

On the so-called passive construction of Udmurt

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Proposal: In this talk we investigate the morpho-syntax of the Udmurt *-emjn* construction (1). We argue that in spite of recent claims to the contrary, the *-emjn* form is not a canonical passive that is similar to the Russian or English passive. Instead, we suggest that it is syntactically a predicative PP, such that the P takes a nominalized VP as its complement.

- (1) Budapest-*jn* so 1985 ar-*jn* ... pott-**emjn**
Budapest-INE it year-INE publish-emjn
'It was published in Budapest in 1985.' (Asztalos 2010)

Diachrony: Previous literature (e.g. Serebrennikov 1963; Bartens 2000) agrees that diachronically, *-emjn* was the concatenation of two suffixes: *-m* and the *-jn* case suffix. There is no agreement, however, on how to analyze *-m*, and which case suffix *-jn* corresponds to.

❶ ***-m*:** The non-finite *-m* suffix occurs in two environments: *i*) past participial relatives and *ii*) gerunds. Whether the *-ms* in these uses can or should be unified is heavily debated. Perevoshchikov (1962); Kalinina (2001); Brykina & Aralova (2012) and Serdobolskaya et al. (2012) suggest that there are two homonymous *-m* suffixes. We adopt the analysis of Georgieva & Ótót-Kovács (2016), Georgieva (2018) and Dékány & Georgieva (2020), who argue that the two uses involve the same *-m*. This *-m* heads an extended verbal projection in both cases. In participial relatives we have a simple extended (non-finite) VP, which is not topped off by an adjectival or nominal shell (much like finite relative clauses). In gerunds the same extended VP is embedded under a nominal FP; this brings in the nominal properties. Gerunds are thus mixed V-N extended projections. Among others, this derives the fact that gerunds (but not participles) outwardly have a nominal distribution, i.e., appear in argument positions and as complements of Ps. We suggest that diachronically the same *-m* that is used in participial relatives and gerunds occurs in *-emjn*.

❷ **The case suffix:** In line with Yemelyanov (1927) and Bartens (2000), we argue that *-emjn* contains the inessive case (*pace* Serebrennikov 1963; A. Kövesi 1965 who argue that it contains the instrumental case). *-emjn* in the so-called passive (1) is the main predicate of the clause. PPs headed by the inessive can occupy this position without further ado. While PPs headed by the instrumental can also be predicates in Udmurt, they are never the main predicate of the clause (Fokos-Fuchs 1958; Georgieva 2018).

Putting the pieces together: We suggest that in *-emjn* forms we find the very same extended VP represented by *V-em*. In order to be embedded under the PP *-jn*, this VP has to be nominalized. This can happen in two ways: either by a zero nominalizer (*n*), as in (2a), or with the help of a covert lexical noun with the meaning 'state' that is modified by a participial RC. The structure in (2b) is independently shown to be available in Dékány & Georgieva (2020). The two structures in (2) make different predictions, which we will explore in detail in the talk.

- (2) a. [PP [NP [xVP V-em] n=∅] P=-jn] b. [PP [NP [xVP V-em] N=STATE] P=-jn]

-jn establishes a grammatical relationship between the subject and the state coded in the nominalized VP, and contributes the meaning that we have a stable state as opposed to a change of state. The overall meaning that the surface-subject is *in a result state* arises compositionally.

The synchronic status of *-emjn*: Some recent research suggests that over time, the *-emjn* sequence was reanalyzed into a new, synchronically non-decomposable derivational suffix (Asztalos 2010; F. Gulyás & Speshilova 2014): *-emjn* is now treated as a member of the participial paradigm ('resultative participle'). At least for transitive-base verbs, (1) is taken to represent a canonical passive construction akin to the English or Russian passive (possibly under Russian

influence). We challenge this assumption and suggest that *-emjn* forms have not been reanalyzed: they are still bi-morphemic, *-em-jn*. Since *-jn* is a case suffix, on our approach *-em-jn* forms are syntactically still PPs. On the view that *-emjn* forms have been reanalyzed and they are part of the participial paradigm, they should correspond to extended VPs. The two views thus make clear and distinct predictions regarding the external distribution of *V+emjn*.

Supporting the PP status of *-em-jn*: Udmurt participles can all occur in adnominal position as non-finite relative clauses, but *-emjn* forms are exceptions. They can never occur prenominal, only a predicative use is licensed. This falls out naturally on the PP approach, but remains a stipulation on the view that *-emjn* has become a participial ending. *-Emjn* marked verbs and inessive-marked nouns exhibit further parallels. Udmurt employs copula-drop with NP, AP as well as PP predicates in the present tense. If the so-called passive verb of (1) is a PP, then we correctly predict that ‘passives’ do not take an overt auxiliary in the present tense. On the other hand, NP, AP and PP predicates do occur with auxiliaries in the past and future tenses. The PP analysis of ‘passives’ correctly predicts that exactly these auxiliaries will obligatorily appear in past and future passives. These predictions are born out (not illustrated for space reasons.)

Consequences: Our proposal has the consequence that (1) may be functionally equivalent to the English or Russian passive, but it has a different syntax: its predicate is a PP that embeds a mixed V-N projection.

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