

Filchenko A.

POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN EASTERN KHANTY¹

The paper reviews possession in the eastern-most Khanty dialects with less than half a dozen speakers remaining. The analysis stems from extended fieldwork data and legacy data archived at Tomsk Department of Indigenous Languages of Siberia. The main purpose is to discuss the key morphosyntactic and semantic features of possession based on available data and approached within a conventional theoretical and methodological framework. This will allow integration of the data and analysis into the debates regarding possession from the areal Siberian, genetic Uralic and wider typological perspective.

Key words: *possession, Khanty, typology, Siberia.*

1. Introduction

Khanty (ISO 639–3: *kca*), one of the Uralic languages, is spoken proficiently by fewer than 7000 hunter-gatherers and reindeer herders out of more than 28000 Khanty in North-Western Siberia. Though considered to be a single language, Khanty is a dialectal continuum with a large conventional division into western and eastern dialectal groups (Tereškin, 1961; Décsy, 1965; Gulya, 1966; Honti, 1984; Nikolaeva, 1999; Filchenko, 2007). Dialectal variation of Khanty is considerable, to the extent that many varieties are mutually incomprehensible. In typological terms, the variation is extensive, with the eastern dialects demonstrating distinct features at all levels of the system.

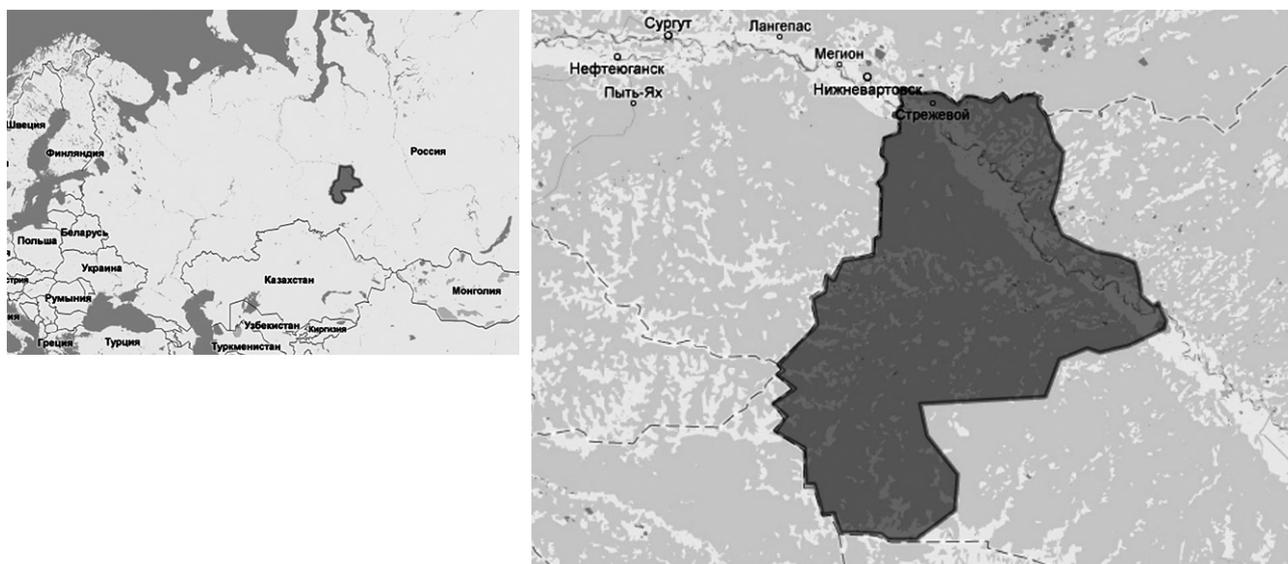


Figure 1. Eastern Khanty dialects of Russian Western Siberia

The present analysis of Eastern Khanty possession is based on the data from two adjacent river varieties of *Vasyugan* and *Alexandrovo*, supplemented by some data from the immediately adjacent *Vakh* dialect. The genre of collected material is diverse, containing narratives and elicitations, supplemented by the available sources and materials collected between 1960–1990's and stored at the Tomsk archive.

Possession in Uralic languages has been a topic of a number of studies both as a part of descriptive efforts (Tereskin, 1961; Gulya, 1966; Filchenko, 2007) and as a typological endeavour (Kangasmaa-Minn, 1984; Bartens, 1991; Honti, 2007, among others).

With regards to their morphosyntactic features possessive constructions are traditionally differentiated into adnominal possessives and predicate possessives, with an occasionally added phenomenon of external possession (where the possessee and the possessor are coded by different clause constituents). Over-imposed to this is traditionally a semantic stratification into alienable/inalienable possession, with an occasionally differentiated category of temporary possession.

While the existing treatments of possession in Uralic languages deal with the above semantic and morphosyntactic categories to a varying extent, it is still beneficial to review these questions on the basis of the Eastern Khanty data, as it is rarely considered in previous works in detail.

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2. Adnominal Possession

The extended Eastern Khanty nominal case paradigm does not include the Gen.case and the adnominal possession is most often coded by the simple juxtaposition of the case-unmarked possessor (either nominal or pronominal) in preposition to the possessee head noun (never pronominal) as exemplified in (1a) ‘*this woman’s clothes*’ and (1b) ‘*those people’s reindeer*.’

