Possessive noun phrase in Permic languages

In the present paper I deal with structural and semantic specificities of possessive noun phrases in Permic languages. Those languages have similar possessive constructions, but as material shows they differ in usage and semantics. The study is based on huge number of examples, but here I do not have space to demonstrate them.

1. Constructions with PX (N-PX)

Both languages have Px which follow the noun. The Udmurt paradigm is quite various comparing to Komi, in particular Udmurt language distinguishes morphologically inalienability and plurality of possessed objects when the referent is a singular person. The pattern is used to express personal possession.

2. Genitival constructions

2.1. Double-marking (N-GEN N-PX)

This construction appears regularly in Udmurt language. In Komi Px can be descended. In Komi languages the possessor and possessee sometimes do not have agreement in person and number.

2.2. Dependent-marking (N-GEN N)

The pattern is particular to Komi languages. In Udmurt such a structure is possible only in external possession.

The pattern is used mostly with animate possessor (especially in Komi languages). In Udmurt inanimate possessor is possible as well (condition of "complete belonging").

3. Ablatival constructions

In all Permic languages the dependent obtains ablative marker if the head is a direct object in the sentence. In this case ablative has a function of genitive.

3.1. Double-marking (N-ABL N-PX-ACC)

In noun phrases the head in most cases in both languages has possessive accusative marking.

3.2. Dependent-marking (N-ABL N-ACC(zero))

Possessive suffix can be descended in Komi languages. If the possessee does not have Px, then accusative has zero marker. Semantic specificities of the pattern are the same as the pattern below has.

4. Juxtaposition (N-NOM N)

The possessor has no marking and precedes the possessee which also does not have obligator markers (it is claimed that the possessor has nominative or absolutive form here). Actually, in Komi languages plural and demonstrative/definitive markers can follow the possessor, but it is not possible in Udmurt.

In Komi language the pattern appears with inanimate possessor; in Udmurt the pattern is used mostly to express inanimate indefinite and inalienable possession (possessor is indefinite). In both languages the construction is typical for postpositions.

Not all kind of unmarked noun phrase expresses possessive relationship. Anchoring cases are: predestination, inalienability, location (rarely), time(only in Udmurt), species, origin(?)/agent. Non-anchoring cases: material, purpose, quality, quantity (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2003).

5. Other constructions

5.1. Spatial belonging

Genitival pattern has restricted usage in Permic languages (it is used mostly with animate possessor). When the possessor is inanimate different patterns appear to distinguish inherent, spatial and temporal possession. Thus spatial possession in Permic languages is marked following ways:
- in Komi the head has adnominal suffix -*sa* which is quite spread and appears almost with all "spatial" lexemes.
- In Udmurt spatial possession is marked by elative and also has additional partial meaning (opposite to "complete belonging").
- Komi P. marks spatial belonging different ways: (a) by elative, (b) inessive, or (c) zero marking.

5.2. Temporal belonging

Komi and Komi P. have special marker which indicate belonging to time, vs. *-s'a, -ja*: *ar-s'a lun* 'autumn day', *töv-s'a ryt* 'winter evening', *ryt-ja udzh* 'evening work' (SKYa 1955: 172; Grammatika 1940: 47, 48). But spatial marker *-sa* in Komi is used with months' names, vs. *fevral'-sa lun* 'a February day', *janvar-sa lun* 'a January day'.

5.3. Physical belonging
Permic languages distinguish physical possession: the presence of one entity in disposal of another entity. In this case the possessor is a head of the noun phrase; the possessee is a dependent and marked by denominative suffix *-(j)o* in Udmurt and *-(j)a* in Komi languages, vs.:

Udm. *s'öd   jys'i-jo   nyl*
Komi *s'öd   jurs'i-ja   nyv*
      black   hair-with   girl
      'girl with black hair' or 'girl who has black hair'
      Komi languages distinguish physical partial possession by denominative suffix *-ös'*: *oshk-ös' vör* 'forest full of bears' (SKYa 1955: 172; Grammatika 1940: 47, 48).

      Udmurt language distinguish permanent (*-o*) and temporal (instrumental *-en*) possession:
      nylpi-jo kyshnomurt 'woman who has (her own) kid(s)'
      nylpi-jen kyshnomurt '(I see) a woman with kid (probably not her own kid)'
Some noun phrases have fixed forms, vs. Udm. *choryg-en*(INST) *n'an* 'pie with fish', *jöl-yn*(INST) *shyd* 'milk soup'. In Komi the pattern with *-a* is used in the same case, vs. *jöl-a shyd* 'milk soup' (SKYa 1955: 172).

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