



TWO TYPES OF GENITIVES IN MOKSHA

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Workshop:
Differential internal possession

Moksha language

- ❖ Moksha is a Mordvin language – together with Erzya
- ❖ Spoken by 431,700 people in Russian Federation (2010 census)
- ❖ Mordvin languages are spoken in the Volga region
- ❖ The variety reported here is spoken in the villages of Lesnoe Tsibaevo & Lesnoe Ardashevo in the north-west of the republic of Mordovia

(fieldwork data 2014-2017)

Structure of the talk

- Preliminary data
 - Nominal morphology
 - Possessive constructions
- Problem & research questions
- Semantics of indefinite genitives: specific vs. non-specific
- Syntactic properties of the two type of genitive constructions

Preliminary data

- Three types of declensions (Kolyadenkov (ed.), 1962)
- → indefinite, definite, possessive
- Four nominal categories expressed: number, possessiveness, definiteness, case

Indefinite declension

- A part of the indefinite declension →
- Number marker only for Nom *-t*

(1) *pet'ε mak-s' uz'ər'*

Peter give-PST.3.SG axe

loman 'ə-n'd'i

man-SG.DAT

‘Peter gave an axe to a man’.

Nom	∅
Gen	-ən'
Dat	-ən'd'i
Abl	-də / -tə
In	-sə
El	-stə
Ill	-s
Lat	-u / -v / -i
Prol	-əva / -ga / -ka

Definite declension

- Obligatory expression of Number
- Only three (grammatical) cases

Case/num	SG	PL
Nom	-s'	-(t')n'ə
Gen	-t'	-(t')n'ə-n'
Dat	-t'i	-(t')n'ə-n'd'i

(2) *pet'ε maks-əz'ə uz'ər'-t'*

Peter give-PST.3.SG axe-DEF.SG.GEN

t'ε loman'-t'i

this man-DEF.SG.DAT

‘Peter gave the axe to this man’.

Possessive declension

- The number of the possessee can be expressed only:
 - with singular possessors
 - in grammatical cases

Case	Possessor								
	1SG		2SG		3SG		1PL	2PL	3PL
	Possessee								
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL			
Nom	-əz'ə	-n'ə	-c'ə	-(t')n'ə	-əc	-ənzə	-n'(ə)kə	-ən't'ə	-snə
Gen	-əz'ə-n'	-n'ə-n'	-c'ə-n'	-(t')n'ə-n'	-ənc	-ənzə-n	-n'(ə)kə-n'	-ən't'ə-n'	-snə-n
Dat	-əz'ə-n' d'i / -z't 'i	-n'ə-n'd'i	-c'ə-n'd'i / -c't'i	-(t')n'ə-n'd'i	-əncti	-ənzə-n di	-n'(ə)kə-n'd 'i	-ən't'ə-n' d'i	-snə-ndi
Abl	-də-n		-də-t		-də-nzə		-də-n(ə)k	-də-nt	-də-st
In	-sə-n		-sə-t		-sə-nzə		-sə-n(ə)k	-sə-nt	-sə-st

Possessive constructions

- ❖ Classical possessive relations
 - ❖ kinship (*girl's mother*)
 - ❖ body-part (*girl's head*)
 - ❖ legal ownership (*girl's house*)
- ❖ Possessive constructions – constructions expressing possessive relations
- ❖ Other adnominal relations can be expressed with possessive constructions in the languages of the world
- ❖ The splits on the scale of such semantic relations differ across languages
- ❖ Such semantic relations – possessive relations in a broad sense
- ❖ (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2002)

Genitive constructions in Moksha

- Classical possessive relations: Double-marking construction
 - definite/possessive genitive on the possessor
 - obligatory possessive marker on the head (in grammatical cases)

(3) *al'a-nc* *kud-*(əc)* / *mon' kud-*(əz'ə)*
father-3SG.POSS.SG.GEN house-3SG.POSS.SG I.GEN house-1SG.POSS.SG
ašč-i *s'embə-də* *vel'ə-t'* *kraj-sə*
be.situated-NPST3.SG all-ABL village-DEF.SG.GEN edge-IN
'His father's house stays on the very edge of the village'.

