

# Null and overt subjects in the Udmurt non-finite clauses

Ekaterina Georgieva  
University of Szeged  
katina.geo@gmail.com



## 1. Introduction

In this poster I investigate the non-finite clauses in Udmurt (Finno-Ugric, Permic). More specifically, I deal with the obligatory disjoint reference effect that arises if the non-finite clause has an overt subject. Null subjects, on the other hand, are (almost always) obligatorily coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause.

The data presented comes from my own fieldwork conducted in 2013 and 2014.

## 2. Null vs. overt subjects in non-finite clauses

▪ Overt pronouns in the English gerund/infinital clauses are obligatorily disjoint in reference from the matrix clause's subject:

- (1) a. *Bill<sub>i</sub> left [without  $\emptyset_{i/j}$  singing at the party].*  
b. *Bill<sub>i</sub> left [without him<sub>\*i/j</sub> singing at the party].*

▪ In Udmurt the null pronoun in (2) is obligatorily coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause, whereas the overt pronoun in (3) shows obligatory disjoint reference. (Note that (3) is not an ECM, the overt pronoun bears nominative case):

- (2) [ $\emptyset$  Gurte berty-sa] *Koľa Liza-ly kniga-ze šot-i-z.*  
go.home-NF Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after s/he<sub>\*i/j/k</sub> got home, Kolya<sub>j</sub> gave his book to Lisa<sub>k</sub>.'

- (3) [*So gurte berty-sa*] *Koľa Liza-ly kniga-ze šot-i-z.*  
s/he.NOM go.home-NF Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after s/he<sub>i/\*j/\*k</sub> got home, Kolya<sub>j</sub> gave his book to Lisa<sub>k</sub>.'

▪ The same phenomenon has been observed in Modern Turkish (Erguvanli-Taylan 1986) and in other Turkic languages. It seems to hold for the other Finno-Ugric languages, too (except for Hungarian (Sárik 1998)).

## 3. Results

• **Disjoint reference from the subject of the matrix clause  $\neq$  disjoint reference from any other DP of the matrix clause**

Coreference between the indirect object of the matrix clause and the subject of the non-finite clause depends on word order:

- (4) *Koľa Liza-ly kniga-ze šot-i-z [so gurte berty-sa].*  
Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG s/he.NOM go.home-NF  
'Kolya<sub>i</sub> gave his book to Lisa<sub>j</sub> when/after s/he<sub>\*i/j/k</sub> got home.'

But the overt subject of the non-finite clause must be disjoint in reference from the matrix clause's one irrespectively of the word order:

- (5) [*Koľa gurte bert-em*] *bere so kniga lyddžy-ny kutsk-i-z.*  
Kolya go.home-NF after s/he.NOM book[ACC] read-NF start-PST-3SG  
'After Kolya<sub>i</sub> had got home, s/he<sub>\*i/j</sub> started reading a book.'

• **Subject-oriented or highest DP oriented disjoint reference?**

- (6) [*Koľa škola-yn dyšetsky-ku so-ly tros gurte už-jos lešty-ny*]  
Kolya school-INESS study-NF s/he-DAT a.lot.of home work-PL[ACC] prepare-NF  
*kule val.*  
must AUX.PST  
'When Kolya<sub>i</sub> was (still) at school, s/he<sub>?i/j</sub> had to do a lot of home work.'

→ highest DP!

▪ **Do thematic roles or focus have an impact on the disjoint reference effect?**

My results show that thematic roles do not play role (e.g. experiencer subjects do show disjoint reference just like agents do). It is unclear whether focus can influence the disjoint reference (e.g. overt reflexive (focus) pronouns are not disjoint in reference).

• **A parallel: obviation and Switch Reference**

Both the Romance/Slavic obviation and Switch Reference are mechanisms for signalling coreference/disjoint reference between the subjects of the embedded and the matrix clause. Arguably, the behaviour of the null/overt subjects in the Udmurt non-finite clauses is a similar mechanism:

	Obligatory coreference	Obligatory disjoint reference
Obviation	Infinitival clause	Subjunctive
Switch Reference	Same-Subject marker	Different-Subject marker
Non-finite clauses in Udmurt	Null subject	Overt subject

## 4. Analysis

▪ One of the possible analyses of the gerund/infinital clauses and the Same-Subject clauses is that they are instances of obligatory control (Hornstein 2001, San Martin–Hornstein 2001, Georgi 2012).

