

Post-verbal constituents in Enets: a corpus study¹

The paper examines the patterns of occurrence of post-verbal elements in Enets, cf. (1)–(3). Enets, as well as other Samoyedic languages, is predominantly verb-final (Tereshchenko 1973: 283). According to (ibid.), the deviations from this word order are usually attested when the post-verbal position is taken by a circumstantial providing additional scene-setting information. Our corpus study based on archive and modern texts in Enets suggests that spatial and temporal modifiers indeed comprise a substantial part of examples with post-verbal constituents (1). Still, there is another important group of examples where post-verbal constituents correspond to given rather than new information. This group includes post-verbal occurrences of direct objects cross-referenced by agreement markers (2) as well as personal pronouns (3), that are frequently placed post-verbally. In the talk, we will compare the frequency of these and other types of post-verbal elements and discuss the grammatical and discourse conditions of their occurrence.

(1) ezuzu-f to-z? n'e-bim? eke d'ia-xa-n'ʔ
ride(ipfv)-CVB come(pfv)-FUT.CONN NEG-1DU.S/SOSg.CONT this place-DAT.SG-OBL.SG.1DU
'We will come riding to this land, after all'.

(2) benka sojza-an tene-za baza-da
Venka good-PROL.SG know(ipfv)-3SG.SOSg language-OBL.SG.3SG
'Venka knows his language well'.

(3) ɔnej mɛ-kon kaja-a? mod'na?
Enets chum-LOC.SG stay_behind(pfv)-1PL.S/SOSg we
'We stayed in the chum'.

References

Tereshchenko N. M. *Sintaksis samodijiskix jazykov: Prostoe predlozhenije*. Leningrad: Nauka, 1973.

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