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North and Central Asia

Edited by
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Volume 164

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Preface

This collection of articles deals with structural typology and the discourse semantics of languages spoken in Europe and North and Central Asia. The articles are from the Neo-LENCA IV workshop which took place Aug. 28, 2012–Sept. 1, 2012 at Stockholm University as a part of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE)¹ (LENCA = Languages of Europe and North and Central Asia). Neo-LENCA IV was divided into three sections: (1) General morphosyntactic typology, (2) Tense, aspect and modality, and (3) Clause combining and discourse. The first three LENCA symposia were held in Russia. The topics of the previous LENCA symposia were deixis and quantification (the Udmurt State University, Izhevsk, Russia, 2001), typology of argument structure and grammatical relations (the Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia, 2004), and grammar and pragmatics of complex sentences (coordination and subordination) (the Tomsk State Pedagogical University, Tomsk, Russia, 2006).

The LENCA symposia were grounded in the conviction that the linguistic structures found in this vast geographic region have enough similarity, yet also intriguing differences, that scholars would be well-served by sharing research on the genetically diverse set of languages situated in Europe and large portions of Asia. Neo-LENCA IV carried on this conviction while embedding the workshop into the context of a major international conference. The languages spoken in Europe and North and Central Asia have been in interaction for centuries, in large part, because geographical conditions favored a high degree of language contact. In addition to language typology, which has been the general frame of all these meetings, special attention has also been paid to areal typological relationships. As with LENCA I–III, this workshop focused on a number of endangered and minority languages.

Sincerest thanks to the organizers of the SLE in Stockholm 2014, and to the workshop participants. We want also to thank John Benjamins for publishing this volume in the Studies in Language Companion Series.

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The editors

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1. **Typology of Languages of Europe and Northern and Central Asia**, Neo-LENCA IV Workshop in SLE. Aug. 28, 2012–Sept. 1, 2012. Organizing Committee: *Thomas E. Payne* (University of Oregon and SIL International) (main organizer), *Pirkko Suihkonen* (University of Helsinki), *Lindsay J. Whaley* (Dartmouth College), and *Andrey Filchenko* (Tomsk State Pedagogical University). (<http://www.ling.helsinki.fi/uhlcs/projects/projects.html>).

Introduction

Pirkko Suihkonen & Lindsay J. Whaley

The main topics of this volume, "On Diversity and Complexity of Languages Spoken in Europe and North and Central Asia", concentrate on structural typology, clause combining, discourse semantics and historical processes in language change. Some articles are summaries of large research projects in which areal typology has an important role, while in others the focus is on the research of certain phenomena in a single language. Several articles deal with topics that have not been investigated in any depth previously. It is typical of these articles that they are involved in complex issues, such as the development of grammatical categories and influence of areal contacts on linguistic structures. Several articles are based on large data collected by the authors or as a result of large corpus projects. However, all the articles are based on a comprehensive understanding of grammar of languages which are the topics of investigation. All the articles have something new to tell about the languages spoken in this region and also about the theoretical frameworks used in the research of those languages. Typology of linguistic phenomena described in the articles forms the backbone of the articles in this volume.

The articles are organized into three sections. The subsection **"Verbal categories and processes in categorizations"** contains three articles on various aspects on verbal systems: an article on tense and aspect systems in Khorchin Mongolian, a Mongolian dialect spoken in eastern Inner Mongolia, an article on TMA systems in Chalkan, an unwritten Turkic variety spoken in the north of Republic Altai, Russia, and one article on causative and passive systems in Xibe, a Tungusic language spoken in Xinjiang province in North-Western China. In subsection **"Syntactic functions and case-marking"**, there are three articles: syntax and semantics of spatial relationships in Evenki, which is a Tungusic language spoken in eastern Siberia, alignment features in Indo-Aryan ('Dardic') languages spoken in the Greater Hindu Kush area, and possession marking in Bashkir, which belongs to the North-Western branch of the Turkic languages mainly spoken in Bashkiria, Russia. The subsection **"Clause combining and discourse"** contains two articles on copular clauses in Turkic languages: an article on Karaim, a North-West (Kipchak) Turkic language spoken Lithuania, and an article on copular markers in Turkish, a South-West Turkic language. The section also contains an article on discourse connectives in Turkish, and an article on anaphora and