(1a.) *jəŋk-juŋk-ni-nə* *tʃu* *ni* *lopiʃäj* *ən-tə*
 water-spirit-woman-LOC DET woman clothes put.on-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘The mermaid put on this woman’s clothes ...’ (Boy-005)

(1b.) *rätʃ* *i* *kät* *niŋ-kən* *wəj-il* *tʃu* *jay* *wel'i-t*
 old.man “and” two woman-DU take-PST0.3PL DET people reindeer-PL
 ‘Old man and two women took those people’s reindeer.’ (OM2W-020)

The examples (2) ‘*mother-his*’ and (3) ‘*dog-their*’ demonstrate that another important means of coding the relationship between the possessor (essentially the modifier) and the possessed (the head) is the affixation on the head, the full paradigmatic set of possessive suffixes.

(2) *äj-qu* *qoli-nt-əl-s* *əŋkä-l* *suʃ* *sätʃ-wəl*.
 little-man listen-TR-DUR-PST2.3SG mother-3SG voice be.heard-PRS.3SG
 ‘The boy listened and hears his mother’s voice...’ (Boy-016)

(3) *jəʃ* *qolintəl-wəl*, *uyantə-wəl* *jəʃ* *ämp-il*.
 3PL listen-PRS.3PL bark-PRS.3SG 3PL dog-3PL/SG
 ‘They listen: their dog is barking.’ (OM2W-035)

The examples (3) ‘*their dog*’, (5a) ‘*my pot*’, and (5b) ‘*your oar*’, ‘*my oar*’ also illustrate that the pronominal NP possessor is unmarked for case and as any nominal modifier is simply juxtaposed to the head noun it modifies (as in (4a, b), cf. vs (5a, b)).

(4a) *mä* *sərni* *wəy-ali-ə* *trop* *käs-käs-əm*
 1SG gold metal-DIM-INSTR.O pellet find-PST3-1SG
 ‘I found a golden pellet’ (S&A-018)

(4b) *käs-tə* *qat* *oyti-nə*
 find-PST0.3SG/SG house roof-LOC
 ‘((S) he) found him on the roof.’ (S&A-006)

(5a) *mä* *səʃə-put-am* *äl* *tuy-ä*.
 1SG clay-pot-1SG NEG carry-IMPR.2SG
 ‘Don’t carry away my pot!’ (Girls-022)

(5b) *appa*, *mä-nat* *məj-a* *nöj* *ajri – juʃ-ən*
 father 1SG-COM give-IMPR.2SG 2SG canoe-tree-2SG

mä *ajri-juʃ-əm* *morəmta-s*
 1SG canoe-tree-1SG break-PST2.3SG
 ‘Father, give me your oar, mine is broken in two!’ (F&S-015)

(5c) *jiŋ-näm* *werätə-na* *qəntʃi-l-ətən*
 3DU-RFL blood-COM write-PRS-3DU
 ‘They both sign it with their blood.’ (TS-172)

Example (5c) demonstrates that the reflexive form of the personal pronoun may code the possessor, the possessee may take a variety of semantic roles and grammatical relations.

Whenever there is a situation of nested possession, as illustrated by the example (6) ‘*beauty’s husband – her husband’s head*’, similar to any other multiple modifier situation in Eastern Khanty, possessor modifiers branch leftwards, maintaining all the possessive relation coding features (NP_[MODIFIER] left juxtaposition, mandatory possessive suffix marking of the inalienable possession (kin, body-parts)).

- (6) *mustəm* *ni* *qu-j-əl* *oy-əl* *toyə* *joyən-ta*
 beautiful woman man-EP-3SG head-3SG away cut-INF
 ‘The beauty’s husband’s head is to be cut off.’ (TS-180)

Finally, the example (7a) ‘*your-bow, your-arrow*’ shows that the possessor may be coded by just the possessive affixation, while the example (7b) ‘*his-oar*’ demonstrates that the possessive relation may be not coded explicitly at all and is rather implicit and recoverable from the context as highly topical.

- (7a) *joyəl-än* *puyl-än* *män-ä* *məj-i*
 bow-2SG arrow-2SG 1SG-ILL give-IMPR.2SG
 “Give me the bow and arrows!” (F&S-030)

- (7b) *pəy-l* *jayəntə-kətə-yən* *ajri* *juɣ* *wej* *morəmta-yən*
 son-3SG row-INCH-PST0.3SG canoe tree handle break-PST0.3SG
 ‘the son had just started rowing when his oar broke.’ (F&S-013)

The possessive noun phrase can be schematically represented by the following model:

(modifier-NP _[possessor] – head-NP _[possessed]) (possessive suffix)
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The examples discussed so far illustrate semantically alienable possession, i.e. the possession typically controlled by the possessor. They also demonstrate that Eastern Khanty does not morphosyntactically differentiate between alienable possession and temporary possession.

