

Posture verbs in Nganasan

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What are posture verbs? Why are they interesting?

- *stand, sit, lie*
- Posture verbs denote particular postures of individuals
- all languages have posture verbs
- often exhibit extended locative uses

John is sitting in the car.

- wide range of languages have been investigated for their posture verb repertoires by the Language and Cognition Group and others



The use of posture verbs

- extended central meanings of these verbs to non-human referents: help conceptualize the position of some entity (Lemmens 2002, Gamerschlag–Petersen–Stöbel 2012)

→ locational, since part of their meaning is to describe the location of an entity.

(2) *The computer sits on a table*

The house stands near the forest

Her clothes are lying on the floor.

- some languages make more extensive use of the posture verbs in locational expressions, cf Dutch (Lemmens 2002), where either the independent ‘be’ verb, or the present progressive forms of ‘stand’ and ‘lie’ are possible.

(3) *Er staat/is een lamp in de hoek.* ‘There’s a lamp (standing) in the corner.’

Het boek ligt/is op de tafel. ‘The book’s (lying) on the table.’

De kleren liggen/zijn in de la. ‘The clothes are (lying) in the drawer.’

(Van Oosten (1982:138),

In some languages ‘sit’, ‘stand’ and ‘lie’ can both be extended to locative and existential constructions.

- they have assumed grammatical functions, e.g. they mark progressive or habitual aspect or behave as copulas

(Serra Borneto 1996; Heine and Kuteva 2007: 276–279; Kuteva 1999; Lemmens 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006; Lemmens and Perrez 2010; Newman 2001, 2002, 2009; Newman and Rice 2004; Newman and Yamaguchi 2002; Schönefeld 2006).

extended meaning

- further semantic extension: the meaning can easily be extended to abstract senses
 - metonymic
 - metaphorical

An extension of English *sit* to what may be called “**non-activity**”:

- The dirty plates are sitting on the table, waiting for someone to take them away.*
- The new car is sitting in the garage until it is registered.*
- The books are sitting on the shelf gathering dust.*
- The cans of beer are sitting in the cupboard, just waiting for someone to drink them.*
- The plane is just sitting on the runway in the heat, waiting for clearance to take off.*
- The director is sitting on the new proposal.*

- **Good-fit ‘sit’:**

The memory chip sits (neatly) inside a little space made for it.

Our house sits between two adjoining ones.

- *Siting in prison, bizottságban ül*

- denote particular postures of individuals
 - extended central meanings to non-human referents
- copula/quasi copula in basic locative constructions
- figurative meaning: metonymy /metaphor

The Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus (NSLC) (Brykina et al 2018)



- 176 annotated texts (1933-2016) by 33 speakers (Russian, English, German translations)
- narrative texts: fairy tales, life stories, folklore texts
- more than 22 000 sentences, 142 000 words

- '*stand*': 115 examples
- '*sit*': 453 examples
- '*lie*': 102 examples
- static meaning / dynamic meaning: (e.g. 'standing', 'not moving,/ 'to stand up' , 'to rise' , 'to lift', 'to stand up', 'to stop,)
- perfective form **X**

inchoative / stative meaning

the distinction between action and state phases can be relatively sharp in languages with lexical or morphological items e.g.

- Hungarian: *ül* 'sit' (state) / *leül* 'sit down' (action)
- German: intransitive *sitzen* 'sit' (state) / reflexive *sich (hin)setzen* 'sit down' (action)
- North Caucasian: *cu* 'to lie' / *dipšar* 'to lie down' with the subject in the ergative or absolute case (Holisky 1987: 126)
- Japan: *suwaru* 'sit down' / + *te iru* construction (*te + i-ru* 'be-PRS') → stative meaning

Toshi *ga* *suwat-ta* / *Toshi* *ga* *suwat-te i-ru.*

Toshi NOM sit-PAST / Toshi NOM sit-te be-PRS

'Toshi sat down.,

'Toshi is sitting.'