clause combining in Ossetic (Ossete), a North-East Iranian (Indo-European) language mainly spoken in North Ossetia. Two of articles in the section deal with evidentiality marking: one article on evidentiality in Dzungar Tuvan, a minority Sayan Turkic language spoken in South Siberia, and one article on evidentiality in German, a Germanic (Indo-European) language. In the last two articles, the focus is on “Historical issues”: the history of the development of the subject reference system in Russian (East Slavonic) and diachrony of some negative markers in the Japonic, Koreanic, Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic languages. Below, the import of these articles is outlined.

I. Verbal categories and processes in categorization

Interaction between tense, aspect and modality has been one of the most challenging research topics in the research of verbal systems in natural language (cf. Carlson 1998; Comrie 1976, 1986; Dahl 1985; Lindstedt 2001). Evidentiality is involved in TAM systems and contributes to the complexity of providing an adequate analysis of the morphosyntax of these systems. Additional progress on the interpretation of TAM systems requires increasing close and comprehensive research on these systems in specific languages. “The tense-aspect system of Khorchin Mongolian” (Benjamin Brosig) is pioneering research on the tense and aspect system of Khorchin Mongolian. Brosig demonstrates that there are structural differences in the tense and aspect categories between the standard language and Khorchin Mongolian, and that there also are differences even in the distribution of grammatical categories. Khorchin Mongolian does not have the present perfect and generic present categories, nor is evidentiality expressed through verbal categories. “Locational and directional relations and tense and aspect marking in Chalkan, a South Siberian Turkic language” (*Irina Nevskaya*) deals with biverbal constructions in South Siberian Turkic, which is the common name of numerous closely related Turkic languages. The biverbal constructions consist of auxiliary verbs expressing existence, location, posture, or motion, and a lexical verb which is marked with non-finite verbal forms. Various grammaticalization processes based on actional forms have given rise to a number of constructions expressing actionality, modality, and complex tense-aspect systems. Because the South Siberian Turkic languages are genetically close to each other, they form a useful cluster of languages for the research on development of semantic categories and also differentiation of new semantic categories.

Like TMA systems, passive and causative, and their interaction, have been topics of extensive research interest. The article “Causative and passive isomorphism in Xibe (Tungusic)” (*Taeho Jang & Thomas Payne*) deals with isomorphism of causative and passive morphemes in Xibe. The isomorphism is, on one level, unexpected, because passive is generally taken to be valence decreasing and causative to be a valence

increasing operation. Jang and Payne argue that the isomorphisation of these categories, which is also found in several other languages of Europe and Central Asia (and elsewhere in the world), is a result of metaphorical extension and grammaticalisation processes. Their work provides particularly good evidence for how this isomorphism has come about.

II. Syntactic functions and case-marking

In nominal typology, the elements marking spatial relationships in a language as well as the grammaticalisation of these elements, have an important value in describing the typological status of a language. This has demonstrated in particular in the research of languages spoken in Europe and North and Central Asia, because many of these languages have rich case systems (on Turkic languages, see Johanson 2012). Research on less commonly investigated languages help develop our understanding of these relationships. In this volume, the article “Spatial semantics, case and relator nouns in Evenki” (*Lenore A. Grenoble*) is a comprehensive overview of case morphology and relator nouns as means of marking spatial relations in Evenki. The analysis is based on the eastern dialects spoken in the Amur basin and in the southern part of Sakha (Yakutia) and also some more western dialects spoken in Tura (the administrative center of the former Evenki Autonomous Okrug), which are less studied than the southern dialects (Nedjalkov 1997). In the article, the use and development of the spatial cases in Evenki are investigated in detail, and it is shown that relator nouns and adpositions have an important function in marking spatial relations in Evenki. The fine-grained system for expressing spatial relationships in Evenki is a result of complex processes that have taken place over time. A special value of this article is in casting new light within a larger theoretical framework on this under-studied system of marking spatial relations in Evenki.

