

**Partitive Constructions and Partitive Elements
Within and Across Language Borders in Europe**

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Possessive Partitive Strategies in Uralic

Evidence from Mari and Hungarian Quantifiers and Inflected Adpositions

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Abstract In this essay, we analyse how proper partitivity is expressed in Hungarian and Mari. Three strategies are used, one of which – marking on the superset via case or adpositions – is basically identical to what we find in well-studied languages. The other two strategies are possessive agreement with the superset by 1) the quantifier that represents the subset or 2) by the postposition that links the subset to the superset. This means that (at least) one of these entities bears a possessive suffix that indicates the number and person of the superset. We discuss how these strategies work in both languages, and what the structural differences are.

Keywords Proper partitives. Possessive agreement. Quantifiers. Postpositions. Loss of possessive suffixes.

Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 Cases and Adpositions (Postpositions) in Partitive Constructions in Uralic Languages. – 3 Possessive Agreement in Uralic Partitive Constructions: Subset Marking in Hungarian. – 4 Comparing the Possessive Strategies in Mari and Hungarian. – 5 Discussion. – 6 Conclusion.



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1 Introduction

The aim of this essay is to describe possessive partitive strategies of proper partitives used in two Uralic languages, Hungarian and Mari. Hereby we provide information of the elusive link between possession and separative in partitive constructions that has been attested in many languages of Europe, such as in the English ‘of’. While in English, the preposition ‘of’, originally a marker of separative relation between two entities, has developed to primarily mark possessive constructions, in Uralic, we see the opposite direction in grammaticalisation. Possessive (agreement) markers have become or are becoming partitive markers in Uralic.

The Uralic languages are spoken in Eastern Europe and in north-western Siberia. The diagram represents a traditional view of the structure of the family. Hungarian belongs to the Ugric and Mari to the Volgaic languages within the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic family.

Diagram 1 The traditional view of the structure of the Uralic family (based on Miestamo, Tamm and Wagner-Nagy 2015, 8)

URALIC

- SAMOYEDIC
- FINNO-UGRIC
 - UGRIC
 - FINNO-PERMIC
 - PERMIC
 - FINNO-VOLGAIC
 - VOLGAIC
 - FINNO-SAAMIC
 - SAAMIC
 - FINNIC

In the morphologically rich Uralic languages, it comes as no surprise that there are different strategies to express semantic proper partitivity morphologically. While the partitive structures of the Finnic languages have been studied earlier, as they involve a dedicated partitive

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case, elsewhere in the family, partitive structures can be formed by means of both case marking and possessive agreement. The possessive strategy has been regarded as one of the common characteristics shared by Uralic and Turkic languages (Fokos 1939, 17-18; 1961, 63-8; for recent research on Turkic see von Heusinger, Kornfilt 2017; Lyutikova 2023).

To discuss the semantics of the partitive constructions, we use the conceptual tools provided in Koptjevskaja-Tamm's semantic-typological work, such as 'part/amount of N (the whole)' relationship (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2001) or in terms of Seržant (2021), the subset (the part/amount) and a superset (the whole) relation. Partitive constructions are divided into two major subclasses: proper partitives and pseudo-partitives. Pseudo-partitive constructions (e.g., a glass of water, a number of problems, a piece of cake), as compared to the proper partitives, do not have an antecedent in the discourse, their subset DP1 is limited to a restricted number of lexical nouns in the head of NP1. In pseudo-partitives, the superset is indefinite and interpreted as an existential nominal construction (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2001; Falco, Zamparelli 2019; Seržant 2021).¹

To clarify how semantics is expressed in morphosyntax, we use Falco and Zamparelli (2019) as well as other approaches that regard proper partitives as structures that capture the semantic relationship between a subset and a superset. We use the term proper partitive throughout the essay for the sake of better understanding, though most of our examples are canonical partitives in the sense of Falco and Zamparelli (2019). Following Jackendoff (1968) and Selkirk (1977), Falco and Zamparelli (2019) argue that proper partitives are represented in two DPs (or other formal means that involve determiner phrases, such as noun phrases and quantifier phrases, e.g., De Hoop 1998; Martí-Girbau 2002; 2010; Cardinaletti, Giusti 2006; Sauerland, Yatsushiro 2017; von Heusinger, Kornfilt 2017, a.o.). DP1 stands for the subset and DP2 represents the superset. The structure in (1c) is adopted from Falco and Zamparelli (2019) and represents the superset, which is embedded in DP1, the subset. The two DPs are related via a preposition or case. The phrases 'ten of the girls' and 'ten of them' are illustrated in (1d) and (1e), respectively.

