PRONOUN EXPANSION IN RUSSIAN AND LATVIAN NOMINAL CLAUSES: SAME ORIGIN?

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Outline of the talk

1. General remarks. Setting the task.
2. Russian case: diachronic study of texts from XI till XVIII
3. Latvian case: diachronic study of texts from XVII till XX
4. Conclusion

Defining the terms

- In general: 2 major strategies of subject reference marking – full DPs / reduced devices

- In this research: focus on reduced referential devices

- Reduced referential devices: personal pronouns and verbal affixes

- Most languages use only one of this two strategies to mark the subject

WALS 2013: typological context

- Verbal affixes: the most widespread pattern (61% of languages)
- Personal pronouns: only 14% of languages
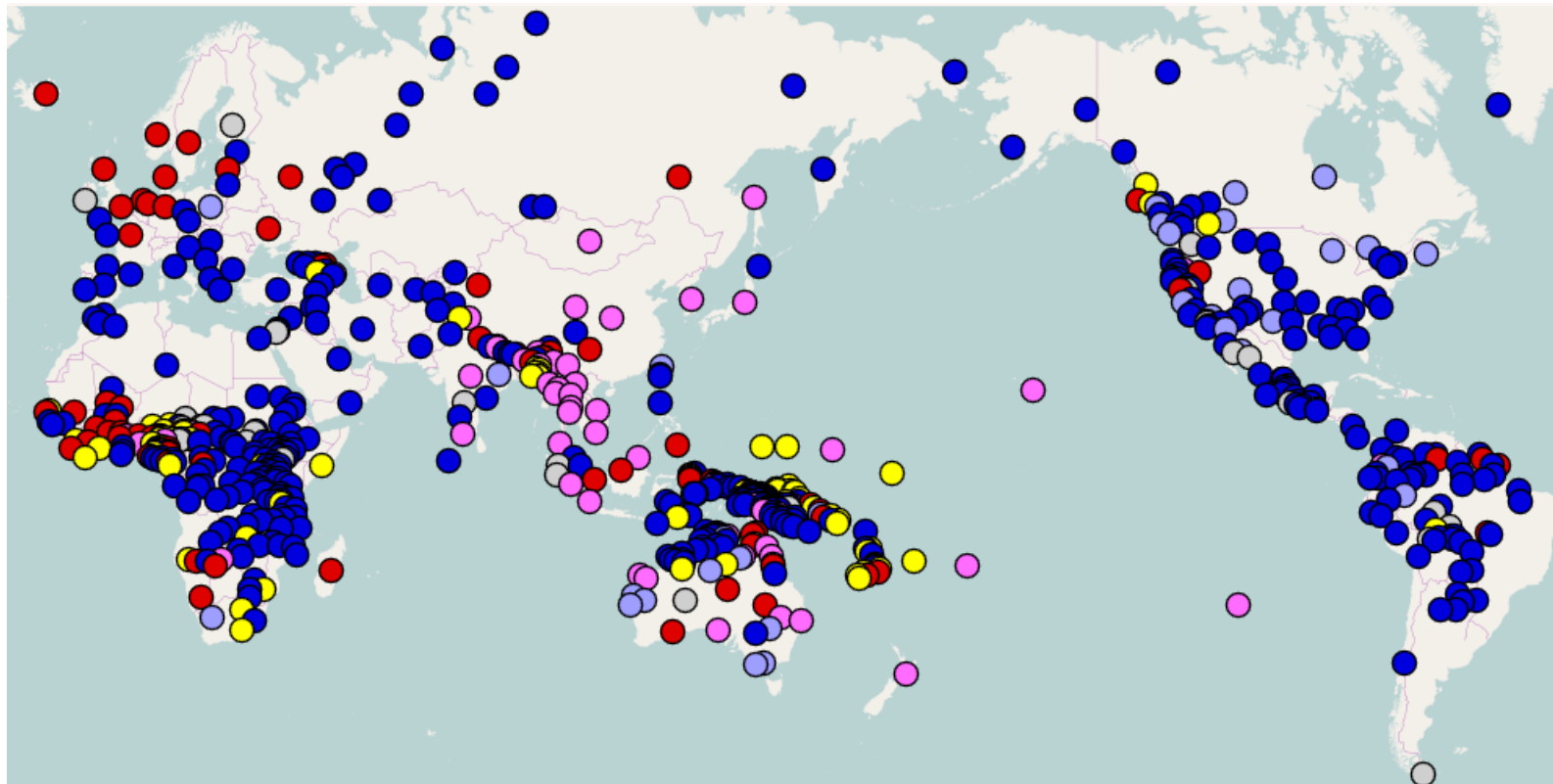
Values

- 🔴 Obligatory pronouns in subject position
- 🔵 Subject affixes on verb
- 🟣 Subject clitics on variable host
- 🟡 Subject pronouns in different position
- 🌸 Optional pronouns in subject position
- ⚪ Mixed

Typological context: diachrony

- PIE language: verbal inflection with pro-drop [Hopper 1975]

