

Word order variation within the Lule Sami PP

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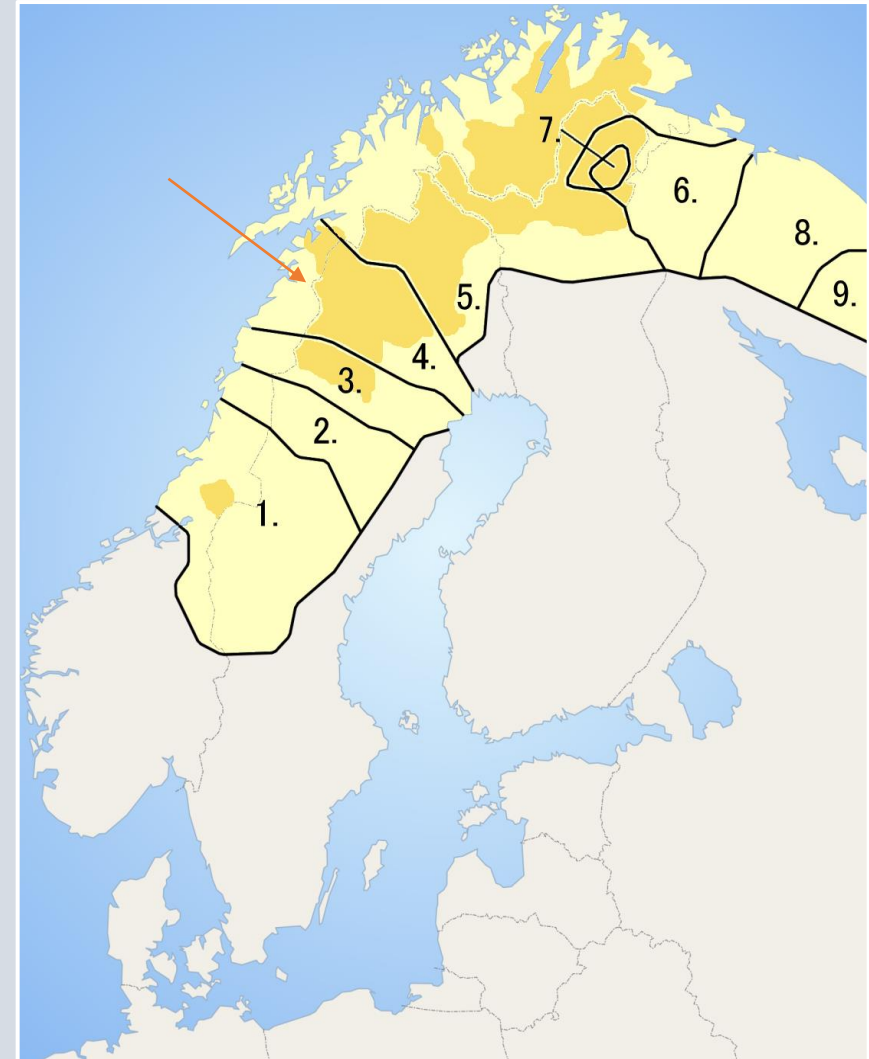
Roadmap

1. Introduction
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1. Introduction

Lule Sami

- Spoken in Northern Norway and Sweden.
- Ca 650 active speakers (Morén-Duolljá 2010).



