

Diagnosing unaccusatives in Udmurt

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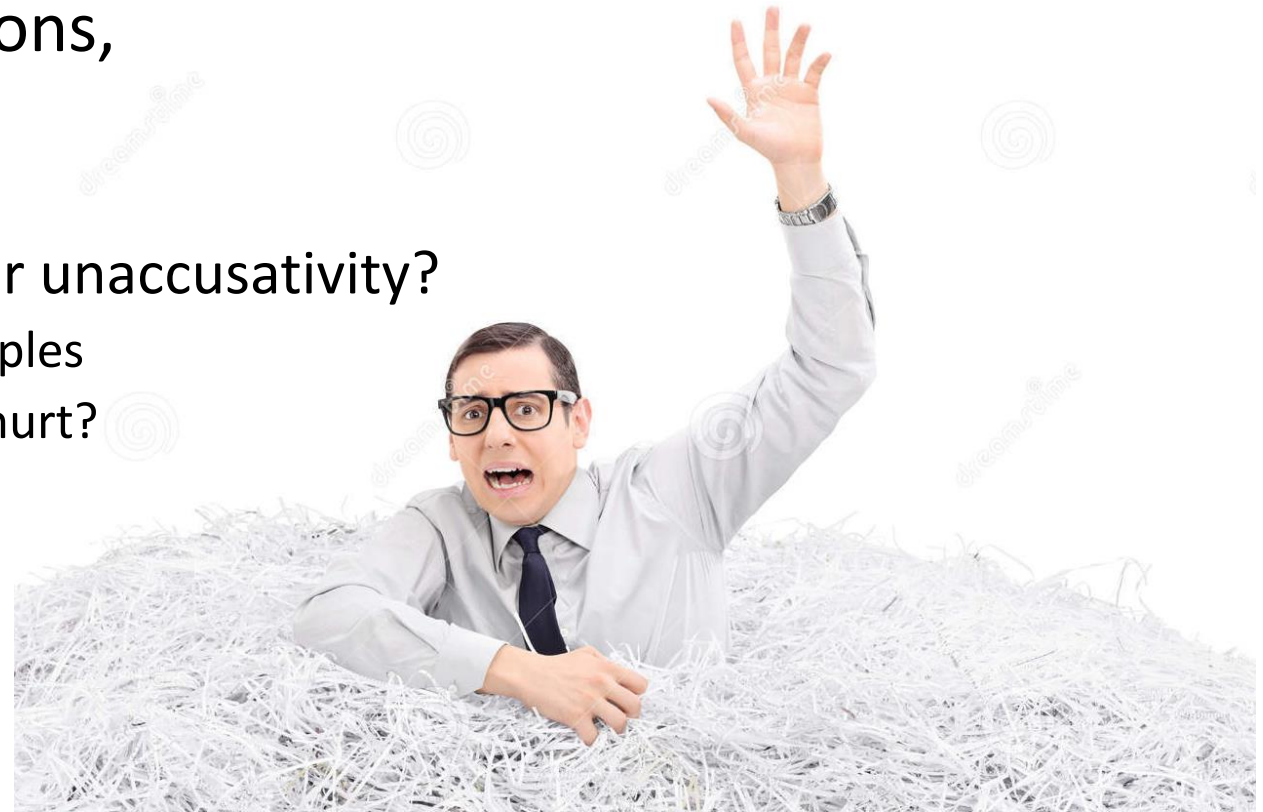
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What is this talk about?

- raising rather than solving a problem,
- questioning my previous assumptions,
- creating two problems of one:
 - Are *-(e)myn* participles a valid test for unaccusativity?
 - Providing an analysis of *-(e)myn* participles
 - How to diagnose unaccusatives in Udmurt?