As for the inalienable possession, this category predictably includes such semantic groups as body parts (8) ‘*his-liver*’, ‘*his-heart*’ and kinship nomenclature (examples (2) ‘*his-mother*’, (7) ‘*his-son*’, (9a) ‘*his-father*’, (9b) ‘*his-younger.brother*’), and (9c) ‘*his-y.brother*’, ‘*his-o.brother*’ (possessive relation to each other), which are never used without the possessive marking (possessive suffixes), with the exception of a vocative function, typically in imperative clauses (cf. example (5) ‘*father!*’):

- (8a) *sart* *n’əyəs-t-ən* *pirnə* *muyl-əl* *män-ä* *qəj-i!*
 pike scale-IMPP-LOC then liver-3SG 1SG-ILL give-IMPR.2SG
 “After you scale the pike, leave me the liver!” (BP-020)

- (8b) *qəsi-nə* *səm-əl* *joy* *loqqinta-yən*
 man-LOC heart-3SG home stop-PST0.3SG
 ‘The man’s heart stopped.’ (M&E-019)

- (9a) *qot* *mä* *appa-m*
 where 1SG father-1SG
 “Where is my father?” (F&S-021)

- (9b) *qu* *təyətə-yən* *qaqi-l-a*
 man say-PST0.3SG y.brother-3SG-ILL
 ‘The boy said to the younger brother’ (F&S-024)

- (9c) *puyəl* *qələmt-əm-əl-nə* *qaq-əl* *atf-əl-a* *toloy-wəl*
 village appear-PP-3SG-LOC young.brother-3SG old.brother-3SG-ILL tell-PRS.3SG
 ‘When they came to the village, the elder brother tells the younger one’ (Girls-030)

3. Predicate Possession

In Eastern Khanty, equatives, proper inclusions and attributives typically follow the nominal predicative pattern in affirmatives, while locatives, existentials proper and predicate possessives fall in another structural class (Filchenko, 2013). The only notable morphosyntactic diversity is manifest in predictable variation of referent coding, in projections of pragmatic functions – to semantic roles – to grammatical relations, and in equally predictable word-order variations between locatives, existential proper and predicate possessives resulting from the above variations in referent coding.

Possession may occur coded by both types of these existential constructions.

3.1 Equative/proper inclusion / attributive predications as possessive constructions

Eastern Khanty equatives (10), proper inclusions (11) and attributive predications (12) display common semantic and structural properties, represented by the model:

[THEME ATTR V _{EX}]

with the copula predicate (*wəs-* ‘be’ – for 1st and 2nd person THEME, or *wəl-* ‘live, exist’ – for 3rd (often *wəl-* is a default copula for all persons THEME)).

(10) *nin qasi-tə əŋk-äl (wəl-wəl)*
 woman man-3PL mother-2SG be-PRS.3SG
 ‘The woman (is) those men’s mother.’ (EKhNeg_015)

(11) *məŋ wäs’-jəyan jay (wəs-əw)*
 1PL Vasyugan-river people (be-1PL)
 ‘We (are) Vasyugan people.’ (EKhNeg_008b)

(12) *qul qolla wəreŋ-ali (wəl-wəl-t)*
 fish all small-DIM be-PRS.3SG-PL
 ‘Fish are all small (EKhNeg_003b)

The copula is typically not explicit for the Present, but is required for the Past and takes the clause final position.

Frequently, attributive predications show the nominal predication strategy using the nominal (adjective, adverb, noun, numeral) with the predicator affix *-aki/* which does not require a copula (13).

(13) *pöt/kän-äm trops-na pon-əm (aki)*
 gun-1SG buckshot-COM load-PTCP (-PRD)
 ‘My gun is loaded with buckshot.’ (ST_050)

Some of these predicator constructions may be seen as covering the proprietive-possession functional domain (cf. examples (14a) and (14b)):

(14a) *jüy öyi-t-aki qu*
 3SG daughter-PL-PRD man
 ‘He is a man who had many daughters’ LT: ‘with-many-daughters man’

(14b) *pīrpit-äl’-nə mörök-kə jəyä-yən*
 by.then-3SG-LOC healthy-PRD become-PST0.3SG
 ‘Finally, (s (he)) got better...’ (M&E-014) LT: ‘with-health became’

The negation of all of the above predication types is coded by a single construction (Filchenko, 2012):

[THEME ATTR NEG _{ST} V _{EX}]

where the standard negator in preposed, either to the copula ‘be’ in the appropriate finite TAM form (15a), or to the nominal predicate (nominal with the predicator affix) (15b)).

(15a.) *wajay əntə kəntf-im wəl-qal*
 animal NEG_{ST} thin-ATTR be-PST3.3SG
 ‘(That) animal WAS NOT THIN.’ (ST_125)

(15b.) *pöt/kän-äm əntə pon-əm-aki.*
 gun-1SG NEG_{ST} load-PTCP-PRD
 ‘My gun IS NOT-LOADED.’ (FYB_022)

3.2. Locative and existential proper predications as possessive constructions

The Eastern Khanty locative predications typically have the structure:

[THEME LOC V _{EX}]

or possible

[THEME V_{EX} LOC]

with the THEME referent identifiable and active, appearing clause-initially (16).

- (16) *fʉ qu pəltə tot-aki, (qot ola-γən i tot ola-wəl)*
 DET man suit DET-PRD DET lie-PST0.3SG and DET lie-PRS.3SG
 ‘That man’s suit is at its place (lying where it had been lying before).’ (TS_110).

The Eastern Khanty existential proper predications typically demonstrate the model [LOC THEME V_{EX}]. The differentiation between the locatives and the existentials proper hinges on the pragmatic status of the THEME coded by the S grammatical relation. In locatives, this referent is identifiable and active, and as such tends to the S-like clause-initial position (16), while the LOC itself belongs to the pragmatic assertion. In the existentials proper, the THEME is typically lower in its pragmatic status and less S-like in its clause-medial or -final position (17a).

