

On dative subjects and agreement with infinitives licensed by an external P head*

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1. Introduction

The paper focuses on the behavior of infinitival clauses in Meadow Mari (Uralic; head-final, SOV) that allow overt subjects and agreement on the infinitive.¹ The phenomenon is illustrated in (1a) where an infinitival purpose clause appears with an overt obligatorily dative subject, which is not coreferent with a main-clause dependent and must be cross-referenced by an agreement suffix on the infinitive. As further shown in (1b), in the absence of an overt subject and agreement marking obligatory subject-control is established.

- (1) a. [Məlanna kudəvečə-š pur-aš-na], təj pečə-m sümər-en-at.
we.DAT yard-ILL go-INF-1PL you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
'You broke the fence for us to get into the yard.'
- b. [PRO_i kudəvečə-š pur-aš], təj_i pečə-m sümər-en-at.
yard-ILL go-INF you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
'You broke the fence to get into the yard.'

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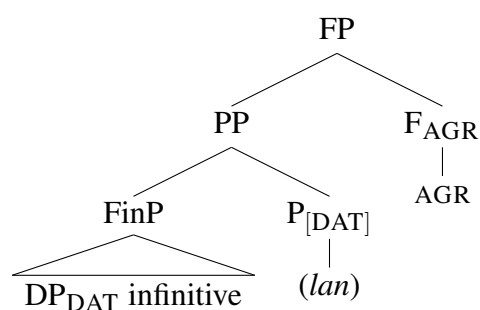
¹The person-number suffixes that appear on infinitives are identical to those cross-referencing dependents of adpositions in PPs and possessors in possessive constructions; see Section 3. Throughout the paper I gloss them simply as person.number. At the same time they do not match the agreement inflections attested on finite verbs; to indicate the contrast I add FIN (finite) to the latter.

Glossing abbreviations: ACC = accusative, ADE = adessive, DAT = dative, DISC = discourse marker, FIN = finite, GEN = genitive, ILL = illative, INF = infinitive, NOM = nominative, PST = past (aorist or perfective), PL = plural, SG = singular.

This behavior gives rise to the following two questions. Are the two phenomena – namely, dative subjects and agreement on infinitives – related? And what is the source of the dative case and the agreement morphology?

I propose that the presence of both dative subjects and agreement marking depends on the presence of a postpositional head P_{DAT} that takes some infinitival clauses as its complement (2). P_{DAT} can exceptionally assign dative case to the embedded subject, which can be either a DP or a *pro*. AGR also becomes available due to the properties of the dative adposition and does not result from a relation established between the subject and the embedded T head; cf. analyses along this line proposed for Russian (a contact language; Comrie 1984, Greenberg 1985, Franks and Hornstein 1992, Moore and Perlmutter 2000, i.a.) and Hungarian (another Uralic language; Tóth 2000, Landau 2004).

(2)



The Mari data contribute to the discussion of overt subjects and agreement outside of the finite domain across the world’s languages. The proposed analysis opens a way for comparison of Mari with other typologically distinct non-Uralic languages that allow exceptional case licensing by a preposition heading the embedded clause. It also facilitates our understanding of the structure of PPs, in particular shedding light on the mechanism of Case-assignment.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 describes the data and presents the relevant empirical observations. Section 3 outlines the analysis, whereby the infinitival clauses under consideration are headed by P_{DAT} . Section 4 delves into the morphosyntactic properties of adpositional constructions in Mari, providing an account for the presence of case-marked dependents and possessive agreement. Section 5 summarizes the proposal and Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. The puzzle: Dative subjects and agreement

Meadow Mari, also known as Eastern Mari, is one of the two closely related Mari languages, spoken in the Mari El republic, Russian Federation, by approximately 470 000 speakers (mostly bilingual in Mari and Russian; Eberhard et al. 2022). Meadow Mari is often considered to be the standard variant of Mari and, for the sake of simplicity, throughout the paper I use the name “Mari” to refer to it. The data presented in the paper are from the Morkinsko-Sernur dialect of Mari and were collected during my fieldwork in 2020–2021.