Research on alignment of main syntactic categories in argument structure has been a topic of intensive descriptive research of natural languages. A part of this has been research on typological differentiation of ergative and accusative languages (cf. e.g. Bickel 2011; Comrie 2013). However, the research of alignment systems in lesser-known languages is shining new light on the organization of these systems. The article “A survey of alignment features in the Greater Hindukush with special reference to ‘Indo-Aryan’” (*Henrik Liljegren*) is a pioneering work on languages spoken in the Greater Hindu Kush area in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kashmir. The Greater Hindu Kush forms a transit zone between South and Central Asia. The article provides an analysis of the main syntactic categories in the author’s fieldwork data. The areas where these languages are spoken are difficult to access. They also have been in contact with many different languages. This paradoxical fact that they have a degree of

areal isolation but also have had points of contact with different languages has driven the divergent development of structures in these minority languages. Liljegren investigates several phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical properties of the Hindukush Indo-Aryan ('Dardic') languages.

Structural typology has its foundation in the deep analysis of semantic categorization, a fact which holds also in phrase-level typology. Categorisations of basic structural types on possessive phrases are traditionally based on fine-tuned semantic differences (cf. König 2001). "Between predicative and attributive possession in Bashkir" (*Maria Ovsjannikova & Sergey Say*) examines a strategy used in forming genitive and possessive constructions in Bashkir. There is some mixed behaviour in the possessive constructions between external and internal possession, which raises the question of the applicability of ordinary constituency tests in characterizing possessive phrases. The article contains a careful and detailed analysis of constituency in the possessive constructions in Bashkir as well as challenging the concept "constituency," or at least its usefulness in determining possession types. Ovsjannikova and Say claim that if languages do not have a morphologically marked possessor construction, "there is also a direct link between discourse configurations and syntactic properties related to what is assumed to be constituency".

III. Clause combining and discourse

Determining taxonomies of predicate types and argument structure has an important role in the research on sentence-level syntactic typology (cf. e.g. Foley & Van Valin 1984; Givón 1984: 85–134; Keenan 1987: 316–334; Comrie 1993; Croft 1995). In particular in recent research, attention has been paid to the importance of discourse elements in sentence structure as well as the function of clauses in sentence structure. Copular clauses belong to the so-called basic sentences in which the structure-forming elements, including copular markers, are the focus of investigation. The systems and functions of various discourse connectives extend the research to encompass even larger syntactic units. Typology of clause combining and discourse correlatives pays attention to the nuclear area of discourse and syntactic typology. In addition to marking the structural elements in discourse structure, discourse strategies take care of marking the semantic relationships, such as evidentiality (cf. e.g. Aikhenvald & Dixon 2003 (eds)). The articles in this section deal with all these topics. And in all these cases, the articles deal with topics that are poorly-known, in some cases, even completely unknown areas in the languages investigated.

"Areal features of copula clauses in Karaim as spoken in Lithuania" (*Éva Ágnes Csató*) underscores the effects of language contact in creating linguistic differentiation by areas. Three contact languages (Lithuanian, Polish and Russian) have influenced

the development of copular clauses in Karaim in distinct ways. The article “Non-past copular markers in Turkish” (*Birsel Karakoç*) concludes that there are “systematic correspondence between the semantic types of copular clauses and copular markers”. Drawing data from various written sources and corpora of spoken Turkish, Karakoç has developed a useful categorization scheme for how the morphosyntactic and discourse properties of copula constructions relate to various semantic properties. His article is a part of a larger project that compares non-past copular markers across different Turkic languages. Taken together with Csató’s work, a fascinating overview of the intricacies of the semantic and morphosyntax of copula constructions in Turkish is furnished.

Research on polar particles has been an important topic, in particular in semantics (cf. e.g. Lewis 1975; Löbner 1987). “On the distribution of the contrastive-concessive discourse connectives *ama* ‘but/yet’ and *fakat* ‘but’ in written Turkish” (*Deniz Zeyrek*) examines the appearance of two contrastive particles in a large electronic text corpus, the Turkish Discourse Bank (TDB) which consists of c.a. 500,000 million words. The distribution and differentiation of *ama* and *fakat* were examined in various structural positions, in combinations with other connectives, in different kinds of semantic contexts, and in various text types representing different genres. Zeyrek shows that there are real differences in the distribution of the occurrences of *ama* and *fakat*, and that these differences correlate with the semantic and genre types. The article is an example of importance of large text corpora in the research of linguistic elements which are linked with large textual units and complex syntactic and semantic structures.

