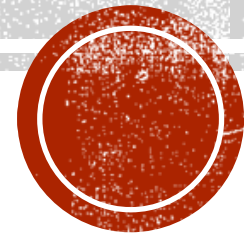


**THE SEMANTICS OF COMPLEX
PREDICATES IN FINNO-UGRIC AND
BEYOND:
HOW DO ASPECTUAL AND SCALAR
PROPERTIES INTERACT?**

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COMPLEX PREDICATES

- Simple converb of a lexical verb + a grammaticalized verb.

HILL MARI

(1) *män'* *amal-en* *ke-n-äm.*

I sleep-CVB go_away-PRET-1SG

'I fell asleep'.

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(2) *pünä* *ütä-sa* *lez'-i-z.*

dog bark-CVB send-PST-3SG

'The dog burst out barking'.



DATA

- OTIPL MSU field projects.
- Hill Mari (< Finno-Ugric), 2016–2019: <https://hillmari-exp.tilda.ws/en/>
- Tatyshly Udmurt (< Finno-Ugric), 2019 – ...: <https://tatyshly-udmurt.tilda.ws/en>
- Elicitation, field corpora.
- Possible pattern replication (Turkic > Finno-Ugric), see e.g. [Chkhaidze 1960: 96–98; Serebrennikov 1960: 260; Bradley 2016].
- Turkic parallels (secondary sources; some elicitation).



PROBLEM

- Actional/aspectual meanings (resultative, durative, iterative, ingressive etc.), see [Chkhaidze 1960; Serebrennikov 1960: 190–199; Kelmakov 1975; Horvath 2013; Pischlöger 2014, 2017; Bradley 2016; Bradley, Pischlöger 2021] etc. on Mari and Udmurt.
- Simple and complex predicates are often interchangeable during elicitation.
- The semantic difference between quasi-synonymic predicates is not always transparent.
- Complex predicates do not have grammatically obligatory uses in texts.

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(3) *mon kâmm-i-∅* / *kâmmâ-sa* *košk-i-∅*.

I be_cold-PST-1SG be_cold-CVB go_away-PST-1SG

‘I’m cold’.



PROBLEM

- What semantic function(s) do complex predicates convey?
- Do they share a common semantic pattern?
- What is the Turkic pattern that is replicated in Finno-Ugric?



PROBLEM

- Actional modification.
- Scalar modification.
- Their interaction.



ACTIONALITY

- Lexical property of a verbal stem.
- [Tatevosov 2003, 2010, 2015, 2016].
- Semantic and typological development of [Vendler 1957].
- Very roughly for the purposes of this talk: telic vs. atelic interpretations.



ACTIONALITY: TURKIC

- General idea:
grammaticalized verbs are
actional modifiers
[Johanson 2011, 2021;
Shluinsky 2009, 2021;
Shamina 2010; Tazranova 2005]...

[Shluinsky 2021: 409]

Table 15.1 Meaning of the construction *-p tur-* in Karachay-Balkar depending on the actional class of the lexical verb

actional class of the lexical verb	meaning of the construction <i>-p tur-</i>
strong telic <ES; P>	resulting state
punctual <ES; —>	resulting state
weak telic <ES, P; P>, result verbs	resulting state
weak telic <ES, P; P>, manner verbs	resulting state, lexical process
(weak) inceptive-stative <ES, S; S>	lexical state
stative-process lexical verbs <ES, S; P, S>, <ES, P, S; P, S>	lexical state
telic-stative lexical verbs <ES, P, S; P>, <ES, S; P>	resulting state
(weak) ingressive-process <EP, P; P>	lexical process
two-endpoint telic <ES, EP, P; P>	resulting state
multiplicative <ES, MP; MP>	resulting state of a single quantum
multiplicative-process <ES, P, MP; P, MP>	resulting state of a single quantum
stative <S; S>	lexical state
process <P; P>	no episodic uses



ACTIONALITY: FINNO-UGRIC

- Resolving ambiguity between telic and atelic interpretations.
- Mostly telicizers.
- Or the telic interpretation can be new for a verbal stem.

HILL MARI

(4) a. *lâm šâl-en.*

snow melt-PRET

‘The snow melted [not finished]
/ melted away [finished]’.

b. *lâm šâl-en ke-n.*

snow melt-CVB go_away-PRET

‘The snow melted away / *melted’.

(5) a. *män’ amal-en-äm.*

I sleep-PRET-1SG

‘I slept’.

b. *män’ amal-en ke-n-äm.*

I sleep-CVB go_away-PRET-1SG

‘I fell asleep’.



