked (or ACC) and the **theme** is oblique (secundative alignment). Object agreement is now obligatory.

- (1)a. *(ma) tam kalaŋ-ət we:l-sə-l-am.*  
I these reindeer-PL kill-PST-PL.OBJ-1SG.SBJ  
'I killed these reindeer.' (DN2011: 142)
- b. *ma a:n juwan e:lti ma-s-e:m / ma-s-əm.*  
I cup John to give-PST-SG.OBJ<1SG.SBJ give-PST-1SG.SBJ  
'I gave the cup to John.' (DN2011: 148)
- c. *ma juwan a:n-na ma-s-e:m / \*ma-s-əm.*  
I John cup-LOC give-PST-SG.OBJ<1SG.SBJ give-PST-1SG.SBJ  
'I gave John a cup.' (DN2011: 148)

In contrast to the behaviour of DOM objects and IOs in Spanish, Hindi, etc., agreeing theme and recipient objects in Khanty and Mansi behave alike syntactically: both languages allow theme and recipient passives, for example. This is shown in (2) for Khanty; in (2b), the theme is marked with LOC, as in (1c).

(2)a. *εβi* *†θβε* *mə-s-i.* [Theme passive]  
 girl 3SG.DAT give-PST-PASS.3SG  
 ‘The girl was given to him.’ (LMU Ob-Ugric Database ID 1316)

b. (*luw*) *juwan-na* *ke:si-na* *ma-s-a.* [Recipient passive]  
 he John-LOC knife-LOC give-PST-PASS.3SG.SBJ  
 ‘He was given a knife by John.’ (DN2011: 104)

(3) and (4) show the structures of (1b) and (1c), respectively. In (3), the theme (TH) moves to SpecAppl, where Appl agrees with it. In (4), the recipient REC is merged in SpecApplP and Appl agrees with it. Appl only agrees with its specifier, but not the complement of V, explaining the higher position of agreeing objects. Both REC and TH get Case from *v*, so both passivise if *v* fails to assign ACC.

## References

- Dalrymple**, M. & I. **Nikolaeva**. 2011. *Objects and information structure*. CUP.  
**Manzini**, M. R. & L. **Franco**. 2016. Goal and DOM datives. *NLLT* 34. 197–240.  
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**Virtanen**, S. 2015. Transitivity in Eastern Mansi. University of Helsinki PhD dissertation.

## Kazakh multi-functional particle *ǰoj*: the first description

Nadežda Christopher, SOAS

This paper provides the first detailed description of the Kazakh multi-functional particle *ǰoj*, which has not been thoroughly examined in the linguistic literature to date. Kazakh is a Kipchak (Turkic) language spoken in the Republic of Kazakhstan, and is one of less commonly spoken languages on the territory of the Russian Federation.

First, I present two existing descriptions of *ǰoj* and introduce the new data that shows that the existing descriptions fail to fully capture the nature of *ǰoj*. I proceed to propose that *ǰoj* is an information-structurally loaded particle, which plays a role in Common Ground management. If considered within wider typological and theoretical contexts, I propose comparing *ǰoj* with the Russian particle *že*. The particle *ǰoj* (also *ǰoy* or *ɣoy* in the literature) has not been described in detail in the linguistic literature. The two mentions of it that I found in the literature are by Straughn (2011) and Muhamedowa (2016).

Let us consider what is said about *ǰoj* in these works. Straughn (2011) glosses *ǰoj* as EXPL ('Explicative'), and states that "the addition of *ǰoy* merely indicates that the speaker is expressing an emotive attitude toward the content of an utterance" (2011:135). It is also claimed that *ǰoy* is "limitless in distribution" (2011:136). The example below demonstrates that, although, *ǰoj* might be adding an emotive colouring to the utterance, it also plays an important role of indicating that the information carried by the utterance had previously been added to the Common Ground and is now referred to again by the speaker. *ǰoj* would be infelicitous in (1b) if the information carried by the utterance had not been previously shared between the interlocutors; the same sentence without *ǰoj* would simply be adding new information to the Common Ground.

(1) a) Mother: Why weren't you home yesterday afternoon?

b) Son: *Keše sabaq bol-dī ǰoj!*

Yesterday lesson be-PAST.3SG *ǰoj*

'There was a class yesterday, wasn't there/don't you remember?'

Thus, the example in (1) shows that *ǰoj* is neither 'limitless in distribution', nor merely an 'emotive attitude indicator'. The particle here is rather an indicator of 'old information' being re-activated in the Common Ground.

Muhamedowa (2016) recognises the fact that *ǰoj* "appeals to shared information between the speaker and the hearer" (2016:163), however, she also claims that the particle has a "fixed position in a sentence and must appear after the predicate" (2016:15). The example in (2b) proves this claim inaccurate.

(2) a) Speaker 1: Bolat wrote this book.

b) Speaker 2: *Bul kitap-tī Marat ɣoj žaz-ǰan!*

This book-ACC Marat *ǰoj* write-PERF

'It was Marat who wrote this book (not Bolat)!'