▪ Movement Theory of Control (Hornstein 2001)

▪ Georgi's (2012) analysis of Switch Reference: Same-Subject Clauses

Defective T → cannot value case on the subject → subject moves to the matrix clause → obligatory coreference

Different-Subject Clauses

Non-defective T → can value case on the subject → subject does not move → since there is no movement, subjects are disjoint in reference

▪ Applied to Udmurt, this means that in (7) the subject of the non-finite has been moved to the matrix clause, while in (8) no movement has applied, hence disjoint reference:

- (7) =(2) [TP *Koľa* [VP *Koľa* [VP ... [*Koľa* TP<sub>def</sub> gurte berty-sa]]]]  
(8) =(3) [TP *Koľa* [VP *Koľa* [VP ... [*so* TP gurte berty-sa]]]]

▪ Advantages of this approach:

It captures the obligatory control properties of sentences like (2). It also account for that fact that in (2) the overt subject can appear only in the matrix but not in the non-finite clause.

▪ Disadvantages of this approach

Theory-internal problems (sideward movement, theta criterion violation), unclear how to account for the Udmurt non-finite clauses showing agreement and for the reflexive (focus) pronouns

## References

Erguvanli-Taylan, Eser 1986. Pronominal versus Zero Representation of Anaphora in Turkish. In: Slobin, D.I. & Zimmer, K. (eds.) *Studies in Turkish linguistics*. Amsterdam – Philadelphia, John Benjamins. 209–232. • Georgi, Doreen 2012. Switch Reference by Movement. In: Weisser, Ph. (ed.) *Perspectives on Switch-Reference: Local Modeling and Empirical Distribution*, Vol. 89 of *Linguistische Arbeits Berichte*, University of Leipzig, 1–40. • Hornstein, Norbert 2001. *Move! A Minimalist Theory of Construal*. Cambridge – Oxford, Blackwell. • San Martin Itziar & Norbert Hornstein 2001. Obviation as Anti-Control. *International Journal of Basque Linguistics and Philology* xxxv-1: 367–384. • Sárik Pál 1998. A határozói igenevek néhány problémája. *MNy* 94: 423–436.

## Acknowledgments

I am eternally grateful to my informants. I would also thank István Kenesei, György Rákosi and Eszter Ótötvölgyés for the discussion and comments on the earlier version of this paper. The support of the CAMPUS Hungary scholarship programme is gratefully acknowledged.

## Null and overt subjects in the Udmurt non-finite clauses

### 0. Introduction

In this poster I investigate the non-finite clause in Udmurt (Finno-Ugric, Permic). More specifically I deal with the obligatory disjoint reference effect that arises if the non-finite clause has an overt subject. Null subjects, on the other hand are (almost always) obligatorily coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause.

The data presented comes from my own fieldwork conducted in 2013 and 2014. I worked with altogether 30 speakers (19 female, 11 male). They represent different Udmurt dialects: Southern dialect group (Alnash and Grakh district), Northern dialect group (Balezino district), Central dialect group (Igra, Jakshur-Bodja és Sharkan district) and Udmurt spoken in Tatarstan (Kukmor district). However, the question I am addressing now does not show dialectal variation.

### 1. The puzzle

It is a well-known fact that the overt pronouns in the English gerundival/infinitival clauses are obligatorily disjoint in reference from the matrix clause's subject. Consider example (1a,b):

- (1) a. *Bill left [without Ø singing at the party].*  
b. *Bill left [without him singing at the party].*

Now consider the following Udmurt examples. The null pronoun in (2a) is obligatorily coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause, whereas the overt pronoun in (2b) is obligatorily disjoint in reference. Note, however, that (2b) is not an ECM like the English example above, the overt pronoun bears the nominative case:

- (2) a. [Ø Gurte berty-sa] *Ko'la Liza-ly kniga-ze šot-i-z.*  
go.home-NF Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after (s/he<sub>i/j</sub>) got home, Kolya<sub>j</sub> gave his book to Lisa.'
- b. [So gurte berty-sa] *Ko'la Liza-ly kniga-ze šot-i-z.*  
s/he.NOM go.home-NF Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after (s/he<sub>i/\*j</sub>) got home, Kolya<sub>j</sub> gave his book to Lisa.'

All of the Udmurt non-finite clause that can have an overt subject display the same phenomenon (these are the clauses headed by the suffixes *-sa*, *-tek*, *-ku*, *-tož*, *-(e)m*, *-mte*). These non-finite clauses do differ in terms of presence/lack of agreement, syntactic position that the non-finite clause can occupy (complement or adjunct clause), but are similar with respect to the disjoint reference effect.