- (17a) *ʼstol-nə way ola`qata-wəl*
 table-LOC money lie-PRS.3SG
 ‘There is money on the table (EKhNeg_213a)
- (17b) *timin pəltə qo-pə ənt-əm, tol`ko jüγ qu-j-əl-nə*
 DET coat where-Emph NEG_{EX} only 3SG man-EP-3SG-LOC
 ‘He wouldn’t find a suit like that anywhere, only her husband had one.’ (TS-145)

Possessive predications are essentially existential/locative predications, where the semantic possessor is grammatically the locative (cf. possessive (17b), (18a) vs. locatives (16) and existential proper (17a)).

- (18a) *män-nə qasi wəl-wəl...*
 1SG-LOC man be-PRS.3SG
 ‘I have a friend...’ (OM2WM_039)
- b. *(jüγ-ən) me`täli-pə ən`tim-äki-iki*
 3SG-LOC some-Emph Neg_{EX}-PRD-PRD
 ‘(She) has got nothing.’ (ST_121)

Thus, possessive constructions may be represented by the model identical to that of existential proper:

[LOC THEME NEG_{EX}].

Another intransitive construction coding the existential/locative relation conceptually covering possession (possessee being located in the domain of the possessor) is the construction with the posture verbs ‘sit, stand, lie.’

- (19) *räγ-nə t`ukurä jəm in-ta qula-pärt iγ-wəs stol-əl-nə aməs-wəl*
 old.man-LOC this.much good eat-INF more-lot eat-DER table-3SG-LOC sit-PRS.3SG
 ‘There is a lot of good food on the old man’s table.’ (TS-077)

3.3 Transitive possessive constructions

Apart from existential possessive constructions (20a), possession relation may also be coded by means of the Eastern Khanty possession verbs (*keep, hold, own*), which may function either as matrix finite (20b) or dependent non-finite (20c) predicates.

- (20a) *atfi-l-nə kə werəγ-ot-kən wəl-qən*
 brother-3SG-LOC two little-thing-DU live-PST0.3DU
 ‘The elder brother had two children.’ (Girls-005)
- (20b) *qaq-əl əj-ni toja-γən...*
 brother-3SG little-woman keep-PST0.3SG
 ‘The younger brother had a girl.’ (Girls-004)
- (20c) *mä nipik taja-m-am-nə, töγ nöγ-ä mə-γäs-i*
 1SG book keep-PP-1SG-LOC CND 2SG-ILL give-PST1-PS.3SG
 ‘If I had a book, I should have given it to you.’ (Gulya, 1966: 122)

Interestingly, the negation strategy for these possessive constructions also follows the existential negation pattern (21a), rather than the standard negation pattern of the regular transitive predications (Filchenko 2013). The standard negation strategy with the possession verbs is possible, but usually in the context of object ownership, whereas the sense of kin possession is less natural (21b).

(21a) *(jəy-ən) öyi-t ənt`im wəl-qal*
 3PL-LOC daughter-PL NEG_{ex} be-PST1.3SG
 ‘They had no daughters’ (Predicate Possessors 1.1.6.)

(21b) *% jüy-ən öyi-t əntə taja-qal*
 3SG-LOC daughter-PL Neg_{Sr} keep-PST1.3SG
 ‘% (S) he did not have/keep a daughter’ (Essive_1.1.3)

In the Eastern Khanty negative predicate possessives, the bare negative existential *əntim* appears either in present or the suffixless past (Tereškin, 1961; Filchenko, 2007), while the morphological past forms occur within the model [LOC THEME NEG.EX VEX [BE]].

(22a) *jüy-ən moloko wəl-wəl*
 3SG-LOC “milk” be-PRST.3SG
 ‘She/It has milk’ (ST_120)

(22b) *moq..., metali-pə ən`tim-äki-iki..., ən`tim wəl-`qal*
 baby some-Emph NEG_{ex}-PRD-PRD NEG_{ex} be-PST1.3SG
 ‘Baby..., (there) is nothing, (she) has got nothing.’ (ST_121)

In (22a-b), the quoted present of (22a) is mirrored at the onset of (22b), which is then self-repaired to appropriate past (PST1) where *əntim* requires an auxiliary inflected for appropriate TAM. In (22b), the last part contains the copula *wəl-* ‘be’, rendering the literal ‘*non existent [the THEME] was.*’ The omitted topical THEME ‘*bear’s cub*’ is coreferential with the 3SG inflection on the copula, and it is its absence that is asserted in the proposition (Lit.: *I got down there, and there was nothing, wasn’t no cub*). These elliptical structures are within the general typological tendency for structural economy towards available/predictable information, representing the correlation of morphosyntactic simplicity to pragmatic topicality (Dahl, 1979; Lambrecht, 1994).

4. Possessive affixation as pragmatic marking

There is a systematic consistency in the strategies of structuring information in Eastern Khanty, originating in the fixed grammatical inventory of this language system. The pragmatic features of identifiability, activation, definiteness, and topicality are consistently expressed by the grammatical features of predicate agreement, case marking, anaphora, constituent order (Filchenko, 2012).