- Ancient IE languages: verbal inflection with pro-drop

    a.   Sanscrit [Kiparsky 2008: 33]
    pa´sya-ti m¯am ya-h. pac¯a-mi
    see-3SG me-ACC who-NOM   cook-1Sg
    'He sees me, who am cooking'

  b. Latin:
    Dum   spir-o sper-o
    while   breathe.PRS-1SG   hope.PRS-1SG
    'While I breathe, I hope'

  c. Old High German ("Liber evangeliorum", IX; [Eggenberger 1961: 35])
    Ni thárf-t   es ... lóugn-en
    NEG   need.PRS-2SG it.GEN   deny-INF
    'you do not need to deny it'

  d. Old Russian (Novgorod birchbark letter N. 644, XII):
    poid-i syn-u domov   svoboden-ø je-si
    go-IMP   son-VOC.SGhome free-MSG.NOM be.PRS-2SG
    'Go home, son, you are free'

Typological context: modern situation

- Most PIE descendants possess the same verbal-inflection pattern with pro-drop:
  - Italian: *ø ti am-o* 'I love you'
  - Lithuanian: *ø myli-u tave* 'I love you'
  - South and West Slavic

- But some languages have shifted to a much less common pattern with subject pronouns (verbal affixes either remained or lost)
  - Germanic: ***Jag** alskar dig* 'I love you' (Swedish)
  - East Slavic: ***ja** ljublj-**u** tebja* 'I love you' (Russian)
  - Latvian: ***Es** mīl-**u** tevi* 'I love you'

- Why did this happen?

Germanic VS East Slavic and Latvian

- In modern Germanic subject pronouns are obligatory and normally cannot be omitted:
  - English: *we are the champions / * ø are the champions*
- East Slavic: subject pronouns mostly presented but quite often (from ¼ to 1/3 of all occurences [Kibrik 1996, Seo 2001 inter alia]) can be dropped:
  - Russian: *(ja) xoču domoj* 'I want to go home'
- Latvian: similar to Russian [Luis, Spencer 2014] although no quantitative studies were carried out
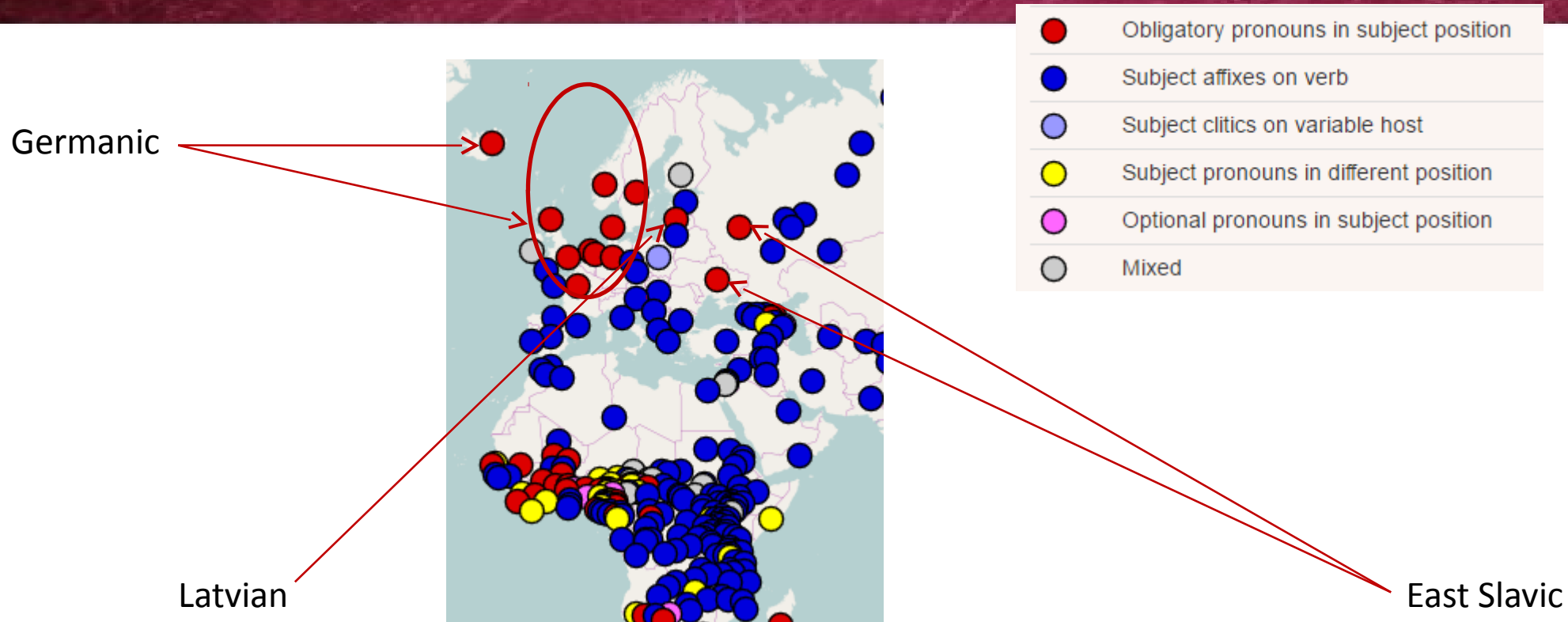- "Partial pro-drop languages"

From J. R. R. Tolkien, "The Lord Of The Rings"