In (2b) *ǰoj* follows the grammatical subject of the sentence, and not the predicate. Most

importantly, however, is the fact that the particle here has to follow the contrastively focussed term in order to achieve the desired effect of replacing an incorrect (from the point of view of the speaker) piece of information with the correct one. The addition of *ǰoj* also indicates a strong commitment by the speaker to veracity of this information – this attitude of the speaker to the proposition has been referred to as ‘(non-)confirmativity’ (Friedman 1981).

Taking into consideration the examples in (1) and (2), as well as other instances of use of *ǰoj* I propose that this particle has two main functions/meanings: confirmative and contrastive. Formal analysis of the behaviour of *ǰoj* in different contexts (semantic, syntactic and prosodic), and its interaction with other information-structurally loaded items will help determine which of these meanings is primary, and which – an extension.

From the typological point of view, the particle *ǰoj* can be compared to the Russian *že*, which McCoy (2003:132) analyses as a marker of “kontrast” as well as a marker of “activated information”. McCoy (2003:133) views kontrastivity as the core semantic meaning of *že* in a variety of environments, while its position in the clause (identified in relation to the [+contrast; +rheme] element it marks), its discourse role and its various implicatures are seen as the consequences of this meaning. A full comparative analysis of *ǰoj*, *že*, as well as other multi-functional particles, such as the Greek *ge* and the German *doch*, would provide for a better understanding of the roles of these particles in Common Ground management and in other Information-Structure related processes.

#### References:

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- Muhamedowa, R., 2016. *Kazakh: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Straughn, C., 2011. *Evidentiality in Uzbek and Kazakh*. Ph.D. The University of Chicago.
- Alexey Kozlov: *Futurum pro habituali: interaction of aspect and information structure*

## POSSESSIVE AGREEMENT GRAMMATICALIZING INTO A TOPIC MARKER

KATALIN É. KISS, RIL-HAS, PPCU, ORSOLYA TÁNCZOS, RIL-HAS

**Claim:** The present-day functions of the Udmurt *-ez/jez* derive from its possessive agreement role. The multiple reanalyses that have taken place will be reconstructed on the basis of Hungarian, where the grammaticalization path of possessive Agr is better documented.

**Facts to explain:** In Udmurt, the suffix *-jez* has seemingly unrelated functions: (i) possessive Agr; (ii) familiarity marking; (iii) contrast; (iv) differential object marking; (v) nominalizing.

The Hungarian analogue: We show that the grammaticalization path of the Hungarian *-ik*, a suffix cognate with 3PL possessive Agr, and that of *-ja*, the 3SG possessive Agr suffix, provide analogues that enable us to derive the functions of *-ez/jez* from its possessive role.

The suffix *-ik* appearing on pronouns, e.g. *minden-ik* 'every', on ordinal numerals, e.g. *második* '2nd', and, optionally, on comparative adjectives, e.g. *szebb-ik* 'more beautiful', was an allomorph of 3PL possessive Agr in Old Hungarian. In OH texts, *-ik*-marked elements only appear as heads of possessive constructions with a lexical or pro possessor, e.g.:

- (1) *Valanac ot hat kő vedreci* [<sub>DP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> *mēdèn-ic<sub>i</sub>*] foglaluā kèt kőblöt.  
were there six stone buckets every-Poss3PL taking two vats

Since possessive Agr can only merge with NP, the root combined with *-ik* is always assigned an NP layer, i.e., *-ik* has a nominalizing effect. In Middle Hungarian, *-ik* is reinterpreted as a familiarity marker; and the *-ik*-marked element becomes a determiner/modifier. However, its possessor is still implicitly present, excluding a generic reading:

- (2) a. *Minden-ik ember magas.* b. *Minden-\*ik ember halandó.*  
every man [of them] tall every man mortal

The 3SG *-ja* suffix has followed a similar grammaticalization path. In its familiarity-marking functions, it has become invariant, showing so-called anti-agreement:

- (3) *Pro<sub>1PL</sub> hárm-as-á-val mentünk be.*  
pro<sub>1PL</sub> three-Poss3SG-with went-1PL in  
'We went in in threes.'

**The proposal:** We claim that the seemingly non-possessive functions of the Udmurt *-ez/jez* represent different stages of a similar grammaticalization path. *-ez/jez* is a 3SG possessive agreement which can also be used in the presence of an implicit possessor present in the situation or the context – hence the familiarity marking role of *-ez/jez*:

- (4) *kar-in zoopark-ez vań.*  
city-INE zoo-Poss3SG is

Familiarity marking corresponds to familiarity-topic marking. *-ez/jez* can also mark contrastive topics, whose implicit possessors represent opposing subsets of a familiar referent:

- (5) *Ulizy-vylizy kyk bratjos, pokchi-ez kuaner, byzym-ez uzyr.*

lived-were.3SG two brother.PL younger.brother-3SG poor older.brother-3SG rich  
 Like in the Hungarian (3), we attest anti-agreement (default 3SG).

Topical objects are also marked by *-ez/jez*, i.e., *-ez/jez* can be interpreted as accusative case.

