

Workshop on "The morphosyntax of Khoe languages"

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Questionnaire for the workshop “The Morphosyntax of Khoe Languages”

1 Nominal morphology

1.1 *Nominal forms and their distribution and role (with PGN’s, with PGN’s + -a, without PGN’s)*

Can nouns occur without any marking (without PGN, *-a*)? If yes, in which contexts?

With which markers do nominal constituents occur (PGN, *-a*)?

In which contexts are these markers required? In which contexts do only PGN markers occur, in which do PGN’s + *-a* occur?

How are clauses nominalized?

1.2 *PGN-series, form, distribution*

List the paradigms of PGN-markers. Do their forms alternate?

In which context do they occur (e.g. as free pronouns, bound pronouns, gender-number markers on nouns, nominalizers)? Are they obligatory in these contexts?

1.3 *Status of PGN’s, incl. object-markers (suffix, clitic, phonological word)*

Which syntactic categories can PGN-markers attach to (noun, noun phrase, etc.), e.g. with what do they merge to form grammatical words?

Criteria:

- The morpheme order within grammatical words is usually fixed; to test what the PGN-marker is attached to, vary the morpheme order between the marker and potential hosts. If the order is fixed, this is a sign that the marker and the constituent in question form one single grammatical word.
- Formatives that are combined into a single grammatical word cannot be interrupted by phrasal constructions; to test whether PGN-marker and potential host form a single grammatical word, try out whether it is possible to insert a syntactic constituent between the marker and what you think might be its host. If this is possible, the two do not form a single g-word.

Are the PGN-markers phonologically bound? If yes, which side of their host (left/right) do they attach to?

Criteria: Whether a PGN is phonologically attached to a host can be determined according to whether the two form a single domain for various phonological generalizations:

- Do they form a single domain for phonological rules (assimilations, processes manipulating tones and prosodic rules that assign syllables and stress)?
- Do they form a single domain with respect to phonotactic generalizations (e.g. certain sounds occur only initially in phonological words, others are banned on a phonological word boundary)?

- Does the PGN-marker fulfil the language-specific minimality-constraints (in many languages a word cannot consist of less than two syllables or two morae)? If not, it cannot form its own phonological word and must be attached to something phonologically.

Can PGN-markers form their own phonological words, i.e. be phonologically free?

Criteria:

- If there are no phonological rules or restrictions that require the domain of a phonological word, consisting of the PGN-marker and the syntactic constituent it attaches to, or if the PGN-marker fulfils the requirements for the minimal word, the PGN-marker might constitute a phonological word of its own.

References:

Hall, T.A., 1999. *The phonological word: a review*. In Studies on the Phonological Word. T.A.

Hall. & U. Kleinhenz (eds)

Bickel, B. & J. Nichols, forthcoming. *Inflectional morphology*. In Language typology and syntactic description. T. Shopen (ed)

1.4 **Pronominal bases in Khoekhoe**

Does the language have other pronoun-like elements beside PGN's (e. g. like *ti* in Khoekhoe *tita* 'I')?

In which contexts are they used?

Are they ever used independently (without PGN's)?

1.5 **Oblique/ subordinative**

Does the language have an oblique / subordinative case marker *-a* attached to a PGN marker?

What is its function and distribution?

Does a morpheme of this form appear in other contexts (e. g. as a copula *a* as in Khoekhoe)?

2 **Syntax**

2.1 **Grammatical relations (subject, object, etc.)**

How are the grammatical relations expressed (morphological marking, word order, etc.)?

What is the interrelation between different PGN series and grammatical relations?

Are grammatical relations transparent or are there ambiguities (e.g. between subject and object)?

2.2 **Diathesis and its influence on word order; special cases**

How are passive constructions built?

Are there impersonal passives? In which contexts do they occur?

2.3 Sentence types / mood

Does the language have sentence type markers? (declarative, interrogative, etc.)

What are their forms and distribution?

Are they obligatory? If not, how frequently are they used in discourse?

Does the language have mood markers? What are their forms, position and distribution?

What are the strategies for non-verbal predication?

2.4 Word order types

What are the basic word orders?

How frequent are different word orders in discourse?

What functions are they associated with?

What is the word order in different sentence types

- Q-word-questions

- Yes/no-questions

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Is there any interaction between word order and nominal morphology?
(e.g. different PGN series depending on position)

3 Information structure (see Appendix 1)

How is the communicative point of focus (assertive focus vs. contrastive focus) reflected?

How is the scope of focus (term focus, verb focus, operator focus) reflected?

Are there any focus markers?

How do focus-sensitive operators like 'only', 'also', 'even' behave?

Are there any special focus constructions? (cleft constructions)

How arethetic statements expressed?

Appendix 1: Information structure

Two types of statements/sentence are distinguished: categorical andthetic

... a fundamental difference between utterances which are logically analyzed into two successive mutually related judgments, one naming an individual and one naming an event (categorical statements), and utterances in which the logical relations between various parts of the communicated state of affairs remain unanalyzed (thetic statements). (Sasse 1987: 554)

Categorical statements have a focus-background structure
(after Dik 1997)

Different types of focus

Certain languages have a rather elaborated Focus system, and use different formal strategies for different types of Focus. The main parameters for the subcategorization of Focus are the scope and the communicative point of the focusing

- The “**scope**” of the focus function, i. e. the question of what part of the clause is placed in Focus

Difference of scope: focus may be assigned to any part of the clause structure, what may lead to different focusing strategies.

Focus on:

predicate (verb):

I didn't PAINT the house, I REpainted it.

[Focus on the predicate; on part of the predicate]

term (subject, object, etc):

A: *I heard your motorcycle broke down.*

B: *My CAR broke down.*

[Focus on the subject]

operator (tense, mood, aspect, polarity):

A: *Peter solved the problem.*

B: *He did NOT solve the problem.*

A: *He DID solve the problem.*

[Focus on polarity operators]

- The “**communicative point**” of the focusing, i.e. the question of what pragmatic reasons underlie the assignment of Focus to the relevant part of the underlying clause structure:

Difference in communicative point:

assertive (information gap/completive) focus (without contrast)

A: *Where is John going?*

B: *John is going to the MARKET. / To the MARKET.*

contrastive focus – involves some kind of contrast between the Focus constituent and alternative pieces of information which may be explicitly presented or presupposed

A: *John bought apples.*

B: *No, he bought BANANAS.*

Thetic statements

(after Sasse 1987)

In contrast to categorical statements, which have a focus-background configuration, thetic sentences are of a homogeneous nature with no sentence-internal information structure.

Typical domains for thetic expression:

1. EXISTENTIAL STATEMENTS (in a wider sense; presence, appearance, continuation, etc., positively and negatively)
2. EXPLANATIONS (with or without preceding questions such as ‘what happened?’, ‘why did it happen?’)
3. UPPRISING OR UNEXPECTED EVENTS
4. GENERAL STATEMENTS (aphorisms, etc.)
5. BACKGROUND DESCRIPTIONS (local, temporal, etc., setting)
6. WEATHER EXPRESSIONS
7. STATEMENTS RELATING TO BODY PARTS

Examples:

1. *It is raining.*
2. *There is a dog running.*
3. A: *What happened?*
B: *My CAR broke down.*

References:

Dik, Simon C. 1997a. *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part 1. The structure of the clause*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Sasse, Hans-Jürgen (1987). *The Thetic/Categorical Distinction Revisited*. In: *Linguistics* 25: 511-580.