English	Russian	Latvian
'Aragorn,' **she said**, *'why* **will you go** *on this deadly road?'* *'Because* **I must**,*'* **he said**. *'Only so* **can I see** *any hope of doing my part in the war against Sauron.'* *For a while* **she was silent**, *as if pondering what this might mean.* *Then suddenly* **she laid** *her hand on his arm.* **Tu esi stingrs** *un izlēmīgs pavēlnieks,* — **viņa bilda.**	*– Aragorn, –* **skazala ona**, *– zachem* **ty edesh** *etim giblym putem?* *– Zatem, chto* **ø ne mogu** *inače,* – **otvečal on**. *– Tol'ko tak* **ja**, *byt' mozhet,* **sumeju** *operedit' Saurona.* **Ona pomolchala**, *obdumyvaja poslednije ego slova.* *Potom vdrug* **ø polozhila** *ruku jemu na plecho.* – **Ty surov** *i tverd,* – **skazala ona.**	*— Aragorn, —* **viņa bilda**, *— kamdēļ* **tu gribi iet** *to nāves ceļu?* *— Jo ø citādi* **nevaru**, *—* **viņš atteica**. *— Tikai tā* **es varu** *cerēt paveikt, kas man paveicams karā pret Sauronu.* *Kādu brīdi* **viņa klusēja**, *it ka prātodama, ko tas varētu nozīmēt.* *Tad* **viņa** *piepeši* **uzlika** *plaukstu viņam uz rokas.* **You are a stern lord** *and resolute,'* **she said.**

Germanic VS East Slavic and Latvian: chronology of pronoun expantion

- Germanic: pronoun expansion was launched at a preliterate (Proto-Germanic) stage and ended up by 9th century [Axel 2007, Faarlund 2010: 1710],

- Russian: gradual pronoun expansion from 11th till 18th century, with its peak in XVI [Zaliznjak 2008, Meyer 2012]

- Latvian: no data on ancient pro-drop before 19th century

- First original Latvian texts refer to 19th century, due to historical and sociolinguistical reasons

- Yet Lithuanian (commonly supposed as one of the closest languages to PIE) emploies the old pro-drop pattern with verbal inflection

- Latvian: unstudied evolution?

Geografical proximity (WALS)

Germanic

Latvian

East Slavic

Legend:
- 🔴 Obligatory pronouns in subject position
- 🔵 Subject affixes on verb
- 🟣 Subject clitics on variable host
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Hypothesis of external influence

- Kibrik 2013: "it is unlikely that two similar and rather unusual systems… emerged completely independently in geographical proximity. In my view, such independent emergence would count almost as a areal-typological miracle"
- The initial trigger of pronoun expansion in Germanic remains unclear [Axel, Weiβ 2011: 327] but here the most important is that Germanic pronoun expansion had already ended up by the time when a similar process started in Russian
- Kibrik 2013: later Russian and Latvian pronoun expansion as a borrowing from Germanic?
- Chronologically consistent scenario
- But many sociolinguistic objections (e.g. West Slavic preserved the old PIE referential pattern despite a much more intensive contact with Germanic)
- To shed some light: a comparative diachronic study of Russian and Latvian must be taken.

Russian: general remarks

- 3 main types of clauses affected by pronoun expansion: synthetic verbal present clauses VS analytic nominal present clauses and verbal perfect clauses

		Early Old Russian (before 12th century)	Modern Russian	Translation in English
Nominal present	1Sg.M 3Sg.M	*vinovat-ъ jesmь* *vinovat-ъ jestь*	*ja **øcop** vinovat* *on **øcop** vinovat*	'I am guilty' 'he is guilty'
Verbal Perfect/Past	1Sg.M 3Sg.M	*Perfect* *dal-ъ jesmь* *dal-ъ jestь*	*New past* *ja dal* *on dal*	'I gave' 'he gave'
Verbal Present	1Sg.M 3Sg.M	*ø daj-u* *ø da-et*	*ja daj-u* *on da-et*	'I give' 'he gives'

- In this talk: focus on nominal present clauses
- Zaliznjak 2004, 2008: it was nominal clauses with a noun predicate where personal pronouns expanded first of all (12th century, while verbal clauses have developed the same pattern for about 4 centuries later)

Old Russian peculiarities: pronoun expansion VS copular loss

- Pronoun expansion goes hand in hand with the loss of verb copulas
- Zaliznjak 2008, a study of Novgorod Birchbark letters: "almost every time a phrase with zero copula contains an overt pronoun" [idem: 246].
- e. *knjazь jesmь -> **ja øcop** knjazь* 'I am a prince'
- Kibrik 2004: was it pronoun expansion or copular loss that was launched first ("a chicken-egg-dilemma") ?
- Jakobson 1935, Lindseth 1998, Kibrik 2011, Kopotev 2011: hypothesis of copula loss as the initial trigger of ensuing reference evolution
- Based on the fact that 3rd person copula was often omitted even in the earliest texts (although mostly in phrases with full DPs as a subject) where no overt unstressed pronouns were found :
- f. *a zamk-e **øcop** krьle a dver-i **øcop** krьle*
   and   lock-SG.NOM   intact-MSG.NOM   and   door-PL.NOM   intact-MPL.NOM
   "And the lock (is) intact, and the doors (are) intact"   (birch-bark letter 247, 11th cent.)
- Kibrik 2013: "Unmotivated expansion of subject pronouns appears a typologically unlikely process, whereas the simplification of verb paradigms is cross-linguistically common"

Old Russian peculiarities: objections to the "copula-loss-first" hypothesis

- All first subject pronouns noted in [Zaliznjak 2004] belong to 1st and 2nd and not to the 3rd person

  g. *a* **ne sestra ja** *vamo* 'And I am not your sister' (birchbark letter 644, 12th century).

