AGREEMENT WITH CLAUSAL ARGUMENTS IN MOKSHA-MORDVIN: FACTIVITY OR LEXICAL CONSTRAINTS[1]

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Keywords: Uralic languages, subject-object agreement, factivity, complementation, syntax

In Moksha-Mordvin (> Uralic) non-derived nouns (nouns without a derivational suffix) in direct object (DO) position exhibit differential object marking (DOM) and trigger DOI with transitive verbs: non-marked DOs require that the verb agree with the subject only, while genitive DOs most often trigger subject-object agreement. The choice between the constructions with and without object agreement (OA) markers is regulated by the factors largely discussed in the literature on DOM: referential properties of DOs, topicality and telicity of the verb (Comrie 1989; Aissen 2000; Tamm 2004). The absence of OA is favored by presence of verbal derivational suffixes signaling non-telicity or pluractionality. However, in constructions with clausal DOs other factors come at play, such as factivity, semantic opposition of events (states-of-affairs) vs. propositions, realis vs. irrealis distinction (Molnár 1971; Serdobolskaya, Kozhemyakina 2014). This paper is aimed at identifying the exact impact of each factor with various complement-taking verbs (CTV) and the influence of idiosyncratic lexical properties of each CTV. The study is partly based on elicited data, partly on the corpus of texts from Mokshenj-pravda journal.

Molnár (1971) and Serdobolskaya, Kozhemyakina (2014) show that factive CTVs such as 'know' most often trigger OA (1), while non-factive CTVs such as 'believe' do not.

We understand factivity as presupposition of the complement clause, which can be diagnosed by preservation of truth of the proposition in the complement clause in case of the negation of the governing CTV (Beaver, Geurts 2012). Defined as such, factivity has often been claimed to be a lexical property of CTVs (Kiparsky, Kiparsky 1971). The question arises, whether it is confirmed by language-specific studies, i.e. whether language-specific devices sensitive to factivity are chosen based on lexical properties of CTVs or based on the presence of presupposition of a clausal complement.

In Moksha, factive verbs such as 'know' and 'forget' mostly take OA with clausal arguments (1). However, OA may be absent. We show that it happens exactly in contexts where presupposition does not project, that is, in presupposition-opaque contexts (2) and in polar indirect questions (3). Thus, in factive contexts OA is required, and non-factive contexts favor its absence even with so-called factive CTVs. In this way, presence of presupposition overrides the idiosyncratic lexical properties of governing CTVs.

However, with eventive complements most CTVs such as perception verbs (4) and 'like, love' obligatorily take OA with clausal arguments (unlike with non-derived nouns). It happens notwithstanding the semantics of the complement clause (event or proposition), its givenness or topicality, realis vs. irrealis distinction. However, OA may be omitted in case of presence of verbal pluractionality suffix (5), in the same way as with non-derived DOs. Thefefore, DOI is entirely explained by lexical properties of these CTVs.

The verb 'wait' can take both events and non-factive propositional complements. In the latter case OA is absent, as predicted by the above formulated rule. With eventive complements, however, this CTV takes OA in case of telic interpretation and does not take it in case of

atelicity. Thus, with 'wait' DOI is partly regulated by the semantics of the complement, partly by semantic factors relevant for non-derived DOs.

In conclusion, DOI with clausal argument in Moksha is influenced by a complex interplay of various factors, some of which are the same as with non-derived DOs, and some are only relevant for clausal complements. For eventive complements, lexical restrictions of the governing CTV are the most important factor. However, for propositions factivity is relevant, rather than lexical properties of the governing CTVs.

Examples

(1) *ton   že   soda-jt'   /   *soda-t'   što   mon   af ul'an kucə!*
      you   EMPH know-PST.3.O.2SG.S   know-PST.2SG that…

'(Why didn't you take the keys?) You knew that I wouldn't be at home!' (Elicitation)

(2) *kədə   mon   soda-l'-in'ə   /   ᴼᴷsoda-l'-ən'   što*
      if   I   know-IMPF-PST.3.O.1SG.S   know-IMPF-PST.1SG   that
      t'əjən azəvi valšebnaj val mon s'akə afəl'ən' l'ijə i aralal'in'ə jalga-z'-ə-n'.

'(A tale's character flew away leaving his friend alone). If I had known that I could to pronounce a magic spell and fly away, I would not have flown away, I would remain with my friend. (But I know I cannot etc.)' (Elicitation)

(3) *mon   af   sod-an   ul'-iĭt'   l'i*
      I   NEG know-NPST.1SG   be-NPST.3PL   whether
      moskusa t'aftamə vastt kosə ul'i koda tonafn'əms mokšən' kɛl't'.

'I don't know if there are places in Moscow where one can learn Moksha language.' (Elicitation)

(4) *mon   n'ɛ-jn'ə   /   *n'ɛj-ən'   koda   it't'   lang-s*
      I   see-PST.3.O-1SG.S   see-PST.1SG   how   child.DEF.SG.GEN   on-ILL
      koməc'   pin'ə
      jump.PST.3SG dog

'I saw a dog jump at the child.' (Elicitation)

(5) *kažnaj   n'ed'el'a-n'ɛ   n'ɛjə-n'-kšn'-es'   st'ir-s',   koda*
      every   week-TMPR   see-FREQ-FREQ-PST.3SG   girl-DEF.SG   how
      ofts' kajs'əz'ə oftən' ponav ked'ənc i ars'əs' meki loman'ks.

'Every week the girl saw the bear take off his bear's furry coat and become a man.' [A Mordvin tale «Nut's branch»].

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