The Eastern Khanty agreement is obligatory between the grammatical relation of S/A and the finite predicate V, while the agreement between the grammatical relation of O and the transitive finite predicate is contingent upon the pragmatic properties of the O referent (Tereskin, 1961; Gulya, 1966; Filchenko, 2007). That is, finite predicates always agree with the S/A argument (subject conjugation), but transitive finite predicates may also agree with the O argument (object conjugation), expressing pragmatic identifiability, accessibility and high degree of activation of this referent in the interlocutors’ discourse universe. This is evident from the pragmatic context, where a new, unidentifiable referent is introduced into the discourse expressed by an O argument in the part of the proposition that asserts new information, and the predicate bears the S–V (subject conjugation) inflection. Thus, the slightly altered (23*) below, with the predicate marked with the O–V object conjugation, will be unacceptable in the sense of asserting new information and containing a brand-new referent. In this form, with the O–V object conjugation inflection, the only available reading is one where the referent expressed by the O argument is an identifiable, accessible discourse referent with relatively high degree of pragmatic activation:

(23a) *(mä) sart terkä-s-im iwes-nə*
 1SG pike fry-PST2-1SG/SG stick-LOC
 ‘(I) fried **the pike** on sticks (made fish kebab)’

and not

*‘I fried **a pike** on sticks’

- (23b) (mä) (sart) terkä-s-im iwes-nə
 1SG pike fry-PST2-1SG/SG stick-LOC
 ‘(I) fried it (the pike) on sticks (made fish kebab)’

The O arguments that trigger the O–V (object) predicate agreement are more flexible in their constituent position, or may be altogether elided (23b), whereas the O argument without the O–V agreement is fixed in its overt SOV position. The omission of the identifiable and active Target referent in the O relation is attested only co-occurring with the (objective) conjugation, the O–V agreement inflection.

In the Eastern Khanty clauses containing reflexivization, the reflexives can be bound either with the S/A argument or the O argument triggering the O–V agreement. Yet the O argument not triggering the O–V agreement cannot control reflexivization. In (24a), the possessive affix marking the 3SG of the possessor on ‘house’ may refer both to the possessor referent of the S/A argument ‘bear’ and the identifiable possessor referent of the O argument ‘dog’ that co-occurs with the O–V (object) agreement.

- (24a) iy-nə ämp joy nirimtä-s-tä tfimin ont-qat-al
 bear-LOC dog home take-PST2-3SG/SG there inside-house-3SG
 ‘The bear hid the dog inside his (bear’s) / (dog’s) house.’

In (24b), this possessive affix may only be co-referential with the possessor referent of the S/A ‘bear’, and not with the unidentifiable possessor referent O ‘dog’, which does not trigger O–V (object) agreement (the predicate in (24b) displays just the obligatory S–V (subject) agreement).

- (24b) iy-nə ämp joy nirimtä-s-əyən tfimin ont-qat-al
 bear-LOC dog home take-PST2-3SG DET inside-house-3SG
 ‘The bear hid a dog inside his (bear’s) house’ / *(dog’s) house.’

Thus, discourse-pragmatic features of identifiability and activation, expressed by verbal agreement possessive markers, are instrumental in identifying possible antecedents, controllers of reflexivization.

One of the dominant, if not exclusive, devices of clause subordination in Eastern Khanty is the use of non-finite constructions. These non-finite forms are of three types: infinitival, participial and converbial (Tereskin, 1961; Gulya, 1966; Filchenko, 2007). They share the functions of adverbial clauses of purpose, aspect/mood, manner, time/space and relative clauses. The Eastern Khanty non-finite relative clauses are such that the grammatical relation of the relativized nominal argument is prototypically not overtly marked, which is consistent with the gap relativization strategy. In most instances these are subject-controlled embedded non-finite clauses, i.e. the S of the non-finite clause is co-referential with the S of the matrix clause (cf. examples (25) and (26)). This, however, is not mandatory, and there are numerous examples of adverbial, complement and relative non-finite clauses where the S of the non-finite predicate is not co-referential with the S of the matrix clause (cf. examples (27) and (28)).

- (25) al’wal’i-nə sart-əl toy pən-tə än’i-l’-ä toloy-wəl
 Alvali-LOC pike-3SG DET put-IMPP sister-3SG-ILL say-PRS.3SG
 ‘Alvali has put his pike in and says to his sister’ (BP-015)

- (26) äl’-əḡ nuy kül’-m-äl’-nə jöḡr-äl’i-j-a ulm-əl jäsiḡlā-tə
 morning-LOC up wake-PP-3SG-LOC mouse-DIM-EP-ILL dream-3SG tell-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘and in the morning, having gotten up, the little bird told the dream’ (B&M-003)

- (27) quntə toy jö-m-äl-nə Al’wə kola tfu juḡ-əl-nə aməs-wəl
 when DET come-PP-3SG-LOC Alva still DET tree-3SG-LOC sit-PST.3SG
 ‘When he (Syvsiki) got back, Alva was still up that tree of his.’ (A&S-019)

- (28) ji-min aməs-t-il-oy iki qily-əl-a t’u köl tiḡtə-s
 eat-CNV sit-IMPP-3PL-PRL old.man grandkids-3SG-ILL DET word say-PST2.3SG
 ‘while sitting and eating their (children) supper, the oldman told to his grandchildren’ (Gulya, 1966)