- 3rd person zero copula is indeed cross-linguistically common but 1st and 2nd copula drop is much less known

- Borkovskij, Kuznecov 2006; Ivanov 1982; Zaliznjak 2004: copula drop was caused by subject pronoun expansion and not the contrary

- But no consistent evidence either, except for some very rare examples of 1st-2nd pronouns in 12th century texts

What could clarify?

- It seems that if at some stage a double-marking pattern (both with personal pronouns and verb copulas) existed then it could account for subject pronoun expansion-first hypothesis.

- For subject pronoun expansion-first:
  - *knjazь jesmь -> ja jesmь knjazь -> ja knjazь*

- For copula-loss-first:
  - *knjazь jesmь -> ja knjazь*

- So what about these intermediate double-marking stages?
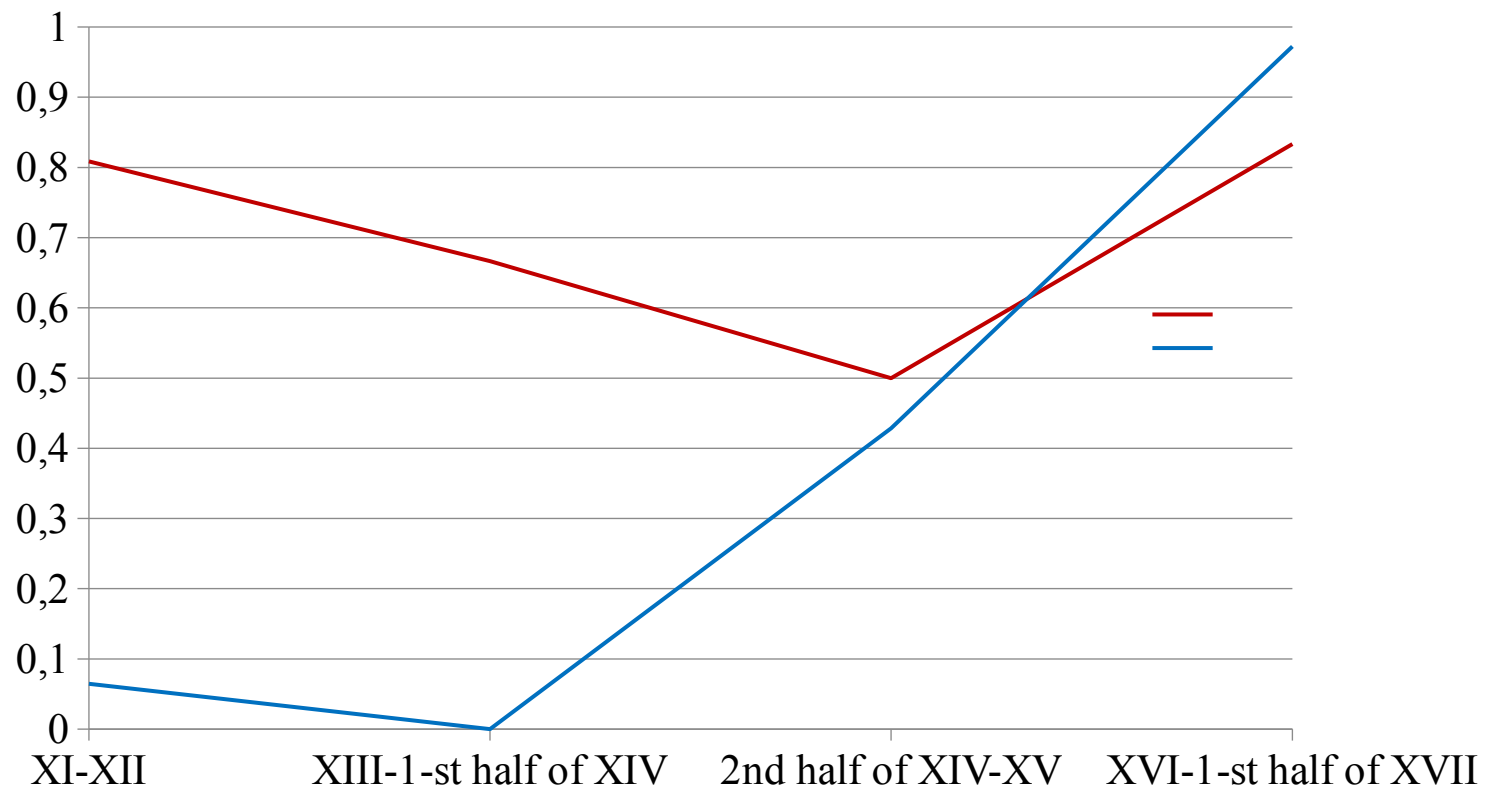
Double-marking patterns in Old Russian: problems