(6) *Sasha kniga-jez lydziz.*  
 Sasha.NOM book-ACC read.PST.3SG

As often happens across languages, topic marking has been extended to all animate objects:

(7) *Mon odig puny-jez utchas'ko.*  
 1SG one dog.ACC search.PST.1SG

As a relic of its original possessive Agr role, *-ez/jez* can only merge with the category NP, hence its lexical stem is assigned an NP layer, and is interpreted as a nominal:

(8) *ton ponna-jez*  
 you because.of-NOMIN  
 'who/which is because of you'

The partitive and counting meanings of *tros* 'many' are also distinguished by *-ez/jez*: *tros-ez* means 'a large part of a contextually or situationally given set'; whereas *tros* means 'numerous':

(9) *tros-ez mynozy, kinlen van' in'i vizajez jake kin otyn, Jevropayn ule.*  
 many-3SG go.FUT.3PL who.GEN be already visa.3SG or who there Europe.in live  
 'Many [of them] will go, who has already visa or who live there, in Europe.'

(10) *Tros adjamy lyktiz koncerte.*  
 many people came concert.to  
 'Many people came to the concert.'

## FUTURUM PRO HABITUALI: INTERACTION OF ASPECT AND INFORMATION STRUCTURE<sup>1</sup>

Alexey Kozlov (Moscow State University / Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy  
of Sciences / St. Philip's School)

The present study focuses on habitual uses of verbal forms which, at least on the synchronic stage, seem to have future as their main function, and are only marginally used in present habitual contexts, contrasting with default ways of expressing habitual. The use of such forms is strongly influenced by the information structure of the sentence as well. The cases of three languages are taken into account: future perfective forms (1) opposed to Imperfective habituals in Russian; Future forms as opposed to default Present and Past Iterative in Udmurt (< Permic < Finno-Ugric); unmarked non-past forms (2) as opposed to Iterative forms, generally obligatory in habitual contexts, in Moksha (< Mordvinic < Finno-Ugric). The usage of FPH is governed by strict rules, almost the same in each of the three cases. Such forms can refer both to present and past habits and strongly prefer an adverbial quantifier to be in a sentence or in the previous context (e.g. (1) has only futural interpretation without a quantifier). Furthermore, they are to be in the focus of the clause, either narrow or wide (2a-b). Finally, such forms are claimed to have a certain “episodic flavour”. A synchronic semantic analysis should probably be such that these forms do not contain any habitual operator per se; they are episodic, and it is the adverbial quantifier where the meaning of the habitus comes from (cf. the treatment of non-kind referring NPs as A green bottle has a narrow neck in Carlsson, Pelletier 1995). The “focus-only” restriction is probably due to the fact that such forms is to be in the scope of the quantifier, not being bound by it. In the talk, we are going to show that such analysis runs counter a possible diachronic explanation. In each of the cases, the form under discussion used to be a general present, thus being able to refer to habitual situation without any restrictions. Later, it got forced out from habitual contexts by another form which is the “default habitual” now. A “doughnut category” analysis (Haspelmath 1999) does not explain the sensitivity to information structure which FPH forms how at the present stage. We have to suppose that a reinterpretation of these forms as an episodic took place after the new “default habitual” was established, so now they appear in habitual contexts only in the scope of an adverbial quantifier, and therefore, in the focus of the clause.

(1) RUSSIAN

<i>saša</i>	#( <i>inogda</i> )	<i>vspomnit</i>	<i>muža</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>zapláčet</i>
S.	sometimes	remember.PFV.FUT.3SG	husband.ACC	and	cry.PFV.FUT.3SG

‘Sometimes Sasha remembers her husband and weeps.’ {only future interpretation without *inogda* }

(2) MOKSHA

a. <i>koj=kostə</i>	<i>saša</i>	<i>l’etfta-si</i>	<i>mərd’ə-n-c</i>
sometimes S.		remember-NPST.3SG.O.1SG.S	husband-GEN-3SG.POSS.SG

<sup>11</sup> The study is supported by the RFFI grant project № 16-06-00536

*avar'd'-i*

cry-NPST.3SG

'Sometimes Sasha remembers her husband and weeps.'

b. *saša avar'-čn'-i* (\**avar'd'-i*) [*an'c'ək mard'ə-n-c* *kolgə*]<sub>FOC</sub>

S. cry-ITER-NPST.3SG cry-NPST.3SG only husband-GEN-3SG.POSS.SG about

'Sasha (generally) weeps only about her husband.'

#### References

1. Carlson G.N., Pelletier F.J. The generic book / G.N. Carlson, F.J. Pelletier. – Chicago, 1995.
2. Haspelmath M. The semantic development of old presents: new futures and subjunctives without grammaticalization // *Diachronica* XV (1), 1998. — P. 29—62

Saturday 3rd December, KLT, SOAS College Building

- 9.00-9.30 David Kindlein: The tension between in-situ clefting and discourse-bound extraposition in Kabardian identificational sentences
- 9.30-10.00 Diana Forker: Discourse particles in Sanzhi Dargwa and their function in common ground updating
- 10.00-10.30 Lenore Grenoble and Nadezhda Ya Bulatova: Referent tracking in Evenki discourse
- 10.30-11.00 break
- 11.00-11.30 Nikolett Mus: „Non-canonical” word order in Tundra Nenets. An explanation of the initial OS order
- 11.30-12.00 Olesya Khanina: On focus in Enets: evidence from spontaneous question-answer pairs
- 12.00-12.30 Larisa Leisiö: Backchannels in Nganasan conversation
- 12.30-14.00 lunch break
- 14.00-15.30 Plenary (see main conference programme)
- 16.00-16.30 Alexey Kozlov, Maria Privizentseva and Polina Pleshak: Case compounding and discourse structure in Moksha
- 16.30-17.00 Svetlana Toldova: Topicality and Differential Object Marking in Moksha
- 17.00-17.30 Erika Asztalos and Orsolya Tánczos: Aboutness Topic in Udmurt