Split intransitivity

- cross-linguistically, intransitive Vs can be divided into two, semantically and syntactically distinct classes (Perlmutter 1978):
 - **unaccusatives** (subject = internal argument)
 - **unergatives** (subject = external argument)
- difference in syntactic behavior → syntactic tests for unaccusativity/unergativity
(! not merely a distinction between intransitive Vs with an Agent or a Patient subject)

Split intransitivity as a scalar phenomenon

Table 1. *The auxiliary selection hierarchy for Italian verbs (after Sorace 2000)*

Semantic category	Example	Auxiliary	ASH type
Change of location	<i>cadere fall</i>	E <i>essere be</i>	CORE UNACCUSATIVE
Change of state	<i>nascere be born</i>		↓
Continuation of pre-existing state	<i>sopravvivere survive</i>		
Existence of state	<i>esistere exist</i>		PERIPHERAL UNACCUSATIVE
Uncontrolled process	<i>brillare shine</i>		PERIPHERAL UNERGATIVE
Controlled process (motional)	<i>correre run</i>		↑
Controlled process (non-motional)	<i>lavorare work</i>	A <i>avere have</i>	CORE UNERGATIVE

(Bard et al. 2010: 329)

Sorace (2000):

cross-linguistically and language-internally,

- **peripheral** unacc.-s and unerg.-s may show **variation** wrt certain syntactic properties
- **core** Vs behave **uniformly**
- the unacc./unerg. nature of a V or construction is correlated with ***telicity***, ***dinamicity***, and ***agentivity***

The unaccusative-unergative distinction in Udmurt

- understudied topic (Asztalos 2008, 2011)
- predicative participles in *-(e)myn*: a potential syntactic test for unaccusativity
 - *-(e)m-yn* < PTCP.PRF-INE
 - often considered as a resultative construction (e.g., Leinonen & Vilkuna 2000, Winkler 2001)
 - nominal predicates
 - Asztalos (2008, 2011) examines their distribution → they can be formed either of
 - **transitive** Vs (→ sort of a passive), or
 - of **unaccusatives** (→ intransitive passives, cf. Alberti 1996)
 - the subject of the construction is an internal argument; sort of an unaccusativity test
 - no further potential tests mentioned in the literature

-(e)myn participles with transitive (1) and unaccusative (2) Vs

(1) *Budapešt-yn so 1985-eti ar-yn ik pott-emyn.*

Budapest-INE 3SG[NOM] 1985-ORD year-INE EMP publish-PTCP

‘In Budapest it has been published in 1985.’ (Škljaev 2000: 180)

(2) *Pudo-os bert-emyn.*

domestic_animal-PL go.home-PTCP

‘The domestic animals are gone home.’ (Škljaev 2000: 143)

Intransitive Vs in the *-(e)myn* construction in the corpus of Asztalos (2008, 2011)

unaccusatives*	unergatives*
34	1

luyny 'to be', *potyny* 'to originate; to seem; to exit', *kyldyny* 'to form, to develop', *lukaškyny* 'to assemble together, to accumulate', *byryny* 'to end; to run out', *pukšyny* 'to be placed', *intyjaškyny* 'to be placed', *karjaškyny* 'to nest; to be placed', *kylyny* 'to stay, to remain', *gerdžaškyny* 'to be attached to', *pećatlaškyny* 'to be printed', *pyćany* 'to be absorbed', *ćigyny* 'to break', *džokany* 'to suffocate; to be ruined', *söriškyny* 'to become ruined; to become disabled', *kudžyny* 'to get drunk', *ebylany* 'to weaken; to freeze', *zoltiškyny* 'to tense', *posiškyny* 'to get crumpled/creased', *jormyny* 'to anguish', *dašaškyny* 'to prepare for', *kyliškyny* 'to undress', *pertćiškyny* 'to be solved', *udaltyny* 'to succeed', *pormyny* 'to succeed', *zoltiškyny* 'to tighten, to tense', *lyktyny* 'to come', *potylyny* 'to come out, to exit', *pyryny* 'to enter', *vuyny* 'to arrive', *bertyny* 'to go home, to return', *vyžylyny* 'to cross', *ušyny* 'to fall', *ležiškyny* 'to descend'

dyšetskyny 'to study'

→ or rather: 'to become a literate'

→ change-of-state

*on the basis of Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995)