ACTIONALITY: FINNO-UGRIC

- Resolving ambiguity between telic and atelic interpretations.
- Some verbs convey the atelic interpretation.

HILL MARI

(6) *šärgä-štä män' pirä-m cakl-en-äm / cakl-en mi-en-äm.*

forest-IN I wolf-ACC notice-PRET-1SG notice-CVB come-PRET-1SG

'I noticed a wolf in the forest (once / several times).'

(7) *marê-n-vlä čäd-em-∅ mi-ät.*

Mari-GEN-PL few-INCH-CVB come-NPST.3PL

'The number of Mari people is gradually decreasing'.



ACTIONALITY: FINNO-UGRIC

- Resolving ambiguity between telic and atelic interpretations.
- But in some cases there is no ambiguity to resolve.

HILL MARI

(8) a. *lem šap-en.*

soup sour-PRET

‘The soup has soured’.

b. *lem šap-en ke-n.*

soup sour-CVB go_away-PRET

‘The soup has soured’.

(9) a. *vas'a jangâl-en.*

Vasya get_tired-PRET

‘Vasya got tired’.

b. *vas'a jangâl-en šänz-än.*

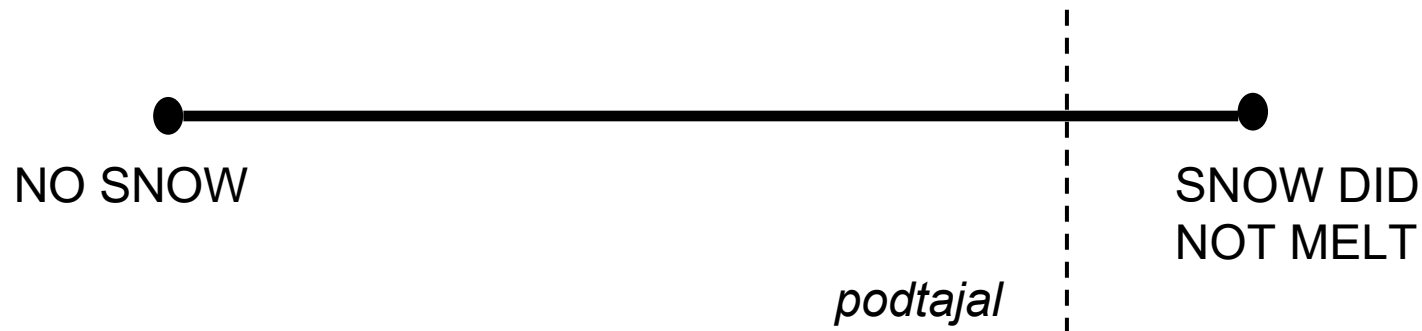
Vasya get_tired-CVB sit_down-PRET

‘Vasya got tired’.



SCALARITY

- Complex predicates contribute to actionality alternations.
- At the same time they are scalar modifiers, i.e. they modify the degree of a certain situation parameter.
- Different degrees can be ordered on a scale.
- See e.g. [Filip 2000; Kagan 2015] on Russian verbal prefixes, [Tatevosov 2007] on pluractionality in Chuvash.
- E.g. Russian *Sn'eg podtajal* 'The snow melted a bit' (< *tajat* 'melt').



SCALES: SPEED

HILL MARI

(10) *tâgâr-jalaš-vlä* *vəc* *m'inut-âštâ* / *??kok sutka-štâ* *vele*
shirt-trousers-PL five minute-IN two day-IN only

košk-en *ke-n-ät.*

dry_out-CVB go_away-PRET-3PL

'Clothes dried out in 5 minutes / ??only in two days'.

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(11) *kubâsta budâ-sa* *košk-i-z.*

cabbage grow-CVB go_away-PST-3SG

'Cabbage grew quickly [e.g. after rain]'.



SCALES: SPEED

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(12) *koč'âšpi kal'len / ??šäp budâ-sa mân-e.*
kitten slow kitten fast grow-CVB go-PRS.3SG

'The kitten is growing gradually / ??rapidly'.

HILL MARI

(13) *no sola-štâ edem-vlä post'ep'ennâ šong-em-ät,*
but village-IN person-PL gradually old-INCH-NPST.3PL
šong-em-∅ mi-ät. uže rovojaj-en ak kert-ep.
old-INCH-CVB come-NPST.3PL already work-CVB NEG.NPST-3 can-3PL
vol'âk kätö-vlä čäd-em-∅ mi-ät.
cattle herd-PL few-INCH-CVB come-NPST.3PL

'But people in villages are gradually getting older. They can no longer work. Cattle herds are dwindling'.



