The heterogeneity of postverbal elements in Udmurt

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The Udmurt language

- Uralic language family, Finno-Ugric branch, Permic subgroup
- population: 552 299, speakers: 340 338 (census of the Russian Federation, 2010)
- Udmurt Republic (minority language) + Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Mari El, Perm Krai, Kirov Oblast, Sverdlovsk Oblast etc.
- *de jure*: official status in the Udmurt Republic
- bi-, trilingualism, strong Russian influence

The Russian Federation

Moscow

UDMURTIA

Udmurt Regions

(ibtpartners.org)

Word order: previous literature

→ **non-rigid SOV**: VX ordered sentences are always pragmatically marked
  (Csúcs 1990; Suihkonen 1990; Winkler 2001, 2011; etc.):
  - *backgrounded theme* (not unusual in SOV languages, cf. Ponariadov 2010)
    (discourse-old information),
    or
  - *rheme* (Ponariadov 2010) or *focus* (Tánczos 2010) – discourse-new information
    → due to Russian (SVO) influence (Ponariadov 2010, Tánczos 2010)

→ mixed **(SOV/SVO)** language: VX sentences can also be (discourse-)neutral
  (Ponariadov 2010; Asztalos & Tánczos 2014; Asztalos 2016, 2018)

Aims of the talk

- comparing **non-verb-final sentences** in *old folklore texts* and *contemporary blog posts*:
  - proportion of VX ordered sentences
  - syntactic function of postverbal elements
  - discourse-pragmatic function (information role) of postverbal elements
- some observations on the relative order of multiple postverbal constituents

→under the strengthening influence of SVO Russian, can we detect a change?

Data

- **old texts:** folklore texts from the end of the 19th century

  tokens: 4214, clauses: 549

  - Wichmann, Yrjö (1901*): Wotjakische sprachproben II*. In: Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne XIX. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Kirjapainon Osakeyhtiö, Helsinki, 1-200.
  - Munkácsi Bernát (1887): *Votják népköltészeti hagyományok*. Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Budapest.

- **contemporary texts:** blogposts
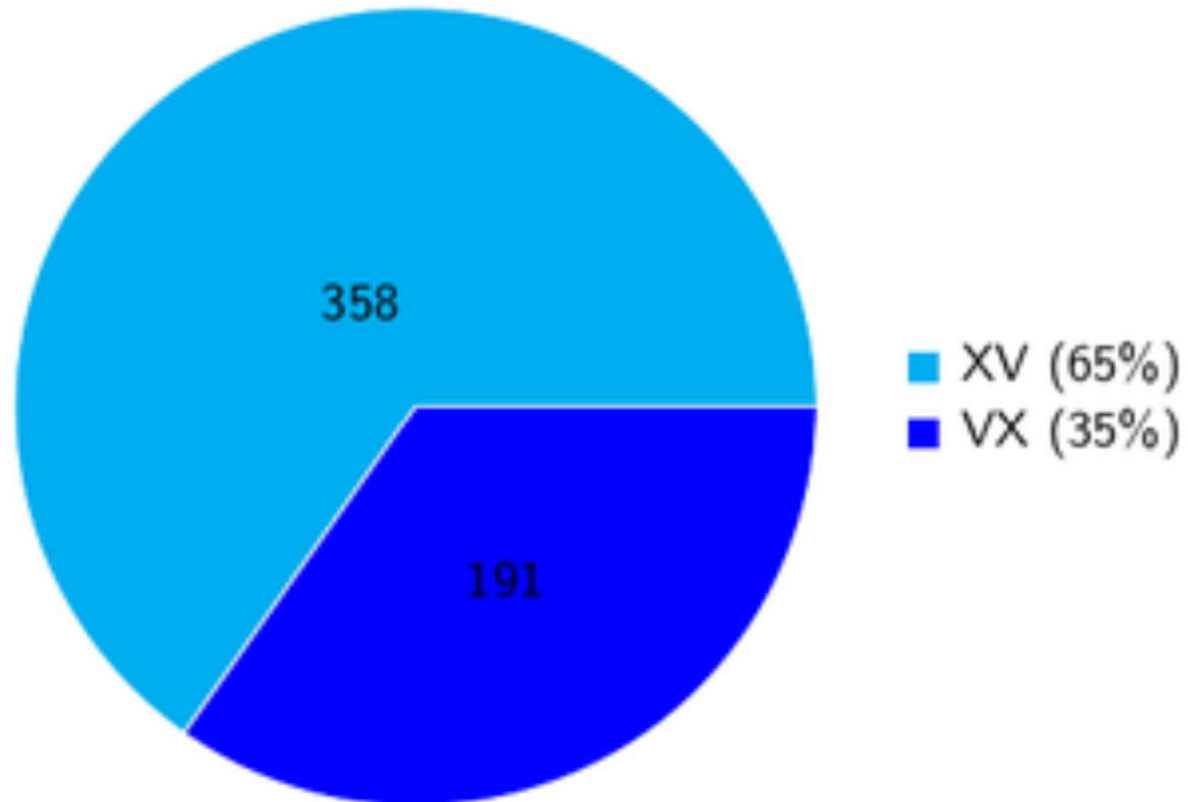
  tokens: 4572, clauses: 591