(Newman és Yamaguchi 2002: 47)

ɲomtə-d'a / ɲomt̪ü-s'a 'sit'

stative suffix

■ *kobtuā-tənu-ʔ ɲomtə-ði.*

girl-LAT.SG-1PL sit-IMP.2SG.R

'Sit down near our daughter!' (PKK_71_Djajku_flkd.025)

■ *təni ɲomt̪ü-kətu-gəj.*

there sit.STAT-ITER.PRS-3DU.S

'They were siting there' (ChND-KES_061107_Berizenaa_flkd.124)

'stand' (115 examples)

<i>nənsu-</i>	'get up', 'stop'	9
<i>nənsi-</i> (<i>nən'd'i-</i>)	'stand'	51
<i>n'etə-ra-</i>	'set up'	24
<i>n'eðü-</i>	'standing upright'	10
<i>tuti-</i>	'lay the table'	7
<i>tutu-</i>	'stand'	13
<i>hiliti-</i>	'stand stock still'	1

Secondary meaning: 'wait, does not move'

equipments for transportation: SLEDGE, BOAT, AIRPLANE

- *ηuəiʔ* *in's'üðə* *kəntə* *tuti-ti*
one man's_sledge sledge stand [VBLZ]-PRS.[3SG.S]

Одна нарта стоит...(MVL_090807_Hungabtadja_flks.026)

- *N'orumu-ə* *ηəntüɹüä-ðu* *tutu-ti*
copper-ADJZ boat-NOM.SG.3SG stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

Медная лодка стоит у него (TKF_97_Djajku_flkd.020)

- *əməniə* *ənti* *Pariš* *təti* *tuuηəntu təirii-ʔiä-ruʔ*
this-ADJZ-LOCPRON-ADJZ sort of Paris that fireboat fly.PTCP.PRS-AUG-NOM.SG.2PL

- ηuəl'iaiʔ* *nən'd'i-ti* *tij* *barə-tu.*
already stand-PRS.[3SG.S] you.PL.[ACC.SG] wait-PRS.[3SG.S]

'Here is the plane to Paris , it's waiting for you.' (KES_031115_Paris_nar.117)

'stand' verbs and their subjects

	<i>tutu-</i>	<i>n'etə-</i>	<i>nən'd'i-</i>
PEOPLE			17
DOG, COW			2
TREE			1
SLEDGE	3		3
BOAT	1		1
AIRPLANE			2
TENT		5	13
CAMP (TENTS)	1		1
BOTTLE	1	1	
CUP	1		
MEAT	1		

Subjects: [+HUMAN]: 17 & [+ANIMATE]: 3

■ *təndə* *bikaa* *d'igə* *n'ini* *t'etuami* *d'erbajkaʔa*
that.[GEN] river.[GEN] mountain.[GEN.] on-LOC.ADV very fat.ADJZ.AUG.

hūaa *nən'd'i-ti*

wood. stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

На горе у этой речки стоит одно толстое дерево (JDH_02_Djansaba_flkd.014 (001.014))

■ *əəiʔ*, *nagür* *banü-ʔüə* *nən'd'i-ti*, *ŋanuə* *məl'i*
oh, three dog-AUG stand-PRS.[3SG.S] real totally

logiā-təiʔ

bark-PRS.EXCL.[3SG.S]

Там теперь три собаки стоят, вот так здорово лают (KES_031115_Paris_nar.063).

■ *əj* *kuraa* *kona-ŋku* *tahariāa* *bəbə-tənu-ntu* *nən'd'i-ti*
Oh cow.[GEN.SG] go-DIM now place-LOC.SG-OBL.3SG stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

Oh, the little calf stands on its place (KNT_960809_WildAnimals_flkd.141)

geometric properties of the subject: tall, vertical extent higher than horizontal: TENT, BOTTLE, supported: CUP ((Ameka-Levinson 2007)

■ *təndə* *kad'anu* *tahariāa* *d'ikəra-ʔa* *n'i-ni* *tahariāa* *palaatkə-δuŋ*
that.[GEN.SG] near now mountain-AUG.[GEN.SG] on-LOCADV now tent-NOM.SG.3PL
n'eδü-tü
stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

'there he saw the mountain and the tent on its slope' (TKF_061105_FoxFosterling_flk.330)

■ *əmənɪə* *takəə* *koru-d'əə* *s'ai-təni*
this.[GEN.SG] that.[GEN.SG] house-ANT.[GEN.SG] corner-LOC.SG
s'iti *butulka* *n'eδü-tü.*
two bottle stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

Там вон, в углу бывшего дома две бутылки стоят' (MVL_080304_NjomuKamleguNy_flks.243)

■ CUP & MEAT

Duʔəðəʔ kiðiaʔ *tutu-ti,*
teacup stand-PRS.[3SG.S]

Dəmsa-ʔkutu *tutu-ti.*
meat-DIM-NOM.SG.3SG stand[DRV]-PRS.[3SG.S]

A teacup is (standing), the meat is (standing).