Similarly to many other Uralic languages, Mari is head-final with the fixed SOV word order and frequent subject *pro*-drop. Mari has several types of subordinate clauses, both

DAT subjects and AGR in infinitival clauses licensed by P

finite and non-finite; the non-finite class includes infinitival and nominalized clauses and converbs. The present paper focuses on embedded infinitives derived from a verb using the suffix *-aš*; as illustrated in (3b), they typically appear with an obligatorily controlled subject and do not exhibit any agreement morphology.

- (3) a. Rveze-vlak pečə-m törlat-en-ət.
boy-PL fence-ACC fix-PST-FIN.3PL
'The boys fixed the fence.'
- b. Məj rveze-vlak-əm_i [PRO_i / *nuno_(i) / *nunəlan_(i) pečə-m
I boy-PL-ACC they.NOM they.DAT fence-ACC
törlat-aš-*ət/*əšt] jod-ən-am.
fix-INF-FIN.3PL/3PL force-PST-FIN.1SG
'I forced the boys to fix the fence.'

However, overt dative subjects and agreement marking (AGR) morphologically identical to the possessive suffixes can exceptionally appear in infinitival subject-oriented purpose clauses. AGR is present when the embedded subject is either an overt DP or a silent *pro* and when it is not coreferent with the matrix one (4a). When both an overt subject and AGR are absent, obligatory control is established (4b).

- (4) a. [**Məlanna** kudəvečə-š pur-aš-**na**], təj pečə-m sümər-en-at.
we.DAT yard-ILL go-INF-1PL you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
'You broke the fence for us to get into the yard.'
- b. [**PRO**_i kudəvečə-š pur-aš], təj_i pečə-m sümər-en-at.
yard-ILL go-INF you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
'You broke the fence to get into the yard.'

The dative DP in (4a) is indeed the embedded subject and not a matrix dependent; for instance, it is selected by the embedded predicate (5).

- (5) [**Kogəl'-lan** küjə-aš*(əžə)], duxovka-m čükt-əš-na.
pie-DAT cook-INF-3SG oven-ACC turn.on-PST-FIN.1PL
'We turned on the oven for the pie to cook.'

The DP *kogəl'lan* in (5) cannot be interpreted as an argument of the matrix verb ('turn on') or as an adjunct modifying the main clause event and evidently receives a thematic role from the embedded verb ('cook', intransitive).

3. Proposal: P(DAT)

To account for the empirical observations summarized in Section 2, I propose that the presence of both overt subjects and AGR in infinitival clauses is contingent on the availability

of the dative case, which in turn is assigned by the special P_{DAT} head that selects some, but not all, non-finite clauses as its complement.

Following the literature on Uralic languages, I assume that dative belongs to the same group as spatial cases, which form a sub-class of postpositions. The postpositions are divided into two groups: Case-assigning (with a Case feature) versus non-Case-assigning (without a Case feature); the latter are mostly derived from relational nouns (cf. Dékány and Hegedüs 2015, Dékány 2018, and references therein). Examples include P_{DAT} on the one hand and *nergen* ‘about’, *ončəlno* ‘in front of’, on the other hand.² It is important to note that, despite sharing the name, Uralic postpositions are fundamentally different from, for instance, prepositions in Indo-European languages. As I discuss in more detail in Section 4, Uralic adpositions is a semi-functional category: while they have some semantic content, it is doubtful that they assign a thematic role to the dependent nominal phrase and their function is to assist in Case-licensing of the latter (cf. the case-projection, KP).

I argue that purpose adjunct clauses are inherently embedded under the dative adposition (P_{DAT}).³ As P_{DAT} has a [Case:DAT] feature, it can exceptionally Case-license the embedded subject. The agreement marking on the infinitive also results from an Agree relation being established between a postpositional head and the embedded subject; thus, AGR appears whenever DAT is available. A simplified structure is shown in (6), to be elaborated later in the paper.

