Journée d'études Typologie des langues du Caucase

Mardi 28/03/2017 - 9h-17h
Salle Elise Rivet
Institut des Sciences de l’Homme
14 av. Berthelot
69007 Lyon

Organisateurs : Anetta Kopecka & Brigitte Pakendorf

Morning session: 9.00 - 12.00

1. An overview of East Caucasian languages and their neighbours: families, contacts, typological profiles (approx. 30 min) Michael Daniel
This is a short survey of the linguistic families endemic to, or represented in, the Caucasus. We will provide a very general introduction to the typological properties of the languages of the Caucasus, focusing on the languages of the East Caucasian language family.

2. Moods in East Caucasian (60 min) Nina Dobrushina
In this lecture, I will present a survey of non-indicative moods in East Caucasian. I will treat expression of inducement to different persons (imperative / hortative / jussive), morphosyntactic structure of volitional clauses, and the meaning of the optative in Daghestanian languages. I will also discuss the domain of irrealis, with a special focus on conditional constructions.

3. Two ditransitive strategies in East Caucasian: Recipient split? (90 mins) Michael Daniel
East Caucasian languages show a typologically rare pattern of discriminating two types of 'give'-situations by alternating inflectional marking on the recipient NP. I will walk the audience through different possible semantic interpretations of the phenomenon, to come up, in the end, with a less obvious - but also more theoretically plausible and promising - interpretation of the contrast, ultimately linking it to the two-layered model of semantic roles and the dual nature of the situations of transfer.

Afternoon session: 13.30 - 17.00

4. Person agreement in Archi, Dargwa and Nakh: gender or what? (90 mins) Michael Daniel
Unlike the widespread gender, person agreement is not typical of East Caucasian languages. Archi, Dargwa and Nakh do person reference by means of gender agreement (person by other means, in terms of Corbett et al's). Unlike other NPs with plural human reference, first and second plural pronouns unexpectedly control non-human plural agreement. After discussing some typologically peculiar morphosyntactic properties of this agreement, I will suggest, as one possibility, a functional explanation of how this pattern may have emerged.
5. Where have all the adjectives ended up: a study in Archi statives (60 mins) Michael Daniel

It is well known from the typology of property words that adjectives is the least stable part-of-speech category, torn between nouns and verbs. The typological profile under which the property words are verbs is sometimes called adjectival-verb languages. In this paper, I argue that merely showing that a property word is a predicate rather than an attribute is not equivalent to arguing that it is, morphosyntactically, a verb. To use Dixon's metaphor (Where have all adjectives gone?) , Archi is an example of a language whose property words certainly went all the way to become predicative items. However, they remained a separate morphosyntactic class and did not (fully) assimilate with verbs.

6. Agreement classes in East Caucasian: the rise and fall of structuralism (60+ mins if we have time) Michael Daniel

If we will survive so far in this long day, I will consider nominal class (gender) systems in several East Caucasian languages. Here, a small set of cognate markers are combined into multiple singular - plural pairs, forming from three to many 'agreement classes'. I will show that following the insightful Zalizniak's structuralist approach in his seminal book on Russian gender does not provide a plausible description of the gender systems in East Caucasian. Instead of ascribing nominal class (gender) to a lexical item on the whole, one should ascribe it separately to its number forms, singular vs. plural. This provides a more semantically transparent and more parsimonious description of at least some of the systems.