  - *Mynam malpanjosy* (http://udmurto4ka.blogspot.com/) – posts from 2016
  - *Marajko. Marjalen zareźez* (http://marjamoll.blogspot.com/) – posts from 2015-2016

→ available in the database compiled during the project *Languages under the Influence* (ERC HU 15 118079)
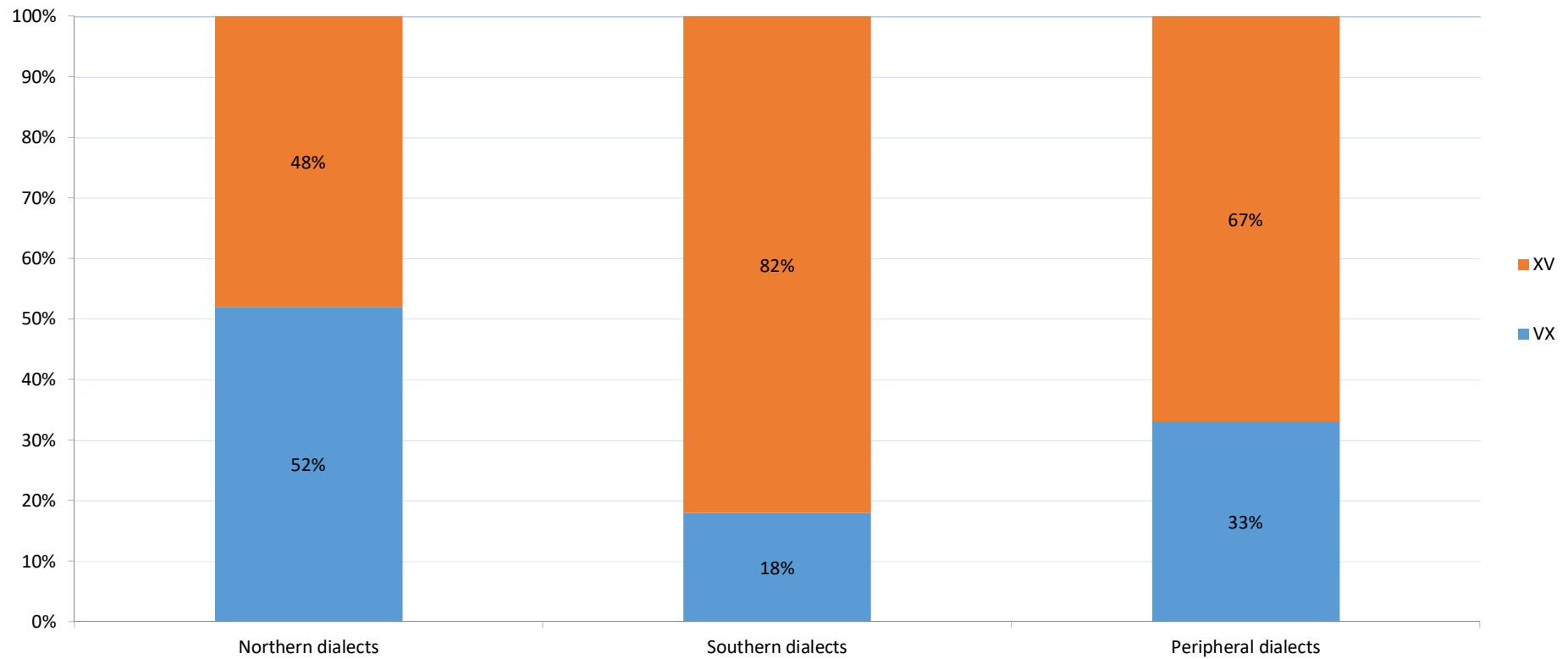http://www.nytud.hu/oszt/elmnyelv/urali/adatbazisok_udmurt.html

Old texts

- 549 clauses
- proportions:

Old texts: dialectal differences

Old texts: syntactic functions of postverbal elements

- no restriction on the syntactic function
- however, there seem to be some tendencies:

Synt. function	Temp	Loc	S	Dat/Lat	O_{ACC}	O_{NOM}	Adv Manner	Inf
Occurrences	1	3	54	58	32	9	4	19
Proportion	0,9%	10%	19%	37%	53%	12%	15%	44%

- neutral order of constituents, according to Glezdenev (1921: 45–47):
  Temp – S – verbal arg. – O – AdvManner – V

Old texts: discourse-pragmatic function of postverbal elements

- **discourse-old** (backgrounded) information: approx. 67%:

[Context: A fox has stolen a chicken, a goose, an arie and an ox.]

