Uralic Essive

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This paper wishes to contribute to the central topics of the workshop by discussing various formal and functional aspects of the *essive* in the Uralic languages. The *essive* can be considered a special feature of the Uralic case system; although only a part of present-day Uralic languages (mainly Fennic and Hungarian) have the *essive* in their case inventories. Some other languages may employ other case forms to serve as an essive, i.e. the *translative* (Khanty, Mordvin), the *locative* (Nothern Khanty), or *lative* (Mari). In Veps, the *essive* converged with the *genitive* and *accusative*.

The paper argues for the following points.
  (1) The status of the *essive* in Uralic is not unproblematic. First of all, the *essive* is not a type of case such as the *accusative* or *locative* which mark referential nominals, but rather a predicative marker.
  (2) The *essive* in Uralic is the marker of nominal or adjectival secondary predicates only. It does not apply to non-verbal main predications, and thus differs from predicative cases found in, for instance, Russian and Kolyma Yukaghir.
  (3) How to accommodate the *essive* in the cases systems of the Uralic languages? The name suggests that the *essive* is a spatial case. Moreover, the *essive* in Fennic originates from Proto-Uralic locative *-na*. There is no straightforward explanation for the development of the *locative* into the *essive.*
  (4) The constituents marked by the *essive* form a sub-class of or they partially overlap the class of depictives. They can be set apart from converbal depictives which do not allow the *essive* (interestingly, there are many examples of converbs taking other cases).
  (5) The *translative*, also a marker of secondary predications which do not function as a depictive, may take up the *essive* interpretation.
  (6) The *essive*-phrase often allows for a manner interpretation, that is why several languages allow the co-ordination of the *essive* with a converb. Languages may even have minimal pairs of genuine *essive* opposed to *essives* with a manner interpretation.

These points define the area in which the *essive* could be studied: referential vs. predicational; secondary vs. main predication; spatial vs. non-spatial; *essive* vs. *translative*; depictive vs. manner.

Examples

Essive
Fin.   Heikki on Jämsässä lääkäri<u>na</u>
         'Heikki is (working as) a doctor in Jämsä.'
Hung.   Katona<u>ként</u> voltam Tallinnban.
         'I was as a soldier in Tallinn.'
Saami   guolle<u>n</u>
         'as a fish'
Votic   Elin setamehe<u>nnä</u> tallinnaza
         'I was as a soldier in Tallinn.'

Translative
Khanty   Ma luwe:l ma jike:m<u>mi</u> lu:nerle:m
         'I consider him my son.'
Mord.   Kudo<u>ks</u>
         'to (as) the house'

Coordination of essive & converb
Fin.   vasynee<u>nä</u> ja jalkojaan oiko<u>en</u>
         'tired and stretching his legs'

Essive versus manner
Hung.   Pál <u>mint</u> tanár / tanár<u>ként</u> dolgozik.
         'Paul is working as / as if he is a teacher.'
Hung.   Mari nyers<u>en</u> ette meg a halat. - Mary szép<u>en</u> énekel.
         'Mary ate the fish raw.'   'Mary sings beatifully.'

Predicative case
Kolyma ūjs'ī omos'e šoromo<u>lek</u>
         'The workman is a good person.'

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