New(er) data provide counterexamples

- **new data:**

- collected by a questionnaire in 2013 in Izhevsk, 6 informants
- search queries on Udmurt Corpora and Google in 2022
- grammaticality judgements of a native speaker (2022)

- **peripheral unergatives** (cf. Sorace 2000) in the *-(e)myn* construction:

(3) *Anaj-e* (...) *as* *vakyt-a-z* *kuas-en* ***byžyl-emyn.***

mother-1SG self period-INE-3SG ski-INS **run-PTCP**

'My mother skied in her youth.' (Udmurt Corpora)

(4) *Soos* (...) *žad'-emyn* *eššo,* *palatka-os-yn* ***iž-emyn.***

3PL become_tired-PTCP also tent-PL-INE **sleep-PTCP**

'They are tired as well, they have slept in tents.' (Udmurt Corpora)

- also: ***lobany*** 'to fly', ***ektyny*** 'to dance', ***šerekjany*** 'to laugh'

Counterexamples: core unergatives in the *-(e)myn* construction

- *užany* ‘to work’: 1247 hits, *šudyny* ‘to play’: 144 hits
- also: *šutetskyny* ‘to rest’, *veraškyny* ‘to talk’, *keretyny* ‘to quarrell’

(5) *Zoja Jermakova 30 ar uža-myn ferma-yn.*

Zoja Ermakova 30 year **work**-PTCP farm- INE

‘Zoja Ermakova worked 30 years in a farm.’ (Udmurt Corpora)

(6) (...) *tunsyko lu-o-z, kyće šemja-yn vordsk-emy, kytyn*
interesting be-fut-3sg what_kind_of family-ine be_born-ptcp where

dyšetšk-emy, kyće šudon-jos-yn šud-emy (...) V. E. Zubkov.

study-PTCP what_kind_of game-PL-INS **play**-PTCP V. E. Zubkov

‘(...) it will be interesting to know how the family was in which V.E. Zubkov was born, where he studied, what games he played (...).’ (Udmurt Corpora)

- However, not all unergatives seem to be grammatical in the construction:

(7) **Ad'ami kyzj-emyn.*

man cough-PTCP

'The man coughed.' (constructed)

- + no occurrences with *kalgyny*, *porjany*, *jumšany* 'to walk', *kižńyny* 'to sneeze', *vukyštyny* 'to yawn', *dyrekjany*, *zurektyny* etc. 'to tremble', *žingyrtyny* 'to ring', *lakyrtyny* 'to rattle', *ńoryny* 'to wail', *šukyrtyny* 'to whisper', *guretyny* 'to clamour', *mjaugetyny* 'to meow', *utyny* 'to bark', *žal'tyrtyny* 'to jangle', *vorekjany*, *pištyny*, *čil'ekjany* 'to glitter', *žingyrtyny* 'to phone', *kešaškyny* 'to shout', *labyrtyny* 'to talk' etc.

Counterexamples: transitives with the **external** argument as the subject of the *-(e)myn* constr.

(8) *Talant-jos no vań. Tol'ko **kritika** soos-ty **adź-emyn** övöl na.*
talent-PL also be only critique 3PL-ACC see-PTCP be.NEG yet
'There are talents, as well. The critique just hasn't seen them yet.'

(Škljaev 2000: 159)

Possible explanations

- 1) *-(e)myn* is a valid test for unaccusativity, but even core unergatives vary wrt their ability to occur in the construction
 - ! What about Sorace's (2000) hierarchy?
- 2) *-(e)myn* is a valid test for unaccusativity, but *-(e)myn* forms syntactically different constructions with unacc.-s than with unerg.-s
- 3) the *-(e)myn* test is not a reliable test for unacc., *-(e)myn* constructions express sg else
 - Are there any syntactic tests at all that are able to distinguish between unaccusatives and unergatives in Udmurt?
 - If not, what about the cross-linguistic validity of the unacc./unerg. split?

Scenario 2: Two different constructions?

- One that has the internal argument as the subject
- Another that has the external argument as the subject

Scenario 2: Two different constructions?