It is seen in (25) through (28) that the non-finite (participial) predicates of embedded dependent clauses can either have (25), or not have ((26), (27), (28)) possessive affixes co-referential with the head argument that they modify. What triggers this possessive agreement is not readily available from the analysis of the formal features of the clause arguments. The analysis of the functional-pragmatic status of the referents of propositions that correspond to the head of the embedded non-finite clause, however, proves revealing. Similar to the O–V agreement pattern in

the finite matrix clauses, the agreement between the head and the non-finite predicate of the embedded clause is motivated by the pragmatic properties of this referent (identifiability, activation). In the example (25), the head referent of the non-finite predicate of the embedded clause is clearly identifiable and activated in the interlocutors' discourse universe as co-referential with the S/A of the finite matrix predicate. In the rest of the examples (26, 27) the S/A referents of the dependent participial clauses are unidentifiable and not activated, thus requiring explicit coding by a possessive (agreement) affixation on the non-finite dependent predicate.

Finally, there is a rare, but cross-dialectally attested (Nikolaeva, 1999) phenomenon (rare in Eastern Khanty), where the possessive marking on the S/A arguments of the matrix clause is referential with the S/A argument of the embedded non-finite clause. This appears to be an instance of head-marking, consistent with the Eastern Khanty possessive head-marking reviewed above.

- (29) *noŋ masmält-əm wajaŋ-ən mən*
 2SG shoot-PP animal-2SG go.PST0.3SG
 'The bear that you shot went away'

The combination of the above functional features indicates the importance of the discourse-pragmatic function of the referent in triggering the possession-type agreement marking. Possessive markers appear to be consistently and robustly employed by the Eastern Khanty system to signal the pragmatic status of the referents of the proposition. The correlation of syntactic flexibility and omissibility, control over reflexivization are consistently associated with the overall pragmatic prominence of the referents, their inferability, identifiability, activation through a relation of possession to an already active referent. On the other hand, the correlation of syntactic rigidity, obligatory overtiness, inability to control reflexivization, absence of association via possession with an active discourse referent manifests the pragmatic relation of focus, pragmatic assertion (new information) (Lambrecht, 1994; Nikolaeva, 1999; Givón, 2001).

5. Propreitive – possessive phenomena (propriative/attributive – comitative)

The majority of Eastern Khanty adjectives are derived from noun stems with the help of a variety of affixes (Tereskin, 1961; Gulya, 1966; Filchenko, 2007). Since Eastern Khanty nominal modifiers (apart from possession) do not normally carry agreement with the head, relational affixation in this context is non-existent in Eastern Khanty. As for derivational affixation in Eastern Khanty nominal modifiers, it is fairly diverse, as is the repertoire of changes in grammatical categories, and significant meaning alterations that they manifest.

Observing possible strategies of derivation and semantic grouping of the Eastern Khanty nominal modifiers (adjectives), it is evident that the most productive of such derivational affixes is etymologically associated with the comitative case marker.

i) Attributive derivational affix /-əŋ/ has propriative semantics of endowed with:

- (30) *aŋt-aŋ* 'having ribs (*aŋt-* 'rib')';
äj-äj - köl-äj ni 'talkative/sociable woman' (*äj* 'news'; *köl* 'word')';
alm-əŋ 'sleepy (*aləm* 'sleep')';
lil-əŋ 'alive (*lil* 'life, breath')';
səm-əŋ qasi 'courageous man (*səm* 'heart').

- (31) *jöŋ öyi-əŋ qo*
 3SG daughter-ATTR man
 'He is a man of many daughters (*öyi* 'daughter')

Schematically this process of derivation may be represented as follows:

$$NP = Y-əŋ + X$$

where, X and Y are nouns, and affixation of /-əŋ/ to Y (juxtaposed to X) manifests salience of the feature Y in the referent X.

In Finno-Ugric literature this affix is traditionally assigned possessive semantics (Gulya, 1966). This is true for the majority of the available examples of the Eastern Khanty denominal adjectives derived with this affix, to the extent that the head is seen to possess a feature expressed by the modifier, i.e. in the example below, it is the 'place' that possesses 'squirrels' and 'lynx' as a salient feature, and not alternatively, the 'squirrel' or 'lynx' whom the place belongs to (in these situations, the possessive relation would just be coded by juxtaposition of uninflected nominal (cf. section 2. above)):

- (32) *läŋkiŋ tayi* 'place with squirrels' *kömläyəŋ tayi* 'place with lynx'

- (38) *ariŋ-aw(ə)* (*tay̆i*) *men-s-əw*
 far place go-PST2-1PL
 ‘We went far away’ (arinaw 92far/remote/foreign (araŋ ‘strange’))
- iv) *-tə/*:
 (39) *pes-tə* ‘sharp, quick’;
pəy-tə ‘black’ (*pəyə* ‘fur of an animal’);
wər-tə ‘red’ (*wər* ‘blood’).
- v) *-əy/*:
 (40) *mäl-əy* ‘blunt, blank’;
mol-əy ‘free, separate, detached’;
səl-əy ‘friable, gunpowder’ (*səl* ‘small (multiple objects: stones, money, pellets)’);
n’är-əy ‘raw, unprocessed, bare’ (*n’är* ‘damp, wet’).
- (41) *n’ärəy* *pam* *qorasəw*
 wet grass image
 ‘green like wet grass’

It is notable that the latter affix *-əy/* bears formal, functional and semantic kinship to another attributive/adverbial derivational suffix *a* with general adverbial- / predicative semantics *-aki/* already mentioned above (cf. section 3.1.):

- (42) *äj-äki* ‘of little importance (*äj* ‘small’)’;
är-ki ‘numerous (*är* ‘many, various’)’;
al-qi ‘weak (*ali-* ‘manage/overcome’; *al-* ‘carry’).