(6) [PP [_{FinP} DP_{DAT} infinitive] P_{DAT}]

The proposed analysis is supported by the following data. First, the inflections observed on infinitives are identical to those on postpositions⁴ and in possessive constructions and differ from the exponents of agreement on finite verbs; compare the paradigms in Table 1. The parallelism between infinitives and adpositions is expected, since in both cases the suffixes under consideration spell out the acquired features of P. In the next section I will further consider the matching non-finite agreement and possessive morphology.

²Dékány and Hegedüs (2015) draw a distinction between “non-Case-like” and “Case-like” postpositions. The former (dative, locative, etc.) take a complement in an oblique case. The latter (often derived from a relational noun) take a morphologically unmarked complement, and behave like affixal case suffixes in many respects. I am grateful to Éva Dékány for bringing this to my attention.

³From a semantic point of view this assumption is plausible, since in Mari, similarly to other Uralic language, dative is a directional case that is used to introduce a Recipient, a Goal (an object/location/point in time) or a Vicinal Goal (Ylikoski 2011, Riese et al. 2019).

- (i) a. Kas-lan mo-m kočk-aš əštet?
evening-DAT what-ACC eat-INF make.NPST.2SG
‘What will you make for dinner?’
b. Ivuk kevət-əške kində-lan kaj-en.
Ivuk store-ILL bread-DAT went-PST
‘Ivuk went to the store for bread.’

⁴Across the Uralic languages, postpositions regularly bear a suffix cross-referencing the embedded nominal: cf. (*én-)**elött-em* ‘I-front-1SG’, (*én-)**nál-am* ‘I-ADE-1SG’ in Hungarian.

Table 1. Agreement morphology (Riese et al. 2019)

	POSS	postposition	infinitives	PST (aorist)	PST (PFV)
	<i>el</i> ‘country’	<i>ončəlno</i> ‘in front’	<i>pur-aš</i> ‘to go’	<i>kočk-</i> ‘eat’	<i>lud-</i> ‘read’
1SG	el-em	ončəl _n -em	pur-aš-em	kočk-əm	lud-ən-am
2SG	el-et	ončəl _n -et	pur-aš-et	kočk-əč	lud-ən-at
3SG	el-že	ončəl _n -əžo	pur-aš-əže	kočk-o	lud-ən-∅
1PL	el-na	ončəl _n -əna	pur-aš-na	koč-na	lud-ən-na
2PL	el-da	ončəl _n -əda	pur-aš-da	koč-da	lud-ən-da
3PL	el-əšt	ončəl _n -əšt	pur-aš-əšt	kočk-əč	lud-ən-ət

Second, another dative marker *-lan* can appear on the infinitive itself, in addition to that on the embedded subject. According to the native speakers that I consulted, DAT on the infinitive is always optional, while DAT on the embedded subject is obligatory; so far, I have found no correlation between the absence/presence of DAT on the infinitive and any syntactic, semantic, or pragmatic properties of the sentence. The presence of the second *-lan* is accounted for under the assumption that P_{DAT} may be independently spelled out.

- (7) a. [PRO_i kudəvečə-š pur-aš-**lan**] təj_i pečə-m sümər-en-at.
 yard-ILL go-INF-DAT you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
 ‘You broke the fence to get into the yard.’
- b. [Məlanna kudəvečə-š pur-aš-**lan**-na] təj pečə-m sümər-en-at.
 we.DAT yard-ILL go-INF-DAT-1PL you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
 ‘You broke the fence for us to get into the yard.’

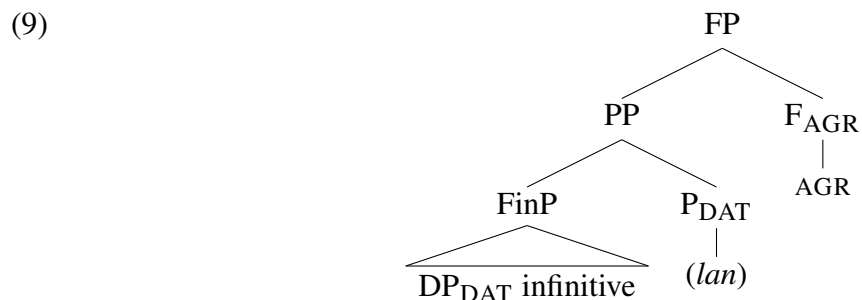
In addition to this, note that when an overt dative suffix appears on the infinitive (7b) it is attached closer to the root and followed by the possessive marker; the alternative order is usually not allowed (8). The order DAT-AGR matches that in PPs and dative pronouns: *mə-lan-na* we-DAT-1PL but not **mə-na-lan* we-1PL-DAT. An alternative analysis whereby AGR results from an agreement relation established between the embedded subject and the non-finite T head predicts the order to be strictly AGR-DAT, contrary to the facts.⁵