¹ See more on Uralic pseudo-partitives in the various chapters in Bakró-Nagy, Laakso, Skribnik 2022 or in comparison with proper partitives in Kubínyi, Tamm 2022. In Hungarian, pseudo-partitives do not have a complex structure. The subset precedes the superset (i).

(i) *egy pohár bor*
INDF glass[NOM] wine[NOM]
'a glass of wine' (Tamm 2014, 124)

- (1) [Context: Twenty students came to the party.]
- a. *Ten of the girls / ten girls of the freshmen went home very late.*
- b. *Ten of them went home very late.*
- c. [_{DP1} [_{NP1} [_{PP} [_{DP2} [_{NP2}]]]]]
- d. [_{DP1} ten [_{NP1} (e) [_{PP} of [_{DP2} the [_{NP2} girls]]]]]
- e. [_{DP1} ten [_{NP1} (e) [_{PP} of [_{DP2} them [_{NP2} (them)]]]]]
- f. [_{DP1} ten [_{NP1} girls [_{PP} of [_{DP2} the [_{NP2} freshmen]]]]]

The supersets in ('ten of the girls/ten girls of the freshmen') in (1a) and ('ten of them') in (1b) are related to the antecedent ('twenty students'). The superset can be a proper part of the antecedent, or a personal pronoun. As shown in (1d) and (1e), the head of NP1 ('girls') is silent (Cardinaletti, Giusti 2006), but can be overt as well, see (1f). However, in DP1, there must be an overt quantifier. The head of PP assigns case to DP2; see (1c), (1d), (1e), and (1f).

Our aim is to show how the partitive relation is marked via possessive agreement in Hungarian and Mari, see (1c). In typical Uralic languages, possessive agreement is a means to mark the number and person features of a possessor on the possessee via non-verbal agreement affixes, more specifically, suffixes. In Uralic, in partitive constructions, the locus of the possessive agreement can be the 'part', but it can also be the entity that relates the 'part' to the 'whole'. Therefore, we can say that in most of these languages, altogether three strategies are available to mark partitivity, one for each entity involved: the part, the whole, and the relating entity. In this essay, 'possessive agreement' means the partitive use of the possessive agreement suffixes to mark the number and person of the 'whole' on either the 'part' or on the link between the two, on the adposition.

The essay is organised as follows: in Section 2, we illustrate Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian and Mari. In these languages, the cases and postpositions that combine with the DP that denotes the superset mark the relation between the subset and the superset. In Section 3, we focus on the possessive strategies. We discuss the nature of possessive agreement on different syntactic categories and the morphological and syntactic properties of a special kind of quantifiers that can be marked for possessive agreement in Hungarian. In Section 4, we show that there are similarities but also crucial differences between Hungarian and Mari with respect to the use of the three strategies for encoding proper partitivity. Section 5 is a brief discussion and Section 6 is the conclusion.

2 Cases and Adpositions (Postpositions) in Partitive Constructions in Uralic Languages

In Uralic languages, one way of encoding the relationship between the subset and a superset is structurally identical with what can be observed in languages like English (2). This strategy involves marking the superset with case, for instance, elative, ablative, inessive, or adpositions, as illustrated in (3) to (6). Either the case phrase (KP) or the adpositional phrase (PP) is projected in these structures.²

(2) English

[Some students came to the party.]

Two of them / two of the girls / two girls of the freshmen left very early.

(3) Hungarian

a. *Megevett hármat az almá-ból*
 PREF.eat.PST.3SG three.ACC DEF apple[SG]-ELA
 /??hármat az alma **közül.**
 three.ACC DEF apple[NOM.SG] from
 ‘He ate three of the apples.’

b. [...] *Kettő a diákok közül*
 two[NOM] DEF student.PL[NOM] from
 /??kettő a diákok-**ból** hazakísért.
 two[NOM] DEF student.PL-ELA home_accompany.PST.3SG
 ‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of the students accompanied me home.’

