When grammar-internal factors hinder an OV-to-VO shift: the case of Surgut Khanty

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Abstract: Language contact is often argued to lead to word order change – e.g., the OV-to-VO shift. Though the exact mechanism of change is poorly understood, instances of lack of this change, despite the favourable conditions being present (intense contact, dominant bilingualism with a majority VO language, etc.) are worth investigating. In this paper, we present novel data from Surgut Khanty (Ob-Ugric, Uralic) and show how language-internal factors pertaining to information structure (IS) – fusion of grammatical roles and IS-properties, and IS-restrictions on the postverbal domain – govern the distribution of postverbal constituents (PVCs) in an otherwise rather strictly verb-final language. We propose that these factors have so far prevented Surgut Khanty from undergoing an OV-to-VO shift despite intense contact and widespread bilingualism with a dominant VO language, Russian.

Keywords: *language contact*, *word order*, *information structure*, *prosody*, *Uralic languages*.

1 Introduction

While clearly less typically "borrowed" than phonological features or non-core lexical material (Aikhenvald 2007), word order has been extensively argued in recent decades to be among the linguistic properties that can be transferred as a result of language contact. In particular, in certain sociolinguistic settings, sustained and intense contact is often thought to trigger a kind of (morpho)syntactic variation that may ultimately lead to a shift in the frequencies and functions of characteristic constituent orders, to the point that is commonly termed word order change (Aikhenvald 2002, 2007, Dryer 1992, Heine & Kuteva 2005, Kroch & Taylor 1997, Thomason 2001, Thomason & Kaufman 1988, Winford 2003).[1]

In spite of the growing number of well-documented plausible cases in point, the exact linguistic mechanisms of contact-induced word order change are still poorly understood. Therefore, instances of a lack of – or selectivity in – such changes, despite the favourable general sociolinguistic conditions being present, are particularly worth investigating. In this paper, we present novel data from a verb-final/OV language, Surgut Khanty (Ob-Ugric, Uralic), that points to the role that language-internal factors, related to Information Structure (IS), play in the sustained "resistance" of the language to a potential OV-to-VO shift, as a result of contact with VO Russian.[2]

Specifically, we argue that in spite of long-standing intense contact with socio-culturally dominant Russian and widespread bilingualism, properties of Surgut Khanty pertaining to the fusion of grammatical roles with IS-properties, and IS-restrictions on the postverbal domain, have jointly prevented Surgut Khanty, so far, from undergoing a shift away from strict OV and towards VO (or even towards flexible OV/VO).

The paper is structured as follows. After introducing the sociolinguistic situation of Surgut Khanty and the expected effects of language contact, Section 2 provides background on the core syntactic features and the mapping between grammatical functions and IS in Surgut Khanty. In Section 3 we provide information on the primary linguistic data we investigated, which centered around occurrences of post-verbal constituents (PVCs) in Surgut Khanty. After presenting the methods of data processing, we provide an overview of the results of a quantitative analysis, in which we explore the grammatical function and IS status of attested PVC phrases. In Section 4, we propose that the frequency distribution of core arguments and adjuncts occurring after the verb, including the apparent restriction on post-verbal objects, is due to the interplay between Surgut Khanty's fusion of the core grammatical roles with IS-properties on the one hand, and the IS-properties associated with PVCs on the other. This hypothesized interplay makes a specific prediction regarding the form of post-verbal patient/theme arguments of transitive verbs, which, as we show, is borne out. We close the section by putting forward a hypothesis that the IS-properties associated with the postverbal

[1] The role of contact in word order change has not gone uncontested; for references, see Sankoff (2002).

[2] In discussing the "complex resistance" of certain languages to "grammatical interference" from their contact languages, Weinreich (1963: 44) puts his finger on "purely structural considerations (incompatibility of new forms with existing ones)" as one conceivable, but as yet unconfirmed, potential source, alongside psychological and socio-cultural factors. Our paper is a case study at the syntax–IS interface demonstrating the validity of his conjecture.

domain may, in fact, ultimately stem from mechanisms that ensure that the syntax-prosody mapping can accommodate PVCs. Section 5 concludes with the main results.

