

SUBJECT REFERENCE IN LATVIAN: ON THE HISTORY OF ONE PRESUMED DIACHRONIC EVOLUTION

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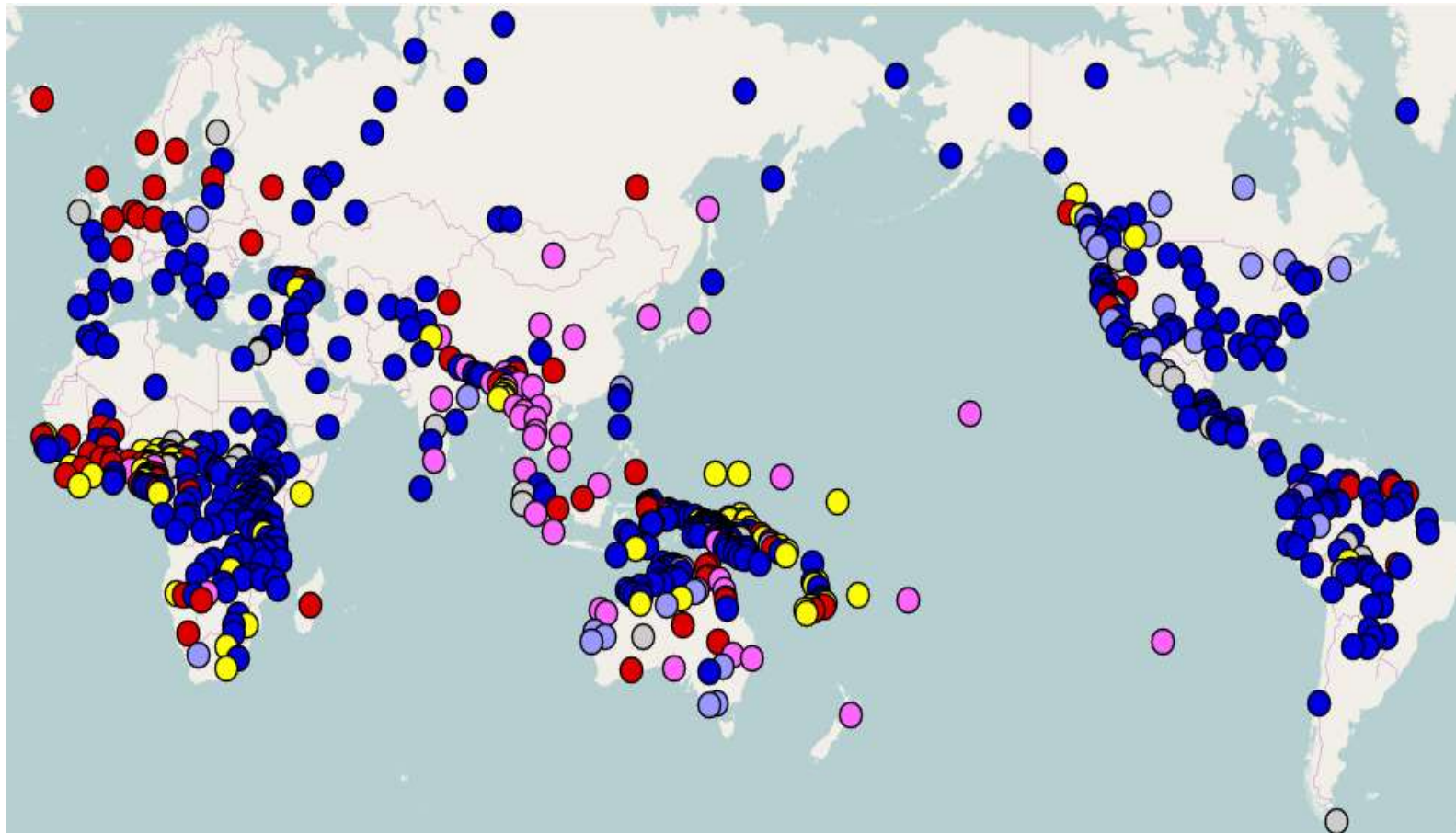
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DEFINING THE TERMS

- In general: 2 major strategies of subject reference marking – full DPs / reduced devices
- In this talk: focus on reduced devices
- 2 major patterns of reduced referential devices – verbal affixes (61% of languages) and personal pronouns (14% of languages) [Dryer 2013]
- Double-marking pattern (personal pronouns + affixes) is very rare and exotic and appears most only Germanic, East Slavic, Latvian [Luís, Spencer 2012: 142], sporadic Austronesian and Papuan languages [Siewierska 2008],