■ CAMP

Tə *mal'irə-ʔ* *nən'd'i-ti-ʔ*
 camp-NOM.PL stand-PRS-3PL.S

The camp is standing.

' sit'

- 453 examples / 437 *ηomtə-d'a* / *ηomtü-s'a* verb pair

- 16 others:

mənə heŋgə d'üntüāmə s'erəʔkiʔəm

,I will ride the black horse.'

ləmn'iziðə ηonsiəd'i

'he is sitting down to pee'

təməəni heðitigəti, in's'üðüs'a heðitigəti, lonirüs'a kəruraatətu.

'He goes on the sleigh and just sits there.'

Subjects

■ [+ human]

■ in the tent (30)

<i>tahariāa</i>	<i>kaŋgü-t'ə-küə-tənu</i>	<i>ma-tənu</i>	<i>i-t'ü-tə-tu</i>
now	when-EMPH-EMPH-LOC.SG	tent-LOC.SG	be-NMLZIPF-LAT.SG-OBL.3SG
<i>kobtuā</i>	<i>ŋomtü-tü-gəj</i>		
girl.GEN.SG	sit-PRS-3DU.S		

They sat in the tent with the girl for some time. (JSM_080217_FourBrothers_flkd.128)

■ on the sledge (24)

<i>n'üə-ʔkü-mə</i>	<i>əmə-ə-ni-ə</i>	<i>kəntə-nə</i>	<i>n'i-ni</i>
child-DIM-NOM.SG.1SG	this-ADJZ-LOCPRON-ADJZ.NOM.SG	sledge-GEN.SG.1SG	on-LOCADV
<i>ŋomtü-tü</i>			
sit.STAT-PRS.3SG.S			

My child sits on the sledge. (KES_080721_Disease_flkd.262)

animal - only birds (5 examples)

- *nojbuə-tu* *n'i* *ɲuəiʔ* *kula* *ɲomtü-ʔə.*
head.GENSG-3SG on one **crow** sit.PF-3SG.S

'A crow sat on his head' (PKK_71_OneTent_flkd.044)

- *təti* ***ɲiəru*** *məna-tu* *n'ini* *ɲomtü-tü.*
that **eagle** egg.GEN.PL-3SG on sit.STAT.PRS-3SG.S

'The eagle sits on its eggs' (ASS_161023_Fox_flkd.005)

- *or'el* *ɲomtü-tü* *huāa* *n'ini.*
eagle sit.PRS-3SG.S tree.GEN on.LOC.ADV

'The eagle sits on the tree' (MVL_080225_Fox_flkd.001)

- *muŋku* *n'ini* ***ɲiəru*** *ɲomtü-tü.*
forest-GEN on **eagle** sit.STAT.PRS-3SG.S

'In the forest sits an eagle' (ASS_161023_Fox_flkd.004)

- *tə* ***kəhi-gümü-ʔ*** *kad'a-ni-ndi* *ɲomtü-ɲüdü-tü-ʔ*
that **grouse-EMPH-NOM.PL** beside-LOCPRON-OBL.3DU sit.STAT-DEF-PRS-3PL.S

'The grouses sit beside them' (JDH_00_TwoDolganBrothers_flk.112)

[inanimate] (1 example)

- *tə n'emat'a-ʔku tahariāa tair-iə-gümü-rə ɲomtü-ʔi-ðə*
so big-DIM.NOM.SG now fly-PTCP.PRS-EMPH-NOM.SG.2SG sit-PF-3SG.R

'The enormous plane has landed (sit)'. (KES_031115_Paris_nar.040)

'staying at home = sitting in a tent' (5 example) 'waiting' → inactivity

- *d'oðür-s'ü-tə* *bənti-məni,* *t'üra-btu-guj-s'a,* *hüə-tə* *ma-tənu* *ɲomtü-mügətə-tu*
walk.FRQ.FUT.3SG.S outside-PROL takefresh air-ATT-DUR-INF year-LAT tent-LOC sit-VN.IPF.ABL.SG.OBL-3SG
'Когда будет ходить по улице, проветриваться, чем все время дома сидеть.' (JSM_090809_Life_nar.023)