SCALES: FREQUENCY

HILL MARI

- (14) *män'-än* *mašinä-em* *so* *pâdâr-g-en* *šalg-a,*
I-GEN car-POSS.1SG always break_down-DETR-CVB stand-PRS.3SG
sedändono *ves-ä-m* *näl-äš* *kel-eš.*
therefore other-FULL-ACC take-INF be_necessary-PRS.3SG

‘My car breaks down all the time, so I have to buy another one’.

- (15) **tädä jažo* *mašinä, šoe-n* *vele* *pâdâr-g-en* *šalg-a.*
it good car rare-ADV only break_down-DETR-CVB stand-NPST.3SG

Intended: ‘This is a good car, it rarely breaks down’.



SCALES: FREQUENCY

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(16) *k̄az'* *zor* *k̄zär* *nunal-l̄ê b̄êde / ??tolez'-a-z* *odig pol ḡäne*
weather rain now day-DAT every month-LOC/ILL-POSS.3SG one time only

zor̄-sa *k̄âl'l'-e.*

rain-CVB lie-PRS.3SG

'Nowadays it rains every day / ??only once a month'.



SCALES: DURATION / TIME LIMITATION

TATYSHLY UDMURT

(17) *mon so-in* *kâk minut / *žâŋâ* *nunal*

I that-INS two minute half day

vera-s'kâ-sa *bas't-i-∅.*

speak-DETR-CVB take-PST-1SG

'I talked to him for two minutes / *half a day'.



SCALES: QUANTITY / ACCUMULATION

HILL MARI

(18) *män' šukâ / *čädä kal'avongâ-m pog-en šänd-en-äm.*

I many few mushroom-ACC gather-CVB seat-PRET-1SG

'I have gathered many / *few mushrooms'.



SCALES: AFFECTEDNESS

TATYSHLY UDMURT (+distributivity)

- (19) *mon van' kanfet-jos-âz s'i-sa pot-i-∅.*
I all candy-PL-ACC eat-CVB exit-PST-1SG

'I ate all the sweets [of different kinds].'

- (20) *vras' bâdes klass-lâ / nâlpi-jos-lâ / */#maša-lâ*
doctor all class-DAT child-PL-DAT Masha-DAT
privivka les'tâ-sa pot-i-z.
vaccination do-CVB exit-PST-3SG

'The doctor vaccinated the whole class / the children / */# Masha'.



SCALES: UNEXPECTEDNESS

HILL MARI

(21) *škol-ân*

school-GEN

d'ir'ektâr-žâ

director-POSS.3SG

p'edsovet-äš

school_council-ILL

tol-ân

come-CVB

šagal-ân.

stand_up-PRET

'The headmaster came to the school council
(unexpectedly, e. g. everyone thought he was in hospital).'



SCALES: FINNO-UGRIC

- At least:
 - Speed.
 - Frequency.
 - Duration / time limitation.
 - Quantity / accumulation.
 - Affectedness.
 - Unexpectedness.
- Just some Turkic parallels.



SCALES: TURKIC

BASHKIR

CVB (-*p*) + *jebär* ‘send’: sudden intensive start of an action.

(22) ...*тине лә, шаркылдап көлөп ебәрзе.*

...*ti-ne lä, šarqəlda-p kölö-p jebär-ðe.*

say-PST and laugh_loudly-CVB laugh-CVB send-PST

‘...he said and burst out laughing’.

[Yuldashev 1981: 220]

Cf. [Zakiev et al. 1993: 190] on a cognate construction (-*p* + *žibär*) in Tatar: sudden start of action, intensive momentary action.



SCALES: TURKIC

BASHKIR

CVB (-*p* + *səq* 'go out, exit'): finished action over a totally affected object

(23) *Сәлмән быларҙың барыһын да берәм-берәм хәтерләп сықты.*

sälmän bəlar-ǰəŋ barə-hə-n da beräm-beräm

Salman this.PL-GEN all-POSS.3-ACC ADD in_turn

xäterlä-p səq-tə.

recall-CVB go_out-PST

‘Salman recalled each of these events in turn’.

[Yuldashev 1981: 221]

Cf.: [Zakiev et al. 1993: 189] on a cognate construction (-*p* + *čəg*) in Tatar:

action affecting all the surface of an object; completeness of an action;
unexpected action.



