A partial and impartial view on partitives

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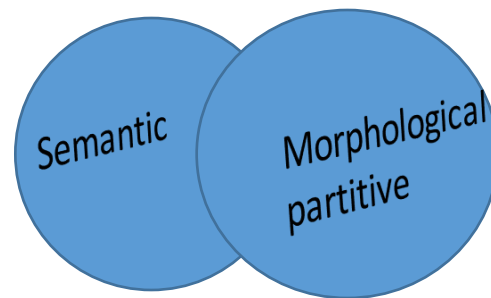
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Workshop on Partitives

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Semantics and morphology: a "partitive" mismatch

- Several Uralic languages have cases that are referred to as "partitive".

- The semantics of these cases diverges from the generally assumed notion of "partitive".

Semantic   Morphological partitive

- It is useful to distinguish between
- "partitive semantics" (and cases that express it)
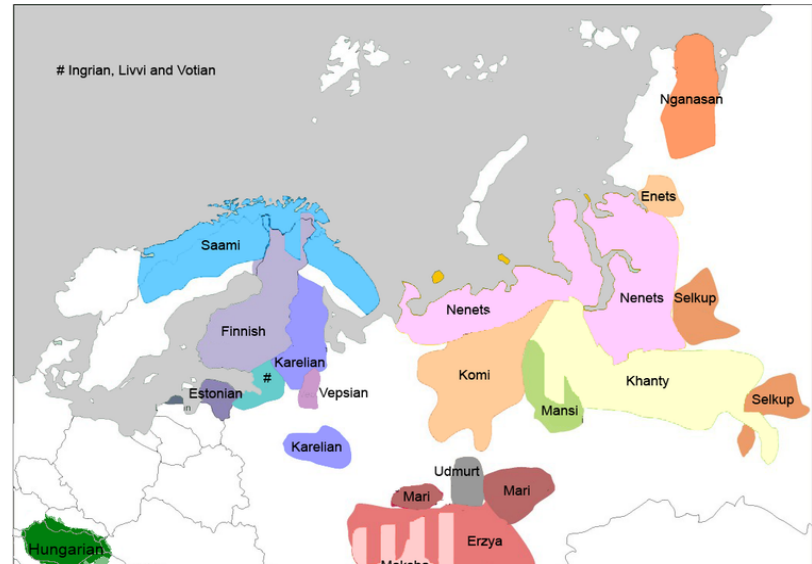- and "partitive cases" (and the semantics they express).

Partitive in the case paradigm

Morphological partitives:

Finnic, Sami

Semantic partitives:

Almost all Uralic cases have one
or more cases for "separation"

Partitive and source cases: Estonian

Nominative	book	raamat
Genitive	of a book	raamatu
Partitive	**(of) a book**	**raamatu-t**
Illative	into the book	raamatu-sse
Inessive	in a book	raamatu-s
Elative	from (inside) a book	raamatu-st
Allative	onto a book	raamatu-le
Adessive	on a book	raamatu-l
Ablative	from the book	raamatu-lt
Translative	in(to), as a book	raamatu-ks
Terminative	until a book	raamatu-ni
Essive	as a book	raamatu-na
Abessive	without a book	raamatu-ta
Comitative	with a book	raamatu-ga

Source cases: ablative, elative, delative, egressive, and exessive

- Ablative (Erzya, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Mansi, Vepsian, Votic, etc) denotes movement away from something (e.g., away from the house)
- Elative (Erzya, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Lule Sámi, Pite Sámi, Votic, etc) denotes "out of something" (e.g., out of the house).
- Delative (Hungarian) denotes movement from the surface (e.g., from (the top of) the house)
- Egressive (Veps, Udmurt) marking the beginning of a movement or time (e.g., beginning from the house)
- Exessive (Karelian, Ingrian, Livonian, Votic, Estonian, etc) transition away from a state (from a house)
- Genitive-ablative (Komi) source of information, resource

What is the partitive? Separation, motion…

… and identical matter (identity)

Separation, motion, identity

- In terms of spatial relationships, the Partitive Concept instantiates a **separative relationship** of an individual or matter to another individual or matter.
- In terms of identity, the partitive instantiates **the same kind identity** (not difference or similarity).

Kinds of N and amounts of N

"separable part of N that **belongs to the same kind** with N"
versus
"amount of N"

Some/part of my children vs some water

Part/kind-of-N and TAM extensions

The emergence of functional partitives, the TAM categories

a. "part of N" →

b. → "part of V" (N-obj has the morphological partitive marking)

c. → (N-object is a non-finite, deverbal nominalization and partitive marked)

d. → "indirect evidence" (V-nonfin (main predicate) has the morphological partitive formative)

e. → "part of/incomplete evidence" (V-nonfin (main or embedded predicate) has the morphological partitive formative)

f. → "part of/incomplete evidence for the completion/completability of the event" (partitive object case)

Amount-of-N

The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking
a. "part of N" (the morphological partitive marking has disappeared) →
b. → "amount of N" (has the morphological partitive marking)
c. → "amount of V" (N has the morphological partitive marking)
d. → "N-obj" (N has the morphological partitive marking)
e. → Adpostion "N-obj" (N has the morphological partitive marking)

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(7) Estonian

Mari   *sõ-i*   **?õuna /**   **õuna-st.**

M[NOM]   eat-PST.3SG   apple.PAR   apple-ELA

'Mary ate some quantity of the apple.' (bounded event, nonquantized apple)