Deixis, anaphora and related functions have been the topics of intensive research within various theoretical frameworks during tens of years (e.g. Wasow 1979; Reinhart 1983; Anderson & Keenan 1985; Jackendoff 1996; Lenz 2003; Janssen 2004, among others). Specifying the position of the elements and their relationships in space, binding the relations of those elements and controlling the activities of the elements in that space belong to most challenging tasks in the research and anaphora. “Anaphora in Ossetic correlatives and the typology of clause combining” (*Oleg Belyaev*) provides a comprehensive description of anaphoric relations in the Iron dialect of Ossetic, a North-East Iranian language spoken in the Caucasus. Belyaev argues that Ossetic correlatives can be analyzed as obligatory pronominal anaphora. Under this analysis, the relative phrase serves as the antecedent and the correlate is the anaphor. The author draws data both from his own fieldwork and from the Ossetic National Corpus. The article represents important research on a topic that is poorly understood in the minority languages of Europe, North Asia and Central Asia.

As mentioned above, evidentiality is intertwined with a number of other linguistic categories. Evidentiality is the topic of the article “Kinds of evidentiality in German complement clauses” (*Olga A. Kostrova*). The author claims that in German, “reported speech is the core of evidentiality”. She employs a large data base (c.a. 3,000 sentences)

consisting of German texts and also of spoken German recorded in interviews. Kostrova examines variations in the morphosyntax of complement clauses, and the ways in which the morphosyntax interacts with the lexical semantics of verbs, to determine how German expresses different kinds of evidentiality: quotative vs. indefinite, evoked vs. cited, effective vs. conjectural, acquired through perception vs. inferred, and referred to subject vs. referred to subject and narrator. "Evidentiality in Dzungar Tuvan" (*Monika Rind-Pawłowski*) is a significant work on evidentials in a variety of Tuvan. The preliminary hypothesis of the article is that evidentiality in Dzungar Tuvan has three types of sources: (a) sense experience, (b) knowledge obtained from a third person (hearsay) and (c) inference from existing evidence. Rind-Pawłowski develops a fine-grained classification for examining different text types and finite verb classes. She finds that aspect and aspectual types form a special axis for collecting information on evidentiality.

IV. Historical issues

Although historical considerations are part of this discussion in most of the articles presented in this volume, diachrony is as the center of the two last articles. "On the evolution of Russian subject reference: internal factors" (*Evgeniya Sidorova*) deals with the historical development of subject reference in Russian. Different from other Indo-European languages, East Slavonic languages use both the pro-drop system and pronominal system in referring to subjects in simple sentences. The referential system of modern Russian, in which both verbal inflection and verbal inflection with pronouns are used, forms the schema against which the development of the subject reference system is described. It is shown in the article that the referential system in modern Russian has changed significantly from earlier eras. In Old Russian, the pattern of verbal inflection was predominant and the use of subject pronouns largely restricted to the present tense. Over time subject pronouns began to spread to sentences in the past tense form and occur with much greater frequency. The research is based on evidence gathered from old linguistic documents available from Russian.

Cross-linguistic historical research of languages spoken over large geographical areas like Europe and North and Central Asia is among the most-challenging topics in linguistics. It becomes even more challenging, when the genetic relationships of such dispersed languages are under investigation. Often, the research cannot draw on material with much of a time depth because the historical documents are rare. Altaic is a case in point. "The development of negation in the Transeurasian languages" (*Martine Robbeets*) deals with the diachrony of some negative markers in the Japonic, Koreanic, Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic languages. Robbeets argues that these negative markers provide evidence for the genetic reality of Altaic, a claim that has been rejected by others on the basis of not having a reliable method to differentiate between linguistic

borrowing, language contact, chance similarity and common descent from the same language. One of the persistent problems in moving the debate over Altaic forward has been a shortage of documentation of various phases of the languages under discussion. Robbeets suggests that the negative markers, when investigated from both a formal and functional perspective, offer a relatively reliable source of information about genetic relatedness.

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