The Typology of Local Expressions in Uralic

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Abstract

In this paper I shall look at local expressions in Uralic. First, I look at their structure and then turn to the question whether and how they are similar or different to expressions in other languages.

1   Local Expressions

Local expressions consist of several layers ([6]). They can be clearly separated using standard type-theoretical analysis ([4]). From a morphological point of view languages differ in how clearly they separate them.

(1) $[_{\text{PathP}} \text{P}_{\text{Path}} [_{\text{PlaceP}} \text{P}_{\text{Place}} [_{\text{AxPartP}} \text{P}_{\text{AxPart}} [_{\text{LocP}} \text{P}_{\text{Loc}} \text{DP}]]]]$

1. DP denotes an object, the so-called **landmark**.

2. LocP denotes a point. It is the location of the landmark.

3. AxPartP denotes a certain axial system.

4. PlaceP denotes an area (in terms of the landmark).

5. PathP denotes a motion pattern.

This is a refined version of [3] where I used the standard division into two heads: M(odaliser) and L(ocaliser). L is decomposed here into a succession of three heads, while M is simply another name for Dir.

In Uralic languages, we find evidence for inflection both with respect to L and M, e.g. in Finnish:

↓ L	M →		
	static	to	from
inner	`talo-s-sa`	`talo-on`	`talo-s-ta`
outer	`talo-l-la`	`talo-l-le`	`talo-l-ta`

Modulo some morphophonemics, we can identify the morphemes /s/ (the "inner" L), /l/ (the "outer" L), as well as /Ca/ "no motion" (= static mode), /Vn/ "motion to" (= cofinal mode), and /tA/ "motion from" (= coinitial mode).

This double dependence on L and M is found in Hungarian, through historically it is of different origin. In Proto-Uralic there is only evidence of a single level of morphological differentiation, with respect to mode. The case system merely distinguishes static, (al)lative and ablative cases.

2 Diminished Paradigms

There are some noteworthy consequences of the structure (1), which I shall review below.

2.1 Standard Cases

If an expression already denotes a location, there is no inflection for L, only for M. This standardly includes

Table 1: Inflecting Adpositions

| | Stasis | Motion | | | |
		Source	Goal	Trajectory	Terminus
Hungarian	mögött	mögül	mögé		
Vakh Khanty	čöṇṇə	čöṇčööɣ	čöṇč(ää)		
Estonian	taga	tagant	taha		
M. Mordva	ftal⁀ə	ftald⁀ə	ftalu	ftalga	
F. Nenets	punnⁱaana	punnⁱaat	punnⁱŋ	punnⁱaanma	
Komi	sajin	sajïš^j	sajë	sajti	sajëdz^j

1. Locative Question words: Hu. /hol/ "where", /hova/ "whereto", /honnan/ "wherefrom".

2. Locative Demonstratives: Hu. /itt/ "here', /ide/ "to here", /innen/ "from here".

3. Cities: Hu. /Budapesten/ "in Budapest", /Budapestre/ "to Budapest", /Budapestről/ "from Budapest".

In Finnish, /missä/ "where" is derived from /mitä/ "what", but functions like /hol/. Also, persons form a special category; for example, Fi. /luona/, best translated as French /chez/, is used only with people, not things.

2.2 Inflecting Adpositions

A typological specialty of Uralic languages are the adpositions, see Table 1. They inflect for mode, e. g. Hu. /alatt/ "under", /alá/ "to under" and /alól/ "from under". The reason is that inflection for L is historically secondary while inflection for M has always been possible. Typically, the postpositions are former nouns (cf. [5] for Hungarian Ps and nominal cases).

Table 2: Two Paradigms in Mari

nominative	kit	olâmbal
genitive	kiδân	olâmbalân
dative	kitlan	olâmballan
accusative	kiδâm	olâmbalâm
comparative	kitla	olâmballa
comitative	kitke	olâmbalγe
inessive	kiδâšte	olâmbalne
illative	kiδâke	olâmbake
lative	kiδeš	olâmbalan
elative	—	olâmbač(ân)

2.3 Superimposed Inflection

[1] has noted that certain nouns in Mari and Finnish are actually of local origin. His example is /olâmbal/ "bench", consisting of /ol/ and /âmbal/. The original meaning is rather "place to sit on". /âmbal/ is analogous to Fi. /päällä/ and derives from a noun meaning "head", but has effectively become a postposition. Fitting such a construction into the declension paradigm produces an interference between the original Uralic paradigm and the present one.

inessive	âmbalne	(< *nA)	static
illative	âmba(l)ke	(< *k)	goal 1
lative	âmbalan	(< *n)	goal 2
elative	âmbač	(< *tA)	source

3 Agreement

Uralic languages tend to use directional forms more often than Indo-European languages. Most extreme cases are Finnish and Mari. In the combination V + DP, where V is a verb of change, Uralic tends to express the fact of change *also in the*

DP. This is very often unnecessary, and can lead to ambiguities.

(2)   (Fi.) `Rakennamme uuden hotellin Turkuun`
        build-we new hotel Turku-ɪʟʟᴀ
        We are building a new hotel in Turku.

(3)   (Fi.) `Ukko väsyi tie-lle.`
        old.man got.tired way-ᴀʟʟ
        The old man got tired on (lit. onto) the road.

(4)   (Fi.) `Somap' on sota-han kuolla.`
        sweet is war-ɪʟʟ to.die
        It is sweet to die in (lit. into) war.

(5)   (Fi.) `Tää-ltä pyrkii häviämään tavaroita.`
        this-ᴀʙʟ tends disappear things
        From here, things tend to disappear.

(6)   (Fi.) `Metsästäjä ampui karhun metsä-än.`
        hunter shot bear forest-ɪʟʟ
        The hunter shot the bear in (lit. into) the forest.

(7)   (Mari) `Wə·δeško·lə̂šə̂ wo·l'ə̂k.`
        The animal died in (lit. into) the water.

Examples (3), (4), (5), (6) show a directional that is quite unexpected from the standpoint of Indo-European. For example, in (3) the allative does not signal motion of the trajector (the man) onto the road; it signals merely a change of state. Likewise, the directional in (5) is not to be interpreted that the bear moves into the forest. In both cases therefore the cofinal M contributes not the meaning of change of place, as it normally does.

To resolve this, I propose here to view Finnish and Mari as languages exhibiting *fact of change agreement*. This means that the fact that something changes in these languages is expressed not only in the verb but also in DPs or PPs expressing the state (or place) of the trajector. Hence, that the DPs or PPs contain a directional makes no contribution to the pattern of motion (or change), it only signals that change occurs. Space limitations do not permit me to discuss the excellent [2]. Suffice it to say that the use of a directional in these 'agreement' construction does not signal motion of the trajector, but rather modify the aspect or the structuring of the event, or sometimes even future tense (Janne Saarikivi, p.c.).

4 Comparison

- Local Case Systems are similar to those found in Caucasian and Eskimo-Aleut, having a systematic three way distinction in mode.

- Inflecting postpositions I have not been able to attest elsewhere.

- A distinction between spatial and nonspatial nouns is found quite frequently and is a common source of adpositions and case endings.

- Uralic languages seem to put a strong emphasis on the distinction between stasis and change. Indo-European languages by contrast are happy to have lost the distinction.

- The preponderance for using directionals even when the meaning of change is already present in the verb is unique to some Uralic languages.

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