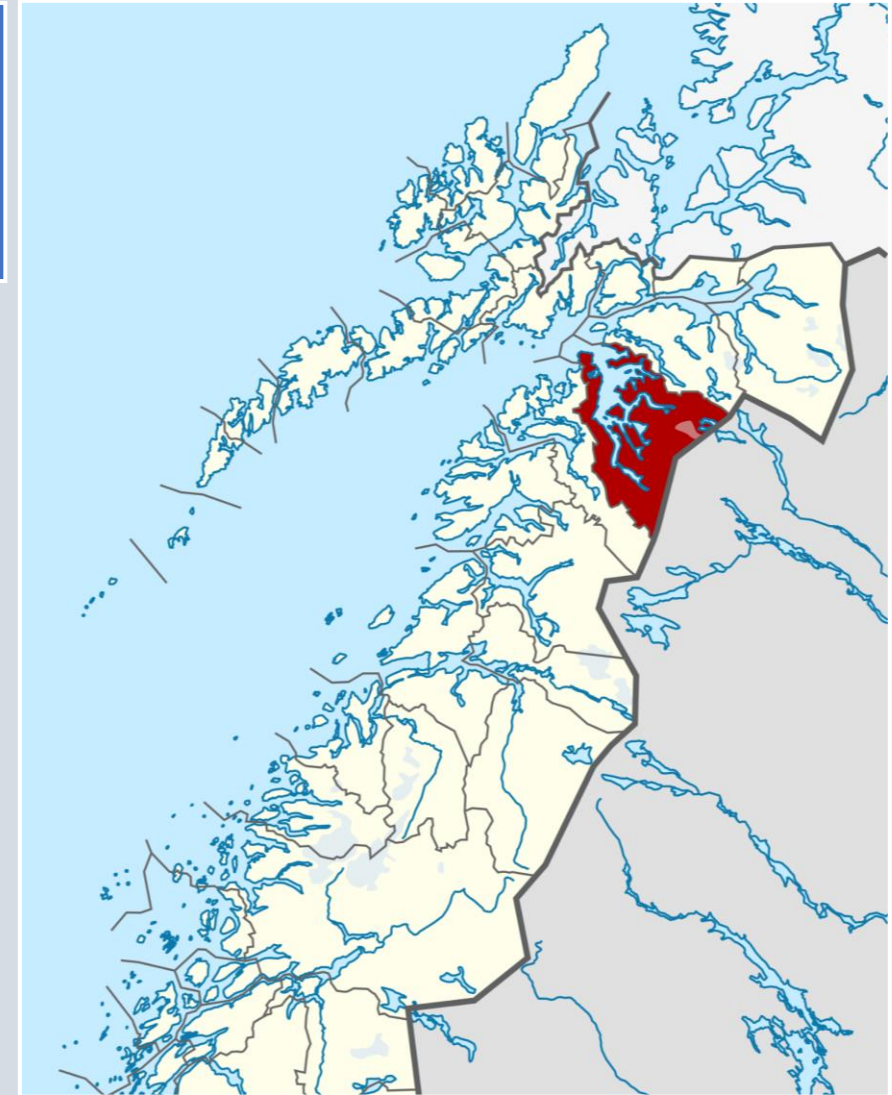
Adapted from
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sami_languages_large_2.png

Lule Sami

- Predominantly head-final.
- Predominantly, but not strictly, postpositional (Nystø and Johnsen 2000; Spiik 1977/1989; Wiklund 1901/1915).
- Complements of adpositions are normally in the genitive, but can appear in other cases.

Methodology

- Spoken, original data from Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord, Norway.
- 11 participants: men and women from three age groups, with more and less exposure to standardised Lule Sami.
- 8 elicitations: stimulus-based, interview-based, freer conversation.



From https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Norway_Nordland_-_Tysfjord.svg

2. Data and findings

Numbers on word order

- Roughly 4,000 occurrences of PPs in my data:
 - 78% postpositional
 - 8% prepositional
 - 13% without overt complements
 - 1% subordinating

Examples of postpositional phrases

1) *ståvlå* *duogen*

chair.GEN.SG behind
'behind the chair'

2) *miehtse* *badjelis*

forest.GEN.SG from.above
'from above the forest'

Examples of postpositional phrases

3) *javlaj*

Christmas.GEN.PL

'during Christmas'

sinna

in

4) *giela*

language.GEN.SG

'about the language'

birra

about

Prepositions and contrastiveness

- Contrastiveness: denotation of element is contrasted against a set of alternatives (Vallduví and Vilkuna 1998).
- **Prepositionality can mark contrastiveness in Lule Sami.**



Prepositions and contrastiveness

- Context: speaker tries to ensure it is the marsh and not another part of the landscape she should concentrate on:

5) *Le* *sån* *háledime* *badjel* *JIEKKE?*
be.PRS.3SG 3SG.NOM fly.PROG over marsh.GEN.SG
'Is it flying above the MARSH?'

Prepositions and contrastiveness

- Context: you correct someone who thought you only ran TO the lake:

6) *Viehkiv*

run.PST.1SG

BIRRA

around

jávre.

lake.GEN.SG

‘I ran AROUND the lake.’

(Sandra Nystø Ráhka, personal communication)

Prepositions in non-contrastive contexts

- Most occurrences of prepositional phrases are non-contrastive.
- Extension of contrastive function: alternatives AND contrast → alternatives without contrast being necessary.
- **Prepositionality in Lule Sami can also mark membership in a PREDEFINED ALTERNATIVE SET.**

Prepositions in number phrases

- Alternative set for numbers: numeral system.