- Zaliznjak 2004: only 1 item in the corpus of birch-bark letters
- Zaliznjak 2008: significant predominance of double-marking patterns in the dialogs of Kiev chronicles (12th century) but almost no occurrences in later works
- (Meanwhile if we presuppose any external influence from Germanic, there could be no question about copular loss as the initial trigger)
- A more profound investigation on double-marking pattern in Old Russian should be carried out

The analysis: main principles

- Texts from 11th till 2nd half of 17th century
  - 2nd half of 17th century: "referential marking is nearly the same as in modern Russian" [Zaliznjak 2008: 256.; Chernykh 1952: 227; Borkovsky, Kuznetsov 2006: 323; Kibrik 2013: 236]
- 2 registers: non-literary (both informal and official) VS literary, studied separately
- Sources: Russian National Corpus (historic part) http://ruscorpora.ru/old; e-library "Pushkinskiy Dom" (literary works from 11th till 17th century, online at http://pushkinskijdom.ru); e-library "Vostochnaja literatura" ('Eastern literature' – documents and acts from 11th till 17th century, online at http://www.vostlit.info)
- 1st-2nd VS 3rd person pronouns
- Pronoun expansion / copula loss distinguished => Types of patterns analyzed: zero pronoun clauses (both with and without a copula); zero copula clauses (both with and without a subject pronoun); double-marking patterns with both a subject pronoun and a verb copula
- Overall volume: nearly 1000 relevant clauses extracted from texts
- Methodology: manual data extraction with later statistical processing in SPSS (binominal and χ-square tests, Student's t-test)
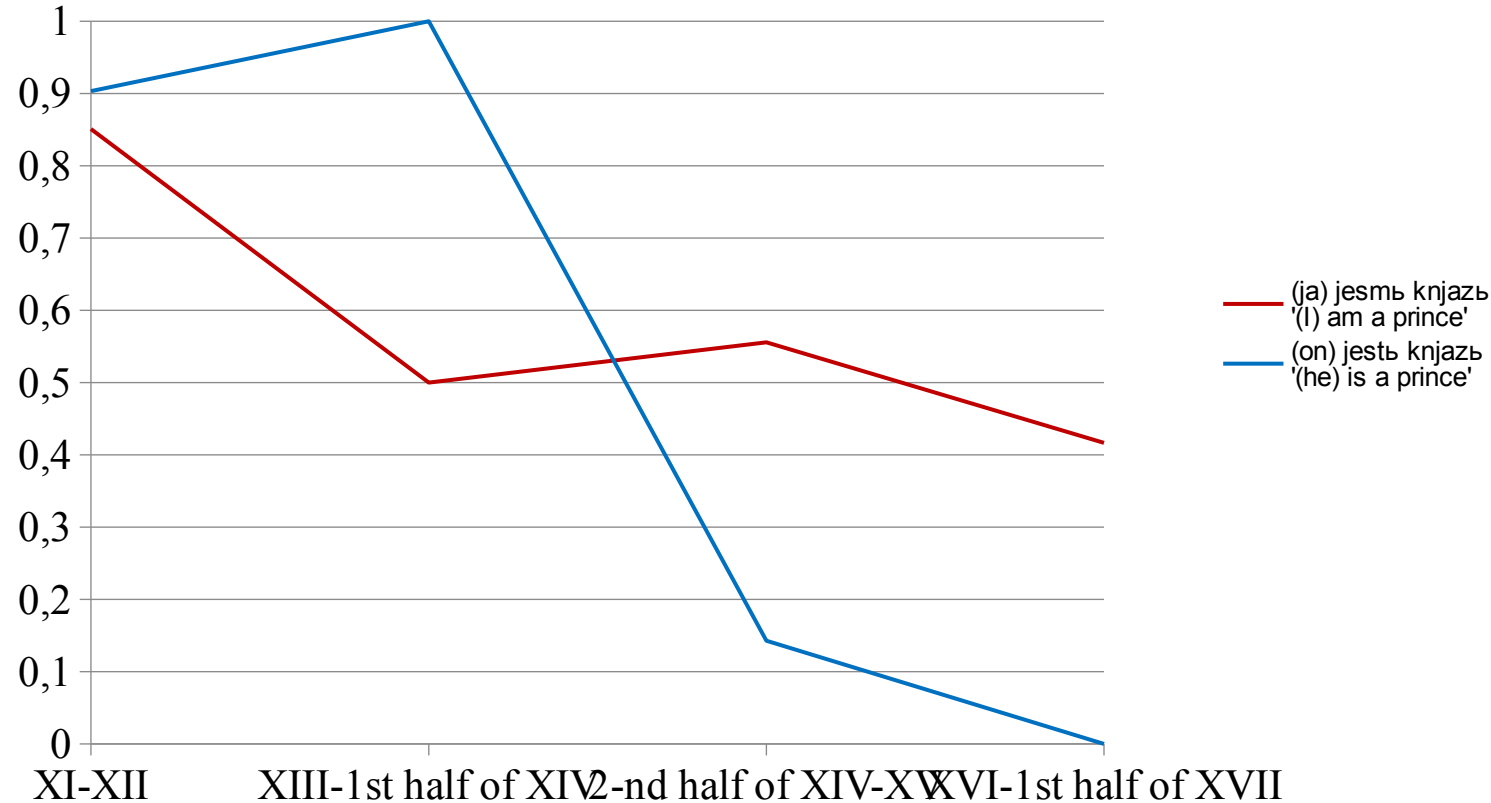
Results: informal style-1
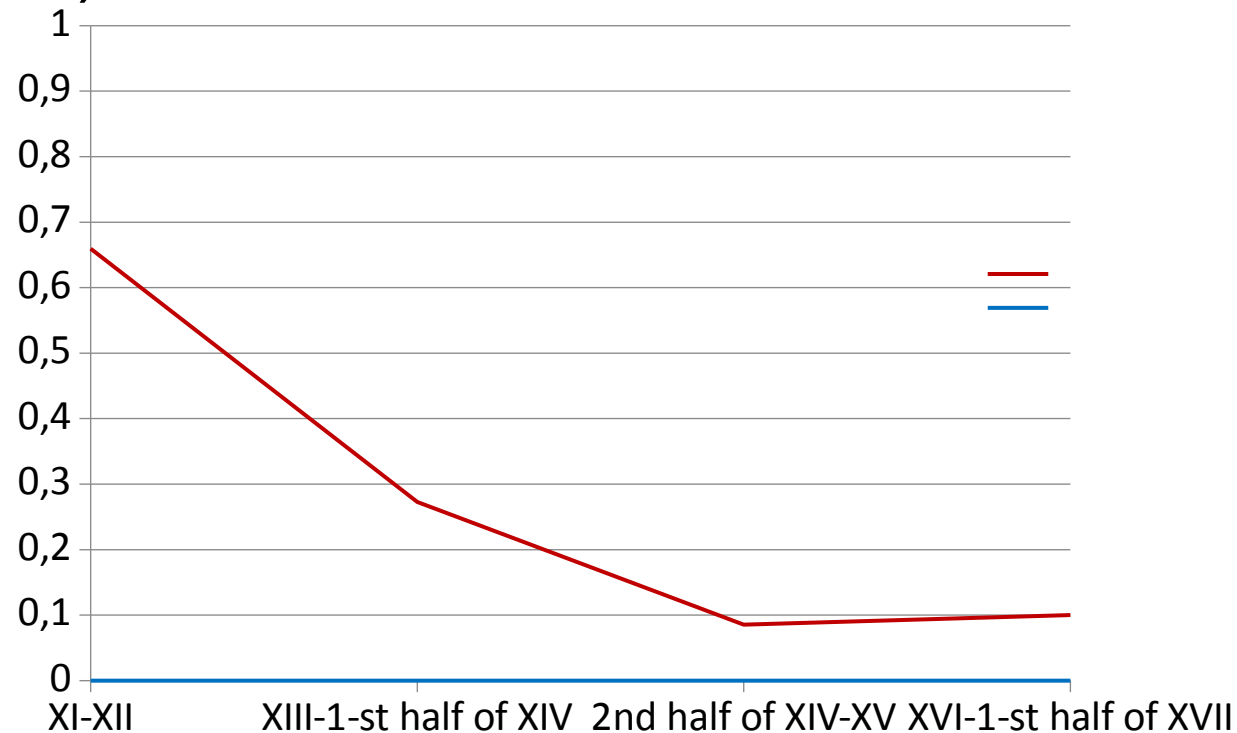
- Pronoun expansion: 1-2 VS 3 person