Genitive constructions in Moksha

❖ In obliques obligatory possessive marker only if the possessor is a personal pronoun

- (4) *son oza-də* *mon'* *l'εpə kr'eslə-sə-n* / **kr'eslə-sə*
he sit-CONV.POS I.OBL soft armchair-IN-1SG.POSS armchair-IN
'He is sitting in my soft armchair'.
- (5) *son oza-də* *al'ε-z'ə-n'* *l'εpə kr'eslə-sə-(nzə)*
he sit-CONV.POS father-1SG.POSS-GEN soft armchair-IN-3SG.POSS
'He is sitting in my father's soft armchair'.

Genitive constructions in Moksha

- Other adnominal relations: Dependent-marking construction
 - indefinite genitive on the dependent
 - no possessive agreement on the head

(6) *paks'ε-n'* *pan'čf-n'ə* / **pan'čf-anzə* *pan'č-s'-t'* *n'i*
field-GEN flower-DEF.PL flower-3SG.POSS.PL open-PST.3-PL already
'Field flowers have already faded'.

Referentiality split

- The main split is between anchoring and non-anchoring possessors (anchoring: presence of the referents of possessor and possessee)
- (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2004)

Relations	Double-marking	Dependent-marking
kinship	OK	*
author	OK	*
legal ownership	OK	*
body part	OK	*
part-whole	OK	*
temporal	?	OK
locative	?	OK
predestination	*	OK
species	*	OK
purpose	*	OK
matherial	*	OK

Problem

- Our expectations:
 - definite declension for definite arguments → definite possessors
 - indefinite declension for indefinite arguments → indefinite possessors
- But it is not true!
- To denote a specific entity indefinite genitive needs
 - a modifier (e.x. adnominal indefinite pronoun)
 - to be on a personal name

Research questions

- Why does indefinite genitive need a modifier?
- How to analyze indefinite genitive in specific contexts?
- What are the main properties of the two constructions (with specific possessor and with generic dependent)
- Where they are in the NP structure?

Definite vs. indefinite genitives

- Indefinite genitives cannot denote specific entities

(7) *ava-t'* *sumka-c* *pra-s'*
woman-DEF.SG.GEN bag-3SG.POSS.SG fall-PST.3SG

‘The woman’s bag has fallen’.

(8) *ava-n'* *sumka-s'* *pra-s'*
woman-GEN bag-DEF.SG fall-PST.3SG

‘The woman bag (intended for women) has fallen’.

*‘The bag of a woman has fallen’.

Indefinite possessors

- To denote a specific entity indefinite genitive needs a modifier
 - indefinite pronoun

(9) *kodamə bəd'ə ava-n' sumka-s' / sumka-c pra-s'*
which INDEF woman-GEN bag-DEF.SG bag-3SG.POSS.SG fall-PST.3SG
'The woman bag (intended for women) has fallen'.

Indefinite genitive and numerals

- To denote a specific entity indefinite genitive needs a modifier:
 - numeral

(10) *kolmə brad-ən' kuc' ašč-i*

three brother-GEN house.DEF.SG be.situated-NPST.3SG

ber'ek-t' tona bok-sə

bank-DEF.SG.GEN that side-IN

‘The house of the three brothers is situated on that side of the river’.

Indefinite genitive and definite modifiers

- Adnominal indefinite genitive can even take a demonstrative as its modifier
- With other indefinite grammatical cases it is impossible (Kashkin, in press)

(11) *s'in' mora-s'-t' kancercə kodamə bəd'ə t'ε kizə-n' morə*
they sing-PST.3-PL concert.IN which INDEF this year-GEN song
'They have sang on the concert some song of this year'.

(12) *t'ε kuc' / *kud oc'u i mazi*
this house.DEF.SG house big and beautiful
'This house is big and beautiful'. (Kashkin, in press)

Personal names

- Personal names of humans take indefinite genitive
- They are referential and trigger the agreement

(13) *pet'ε-n'* *kuc'uv-ǎc* / **kuc'u-s'* *ašč'-i*
Peter-GEN spoon-3SG.POSS.SG spoon-DEF.SG be.situated-NPST.3[SG]
morkš lank-sə
table on-IN
'Peter's spoon is on the table'.

Personal names

- Personal names of non-humans remain non-referential if they take indefinite genitive

(14) *mosku-t'* *mitro-c* *pεk* *mazi*

MOSCOW-DEF.SG.GEN metro-3SG.POSS.SG very beautiful

‘Moscow metro is very beautiful’.

