Maria Cheremisinova, NRU HSE

Syntax of attributivizers in Kazym Khanty

The topic of this paper is syntax of attributivizers -əŋ and -əp in Kazym variety of Khanty (Northern dialect). The data comes from the author's own fieldwork done in Kazym, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous region of Russia in 2018.

Northern Khanty has several attributivizers with proprietive semantics ('having X') [Nikolaeva 1999]; the exact number of those suffixes and their morphosyntactic properties differ by dialect.

In Kazym Khanty, there are two productive attributivizers with proprietive semantics: -əŋ and -əp.

Kaksin [2007] claims that -əŋ is attached to nominal stems, while -əp can be attached to a 'combination of words'. My data are somewhat different: -əŋ can be attached to phrases larger than a noun as well (1), whereas -əp is just **not compatible** with a noun without a modifier.

(1) [χuw əpt]-əŋ   / [χuw əpt]-əp   ewie   λuŋ-əs   χot   λipi
     [long hair]-PROP / [long hair]-PROP.P girl   come.in-PST[3SG] house in
     'A girl with long hair came into the house.'

The attributivizers in Khanty have properties different from cases, and for this reason the syntactic structure of attributivized phrase is worth studying. First of all, the noun to which attributivizer attaches can not take case, possessive or number affixes. Moreover, the noun in attributivized phrase is not available for cross-reference by anaphoric pronouns outside of the clause.

Phrases modified by proprietives can take several adjectives (which can also be modified by an adverb) (2), nouns (3) or numerals (4) as their dependents.

(2) [wɛra aj   wurti jɛrnas]-əŋ / [wɛra aj   wurti jɛrnas]-əp
     [very small red   dress]-PROP / [very small red   dress]-PROP.P
     ewi   ńäχ-λ
     girl   laugh-NPST[3SG]
     'A girl in a very small red dress is laughing.'

(3) [χɵ   ńawrɛm putinkaj]-əŋ / [χɵ   ńawrɛm putinkaj]-əp   ewi
     [man child   shoe]-PROP / [man   child   shoe]-PROP.P   girl
     χɵχəλ-λ   juχi
     run-NPST[3SG] home
     'A girl in a boy's shoes is running home.'

(4) [χɵλəm λajəm]-əŋ / [χɵλəm λajəm]-əp   iki   wɵnt-ən   wɵλ-λ
     [three ax]-PROP   / [three ax]-PROP.P man   forest-LOC live-NPST[3SG]
     'A man with three axes lives in the forest.'

However, the head nouns in attributivized phrases can not be further modified by demonstratives or indefinite pronouns; the attributivizers cannot attach to proper names and question words. In (5) indefinite pronoun depends on the head of the whole NP (i. e. *aj iki* 'boy') and not on the attributivized NP marked by -əŋ; while the use of attributivizer -əp is ungrammatical altogether.

(5) #muλsər juntut-əŋ / *muλsər juntut-əp   aj   iki
     some   toy-PROP   / some   toy-PROP.P   small   man
     kim   ɛt-əs

outside   go.out-PST[3SG]
#'A boy with some toys went out of the house.'
'Some boy with toys went out of the house.'

As we can see, the heads of attributivized phrases can not be modified by D-like elements. Therefore, we propose that proprietives in Kazym Khanty attach to a small nominal [Pereltsvaig 2006] rather than a full DP. This can be evidence for existence of a DP projection in Khanty.

According to my data, there is no difference between syntactic "size" of NPs that -*əŋ* and -*əp* can take. However (5) shows that proprietives are in fact not interchangeable. The main difference between the attributivizers -*əŋ* and -*əp* is that while the noun with the attributivizer -*əŋ* can have modifiers, but does not necessarily do so, -*əp* has to have at least one.

(6)   puw-əŋ   / *puw-əp   an   omas-λ   päsan   ɵχti-n
       handle-PROP / *handle-PROP.P   cup stand-NPST[3SG] table   on-LOC
       'A cup with a handle is standing on the table.'

(7)   wurti puw-əŋ   / puw-əp   an   omas-λ   päsan   ɵχti-n
       red   handle-PROP / handle-PROP.P   cup stand-NPST[3SG] table   on-LOC
       'A cup with a red handle is standing on the table.'

References
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