Results: informal style-2

- Copula loss: 1-2 VS 3 person

Legend:
- (ja) jesmь knjazь '(I) am a prince'
- (on) jestь knjazь '(he) is a prince'

X-axis: XI-XII | XIII-1st half of XIV | 2-nd half of XIV-XV | XVI-1st half of XVII

Results: informal style-3

- Double-marking patterns (both with a subject pronoun and a copula)

Comments

- At the very first stage (11th-12th century) pronoun expansion in 1st and 2nd person does not correlate with copula loss

- It correlates in 3rd person only

- It seems that referential reconstruction in the history of Russian consists of 2 totally different stages – pronoun expansion only (11th-12th century, 1st and 2nd person) and copula loss (began in 14th century in 3rd person and than expanded to 1st and 2nd person) that triggered another wave of pronoun expansion replacing the ancient verb copulas

- In the early old Russian we had a double-marking pattern in 1st and 2nd person which splitted up further into 2 different "rivalling" patterns (zero pronoun+copula; overt pronoun+ zero copula).

- A massive copula loss in 3rd person (14th century) provoked an expansion of 3rd person pronouns and a flush of new patterns with an overt pronoun and zero copula, such as *on øcop knjazь* 'he *øcop* prince'

- Under the influence of 3rd person 1st and 2nd person reference strategies have gradually lost a "zero pronoun+copula" pattern *knjazь jesmь* so that only "overt pronoun+zero copula" became grammatical (17th century)

- This scenario explains all contradictions in previous discussions but however looks quite curiously

