

Nominalizations in Hill Mari

Proposal

This paper deals with the two kinds of deverbal nouns that exist in Hill Mari: nominalizations derived using the suffix *-mâ-* and those derived using *-maš-*. The aim of the study is to establish the functional structure in Hill Mari nominalizations.

- (1) *ädär-žä-n* *jažo*-n* *kušt-âmaš-âžâ-m/*
 daughter-POSS.3SG-ACC good-*GEN¹ dance-NMN.ACT-POSS.3SG-ACC/
jažo(-n)* *kušt-âmâ-žâ-m* *ävä* *päl-ä*
 good-GEN dance-NMN-POSS.3SG-ACC mother know-NPST.3[SG]
 ‘Mother knows that her daughter dances well.’

The data gathered during fieldwork shows that the first kind of deverbal nouns found in Hill Mari, the *-mâ-* nominals, retain a lot of clausal properties due to the many clausal projections embedded in the DP, the structure of these nominals thereby being [DP [NumP [TP [AspP [vP [LP]]]]]]. The ambiguous results on the *-maš-* nominals suggest to analyse these as two different kinds of nominalizations, one of them functioning as a RN and therefore including no functional verbal projections: [DP [NumP [LP]]], the other having the same structure as *-mâ-* nominalizations (and only being grammatical for a group of speakers).

Background

Depending on whether they have an eventive reading and retain part of the argument structure of the original verb deverbal nouns fall into two categories: Argument Supporting Nominalizations (ASNs) and Referential Nominals (RNs). ASNs differ across languages with respect to the number and type of the (nominal and verbal) functional projections they include (as argued for in [Alexiadou 2001]).

Functional structure in *-mâ-* nominalizations

Among the evidence of the presence of the *light verb* are the possibility of adverbial modification (manner adverb modification in particular) and the accusative case of the direct object.

- (2) *män'* *mardež-än* *okn'a-m* *päsä-n/*päsä* *pač-än*
 I wind-GEN window-ACC quick-GEN open-CVB
šu-mâ-žâ-m *už-a-m*
 leave-NMZ-POSS.3SG-ACC see-NPST-1SG
 ‘I saw the wind open the window quickly.’

The presence of the *AspectP* is indicated by the possibility of aspectual modification. Based on the grammaticality of T-level adverbs (according to Cinque’s Universal Hierarchy [Cinque 1999]) and subject raising under nominalization I will argue for the presence of the *TP* within the structure of *-mâ-* nominalizations.

As for the nominal projections, *-mâ-* nominals allow pluralization when derived from a telic verb which according to [Alexiadou, Iordăchioaia, Soare 2010] is due to the [+bounded] feature allowing for the projection of *Num(ber)P*.

Restrictions on *-mâ-* nominalizations

The suffix *-mâ-* can be used to derive a nominal from any verb. These nominals are ungrammatical in contexts corresponding to RNs:

¹ *-n* in this case is an adverbializer deriving *jažon* (‘well’) from *jažo* (‘good’)

- (3) *vojna xala-štâ pâdârtâ-maš-vlä-m/*pâdârtâ-mâ-vlä-m kod-en*
 war city-IN destroy-NMN.ACT-PL-ACC/*destroy-NMZ-PL-ACC leave-PRF[3SG]
 ‘The war has left destructions in the city.’

On the status of *-maš-* nominalizations

As far as *-maš-* nominals are concerned, the speakers of Hill Mari fall into two groups. The speakers of the first group use *-maš-* nominals in their speech as RNs only and find the use of *-maš-* nominals as ASNs either unnatural or ungrammatical. The second group of speakers finds it possible to replace the *-mâ-* nominal with its *-maš-* equivalent in mostly any context. The only restriction here seems to be the inner aspect of the original verb: *-maš-* ASNs cannot be derived from atelic verbs.

- (4) *mân' alina-n mägör-ämâ-žâ-m/*mägör-ämâš-žâ-m*
 I Alina-GEN cry-NMZ-POSS.3SG-ACC/*cry-NMN.ACT-POSS.3SG-ACC
kol-ân-am
 hear-PRF-1SG
 ‘I heard Alina cry.’

For both groups of speakers *-maš-* nominals may be pluralized which indicates the presence of the *NumP* within *-maš-* nominals.

References

- [Cinque 1999]: Guglielmo Cinque. *Adverbs and Functional Heads: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective* // Oxford University Press, 1999
- [Alexiadou 2001]: Artemis Alexiadou. *Functional Structure in Nominals: Nominalization and Ergativity* // John Benjamins Publishing, 2001
- [Alexiadou, Iordăchioaia, Soare 2010]: Artemis Alexiadou, Gianina Iordăchioaia, Elena Soare. *Number/aspect interactions in the syntax of nominalizations: A Distributed Morphology approach* // *Journal of Linguistics*, Cambridge University Press, 2010