

ABSTRACT

In Kazym Khanty, there is variation in subject encoding of participial relative clauses: the subject is either unmarked (Nominative) or Locative. While Locative subjects has been treated as demoted ones by a passivization operation, unmarked subjects clearly behave as possessor-like adnominal modifiers. This kind of RCs exhibits so-called Stuttering Prohibition (Kornfilt 2009): such RCs cannot be possessed.

This restriction has been observed in several Turkic languages (Kornfilt 2009, Laszakovics to appear) and has been used as an argument against Dependent Case Theory (Marantz). I consider the Khanty puzzle as an evidence against DCT, too, even though there is no morphological Genitive.

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GENERAL LANGUAGE INFO

- Kazym Khanty > Northern Khanty > Ob-Ugric > Uralic
 - SOV, non-finite complementation
 - Four morphological cases:
 - Nouns: NOM=ACC, DAT, LOC
 - Pronouns: NOM, ACC, DAT
 - Possession expressed via juxtaposition + possessive agreement (obligatory if pronominal possessor, optional otherwise)
- (1) ma χot-*(εm)
I house-1SG
'my house'
- (2) jawan χot-†
John house-3
'John's house'
- Passivization: -a(j)-/-i(j)- (PASS) on the verb + demotion of SU to LOC
- (3) amp-εm-a up-εm-ən nuxi mā-s-i
dog-1SG-DAT sister-1SG-LOC meat give-PST-PASS
'The meat was given to my dog by my sister'.

SUBJECT ENCODING

In object relative clauses, the initial subject can be either unmarked (Nominative) or Locative:

- (5) a. aŋk-εm tət-əm nán jiłəp
mother-1SG buy-NFIN.PST bread new
b. aŋk-εm-ən tət-əm nán jiłəp
mother-1SG-LOC buy-NFIN.PST bread new
'The bread bought by my mother is fresh'.

Since Khanty participles are voice-neutral, 5b could be approached as relativization from passive clauses (Nikolaeva 1999: 76), cf. the initial sentence for 5b:

- (6) aŋk-εm-ən nán tət-s-a
mother-1SG-LOC bread buy-PST-PASS
'The bread was bought by my mother'.

The unmarked subject behave as possessors, though:

- It triggers possessive agreement in the same way:

- (7) ma tət-əm nán-*(εm) jiłəp
I buy-NFIN.PST bread-1SG new
'The bread bought by me is fresh'.
- (8) ^{OK} aŋk-εm tət-əm nán-† jiłəp
mother-1SG buy-NFIN.PST bread-3 new
'The bread bought by my mother is fresh'.

- This kind of relative clauses cannot be possessed:

- (9) aŋk-εm pəs-əm jernas nuχ sor-s
mother-1SG wash-NFIN.PST dress up dry-PST[3SG]
'The dress washed by my mother is dry'.
- (10) *ma aŋk-εm pəs-əm jernas-εm nuχ sor-s
I mother-1SG wash-NFIN.PST dress-1SG up dry-PST[3SG]
IR: 'The dress washed by my mother is dry'.

- NPIs cannot occur neither as possessors nor as unmarked subjects of RCs:

- (11) *nemχujat aj amp-†
nobody little dog-3
IR: 'nobody's puppy'
- (12) nemχujat-ən / *nemχujat änt tuxit-əm an-ət jira wə-s-əm
nobody-LOC nobody NEG clean-NFIN.PST cup-PL away take-PST-1SG
'I took away the cups that nobody had washed'.

CONFIGURATIONAL CASE

In Dependent Case Theory (Marantz 1992; Baker 2015), case licenses agreement and not vice versa, contra Chomsky (2000, 2001):

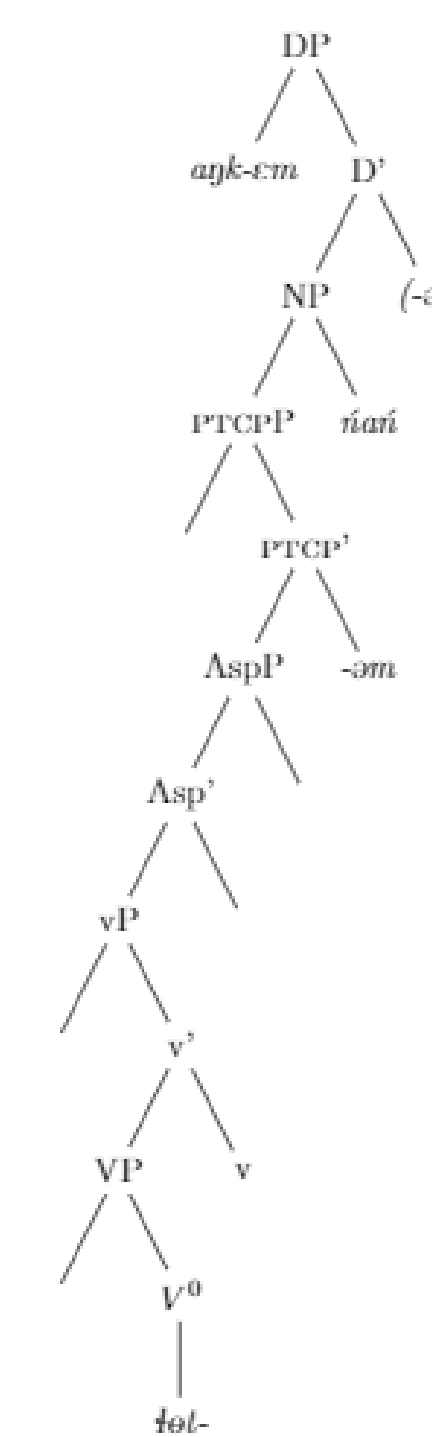
- NOM is assigned to a NP x iff x is in the CP phase and x is not assigned any other case
- GEN is the unmarked case in the DP phase.

Does this work for Khanty?

No. Even if we suppose that the Khanty NOM is the unmarked case in any domain (amalgamating NOM and GEN of DCT), (10) would be grammatical then: both *ma* (I) and *aŋk-εm* (mother-1SG) are unmarked in the DP phase, and D finds an agreement target and spells out the target's features.

Solution resembles Laszakovics' (2018) account for Kyrgyz RCs with genitive subjects that exhibit the same pattern:

- Unmarked subjects of RCs are possessors and hold the same structural position, that is, they are in Spec,DP
- Locative subjects have been demoted to Locative (probably via feature-assignment by $T_{Top, \phi}$) before relativization, and thus they are adjuncts to VP



CONCLUSIONS

- Khanty relative clauses exhibit variation in subject encoding (NOM vs. LOC)
- Indeed, neither NOM nor LOC are real subjects
 - Unmarked (NOM) subjects are possessors
 - Locative subjects are demoted (=adjuncts to VP)
- The Khanty data, as well as the (widely discussed in literature) Turkic RCs, constitute a problem for Dependent Case Theory
- To save DCT, one needs an independent argument, such as competition for the same structural position
- Them NOM can be approached as unmarked case in *any* domain, and impossibility of possessed RCs with unmarked subjects comes from the fact that they end up in a possessor-like position
 - By now I am unable to find out whether they have been generated in Spec,DP or raised to this position ☹
 - Neither do I know how exactly Locative gets assigned ☹ ☹