

Multiple postverbal constituents in a non-rigid SOV language: the case of Udmurt

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Introduction

- Udmurt: SOV (Vilkuna 1998, Winkler 2001, 2011)
SOV > SVO (Tánczos 2013, Asztalos, Gugán & Mus 2017, Asztalos 2021)
 - the textual frequency of non-verb-final sentences is relatively high
(Asztalos et al. 2017: 35–44%, see also Bulychov 1947, Suihkonen 1990, Vilkuna 1998, Asztalos 2018)
 - multiple postverbal constituents (MPVCs) are also allowed
(cf. Asztalos et al. 2017: some preliminary observations on the order of MPVCs)
- Aims:
- describing the relative order of postverbal constituents (PVCs) in Udmurt
 - identifying the factors (syntactic? discourse-pragmatic?) that underlie it
 - proposing some possible syntactic operations for a future analysis
 - diachronic dimension: by the comparison of old and contemporary texts

Cross-linguistic perspective: (Some) factors determining postverbal constituent ordering

- 1) *information structure: given-before-new*** principle
(Gundel 1988)
- 2) *syntactic function:*** PVCs in their basic (preverbal) ordering (for Bangla (SOV), cf. Simpson & Choudhury 2013)
- 3) *heaviness/grammatical weight:*** length and grammatical complexity (cf. Behaghel 1930, Wasow 1997, Wasow & Arnold 2003 etc.)
- 4) *semantic connectedness:*** elements whose interpretation is dependent on the verb are more likely to occur adjacent to it (Wasow & Arnold 2003)

Data

- cf. Asztalos et al. (2017)
- but while Asztalos et al. (2017) discusses VX sentences in general, the present study aims at providing a thorough analysis specifically of MPVCs
 - „old texts”: **folklore texts** from the end of the 19th century
549 clauses, 4214 tokens:
 - Wichmann, Yrjö (1901): *Wotjakische sprachproben II*. In: Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne XIX. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Kirjapainon Osakeyhtiö, Helsinki, 1–200. (W)
 - Munkácsi Bernát (1887): *Votják népköltészeti hagyományok*. Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Budapest (M)
 - **contemporary texts**: blogposts
591 clauses, 4572 tokens:
 - *Mynam malpanjosy (MM)* (<http://udmurto4ka.blogspot.com/>) – blogposts from 2016
 - *Marajko. Marjalen zarežez (MZ)* (<http://marjamoll.blogspot.com/>) – blogposts from 2015–2016

Discourse-pragmatic roles of PVCs

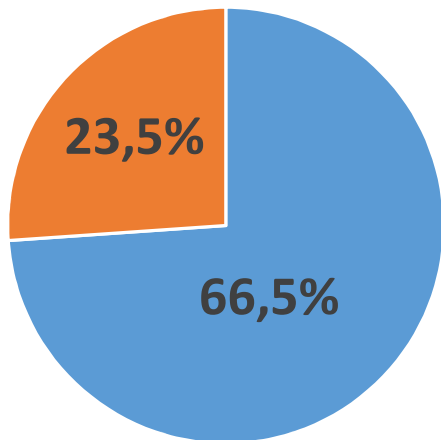
- *discourse-old* information:
 - evoked in the prior discourse, or
 - inferable from the prior context (cf. Prince 1992)
- *discourse-new* information: not evoked and not inferable from the prior context
 1. *argument* focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994)
 2. *predicate* focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994)
 3. *sentence* focus (*all-new* sentences) (cf. Lambrecht 1994)

Results

Folklore texts vs. blogposts: differences

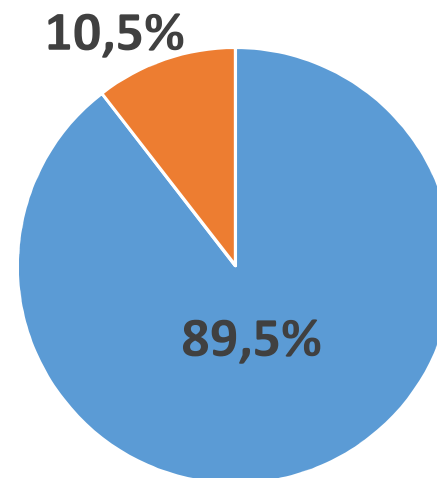
1. Frequency of clauses with **multiple postverbal constituents** (within non-verb-final clauses)

Folklore texts



(8,2% of all clauses)

Blogposts



(4,6% of all clauses)

Folklore texts vs. blogposts: differences (cont.)

2. Number of PVCs if > 1:

- folklore texts: **2**
- blogposts: mostly 2, but in some cases, 3

3. Occurring permutations of (postverbal) discourse-pragmatic roles:

	<i>old-old</i>	<i>new-new</i>	<i>old-new</i>	<i>new-old</i>
folklore texts	Y	Y	Y	—
blogposts	—	Y	Y	Y

1. Identical discourse roles: *old-old*

- folklore texts only
- the constituents typically follow their basic (preverbal) ordering:

Adv_{Temp/Loc} – S – verbal arguments – O – AdvManner (cf. Glezdenev 1921)

→ a possible analysis: leftward movement of the verb (cf. Simpson & Choudhury 2015)

- motivation: V focus in some cases (1), or preverbal focus
(a structural Foc position on the left periphery, cf. Tánczos (2010))

Adv_{Loc} O: The forest spirit asks the man to go along a road where he will find a house, and to wait for him in that house.