Examples of multiple derivational processes show that adverbial/predicator affix *-aki/* is the only one that appears to co-occur with other attributive modifier derivational affixes. The linear order is always such that *-aki/* follows other derivational affixes.

- (43) *wuj-aŋ-əki* ‘she is fat/proud’ ← (*wuj-aŋ* ‘adj. 1. fat, 2. proud’) ← (*woj n* ‘fat’)

Schematic representation of all these derivations look similarly as follows:

NP = Y-/PROPR/ + X

where X and Y are nouns, and affixation of a proprietive suffix *-PROPR/* to Y manifests its semantics of a nominal modifier to X, with some feature Y saliently present in X.

6. External possession

The last group of examples reviewed in this discussion illustrates the phenomenon of external possession. Typologically, the external possession constructions are characterized by such features as: possessor coded as a core grammatical relation of the verb (Subject, Direct Object, Indirect Object, or Dative, etc., but not an oblique); possessor is a constituent separate from that containing the possessee; the predicate can be intransitive, transitive, ditransitive; in addition to being expressed as a core grammatical relation, the possessor can simultaneously be expressed by a pronoun or pronominal affix internal to the NP containing the possessee; there is an extra participant, the possessor treated as an additional argument of the clause; external possession is motivated when the possessor of an object is not co-referential with the clause subject (Payne, 1999: 3–5).

Eastern Khanty has a group of examples whose structural and semantic features could be seen as apparently falling within the external possession phenomenon. Analysis of most examples as external possession can be debated, but their discussion may still be useful for better understanding of the system.

- (44) *niŋ-nä* *iwän* *sewl-əl-oy* *toy* *qayrimt-əl-tə*
 woman-LOC Ivan neck-3SG-PRL there catch-MMNT-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘The woman caught Ivan by his neck.’ (3Sons-140)

cf.

- niŋ-nä* *iwän* *qayrimt-əl-tə*
 woman-LOC Ivan catch-MMNT-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘The woman caught Ivan.’ (constructed)

- (45) *räŋ* *oŋ-əl* *jəm-əŋ* *wer-ta* *jəŋil-wəl*
 old man head-3SG good-ADV do-INF start-PRS.3SG
 ‘He cures the old man’s head.’ (3Sons-050)

cf.

- räŋ* *jəm-əŋ* *wer-ta* *jəŋil-wəl*
 old man good-ADV do-INF start-PRS.3SG
 ‘He cures the old man.’ (constructed)

According to D. Payne’s generalizations for EPC, examples (44) and (45) are not examples of possessor raising construction but rather of external possession construction as (shown in constructed versions of these examples) there are complete predications with the affected undergoers of the actions ‘*Ivan*’ and ‘*oldman*’, licensed and governed by the argument frame of their respective predicates ‘*caught*’ and ‘*cures*.’ The presence of the locative obliques ‘*his neck*’ and ‘*his head*’ just further refines the exact location at which the undergoer was affected. The possessors ‘*Ivan*’ and ‘*oldman*’ do not have semantic dependency relation to these obliques. Thus there is no raising (Payne, 1999: 7).

The possessor may be not explicitly coded, but the external possession relation still holds, as the possessor’s identity is manifest in the possessive affixation on the possessee – coded as the oblique locative, refining the location of undergoer’s affection, as well as from the possessive (objective) agreement inflection on the predicate, as in (46) and (47).

- (46) *innə* *niŋ-juŋk-nə* *oŋpi* *poŋləmtə-tə*
 just woman-spirit-LOC door open-PST0.3SG/SG

- qu-nə* *oŋ-əl-təŋə* *jäjəm-oŋ-nat* *loyosəl-tə.*
 man-LOC head-3SG-place axe-head-COM hit-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘As soon as the mermaid opened the door the man hit her on the head with the blunt end of the axe.’ (Boy-028)

cf.

- qu-nə* *jäjəm-oŋ-nat* *loyosəl-tə.*
 man-LOC axe-head-COM hit-PST0.3SG/SG
 ‘... the man hit her with the blunt end of the axe.’ (constructed)

- (47) *mä-nə* *oŋ-əl* *təkən* *potŋkan-na* *jöŋə-käl-im*
 1SG-LOC head-3SG DET gun-INSTR shoot-PST1-SG/1SG
 ‘I shot it in the head with the gun’ (BP-008)

cf.

- mä-nə* *potŋkan-na* *jöŋə-käl-im*
 1SG-LOC gun-INSTR shoot-PST1-SG/1SG
 ‘I shot it with the gun’ (constructed)

In line with the typological parameters of EPCs (Payne, 1999), in Eastern Khanty, the grammatical relation of the external possessor tends to be: primary/direct object, an NP unmarked for Accusative².