	Meaning	Overt subject in nominative	Agreement (and the case marking of the subject)	Syntactic position
<i>-sa</i>	manner or vague temporal	✓	*	adjunct
<i>-tek</i>	'without'	✓	*	adjunct
<i>-ku</i>	'when'	✓	✓ (→ Nom <sup>1</sup> )	adjunct
<i>-tož</i>	'by the time'/'till' or 'instead of'	✓	✓ (→ Nom <sup>1</sup> )	adjunct
<i>-(e)m</i>	deverbal noun, combines with postpositions	✓	✓ → Gen	complement or adjunct <sup>2</sup>
<i>-mte</i>	deverbal noun, negated, combines with postpositions	✓	✓ (?) → Gen	complement or adjunct <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For many speakers the agreement in the non-finite clause headed by the suffixes *-ku* and *-tož* is used only if the subject of the non-finite clause is not overt (i.e. pronominal clitics/pronominal agreement).

<sup>2</sup> In this paper I deal only with the adjunct clauses.

Arguably, the same obligatory disjoint reference effect can be observed in other Finno-Ugric languages, too. However, the literature does not give negative evidence on this question, but the provided examples from Komi-Zyrian and Meadow Mari (Serdobolskaya 2008, Bartens 2000), Northern Khanty (Nikolaeva 1999), Northern Mansi (Bíró 2011) seem to prove that overt subjects are always disjoint in reference from the subject of the matrix clause. It is worth mentioning one observation about the Northern Khanty non-finite clauses: "In same-subject sentences the pronoun is typically omitted under coreference with the matrix clause subject [...]" (Nikolaeva 1999: 48) (however, this does not say explicitly that any overt subject in the non-finite clause would

be interpreted as disjoint in reference with the subject of the matrix clause). There is one clear counterexample of this rule/tendency, namely the Hungarian *-vÁn* non-finite clauses which allow an overt subject to be coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause (Sárik 1998). The obligatory disjoint reference effect has been also observed in Modern Turkish (Erguvanlı-Taylan 1986) and other Turkic languages, for instance in Tatar and Kazakh (Eszter Ótött-Kovács, p.c.).

## 2. Results

In this section I will demonstrate in greater detail the obligatory disjoint reference in the Udmurt non-finite clauses. I investigate whether the overt subject of the non-finite clause must be disjoint in reference only with the subject of the matrix clause or with any DP from the matrix clause. I take into account the order of the matrix and the non-finite clause. I will show that the obligatory disjoint reference effect is not subject-oriented, but rather highest DP-oriented, that is the overt subject of the non-finite clause must be disjoint from the dative/genitive case-marked highest DP from the matrix clause.

- **Which DP must the overt subject be disjoint in reference from?**

At first glance it seems that the overt subjects cannot be coreferent with any DP from the matrix clause, see example (2b) repeated below, the overt subject of the non-finite clause cannot refer to the indirect object of the matrix clause (the same holds for direct objects and possessors).

- (2) b. [*So gurte berty-sa*] *Koľa Liza-ly kniga-ze* *śot-i-z.*  
s/he.NOM go.home-NF Kolya Lisa-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after (s/he<sub>i/\*j/\*k</sub>) got home, Kolya<sub>j</sub> gave his book to Lisa<sub>k</sub>.'

- **Word order**

Word order can fix example (2b) and make coreference possible between the overt subject of the non-finite clause and the indirect object (/direct object/possessor) if the DP *c*-commands the pronoun (3) However, the overt subject of the non-finite clause must be disjoint in reference from the matrix clause's subject (4). Hence, I suggest that the disjoint reference effects between the subjects is a different phenomenon.

- (3) [*Liza gurte berty-sa*] *Koľa so-ly kniga-ze* *śot-i-z.*  
Liza go.home-NF Kolya s/he-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG  
'When/after Liza<sub>i</sub> got home, Kolya gave her<sub>i/j</sub> his book.'
- (4) *Koľa Liza-ly kniga-ze* *śot-i-z* [*so gurte berty-sa*]  
Kolya Liza-DAT book-3SG.ACC give-PST-3SG s/he go.home-NF  
'Kolya<sub>i</sub> gave his book to Liza<sub>j</sub> when/after s/he<sub>\*i/j/k</sub> got home.'

- **Subject-oriented or highest DP-oriented disjoint reference effect?**

Some Udmurt predicates take a dative complement (for instances the deontic modal auxiliary *kule* 'must, have to') or a genitive one (Udmurt does not have a verb meaning 'want', instead a non-finite clause is used with the light verb *pote* and the main verb in the deverbal noun form *-(e)m*). These "quirky-case" highest complements behave like subjects with respect to the disjoint reference effect – they cannot be coreferent with the overt subject of the non-finite clause.