SCALES: TURKIC

KYRGYZ

-*p* + *tur* 'stand': frequent / constant / long-lasting action

(24) *Кызынын да, келинин да жолун тоспой, ликбезге аларды өзү жиберип турат.*

kyz-y-nyn *da*, *kelin-i-n* *da* *žol-u-n*

girl-POSS.3-GEN ADD daughter-in-law-POSS.3-GEN ADD way-POSS.3-ACC

tos-po-j, *likbez-ge* *alar-dy* *öz-ü* *žiber-ip* *tur-at.*

block-NEG-CVB.IPFV likbez-DAT that.PL-ACC REFL-POSS.3 send-CVB stand-NPST.3

‘Not preventing his daughter and daughter-in-law, he (constantly) sends them to likbez (educational campaign against illiteracy) himself’.

[Zakharova (ed.) 1987: 224]



SCALES: TURKIC

“The similar verb *sal-* ‘to move’ (tr), ‘to place’, ‘to lay down’ is used in ⟨b⟩ *sal* constructions denoting **fast** and **unexpected** action. <...>

Verbs meaning ‘to put’ <...> occur in constructions expressing **suddenness** and **quickness** <...>

Actional phrases of all types can [with the verb ‘stand’ – E.K.] combine with ⟨b⟩ constructions when interpreted serially, i.e. ‘to act **repeatedly, continuously, frequently, several times, on several occasions, regularly, usually, habitually**’”.

[Johanson 2021: 602, 605]



SCALES: TURKIC

- Case study in Nizhnebaltachevo (Bashkortostan, Tatyshly district): Tatar native speakers, either proficient in Tatyshly Udmurt or not.
- Some differences in the use of specific verbs.
- But in general many similar scalar patterns.



SCALES: TURKIC

- Case study in Nizhnebaltachevo (Bashkortostan, Tatyshly district): Tatar native speakers, either proficient in Tatyshly Udmurt or not.

(25) (Udm.) *pünä ütä-sa lez'-i-z.*

dog bark-CVB send-PST-3SG

(Tat.) *et ür-öp jibär-dä.*

dog bark-CVB send-PST

'The dog burst out barking'.

(26) (Udm.) *prazdn'ik-ân mon irina-jez a²ž'â-sa kel't-i-∅.*

holiday-LOC I Irina-ACC see-CVB leave-PST-1SG

(Tat.) *bäjräm-dä min irina-nâ küür-öp kuj-dâ-m.*

holiday-LOC I Irina-ACC see-CVB put-PST-1SG

'I saw Irina briefly at the holiday party'. (*kuj-* 'put; leave')



ACTIONALITY VS. SCALES

- Scalar semantic is understudied for Turkic?
- [Shluinsky 2009: 34] on *tur* ‘stand’ in Tubalar Altai.
- Actional modifier: imperfective.
- Intensity as a non-trivial semantic component with atelic verbs.

TUBALAR ALTAI

(27) *wasʲa kebezen-de tʲad-ip tur-di.*

Vasya Kebezen-LOC live-CVB stand-PST

‘Vasya lived in [the village of] Kebezen for a long time’. [ibid.]



ACTIONALITY VS. SCALES

- Purely actional modifiers?
- The role of actional modification and scalar semantics is a parameter of variation for each particular lexeme?
- Uralic: ???
- [Tazranova 2005: 56] on *jat* 'lie' in Altai: progressive/habitual/iterative ("значение настоящего конкретного и (широкого) обычного времени").
- (However it is not quite clear how this semantics is shared between the grammaticalized verb and the tense affix)
- Kyrgyz *žat* 'lie' (some elicitation, cf. also [Oruzbaeva et al. 2009: 318–319]): progressive; a possible scalar component is not clear.

KYRGYZ

(28) *Men (azyr) idiš žuu-p žat-am.*

I now dishes wash-CVB lie-NPST.1SG

'I am washing dishes now'. ("We just clarify that sth. is happening now")



ACTIONALITY VS. SCALES

- General profile of a language?
- "In both Turkic and Mongolic aspectual auxiliaries in combination with converbs play a central role in the expression of actionality" [Malchukov, Czerwinski 2020: 610].
- Should we expect purely actional modifiers to be more likely in such an actional/aspectual system?
- Why then does scalar modification develop?
- Uralic: many aspect suffixes; discontinuous past marking (V + be.PST), see, among many others, [Serebrennikov 1960; Tsypanov 2005; Mordashova 2017; Moldanova 2022; Dyachkov 2023].
- Does this trigger a new pattern in the domain of actionality&aspect to make its semantic contribution on some new grounds?



SUMMARY

- Hill Mari, Tatyshly Udmurt: actional modification in complex predicates.
- In addition: scalar semantics of complex predicates.
- Parallels in Turkic.
- Variation in the impact of actional and scalar dimensions?

