Russian conjunctions in Forest Enets: A corpus-based study

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Introduction

- A corpus-based study of subordinate clauses with Russian conjunctions in Forest Enets (Samoyedic < Uralic)
- A part of a larger study on Russian conjunctions in minority languages of Russia
- Cf. Khomchenkova & Stoynova (2021) for Nanai (Southern Tungusic < Tungusic), Hill Mari (Finno-Ugric < Uralic), and Forest Enets.

Many thanks to Irina Khomchenkova, who is a co-author of this larger study

Many thanks to Andrey Shluinsky and Olesya Khanina, whose Enets data I use

Outline

- Background: borrowability of conjunctions
- Data
- Hypothesis 1: Frequency in donor language
- Hypothesis 2: (In)congruence between donor language and recipient language
- A broader perspective: Forest Enets vs. Hill Mari vs. Nanai
- Discussion

Background

Borrowability of conjunctions: Cross-linguistic generalizations

- **Thomason** (2001: 70-71): a hierarchy based on intensity of contact
  - casual contact: nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives > slightly more intense contact: **conjunctions**, adverbial particles > more intense contact: pronouns, numerals, derivational affixes > intense contact: inflectional affixes
- **Matras** (2007: 56)

a hierarchy of borrowability, explained in semantic and pragmatic terms:

  - concessive, conditional, causal, purpose > other subordinators (=temporal)
- **Grant** (2012: 350)

within each semantic type of subordinate clauses the borrowability of a conjunction depends on how it is frequent and semantically basic/complex

  - less frequent (having more specific meanings) > more frequent (basic)

Russian conjunctions in languages of Russia

Stolz & Levkovych (2022)

- a large-scale study on borrowed conjunctions in the territory of the former USSR
- the results do not agree with the generalizations by Matras 2007 and Grant 2012

Forker & Grenoble (2021: 278-280)

- a survey of structural outcomes of contact with Russian in languages of Russia
- MAT-borrowing: Russian conjunctions
- PAT-borrowing: restructuring of subordination strategies (nonfinite, without CONJ) under the Russian influence

Previous studies: Russian conjunctions in languages of Russia

Barbier (2021)

- a corpus-based study on adverbial clauses in Negidal affected by Russian
- the main result: the Russian influence is much weaker than expected
- too rapid language shift

Khanina (2021)

- on Russian influence in Enets
- observations on Russian conjunctions and structural changes in adverbial clauses

Another perspective

The question of previous (cross-linguistically oriented) studies:

- which conjunctions are more / less likely to be adopted and why?

Our question (corpus-based):

- which adopted conjunctions are more / less frequent and why?

→ Hypotheses:

- frequency in Donor Language (Russian), cf. Grant (2012)
- congruence between Donor Language (Russian) and Recipient Language (Forest Enets)