THE TENSION BETWEEN IN-SITU CLEFTING AND DISCOURSE-BOUND EXTRAPOSITION IN  
KABARDIAN IDENTIFICATIONAL SENTENCES

DAVID KINDLEIN, SIL

Kabardian, an SOV language, makes use of pseudo-clefts for identificational articulation. This denotes sentences with “a headless REL-clause functioning as subject [...] and a nominal predicate” (Givón, 2001, p. 225). In (1) the affirmative copula (AFF.COP) marks the clefted constituent, i.e. the nominal predicate. The relative clause (RC) contains a nominal participle with absolutive ending (ABS).

- (1) Хъыджэбзы-м      щлалэ-щ                      Ø-и-ш-а-р  
 woman-ERG      lad-AFF.COP                      O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRT-ABS  
 ‘A lad is whom the woman led.’

The object of the SOV topic-comment allosentence has become the complement in the pseudo-cleft construction of (1). Since it has remained in its second-place position it now splits the other lexical argument, the ergative subject, from the verbal form that governs it, the participle. This seems to create a typologically inadmissible split RC. An explanation for this feature is found when noting the similarities of pseudo-clefts with *wh*-questions, both containing participles. As König and Siemund (2007, p. 291) point out, semantically such *wh*-questions are “open propositions with interrogative words signalling the relevant variable positions”. (2a) asks for the front-positioned subject, while (2b) asks for the second-positioned direct object.

- (2) a. Хэт-Ø                      хъыджэбзы-р                      Ø-зы-ш-а-р?  
 who-ERG                      woman-ABS                      O3SG-S.REL-lead-PRT-ABS  
 ‘Who led the woman?’ [Who (is)] [the one who led the woman]
- b. Хъыджэбзы-м                      хэт-Ø                                      Ø-и-ш-а-р?  
 woman-ERG      who-ABS                                      O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRT-ABS  
 ‘Whom did the woman lead?’ [Who (is)] [the one the woman led]

Rather than requiring *wh*-movement Kabardian allows for *wh*-in-situ, where “interrogative words remain exactly in the position of the constituent which they replace” (ibid., p. 301). Yet the in-situ parameter is then also transferred to pseudo-cleft identificational answers. In other words, native speakers would provide an elicited response where the *wh*-in-situ slot of the interrogative construction is filled by the focused and therefore predicated constituent in a corresponding pseudo-cleft identificational construction. It is the in-situ parameter at work in (2b), then, that explains the seemingly split RC of (1). This is in line with findings like Andrews’ (2007, p. 156) in Malayalam.

However, the reason this principle is difficult to establish in connected discourse is the strong tendency to postpose (or, more rarely, prepose) the focused, predicated

constituent on discourse-pragmatic grounds. For instance, in line with the principle of *natural information flow*, the asserted, newly added, clefted information in connected discourse is frequently postposed (3).

- (3) Махуэ псом еджакүитым кѣахуэщыпар щхъэмыж ІэмыщІэ-щ.  
day all the two pupils what they could collect grain a fistful-AFF.COP  
'What the two students were able to collect throughout the day was one fistful of grain.' (C.44)

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- (2) (A: Please tell me more stories about Sanzhi. B answers:  
biriz-la k:alk:i-la b-urs-ib=da=q'al xabar s:a  
birch-GEN tree-GEN N-tell.PFV-PRET=1=PRT story yesterday  
'Yesterday I already told the story about the birch tree.'

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## REFERENT TRACKING IN EVENKI DISCOURSE

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This paper examines referent tracking and information structure in the Tungusic languages, focusing on Evenki discourse, but with reference to other Tungusic languages, where information structure has been more thoroughly studied (see, for example, Gorelova 2002, 2006 for Manchu; Nikolaeva & Tolskaya 2001 for Udihe). Despite relatively comprehensive descriptions of Evenki (e.g. Bulatova 1987; Bulatova & Grenoble 1999; Konstantinova 1964; Nedjalkov 1997), referent tracking and information structure have been largely ignored.

Evenki has a number of linguistic means for introducing and tracking referents. A referent tends to be first introduced with a full lexical noun: a noun, including a proper name, a nominalized verbal form or participle, or a modifier plus noun. It can then be referred to by use of a noun, a pronoun or a zero anaphor. A number of different pronominal categories are available for referent tracking in Evenki: personal pronouns, deictic pronouns and zero anaphora (with explicit person marking of subject on the verb). Unlike some Tungusic languages such as Oroch and Udihe, the use of personal pronouns is not restricted to human and anthropomorphized referents. There is a two-way deictic distinction, proximal and distal. As is characteristic of other Tungusic languages, the proximal *ər* 'this' is rarely used anaphorically and is excluded from the present analysis.