(4) Finnish

a. [...] *Kaksi hei-stä hylättiin.*
 two[NOM] they.PL-ELA reject.PASS.PST
 ‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them failed.’

b. *Kaksi hei-tä, 22-vuotias nainen ja*
 two[NOM] they.PL-PAR 22-year.old woman and
31-vuotias mies, jouduttiin viemään
 31-year.old man have_to.PASS.PST take.INF
ensiapuun Tampereen yliopistolliseen sairaalaan.
 first_aid.ILL Tampere.GEN university.ILL hospital.ILL
 ‘Two of them, a 22-year-old woman and a 31-year-old man, were forced to be taken to first aid at Tampere university hospital.’

² Where not otherwise indicated, the Hungarian data are based on the authors’ intuition.

In Hungarian, the distribution of the postposition *közül* ‘out of’ and the elative case in constructions with partitive semantics is primarily based on countability: *közül* ‘out of’ usually does not occur with mass nouns, while the elative marker does, as shown in (3a) and (3b) above.³

As to Finnish, both the partitive case and the elative case can be used to mark the partitive relation on DP2 (4). The choice between the two cases depends on multiple factors, especially the definite/indefinite reference of the superset; nonetheless, it can be also free (VISK § 592). The elative and, in some constructions, the partitive morphological case is used to mark proper partitivity on DP2 also in Estonian, another Finnic language (5a). Partitive or pseudo-partitive semantics do not match well with what are referred to as the morphological partitive or elative cases, and these terms are perhaps not well suited for describing the natural divide between the case phenomena. In one type of interrogative *wh*-clauses, the object argument may be either in the morphological partitive or elative case (without any semantic partitivity), as illustrated with the minimal pair (5b) and (5c). Also, semantic partitivity is often expressed by postpositional phrases, as in (5d) and (5e).

(5) Estonian

a. [...] *Kaks nei-st sai(d) hea hinde.*
 two[NOM] they.PL-ELA get.PST.3PL good.ACC grade.ACC
 ‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them got a good grade.’

b. *Miks/mis sa te-da kiusa-d?*
 why 2SG DEM-PAR bully-2SG
 ‘Why are you bullying him?’ (Pajusalu 2006, 331)

c. *Mis sa ta-st kiusa-d?*
 what 2SG DEM-ELA bully-2SG
 ‘Don’t bully him.’ (Pajusalu 2006, 331)

d. [...] *Kaks nende (tudengite) seast*
 two[NOM] DEM.PL.GEN student.PL.GEN from_among
sai(d) hea hinde.
 get.PST.3PL good.ACC grade.ACC
 ‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of them / two of these students got a good grade.’

³ Words denoting crops are mass nouns in Hungarian. In sentence (3), *hármat az almából / ?? hármat az alma közül* can be interpreted as ‘three of the apples’. In Hungarian, neither the elative case nor the postposition is exclusively used in partitive constructions.

- e. *paati-de sea-st /hulga-st*
 boat-GEN.PL among-ELA amount-ELA
 ‘from among the boats’ (Tamm 2014, 117)

In Mari, the postposition *yyč* ‘from’ is used to mark partitivity on DP2 (6a). Also, inessive case on DP2 can be – or was, at least, earlier – used to indicate the partitive relation (6b).

(6) Mari

- a. *Kum eryy yyč koktyt-šy-m salđat-lan puem.*
 three son[NOM.SG] from two-3SG-ACC soldier-DAT give.PRS.1SG
 ‘I’ll send two sons out of the three to the army.’ (Bereczki 1990, 43)
- b. *Kum uškal-yšte ikty-žy-m užalem.*
 three cow[SG]-INE one-3SG-ACC sell.PRS.1SG
 ‘I will sell one of (the) three cows.’ (Bereczki 1990, 38)

To represent partitive constructions in Uralic, in (7a), we adopt a modified structure proposed by Falco and Zamparelli (2019, 11); see the example (1e), ‘ten of them’, which is repeated here for the sake of convenience as (7b).