2 Background: Surgut Khanty

2.1 Sociolinguistic background

The Khanty are a small minority, both demographically and linguistically. According to the 2020 Russian census, 31,467 people identified themselves as Khanty, though only 13,900 of them reported Khanty as their native language. People of Khanty ethnicity live in two administrative regions within Russia: the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug–Yugra and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug. In the former, they make up 1.14% of the total population, and in the latter, 1.95% (Pusztay 2022). The Khanty varieties differ from one another in many respects. This paper focuses on the Surgut Khanty variety, which belongs to the Eastern dialect group of Khanty and is spoken along six rivers in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region, near the city of Surgut.

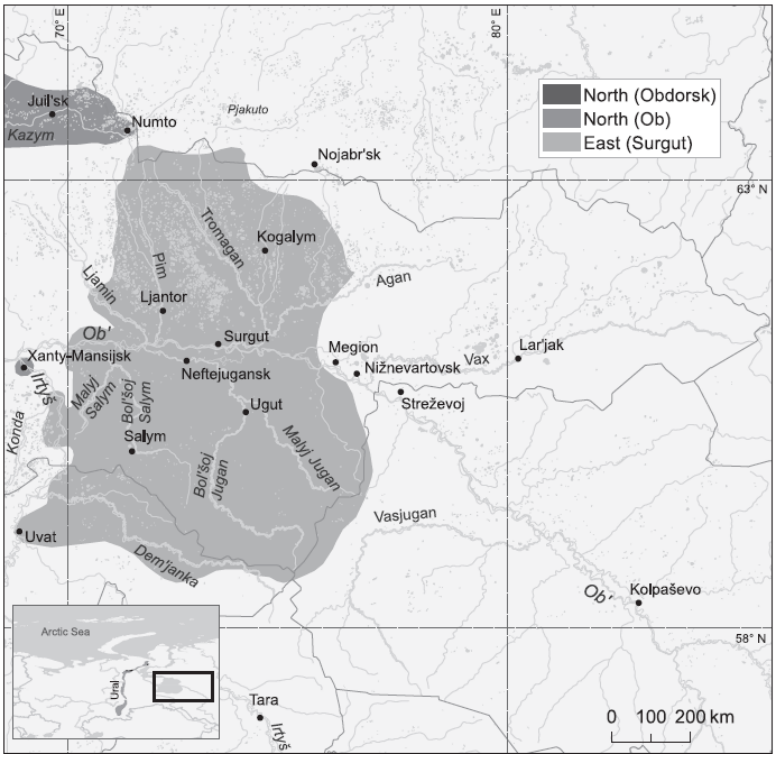

Figure 1 Surgut Khanty: Current area of use (Schön & Gugán 2022: 610)

The estimated speaker count of Surgut Khanty is less than 3,000 (Csepregi & Onina 2011), which makes it severely endangered. It may be designated as a language (rather than a dialect/variety), as Surgut Khanty and Vakh-Vasyugan Khanty, the other dialect group of Eastern Khanty, are not mutually intelligible. Surgut Khanty, and Eastern Khanty more generally, is almost exclusively unwritten, and minimal formal education is practiced in the language.

In terms of language contact, at the beginning of the 20th century, Russian influence on Khanty was not pervasive (Csepregi 2024: 28), but by now Surgut Khanty has been in intense contact with Russian for many decades. This started with the sovietization in the 1930s, when Khanty-speaking children were brought to residential schools. Currently, most native speakers of Surgut Khanty are bilingual, with Russian as sociolinguistically dominant; there are only very few elderly monolingual speakers (Schön 2017).

2.2 Expected contact effects

Like most Uralic languages, Surgut Khanty is a head-final language. On the clausal level, it exhibits relatively strict verb-finality and is typically described as rigidly verb final/OV (Csepregi 1998, Honti 1984, Nikolaeva 1999).

It has been noted, however, that some languages traditionally described as rigidly verb final have since been found to allow some (phrasal) constituents after the verb (PVCs) (Kim & Shin 1992, Simon 1989). Below, we report an empirical study that investigates the frequency distribution of PVCs in Surgut Khanty – despite the language often being described as rather strictly verb-final. Our motivation to look for PVCs in Surgut Khanty is the assumption that being in intensive contact with dominant Russian for almost a century may have led to changes in the permissibility of PVCs.

