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Expressing emphatic assertion of identity: Evidence from Hill Mari

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Keywords: Uralic languages, focus particles, semantics, information structure, syntax

Schedule: Fri 9.30 Room 4

This paper deals with the semantics and syntax of the focus enclitic *=ok* in Hill Mari (Finno-Ugric). The data were collected in fieldwork in the village of Kuznetsovo and its surroundings (2016-2017, Mari El, Russia). We rely on both elicitation and a corpus of transcribed oral narratives (ca 25000 tokens; 233 entries of *=ok*).

In the previous works (Saarinen 1986; Sibatrova 1987) the properties of *=ok* were not analyzed in full detail; neither were they related to any typological background. We will propose its semantic invariant, which is emphatic assertion of identity. This notion is discussed in (König 1991) where it is linked to particles like German *ausgerechnet, eben, genau*, English *exactly, precisely* which focus the identity of two participants or match a situation to a certain scheme. In (1b) *=ok* marks the identity of the moment when the speaker wants to get money with the moment of speech, and in (2) it helps to clarify whether the person who swore is exactly Vasya.

(1) a.*mäläm*   ***kəzət***   *oksa-m*   *pu-ø=aj*
        I.DAT.1SG   now   money-ACC   give-IMP.2SG=PTCL
        'Give me some money now (perhaps later today)'.
    b. *mäläm*   ***kəzət=ok***   *oksa-m*   *pu-ø=aj*
        I.DAT.1SG   now=OK   money-ACC   give-IMP.2SG=PTCL
        'Give me some money right now /immediately'.

(2) ***vas'a=ok***   *sasl-en?*
      Vasya=OK   swear-PRET
      'It is Vasya who swore [at somebody], isn't it?'

The particles of the above-mentioned class have not received much attention in typology: apart from the research of E. König, they are discussed by e.g. Dobrovolskij & Levontina (2012) for Russian and German, Diewald (2013) for German, Beeching (2017) for English and French, Mingming (2018: 120–122, 146–147) for Chinese. We will provide some typological contribution, focusing on how the proposed invariant interacts with the semantics of different lexical and grammatical constructions and what syntactic restrictions are imposed on *=ok*.

The semantic effects of *=ok* will be discussed concerning quantifiers, reflexives, converbs, negation, imperatives, questions and correlatives. Thus, in constructions with the light verb *šalgaš* 'to stand' grammaticalized into frequentative *=ok* functions as an intensifier on a converb (3), and in imperatives it can in particular indicate making the social distance closer in polite requests (4).

(3)   *papa*   *kečə*   *məčkə*   *rad'io-m*   **kolə̂št=ok**   *šalg-a*
        grandmother   day   along   radio-ACC   listen.to:CVB=OK   stand-NPST.3SG
        'Granny listens to the radio all day long (and cannot do anything else)'.

(4)   *a.*   *ti*   *pumaga-vlä-m*   *tok-em*   *anž-al-aš*
        kand-əd=ok
           this   paper-PL-ACC   to-POSS.1SG   look-ATT-INF   bring-IMP.2PL=OK
           {A chief asks the secretary} 'Give me these documents to look through, please'.
     b.   *tagačə*   *tidə*   *prost'-alt-eš,*   *tol'ko*   *irgodə̂m*
        veremä-štə
           today   this   forgive-MED-NPST.3SG   only   tomorrow   time-IN
        tol-da   /   ***tol-d=ok**
           come-IMP.2PL   come-IMP.2PL=OK
           {'You are late again!} It is forgiven today, but come on time tomorrow!'

As regards syntactic properties, *=ok* most frequently modifies adverbials, nouns in locative cases, postpositions, converbs. However, it is ungrammatical on the dependents within the respective phrases. We propose that such constraints emerge because the phrases in question are lexical projections, *=ok* being subject to the Phase Impenetrability Condition. This entails that the material inside a lexical projection and the material outside it (including *=ok* in our case) form separate Spell-Out domains and, consequently, that syntactic operations like Agree are inapplicable to the heads within such separate domains (Chomsky 2000; Abels 2003), rendering impossible the appearance of *=ok* inside the phrases.

Abbreviations
1, 2, 3 – 1st, 2nd, 3rd person; ACC – accusative; ADD – additive particle; ATT – attenuative; ATTR– attributivizer; CVB– converb; DAT– dative; IMP– imperative; IN– inessive; INF– infinitive; MED– medial voice; NPST– non-past tense; POSS– possessive; PTCL– particle; PL– plural; SG – singular.

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The diachrony of 'rather than'-clauses revisited

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Keywords: adverbial subordination, preference clauses, 'before'-clauses, Udmurt, Uralic, Permic

Schedule: Thu 14.30 Room 8

In this talk, I deal with a type of adverbial subordinate clauses, namely, 'rather than'- or *preference clauses*. Diachronically, preference clauses develop from temporal clauses, and the semantic change involves the conventionalization of the implicature: '(temporal) precedence > preference' (Traugott–König 1991). In terms of syntax, Kortmann (1996: 190) proposes two diachronic origins:

(i) temporal adverb in a comparative construction;
(ii) 'before'-clauses.