Literary style: main features and results

- Strict conservative structure with very few changes along the time, religiously-oriented fabula [Živov 2017]
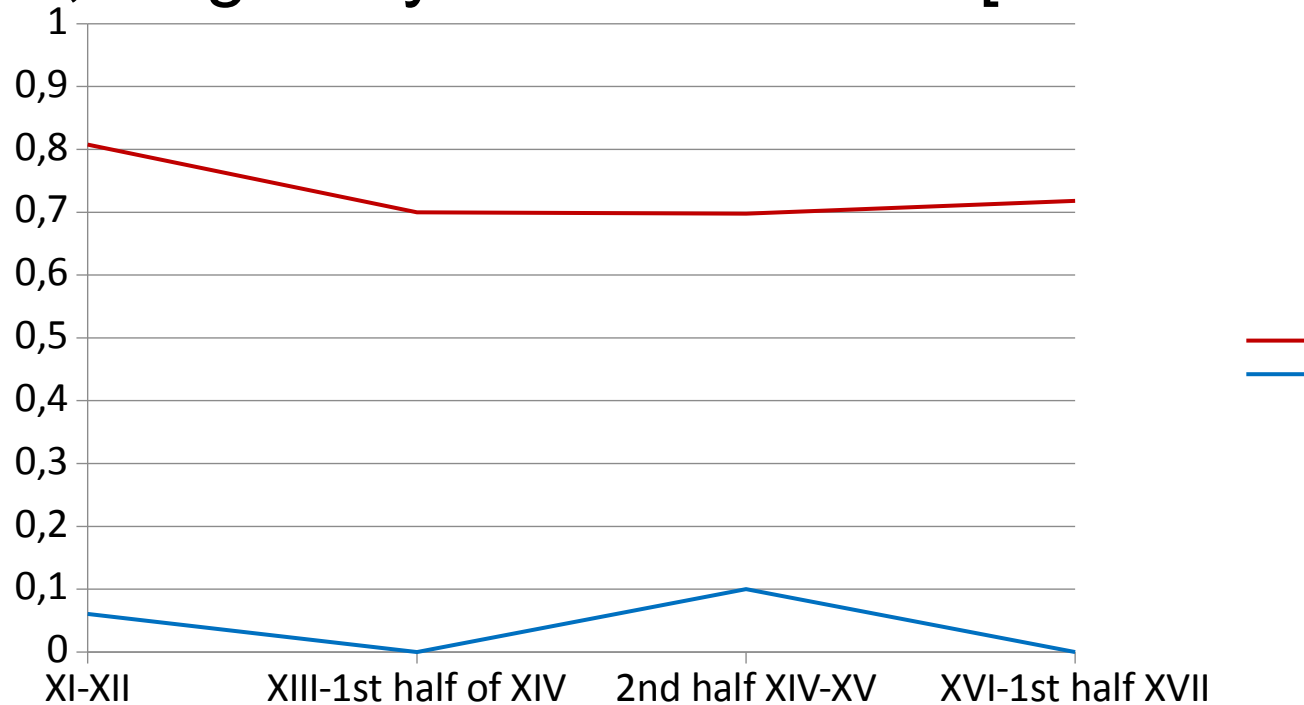
Literary style: comments on double-marking patterns

- The double-marking pattern with both a pronoun and a copula in 1st and 2nd person is kept all the time
- In informal style this pattern dominates significantly only at the very first stage and in one text only (dialogs of Kiev chronicles, 12th century)
- But its long-term presence in much more conservative literary works the language of which could be treated as a more ancient version or Old Russian proves its predominance in the language of the earliest period
- Plausible conclusion: a double-marking pattern dominated in the very early Old Russian (11th-12th century) and then was lost under internal language factors –
    1) rise of overt pronoun zero-copula constructions in the 3rd person *on øcop knjazь* 'he (is a) prince"
    2) semantic affinity between verbal copula and personal pronoun [Khaburgaev 1978: 45-46; Zaliznjak 2004:179].
- Negation test: in Middle Old Russian (13th-14th cent.), in contrast to Proto-East-Slavic, negation is never employed before a copula if we want to negate the predicate.
- Proto-East-Slavic: ***øpro nesmь*** *knjazь* 'I am not a prince ', VS
- Middle Old Russian ***ne knjazь jesmь*** 'I am not a prince ' (***øpro nesmь*** *knjazь* would mean 'Not I am a prince')

Russian evolution: stages and conclusion

	Proto-East Slavic (before IX)	Early Old Russian (X-XII)	Middle Old Russian (XIII-XV)	Great Old Russian and modern Russian (XVI-XXI)
1-2 person	*ø**pro** jesmь knjazь*	*ja jesmь knjazь*	*ja ø**cop** knjazь /* *ø**pro** **jesmь** knjazь* (completely interchangeble, see below)	*ja ø**cop** knjazь*
3 person	*ø**pro** jestь knjazь*	*ø**pro** jestь knjazь*	*ø**pro** ø**cop** knjazь / on ø**cop** knjazь*	*on ø**cop** knjazь*

Pronoun-expansion-first

Copula-loss-first

Old Latvian: general remarks

- Almost all texts before the end of 18th century were written by Germans => the original referential strategy of Latvian cannot be traced back in the same way as in Russian

- Corpus of Early Old Latvian www.korpuss.lv/SENIE (texts from 16th till 18th cent.): over 95% of patterns are similar to double-marking Germanic ones

- But in native speaker Jānis Reiters' works (17th century) there is also a predominance of double-marking pattern in all persons
  - JR1675:
  - *Äß äßmu taß Kungß tawß Deewß* 'I am your Lord your God'
  - *Juuß mani Draugi äßet* 'You are my friends'