Syntactic contact effects are ubiquitous in many similar persistent contact situations. Changes in word order in Northern Khanty (Nikolaeva 1999: 57–64) and Vasyugan Khanty (Filchenko 2010: 365–369) have been attributed to Russian influence. Similarly, intensive contact with VO Russian has been described to have led to mixed word order in Udmurt (Permic, Uralic), whose basic order is/was OV: Asztalos (2021) observed that Russian-dominant young bilinguals produced head-initial constituents more frequently and judged them to be more acceptable, and argued that this is indicative of contact-induced word order change. Contact with VO languages has led, in the case of several OV languages, to mixed OV/VO and then to VO basic orders outside of Uralic, too (Faarlund 1990, Talmy. Givón 1977, Tai 1976).

Contact-induced syntactic changes have been noted in Surgut Khanty already. Working with elicited Surgut Khanty data, Dékány, Gugán & Tánczos (2020) observe the borrowing of externally headed finite relative clauses, while in an overview of clausal subordinating strategies, Csepregi & Gugán (2020), likewise, note the appearance of borrowed conjunctions in adverbial and complement clauses.

Accordingly, one may expect that contact with Russian could have also affected the word order properties of Surgut Khanty, leading to less rigid verb-finality and the appearance of PVCs – notably, post-verbal objects, given the VO character of Russian. However, according to existing work, the frequency of PVCs in Surgut Khanty has stayed low and stable, which suggests a surprising lack of OV-to-VO shift. Specifically, Asztalos, Gugán & Mus (2017) compare the frequency of non-verb-final word orders in a corpus of Khanty texts collected in 1901 by H. Paasonen and in a small corpus of interviews and narratives collected in 1994–2004. They report the percentage of non-verb-final clauses to be 9.2% in the older corpus and 7.8% in the newer corpus. Furthermore, the percentage of postverbal objects among all PVCs was too low to report for the older corpus, and, in the newer corpus, only comprised

5%. As will be shown in the next section, our aim was to verify these conclusions, by using a dedicated new database of PVC-containing clauses in Surgut Khanty (Schön 2024).

2.3 Mapping between grammatical functions and information structure in Surgut Khanty

Before proceeding to quantitative analysis, let us introduce a grammatical property of Surgut Khanty that is going to be important for our exposition. Ob-Ugric languages, including Surgut Khanty, feature a fusion between grammatical roles and the IS-status of certain constituents – namely, subjects and objects (henceforth GR-IS fusion). This grammatical property is going to be relevant for our account of PVC distribution in the language.

Subjects in Surgut Khanty represent given information and act as primary topics (Nikolaeva 1999, 2001). As far as the typology of topics goes, we follow Nikolaeva (1999) in taking Surgut Khanty subjects to instantiate aboutness topics of the sentence (Talmy Givón 1983, Reinhart 1981). We also observe that Surgut Khanty subjects can act as contrastive topics – that is, elements that signal that the topic of the sentence is contrasted with an alternative topic, often the topic of the preceding discourse (Büring 1999, Kuno 1976). Fundamentally, contrastive topics are also a type of aboutness topic, since they also establish the main topic of the current discourse (while also signalling its contrastive nature) (Krifka 2008). With respect to their syntactic distribution, primary topic subjects are typically found in the left periphery of the clause. This is illustrated in (1), with the subject *Miːʃɐ* 'Misha' that acts as the primary aboutness topic:

(1) ('Misha caught a pike when the boys went fishing.')
Miːʃɐ sɒːrt jɑqə tuːβ-təɣ.
Misha pike home bring[PST]-3SG(SBJ).SG(OBJ)
'Misha brought the pike home.'

In turn, objects in Surgut Khanty can have one of two IS-statuses: they can either act as (or as part of) narrow foci and represent new information, or act as secondary topics (Nikolaeva 1999, 2001). The dual nature of objects is reflected in the morphosyntax – namely, the pattern of verbal agreement. Verbs in Surgut Khanty can agree both with subjects and objects. In a simple sentence with a transitive verb and a nominative subject, the verb either displays agreement only with the subject, or is suffixed by a portmanteau agreement morpheme that expresses agreement with both subject and object – the choice being dependent on the IS-status of the object. Specifically, if the verb lacks object agreement, the object functions as the information structural focus (or part of it); if the verb carries object agreement, the object is interpreted as a secondary topic (Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011, Nikolaeva 1999, 2001). The latter was illustrated in (1), with the secondary topic object *sɒːrt* 'pike', already mentioned in the context that precedes the example sentence, triggering object agreement on the verb. The former is shown in (2), where the new information object *βɛɬi qɒːt* 'reindeer house' does not elicit object agreement on the verb.

