

### **The grammaticalization of the Synja Khanty posture verb 'lie'**

The present paper aims to describe the grammaticalization of the verb 'lie' into a quasi-copula used in locative and existential sentences, in the Synja dialect of Northern Khanty (Uralic, Ugric branch, agglutinative).

The corpus is made up of the texts collected by Eszter Ruttkay-Miklián on the basis of the theoretical and practical instructions of the late Éva Schmidt.

The investigations have proved the quasi-copula use of the verb, which function was hardly emphasized earlier. The background to this development was served by the secondary, metaphoric meanings of the verb. Besides describing the location of inanimate subjects, the quasi-copula in question is also used for expressing inactivity.

In locative sentences, the quasi-copula 'lie' is used with Figures having prominent horizontal extension; or with Figures that are in contact with the Ground on a considerable surface; as well as with objects having an irregular shape, or having no base giving stability. Furthermore, in many sentences, it cooccurs with objects situated below the human active zone (ground, floor, bed etc.). In addition, this quasi-copula is used in many sentences not containing information neither on the geometrical attributes of the Figure or the Ground, nor their relation. These examples might prove that the grammaticalization process continued and the quasi-copula 'lie' moved on towards becoming a copula. Considering the fact that, in this dialect, the sound forms of the BE-verb and the verb 'lie' are quite similar, it cannot be excluded that this resemblance positively influenced the process of grammaticalization. The mixed use of the two verbs is illustrated in several sentences.

The linguistic material used in the present investigation has proved to be excellent for the given purpose: contrary to the folklore or didactic texts, as well as the language of journalism, there can be found a lot of sentences in it describing the location and position of various objects. At the same time, the fieldwork situation left its mark on the formation of sentences, i.e. objects and spatial relations are often described with deictic elements, making these data meaningless from the viewpoint of the research.

A further lesson learned from the research is that in the case of a language dialectally strongly divided, the results do not necessarily hold in respect of any other dialect. Finally, as the text material reflects the idiolect of one single speaker, the results cannot be exhaustive.

*Keywords: Northern Khanty, Kazym dialect, posture verb, quasi-copula.*

MÁRIA SIPOS