(15) *moskuv-ən'* *mitro-s'* / **mitro-c* *pεk* *mazi*

MOSCOW-GEN metro-DEF.SG metro-3SG.POSS.SG very beautiful

‘The metro in the Moscow is very beautiful’.

Syntactic properties

- Specific genitives vs. generic genitives
- Agreement on the head
- Possibility of own modifiers
- Position within the noun phrase

Dependents of a definite genitive

(16) *mon s'id'ə-stə n'ej-ən-ca bazar-sə*
I frequent-EL see-IPFV-NPST.3.O.SG.O.1SG.S market-IN

bednaj sos'ed-əz'ə-n' s't'ər'-ənc

poor neighbor-1SG.POSS.SG-GEN girl-3SG.POSS.SG-GEN

‘I often see on the market my poor neighbor’s daughter’.

(17) *kolmə brat-t'n'ə-n' kucnə ašč-i*
three brother-DEF.PL-GEN house.3PL.POSS be.situated-NPST.3SG

l'ej-t' tona ber'εg-sə

river-DEF.SG-GEN that bank-IN

‘The house of the three brothers is on that side of the river’.

Dependents of a definite genitive

- Demonstratives and quantifiers can modify definite genitives as well

(18) *s'embə vas'ε-n' s'estra-nzə uže jaka-j°-t' škola-v*
all Vasja-GEN sister-3SG.POSS.PL already go-NPST.3-PL school-LAT

‘All Vasja’s sisters already go to school’.

(19) *t'ε ava-t' panar-əc pεk mazi*
this woman dress-3SG.POSS.SG very beautiful

‘This woman’s dress is very beautiful’.

Genitives on genitives

- Both genitives can modify definite genitives

(20) *šuftə-n'* *vedərka-t'* *kundamə-c* *kšn 'i-n'*
tree-GEN bucket-DEF.SG.GEN grip-3SG.POSS.SG iron-GEN

‘The grip of the wooden bucket is made of iron’.

(21) *vas'ε pɛl'-əz'ə* *al'a-nc*
Vasja puncture-PST.3SG.S.3SG.O father-3SG.POSS.SG.GEN
mašina-nc *šarij-ənc*

car-3SG.POSS.SG.GEN wheel-3SG.POSS.SG.GEN

‘Vasja has punctured the wheel of his father’s car’.

Dependents of an indefinite genitive

- Although adjectives and numerals can modify indefinite genitives,...

(22) *kant-t* *kel'mə ved'-ən'* *vedərka*

carry-IMP.SG cold water-GEN bucket

‘Carry a bucket for cold water’.

(23) *vet'ə kilov-ən'* *kirɛ-s'* *t'ejə-n* *pɛk* *tožd'ɛ*

five kilo-GEN weight-DEF.SG PRON.DAT-1SG.POSS very light

‘A five kilo weight is too light for me’.

Dependents of an indefinite genitive

- Demonstratives and quantifiers are impossible with generic dependents

(24) #*t'ε* *ava-n'* *sumka-s'* *pra-s'*
this woman-GEN bag-DEF.SG fall-PST.3SG

‘This woman bag has fallen’.

*‘The bag for this woman’.

(25) #*s'embə* *ava-n'* *sumka-t'n'ə* *pra-s'-t'*
all woman-GEN bag-DEF.PL fall-PST.3-PL

‘All woman bags have fallen’.

*‘The bags for all women have fallen’.

Dependents of an indefinite genitive

- Definite genitive is irrelevant (it triggers the possessive declension)
- Indefinite genitive is recursive

(26) *son ašč-i* *šuftə-n'* *s'ed'-ən'* *per'ila-t'n'ə-n'*
he be.situated-NPST.3SG tree-GEN bridge-GEN banisters-DEF.PL-GEN
lank-sə

on-IN

‘He is staying on the banisters of the bridge’.

Position within the NP

- Definite genitives can be postponed in structural cases

(27) ^{OK}*baba-z'ə* *put-əz'ə*
grandmother-1SG.POSS.SG put-PST.3SG.S.3SG.O

tar'elka-nc *vas'ε-n'* *morkš lank-s*
plate-3SG.POSS.SG Vasja-GEN table on-ILL

‘The grandmother put Vasja’s plate on the table’.