(2) βɛɬi qɒːt ɒːmtəχmən min Ljali-nat.
reindeer house build.PST.1DU 1DU Ljali-COM
'Me and Ljali built a reindeer house.'

In terms of topic typology, we follow Nikolaeva (2001: 20–21), in that objects that are accompanied by an agreeing verb also act as aboutness topics. Evidence for this comes, among others, from the fact that nonspecific, non-presuppositional NPs cannot function as an object if the verb carries no agreement (Nikolaeva 2001: 20–21). Importantly, an object cannot trigger agreement if it is given/salient but not an aboutness topic. As illustrated below, in the context of a question that elicits an 'all-comment' response sentence (Lambrecht 1994, Vallduví 1992), the object, headed by a demonstrative and hence contextually given/salient, is incompatible with object agreement:

(3) Northern Khanty (adapted from Nikolaeva 2001: 28)[3]
('What happened?')
ma tam kalan we:l-s-em/ *we:l-s-e:m
I this reindeer kill-PST-1SG(SBJ)/ kill-PST-1SG(SBJ).SG(OBJ)
'I killed this reindeer.'

Importantly, as opposed to objects, subjects cannot be focused. As shown above, by default, subjects are interpreted as (primary) aboutness topics.

3 Sources of data and quantitative analysis

3.1 Database

In order to analyze the types and distribution of PVCs in Surgut Khanty, and assess them from the point of view of their IS-status, we utilized a dedicated new database of PVC-containing Surgut Khanty clauses, sourced from spoken narratives and dialogues recorded between 2010 and 2016 (Schön 2024). The database consisted of 249 total clauses coming from 13 speakers, which were transcribed and included into the database together with the surrounding context (to assess the IS-properties of the overall discourse), and accompanied by audio files for prosodic analysis. While the total number of tokens might seem low, this is due to the overall rarity of non-verb-final clauses in Surgut Khanty, as discussed above.

3.2 Quantitative analysis and results

Only declarative clauses were considered for the purposes of the analysis; we excluded imperatives (n=3) and questions (n=26), as well as clauses with PVCs represented by afterthoughts (defined as having a preverbal correlate and prosodically separate; n=32) and discourse particles (n=70). This yielded a total of 118 declarative clauses suitable for analysis, with the distribution as shown in Table 1. Note that 'Targets' in Table 1 include purpose infinitives, goals of motion, and detachable directional preverbs; more on the category of 'Targets' in Section 4.

[3]Note that even though this datapoint comes from a different Khanty variety, as far as we can tell, the object agreement facts in Northern Khanty align with those in Eastern Khanty varieties, including Surgut Khanty (at least with respect to nominal objects, as pronominal objects display different agreement patterns in the two varieties.)

Type of PVC	n
subjects (active clauses)	14
subjects (passive clauses)	10
by-phrases (LOC-marked agents; passive clauses)	7
direct objects (active clauses)	1
temporal/locative adjuncts	60
'Targets'	26
Total	118

Table 1 Types of PVCs in declarative clauses in the database

We further assessed the IS-properties of the argument-like PVCs (including arguments proper and *by*-phrases but excluding adjuncts and 'Targets') by labeling them, on the one hand, as DISCOURSE-NEW or DISCOURSE-OLD, to reflect whether they have been mentioned in the discourse before, and, on the other, as HEARER-NEW or HEARER-OLD, to reflect whether a referent was known to the hearer prior to the current discourse (Prince 1981). This yielded a four-way typology, as shown in Table 2.

