Marker *-ge* in Hill Mari: Is it really a comitative?

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This paper deals with the affix *-ge* in Hill Mari: I will propose a new analysis of its semantics relying on my field data, collected in the village of Kuznetsovo and nearby villages (Mari El, Russia) in 2016-2018. In traditional Hill Mari grammars this marker is referred to as sociative case (Savatkova 2002: 100) that marks the accompanying entity (Tuzharov 1987: 89). T. Stolz et al (2006: 70) suggest that *-ge* is "a number-marking affix", which introduces the meaning of totality. Alhoniemi (1993: 60), Savatkova (2002: 100) and Salo (2016: 197) also mention the latter meaning.

My data show that prototypical comitative constructions (CC) mentioned in (Arkhipov 2009) tend to be encoded with the postposition *dono* 'with':

(1) *ivan maša dono/ *maša-ge šə̂rgə̂-škə̂ ke-n*
   I. M. with M.-COM forest-ILL go-PRET
   'Ivan went to forest with Mary.'

The marker *-ge* occurs in CCs only if they refer to some full set. In (2) a mother and her child make up such a set, whereas in (3) they do not as a child is not hers.

(2) *ävä t'et'ä-ge xə̂nal-aš tol-ə̂n*
   mother child-COM visit-INF come-PRET
   'A mother paid [us] a visit with her child.'

(3) **ə̂də̂rämäš jäl t'et'ä-ge mašinä-š sə̂nz-ə̂n*
   woman smb.else's child-COM car-ILL sit-PRET
   'A woman got into a car with somebody else's child.'

In such constructions *-ge* marks either a salient part of the whole entity (4) or an object that forms a complete set with another one (5), but it cannot be used if two objects do not constitute a set pragmatically (6).

(4) *maša divan-ə̂škə̂ jal-ge kuz-en šə̂nž-ə̂n*
   M. couch-ILL foot-COM climb-CVB sit-PRET
   'Mary sat with her feet up on the couch'

(5) *mə̂n' törelkä-m cäškä-ge šu-en-äm*
   I plate-ACC cup-COM throw-PRET-1SG
   'I threw away a plate with a cup.'

(6) **mə̂n' xalat-ə̂m xolodil'n'ik-ge šu-en-äm*
   I dressing.gown-ACC fridge-COM throw-PRET-1SG
   'I threw away a dressing gown and a fridge.'

Moreover, *-ge* has quantificational functions, which is untypical of comitative markers. It encodes CMP-quantification (in terms of (Tatevosov 2002)) marking a set of similar objects (7).

(7)   **klas-ge**   *poxod-∂š*   *ke-ät*
         class-COM   camping.trip-ILL   go-NPST-3PL
         'The class are going camping.'

However, if a CMP-quantified object does not consist of equal parts, *-ge* is only possible with a quantifier, e.g. *cilä* (8). The same restriction emerges for DEF- and GEN-quantification.

(8)   **licä**   **cilä(-ge)**/   ***licä-ge**   *kec-eš*   *j∂l-en*   *ke-n*
         face   all-COM   face-COM   sun-LAT   burn-CVB   go-PRET
         'All (my) face got sunburnt.'

Therefore, *-ge* serves rather as an intensifier than as a quantifier, also expressing emphatic meaning in some more contexts.

To sum up, the main property of *-ge* is not just totality, which was previously mentioned. I propose its another semantic invariant: *-ge* emphasizes important separable parts of an object or of a set. In its "comitative" function *-ge* marks one salient part of a (complex) object necessary to make up some complete set (4), (5). In its "quantificational" function it marks every part of a (complex) object (7). If an object is not quantified by itself, it requires additional quantification (8). I will elaborate on this analysis in my talk, relying on theoretical approaches to the connections between quantification and intensification (Burnett 2014).

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