Emergent constructions in Nganasan conversation
(Larisa Leisiö, University of Eastern Finland)

Interactional linguistics began to develop in the1960s and 1970s in the realm of sociological conversation analysis, ethnomethodology, and functional linguistics. Interactional-linguistic analysis in its early days concentrated on the conversational structures in order to explain how language and its particular elements serve conversational structures and participants' interactional activities. More recently interactional linguistics has also explored the relationships between conversational structures and syntax (e.g. contributions in the volumes by Ochs et al. and Auer & Pfänder). One of those who directed the attention of interactional linguistics to grammar was Paul Hopper (1987), who coined the term *emergent grammar* borrowing it from the context of *emergent culture* in the sense of culture that is "emergent, temporal, and disputed", as the cultural anthropologist Clifford (1986: 19) put it. As a social phenomenon and a part of culture, speech "is temporal; its structure is always deferred, always in a process and never arriving, and therefore emergent". This paper was a strong manifesto against the abstract I-language construct: grammar is not "to be understood as a pre-requisite for discourse, a prior possessor attributable in identical form to both speaker and hearer. Its forms are not fixed templates but are negotiable in face-to-face interaction..." (Hopper 1987: 141). Although emergent grammar does not dispute the existence of stable grammatical units, its aim is to "explore the leading edges and the territory around" (Hopper 2011: 28).

Two important features of spoken language are temporality and projectability (discussed in detail by Auer 2009a & 2009b). Temporality means that speech unfolds linearly in time, containing all repairs and restarts that are erased in written language; projectability means that the participants to the interaction create shared expectations concerning the development of speech and the moments in which the turn can shift from one speaker to another – turn completion points (Auer 2009b: 4). Participants' expectations "are based on linguistic and social routines of interaction. There is no need to exclude these routines from an emergentist approach to spoken syntax; rather, this approach presupposes some categorized linguistic knowledge." (Auer & Pfänder 2011: 15.)

Although the ethnomethodological approach to language evolved in the study of rare and endangered languages, interactional-linguistic analysis has mostly focused on large and profoundly studied languages. Among the Uralic languages only spoken Finnish has been studied in the framework of interactional linguistics.

In my pilot research I explore Nganasan conversation, investigating in particular the structures on both sides of syntactic completion points and the ordering of syntactic units within a speech turn. My data are extracted from a conversation between two old Nganasan men in February 2012 in Dudinka on the Taimyr Peninsula. I was a witness to the conversation, in conversation-analytic terms *a bystander* with a tape-recorder.

I will use such terms of conversation analysis, such as turn construction unit, transition relevance place and prosodic unit. The turn construction unit is a segment of speech that may comprise a turn of one speaker. At the end of a turn construction unit there is a transition relevance place indicating a point where speaker change is possible. A prosodic unit is a piece of speech pronounced with a single pitch contour.

The extract below belongs to the initial part of the conversation. The speakers are denoted as M1 and M2. Referring to the times when both speakers were young M1 praises M2 as an excellent reindeer herder. M1 tries to get M2 to tell a story of his own about those times. In lines 11-12 M1 continues his appraisal by saying that M2 was fleet of foot. M2 just shortly expresses a short mark (called *continuer,* line 13), indicating with it that M1 can continue his

turn. M1 paraphrases what has just been said, upgrading it to an exclamation (line 14). Expression on line 14 seems to be syntactically and intonationally completed and thus, constitutes a transition relevance place. The floor is shifted to M2, who continues the preceding syntactic structure with the adverbial (line 15) 'on my one leg' - M2 has been one-legged since childhood. Although it is outside the preceding prosodic unit, the adverbial is syntactically and pragmatically a part of the preceding utterance. This finalizing adverbial is multifunctional; it indicates manner and can also be treated as a comitative and instrumental adverbial. The adverbial serves to upgrade the appreciation expressed by M1 – even being one-legged M1 was fast. Both speakers have collaboratively produced the characteristics of M2 as a reindeer herder. Additionally, M1 has achieved his aim to activate M2 as a speaker.

(11)M1:   *əəj"!*   *təə*   *t'uhə-güə-nï,*
                                INTERJ   that   time-PTC_{TOP}-LOC_{ADV}
            At that time

(12)   *tahariai",*   *kəd'a-"likü*   *i-süə-ŋ;*
          PTC   quick-DIM   be-PST-2
          you were fast;
(13)M2:   *ə"ə*
(14)M1:   *kəsəgəə*   *i-süə-ŋ!*
                     fast   be-PST-2SG
          You were fast!
(15) M2   *ŋuə-liaa*   *ŋo-t'enï-nə*
                     one-PTC_{FOC} leg-LOC-1SG
          With my only leg

The adverbial expressed by M2 (line 15) belongs grammatically to the preceding syntactic unit (line 14) – after line 15 the conversation continues with M1's introducing a new topic. In a grammatical sentence the adverbial should agree with the subject (2SG, line 14) and should take the possessive suffix 2SG. Instead, the adverbial (line 15) agrees with the referent of the main subject (the 1st person singular), who is the recipient of line 14 and the speaker of line 15. Thus, the grammatical structure is also regulated from outside the syntactic unit. Spoken interaction includes, in particular, collaborative turn processing, which brings a third dimension to the regulation of syntactic structures, the dimension of the participants.

Abbreviations: PST, PTC_{FOC} focus particle, PTC_{TOP} topic particle, LOC locative, LOC_{ADV} locative marker on adverbs.

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