The focus here is on the distribution of the third person pronouns with regard to information packaging in narrative, both historically collected folklore texts and my own field recordings. In third-person narration the distribution of anaphoric devices is not straightforward. Continuing topic can be signaled by anaphoric zero, but often is not. Full lexical NPs sometimes occur in adjacent clauses, often with a disambiguating function, i.e. in those situations where there are two possible referents. Elsewhere, the second NP is used for emphasis of some kind (and perhaps for metrical reasons in oral folklore). The third personal (*nun̄an*, *nun̄artyn*) and deictic pronouns (*tar*, *taril*) are of particular interest. They occur with near equal frequency in some texts; their distribution is best accounted for in terms of topicalization and focus.

Historically, the Tungusic languages as a whole are characterized by having only "one pragmatic peak, as the focus of pragmatic, discourse, and/or referential phenomena is called, per sentence" and that this peak is "manifested in the main clause" (Nichols 1979: 420). The data show relatively recent differences in referent tracking under Russian influence, based on a contrastive analysis of the system found in folklore texts which were collected in the 1950s-1960s when the language was robustly spoken and our field recordings, made from 1998-2014. The latter are comprised of both elicited narratives and more open-ended life stories. These more recent field recordings show Russian influence on word order, information structure and referent tracking.

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„Non-canonical” word order in Tundra Nenets. An explanation of the initial OS order  
Workshop on information structure and discourse

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Tundra Nenets (Northern Samoyedic, Uralic) is traditionally regarded as being a strict SOV language at least at the level of its single declaratives (see 1).

- (1) *xasawa ti-m xada(-da).*  
man reindeer- ACC kill-(SG<)3SG  
'A/the man killed a/the reindeer.' (Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011: 132)  
S O V

Recent studies (e.g. Nikolaeva 2014), however, revisit this traditional view stating that it is only the clause finality of the main verb which seems to be a rigid syntactic rule in the language. The other (major) constituents of the clause may surface in further „non-canonical” orders. One of these orders is illustrated in (2–3), where the accusative marked direct objects precede the subjects, i. e. the order is <O, S> in the clauses.

- (2) *ηano-m?i ηeneća-? [ti ] me?-ηa-da?*  
boat-ACC people-PL make-CO-SG<3PL  
'The people made the boat.' (Okotetto 1998: 63)  
O S V
- (3) *suju-koća-m?i ηaćeke-xe ? [ti ] soda-d'i?*  
calf-DIM-ACC child-DU take.away-2DU  
'The children (DU) took away the small reindeer calf.'  
(Samoylova & Barmich 2008: 115)  
O S V

As it is illustrated in the quasi-minimal pair in (2–3), the differential object marking in the language – which serves to mark the topicality of the direct object (cf. Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011) – does not correlate with the position of the direct object, as both agreeing (see 2) and non-agreeing (see 3) objects may appear to the left of the subject. Consequently, it is not the information status of the direct object, i. e. its topicality, which affects its preposed position. This is also supported by the fact that wh-objects can move across the subjects in wh-questions, as in (4).

- (4) *ηamge-m?i pidara? [ti ] pær-ηa-da??*  
what-ACC 2PL do-CO-2PL  
'What are you doing?' (Nenyang 2005: 93)  
O<sub>Q</sub> S V

In (2), the agreeing topical object is fronted and it moves to the topic position. In contrast, the non-agreeing objects in (3–4) can be interpreted as contrastive foci which move to the initial focus position. In addition, the orders in (3–4) can also be analysed as follows. The subjects are focused and therefore they are postposed to the right of their canonical positions.

In my talk, I will examine these reversed constructions and answer the following questions: (i) What types of direct objects (e.g. pronouns, full NPs, etc.) are fronted? (ii) What kind of subjects are preceded by direct objects? (iii) Is there any syntactic and/or pragmatic restriction of the reversed order? (iv) Is it only the subject which is preceded by the direct object or the object also moves across other clause initial constituents, such as sentential adverbs? (v) Is the reversed order the consequence of the scrambling of the major constituents?

Consequently, I will examine in OSV sentences using distributional evidence whether only O or both O and S occupy operator positions. In addition, I will determine the discourse functions of S and O on the basis of contextual information in addition to verbal agreement.

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## ON FOCUS IN ENETS: EVIDENCE FROM SPONTANEOUS QUESTION-ANSWER PAIRS

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This paper discusses linguistic correlates for focus (Lambrecht 1994) in Enets (Uralic, Samoyedic). The research is based on a corpus of natural texts (Tundra Enets=TE, 7 hours, ca. 10 000 clauses; Forest Enets=FE, 25 hours. ca. 30 000 clauses). Apart from describing a linguistic phenomena in Enets, the paper also aims to contribute to a methodological discussion illustrating that there is no prerequisite for the elicitation origin of the classical question-answer pairs in a study of information structure.

First, we will show that in all argument-focus (or narrow focus) wh-questions attested in the corpus, wh-word goes immediately before the verb (1), as is indeed cross-linguistically typical for a SOV language (Kim 1988; Kiss 1995). Besides, we will also show that in all sentence-focus wh-questions ('What happened?' and 'How on earth can it be that X?' types), wh-word goes in front of the sentence (2), (5).