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a.   *Mari*   *sõ-i*   **õuna**.
      M[NOM]   eat-PST.3SG   apple.PAR
      'Mary was eating an apple.' (unbounded event, quantized or nonquantized apple)

Aspectual object case alternation

Mari   *küpsetas*   *kooki*.
Mari   baked   cake.PAR
'Mary was baking a cake.'
(atelic, imperfective, unbounded VP)

Mari   *küpsetas*   *koogi*.
Mari   baked   cake.ACC
'Mary baked a cake.'
(telic, perfective, bounded VP)

Some verbs are atelic (thus object is partitive)

Mari	*kuul-is*	***lindu.***
M[NOM]	hear-PST.3SG	bird.PAR

'Mary heard a bird.' (unbounded event, quantized bird)

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V+v(present participle suffix)+t(partitive)

Mari	*kuul-is*	**lindu**	*laul-va-**t**.*
M[NOM]	hear-PST.3SG	bird.PAR	sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR

'Mary heard a singing bird.'

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Mari   *kuul-is,*   *et*   *lind*   *laul-va-t.*
M[NOM]   hear-PST.3SG   that   bird[NOM]   sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR
'Mary heard that the bird was singing.'

Mari　　*ütle-s,*　　　*et*　　*lind*　　　*laul-va-**t**.*
M[NOM]　say-PST.3SG　that　bird[NOM]　sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR
'Mary said that the bird was singing.'

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*(Mari   ütle-s,   et)   lind   laul-va-**t**.*
M[NOM]   say-PST.3SG   that   bird[NOM]   sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR
'(Mary said that) the bird was singing.'

Indirect Evidential

Lind   laul-va-*t*.

bird[NOM]   sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR

'Allegedly, the bird is singing.'

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Bounded event, partitive (psych predicates)

Silvi	*üllata-s*	*Toomas-t.*
S[NOM]	surprise-PST.3SG	T-PAR

'Silvia surprised Thomas.'

The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking

a.   "part of N"

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Estonian

noorim   **mu**   **laste-st**
young.SUP   SG1.GEN   child.PL-ELA
'the youngest of my children'

(7) Estonian

Mari   *sõ-i*   ***?õuna /***   ***õuna-st.***
M[NOM]   eat-PST.3SG   apple.PAR   apple-ELA
'Mary ate some quantity of the apple.' (bounded event, nonquantized apple)

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kaks　　　　***jõge***

two[NOM]　　river.PAR

'two rivers'

A digression before number phrases with partitive Uralic semantic partitive and information structure

- In the Uralic languages, the semantic partitive is generally expressed by the elative case. If there is no dedicated elative case, then the semantic partitive is expressed by the ablative.

- The morphological partitive is more characteristic of pseudopartitive constructions. Pseudopartitive constructions and number phrases are expressed predominantly via juxtaposition.

- Objects are accusative marked or unmarked depending on their information structural status

Unmarked/accusative alternation
New versus old information

Udmurt: unmarked/accusative opposition

     a.   *n'an'*   *s'i-i*

           bread[ACC]   eat-INF

           'to eat (a piece of) bread.'

     b.   *n'an'-ez*   *s'i-i*

           bread- ACC   eat-INF

           'to eat (a piece of) this bread up.'

Nominative argument heads for telic… remnant of information structural DOM

The state dried up two rivers
(one would expect Accusative
in Estonian)

Riik kuivatas ära

kaks	jõge
two[NOM]	river.PAR

'two rivers'

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a. *Mari sõ-i **õuna**.*
   M[NOM] eat-PST.3SG apple.PAR
   'Mary was eating an apple.' (unbounded event, quantized or nonquantized apple)

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a. *Mari*   *armasta-b*   **Jaanus-t**.
M[NOM]   love-3SG   J-PAR
'Mary loves John.'

b. *Mari*   *vaata-b*   **jõge**.
M[NOM]   look-1SG   river.PAR
'Mary is looking at the river.'

c. *Mari*   *kuul-is*   **lindu**.
M[NOM]   hear-PST.3SG   bird.PAR
'Mary heard a bird.'

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mööda   ***jõge***
along   river.PAR
'along the river (prepositional phrase)'

jõge   *mööda*
river.PAR   along
'along the river (postpositional phrase)'

Summary

- There are many Source (separative) cases in a language with a developed morphological partitive.
- There is a mismatch between part-of and amount-of semantics vs the partitive case form.
- The interaction between TAM, definiteness, and the partitive can be observed in many areas.
  - Aspectual DOM
  - Definiteness effects, telicity, and partitive arguments
  - Case on non-finites and verb stems
- Partitive has also become an abstract case.

Partitive: stages of development in Estonian

1) an NP-stage (Krifka 1992), that is, the stage where the meaning of the partitive pertains to parts of a whole

2) an aspectual stage (Larjavaara 1991, Laanest 1975, Krifka 1992),

3) epistemic modal and evidential phase (Campbell 1991, Aikhenvald 2004).

- The NP-partitive relates to the referential properties of nouns
- The aspectual partitive marks objects in sentences describing incomplete events, and
- The partitive evidential appears in sentences that encode incomplete evidence compared to the expectation of complete evidence

- See my article in Luraghi and Huumo's book for the references and further details (only the part of numeral heads and nominative marking is an addition).