

## Nominal adverbials with temporal semantics in Hill Mari<sup>1</sup>

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This paper deals with Hill Mari (< Finno-Ugric) nominal adverbials with temporal semantics, such as in (1). Although they may have the distribution of adverbs (1), they can be used as NPs in argument positions as well (2). This means that they are NPs and, therefore, they have to receive case (Vergnaud 1977). The research is focused on the sources of case for these phrases.

- (1) *šošâm mән' -ән âškal-em šäl-ән*  
spring I-GEN cow-POSS.1SG hide-PRET  
'In spring, my cow has run away'.
- (2) *mән' šošâm-âm jažo-n ert-är-en-äm*  
I spring-ACC good-ADV pass-CAUS-PRET-1SG  
'I spent the spring well'.

Some adverbials in their temporal function are unmarked (*irok* 'morning'; *šošâm* 'spring'; *cäš* 'hour') (1), others bear accusative (*jäd* 'night; *tel* 'winter', *kängäž* 'summer', *šäžä* 'autumn') (3), *vadâ* 'evening' takes lative marking. When modified, all of them can be in genitive as well. Some temporal expressions are PPs (4). Below, we do not consider the latter three cases.

- (3) *šäžä-m mән' pi-m näl-ән-äm*  
autumn-ACC I dog-ACC take-PRET-1SG  
'In autumn, I bought a dog'.
- (4) *tî irok paštek mән' a-m šâpš*  
this morning after I NEG.NPST-1SG smoke  
'From this morning I won't smoke'.

The data were collected in the village of Kuznetsovo (Mari El, Russia) in 2016-2018 primarily by elicitation.

In Mari grammars, temporal expressions are not discussed in detail (Alhoniemi 1993; Savatkova 2002). Most papers on other languages focus on their semantics, but not on morphosyntactic properties (Haspelmath 1997; Erschler 2009) or lack formal analysis (Rozhanskiy, Markus 2018). There are some formal proposals concerning caseless adverbials (Larson 1985, 1987; Kobayashi 1999) but they consider only English data. Baker (2015) points out that in some languages temporal adverbials receive a structural case, whereas in others they do not. Below, we investigate whether the Hill Mari data are compatible with the previous analyses. We also discuss whether the case of temporal adverbials in Hill Mari is lexical or structural.

"Unmarked" temporal adverbials differ considerably from caseless NPs in Hill Mari: in contrast to unmarked direct objects (DO) (Pleshak 2017), they can attach an emphatic particle =*ok* (5) and do not have to be verb-adjacent (1).

- (5) *irok=ok ke-t=ät vadâ jakte*  
morning=EMPH go-NPST.2SG=ADD evening till  
'You go in the morning and stay till the evening'.

"Unmarked" temporal adverbials can also be modified with high dependents such as quantifiers (6). This means that these adverbial NPs do receive case. Following Bresnan, Grimshaw (1978)

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and McCawley (1988), we assume that they are complements of null Ps, receiving an abstract case from them.

- (6) *každaj irok mən' šäräš-äm kačk-am*  
 every morning I porridge-ACC eat-NPST.1SG  
 'I eat porridge every morning'.

Some adverbials receive the accusative case. The question arises whether this accusative is a special lexical case or these adverbials undergo structural case assignment. In order to understand it, we compare properties of the temporal accusative and those of the DO-accusative. First, the two differ in the affix ordering: in DO, the case marker has to follow the possessive affix (7a), whereas in temporal adverbials the former precedes the latter (7b).

- (7) a. *lašaš-žžə-m / \*lašaš-əm-žžə kid dono nüštäl-ät*  
 flour-POSS.3SG-ACC flour- ACC-POSS.3SG hand with stir-NPST.3PL  
 '(They) stir flour manually'.  
 b. *tel-əm-žžə / \*tel-žžə-m veremä šo-eš kož-əm*  
 winter-ACC-POSS.3SG winter-POSS.3SG-ACC time reach-NPST.3SG fir-ACC  
*käcäl-äš*  
 seek-INF  
 'In winter, it is time to look for fir'.

Second, an adverbial and a direct object, both marked with accusative, are compatible within one sentence (8).

- (8) *tel-əm mən' kok kol-əm kăč-en-äm*  
 winter-ACC I two fish-ACC catch-PRET-1SG  
 'In winter I caught two fish'.

These facts support the hypothesis that the temporal accusative is a lexical case rather than a structural one.

To sum up, there are temporal adverbials that are NPs in Hill Mari (there are also PPs, we do not consider them here). We provide some evidence that although there are contexts where unmarked NPs are caseless, such as some DOs of non-finite forms, unmarked temporal expressions receive case from a null P. The accusative case in temporal expressions also differs from the accusative of DOs. We will exemplify the diagnostics that help to compare caseless NPs with unmarked adverbials and accusative direct objects with temporal expressions: availability of different positions in the clause, finiteness of the clause, possibility to bear discourse particles, etc.

#### Abbreviations:

ACC – accusative, ADD – additive particle, ADV – adverbializer, AOR – aorist, CAUS – causative, CVB – converb, EMPH – emphatic particle, GEN – genitive, INF – infinitive, NEG – negation, NPST – nonpast, PL- plural, POSS – possessive, PRET – preterite, SG – singular, 1-3 – person.

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