

The Fall and Rise of Partitive in Jõgõperä Votic¹

In Votic the Partitive marker has several allomorphs, one of them (-*a/-ä*) does not contain a consonant. In Kattila Votic, when this Partitive marker is attached to the stems ending in -*a/-ä*, the resulting forms have a long final vowel, e.g. *päivä* 'day:PART' [Ariste 1968: 20]. Thus, words that have stems ending in -*a/-ä* and do not have consonant gradation, can have the same forms for Partitive and Genitive (i.e. *einä* 'hay:PART/GEN', *senä* 'word:PART/GEN'). In Jõgõperä Votic, which is notable for a strong apocope, the Partitive forms of this type have lost the length of the final vowel. In the dictionary of Jõgõperä Votic [Tsvetkov 1995] (presenting the data from the beginning of the 20th century) the corresponding forms are spelled as *einä* 'hay:PART', *senä* 'word:PART'. These forms differ from Genitive forms, which have a prolonged vowel (*einä* 'hay:GEN', *senä* 'word:GEN'), but are the same as Nominative forms (*einä* 'hay:NOM', *senä* 'word:NOM'). In contemporary Jõgõperä Votic the apocope developed even further, and the Genitive forms also lost the length of the final vowel. Thus, in contemporary Jõgõperä Votic we would expect a very specific situation: in many nouns three grammatical cases (Nominative, Genitive and Partitive) would have the same form, i.e. *kana* 'hen:NOM/GEN/PART', *iha* 'sleeve:NOM/GEN/PART', *tila* 'bed:NOM/GEN/PART', *kala* 'fish:NOM/GEN/PART', *griba* 'mushroom:NOM/GEN/PART', *raha* 'money:NOM/GEN/PART', *tara* 'garden:NOM/GEN/PART'. This situation looks really weird: some most important grammatical oppositions (for example, the opposition between a complete and incomplete action) are going to be lost due to the similarity of the case forms. However, the data collected from the contemporary Votic speakers show that the merging of case forms is not so widespread as it could be. Many nouns of the discussed type have an alternative variant of Partitive with a geminated consonant in the stem: *kana* ~ *kanna* 'hen:PART', *iha* ~ *ihha* 'sleeve:PART', *tila* ~ *tilla* 'bed:PART', *kala* ~ *kalla* 'fish:PART', *griba* ~ *gribba* 'mushroom:PART', *raha* ~ *rahha* 'money:PART', *tara* ~ *tarra* 'garden:PART'.

In my presentation I would like to discuss the reasons why and what for these forms with a geminated consonant have appeared.

There is no doubt that this gemination is the so-called "secondary gemination" existing in many dialects of Finnic languages (of Ingrian, Estonian, Finnish, Livonian). This type of gemination was not observed in central Votic dialects, but it exists in Eastern Votic and Lower Luga Votic varieties. In Jõgõperä Votic secondary gemination is found both in nouns and verbs, but it is not so widespread as in the neighboring Luuditsa dialect. However, according to [Tsvetkov 1995] the discussed class of nouns (with -*a/-ä* stem and without consonant gradation) did not have secondary gemination in Partitive forms (there are forms like *kana*, *iha* but not *kanna*, *ihha* in the dictionary). Thus, one can claim that gemination in these forms is a recent phenomenon.

The main problem of this recent gemination is that it contradicts the phonetic rules that define its appearance. There are different types of secondary gemination but in all cases it appears only before a long vowel (in [Tauli 1956: 147] the gemination is explained as a result of a more intense articulation of the consonant due to the following long vowel). However, in forms *kanna*, *ihha*, etc. the vowel after the geminate is short. The hypothesis that the final vowel shortened later than the gemination developed does not look reliable, since already in [Tsvetkov 1995] the Partitive forms end in a short vowel. From my point of view, there is only one good explanation of this phenomenon: gemination in the Partitive forms was borrowed from Ingrian language. The following facts support this hypothesis: a) there is gemination in the corresponding nouns in Ingrian; b) there was a mixed Votic-Ingrian population in Jõgõperä; c) secondary gemination is widespread in the neighboring Luuditsa variety, where contacts with Ingrians were even more

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intensive than in Jõgõperä; d) the variation of forms with and without gemination looks rather natural for the borrowed forms, but it would not suit to the situation when gemination developed due to some phonetic causes; e) the similarity between Lower Luga Votic (including Jõgõperä) and Ingrian gemination was already observed in previous research (e.g. [Viitso 1964]).

The conducted analysis allows making two important conclusions:

a) The forms with secondary gemination can appear in a language not only as a result of phonetic processes but also as a result of borrowing. Consequently, secondary geminates can arise not only before a long vowel.

b) A tendency to merge two different cases can be often observed in a language. However, a language can develop some new mechanisms to avoid this merging. Sometimes these new mechanisms can arise after the merging of cases is complete (like in Veps, where Elative and Ablative were merged with Inessive and Adessive correspondingly, but later a new Elative and Ablative developed). Sometimes (like in Votic) a new mechanism is introduced only for those types of stems, for which the old system of differentiation does not work any longer.

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