	DISCOURSE-NEW	DISCOURSE-OLD
HEARER-NEW	6	0
HEARER-OLD	0	26

Table 2 IS-properties of the argument(-like) PVCs

The pattern emerging from the data in Table 1 is that PVCs are represented by subjects (active and passive), *by*-phrases (LOC-marked agents in Surgut Khanty), adjuncts, and 'Targets'. While the vast majority of data is covered by the two latter categories, it is the former four that are of particular interest to us, given their argument-like status and, therefore, their behaviour with respect to the GR-IS fusion, described in Section 2.2, and the potential OV-to-VO shift. It is worth noting that direct objects in active clauses almost never appear as PVCs, whereas subjects, both active and passive, and agents of passive clauses, appear as PVCs considerably more readily.

Table 2, in turn, shows that, among the argument-like PVCs, there is a strong preference for DISCOURSE-OLD & HEARER-OLD ones. In the next section, we provide an account of these tendencies.

4 Analysis

4.1 Proposal

As was shown in Section 2.2, the grammatical role of object in Surgut Khanty is necessarily fused with one of two IS roles, in the following way: if the verb carries no agreement with the

object, the object acts as focus of the utterance/new information conveyed by the utterance, or part of the focus/new information; if the verb agrees with the object, the object acts as a secondary topic. We have also adopted the view that, as far as the typology of topics goes, secondary topic objects have an aboutness topic status. In other words, objects in Surgut Khanty are necessarily discourse-'prominent', in one of two ways: without object agreement on the verb, an object is part of focus ('new-prominent'), while with object agreement on the verb, the object is prominent in another way, as an aboutness topic ('given-prominent').

Importantly, neither of these possible IS statuses of an object – neither that of a focus/new information (or part of it) nor that of an aboutness topic (i.e., the main topic of the utterance) – is compatible with a given-backgrounded status – i.e., the information that has already been part of the discourse but does not constitute an aboutness topic of an utterance; in other words, something that can be called a familiarity topic (Talmy Givón 1983). That is, an object cannot be simply given-backgrounded without being an aboutness topic; verbal agreement makes an object discourse-'prominent' in the sense of lending it aboutness topic status.

Subjects are different, in that verbal agreement with the subject in Surgut Khanty is obligatory. This means that the presence of agreement itself does not make a subject discourse-'prominent' in the same way as in the case of an object. The subject is interpreted as an aboutness topic by default. Nevertheless, we would like to propose that under the right circumstances, a subject may be interpreted as simply given-backgrounded – that is, as a familiarity topic. This is what happens when a subject is placed postverbally.

Specifically, our proposal is that the postverbal domain in Surgut Khanty is associated with discourse-'nonprominence', and favours constituents with the IS status of givenness-backgrounding. This was demonstrated by the data in our database, with the strong preference for given (both HEARER-OLD and DISCOURSE-OLD) PVCs, as was shown in Table 2. This is also in line with what has been observed for PVCs in some other languages that are otherwise rather strictly verb-final (e.g., Turkish): they only allow for PVCs that are given-backgrounded (Göksel 2013, Özge & Bozsahin 2010, Öztürk 2013).

The fact that the postverbal domain in Surgut Khanty admits given-backgrounded material, coupled with the fact that subjects (and other agent constituents, such as *by*-phrases in passive constructions) can be given without necessarily being turned into an aboutness topic, explains the prevalence of subjects and agents as PVCs in Surgut Khanty, as was shown in Table 1. In contrast with subjects, objects of transitive verbs in Surgut Khanty cannot be simply given-backgrounded (i.e., act as a familiarity topic), without simultaneously acting as an aboutness topic. What follows is that, for IS reasons, objects cannot be placed postverbally, since the post-verbal field is associated with nonprominence, or mere givenness-backgrounding. This, in turn, creates a grammar-internal reason for Surgut Khanty resisting a more flexible pre-/post-verbal positioning of the object, and a potential switch to VO as a default word order, despite favourable conditions for that (long-standing intense contact with Russian) being present.

Before moving on to further predictions of our approach, we should address the status of the most numerous PVCs in our database – locative and temporal adjuncts and 'Targets', as shown in Table 1. The former can be easily accommodated by our account. We take it that adjuncts do not have an inherent IS-specification, as may be manifested by the fact that

they cannot trigger verbal agreement; as such, they may become given-backgrounded PVCs if warranted by context. On the other hand, 'Target' PVCs likely require a non-IS-related explanation – and, as such, fall outside of our account altogether. Interestingly, both the existence of the coherent category of 'Target' constituents, as comprised by e.g., purpose infinitives, goals of motion, and recipients, and the tendency for 'Targets' to appear postverbally has typological parallels in other otherwise strictly verb-final languages: for instance, the high occurrence of 'Target' PVCs in West Asian OV languages is discussed in detail in Haig et al. (2024).