- **Resultativity?** (cf. Leinonen & Vilkuna 2000, Winkler 2001)

- **core unaccusatives:** ✓

(9) *Vańmyz umoj, vań užpum-jos **pertćišk-emyn**.*

everything good all problem-PL **get_solved**-PRCP

‘Everything is fine, all problems are solved.’ (Shkljajev 2000: 87)

(10) *Koľa kemalaś **vu-emyn** ņi. (constructed)*

Kolja for_a_longtime **arrive**-PTCP already

‘“Kolja has arrived a long time ago (Kolja has been here for a long time).”’

Scenario 2: Two different constructions? (cont.)

- **Resultativity?**

- **core unergatives:** it's not necessarily the case:

Context: 'This 50 year old men has never had a rest so far.'

(11) *Jalan uža-myn - byžyl-emyn.*

always work-PTCP run_about-PTCP

'He was always working and running about.' (Udmurt Corpora)

(12) *Soos keret-emyn övöl (...).*

3PL quarrell-PTCP be.NEG

'They havem't/didn' quarrell.' (Udmurt Corpora)

Scenario 2: Two different constructions? (cont.)

- **Telicity?**

- **core unaccusatives:** the construction is typically telic:

(13) *Berlo 10 ar kuspyn Udmurťi-yn udmurt kyl-ez dyšet-iś*
last 10 year during Udmurtia-INE Udmurt language-ACC learn-PTCP.IMP
pinal-jos-len lyd-zy 92 śurs-ly kulesm-emyn.
child-PL-GEN number-3PL 92 thousand-dat decrease-PTCP

‘During the past 10 years the number of children learning Udmurt **has decreased to 92 thousand.**’ (Udmurt Corpora)

- **core unergatives:** the construction is typically atelic:

(14) *Zoja Jermakova 30 ar uža-myn ferma-yn.*
Zoja Ermakova 30 year work-PTCP farm-INE

‘Zoja Ermakova worked 30 years in a farm.’ (Udmurt Corpora)

Scenario 2: Two different constructions? (cont.)

- *-(e)myn* constr.s can be combined with a **copula** independently of the unacc./unerg. nature of the V (anteriority):

(15) *Vordišk-em gurt-e lykt-emyn val bydes strana.*
be_born-PTCP.PRF village-ILL come-PTCP COP.PST whole country
‘The whole village had come to his native village.’ (Udmurt Corpora)

(16) *Ta nylkyšno kema ar-jos čože uža-myn val ňi.*
this lady long year-PL for work-PTCP COP.PST already
‘This lady had been working for long years already.’ (Udmurt Corp.)

Scenario 3: *-(e)myn* is not a reliable test for unaccusativity

- Are there any other syntactic tests that are able to distinguish between unaccusatives and unergatives in Udmurt?
 - a potential candidate: attributive perfect participles in *-(e)m*
 - however, these can also be formed of unergatives:

(17) (...) *tatyn uža-m* *ad'ami sopala* *uly-ny*
here **work**-PTCP.PRF man to_that_direction live-INF
košk-em.

go_away-EV.3SG

‘The man who worked here left for living in that area.’ (Udm. Corp.)

Scenario 3: Are *-(e)myn* constructions rather some kind of a perfect tense?

- anterior action/event which has some impact in the reference time on the subject?

BUT:

(18) *Ta – Rossi-yś nyryśeti-os-yz pöl-yś ximik,*
this Russia-ELA first-PL-DET among-ELA chemist
ul-emyn 1867-ti – 1896-ti ar-jos-y.
live-PTCP 1867-ORD 1896-ORD year-PL-ILL (Udmurt Corpora)
'She is one of the first women chemists from Russia, she lived between
1867 and 1896.'

- A further complication: indirect evidential shade/epistemic modal value?
(pc. Yulia Speshilova)

How to go further...?

- Bifurcating topic:

- Providing an analysis of *-(e)myn* constructions

- The **nominal** nature of *-(e)myn* predicates may have a relevance

- Finding evidence for split intransitivity in Udmurt – further potential unaccusativity/unergativity tests?

- Tests for external/internal nature of the subject

Thank you for your attention!



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