- (1)  $\epsilon$ ke d<sup>ʲ</sup>eri-xon **ɔbu** pɔn<sup>ʲ</sup>i-d<sup>ʲ</sup>a-d                      (2) **miiʔaj** tɔrɔj kɔba teza-da-dɔ  
FE this day-LOC.SG **what** do(ipfv)-Q-2SG.S      TE **why** such skin bring(pfv)-FUT2SG.S  
'What have you done today?'                      'Why on earth will you bring me such skins?!'

Enets transitive verbs exhibit obligatory cross-reference with subject and optional cross-reference with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person direct object (=DO); the object cross-reference is virtually obligatory when DO has no lexical expression. So second, we will check for any possible correlations between different types of transitive questions and verbal object cross-reference, as other Uralic languages show indeed a connection between the rules of object verbal cross-reference usage and information structure (Nikolaeva 2001; Toldova & Serdobolskaya 2012). Similarly to what was shown for Northern Khanty by (Nikolaeva 2001), wh-questions to *direct object* in Enets never show object cross-reference (1), while wh-questions to *subject* of transitive clause always show object cross-reference with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person object (3).

- (3) kud<sup>ʲ</sup>i-miʔ                      mu-da-**za**                       $\epsilon$ ke,     $\epsilon$ ke d<sup>ʲ</sup>a  
FE which-NOM.SG.1DUtake(pfv)-FUT-**3SG.SOsg**      this this place  
'Who of us will take this land?'

General questions to the truth value of a transitive proposition ('Does X do Y?' type), corresponding to predicate focus sentences, usually show object cross-reference, the same do their answers (4).

- (4) ne-d                      kaza-ba-rʔ                      d<sup>ʲ</sup>igua,                      ne-jʔ d<sup>ʲ</sup>uʔa-**b**  
TE woman-OBL.SG.2SG                      kill(pfv)-Q-**2SG.SOsg**  
there\_is\_no.3SG.S                      woman-NOM.SG.1SG lose(pfv)-**1SG.SOsg**  
'(Why are you alone?) Did you kill your wife? - No, I lost my wife.'

Sentence-focus transitive questions with *wh*-words ('How on earth can it be that X?' type) are heterogeneous in this respect. If a better candidate for the referent of DO applied to the same verb can be readily suggested by the speaker, no object cross-reference is observed (*It's better to do the same to a different object, not to X* – e.g. in (1): You'd better bring me different skins than such skins). If an alternative action applied to the same subject and DO can be readily suggested by the speaker, the object cross-reference is observed (*It's better to do X to this object, not Y* – e.g. in (5): You'd better keep these things upstairs than bring them down).

(5) miiʔa tɔɔj mite-ʔ teʔi-z nexer-**e-zɔ**  
 TE why such thing-PL top-ABL.SG take\_out(ipfv)-**SOpl-2SG.SOnsg**  
 'Why on earth do you take out such things from upstairs?!'

The evidence from the natural questions and answers attested in the Enets corpus, thus, suggests the following two generalizations about the expression of focus in this language. First, the argument in focus is linearly located immediately before the verb. Second, the presence of object cross-reference on the verb in a transitive clause indicates focus either on the subject, or on the predicate, or on the sentence; if the focus is on DO, the object cross-reference is impossible (in 93% of transitive clauses with overt DO and no object cross-reference, DO immediately precedes the verb). So in Enets, the cross-linguistically typical locus of focus (=on DO, Du Bois 1987) is left unmarked by the object cross-reference, while atypical locus (=on subject, predicate, sentence) is marked by the object cross-reference.

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## BACKCHANNELS IN NGANASAN CONVERSATION

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I explore Nganasan interaction within the framework of pragmatics and conversation analysis. The focus of this research centres on turn-taking and, in particular, notifications of various types that function as a sign for the other conversant to keep the floor. These notifications are called *backchannels*.

Victor Yngve (1970: 568) coined term 'back channel' as a channel "over which the person who has the turn receives short messages such as 'yes' and 'uh-huh' without relinquishing the turn". Since then the term backchannel has been used more generally for any reaction, facial expressions, gestures and vocalisations of various kinds that are provided as a reaction to the other's speech. According to their mode of expression, backchannels are divided into verbal and non-verbal.

The frequency of backchannels has been shown to be language and culture-specific (White 1989), and regarding their form, backchannels have been divided into non-lexical, phrasal, and substantive categories (Young & Lee 2004: 381). A function-based division characterises them as *generic* and *specific* and, more exactly, as *continuers* and *assessments* (Goodwin 1986). Backchannel items also differ as to the point of the conversation at which they are provided, which is mostly at a *transition relevant place* (Sacks et al. 1974), the point at which the turn can be shifted to the participant who has been providing the backchannel. In a sense, backchannel is a misnomer, since it can be identified as such only retrospectively, as Tolins and Fox Tree demonstrated for *American English* (2014: 155). These authors have evinced that backchannels play an important role in steering narrative development, as well as a resource of the overhearer's comprehension (Tolins & Fox Tree 2015).

With rare exceptions (Umaporn 2007), backchannels have usually been considered in English data and in several other well-studied languages. However, I make a pilot investigation of backchannel strategies that can be found in Nganasan interaction. Nganasan (<Uralic <Samoyedic <Northern Samoyedic) is a moribund language still spoken on the Taimyr Peninsula, Siberia.