- Postposition of a single indefinite genitive is rather ungrammatical

(28) **t'εči* *t'ej-nək* *usk-s'-t'* *lofc'ə kaza-n'*
today PRON.DAT-1PL.POSS carry-PST.3-PL milk goat-GEN

Int: ‘Today they have carried us milk of goat’.

Compatibility of two genitives within one NP

- Definite genitive is the leftmost dependent of the NP

(29) *pejəl'-t'* *šuftə-n'* *pe-c* *kola-v-s'*
knife-DEF.SG.GEN tree-GEN edge-3SG.POSS.SG brake-PASS-PST.3[SG]

‘The wooden haft of the knife is broken’.

(30) #*šuftə-n'* *pejəl'-t'* *pe-c* *kola-v-s'*
tree-GEN knife-DEF.SG.GEN edge-3SG.POSS.SG brake-PASS-PST.3[SG]

*‘The wooden haft of the knife is broken’.

‘The haft of the wooden knife is broken’.

Summary

	Definite GEN	Indefinite GEN
adjectives	OK	OK
indef. genitives	OK	OK
numerals	OK	OK
demonstratives	OK	#
quantifiers	OK	*
def. genitives	OK	-
postponed	OK	*
agreement	OK	*

Further problems

- Two definite genitives are incompatible within one NP

(31) **t'ε c'ora-t'* *mašina-t'* *šari-jəc*
this boy-DEF.SG.GEN car-DEF.SG.GEN wheel-3SG.POSS.SG
Int: 'this boy's wheel of the car'

- Two indefinite genitives are compatible within one NP

(32) *id'-ən'* *s'uftə-n'* *nałks'əmbəl*
child-GEN tree-GEN toy
'wooden toy for children'

Conclusions

- Definite genitive encodes both specificity and case
- Indefinite genitive encodes the case only
- → if specificity is already present in the structure (inherent specificity in personal names or specific modifiers), indefinite *-n* is added to denote the case
- → if specificity has to be added to the structure, definite *-t* is added to denote both

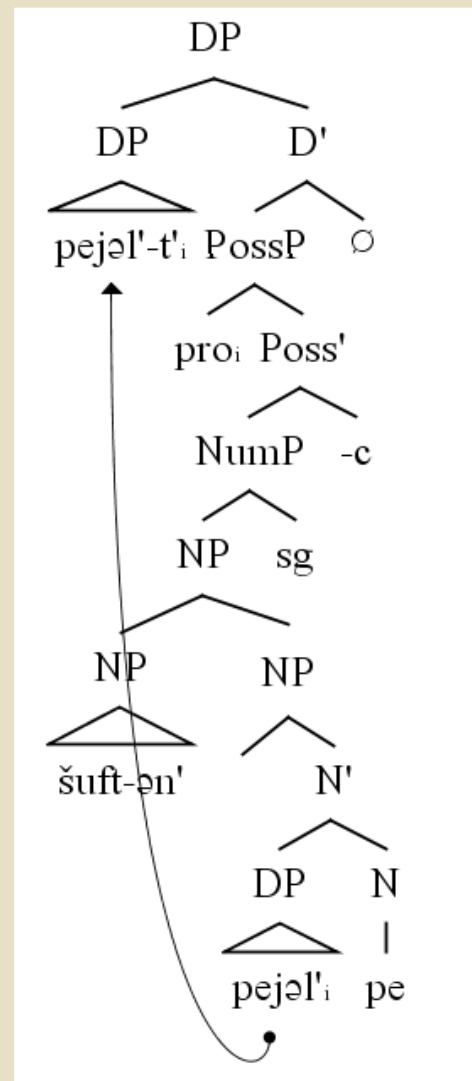
Indefinite genitive – is it a real case?

- Cannot encode specificity
- Can mark specific NPs
- Is on the adjuncts

- → is it a case?

Structure

- The structure that can be proposed using the hierarchical model of DP (Abney 1987, Alexiadou et al. 2007, Lyutikova 2017)
- Definite genitive is assigned to the complement of the NP by the head D
- Being in Spec, DP they control the possessive agreement
- NPs with indefinite genitive lack specificity, are adjuncts of the NP
- They do not control the possessive agreement



pejəl'-t'

šuftə-n' pe-c

knife-DEF.SG,GEN tree-GEN haft-3SG.POSS.SG

‘The wooden haft of the knife’

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Thank you for your attention!