⁵Another crucial difference between the finite inflections and the rest of the agreement markers concerns their regularity. Agreement marking on finite verbs is always obligatory and its position is fixed (TENSE-FIN.AGR). However, when it comes to the so-called non-finite agreement marking, that is, the one that appears on infinitives, possessed nominals and dependents of postpositions, the degree of inter- and intra-speaker variation is very high (Riese et al. 2019). As noted in the main text, the order AGR-DAT is typically not allowed; while this is true for plural forms, in case of a 1SG/2SG dependent some speakers prefer the order DAT-AGR. What is crucial is that for each individual consultant the preferred pattern holds for both purpose clauses and PPs.

In addition to this, one of the speakers that I consulted reported that, in sentences with an infinitival purpose clause, AGR on the infinitive is optional when the embedded subject is an overt personal pronoun. I leave this behavior to be examined in detail by future research and would like to tentatively suggest that the unusual properties of AGR in Mari could be accounted for under an analysis in terms of clitic doubling. The clitic may appear either as a direct result of an Agree relation being established between the target DP and a c-commanding functional head (P/F_{AGR} in purpose infinitives) or as a realization of the head of a movement chain (with the embedded subject moving to Spec,PP/FP in purpose infinitives); see Harizanov 2014 and references therein for a discussion of the mechanisms of clitic doubling in the world’s languages.

- (8) **[Məlanna kudəvečə-š pur-aš-na-lan] təj pečə-m sümər-en-at.*
 we.DAT yard-ILL go-INF-1PL-DAT you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
 Intended: ‘You broke the fence for us to get into the yard.’

To summarize, it appears that in Mari purpose clauses an embedded FinP⁶ is merged as a complement of a P_{DAT}, which is either covert or overtly realized as *-lan*. To account for the order of the suffixes, I further suggest that a separate functional projection responsible for agreement (F_{AGR}) is added on top of the PP (9).



While the structure in (9) reflects the morphosyntactic properties of the infinitival purpose clauses under consideration, a successful analysis shall also account for the similarities between purpose infinitives and dative nominals, on the one hand, and possessive constructions, on the other hand. In other words, what is the structure of dative DPs and PPs in general and why are they often accompanied by a seemingly possessive agreement suffix? To address these questions, in the next section I focus on the syntax of adpositional phrases in Mari.

4. The structure of PPs in Mari

4.1 Possession and postpositions

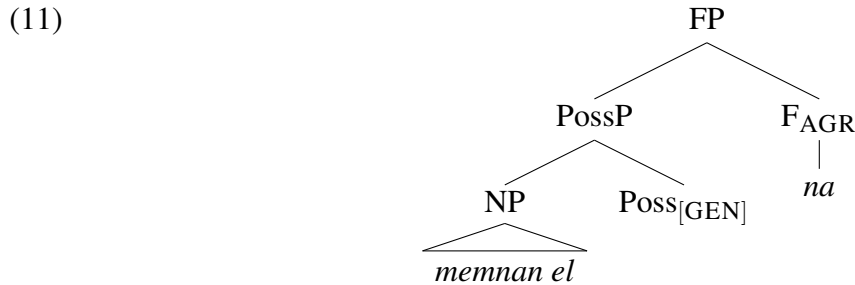
I propose that the alikeness of purpose infinitives, dative pronouns, PPs, and possessive phrases stems from the fact that the infinitival FinPs are merged within a PP headed by the P_{DAT}. In turn, the PP, which belongs to the general class of adpositional structures, originally involved possession: a possessive relation was established between the PLACE nominal or a similar relational noun (Possessum) and the Ground DP (Possessor). Although in Modern Mari the original structure has undergone some change, as will be suggested in this section, the preexisting version of it reveals itself in agreement marking. Let us see how this assumption allows us to account for all the relevant data.