Conclusion

It can be seen that Eastern Khanty has a fairly diverse inventory of constructions to code possessive relations. Of these, the most frequently used types are the adnominal possession constructions and the existential/locative/possessive constructions, with the possessor coded by a locational NP. At a more lexical-morphological level, a variety of proprietive/possessive affixes is used to code salient possession of a feature. At the more syntactic-pragmatic level, possessive markers are used to maintain information flow and discourse coherence, coding more topical, identifiable referents of the proposition.

Text Data

- ST: “Ski-tracks”, 2005. Vasyugan Khanty. Recorded A. Filchenko. Tomsk archive.
 TS: “Three sons”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).
 S&A: “Syvsiki and Alvali”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).

² Eastern Khanty does not mark Acc for nouns, but does for pronominal O arguments (Filchenko, 2007).

- Girls: “Girls”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).
 BP: “Big Pike”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).
 M&E: “Man and Eagle”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).
 B&M: “Bird and Mouth”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Tretyakov, 2010).
 Boy: “Boy”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Kurganskaja, 2012).
 OM2W: “Oldman and two women” Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Kurganskaja, 2012).
 F&S: “Father and Son”, Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko, Potanina, Tonoyan, Kurganskaja, 2012).
 FYB: “Funny young bear”, 2005. Vasyugan Khanty. Recorded A. Filchenko. Tomsk archive.
 EKHNeg: “Eastern Khanty Negation Questionnaire”, 2012, adapted and recorded A. Filchenko, S. Kovylin.
 Predicate Possessors: “Predicate Possessors Questionnaire”, 2013, Vasyugan Khanty. Recorded A. Filchenko.
 Tomsk archive.
 Essive: “Essive Questionnaire”, 2013, Vasyugan Khanty. Recorded A. Filchenko. Tomsk archive.
 EKHNegation: “Eastern Khanty Negation Questionnaire” 2013: Vasyugan Khanty. Recorded S. Kovylin,
 A. Filchenko. Tomsk archive.

Abbreviations

A – agent of transitive clause	IMPR – imperative	PRS – present
ABES – abessive	IMPP – imperfective participle	PS – passive
ACC – accusative	INCH – inchoative	PST – past
ADJ – adjective	INDF – indefinite	PST0 – past 0 (suffixless past)
ADV – adverb	INDF.PRON – indefinite pronoun	PST1 – past 1 (-yas)
ALL – allative	INF – infinitive	PST2 – past 2 (-s)
ATTR – attributive	INSTR – instrumental	PST3 – past 3 (-yal)
COM – comitative	LT – literal meaning	PSTP – postposition
CND – conditional	LOC – locative	RFL – reflexive
CNV – converb	MMNT – momentative	S – subject of intransitive clause
DAT – dative	NEG – negator	SG – singular
DER – derivational affix	NEG _{EX} – existential negator	TAM – tense, aspect, modality
DET – determiner	NEGIMP – imperative negator	THEME – theme
DIM – diminutive	NEG _{ST} – standard negator	V – verb
DU – dual	NFIN – non-finite	V _{EX} – existential verb
EL – elative	NP – noun phrase	VP – verbal phrase
EMPH – emphatic	O – object of transitive clause	X – an element of a model
EP – epenthetic	PL – plural	Y – an element of a model
FE – finite element	PP – perfective participle	1 – first person
HAB – habitual	PRD – predicator affix	2 – second person
ILL – illative	PROL – prolativ	3 – third person

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Filchenko Andrey, Kandidat Nauk, Ph. D. Linguistics, associate professor.
Tomsk State Pedagogical University.
Ul. Kievskaya, 60, Tomsk, Russia, 634061.
E-mail: afiltchenko@tspu.edu.ru

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Фильченко А. Ю.

ПОСЕССИВНЫЕ КОНСТРУКЦИИ В ВОСТОЧНЫХ ДИАЛЕКТАХ ХАНТЫЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

В статье рассматриваются способы выражения посессивности в наиболее угрожаемых восточных диалектах хантыйского языка. Анализ основывается на эмпирических данных, собранных в ходе предшествовавшей полевой работы и данных полевого архива кафедры языков народов Сибири ТГПУ. К основным целям относятся обсуждение ключевых морфосинтаксических и семантических параметров и черт посессивных конструкций на основе имеющихся естественных языковых данных и с современных теоретических и методологических позиций. Это позволит интегрировать данные и результаты анализа в современный научный дискурс, посвященный вопросам посессивности в ареальной сибирской, генетической уральской и общетипологической перспективе.

На основе анализа можно заключить, что восточно-хантыйские диалекты располагают разнообразным инвентарем морфосинтаксических средств для выражения посессивных отношений. К наиболее продуктивным и частотным моделям относятся приименные посессивные конструкции, а также бытийные/локативные/посессивные конструкции, в которых обладатель выражен локативной именной группой. На лексико-морфологическом уровне набор именных атрибутивных аффиксов проприетивной/посессивной семантики используется для выражения наличия/обладания неких знаменательных черт. В плане аргументной структуры и дискурсивной прагматики посессивное маркирование используется в целях структурирования информации и обеспечения связанности дискурса, обозначая более топикальные, дискурс-активные референты пропозиций.

Ключевые слова: *посессивность, хантыйский, типология, Сибирь.*

Фильченко А. Ю., кандидат филологических наук, Ph. D. Linguistics, доцент, старший научный сотрудник.
Томский государственный педагогический университет.
Ул. Киевская, 60, Томск, Россия, 634061.
E-mail: afiltchenko@tspu.edu.ru