Data

Data

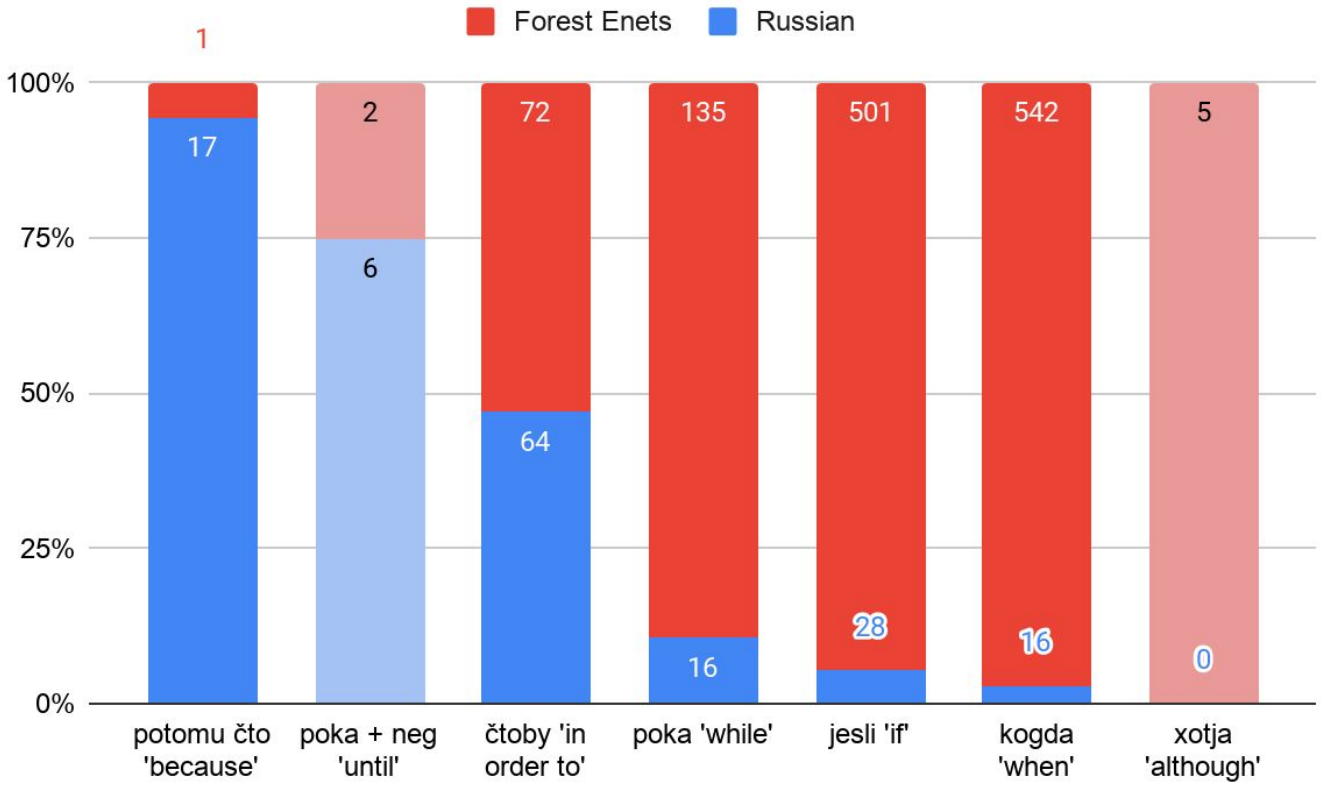
Forest Enets text collection

- created by Olesya Khanina and Andrey Shluinsky
- ca. 75,000 tokens
- collected in the Taimyr peninsula (2009-2012)
- transcribed, translated into Russian, glossed

Sample

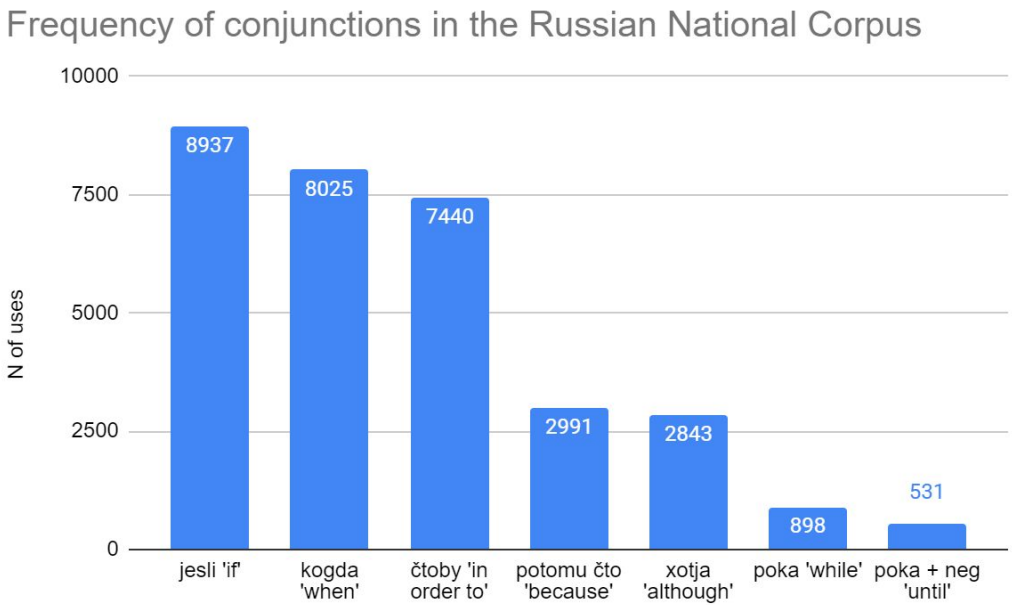
- Sample 1: all adverbial clauses with Russian conjunctions
- Sample 2: for each Russian conjunction attested in Sample 1 - all adverbial clauses *translated into Russian* with this conjunction