- (5) [*Koľa škola-yn dyśetsky-ku*] *so-ly tros gurte už-jos leśty-ny kule val.*  
Kolya school-INNESS study-NF s/he-DAT a.lot home work-PL[ACC] do-NF must AUX.PST  
'When Kolya<sub>i</sub> was (still) at school, s/he<sub>?i/j</sub> had to do a lot of home work.'
- (6) [*Koľa kino učky-ku*] *so-len pop-korn si-jem-ez pote val.*  
Kolya movie[ACC] néz-NF s/he-GEN popcorn[ACC] eat-NF-3SG AUX.3SG AUX.PST  
'When Kolya<sub>i</sub> was watching a movie, s/he<sub>\*i/j</sub> wanted to have some popcorn.'

- **Focus**

It is commonly assumed that focus can overwrite the disjoint reference effect. However, it is unclear whether this holds for Udmurt, too. Below, I will present two cases. In Udmurt the reflexive pronouns can have contrastive focus meaning. Although these pronouns are overt, they can be coreferent with the matrix clause's subject (7). On the other hand, in (8) the overt pronoun is focused (I assumed that the *ik* particle expresses focus), but the coreference between the subjects is impossible:

- (7) [*Koľa gurte bert-em*] *bere aćiz miśk-i-z posuda-jez.*  
Kolya go.home-NF after s/he.REFL wash-PST-3SG dish-ACC  
'After Kolya<sub>i</sub> had got home, he<sub>i/\*j</sub> (lit. himself<sub>i/\*j</sub>) washed the dishes.'

- (8) [*KoPa gurte bert-em*] *bere so=ik mišk-i-z posuda-jez.*  
 Kolya go.home-NF after s/he=FOC wash-PST-3SG dish-ACC  
 ‘After Kolya<sub>i</sub> had got home, HE<sub>i/\*j</sub> washed the dishes.’

• **Thematic roles**

Another factor that can overwrite the disjoint reference effect is the thematic role of the subject. It is common that experiencers show different properties from agents. However, as example (9) demonstrates, the subject of the non-finite clause *Liza* is an experiencer, but it cannot be coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause:

- (9) [*Liza KoPa-leš mežmy-sa*] *so psiholog dory vetly-ny kutsk-i-z.*  
 Liza Kolya-ABL miss-NF s/he psychologist PSP.ILL go-NF start-PST-3SG  
 ‘Since Liza<sub>i</sub> was missing Kolya, s/he<sub>\*i/j</sub> started seeing a psychologist.’

**3. A parallel – Switch Reference and Obviation**

In the literature there are two very well-known clause types in which the subject of the embedded clause must be disjoint in reference from the subject of the matrix clause. One of these cases is the subjunctive obviation in the Romance/Slavic languages. The other crosslinguistically common mechanism for signalling coreference/disjoint reference between subjects is Switch Reference. These two mechanisms differ considerably with regard to many syntactic properties (see Avrutin&Babyonyshev 1997, Drummond 2011, Striling 1993, Georgi 2012), but share the same idea of signalling the coreference/disjoint reference between subjects. Arguably, the behaviour of the null/overt subjects in the Udmurt non-finite clauses is a similar mechanism – the null subjects are used in case of obligatory coreference, whereas the overt subjects trigger obligatory disjoint reference.

	Obligatory coreference	Obligatory disjoint reference
Obviation	Infinitival clauses	Subjunctive
Switch Reference	Same-Subject marking	Different-Subject marking
Non-finite clauses in Udmurt (and other Finno-Ugric/Turkic languages)	Null subject	Overt subject

**4. Analysis**

One of the possible analyses of the gerund/infinitival clauses and the Same-Subject clauses is that they are instances of obligatory control (Hornstein 2001, San Martin–Hornstein 2001, Georgi 2012). Obligatory disjoint reference (i.e. Obviation and Different-Subject clauses) are instances in which there is no obligatory control. This analysis adopts the Movement Theory of Control (Hornstein 2001). Hornstein (2001) proposes that in the English infinitives the subjects moves to the matrix clause:

- (10) a. *John hopes to win the race.* (Hornstein 2001: 38, (36a,b))  
 b. John [John [hopes [John to [John win the race]]]]

Georgi (2012) proposes a similar analysis of Switch Reference. Her analysis in a nutshell:

• **Same-Subject Clauses**

Defective T → cannot value case on the subject → subject moves to the matrix clause → obligatory coreference

• **Different-Subject Clauses**

Non-defective T → can value case on the subject → subject does not move → since there is no movement, subjects are disjoint in reference