For possessive phrases I adopt Dékány’s (2018) analysis, originally developed for Hungarian; the structure is given in (11), with an example in (10). The possessor and the pos-

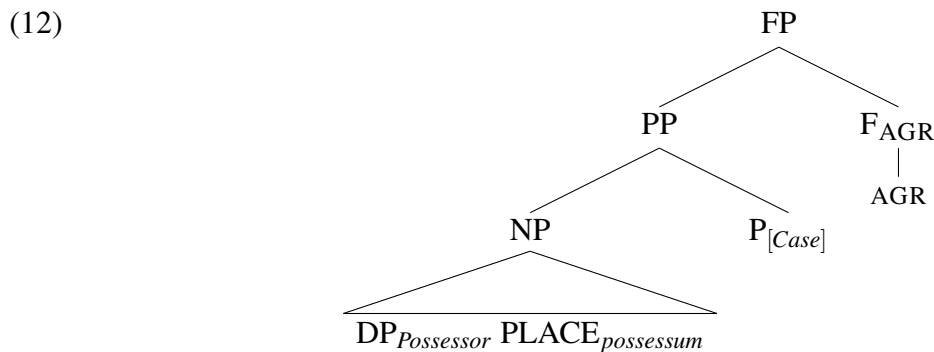
⁶I adhere to the split CP hypothesis and assume that infinitival clauses are FinPs with *-aš* being the exponent of the non-finite T head. As demonstrated in the concluding section of the paper, a CP (ForceP) headed by the complementizer *manən* can be merged on top of the FinP, with the postpositional projections – PP and FP – located between the two.

sessum form a constituent together, which, following Dékány (2018), I take to be an NP. The NP is dominated by two functional projections: PossP is primarily responsible for the genitive Case-assignment and F_{AGR} is responsible for agreement.⁷

- (10) memnan el-na
 we.GEN country-1PL
 ‘our country’



Historically, adpositional phrases belonged to the class of possessive constructions: a possessive relation was established between the PLACE possessum, which was either a silent nominal or a relational noun, and the Ground possessor; see Terzi (2005, 2008), Pantcheva (2008), Noonan (2010), Dékány (2018), to name a few, advocating a similar idea. Thus, the original structure for PPs is derived directly from (11), as shown in (12), with the Case-assigning P head essentially playing the role of the Poss head in (11).



If PPs are derived from the possessive construction with a Case-assigning P being similar in its function to Poss, we expect the complements of the P heads in Mari to be not full DPs but only smaller constituent, PossPs or NPs; a P head combining with a non-finite FinP (and not, for instance, a full CP) matches this pattern. The presence of FP projected by F_{AGR} also follows naturally. Yet a question arises as to whether the Ground-PLACE

⁷For the sake of simplicity, at this point I assume that within the NP the possessor is merged to the left of the possessum and stays in situ, with Case-assignment and agreement proceeding downwards, which results in the possessive morphology in F_{AGR} attaching to the possessum; however, nothing hinges on this assumption. An alternative is to suggest that the possessor is base-generated to the right of the possessum and undergoes movement to Spec,PossP or Spec,FP.

combination shall be postulated in Modern Mari PPs and, most importantly for the present discussion, in purpose clauses. In the next subsection it will be shown how the structure in (12) was reanalysed and how the data support the proposed analysis.