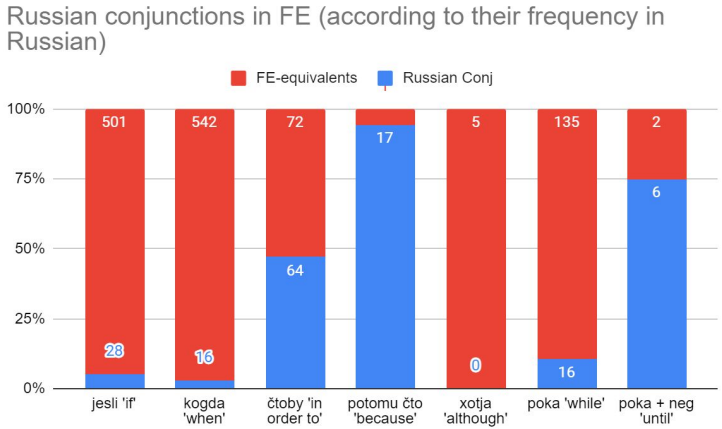
Frequency of Russian conjunctions in FE



Hypothesis 1: Frequency in Donor Language

Frequency of subordinating conjunctions in Russian





NO

Hypothesis 2: (In)congruence between Donor Language and Recipient Language

Congruence in language contact phenomena

- **(In)congruence** (structural compatibility) as a mechanism regulating structural restrictions on contact-induced phenomena

  cf. Weinreich 1953: 25; Campbell & Harris 1995: 123-125; Myers-Scotton 2002; Aikhenvald 2007: 32; Sebba (2009); Besters-Dinger et al. (2014)

It is easier to borrow / switch if there is congruence between contacting languages (in this particular fragment of language system or generally).

Congruence in language contact phenomena

- Explaining the asymmetries appealing to the **(in)congruence** between subordination strategies attested in Forest Enets vs. in Russian

A general picture

- **Russian**:
  - mostly finite subordinate clauses with conjunctions
- **Forest Enets**:
  - mostly non-finite subordinate clauses without conjunctions

see Khanina, Shluinsky (In press) on subordinate clauses in Enets

Congruence in language contact phenomena

A closer look

- In order to assess the degree of (in)congruence, I will consider the following parameters (for each type of adverbial clauses / each Russian CONJ):
  - Are there semantic equivalents to this CONJ in Forest Enets?
    - Are they semantically congruent with this CONJ?
  - Are verbal forms in Russian and Forest Enets congruent? (both finite, finite vs. non-finite)
  - Is there a conjunction in Forest Enets?
    - With the same / different position as in Russian?

