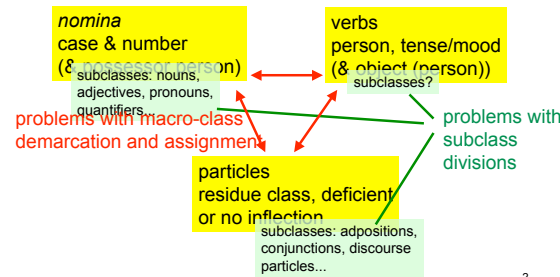


PARTS OF SPEECH IN URALIC

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Three macro-classes



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Particle subclasses

- conjunctions or connector adverbs?
- adpositions or adverbs?
Fi. *puutarha on talo-n edessä*
garden is house-GEN in.front
auto-ssa minä istu-n aina edessä
car-INE I sit-1SG always in.front
- ideophones or adverbs?
Est. *ta kukku-s prantsti maha*
s/he fall-PAST.3SG crash to.the.ground

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Nouns vs. adjectives

- The classical case of noun gradation
Est. *nii on sakse-m*
so is gentleman-COMP
'this way, it will be finer (more like gentfolk do)'
koos on seltsi-m min-na
together is company-COMP go-INF
'together, it is nicer/more social to go'
- Fi. *syksy-mmä-llä*
autumn-COMP-ADE
'later in the autumn'

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Conditions of noun gradation (and other adjective-like use)?

- Adverbial use (rather than noun modifier)?
- Stylistic restrictions?
– affect words (Fi. *paska* 'shit', *helmi* 'pearl' [> 'fine']) behave like adjectives (non-referential elements overweighing)?
Jos rättäri olisi autompi auto siihen saisi pistää automman moottorin helpommin. 'If the 2CV were a more-of-a-car car, it would be easier to mount a more-of-a-car motor into it.' (Internet search)

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Further adjective-like features

- Hu. A *tanár fia-m mindig az-t mond-ja, hogy...*
DEF teacher son-PX1SG always that-ACC say-3SG.OBJ COMPL...
'My teacher son (my son, who is a teacher) always says that...'
- Fi. *?Opettaja-poika-ni (*Opettaja poikani) sano-o aina, että...*
teacher-son-PX1SG say-3SG always COMPL
Est. *Mu õpetaja-st poeg ütles ikka, et...*
I-GEN teacher-ELA son say-3SG always COMPL

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Where do quantifiers belong?

Ost-i-n kaksi ~ monta kirja-a
buy-PAST-SG1 2 ~ many book-PART
'I bought two/many books'
Ost-i-n paljo-n ~ kasa-n kirjo-ja ~ kirjallisuut-ta
'... much-GEN ~ heap-GEN book-PART.PL ~ literature-PART
'I bought a lot of ~ a heap of books ~ literature'
Kahde-sta ~ mone-sta ~ tuo-sta ~ ohue-sta kirja-sta
(*et opi tarpeeksi*).
two-ELA ~ many-ELA ~ that-ELA ~ thin-ELA book-ELA...
'From two/many books ~ that/a thin book, you won't learn enough.'

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Sub-subclasses

- Example: equative adjectives in Finnish
poika on isä-n pituinen ~ minu-n pituise-ni
boy is father-GEN of.length ~ I-GEN of.length-PX.SG1
'the boy/son is as tall as the father ~ as tall as I'
**poika on isä-n pitkä*
boy is father-GEN long – '??'
*(minu-n) pitkä poika-ni ~ *pitkä-ni poika(-ni)*
(I-GEN) long son-PX.1SG ~ *long-PX.1SG son(-PX.1SG)
'my tall son'

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Nouns or particles?

- Adpositions or relational nouns? (Or both?)
- Finnish uninflected adjectives may double as adverbs (adjective/adverb modifiers):
aika (~ *aikamoise-n*) *työ-n te-i-t!*
quite (~ quite.a-GEN) work-GEN do-PAST-2SG
'You've done quite a job!'
on jo aika kylmä
is already quite cold
'It is quite cold already'

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Nomina or verbs?

- The Classic: infinite verb forms – in more and less “finite” uses?

Est. *ma sa-i-n just söö-nud*

I get-PAST-1SG just eat-PTC.PAST.ACT
'I just finished eating'

söö-nud hobuse-le pole piitsa tarvis

eat-PTC horse-ALL NEG.be.CONNEG whip.PART necessary
'For a well-fed horse, one doesn't need a whip'

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Nominal predicate conjugation: Erzya Mordvin

tarka-ś bolota-l'

place-DEF swamp-PAST(.3SG)
'the place was a swamp'

ton vad'ra-t ava-ś

you beautiful-2SG woman-DEF
'you are a/the beautiful woman'

kučkordo-ms-at

kick-INF-2SG
'you deserve a kick'

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kudo-so-nzo-l'i-ń

house-INE-PX3SG-PAST-1SG

'I was in his/her house'

vel'e-va-l'-t'

village-PROL-PAST-(3)PL

'they were (distributed) along the village'

kńiga-t lamo-l'-t'

book-PL much-PAST-(3)PL

'there were many books'

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Something completely different...