WALS 2013: TYPOLOGICAL CONTEXT



Values

- Obligatory pronouns in subject position
- Subject affixes on verb
- Subject clitics on variable host
- Subject pronouns in different position
- Optional pronouns in subject position
- Mixed

TYPOLOGICAL CONTEXT: DIACHRONY

- PIE language: verbal inflection with pro-drop [Walkden 2014]
- Ancient IE languages: verbal inflection with pro-drop

(1) a. Latin:

Dum spir-o sper-o

while breathe.PRS-1SG hope.PRS-1SG

'While I breathe, I hope'

b. Old High German ("Liber evangeliorum", IX; [Eggenberger 1961: 35])

Ni thárf-t es ... lóugn-en

NEG need.PRS-2SG it.GEN deny-INF

'You do not need to deny it'

TYPOLOGICAL CONTEXT: SYNCHRONY

- 61% of modern languages are pro-drop (with verbal inflection)
- West and South Slavic, Romanic, Turkic, Lithuanian

(2) Lithuanian:

Stovi-u

raudon-oj-e

dykum-oje

stand.PRS-1SG

red-DEF-FSG.LOC

desert-SG.LOC

'I stand in the red desert' [J. Ivanauskaitė, *A Journey to Shambala*]

THE CASE OF LATVIAN

- Non-pro-drop with verbal inflection, despite surrounding pro-drop languages and PIE pro-drop stage

(3) *par k-o t-u domā ? -*

about what-ACC you-NOM think.PRS.2SG

'What are you thinking about?'

viņa vaicāj-a

she.NOM ask.PRS-3

'she asked' [Milions 2.0m, <http://www.korpuss.lv>]

- At a certain moment an expansion of pronouns took place
- Why?

CURRENT ISSUE AND SOURCES

- Main goal: to find the trigger of Latvian pronoun expansion
- Diachronic investigation of monuments from XVII (corpus *SENIE*) till today
- The main oldest sources from *SENIE* taken into account:
 - Georgs Mancelis "*Phraseologia Lettica*" (1638) – first German-Latvian phrasebook
 - Georgs Mancelis "*10 sarunas*" (1638 г.) – collection of 10 parallel dialogues of German and Latvian
 - Fridrihs Daniels Vārs "*Kartupeļu dārzs*" ('The garden of potatoes', 1790) – detailed instructions for Latvian on how to cultivate potatoes
- Later sources: e-library of Latvian classic literature <http://korpuss.lv/klasika> for XIX; Latvian fiction from a parallel Russian-Latvian corpus <http://ruscorpora.ru/search-para-lv.html> for XX

METHODOLOGY

- 1-2 VS 3 person
- Present/preterite, perfect and nominal clauses analyzed separately
- Overall volume: 579 clauses with a nominal predicate and 1354 verbal clauses
- Methodology: manual data extraction with later statistical processing in SPSS (binominal and χ -square tests, Student's t-test)

RESULTS

- Non-pro-drop pattern with verbal inflection already dominates in the oldest sources

(4) *Eß winj-a Wahrd-u äßmu as=mirrś-is-∅*
I.NOM he-GEN name-SG.ACC AUX.PRS.ISG forget.PST.PA-MSG.NOM
'I forgot his name'

(5) *eßśi tu kurrli-s?*
AUX.PRS.2SG you.NOM deaf-MSG.NOM

'Are you deaf?' [G. Mancelis, "*Phraseologia Lettica*", 1638]

- No significant difference between the distribution of non-pro-drop pattern in Old and Modern Latvian was found (present/preterite clauses, 1st and 2nd person, binominal test, p-value > 0.95)

OLD VS. MODERN LATVIAN: BINOMINAL TEST

Pattern	1-2 PRS/PT +pronoun	1-2 PRS/PT -pronoun	3 PRS/PT +pronoun	3 PRS/PT pronoun	-
Source					
G. Mancelis, <i>10 sarunas, 1638</i>	60 (75%)	20 (25%)	5	2	
F. D.Vārs, <i>Kartupeļu dārzs, 1790</i>	23 (60%)	15(40%)	N/A	N/A	
R. Ezera, <i>Zemdegas</i> ('The invisible fire'), 1977	62 (70%)	27 (30%)	179	9	
A. Puriņš, <i>Nevaicājiet man neko</i> ('Do not ask me anything'), 1977	64 (74%)	22 (26%)	121	15	

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

- Modern non-pro-drop pattern was already established in XVII (and perhaps earlier)
- It is impossible to track its beginning through monuments since they all were written later
- From particular to general – did not work
- What about the contrary? (\Rightarrow from general to particular)

GENERAL REMARKS ON PRO-DROP PATTERN AND INFLECTION

- Rizzi 1986: rich verbal inflection => null subject (pro-drop) and vice versa

(7) Italian:

a. \emptyset_{pro} *parl-o* *italiano*

\emptyset_{pro} speak.PRS-1SG Italian

'I speak Italian'

b. \emptyset_{pro} *parl-i* *italiano*

\emptyset_{pro} speak.PRS-2SG Italian

'You speak Italian'

(8) English:

*Now **I need** a place to hide away*

- But how to explain languages with both non-pro-drop and verbal inflection (double-marking pattern)?

