

Farrell Ackerman, *Cooperating Constructions in Tundra Nenets*

Tundra Nenets, a Samoyedic language spoken in Northwest Siberia, possesses non-subject participial pronominal relative clause constructions in which the surface expression of the pronominal subject of the embedded verb appears as an affix on the relativized nominal. This can be seen in (1) in which an obligatorily inflected relativized object nominal co-occurs with an optionally expressed independent pronoun (Ackerman and Nikolaeva, 2002).

(1) [(pida) ta-wi] te-da
he/she.NOM give-PART reindeer-3SG 'the reindeer he/she gave'

From a purely descriptive perspective, the distribution of these person/number markers apparently bears a non-local relation with the subject of the participle. At first glance, it appears that the subject agreement suffix *-da* has attached itself to the wrong word!

This pattern of distribution belongs to the somewhat neglected subtype of pronominal gapping constructions analyzed under the label "possessive relatives" (Ackerman and Nikolaeva, 1997, and *Descriptive Typology and Grammatical Theory*, CSLI Publications, forthcoming), so called because, as with all of the other languages of this subtype, the Tundra Nenets pronominal relative is formally identical to nominal possessive constructions (2).

(2) (pida) te-da
he/she.NOM reindeer-3SG 'his/her reindeer'

I will identify several descriptive generalizations that any adequate theoretical account must address. I will argue that a *construction theoretic* approach to grammatical analysis straightforwardly addresses these generalizations, while offering the prospect of explaining, as well describing, phenomenon of possessive relatives.