- (7) a. $[_{DP1} \text{two} [_{QP1} (\text{two}) [_{NP1} (\text{students}) [_{KP/PP} \text{-PAR, -ELA, -INE/ out of, from, from among} [_{DP2} \text{them} [_{NP2} (\text{them})]]]]]]]$
 b. $[_{DP1} \text{ten} [_{NP1} (\text{students}) [_{PP} \text{of} [_{DP2} \text{them} [_{NP2} (\text{them})]]]]]]]$
 (Falco, Zamparelli 2019, 11)

The two DPs are related via a case or an adposition. ‘Them’ represents the superset, which is embedded in DP1, the subset (‘two (students)’). This is the reason for placing partitive/elative/inessive case marking (or any adposition) as the head of KP/PP embedded under NP1 (we put aside the issue of morphological marking of accusative on NP1 in the illustrated sentences (3a), (6a), and (6b)).

3 Possessive Agreement in Uralic Partitive Constructions: Subset Marking in Hungarian

Section 2 detailed what could be called ‘superset proper partitive marking’, since the marking of the partitive relationship involves the phrase that stands for the superset (‘the whole’). Now we introduce the details of what could be called ‘subset proper partitive marking’, which has enjoyed less attention in previous literature on partitivity. In superset but not subset marking, the relationship between the

subset and a superset is structurally marked in an identical way with what can be observed in languages like English. In the Uralic subset marking, which is the focus of this article, the relationship between DP1 and DP2 (i.e., between the subset and the superset) is encoded by possessive agreement suffixes. The possessive suffix attaches to the quantifier in DP1 that stands for the subset. Additionally, it can also attach to the head of the postpositional phrase containing DP2 that stands for the superset. In this section, we detail the quantifiers and in Section 4, the postposition.

Subset marking means, then, that there is an explicit morphological marker of number and person on the subset, which agrees with the superset. The subset is represented by a quantifier, such as a cardinal numeral, a ‘weak’ quantifier such as ‘much’ and ‘several’, or an indefinite pronoun such as ‘one’. The quantifier bears a possessive marker. Henceforth, we refer to these categories by the term ‘quantifier’.

Hungarian and Mari use the same possessive marking strategies to encode partitivity, but the structures may differ in several respects, as shown in Section 4 below. In this section, we focus on Hungarian, briefly discussing the syntactic categories that are involved in possessive agreement. We show that the different syntactic categories behave differently with respect to the possessive suffix. Then we focus on a subtype of the possessively marked partitive quantifiers of Hungarian. Finally, we discuss the agreement features marked with the possessive suffix on quantifiers.

3.1 Possessive Suffixes across Categories in Hungarian

In Hungarian (as, indeed, in most Uralic languages), possessive agreement suffixes can attach among others to possessive constructions, adpositions, and quantifiers in partitive constructions (8).⁴

(8) Hungarian

- a. Péter könyv-e
Peter[NOM] book-3SG
‘Peter’s book’

⁴ As most of the Uralic languages, Hungarian is a pro-drop language. Personal pronouns are not pronounced if they can be recovered via person and number agreement, as is evident from (8c) and (8g). In standard Hungarian, the 3rd plural pronominal possessor formally coincides with its singular counterpart, while in some substandard variants the difference is marked, as indicated in (8j).

- b. **Péter könyv*
Péter[NOM] book
Intended to mean: 'Peter's book'
- c. *a (mi) könyv-ünk*
DEF we[NOM] book-1PL
'our book'
- d. **a mi könyv*
DEF we[NOM] book[NOM]
Intended to mean: 'our book'
- e. *Péter mögött*
Peter[NOM] behind
'behind Péter'
- f. **Péter mögött-e*
Peter[NOM] behind-3SG
Intended to mean: 'behind Péter'
- g. *(ő) mögött-e*
he[NOM] behind-3SG
'behind him'
- h. **ő mögött*
he[NOM] behind
Intended to mean: 'behind him'
- i. *kettő-jük*
two-3PL
'two of them'
- j. **ő(k) kettő-jük*
they[NOM] two-3PL
Intended to mean: 'two of them'
- k. **a fiúk kettő-jük*
DEF boy.PL[NOM] two-3PL
Intended to mean: 'two of the boys'

