

Methods for approaching variation: partitives and beyond

Partitivity in Uralic Languages:
Subset marking
via possessive agreement

September 15th-17th, 2022

Gabi Tóth (KRE)

Kata Kubínyi (ELTE)

Anne Tamm (KRE)

KÁROLI GÁSPÁR REFORMÁTUS EGYETEM

1088. Budapest, Reviczky u. 4., Buda Béla terem

<https://btk.kre.hu/konf/parte/>

Background

- In this talk, partitive constructions are identified on the basis of Koptjevskaja-Tamm's semantic-typological definition 'part/amount of N' relationship (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2001), in more formal terms: $A \subseteq B$.
- The relationship between A and B is represented by two DPs, DP1 is the subset, DP2 is the superset (1a) & (1b) (Falco & Zamparelli 2019).

Background 2

(1) a. [DP₁ [NP₁ [pp [DP₂ [NP₂]]]]]]

(Falco & Zamparelli 2019:11)

b. [DP₁ ten [NP₁ (girls)]_{pp} of [DP₂ the [NP₂ girls]]]]]

NP1 can be silent, but interpretable at the syntax-semantics interface.

Cases to mark partitivity

- In Uralic languages the relationship is encoded on the superset via case marking (elative, ablative or partitive, etc.) or adpositions (meaning elative, ablative or partitive, etc.) (2).
- In the Finnic group this is the only option. In the Volgaic and Ugric branches there is another alternative in limited constructions.

Hungarian

(2) a. [...] *Megevett* *hármat* *az* *almákból.*
pref.eat.PST.3RD three.ACC the apple.PL.ELA

‘He ate three of the apples.’

b. [...] *Kettő* *a* *diákok* *közül*
two[NOM] the student.PL out_of

hazakísért.

home_accompany.PST.3SG

‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them accompanied me home.’

Finnish and Estonian

(2) c. [...] *Kaksi he-istä hylättiin.*

two[NOM] they-PL.ELA reject.PASS.PST

‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them failed.’

d. [...] *Kaks ne-ist said hea hinde.*

two[NOM] they-PL.ELA get.PST.3PL good.GEN grade.GEN

‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them / two of these students got a good grade.’

Mari

(2) e. *kum* *eryy* *yyč* *koktyt-šy-m* *saldatlan*
 three son **from** two-PX.3SG-ACC soldier.DAT

puem
give.PRS.1SG

'I'll send two sons out of the three to the army' (BG 1990: 43)

Superset marking via possessive agreement (Px)

- We discuss constructions in which the relationship between B and A, i.e., between the superset and the subset—in syntactic terms: between DP2 and DP1—is encoded via possessive agreement (Px) by the subset, a quantifier, with the superset.
- In other words, **there is explicit morphological marking of number and person on the subset, which agrees in number and person with the superset.**
- Erzya, Mari, Mansi, and Hungarian have similar strategies to inflect quantifiers, but the structures may differ in several respects.

Singular agreement: Mari 1

- (3) a. [...] *Kokyt-šo* *dene* *kutyr-en-em.*
two-**Px.3SG**[NOM] with peak-PST2.1SG
'[Ten students took the exam.] I spoke with two of them.'
(Elena Vedernikova, p. c.)
- b. *Kum* *uškal-yšte* *ikty-žy-m* *užal-em.*
three cow-INE one-**Px.3SG**-ACC sell-PRS.1SG
'I will sell one of (the) three cows.' (Bereczki 1990: 38)

Mari 2

- (3) c. [...] *Kokyty-št-lan kugu kol
two-Px.3PL-DAT large fish
vereštyn.
fall_prej.PST.3SG
‘[Ten men went fishing.]
Two (of them) caught large fish.’
(Elena Vedernikova p.c.)



Plural agreement 1: Hungarian

- (4) a. *Kettő-jük* *hazakísért.*
two-**Px.3PL**[NOM] home_accompany.PST.3SG
‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them accompanied me home.’
- b. *Melyiküket* *láttad* *utoljára?*
which_person-**Px.3PL**.ACC see.PST.2S>3P last_time.
‘Which person did you see last time?’

Plural agreement 2: Erzya

- (5) *ves'eme-st*
all-**Px.3PL**
'all of them' (Rueter 2010: 153)

Plural agreement 3: Mansi

(6) a. [...] *akw pāla-nəl kapitalizm sistēma, mōt pāla-nəl*
one half-**Px.3PL** capitalism system other half-**Px.3PL**
socializm sistēma.
socialism system

‘[The Great October Revolution has divided the countries of the world in two] one half of them is the socialist system, and the other half the capitalist system.’ (Rombandeeva & Vakhruševa 1989:89)

Dual agreement: Mansi

- (6) b. *t'it* *sūmjax* *ūnlēy,* *akwa-te*
two barn sit.PRS.3DU one-**PX.3SG**
- jil'pi* *sūmjax,* *akwa-te* *pēs* *sūmjax*
new barn one-**PX.3SG** old barn
- ‘There are two barns standing, one of them is a new barn,
the other one is an old barn’ (R: 30)
- c. *akw xumi-tēn* *lāwi:* *ēj, ...*
one man-**PX.3DU** say.PRS.3SG: hey ...
- ‘One of the (two) men says: Hey ...’ (R: 147)

Px agreement

- What are the features encoded in Px on DP1 in these languages?
 - In Mari, the subset DP1 usually exhibits singular agreement, whereas in Erzya and Hungarian, subset-DPs are in plural.
 - In Mansi, the subset-DP is in plural if the superset is in plural.
 - If the superset is in dual, the subset agrees with it either in singular or in dual.