4.2 Remnants of the original PP structure

I propose that in the course of the historical development of Mari the original structure outlined in (12) has undergone some changes. In particular, the complex NP that included the possessum (PLACE) and the possessor (Ground) was simplified: overt PLACE nominals were reanalyzed as Ps and silent PLACE nominals were reduced, leaving the P head to combine directly with the Ground – which can be now an NP, a PossP, or an FP. However, the original structure has been preserved and can still be observed in case of personal pronouns, as shown below.⁸

The behavior of personal pronouns in Modern Mari is illustrated in (13) and (14).⁹ With a non-Case-assigning P the pronoun is always GEN (13). With the Case-assigning P_{DAT} the pronoun is never marked GEN and remains a bare stem (14). In both cases, the pronoun must be cross-referenced by a POSS suffix that attaches to the postposition.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| (13) | a. memnan ončəl̄n-əna
we.GEN in.front.of-1PL
'in front of us' | b. *me ončəl̄n(-əna)
we in.front.of-1PL
Intended: 'in front of us' |
| (14) | a. mə-lan-na
we-DAT-1PL
'to/for us' | b. *mə-lan / *mə-na-lan
we-DAT we-1PL-DAT
Intended: 'to/for us' |

The morphosyntactic properties described above are captured by the analysis put forward in (12); the structural representations are given in (15) and (16). The pronominal dependent is the possessor of the PLACE nominal (the overt *ončəl̄n* in (15) and a silent one in (16)). It is assigned GEN/DAT by the P head and enters an Agree relation with F_{AGR} that results in a possessive marker.

- (15) [FP [PP [NP [DP *memnan*] *ončəl̄n*] [P_{GEN} \emptyset] [F_{AGR} *-na*]]

- (16) [FP [PP [NP [DP *me+lan*] \emptyset Place] [P_{DAT} *-lan*]] [F_{AGR} *-na*]]

A remark shall be made regarding dative personal pronouns. Under the assumption that *-lan* is both the marker of dative case assigned to a DP and the exponent of P_{DAT}, an expected

⁸There are two possible reasons for that. First, personal pronouns are argued to be DPs that cannot be reduced to NPs or PossPs; reducing a silent PLACE in a dative PP with a personal pronoun as the Ground would result in an unsuccessful attempt to merge a full DP as the complement of the P_{DAT}. Second, across the world's languages personal pronouns are shown to be prone to historical change and often preserve the original properties; see, for instance É. Kiss (2013) on personal pronouns in Hungarian.

⁹Notice also that the discussion here is limited to 1st and 2nd person pronouns. 3d person pronouns in Mari are derived from demonstratives and do not conform to the described pattern.

dative form, for instance, of the first person plural pronoun shall be **mə-lan-lan-na* we-DAT-P_{DAT}-1PL. However, such forms are strictly ungrammatical. I assume that they are ruled out post-syntactically: the repeated adjacent material is deleted at PF.

4.3 Postpositions in Modern Mari

As mentioned above, the original syntax of PPs (12) has been preserved for constructions with a pronominal dependent. In other cases, PPs in Modern Mari have a simplified structure compared to that in (12): the overt PLACE nominals became reanalyzed as Ps and the silent PLACE was removed. In the remaining part of the paper I demonstrate how such an analysis accounts for the relevant properties of PPs and, by extension, infinitival purpose clauses embedded under P_{DAT}; due to the limitations of space, I confine myself to the discussion of Case-assigning non-relational postpositions (including P_{DAT}) and I refer the reader to Burukina (2022) for more information on relational Ps.

When a Case-assigning postposition, such as P_{DAT}, combines with an NP, the latter must be an unmarked stem, that is, it can never appear with a genitive suffix. As shown in (17), no possessive morphology is present, unlike in the case of personal pronouns.

- (17) a. *pört-lan / erge-lan*
house-DAT boy-DAT
‘to/for a house’, ‘to/for the boy’
b. *#pört-lan-že / erge-lan-že*
house-DAT-3SG boy-DAT-3SG
Only: ‘to/for his/her house’, ‘to/for his/her boy’

I propose that the NP dependent is merged directly as a complement of the P head. Since the nominal dependent lacks the DP layer, no Case is assigned to it. Furthermore, it is not a valid goal for F_{AGR}, which probes for a DP; hence, the default (null) F_{AGR} is inserted.¹⁰