(1) ***Vań-ze***   ***ik, kureg-ze***   ***no, dźaźeg-ze***   ***no***
all-DET.ACC   PTCL chicken-DET.ACC   also   goose-DET.ACC   also
taka-ze   ***no oš-se***   ***no vand-em***   ***dźićy.***
arie.DET.ACC   also ox-DET.ACC   also slaughter-EVID.3SG   fox
'The fox slaughtered all of them: the hen, the goose, the arie and the ox.' (W24)

Old texts: discourse-pragmatic function of postverbal elements (cont.)

- **discourse-new** information: approx. 25%:

1. **argument focus** (cf. Lambrecht 1994):

[Context: The human and the bear negotiated with each other to sow beets together.]

(2) ***Mon baśt-o vyžy-ze, ton, gondyr, jyl-ze.***

    1SG   take-FUT.1SG root-3SG.ACC 2SG bear   top-3SG.ACC

    'I'll take its/the root, you, bear, (take) its/the top.' (W23)

Old texts: discourse-pragmatic function of postverbal elements (cont.)

[**discourse-new** information – cont.]

2. predicate focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994):

[Context: A poor Udmurt went to hire himself out as a farmhand.]

(3) ***Śures   vylyśen   pumita-m   ńulesmurt-ez.***

    way   from.on meet-EVID.3SG   forest.spirit-ACC

    'On the way he met a forest spirit.' (W30)

Old texts: discourse-pragmatic function of postverbal elements (cont.)

[**discourse-new** information – cont.]

3. sentence focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994)**/neutral**

[initial sentence of a tale, all-new sentence]
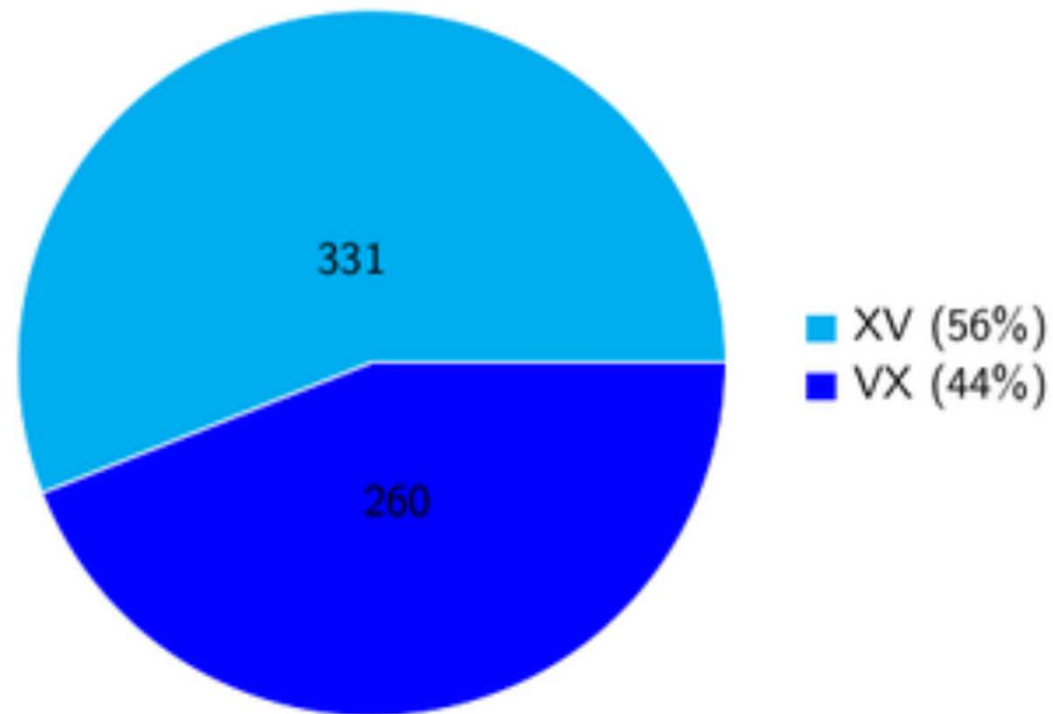
(4) *Odig   udmort   vetl-em   jarmaŋa-je.*
      one   Udmurt   go-EVID.3SG   fair-ILL
      'An Udmurt went to a fair.' (W25)