Overt vs covert superset: Mari

(7) b. *kum* *eryy* *γyč* *koktyt-šy-m* *salδatlan*
three son from two-**Px.3SG**-ACC soldier.DAT
puem
give.PRS.1SG
'I'll send two sons out of the three to the army.'

(Bereczki 1990: 43)

The nature of the superset

In these constructions, the **superset DP2 can be overt or must be covert**.

- a. In Mari the superset can be optionally overt, and the representations associated with the two structures, see the contrast between (8c) and (8b).
- b. In Hungarian, once the subset is marked with Px, the superset DP2 cannot be overtly present, see the contrast illustrated in the options in Hungarian. In DPs with no overt superset DP2, it is assumed that there is a set of phonologically silent features (pro) the subset agrees with (8e).

Typology

- From typological perspective, there are two types of constructions that can be distinguished.
- In structures (8a-b), DP1 and DP2 are related via cases or adpositions, whereas in structures (8c-f) DP1 can be marked with Px.
- These languages are further divided into two groups, namely the superset can be covert or overt or the Px agrees in singular, in plural, or in dual with the superset.

Representations

- (8) a. $[_{DP1} \text{ three } [_{NP} \text{ (freshmen) } [_{pp} \text{ of } [_{DP2} \text{ the}[_{NP} \text{ students}]]]]]$ (Falco & Zamparelli 2019:11) **English**
- b. $[_{DP1} \quad [_{NumP} \text{ two } [_{NP} \text{ (student) } \quad [_{pp/KP} \text{ -ELA/-out_of } \quad [_{DP2} \quad [_{NP} \text{ them}]]]]]]]$
Hungarian , Finnish, Estonian , Mari, and Mansi
- c. $[_{DP1} \quad [_{AgrP} \quad \mathbf{3SG}_i \quad [_{NumP} \text{ one } [_{NP} \text{ (cow)}([_{pp/KP} \text{ -ine}[_{DP2} \text{ three}[_{NP} \text{ cow}_i]]]]]]]]]$ **Mari**
- d. $[_{DP1} \quad [_{AgrP} \quad \mathbf{3SG}_i \quad [_{NumP} \text{ one } [_{NP} \text{ (cow) } [_{DP2} \quad [_{NP} \text{ pro}_i \quad i]]]]]]]$ **Mari**
- e. $[_{DP1} \quad [_{AgrP} \quad \mathbf{3PL}_i \quad [_{NumP} \text{ two } [_{NP} \text{ (student) } \quad [_{DP2} \quad \quad [_{NP} \text{ pro}_i \quad]]]]]]]]$ **Hungarian , Mansi , Erzya**
- f. $[_{DP1} \quad [_{AgrP} \quad \mathbf{3DU/SG}_i \quad [_{NumP} \text{ two } [_{NP} \text{ (student) } \quad [_{DP2} \quad \quad [_{NP} \text{ pro}_i \text{ (DU)}]]]]]]]$ **Mansi**

Conclusion on methodology

To find what fits under the term “partitive” and what is understood by it in linguistic vernaculars, we have proposed a methodology that consists of

- typological and
- formal approaches
- as well as traditional Uralist methods, and
- elicitation.

References

- Bereczki G. 1990. *Chrestomathia ceremissica*. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó.
- Falco, M. & R. Zamparelli 2019. Partitives and Partitivity. *Glossa: a Journal of General Linguistics* 4(1), 1–49.
- Koptjevskaja-Tamm, M. 2001. “A piece of the cake” and “a cup of tea”. Partitive and pseudo-partitive nominal constructions in the Circum-Baltic languages. In: Östen Dahl and Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm, eds: *Circum-Baltic Languages: Volume 2: Grammar and Typology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 523–568.
- Luraghi, S. & S. Kittilä. (2014). Typology and diachrony of partitive case markers. In: S. Luraghi & T. Huomo (eds). *Partitive cases and related categories*. degruyter.com. 1–65.
- Rombandeeva, E. I. & Vachruševa M. P. 1989. *Mansijskij jazyk* [The Mansi Language]. Leningrad: Prosveščenie.
- Rueter, Jack 2010. *Adnominal person in the morphological system of Erzya*. Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne 261. Helsinki: Société Finno-Ougrienne.