In possessive constructions, the possessor can be overt or covert. The possessor is either a lexical NP or a pronoun. The suffix that reflects the number and person features of the possessor appears obligatorily on the possessee ((8a-b), (8c-d)). In adpositional constructions, the postposition cannot agree with a lexical NP, but it must agree with the

personal pronoun ((8e-f), (8g-h)). The quantifiers marked with the possessive suffix agree with the superset. However, the superset cannot be overtly present in the structure. Neither the personal pronoun nor the lexical DP2 can be overt ((8i-k), (9)).

(9) Hungarian

Meglátogat-ta *kettő-nk-et* / **mi* *kettő-nk-et*.
 PREF.visit-PST.3SG>3 two-1PL-ACC we[NOM] two-1PL-ACC
 ‘She visited two of us.’

3.2 Partitive Quantifiers: The Morphological Structure of the Possessively Marked Quantifiers Ending in *-ik* in Hungarian

In the previous subsection, we have already seen that numerals can be marked with the agreement suffix. In this subsection, we take a closer look at a morphologically complex subtype of the possessively marked quantifiers of Hungarian, which can be called *ik*-quantifiers as they end in what is called a derivational suffix *-ik* (É. Kiss 2018).

Examples of *ik*-quantifiers include *egyik* ‘one (of)’, *másik* ‘the other one’, *melyik* ‘which’, *valamilyik* ‘either, one, some’, *mindegyik* ‘each’, *bármelyik* ‘any’, *semelyik* ‘none’. This subtype has the following structure: the root is an indefinite – or alternatively an interrogative-relative – pronoun that is marked with the suffix *-ik*, followed by a possessive marker that has number and person features of the superset in DP2. Apart from quantifiers like ‘two’, ‘many’ etc., it is these pronoun-based *ik*-quantifiers that can always morphologically express the person and number of the superset under the conditions illustrated by examples (8i-k) and (9) above.

Furthermore, if a quantifier has both an *ik*-form and an *ik*-less form, only the *ik*-form can carry the possessive suffix associated with the superset. This could be illustrated by the difference between *egy-ik-ük-et* ‘one-*IK*-3PL-ACC’ versus **egy-ük-et* ‘one-3PL-ACC’ as in (10). Note that the segmentation of the form *-ik* is intentionally diachronic for the purposes of the present essay and, synchronically, it is not a productive inflectional category on quantifiers.

(10) Hungarian

[...] *Meglátogat-om* *egy-ik-ük-et* / **egy-ük-et*.
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 one-*IK*-3PL-ACC one-3PL-ACC
 ‘[Ten students came to the exam.] I will visit one of them.’

3.3 The Nature of the Suffix *-ik* in Hungarian (É. Kiss 2018)

É. Kiss (2018) argues that the *-ik* suffix is historically related to a possessive agreement marker, being an obsolete allomorph of the 3rd person plural possessive suffix *-uk/ük, -juk/jük* (e.g. *ház-uk* ‘their house’, *pénz-ük* ‘their money’, *macská-juk* ‘their cat’, *kecské-jük* ‘their goat’). Following Janda (2015), who also claims that possessive markers have a significant role in the organisation of the discourse, we agree that the entities they refer to have to be introduced in the preceding discourse. É. Kiss (2018) argues that in Modern Hungarian, the suffix *-ik* must be analysed as a specific-partitive derivational suffix. This is why *ik*-quantifiers cannot be interpreted without an antecedent in the discourse, unlike *ik*-less indefinite pronouns or the *ik*-less quantifier; see the difference between (11a) and (11b).⁵

(11) Hungarian

- a. *Meglátogatott valakit /valamilyen hallgatót a klubból.*
 PREF.visit.PST.3SG somebody.ACC some student.ACC DEF club.ELA
 ‘He visited somebody/ some student from the club.’
- b. **Meglátogatott valamely-ik hallgatót a klubból.*
 PREF.visit.PST.3SG some-ik student.ACC DEF club.ELA
 Intended to mean: ‘He visited a (certain) student from the club.’