Contemporary texts

- 591 clauses

→ only moderate increase (35% → 44%)

Contemporary texts: syntactic functions of postverbal elements

Synt. function	Temp	Loc	S	Dat/Lat	O_{ACC}	O_{NOM}	Adv Manner	Inf
Occurrences	7	12	75	40	23	12	8	11
Proportion	12%	35%	29%	54%	32%	29%	20%	28%

Discourse-pragmatic function of postverbal elements

	old information	new information
old texts	approx. 67%	approx. 25%
new texts	approx. 36%	approx. 50%
	↓	↑
	decrease	increase

Multiple constituents in postverbal position

- proportions:
  - old texts: 23,5% of VX ordered sentences have >1 constituent in postverbal position
  - new texts: 10,5%

Relative order of multiple postverbal contituents

1. **old** + **old**: typically ordered in their *neutral* order:

(5) ***Vož-ze***   ***poty-sa***   ***vera-z***   *gondyr*   *aďami-ly: […]*

   anger-3SG.ACC   go_out-CVB   say-PST.3SG   bear   human-DAT

   'The bear said angrily to the human: […]' (W23)

→ **SO** order

→ verb movement?

Relative order of multiple postverbal contituents (cont.)

- [**old** + **old** – cont.] A few exceptions with *non-neutral* order:

[Context: A young man is marrying the water spirit's daughter.]

(6) ***Śud-em - śekta-m***   ***soos-ty***   ***vumurt.***

     feed-EVID.3SG - regale.EVID.3SG   3PL-ACC   water_spirit

     'The water spirit regaled them.' (W27)

→**OS** order

   (O topicalization + verb movement?)

Relative order of multiple postverbal contituents (cont.)

2. **old** + **new**:

(7) ***Uj-yn***   ***dźićy***   ***vat-em***   ***kureg-ze,***

    night-INE   fox   hide-EVID.3SG   chicken-DET.ACC

    kur-em   ***so***   ***ponna***   ***dźaźeg-ez.***

    ask-EVID.3SG   3SG   for   goose-ACC

    'At night, the fox hid the chicken, (and) he asked for a goose in exchange (lit. for that).' (W24)

Relative order of multiple postverbal contituents (cont.)

3. **new** + **new**:

- *neutral* order:

[Context: The author is beginning to tell a story that has just happened to her.]

(8) ***Pot-i***   ***[ostanovka-je]***   ***[Iž-e***   ***myny-ny].***

    go_out-PST.3SG   bus_stop-ILL   Izhevsk-ILL   go-INF

    'I went to the bus stop in order to leave for Izhevsk.'

Relative order of multiple postverbal contituents (cont.)

- [**new** + **new** – cont.] *non-neutral* order (**OLocAdv**):

(9) ***Mińi-ťeatr "Balda" tunne vožmatiz** [Erik Batujev-ly   siź-em*
   mini theatre Balda   today   showed   Erik Batuev-DAT   dedicate-PTCP.PRF
   spektakl'] [Kuzebaj Gerd ńimo   gimnazi-len   aktovoj   zal-a-z]
   play   K.   G.   named high_school-GEN   assembly_hall-INE-3SG
   [pod jegidoj Udmurt Keńeš].
   under aegis   U.   K.
   'The "Balda" mini-theatre today showed a play dedicated to E. B. in the
   assembly hall of K. G. High school, under the aegis of Udmurt Kenesh.' (Mynam
   malpanjosy 09.11.2016)

Tundra Nenets, Surgut Khanty, Udmurt: towards a conclusion

- the VX construction in Tundra Nenets: afterthought (Averintseva-Klisch, 2008)

- discourse-pragmatic functions of postverbal elements in Surgut Khanty and Udmurt:

		Surgut Khanty		Udmurt	
		old texts	new texts	old texts	new texts
old information		+	+	+	+
new information	AFoc	– (?)	+	+	+
	PredFoc	–	+	+	+
	SentFoc	–	–	+	+

Towards a conclusion (cont.)

- gradual broadening of the discourse-pragmatic roles of postverbal constituents → a possible path from XV to VX

- new information in postverbal position: likely to be due to Russian (SVO) influence

- SXV > SVX change: strengthened (in the case of Udmurt) by a survey filled out by 90 native speakers of Udmurt (cf. Asztalos 2018):
  - generational difference: young speakers produced non-verb-final sentences and head-initial constituents more frequently, and judged them more acceptable than old speakers
  - areal difference: speakers from Udmurtia produced non-verb-final sentences and head-initial constituents more frequently, and judged them more acceptable than speakers from Tatarstan (Tatar: SOV)

Thank you for your attention!

Acknowledgements

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