

***TAM: some features
of tense categories
in Finno-Ugrian***

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Background

- EUROTYP (1990-1994), Theme group on Tense and Aspect (Ö. Dahl (ed.) 2000)
- Dahl 1985
- WALS
- *Dialectologia Uralica*: description of dialects + unified model for description of the Uralic languages and dialects (W. Veenker (ed.) 1985). FU-5 in Turku 1980

General characteristics

- Basic opposition past – non-past
- Baltic-Finnic – four grammaticalised tense forms in indicative: present, past, perfect, pluperfect
- More past tense forms e.g. in Volgaic, Permian languages; modal, aspectual, evidential etc. meanings
- Maximal number of tense forms in indicative
- No regular future, different devices of future time reference

General problems

Sources of data:

 Existing descriptions

 Data from corpora?

 Questionnaires?

1 and 2: problems of comparability,
standardization of classifications, *tertium
comparationis*

3: informants – linguists, who are native
speakers

Experts on each language needed

Comparative descriptions of tense systems

Hausenberg & Kokla 1988: an attempt of the unified description (*Dialectologia Uralica*) of the verb forms of the Komi and Mari languages

Mari and Finnish (Moisio 1993), Permic languages (Leinonen ja Vilkuna 2000), Estonian and Finnish (Metslang 1994) etc.

Overviews of FU tenses

- Serebrennikov 1960
- Majtinskaja 1973, 1975
- Kangasmaa-Minn 1984
- Bartens 1993

Examples of features: past

- number of PST types (e.g. two in Mordvin, Khanty)
- marking of PST forms: morphological (suffix, stem variation), \emptyset
- compound past in marked moods, general, non-localizing temporal meaning (Finnish, Estonian, e.g. Est *olevat tulnud* 'came repeatedly / has repeatedly come / had repeatedly come')
- meaning of PSTs: narrative, general past (Mari), temporal distance (Udmurt), duration (Erzya, Komi), progressive (Khanty), habituality (Erzya,) etc.

Examples of features: perfect 1

Form:

- morphological (Mari *tolynam* 'I have arrived', Udmurt *kylemed* 'you have heard')
- analytical verb construction (auxiliary 'be', others?):
 - ② $AUX_{fin} + V_{PART}$ (western type, Finnic, Saami, Mordvin, Mari, e.g. Est *olen saabunud*)
 - ② $AUX_{unchanged} + V_{fin}$ (eastern type, Mari, Permic, e.g. Mari *ludam əl'e* 'I have read')
- no auxiliary (Veps *minä lugenu* 'I ø read')
- particle 'already' (Permic, e.g. Udmurt *(i)n'i*)

Examples of features: perfect 2

Function

- 4 types of use: PFCT of result, experiential PFCT, PFCT of persistent situation, hot news PFCT
- Additional meanings: aspectual, evidential (inferential, quotative), narrative (Mari, Komi). From possible developments (Ö. Dahl's paper on this conference) only hodiernal missing.

Examples of features: other analytical verb forms

Regular, grammaticalised?

Form:

- type a) or b)
- auxiliary verb
- infinite form (participle, gerund, infinitive), unchanged form (regular or irregular)

Meaning (resultative, narrative, progressive etc.)

“In Udmurt, and to a lesser degree in Komi, all the tense and mood forms combine with the two copular auxiliaries, forming compound tenses with various interpretations...” (Leinonen & Vilkuna 2000)

Examples of features: other

PRESENT

Form: suffix (e.g. in Khanty the present is formally marked: *men-l-əm* 'I am going': *men-∅-m* 'I went), ∅

TENSE FORMS OF ATYPICAL WORD CLASSES

NPs and adverbs are conjugated (Mordvin) :

kudosonzo-ŋinʲ 'I was in his house' (*kudosonzo* 'his house')

lone participle (Estonian: *kirjutanud* 'reportedly wrote')

Examples of features: future time reference 1

Degree of grammaticalization

Form:

- morphological (Udmurt *vetlo* 'I shall go')
- analytical construction

Examples of features: future time reference 2

Sources of the futures in the European languages and in the Finno-Ugric languages 1

General meaning	Representing verb	Languages and regions in Europe	Finno-Ugric languages
Agent-oriented modality	SHALL	Northern Europe, Balkan	Sami, Hungarian, Finnish
	WILL	Northern Europe, Balkan	Finnish, Sami

Examples of features: future time reference 3

Sources of the futures in the European languages and in the Finno-Ugric languages 2

Moving towards a goal	GO	Western Europe - Germanic languages, Romance languages	
	COME	Scandinavian Germanic languages, Finnish, Swiss German,	Finnish
Inchoativity	BECOME	Circum-Baltic area	Baltic-Finnic
Ingressivity	BEGIN	Swedish dialects	Occurs in all branches

Examples of features: future time reference 3

Sources of the futures in the European languages and in the Finno-Ugric languages 3

Copula	BUDU, LE-	Slavic	Baltic-Finnic, Mari, Permic languages, Hungarian
Perfectivity, semelfactivity		Slavic	Hungarian, Mordvinian, Mari, Mansi, Komi

Examples of features: aspect

Kangasmaa-Minn: there exists no Finno-Ugric system of aspect markers

- Marked or not?
- Regular, grammaticalised?
- Marking at the verb: verbal prefixes (Ugric), verbal particles (Estonian *ära*)
- Marking at the object noun (Finnic)
- Marking at other NPs (object-like and other adverbials, etc., Finnic)

Examples of features: aspect, Aktionsart

- Analytical verb constructions: progressive (Veps *kin'mas ol'in* 'I was ploughing'), resultative (Fin *tulee tehdyksi* 'will be done'), etc.
- Additional meanings of tense forms (perfect etc.)
- Meaning oppositions: perfective-imperfective, bounded-unbounded, resultative-irresultative
- Aktionsart: meaning (durativity, momentaninity, semelfactivity etc.), means of expression (verbal suffixes, verbal particles etc.)

Problems 1

Pure synchrony or also developmental paths (to what extent)?

- transparent sources of quasi-auxiliaries
- ongoing suffixation of auxiliaries
(Mordvin *sazorolin* = *sazor ul'niń* 'the sister was I', Finnish dial. *kūllolen* 'I have heard')

Problems 2

Interaction of tense with other categories,
cases of combination of different features:

- Tense in different moods
- Tense forms of the negation verb
- Restricted uses of persons (e.g. Komi PFCT in 2. and 3. p.; FUT in 3. p.)
- Evidential, modal etc. uses of tense forms (e.g. perfect in various languages)

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