Forest Enets: Congruence with Russian

	'because'	'until'	'in order to'	'while'	'if'	'when'
Russian conjunction	***potomu čto***	***poka*+neg**	***čtoby***	***poka***	***jesli***	***kogda***
Enets counterparts	-	-	SS: INF/ DS: SUBJ	NMLZ + *ʃeru*	CVB.COND	NMLZ-ABL, PTCP.SIM-DAT, CVB.SIM
semantic equivalent	-	-	+	+	+	±
→ semantic congruence			<	=	=	>
verb form congruence			+	-	-	-
conjunction			-	-	-	-
→ position congruence						

Case 1: No correspondence between DL and RL

→ ***potomu čto* ‘because’ (+ *poka ne* ‘until’)**

- non-typical of Forest Enets
- a new type of finite adverbial clauses created

(1) **patamuʃta** saxar dʲago**-bi-Ø** tundra-xan
because.R sugar there_is_no**-PRF-3SG.S** tundra-LOC.SG
‘Because there was no sugar in tundra’ (lku)

THE MOST FREQUENT

Case 2: Partial congruence in meaning, congruence in form

→ ***čtoby* 'in order to'**

- Enets purpose clauses are structurally similar to those in Russian
- Russian CONJ reinforces Enets non-specialized means of expressing purpose

(2a) nɛnagi-nʲʔ **ʃtɔb** nɔzunʲʔ kanʲe-**nʲi**-tʃ DS → Subjunctive
mosquito-PL.1DU **in_order_to.R**we(du).ABL leave(pfv)-**SUBJ**-3PL.S.PST
'In order that mosquitoes leave us' (ld) SS → Infinitive ("General Converb")

(2b) no **ʃtɔb** te dʲɔgutu-**ʃ** ɛtɔ
well **in_order_to.R** reindeer hurry_up(ipfv)-**CVB** so
'Ну, чтоб оленя подгонять это' (ni)

FREQUENT

Case 3: Congruence in meaning, incongruence in form

→ ***Jesli* 'if' (as well as *poka* 'while')**:

- Enets conditional clauses are non-finite, without CONJ, in contrast to those in Russian
- Russian CONJ is integrated into the Enets non-finite adverbial clause with a similar meaning
- (NB This is not the only option, see the next slide)

(3) **jesl^{j}i** ŋa-za bɔa ɛ-**bu**-ta **Conditional Converb**
if.R sky-NOM.SG.3SG bad be(ipfv)-**CVB.COND**-OBL.SG.3SG
if the weather is bad (ni)

LESS FREQUENT

Case 4: Incongruence in meaning, incongruence in form

→ ***kogda* ‘when’**:

- Enets conditional clauses are non-finite, without CONJ, in contrast to those in Russian
- Russian *kogda* ‘when’ corresponds to several different ways of expression in Forest Enets
- Russian CONJ is integrated into the Enets non-finite adverbial clause with a similar meaning
- (NB This is not the only option, see the next slide)

Simultaneous Converb (or NMLZ-ABL, or PTCP.SIM-DAT)

(4) sɔjuz **kɔgda** mu kaʔa-**buʔuj**
union **when.R** PLC come_down(pfv)-**CVB.SIM**
'When the Union broke' (ni)