I explore backchannelling in folklore story-telling practises. In Nganasan folklore there are two main forms of narrative, namely *dürimī* and *sitābī*. The latter is a long epic story, in which the direct speech of the characters is often presented by singing. *Sitābī* recounts the heroic deeds of the main character, usually by describing tortuous paths towards that character's aim and an arrival at a happy, or sometimes tragic, ending. In the 1950s *sitābī*-telling still gathered Nganasans together in the evenings, like an exciting TV serial might do nowadays. In addition to the main narrator, another participant was a *tuəbtugujs'i*, or 'interpreter', who provided short comments as indications of involvement, comprehension and emotional affiliation. Both participants, the narrator and the interpreter, knew a particular *sitābī*, but agreement concerning

their roles had been conducted in advance, consequently, their turn-types were not at stake during *sitabi*-telling. On the other hand, their procedures for narrating and backchannelling were spontaneous, although the storyline and the personal melody of the main character were retained unchanged from one occurrence of a particular *sitabi*-telling to another.

I explore the interpreter's backchannel turns throughout *sitabi*. Further, I compare the backchannels in *sitabi* to those in ordinary Nganasan conversation, aiming at a construction of a typology of Nganasan backchannels according to their form, function and placement in relation to the turn-order of the floor-holding participant. The data arises from my long-term fieldwork on the Taimyr Peninsula.

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## CASE COMPOUNDING AND DISCOURSE STRUCTURE IN MOKSHA<sup>2</sup>

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Case compounding is inclusion of more than one case marker within one phonological word (Noonan 2008). This paper deals with discourse properties of case compounding in Moksha (< Mordvin < Finno-Ugric). The presented data were collected in Republic of Mordovia, Temnikov district, where the western variety of the central dialect is spoken. In Moksha, double case marking arises in elliptical constructions, when a head of a noun phrase or of a relative clause is omitted. The case marker of the omitted element lands on the dependent noun that is already modified with its own case. In (1a), there is no ellipsis: the noun *kastr'uk* 'pot' comes with the relative marker and depends on the noun *don'c'kej* 'pumpkin', the latter stands in definite genitive, which is the direct object case in Moksha. In (1b), the head noun is elided, and the dependent one appears with two case affixes: relative and genitive.

(1) a. *t'en'i*            *sev-k*            *kastr'uk-stə*    *don'c'kej-t'*  
      now            take-IMP        pot-EL            pumpkin-DEF.GEN

      b. *t'en'i*            *sev-k*            *kastr'uk-stə-t'*  
      now            take-IMP        pot-EL-DEF.GEN

      'And now take the pumpkin in the pot.'

There arises a question: which discourse factors govern the choice between (1a) and (1b)? Although the speakers eagerly accept and interpret structures like (1b), the elicitation can hardly help us to come up with an answer, as macro-structure of discourse and large-scale factors are evidently at play. Meanwhile, written texts, such as newspapers and fiction, contain only sporadic examples of case compounding, as it seems to be avoided in the standard variety of language. The corpus of spontaneous texts that is at our disposal at the moment contains nearly 5000 words, and it does not include any examples of double case marking.

That is why we have chosen the method of a 'referential communication task' (Krauss & Weinheimer 1966 among others), which offers an opportunity to encourage native speakers to use complex grammatical structures that otherwise are rare in colloquial speech. In the course of such experiment, two native speakers are provided with the same scene (painted picture) and a set of entities (small figures). The experimenter stands near one of the participants (which is called Director) and moves figures, placing it on the picture according to the prepared scenario. The second participant (Matcher) does not see what happens, but he has to repeat all the actions. In order to fulfill the task, the Director describes everything that he sees to the Matcher. Matcher is allowed to ask questions if something is unclear to him. As a result of the experiment, a spontaneous dialogue between the Director and the Matcher appears. Due to the

<sup>2</sup> The research is supported by Russian Science Foundation (grant # 16-18-02081).

design of the scenario, it is much richer in the constructions the researcher is interested in than a plain narrative usually is.

The initial hypothesis was that case compounding appears in the contexts, where one needs to distinguish between two or more entities with similar, but not identical characteristics. To put in another way, the genus is highly activated, and the species is unknown, or 'quaestio' (Klein & von Stutterheim 1987), so the speaker may omit the expression of the genus ('pumpkin' in 1b) and to land its case marker on the expression of the species ('in the pot' in 1b). Thus, in order to obtain texts, which include double case marking, the participant were provided with six groups of similar objects with minimal differences. Figures from the one group were moved simultaneously, so that more than one object became highly activated.

By now, we have six experimental texts, which consist of about 12,000 tokens in total. In the talk, we are going to elaborate on our results, which appeared not to agree with the initial hypothesis in several points.

Abbreviations.

IMP — imperative; EL — elative; GEN — dative; DEF — definiteness.

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narrow focus on the verb like in ‘-What do you do with strawberries? Strawberries, I eat them (and not cook)’ has the tendency to be overly marked (definite pattern). DO in topic has a tendency to occupy the leftmost position and requires definite encoding pattern (c.f. (1c)).

3.2. There is a tendency in elicitation examples to move the definite DO to the front of the utterance or, in case of secondary topic, before the verb, while the DO in focus tends to occupy the position after the verb.