The analysis in (18) predicts that, in principle, a Case-assigning postposition (such as P_{DAT}) can combine with a nominal projection of different sizes, the only exception being a ‘complete’ DP. Indeed, P_{DAT} takes as its complement not only an NP but also a possessive phrase. In this case, the possessor is genitive and the possessum remains un-

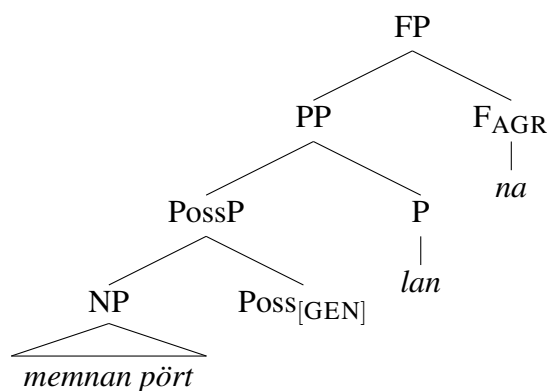
¹⁰Under an analysis in terms of clitic doubling a failure to establish a relation with F_{AGR} results in the absence of a clitic (Preminger 2009).

marked. Interestingly, the possessive marker cross-referencing the possessor can regularly attach either to the postposition or to the possessum (19).

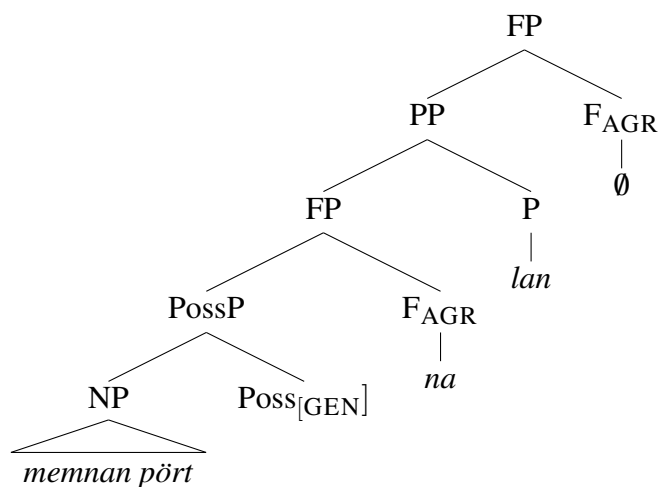
- (19) a. memnan pört-lan-na
 we.GEN house-DAT-1PL
 ‘to/for our house’
 b. memnan pört-na-lan
 we.GEN house-1PL-DAT
 ‘to/for my house’

I argue that the order of the suffixes – DAT-AGR or AGR-DAT – depends on the size of the possessive phrase that P_{DAT} combines with. Recall that in Mari the possessive projection is split into PossP, projected by the case-assigning Poss head, and FP, projected by the agreeing F_{AGR} . P_{DAT} can select either of them as its complement. Combining with a smaller PossP results in the order DAT-AGR (20). Combining with a larger FP gives rise to the order AGR-DAT (21).¹¹

(20)



(21)

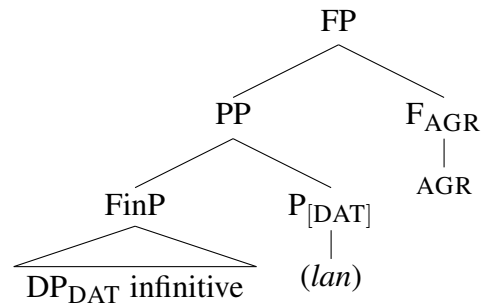


¹¹I assume that the combination AGR-DAT-AGR is ruled out, since the higher F_{AGR} cannot probe a DP that has already established an Agree relation with the lower F_{AGR} .

5. P(DAT) and embedded infinitives

The structure of the dative PPs with an infinitival dependent, repeated in (22), is straightforwardly derived from the general structure of PossPs.

(22)



P_{DAT} takes a FinP as its complement and exceptionally assigns dative case to the embedded subject. The latter is further probed by F_{AGR} ; an Agree relation is established between the two, which results in the corresponding possessive marker, attached to the infinitive (the closest stem). The optionality of the second *-lan* on the infinitive and the order DAT-AGR when it is present also follow: since P_{DAT} is alternatively realized as case on the subject DP it may but does not have to be independently spelled out (cf. Emonds' (1985) Invisible Category Principle).