- *ou, tə-tə* *makə-tə-tə* *ɲuəɹ,* *makə-tə-tu* *ɲomtü-ɹ,*
ou, tent-ABL.SG.OBL-2SG be-IMP.2SG.S tent-ABL.SG.OBL-3SG sit.STAT-IMP.2SG.S
mi-l'ia-ni *koni-gu-mi.*
we-DU.LIM.OBL-1DU go-IMP-1DU.S/O
'oh, you stay at home (sit in the tent), we are leaving' (MVL_080226_TwoHorses_flks.621)

- *nakürə* *d'ali* *ɲomtü-kə-ti*
tree.ACC day.ACC sit-ITER.PRS-3SG.S

'he has been waiting (has been sitting) for three days' (PKK_71_OneTent_flkd.053)

'inactivity' or 'live'?

■ <i>tahariābə</i> now	<i>mintiāgəni</i> probably	<i>əðəə?</i> what-EMPH.NOM.PL	<i>maagüə?</i> <i>manüi?</i> earlier.GEN.PL	<i>hüə-güə-tini</i> year-EMPH-LOC.PL
<i>tə</i> well	<i>d'aŋurə</i> tundra.GEN	<i>n'iini</i> direction	<i>d'ürimi-rə</i> story-2SG	<i>sojbu-kə-tu</i> sound.STAT-ITER.PRS-3SG.S
<i>baaguði-ʔ</i> nonfreezing waer-GEN.PL	<i>n'iini,</i> direction	<i>taa-gal'i</i> reindeer-CAR	<i>ŋomtü-s'a</i> sit.STAT-INF	

'Раньше я слышал о тебе, что ты жил около моря, без оленей сидел.'
(TKF_990819_SomatuShaman_flkd.177)

■ <i>təti</i> That	<i>tahariāa</i> now	<i>miŋ</i> we	<i>taa-gal'i</i> reindeer-CAR	<i>i-s'a</i> <i>ŋomtü-s'üə-mu?</i> be-INF sit.STAT-PST-1PL.S/O
<i>id'a-ʔa-mə</i> dad-AUG-1SG	<i>abaʔa-mə</i> elder sister-1SG	<i>təbtə</i> also	<i>taa-gal'i</i> reindeer-CAR	<i>ŋomtü-s'üə-mu?</i> sit.STAT-PST-1PL.S/O

Так мы без оленей сидели, мать и отец тоже без оленей были
(JSM_090809_ParentsAndUncles_nar.129)

'sitting in the presidency' (1 example)

PART OF THE SCENARIO FOR THE WHOLE SCENARIO

■ <i>tahariāa</i>	<i>təti</i>	<i>pr'ezid'ium-tənu</i>	<i>ŋomtü-tü-ʔ</i>	<i>s'etəgəə-ʔ</i>
now	that	presidency-LOC.SG	sit.STAT-PRS-3PL.S	boss-NOM.PL

'bosses are sitting in the presidency'(PED_080731_Competition_nar.248)

'lie'

- *ton'd'ajt'isi* 'lie' [+human] 47
тоньдиайчисы [тоньдиайчиты, тоньдиайчи"] лежать (о челове́ке)
- *bənüs'a* 'lie' [+animal] 10
бêнүся [бêнүнтү, бêнү"] лежа́ть (о живóтном)
- *kəlsutu* 15
- *n'erbiātiti* 10
- *las'atusa, mən'd'ajməbtiʔiðə, n'arbəd'əsi, n'onīajt'ütu, n'ül'iajt'iti, tid'ajt'üʔ, tiəbtugujt'iðə* 13

S: animal: DOG (2), REINDEER (4), HARE(1)

■ *ηanuə taa i-s'a tahariābə ηanuə heli-t'in ηiitə-nduŋ bənün-ntü-ʔ*
real reindeer be-INF now real some-NOM.PL.3PL still-OBL.3PL lie-PRS-3PL.S
s'ürü n'i-ni
snow.[GEN.SG] on-LOCADV

Олень, некоторые еще лежат на снегу. (TKF_990812_EvilSpirit_flkd.440)

■ *mað-ə kad'a-nu tahariāa hiiüðar-ə bəŋgu-tənu ηanuə n'omu-ʔkü*
tent-EP.[GEN.SG] near-LOCADV now snowdrift-EP.[GEN.SG] burrow-LOC.SG real hare-DIM
bənün-s'a s'iti-riāa kou-tu bakuraru
lie-INF two-LIM. ear-GEN.SG.3SG look.back-PRS.[3SG.S]