Even in languages like Mordvin

- there are nouns and verbs (word stems can be assigned to parts of speech)
- there are nominalizing and verbalizing derivational suffixes
- there are no (productive?) infinite (non-person) verb forms of noun stems (**the there-ing table, *my teacher-ed father, *I want to rich.INF, *while.there-ing, I saw...*)

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Verbs or particles? Take that!

Hu. *nesze!* : 2PL *nesz-tek!*

Est. *säh!* : *säh-ke!*

Fi. dial. *he!* : *he-kkee(tten)!*

(Pragmatic restrictions – or other?)

Hu. *szia!* 'hello!' : *sziasztok!*

Fi. *hei!* : *?*hei-kää!*

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Negation verb or negation particle?

Finnish: Satakunta dialect (< Setälä 1883)

E-n minä tajja satu-ja, ei ollenkaan.

NEG-1SG I know-CONNNEG fairy-tale-PART.PL NEG at.all
'I don't know fairy-tales, not at all.'

Ol-i-k-ko-s kotona? – Ei-kä.

be-PAST-2SG-Q-DP at.home – NEG.DP
'Were you at home? – No, [I] wasn't.'

Ei minä nii-tä muista.

NEG I they-PART remember.CONNEG
'I don't remember them.'

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Case or adverb suffix?

- How many cases in Hungarian?
- Finnish *-sti*: adverb or case suffix?
 - completely productive (within the adjective subclass)
 - division of labour with the instructive case
hitaa-sti 'slowly' : *hitaa-mm-in* 'more slowly'
 - cf. ABL in Estonian: Fi. *hitaa-sti* – Est. *aeglase-lt*

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Genitive or adjective suffix?

(Erzya) Mordvin *-ń*:

tumo-ń čočko

oak-?GEN log

tumo-ń obucija

oak-?DX character

'»oaken» (tough, obstinate) character'

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Word-class ambiguity in word formation

- denominal and deverbal suffixes
- same (similar-looking?) suffixes forming verbs and *nomina*?
- are ambiguous suffixes really older than word-class-specific ones?
 - “Diminutive/precativ” conjugation in Mansi employing nominal diminutive suffixes:
amkkem öli-ris-əm 'poor little me lives alone'

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The Nomen-Verbum Myth

- Error #1: Proto-Uralic was a “primitive” language based on “primitive” cognition, and the speakers were only able to think in terms of concrete entities
 - generic verbalizing (**tA*, **l(V)*, **j*) and nominalizing (**mA*) suffixes appear throughout Uralic and seem to be ancient

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“Word class ambiguity”, from general...

- (Syntactic ambiguity: nominal predicate conjugation?)
- Inherently unclear demarcation: nouns vs. adjectives
- Morphosyntactic ambiguity: adverbial case/derivational suffixes
- Subtype-specific (fairly) productive ambiguity/conversion: e.g. Est. loan nouns with the linking vowel *i* (*arst(i-)* ‘physician’, *maal(i-)* ‘painting’) and verbs with the suffix *i* (*arsti-* ‘heal’, *maali-* ‘paint’)

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- Error #2: If the markers/representatives of a category are young, then the category itself is young, too (e.g. adpositions, conjunctions...)
 - Counter-evidence from grammaticalization studies: markers of a category may be repeatedly lost and recreated, markers of certain functions are typically short-lived and tend to be replaced

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...to sporadic lexicalizations

Hu. (*még előtte áll ki tudja milyen hosszú*)

szánom-bánom idő

pity-1SG.OBJ-repent-1SG.OBJ time

‘(s/he is still facing a who knows how long) time of repentance [“I-pity-it-I-repent-it time”]’

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- Error #3: N/V stems (e.g. Fi. *tuule-* ‘wind; blow [of the wind]’) are remnants of an original, undifferentiated N/V class
 - No group of original N/V stems can be reconstructed, lexemes vary across languages
 - N/V conversion may come into being in a relatively short time – cf. Estonian with Finnish
 - Fi. *lupa* ‘permission’ : *lupa+a-* (< **lupa-ta-*) ‘to promise’
 - Est. *luba* ‘permission’ : *luba-* ‘to allow’

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Conclusions (?)

- Most Uralic languages are not particularly “exotic”
- Problems mainly in coming to grips with exceptions and subclass divisions
- Flexible framework departing from three morphologically defined macro-classes and allowing for different subclass divisions
- Word formation – and the grey zone between derivation and inflection?

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