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MOTION-CUM-PURPOSE AND ASPECT VIA APOPHONY IN EVEN VERBAL DERIVATION: A TENTATIVE DIACHRONIC PROPOSAL[1]

Even (Northern Tungusic < Tungusic) exhibits at least three pairs of verbal derivational suffixes (four denominal verbalizers and one deverbal derivational suffix) the semantic and formal correspondences in which can be analyzed as a case of apophony:

- /ma/ 'go to hunt N' (1); /mi/ 'to hunt N' (2)
- /la/ 'go to gather/fetch N' (3); /li/ 'gather N' (4)
- /na:/ 'go to V (perfective)' (5); /ni/ 'go to V (imperfective)' (6)

(1) *olla-ma-ri-n*[2]
    fish-GO.HUNT-PST-3SG
    'He went fishing'.

(2) *olla-mi-ri-n*
    fish-HUNT-PST-3SG
    'He was fishing'.

(3) *ašatkan mə:-la-ri-n*
    girl water-GO.GATHER-PST-3SG
    'Girl went to fetch water'.

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[2] The Even data is given for the Bistraja variety spoken in Kamchatka (obtained by the authors during summer 2021). We use the transcription reflecting the features specific to Bystraja variety. Note that Even suffixes are subject to vowel harmony rules (see (3)).

(4) *ašatkan møː-li-ri-n*
girl   water-GATHER-PST-3SG
'Girl fetched water'.

(5) *maša nimeːɣ-ne-ri-n   pet'a-tki*
M.   visit-MCP-PST-3SG P.-DIR
'Masha went to visit Petya'.

(6) *mašha nimeːɣ-ni-ri-n   pet'a-tki*
M.   visit-MCP.ATL-PST-3SG P.-DIR
'Masha used to go to visit Petya'.

While the peculiar similarity between these pairs of suffixes was noted at least as early as by [Cincius 1947], the exact meanings of these morphemes were not thoroughly studied previously. On the basis of the fieldwork data collected with the help of speakers of Bystraja Even (Kamchatka, Bystrinsky District), we provide a detailed description of the semantics of constructions involving the morphemes in question and prove that semantic differences reflected in their translations are indeed the part of the suffixes' lexical entry. Additionally, we claim that the semantic correspondences highlighted above can be analyzed as a case of apophony: /iː/ vowel indicates an imperfective event while /aː/ vowel signalizes a perfective event additionally containing a motion-cum-purpose component.

While the exact diachronic scenario for the development of such apophony requires additional research in Tungusic diachronic verb morphology, we provide a tentative development pathway for this apophony pattern in Even. We base our research on the comparative survey of available descriptive materials on other Tungusic languages and previous comparative [Sunik 1962; Robbek 1982; Nedjalkov 1992] as well as diachronic [Cincius 1949, 1975–1977] studies of the language family in question.

As our comparative study shows, the similar apophony exists in Northern Tungusic while in Central Tungusic and Manchu-Jurchen only the variants cognate to some '*/a/' morphemes are present. We provide the following diachronic scenario for the development of apophony-sensitive suffixes. Firstly, at the level of Proto-Northern Tungusic, the verb *waː* 'to kill, to hunt' (see [Cincius 1975–1977] was grammaticalized into the verbalizer -*maː* 'to hunt N' which was neu-

tral to perfective / imperfective distinction. Later, this verbalizer was borrowed into Proto-Central Tungusic (which can be proved by the sound correspondences as reconstructed by [Cincius 1949: 180–181]). The next step involved the development of suffix -*ma:či* 'to hunt N_{IPFV}' via the coalescence of -*ma:* with the general Proto-Tungusic imperfectivizer -*či*. Later in Northern Tungusic the -*ma:či* was truncated to -*mi* while -*ma:* acquired strictly perfective semantics associated with additional motion-cum-purpose component (probably due to the tendency of verbal stems in Northern Tungusic to be perfective without additional aspectual elaborations, see [Nedjalkov 1992]). Later, the correspondence between -*ma:* and -*mi:* lead to the development of -*li:* from -*la:* in Even and Evenki and Even-specific further establishment of -*ni:* as an imperfective variant of a Tungusic-common -*na:* motion-cum-purpose marker.

Abbreviations

3 — 3rd person; DIR — directive; GATHER — verbalization 'to gather x'; GO.GATHER — verbalization 'go to gather x'; GO.HUNT — verbalization 'go to hunt x'; HUNT — verbalization 'to hunt x'; MCP — motion cum purpose; MCP.ATL — motion cum purpose atelic; NFUT — nonfuture tense; PST — past tense; SG — singular.

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