7) *badjel* *guoktalåk* *máná*
over twenty.ATTR child.GEN.SG
‘more than twenty children’

8) *vuollel* *duhát*
under thousand.NOM.SG
‘less than a thousand’

Prepositions in temporal expressions

- Alternative sets for temporal expressions: the timeline, oppositions like *before* and *after*.

9) *ávddål* */1970-tallet/*

before /the 1970's/

'before the 1970s'

10) *maŋŋela* *mállásij*

after dinner.GEN.PL

'after dinner'

Prepositions in spatial expressions

- Alternative sets for areas and paths: subparts like middle and perimeter/extremities.

11) *vádtśá*

walk.PRS.3SG

gassko

middle.of

jæggáj

marsh.ALL.SG

‘s/he walks to the middle of the marsh’

12) *le*

be.PRS.3SG

gassko

middle.of

bálggá

path.GEN.SG

‘s/he is in the middle of the path’

Prepositions in spatial expressions

- Path adpositions normally pick out perimeter of area or both extremities of path.

13) *birra* *jávrev*
around lake.ACC.SG
'around the lake'

14) *tjadá* *miehtse*
through forest.GEN.SG
'through the forest'

Recap of proposed functions of prepositionality in Lule Sami

- **Primary function of prepositionality:** marking contrastiveness.
- **Extended function of prepositionality:** marking membership in a predefined alternative set.
 - e.g. numeral system for numbers, timeline and before/after meanings for temporal expressions, subparts like middle and perimeter/extremities for areas and paths.

3. Towards a Minimalist analysis

Simpson and Wu (2002): local focus projections

- Functional heads can select focus projections reinforcing their meaning.
- Frequent association of the focused element and the head selecting it can lead it to be bleached and grammaticalised over time.

Focus projections in the Lule Sami PP

- Prepositionality in Lule Sami might be due to the adposition moving to local focus projections within the PP selected by Place and Path, reinforcing the relation expressed.
- Focus projection in Place/Path might be bleached from emphatic function to also marking membership in predefined alternative set.

4. Comparison with Sami languages and Finnish

Comparison with other Sami languages

- Lule Sami ambipositions with cognates attested prepositionally in at least three other Sami languages (based on Feist 2015; Hasselbrink 1981; Morottaja and Toivonen 2016; Nickel 1990; Rießler 2019; Sammallahti 1998; Söder 2017; von Gertten 2015; Wilbur 2014):
 - *gassko* ‘in the middle of’: Skolt, Inari, North and South Sami
 - *birra* ‘around’: Akkala, Skolt, North, Pite, Ume and South Sami
 - *tjadá* ‘through’: Skolt, North and South Sami
 - *rastá* ‘across’: Kildin, Skolt, North and South Sami
 - *badjel* ‘over, above’: Skolt, North, Pite and South Sami
 - *manjel* ‘after’: Skolt, North and South Sami
 - *åvddål* ‘before’: Skolt, North and South Sami

Comparison with North and South Sami

- Adpositions allowing prepositionality generally belong to predefined alternative sets.
- Path adpositions like *aalkesth* ‘along’, *bijjeli* ‘(move) above’ occur prepositionally in South Sami (Söder 2017). Could prepositionality have been extended to path adpositions in general?
- North Sami *aistton/aisttan* ‘according to’ is a preposition (Nickel 1990). Does not fit as well with Lule Sami findings.

Comparison with Finnish

- Temporal and other abstract expressions are typically prepositional (Huumo 2013; Lestrade 2010). Temporal expressions belong to predefined alternative sets, most other abstract PPs do not.
- Spatial expressions picking out subparts of paths and areas seem to allow prepositionality, e.g. *keskellä* ‘in the middle of’, *ympäri* ‘around’, *yli* ‘over’ (Huumo 2013; Lestrade 2010).
- Huumo (2013) and Lehismets (2014): Finnish path ambipositions more likely to be prepositional when path is perceived sequentially or shape of path is highlighted (i.e. with motion verbs meaning ‘to circle’, ‘to wind’ etc), in which case I think subparts might be foregrounded.

5. Summary

Summary

- Lule Sami adpositions are predominantly postpositional.
- Prepositionality can be used to mark contrastiveness or membership in a predefined alternative set, such as the numeral system for numbers, timeline and before/after meanings for temporal expressions, and subparts like middle and perimeter/extremities for areas and paths.
- Accounted for by Place and Path heads selecting focus projections to which the adposition can move to reinforce the meaning of these heads. Their function has been extended to also marking members of predefined alternative sets.

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Any errors or misrepresentations are solely my responsibility.

Gijtto!