Оу, рядом с чумом, в ямке в сугробе зайчонок лежит и оба уха наострил. (TNS_900322_Hare_flkd.007)

■ *ban-a-ʔku-kəi-t'ü kad'a-nu-ntu bənü-ntü-gəj*
dog-EP-DIM-DU-NOM.PL.3SG near-LOC.ADV-OBL.3SG lie.down.[STAT]-PRS-3DU.S
собачки рядом с ним лежат (TKF_990819_SomatuShaman_flkd.224)

■ *təndə* *tahariāa* *ton'diajt'i-si* *tundia-ʔku-rə* *d'orə-lə-gə-ta-ðə*
 that.[LATADV] now lie-INF fox-DIM-NOM.SG.2SG cry-INCH-ITER-PRS-3SG.R

The fox lies and cries. (KK_92_Fox_flkd.096)

■ *tahariāa* *tə-kəi-t'ə* *təti* *ŋarka* *i-ŋəə* *təti* *n'ini-bti-ʔiā təti*
 now that-DU-NOM.PL.2SG that bear be-IMP.[3SG.S] that elder.brother-SRLAT-AUG
d'aŋur-ə-ðə-kə *tə-kəi-t'ə* *ŋuə-l'aa-tənu* *taharia* *bənsə* *mou-ntə*
 tundra-EP-ADJZ-ADJZ.LOC2 that-DU-NOM.PL.2SG one-LIM-LOC.SG now all earth-LAT.SG
tondiāj-məbti-ʔi-ndi
 lie.down -DRV-PF-3DU.R

И долган, и медведь, он оба упали, в землю легли. (MVL_080303_TwoDolganBrothers_flk.076 (001.076))

■ *numajkaʔa* *kəlsu-tu* *kad'a-nu-ntu*
 young.man. lie-PRS.[3SG.S] near-LOC.ADV-OBL.3SG

Парень лежит рядом (MVL_080303_TwoDolganBrothers_flk.439 (001.439))

■ *d'übəis'i* 'lie' [–animate] < 'throw' 64

дубѣиси [дубѣиті, дубѣи"] леж́ать (*о предме́те*); *книга џѣмурсанѣ нині*
дубѣиті *кни́га леж́ит на столé*

дубы"тѣсы [дубы"тѣты, дубы"тѣ"] брос́ать, выбрас́ывать, оставл́ять,
прекращ́ать

< *дубѣилесы* [дубѣили"ѣ, дубѣиле"] брос́ить

дубѣѣди [дубѣи"ѣ, дубѣѣ"] брос́ить, в́иброс́ить, оста́вить, прекрат́ить

- *Ou, n'ininti d'übäi?ti? latüs'anə? luut'i.*

На нем лежат погребальные **одежды**.MVL_080304_TwoMeryde_flk.176

- *Maagəl't'ə ηanuə ((unint)) kət'i bəntini ənti tuu biði? d'übäiηə, kəndə n'ini, n'is'iði? tołiri?.*

Ничего, пусть хоть **ружьё** на санке валяется, ниикто не возьмёт.

- *Maaraa? təndə? əku?, hūaat'i, n'itəit'i, sil'i?a maaraa? d'übäiti?.*

Всякое разное там, наверное — **дрова, ведра**, всякое там валяется.

- *Hūaaga?a it'üə d'aηur kuəd'ə n'iid'ə tahariābə ηanuə d'iəði təni?iariāi? d'übäiti.*

Хребет тундры без леса, так только **ягель** валяется.TKF_990812_EvilSpirit_flkd.216

- *Təni?iā tondiājt'it'əbiti latüs'anə? luut'i n'ininti d'übäi?ti?.*

Так лежит, и на нем лежат погребальные **одежды**.

- *kabümüəd'ə? ətəniə d'übäiti?.*

Лучинки та валяются KES_080721_Lemming_flkd.037

- *Tə, tətirə Tətirə təni?iā latüs'anə? luut'i d'übäi?ti?.Tə, tətirə.*

Погребальные **одежды** лежат.

'stand'

'sit'

'lie'

- denote particular postures of individuals + + +
- extended central meanings to non-human referents → locational, describe the location of an entity.

+?

-

-

- figurative meaning

- metonymy

-

+

-

- metaphor

-

-

-