3.3. The definite DO encoding pattern implies wide scope DO reading (e.g. (2b.)), narrow scope interpretation (see (2a)) is impossible, c.f. also Enc 1991), while indefinite pattern allows only narrow scope interpretation, c.f. (2)a) Morkš-t' lang-sə ašč-əs'-t' maṛ-t'. Er' stərn'ε-s' s'εv-əz'ə (eat-3sg.O.3sg.S) mar'-t' (apple-Def.Sg.Gen) (a) ‘There were apples on the table. #Every girl eat an apple’ vs. b) ‘...okEvery girl eat one and the same apple (one of the apples, mentioned before) Thus, the definite marker on the DO can be treated as a presupposition trigger.

3.4. It is possible to promote non-core arguments such as Time, Path, and Result into DO position. That is to have the overt definite genitive marker on the DP and object agreement marker on the verb (e.g. (3) Vasya (t'εn') mol'-əz'ə kolmə čast-stə ‘Vasya has passed+3Sg.S-3Sg.O) this passage+Gen.Def in three hours’)

#### 4. Possible account and conclusions

Thus, the data shows the strong correlation of DO information status and DO encoding in Moksha. The topicalized (salient and not focused) DO DPs must trigger object agreement and definite marker on the DO. According to Nikolaeva (2012) the topic DO occupies the higher position compared to focus DO. Based on this thesis, I suggest the following structure for definite pattern in Moksha: there are two topic positions: the AgrDO position for the topic DP in case when Focus DP/NP is VP-internal, and the salient topic position in SpecCP, to which DP can move, in this position it triggers the DO agreement.

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## ABOUTNESS TOPIC IN UDMURT

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**Introduction:** Recently there are more and more studies (e.g. Tánczos 2010, Asztalos 2012) investigating the syntactic and semantic properties of focus in today's Udmurt. However, the syntax of topic has remained understudied so far.

**Claim:** In this study we examine the syntactic properties of aboutness topics in Udmurt and propose that in today's Udmurt there are three different topic positions: i) a sentence-initial position ii) a middle-field position and iii) a postverbal position.

**Previous studies:** Tánczos (2010) presented the first study focusing on the information structure of the Udmurt sentence in the generative framework. She claims that in Udmurt sentences there is a topic-focus articulation and the topics have the following syntactic properties: i) they always precede the foci, ii) they occur in sentence-initial position, and iii) the topic position is recursive.

(1) (top)\* (foc) comment

(2) [<sub>Top</sub> *Terminatorez kinoteatryn* [<sub>Foc</sub> *SASHA uchkiz*]]  
Terminator.ACC movie.INESS Sasha.NOM watch.PST.3SG  
'It was Sasha who watched the Terminator in the movie.'

**Methods of investigation:** Our data has been retrieved by means of a questionnaire filled out by native speakers of Udmurt in 2016. The questionnaire aimed to explore the information structure of the Udmurt sentence, and it contained different word order variants, which the informants had to evaluate on a five-point Likert scale.

**Results:** Our data indicates that in Udmurt topic constituents do not always appear sentence-initially, they can also be so called middle-field topics.

The sentence-initial position was attested by examining the appearance of non-specific vs. specific subjects in the sentence. Our results show that non-specific subjects cannot precede sentence adverbials (3a vs. 3b), however specific nominals can appear before a sentence adverbial (4).

(3) a. \**Kuno tunne mi dory vuoz.*  
guest.NOM today we to arrive.FUT.3SG  
'A guest will arrive at our place today.'

b. *Tunne mi dory kuno vuoz.*  
(4) *Katja apaj tunne mi dory vuoz.*  
Katja aunt.NOM today we to arrive.FUT.3SG  
'Aunt Katja will arrive at our place today.'

As (5) shows, focus constituents can sometimes also precede topics, resulting in the opposite order in one in (2). This suggests that topics in Udmurt have a similar distribution to Russian (cf. Bailyn 2012), and that the relative position of topic and focus constituents is not fixed.

(5)Context: ‘Christine has three cats: Bogdan, Barsik and Begemot.’

*BARSIKEZ kočyšjosyz pölyś Kristina tužges no jarate.*  
 Barsik.ACC cat.PL.DET of Christine lot.COMP too love.PRS.3SG  
 ‘Among the cats Christine loves **BARSIK** the most.’

Topical constituents can also appear postverbally (cf. Ponarjadov 2010). In our talk, we will examine whether postverbal topics have different properties compared to preverbal ones (w.r.t. aboutness, recursivity, etc.).

(6) *Ćyrty-jaz vuko-kö-ez ošy-sa košk-em vumurt.*  
 neck-3SG.ILL millstone-ACC hang-CONV depart-II.PST.3SG waterghost  
 ‘Hanging the millstone in his neck, the waterghost left.’  
 (Wichmann 1901)

**Analysis:** We claim—contrary to Tánczos (2010)—that there are three topic positions in Udmurt, and assuming that topics occupy spec,TopP we propose that TopP can be projected not only higher but also lower than FocP in the hierarchy. Furthermore we claim that postverbal topics are the result of extraposition. We will also consider the parallel between the topic positions we have found and the three focus positions identified in the literature (e.g. Tánczos 2010, Asztalos 2012).

