On the order of case and possessive agreement in Udmurt

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Aims: As is typical of the Uralic languages, Udmurt marks the person of the possessor with a person marker (Px) on the possessum (e.g., *minam gurt-e* 'my village-Px.1Sg', *tinad gurt-ed* 'your village-Px.2Sg'). What is special about Udmurt is that the order of Px with respect to case markers (Cx) depends on the particular case involved: roughly half of the cases observe PxCx order, while the remaining cases feature Px to the right of Cx (Winkler 2011). This paper follows Kubínyi (2015) in treating CxPx order as Px climbing (a case of clitic climbing), and seeks to shed explanatory light on the distribution of PxCx vs CxPx order from the perspective of a set of non-language-specific hypotheses regarding the syntax of possessive DPs and PPs.

Basic syntax: Oblique cases spell out P heads in syntax (Asbury et al 2007, Georgieva 2023). Possessors also correspond to PPs; they are located in the Spec,DP of the possessum.

(1) [DP [PP POSS'OR PPOSS] [D' D∅ [POSS'UM]]]

We propose that Px is a clitic originating in the complement of the PP in Spec,DP. The clitic finds a host as far up as possible within the structure in which it is contained. When DP in (1) is the direct complement of P, the person clitic docks onto P, resulting in an output in which P (the case marker) is sandwiched between the possessum and the possessive person clitic: CxPx.

Licensing clitic climbing: Px-climbing 'piggy-backs' on, i.e., is licensed by, incorporation of the P that introduces the possessor: PPOSS in (1) must incorporate into a higher P to facilitate Px-climbing, for locality reasons that will be laid out in detail in the paper. Whenever its conditions are met, Px climbing is obligatory. For all cases which occur with CxPx order, the case expones a P which takes the DP in (1) as its direct complement, and this P hosts the Px clitic; see (2).

(2) [PP [DP [PP POSS'OR PPOSS] [D' D∅ [POSS'UM]]] **P**(=case)+climbed.Px]

But in **[A]–[C]**, below, (1) is either not embedded under a P or too deeply embedded within the complement of P, and hence prevented from climbing up to P. In these cases, the clitic attaches to the D-head and is exposed within the possessive nominal, which delivers PxCx order.

[A] No Px-climbing in the absence of P: When the DP in (1) is a subject or object, (1) is in a structural case environment. Structural cases do not involve a P in syntax, so PPOSS incorporation into a higher P is not possible, and the pre-condition for Px-climbing is not met: PxCx order.

[B] No Px-climbing in double-PP structures with spell-out of P₂: The ablative (*-leś*) and the approximative (*-lań*) are semantically complex cases. We propose that this complexity is reflected in their syntax: these cases syntactically involve a double PP-layer, as shown in (3).

(3) [$_{PP2}$ [$_{PP1}$ [$_{DP}$ [$_{PP}$ POSS'OR P$_{POSS}$] [$_{D'}$ D∅ [POSS'UM]]] **P₁**+climbed.Px] P₂]

The ablative corresponds to 'away from', where 'away'=P₂ and 'from'=P₁. The approximative corresponds to 'towards', where 'to'=P₂ and 'wards (i.e., direction)'=P₁. The case suffix spells out the higher P-layer, i.e., P₂; the lower P₁ is silent. P$_{POSS}$ incorporates into P₁, and Px-climbing to P₁ takes place, taking the clitic to a position below that of the case suffix in P₂, hence, PxCx. (The terminative (*-oź*), corresponding to English *up to*, is also semantically and syntactically complex, as in (3); but unlike in the case of the ablative and the approximative, the terminative case suffix expones the lower P-head (P₁), which Px climbs up to, delivering CxPx order here.)

[C] No Px-climbing with small-clause complementation: Den Dikken and Dékány (2018) propose that the Estonian cartitive corresponds to a P that takes a small clause (SC) complement with a silent predicate (THERE) and with the noun that bears the caritive on the surface as the subject of SC. Extending this analysis to Udmurt caritives, we advance (4) as their syntax. The Px clitic cannot leave the left branch containing it, surfacing to the left of the caritive P: PxCx.

(4) [$_{PP}$ [$_{SC}$ [$_{DP}$ N-Px] THERE]] P(=case)]

Inessive/illative syncretism: The otherwise strict inessive/illative (*-in/-e*) distinction (*gurt-in* 'in village', *gurt-e* 'to village') collapses when the ground-DP is possessive, resulting in the syncretic form *-a* (*gurt-a-m* 'village-INE/ILL-Px.1Sg). We treat these spatial cases in terms of a syntax in which one single P combines with either PLACE (to form the inessive) or DIR (to form the illative): the surface distinction between inessive and illative is a function of the exponence of PLACE/DIR. When Px climbs up to P out of the possessive ground-DP, exponence of the PLACE/ DIR head distinguishing between inessive and illative is blocked. As a result, P spells out the same for both cases when Px-climbing obtains, yielding syncretism.

The elative/egressive distinction: The Udmurt egressive (*-iś-en*) is transparently the combination of the elative (*-iś*) and instrumental (*-en*). We represent the Udmurt egressive as a complex expression similar to English *out of*: *out* corresponds to elative *-iś*; like English *of*, Udmurt instrumental *-en* is a functional P. The Px-marker of a possessive ground-DP attaches to the right of the egressive P-complex, as a result of Px-climbing. With the elative, Px-climbing takes place as well, but its application requires augmentation of the case suffix: *-iś-ti-*Px. This is reminiscent of the fact that while English *out* can in principle mark 'movement out of' by itself without the help of a functional P (*out (of) the window*), the use of functional *of* becomes

obligatory when the ground is a weak pronoun (*out *(of) it*). Thus, the augment *-ti-* in elatives can be viewed as a functional P whose exponence is required in the presence of Px-climbing.

Selected references. Den Dikken, M. & É. Dékány. 2018. In *FULL* 7(2): 39–75. • Georgieva, E. 2023. In *FUF* 68: 5–42. • Winkler, E. 2011. *Udmurtische Grammatik*. München: Lincom.