MÜLLER'S CORRECTION (2005)

- For the expansion of personal pronouns, a systemic drop of at least one pair of personal verb affixes is sufficient (“verb impoverishment” [Halle, Marantz 1993]).
- Theory confirmed on diachronic analysis of German [Axel 2007: 322]; English [van Gelderen 2011], Brazilian Portuguese [Duarte 1995] and Russian date [Meyer 2011: 131]
- German: pronouns expanded in the 9th century, just after the unification of formerly differentiated inflection in 1PL and 3PL
- Laufen ‘to run’:

	PRS
1SG	ich lauf-e
2SG	du läuf-st
3SG	er/sie/es läuf-t
1PL	wir lauf- en
2PL	ihr lauf-t
3PL	sie lauf-en

LATVIAN: HOW IT WORKS WITH MÜLLER'S THEORY

- Was there any similar systemic simplification of verbal paradigm in Latvian?
- Indicative present, preterite, perfect clauses: no (the paradigm is rich and differentiated for all persons)
- Latvian verb morphologically does not distinguish 3SG and 3PL (zero marker for both numbers)
- Latvian: *iet* 'to go'

1SG	<i>es ej-u</i>
2SG	<i>tu ej-ø</i>
3SG	<i>vinš/viņa iet</i>
1PL	<i>mes ej-am</i>
2PL	<i>jus ej-at</i>
3PL	<i>viņi/viņas iet</i>

- But it is a common Baltic feature, presented also in Lithuanian (a pro-drop language)
- Stassen 1997, Bhat 2007: 3rd person zero marker is cross-linguistically common and typical for many languages all over the world (both pro-drop and non-pro-drop)

LATVIAN: SEARCHING FOR IMPOVERISHMENT OF VERBAL PARADIGM

- Conditional mood: YES!
- The analysis of old grammars (XVII) shows some of systemic impoverishment of verbal paradigm in conditional mood
- Old Latvian: paradigm of the verb *redzēt* 'to see' [Adolphi 1685: 81], compared to modern Latvian and Lithuanian

LITHUANIAN VS. OLD LATVIAN VS. MODERN LATVIAN: CONDITIONAL MOOD

	Lithuanian	Old Latvian (17 th cent.)	Modern Latvian
1SG	<i>es regėčiau</i>	<i>es redzėtu-∅</i>	<i>es redzėtu-∅</i>
2SG	<i>tu regėtu-m</i>	<i>tu redzėtu-∅</i>	<i>tu redzėtu-∅</i>
3SG	<i>jis/ji regėtu-∅</i>	<i>viņš/viņa redzėtu-∅</i>	<i>viņš/viņa redzėtu-∅</i>
1PL	<i>mes regėtu-me</i>	<i>mes redzėtu-m</i>	<i>mes redzėtu-∅</i>
2PL	<i>jūs regėtu-te</i>	<i>jūs redzėtu-t</i>	<i>jūs redzėtu-∅</i>
3PL	<i>jie/jos regėtu-∅</i>	<i>viņi/viņas redzėtu-∅</i>	<i>viņi/viņas redzėtu-∅</i>

CONCLUSION

- The impoverishment of verbal paradigm in conditional mood is the only thing that radically distinguishes Latvian from Lithuanian in the diachronic perspective, concerning subject reference
- The alignment of the paradigm in the conjunctive mood and the expansion of pronouns in Latvian coincide (before the 17th cent.)
- Given the theory of [Müller 2005], this process can be taken as a likely internal scenario of the expansion of pronouns in Latvian
- Possible scenario: pronoun expansion in conditional mood > pronoun expansion in present/preterite clauses > pronoun expansion in perfect clauses
- That could explain the larger percentage of non-pro-drop pattern in modern present/preterite (both derived synthetically, as well as conditional mood), compared to perfect (derived analytically)

NON-PRO-DROP PATTERN IN MODERN LATVIAN

- Parallel Russian-Latvian corpus (Latvian part), binominal test, p-value < 0.01 (marked with yellow)

	Present/ preterite	Perfect
1 st and 2 nd persons	63%	48%
3 rd person	95%	89%



Thanks for watching! 😊