Applied to Udmurt, this means that in (2a) the subject of the non-finite has been moved to the matrix clause, while in (2b) no movement has applied, hence the subjects are disjoint in reference:

- (11) =(2a) [TP **KoPa** [VP **KoPa** [VP ... [**KoPa** TP<sub>def</sub> gurte berty-sa]]]]  
 (12) =(2b) [TP **KoPa** [VP **KoPa** [VP ... [so TP gurte berty-sa]]]]

Advantages of this approach:

It captures the obligatory control properties of sentences like (2a). It also account for that fact that in (2a) the overt subject can appear only in the matrix but not in the non-finite clause. Disjoint reference arises as a "side effect".

Disadvantages of this approach:

The Movement Theory of Control has been largely criticised mainly because it adopts the sideward movement (Nunes 2001) and it also violates the theta criterion. Concerning the Udmurt data an additional mechanism is needed in order to account for the reflexive (focus) pronouns. Another problematic case are the Udmurt non-finite clauses showing agreement (compare (13) and (14)).

- (13) *Ko'la [uśy-ku-z] kuara-ze=no ez potty.*  
Kolya fall.down-NF-3SG voice-3SG.ACC=is NEG.PST.3 let.out[SG]  
'When he<sub>i</sub> fell down, Kolya<sub>j</sub> didn't make a sound.'
- (14) *Ko'la [uśy-ku-m] kuara-ze=no ez potty.*  
Kolya fall.down-NF-1SG voice-3SG.ACC=is NEG.PST.3 let.out[SG]  
'When I fell down, Kolya didn't make a sound.'

One way to account for these examples is to say that every non-finite clause that shows agreement is a Different-Subject type of clause. In this case an additional stipulation must be made in order to explain the (almost) obligatory coreference in (13). The other option is to propose that (13) and (14) represent completely different structures, the former being a Same-Subject type of clause, the latter being a Different-Subject clause.

### Acknowledgments

I am eternally grateful to my informants. I would also thank István Kenesei, György Rákosi and Eszter Ótton-Kovács for the discussions and comments on the earlier version of this paper.

The support of the CAMPUS Hungary scholarship programme is gratefully acknowledged.

### References

- Avrutin, Sergey & Maria Babyonyshev 1997.** Obviation in Subjunctive Clauses and AGR: Evidence from Russian. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 15: 229–262.
- Bartens, Raija 2000.** *Permiläisten kielten rakenne ja kehitys*. Helsinki, SUS 238.
- Bíró Bernadett 2011.** Cselekvésnevek a manysiban – az északi manysi cselekvésnevek valenciája. *FUD* 18: 3–33.
- Drummond, Alex 2011.** Merge over Move and Romance Obviation Effects. Talk given at the LSA, January 2011. Elérhető: <http://adrummond.net/lisa2011romance.pdf> Utolsó megtekintés dátuma: 2015. március 18.
- Erguvanli-Taylan, Eser 1986.** Pronominal versus Zero Representation of Anaphora in Turkish. In: Slobin, D.I. & Zimmer, K. (eds.) *Studies in Turkish linguistics*. Amsterdam – Philadelphia, John Benjamins. 209–232.
- Georgi, Doreen 2012.** Switch Reference by Movement. In Phillip Weisser (ed.) *Perspectives on Switch-Reference: Local Modeling and Empirical Distribution*, Vol. 89 of *Linguistische Arbeits Berichte*, University of Leipzig, 1–40.
- Hornstein, Norbert 2001.** *Move! A Minimalist Theory of Construal*. Cambridge – Oxford, Blackwell.
- Nikolaeva, Irina 1999.** *Ostyak. Languages of the World/Materials 305*. Muenchen, Lincom Europa.
- Nunes, Jairo 2001.** Sideward Movement. *Linguistic Inquiry* 32 (2): 303–344.
- San Martin, Itziar & Norbert Hornstein 2001.** Obviation as Anti-Control. *International Journal of Basque Linguistics and Philology* xxxv-1: 367–384.
- Sárik Pál 1998.** A határozói igenevek néhány problémája. *MNy* 94: 423–436.
- Serdobolskaya, Nataliya 2008.** Faktory oformlenija subjekta pri nominalizacii v marijskom i komi-zyrjanskom jazykax In: *Tipologija argumentnoj struktury i sintaksicheskix otnošenij. Trudy mezhdunarodnogo simpoziuma*. Kazanj, KGU. 64–77.
- Stirling, Lesley 1993.** *Switch-reference and discourse representation*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.