6. Concluding remarks

The present paper focused on infinitival subject-oriented purpose clauses in Mari, a Uralic language, which allow referential dative subjects and agreement marking on the infinitive. To account for their exceptional behavior, I proposed that overt embedded subjects are licensed by P_{DAT} that heads only some infinitival clauses. Similarly to the spatial adpositions, P_{DAT} projects a complex syntactic structure, which parallels that of possessive constructions. In particular, AGR in the infinitival purpose clauses under consideration results from an agreement relation established between F_{AGR} , which is necessarily merged on top of the PP_{DAT} (as well as any other PP), and the embedded subject.

Examining Mari infinitival clauses allows us to refine the analysis for postpositional constructions in general. The Mari data further contribute to the discussion of exceptional Case marking across the world's languages and highlight the diversity of constructions involving inflected infinitives and embedded dative subjects. For example, similarly looking infinitival purpose clauses with dative subjects are found in Russian, a contact language, where they are commonly analyzed in terms of dative being a structural Case assigned uniformly by the non-finite T head. However, such an analysis cannot be extended to account for the Mari pattern. Embedded dative subjects in Mari are much more restricted and the agreement suffixes on infinitives differ significantly from those used with finite verbs (Section 3); for instance, unlike in Russian, where dative subjects are attested in adjunct clauses of various types, including if-clauses and temporal anteriority clauses, in Mari dative subjects are allowed only in purpose adjuncts.

- (23) [(**Təlat*) *pečə-m sümər-aš(-*na/*et) gən*] *kudəvečə-š pur-əna*.
 you.DAT fence-ACC break-INF-1PL/2SG if yard-ILL go-NPST.1PL
 ‘If we break the fence we will get into the yard.’

The proposed analysis opens several directions for future research. First, as already noted above, it would be interesting to look at other instances of embedded subjects being Case-licensed by a P (or an adposition-like C head) located above the non-finite TP found in the world’s languages, and compare them to the Mari data; see, for instance, Barbosa (2020) on the so-called Prepositional Infinitival Construction in European Portuguese and references therein.

Second, a broader question arises about the categorial status and selectional properties of adpositions in Uralic languages. As discussed in Section 4, P heads in Mari can and shall be compared to Poss heads and thus appear to belong to the nominal domain. Furthermore, both PossP and PP can be dominated by a DP, as shown by the Hill Mari examples in (24), where the discourse marker *-žə* (morphologically identical to the 3SG possessive suffix) is an exponent of the D head (Georgieva 2022).

- (24) a. *Uškal-em-žə-m māj užalem*.
 cow-1SG-DISC-ACC I sell.NPST.1SG
 ‘As for my cow, I will sell (it).’ [Pleshak 2019]
 b. *korz’in loštə-štə-žə ulə*
 basket in.middle-3PL-DISC EX
 ‘The basket is between them’. [ibid.]

However, in case of an infinitival purpose clause, P_{DAT} takes a FinP as its complement. Strikingly, the PP can be dominated by a CP with the complementizer *manən*; as shown in (25), when *manən* is present at the right periphery of the embedded clause, the optional *-lan* and AGR still obligatorily attach to the infinitive, preceding it.

- (25) *Kudəvečə-š pur-aš(-lan)-na manən, təj pečə-m sümər-en-at*.
 yard-ILL go-INF-DAT-1PL COMP you fence-ACC break-PST-FIN.2SG
 ‘You broke the fence for us to get into the yard.’

Thus, in the complex sentences under consideration the same P_{DAT} appears to be a part of an extended verbal projection and resembles a layer within a split CP endowed with A-features; cf. Lohninger et al. (2022) on the left clausal periphery having both A-bar and A properties. Further examination of Mari data will help bring the two contexts (the nominal and the clausal one) together and shed light on the structure of CP and the similarities between CPs and DPs.

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