Associated motion in the Lower Kolyma area: Even, Chukchi and Tundra Yukaghir

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Associated motion (AM) is a grammatical category "whose function is to associate, in different ways, different kinds of translational motion (spatial displacement/change of location) to a (generally non-motion) verb event" (Guillaume & Koch 2021: 3). An overview of this verbal category in the languages of Siberia has been provided by Volkov and Stenin (2019). Our talk focuses on three languages—Even (Lower Kolyma dialect), Chukchi, and Tundra Yukaghir—which are spoken in the Lower Kolyma district of Yakutia. Yukaghir, Chukchi and Even have been in contact at least since the 17th century (Dolgikh 1960), but the contact between the varieties discussed has only about 170 years of documented history (Pupynina, Aralova 2021). These varieties share lexical borrowings (most prominently between Yukaghir and Even), but the number of shared grammatical morphemes is relatively small.

The data for this study have been collected during a field trip to the village of Andryushkino in 2022. We also involve examples from oral Even narratives recorded by us in Andryushkino and published by Sharina and Kuz'mina (2018), Yukaghir texts published by Kurilov and Odé (2012), and Chukchi texts collected in 2013-2019 by Maria Pupynina.

Each of the languages in question has a single marker of AM: *-nA* (Even), *-cqiw/-cqew* (Chukchi), and *-če* (Tundra Yukaghir, e.g. (1)).

(1) Tundra Yukaghir
*met   könme čambii-**če**-me-ŋ.*
I   friend help-**AM**-TR-1SG
'I'll go to help a friend'.

We will address the semantics of these morphemes, namely, the type of motion encoded. The Chukchi and Yukaghir affixes appear to have only andative semantics ('go in order to P'), while Even does not distinguish between andative and ventive ('come in order to P') meanings. Apart from the semantic features, we will look into several morphosyntactic parameters, namely, constraints on the distribution of the affixes and argument structure of the verbs marked with the AM morpheme, cf. Pakendorf & Stoynova (2021: 883–887) for the discussion of competition between the encoding of spatial arguments in Tungusic AM constructions. In conclusion, we will provide several hypothetical scenarios of how language contact might have influenced the structure of this category in the studied area.

Abbreviations

1 — 1st person, AM — associated motion, SG — singular, TR — transitive

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