

### **A comparison of locative and existential clauses in Tundra Nenets, Udmurt and Hungarian**

In this talk, we will examine the syntactic behaviour of locative and existential clauses in three syntactically diverse Uralic languages namely, Tundra Nenets, Udmurt and Hungarian.

The locative (e.g. *The dog is in the garden.*) and existential (e.g. *There is a dog in the garden.*) constructions are often treated in the literature as clauses that have the same underlying structure (e.g. Freeze 1992). In many languages, these two clause-types overlap, i.e. they do not show differences on the surface either. Our main aim is to provide an in-depth comparison of these constructions in the abovementioned languages. We will focus on the variation along the following lines:

- (i) whether there is one or more copular elements in the locative and existential clauses and what their distribution is like;
- (ii) whether the copulas can show (obligatory/optional) person agreement and tense morphology;
- (iii) whether word order differences can be observed across the constructions.

Tundra Nenets has two obligatory verbal items (a copula *ŋæ-* ‘be’ and an existential verb *tańa-*) in locative and existential constructions that take agreement and TAM markers (Nikolaeva 2014). While it is traditionally held that their distribution is clear-cut – i.e. the copula appears in locative clauses while the existential verb is used in existentials –, our novel data show that they can both appear in both sentence types. In Udmurt, in contrast, locative clauses do not require the presence of a copular element (Winkler 2001). However, we do find a morphologically invariant copula (*vań* ‘be’) in existential clauses in the present tense. In past tense, the two constructions conflate whereas the invariant past form *val* appears in both locative and existential sentences. In addition, our data show that in existential sentences, some speakers use the complex form *vań val*. Finally, Hungarian has only one verb (*van* ‘be’) that is always obligatory in both locatives and existentials and agrees in person and number with the subject (É. Kiss 2002).

Additionally, we expect that different word orders will/may be associated with the different constructions at least in cases in which the two constructions conflate, e.g. they have the same copula (Hegedűs 2013).

### **References**

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