- We can thus shift the possible beginning of pro-drop loss at least to 17th century (and it is quite likely to be established even earlier but we have no direct sources)

- There are however some rare examples of pro-drop even in Old Latvian texts written by Germans that could be treated as traces of original Baltic system:
  - MD1788
  - *jauns, §tiprs, weśśels øpro eśmu* 'I am young, strong, healthy'

Modern Latvian

- No massive copular loss similar to Old Russian case could be reconstructed

- LVG 2013: normally a double-marking pattern (personal pronoun + verbal inflection) is employed:

Latvian	Russian	English translation
*tu **esi** virietis*	*ty **øcop** mužčina*	*'you are a man'*

- However sometimes either a pronoun or a copula could be omitted
  - *kamēr **øpro** esmu dzīva, —nepazudīšu* 'While I am alive, I will not get lost' (R. Ezera, 1977)
  - *Kas es **øcop** par skroderi ar vienu roku?* 'What a tailor I am, with one hand?' (Z. Ergle, 1977)

The Latvian of XIX-XX: principles of analysis

- XIX VS XX studied separately, following two periods of the language

- 1-2 VS 3 person

- Pronoun expansion / copula loss distinguished => Types of patterns analyzed: zero pronoun clauses (both with and without a copula); zero copula clauses (both with and without a subject pronoun); double-marking patterns with both a subject pronoun and a verb copula

- Sources: e-library of Latvian classic literature http://korpuss.lv/klasika for XIX; Latvian fiction from a parallel Russian-Latvian corpus http://ruscorpora.ru/search-para-lv.html for XX

- Overall volume: nearly 600 relevant clauses

- Methodology: manual data extraction with later statistical processing in SPSS (binominal and χ-square tests, Student's t-test)

Latvian- frequency and comments

- No significant evolution between XIX and XX for all patterns analyzed
- Overall distribution of patterns (means counted by Student t-test, p-value =0,01):

	Double-marking pattern *es esmu vainīgs* *vinš ir vainīgs*	Overt pronoun + zero copula *es **øcop** vainīgs* *vinš **øcop** vainīgs*	Zero pronoun + overt copula ***øpro** esmu vainīgs* ***øpro** ir vainīgs*
1-2 person	60%	11%	29%
3 person	78%	18%	4%

- No preconditions for a massive copula loss in 1-2 person: personal pronoun is omitted significantly much more often (29%) than a copula (11%)
- 3rd person: the copula is omitted more often than the pronoun but the absolute meanings of all elliptical 3rd person patterns are much lower than for 1-2 person and cannot be treated as a trigger of any massive copular loss

Latvian- results and comments (continuation)

- Latvian strategy has much in common with the early-Old-Russian double-marking pattern lost by XIII century

	Early Old Russian	Old Latvian
1st-2nd person pattern	*ja jesmь knjazь*	*es esmu kungs*
When established	before XII	before XVII (perhaps at the same time

- But 3rd person differs: in the history of Russian no double-marking patterns in the 3rd person were found while in Latvian they dominate consistently through all the time.

	Early Old Russian	Old Latvian
1st-2nd person pattern	*ø jestь knjazь*	*vinš ir kungs*

Latvian: are there any preconditions for a copula-loss? (comparison with middle Old Russian)

- Negation test: Latvian verb copula behaves like a grammatical copula during all the time
- No loss of grammatical meaning could be found throughout centuries (in contrast to Middle Old Russian)

- **XVIII (MD 1788):**
- *es **neeś-mu** Deew-s* 'I am not God'
- I.NOM   NEG be-PRS.1SG God-SG.NOM

- **XIX (R. Blaumanis, "Purva bridējs", 1898):**
- ***t-u*** **ne-es-i** *slikt-s   cilvēk-s* 'You are not a bad person'
- tu-NOM NEG-быть.PRS-2SG bad-MSG.NOM person-SG.NOM

- **XX (*Milions2.0m* corpus):**
- *tik tālredzīg-i   diemžel **ne-es-am*** 'Unfortunately, we are not so far-sighted'
- so far-sighted.MPL.NOM unfortunately NEG-be-PRS-1PL

Conclusion

- Latvian non-pro-drop pattern can be traced back only to 17th century due to the lack of sources while the Russian goes back to much earlier times (12th century)

- But even if both Russian and Latvian double-marking non pro-drop patterns did establish at the same time it is unlikely to be the same phenomenon:

Conclusion-2

- The processes of referential evolution in Russian and Latvian have much more differences than common features, as it looks like from direct sources

	Old Russian	Old Latvian
When established	XI-XII	before XVII (could be in XI-XII as well)
Beginning of pro-drop loss	Double marking pattern in 1st and 2nd person only	Double marking pattern in all persons
Course of pro-drop loss	1st and 2nd verb copulas become treated as syntactic synonyms to personal pronouns	No semantic affinities between personal pronouns and verb copulas established

- The Latvian pattern has more in common with Germanic and chronologically could be a result of a long-term contact with German after Germanic colonization of Livonia (12th-13th cent.) while the loss of pro-drop in Russian seems more likely to be a result of internal language factors

Thanks for watching! ☺