4.2 Further predictions: passivization

According to the central generalization developed here, objects in Surgut Khanty cannot be given-backgrounded, which is the reason why they cannot be placed postverbally. The question is, then: if the theme argument of a transitive verb, canonically realised as the object, needs to be given-backgrounded in a particular context, how can that be expressed in Surgut Khanty? The prediction made by our approach is that if a theme can surface as a subject instead of an object, it can be backgrounded and placed postverbally. In other words, an object of a transitive verb can only be backgrounded if it undergoes passivization first, becoming a subject, and then is placed after the verb. This prediction is borne out, and explains the relative frequency of passivization for the sake of theme-backgrounding in Surgut Khanty. An example is provided in (4), where the given-backgrounded theme of the passivized verb 'drink' surfaces as a postverbal subject.

(4) ('Open the drawer of that table! A cup of blood will be there.')
Mɐ: mənmɐm pənti mɐ:nə noq ji:nʲtʲɬʲəɣti βərət.
1SG go.PTCP.PST.1SG when 1SG.LOC up drink.PST.PASS.3SG blood.3SG
'When I was on my way, her blood was drunk by me.'

Conversely, if the theme becomes a primary topic, it turns into a passive subject that is placed preverbally, and the backgrounded *by*-phrase, if any, can become a PVC. This is shown in (5), where the given-backgrounded *by*-phrase (LOC-marked agent) *tʃe:k nɐ:jnə* is positioned postverbally.

(5) Ke:βərt sɐ:pəɬ pəɬiɬɬəɬta ɬi:βi tʲu: tʃe:k, tʃe:k nɐ:jnə.
pintail.duck neck completely eat.PST.PASS.3SG that misery misery fire.LOC
'The neck of the pintail duck was completely burnt by that great, great Fire.'

Alternatively, in case of topic continuation, the topicalized object may be dropped altogether; the backgrounded *by*-phrase can then still surface postverbally, as in (6).

(6) ('What happened to your eye?')
Tʲu:tən i:ɬə pɑβɬəmi nʉŋnə.
then out poke.PST.PASS.3SG 2SG.LOC
'[It] was poked out by you then.'

4.3 Prosodic properties

We hypothesize that the requirement for the PVCs to be interpreted as given-backgrounded may actually be a consequence of a prosodic property of Surgut Khanty. If we adopt the hypothesis that PVCs in Surgut Khanty do not carry intonational pitch accents – as is the case in some other OV languages, e.g., Turkish (Göksel 2013, Özge & Bozsahin 2010, Öztürk 2013) – that would render PVCs in Surgut Khanty prosodically non-prominent. This aligns with a given-backgrounded status rather than an aboutness topic or new/focal status, both of which are typically associated with carrying an intonational pitch accent (i.e., being prosodically prominent, in addition to being discourse-'prominent'). The assumption that properties of phrasal prosody and the syntax-prosody interface indirectly mediate between syntax and IS is readily compatible with a Y-model of grammar, in which syntax does not have direct access to IS-related information (Büring 2013).

Recast in prosodic terms, the central generalization of our account is that the postverbal domain in Surgut Khanty favours unaccented elements (whereas accented material appears to the left of the verb). While instrumental work to demonstrate the different behaviour of preverbal constituents and PVCs in Surgut Khanty with respect to their accent properties is still in progress, our initial results suggest that our preliminary conclusions are indeed on the right track: typically, PVCs are less prosodically prominent than preverbal material, and, perceptually, they do not appear accented. This is shown in (7) and Figure 2.

(7) ('Which river is your village on?')
Nʲəmnʲɐnnə pə jat͡ʃənə pə jɐː βaɬɬ ɬʉβ pə puːɣəɬ.
Demyanka.on FOC middle.in FOC well is in.fact too village
'On the Demyanka, too – in fact, mid-way upstream – is the village.'

