

Possessive Clitic Climbing in Meadow Mari

In my talk I will present possible syntactic and semantic reasons for a phenomenon called Possessive Clitic Climbing (PCC, cf. Kubínyi 2016) in the Meadow Mari language. This phenomenon occurs in person marking of nominal adpositions in a possessive phrase (PP). The regular pattern for person marking with a nominal head is as follows:

(1)	Meadow Mari	
	pört-em	ončálno
	house-1SG	in_front_of
	'in front of my house' (elicited)	

As seen in (1), in the regular pattern the person is marked on the noun. However, in some cases, the possessive suffix may appear on the postposition instead of the noun, forming an irregular (PCC) arrangement, in which the suffix behaves like a clitic, therefore is attached to the clause, not the word. (1) and (2) denote the same meaning.

(2)	Meadow Mari	
	pört	ončáln-em
	house	in_front_of-1SG
	'in front of my house (elicited)	

PCC is a phenomenon that can be observed in other languages in the area as well, such as Komi (both Zyrian (3) and Permyak) and Udmurt (4).

(3)	Komi-Zyrian				
	jur	vyłti-yd	~	jur-yd	vyłti
	head	over-2SG		head-2SG	over
	'over your head' (Wiedemann 1884: 204)				

(4)	Udmurt				
	ukno	vyži-ad	~	ukno-ad	vyžijn
	window	under-2SG		window-2SG	under
	'under your window' (ibid.)				

However, the occurrence of PCC is restricted. In the Permic languages, a relation between controlledness and PCC seems apparent: if the possessee is an entity controlled immediately by the possessor (e.g. is a property or a body part) and the postposition is spatial, PCC is much more likely to occur (1)–(4). If however the possessee is animate or a situation caused or experienced by the possessor and the postposition has temporal or causal-final values, PCC is not permissible (5) (Kubínyi 2016).

(5)	Udmurt		
	eš-en-ym	seren	
	friend-COM-1SG	because_of	
	'because of my friend' (Алашеева 2011: 40)		

Such a correlation cannot be ascertained in Meadow Mari (Kubínyi 2016). The allowance of PCC is likely governed by a range of factors including animacy, the number and person of the possessor (cf. Saarinen 1991), the semantic properties of the suffix, and grammaticalization of the postposition (cf. Rédei 1962). The aim of this talk is to present the results of questionnaire-based research conducted with native speakers to pinpoint the factors that may allow or restrict PCC in Meadow Mari.