THE LEAST FREQUENT

Incongruence overcoming

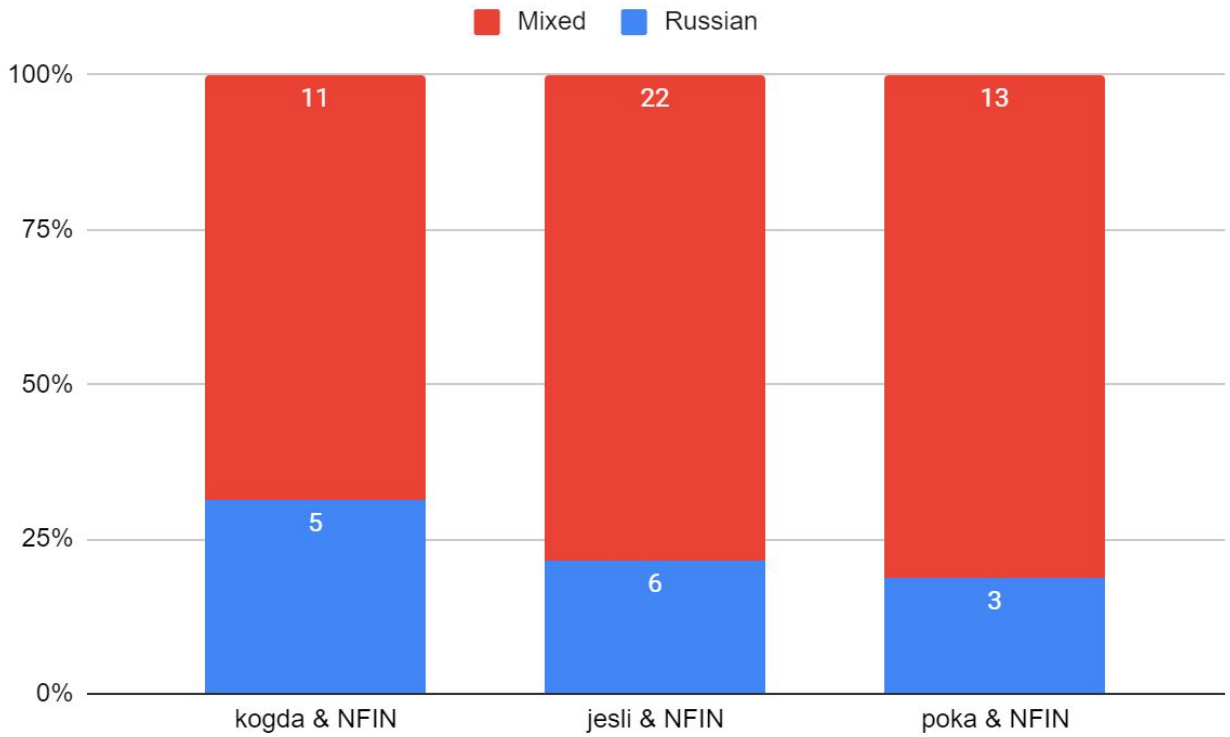
→ **Russian-like verbal forms**: attested, but rare

- **Case 1:** Finite forms instead of non-finite ones:

(5a)	dʲisi-za	**paka**	uza-xan-da	nɔɔbera-**za**
	grandfather-NOM.SG.3SG	**for_the_time_being.R**	arm-LOC.SG-OBL.SG.3SG	hold(ipfv)-**3SG.SOsg**
	‘While his grandfather was holding him in his arms’ (ni)			

(5b)	**jeslʲi**	ɔsa-d	kɔma-**d**
	if.R	meat-DAT.SG	want(ipfv)-**2SG.S**
	'If you want meat' (ni)		

Incongruence overcoming



Incongruence overcoming

→ **Russian-like verbal forms**: attested, but rare

- Case 2: Past tense instead of Subjunctive: 2 examples

(6) ɛtʃuj-ʔ **ʃtɔb** piiʔɛ-**zutʃ**
child-PL **in_order_to.R** be_afraid(ipfv)**-3PL.SOsg.PST**
'In order that the children were afraid of him' (as)

Cf. Russian Subjunctive = PST + *by* (*čto**by*** PST)

But: one example with Future tense

(7) i amɔn ɔzi-da-Ø,
and.R here(loc) be_visible(ipfv).INC-FUT-3SG.S
ʃtɔb ŋɔ-da sɔbu-**ta**-za
in_order_to.R leg-OBL.SG.3SG get(pfv)-**FUT**-3SG.SOsg
'And it will appear here, it will get out its leg' (ld)

Interim summary

MORE FREQUENT > LESS FREQUENT

'because' > ('until') > 'in order to' > 'while' > 'if' > 'when'

NO CORRESPONDENCE > CONGRUENCE > INCONGRUENCE

Strategy 1: incongruence preserving > Strategy 2: incongruence overcoming
(CONJ + no structural changes in Forest Enets) > (CONJ + structural changes)

A broader perspective: Forest Enets vs. Hill Mari vs. Nanai

Three languages compared

- General frequency of Russian conjunctions: DIFFERENT
  - Hill Mari (31,75%) >> Forest Enets (10,46%), Nanai (7,74%)