(1) *Udmort kylsk-em, šed't-em řulesk-yś pići korka, pyr-em*
Udmurt listen-EV.3SG find-EV.3SG forest-ELA small house enter-EV.3SG
korka.

house.ILL 'The Udmurt obeyed him, found (did find) the little house in the forest, entered the house.' (W30)

1. Identical discourse roles: *old-old*

- non-basic postverbal ordering: sporadic
- **OS** in (9): O = personal pronoun → highly topical
→ a possible analysis: topicalization

A young man is celebrating his wedding with the water spirit's daughter.

(2) *Śud-em - śekta-m soos-ty vumurt.*
feed-EV.3SG regale-EV.3SG 3PL-ACC water_spirit
'The water spirit regaled them.' (W27)

2. Identical discourse roles: *new-new*

- folklore texts + blogposts
- the constituents typically follow their basic ordering:

Adv_{Temp} S:

The author tells about a lady who tells clever things in an interesting way.

(3) *Ato vań kuddyr nylkyšno-os, kud-jos-yz tuž ćal'ak vižmo*
but be sometimes woman-PL which-PL-DET very quick clever
verašk-em-en-yzy akyl't-o.
talk-NMLZ-INS-3PL bore-3PL

‘But there are sometimes women who bore you very quickly with their clever speech.’ (MM 09.07.2016)

2. *New-new* – a subcase: *all-new* sentences

- mostly in contemporary texts
- text-initial sentences
- a possible analysis: base-generation (SOV > SVO change in Udmurt)

Adv_{Loc} O:

(4) *Mertt-i* *[ukno ul-a-m]* *[töd'y šireň].*
plant-PST.1SG window under-ILL-1SG white lilac
'I planted a white lilac under my window.' (MZ 05.06.2016)

Adv_{Loc} Inf:

(5) *Pot-i* *[ostanovka-je]* *[lž-e* *myny-ny].*
go_out-PST.3SG bus_stop-ILL Izhevsk-ILL go-INF
'I went to the bus stop in order to leave for Izhevsk.' (MM 09.10.2016)

3. Different discourse roles: *old-new*

- old elements typically precede new ones
- folklore texts + blogposts

Adv_{Loc} S:

The forest spirit is insulting an innkeeper, and calls him out of the tavern. The innkeeper goes out together with the forest spirit and sees that...

- (6) *śurs-leś no tros köll'-o muzjem vylyn ludkeć-jos.*
thousand-ABL PTCL many lie-3PL ground on rabbit-PL
'(...) more than thousand rabbits are lying on the ground.' (W31)

Dat O:

The author went to an Udmurt clothes shop.

- (7) *Bašt-i as-ly-m kaćestvennoj tuzi Alnaš derem.*
buy-1SG self-DAT-1SG quality cool from_Alnash dress
'I bought myself a cool, quality dress made in Alnash.' (MM 09.07.2016)

3. Different discourse roles: *old-new*

- *old-before-new* even when the arising order is not equal to the basic ordering of elements → discourse-pragmatic factors overrule syntactic ones:

“Yesterday I told that the world is in chaos. And today, I will tell...”

(8) *mar malpa-lo so xaos śaryś šor jozo*
what think-3PL that chaos about middle of_age
pokoleńi-yś ad’ami-os (...).
generation-ELA man-PL

‘(...) what the middle-aged generation thinks about that chaos.’

(MZ 30.11.2015)

4. Different discourse roles: *new-old*

- a few examples in the contemporary texts
- PVCs do not follow their basic ordering (however, neutral ordering may be different for contemporary texts)
 - neither discourse-pragmatic nor syntactic motivation for the order
- (9): semantic connectedness of V + the verbal particle-like Adv

The story of a play with a poet as the main hero. There is an equipment on stage (...) A person symbolizing the death is coming. The poet throws away his notebooks (...), but the Death lifts them up and...

(9) *oš-e* *beren* *konstrukcija* *bordy*.
hang-3SG back equipment onto
‘hangs them back onto the equipment. (MM 05.10.2016)

More than two (= 3) postverbal constituents

- a few examples in the blogposts
- *old-old-new*:

The author participated as a supervisor in a school camp organized for children.

(10) *Vu-i-my* *mi Udmurťi-yś* *16 kuža* (...).

arrive-PST-1PL 1PL Udmurtia-ELA 16

‘We arrived 16 from Udmurtia.’ (MM 26.08.2016)

More than two (= 3) postverbal constituents

- *new-new-new*:

O Adv_{Loc} Adv: frame-setting Adv-s following the O (heaviness?):

- (11) *Mini-teatr “Balda” tunne vožmat-i-z [Erik Batujev-ly*
mini theatre Balda today show-PST-3SG Erik B.-DAT
siž-em spektakl’] [Kuzebaj Gerd nimo
dedicate-PTCP.PRF play K. G. named
gimnazi-len aktovoj zal-a-z] [pod jegidoj Udmurt Keñeš].
high_school-GEN assembly_hall-INE-3SG under aegis U. K.
‘The “Balda” mini-theatre today showed a play dedicated to E. B. in the
assembly hall of K. G. High school, under the aegis of Udmurt Kenesh.’ (MM 05.10.2016)

Conclusion

- postverbal constituents with identical discourse roles: relative order determined by syntactic function
 - a possible analysis: leftward V movement
- discourse-pragmatic factors overrule syntactic ones in 2 cases:
 1. *old-old* but one of them is highly topical → the highly topical element precedes the other one → a possible analysis: topicalization
 2. *old-before-new*
- *all-new* sentences with MPVCs: more typical of contemporary texts
→ a possible analysis: base-generation
- some examples of *new-old* order in contemporary texts: neither discourse-pragmatic nor syntactic motivation for the ordering
 - semantic connectedness
 - frame-setting Adv-s in sentence-final position (heaviness?)
- 3 PVCs: only in contemporary texts

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Thank you for your attention!



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