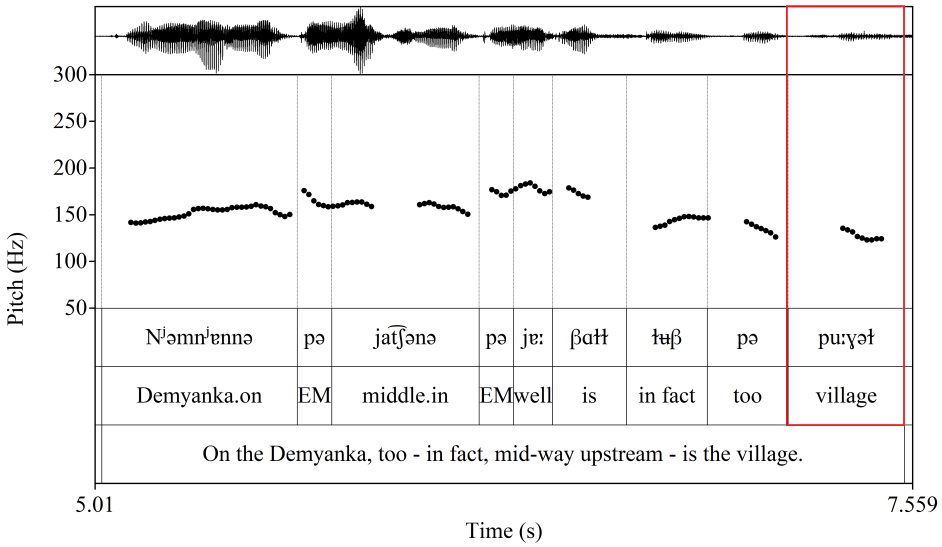

Figure 2 An example of the prosodic realization of a given PVC

In the example in (7), *puːɣəɬ* 'village' appears in the context question, asked by one of the speakers, and is then repeated in the answer by the other speaker, as given-backgrounded material. It is placed postverbally and appears to be the least prosodically prominent constituent in the utterance, as indicated by the lowest values of the fundamental frequency (f0) contour associated with it.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, we provided an account of the rather surprising lack of any sign of an OV-to-VO shift (and the scarcity of PVCs more generally) in Surgut Khanty, an OV language, despite it being in intensive contact with VO Russian. Our proposal rests on two main generalizations: the existence of a fusion between certain grammatical roles and certain IS statuses (the GR-IS fusion), and the restriction on PVCs with certain IS statuses. According to the GR-IS fusion, subjects, by default, act as discourse-'prominent' aboutness topics; alternatively, though, they may have the status of given-backgrounded material (familiarity topics), which are not discourse-'prominent'. Distribution-wise, aboutness topic subjects reside in the left periphery; prosody-wise, they carry intonational pitch accents. In contrast, given-backgrounded subjects, which are non-prominent in both discourse and prosodic terms, surface postverbally – that is, in the clausal domain that favours non-prominent material (both prosodically and discourse-wise).

Objects, in turn, represent either narrow foci/new information or (secondary) aboutness topics – both of which are both discourse-'prominent' and prosodically prominent (i.e., carry intonational pitch accents). Both types occur to the left of the verb but differ morphosyntactically: aboutness topic objects trigger object agreement on the verb, while focused ones do not. Being inherently prominent, both prosodically and discourse-wise, objects cannot appear as PVCs. This explains the resistance to adopting VO as a default word order, despite prolonged contact with VO Russian. A native Khanty strategy to make a theme of a transitive verb given-backgrounded is to passivize the verb, thus turning the theme into a subject, which may surface as a given-backgrounded PVC.

That said, the presence of the few Hearer-New and Discourse-New tokens in Table 2 might suggest that the process of allowing for non-backgrounded PVCs has begun in Surgut Khanty (cf. É. Kiss 2014 on the decay of the GR-IS fusion and the subsequent OV-to-VO shift in Hungarian.)

Other grammatical functions are not involved in a fusion with an IS role, so other phrases, such as adjuncts, can appear after the verb (when backgrounded) more freely. Finally, 'Target' PVCs likely require a non-IS-related explanation, and fall outside the scope of the current account.

Abbreviations

1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, COM = comitative, DU = dual, FOC = focus, LOC = locative, OBJ = object, PASS = passive, PST = past, PTCP = participle, SBJ = subject, SG = singular.

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