→ The strategy “CONJ+finite verb” is more widespread in Hill Mari and almost absent in Nanai and Forest Enets
→ Unlike Nanai and Forest Enets, Hill Mari has a long-term contact with Russian

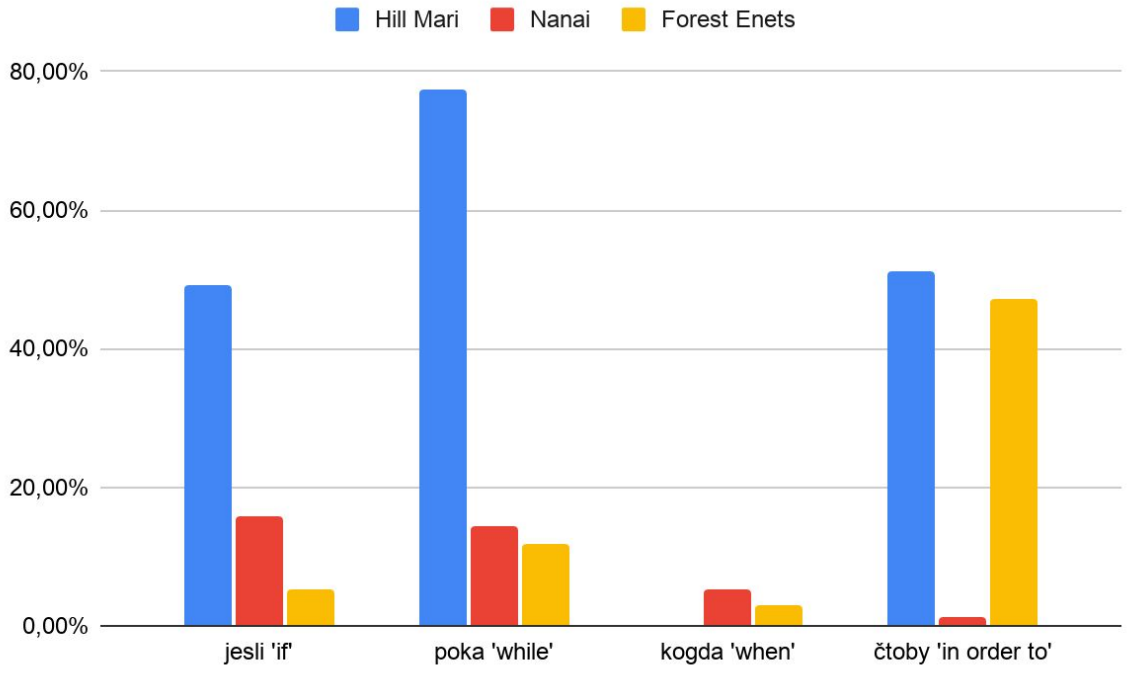
- Frequency distribution of Russian CONJs: DIFFERENT

→ correlates with structural differences in the corresponding semantic types of adverbial clauses in these three languages

(see Khomchenkova & Stoynova 2021 for more detail)

Three languages compared

- *jesli* ‘if’, *poka* ‘while’, and *čtoby* ‘in order to’: frequency distribution in three languages



Discussion

Discussion

HYPOTHESIS 1: correlation with frequency in the Donor Language

NO

HOWEVER: the data of Enets corpus and those of Russian National Corpus are not fully comparable

HYPOTHESIS 2: correlation with semantic and structural (in)congruence between the corresponding subordinate clauses in Donor Language and in the Recipient language

explains differences in frequency for Forest Enets

(partly) explains differences between Forest Enets, Hill Mari, and Nanai

YES

Discussion

HOWEVER:

(In)congruence is not the only factor

- Differences between Selkup dialects (Brykina 2021)
- Differences between Forest Enets and Tundra Enets (Khanina, p.c.)

→ Intensity and type of contact:

- long-term stable contact =/= rapid language shift

→ Inter-speaker variation:

- particular speakers seem to prefer / avoid Russian conjunctions

Methodological problems:

- should one rely on translations given in the corpus?

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