The suffix (or the suffixed word) also triggers object agreement on the verb (É. Kiss 2018).⁶

(12) Hungarian

- a. *Meglátogat-**ok** / *Meglátogat-**om** valaki-t a klubból.*
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 somebody-ACC DEF club.ELA
 ‘I will visit somebody from the club.’
- b. *Meglátogat-**ok** / *Meglátogat-**om** valamilyen **hallgató-t**.*
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 some student-ACC
 ‘I will visit some student.’

⁵ The process described by É. Kiss (2018) seems to be a general tendency in Uralic languages (cf. Nikolaeva 2003; Gerland 2014; É. Kiss, Tánzos 2018).

⁶ In Hungarian, there are two verbal paradigms. Intransitive verbs and transitive verbs with indefinite objects are marked for subject agreement. Transitive verbs with definite objects have object agreement.

- c. *Meglátogat-om* / **Meglátogat-ok valamely-ik-et a klubból.*
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG someone-1K-ACC DEF club.ELA
 ‘I will visit someone (lit. a certain one) of them from the club.’
- d. *Meglátogat-om* / **Meglátogat-ok valamely-ik-et*
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG someone-1K-ACC
a hallgatók közül.
 DEF student.PL[NOM] from
 ‘I will visit someone (lit. a certain one) of the students.’
- e. *Meglátogat-om* / **Meglátogat-ok valamely-ik-ük-et.*
 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG>3 PREF.visit.PRS-1SG someone-1K-3PL-ACC
 ‘I will visit someone (lit. a certain one) of them.’

In (12a) and (12b), the objects *valakit* ‘somebody’ and *valamilyen hallgatót* ‘some student’ do not trigger object agreement, as they are indefinite. In (12c-d), the noun head in DP1 is elided, giving way to the accusative marker to attach to the *ik*-quantifier. In (12c)-(12e) the quantifiers are specific and trigger object agreement, though a specific reading of the DP does not automatically trigger object agreement.⁷ Object agreement is triggered by DPs with the overt definite article, possessive structures, and some pronouns.

Bartos (2000) argues that only full-fledged object DPs agree with the verb, while QPs and NPs do not trigger object agreement. As we have shown in (12c), (12d), and (12e), the *ik*-words agree with the verb. We assume that *ik*-words in QP1 move to the head DP1.

(13) Hungarian

- a. [_{QP} valaki-t [_{NP} (valaki-t)]] (cf. 12a)
 somebody-ACC somebody-ACC
- b. [_{QP} valamilyen [_{NP} hallgató-t]] (cf. 12b)
 some student.SG-ACC
- c. [_{DP} valamely-ik-et [_{QP} (valamely-ik-et [_{NP} (hallgató-t)]]]] (cf. 12c)
 someone-1K-ACC someone-1K-ACC student.SG-ACC

⁷ Not all partitive constructions trigger object agreement:

- (i) *Levizgáztat-ok* / **Levizgáztat-om mindenki-t a diákok közül.*
 PREF.examine-PRS.1SG / PREF.examine.PRS.1SG>3 everybody-ACC DEF student.PL[NOM] from
 ‘I will examine all of the students.’

- | | | | | |
|----|--|---|--|-----------|
| d. | [_{DP1} valamily-ik-et
someone-1K-ACC | [_{QP1} (valamily-ik-et)
someone-1K-ACC | [_{NP1} (hallgatót)
student.SG-ACC | |
| | [_{PP} közül
out.of | [_{DP2} a
DEF | [_{NP2} hallgató-k]]]]
student-PL[NOM] | (cf. 12d) |
| e. | [_{DP1} valamily-ik-ük-et
someone-1K-3PL-ACC | [_{QP} (valamily-ik-ük-et)
someone-1K-3PL-ACC | [_{NP1} (hallgató-t)
student.SG-ACC | (cf. 12e) |

The reason for the movement of the *ik*-quantifiers to DP1 is to check the specificity feature and trigger object agreement, see the contrast between (13a-b) and (13c-e). *Ik*-constructions always agree with the verb, as in (12c), (12d), and (12e), represented in (13c), (13d), and (13e). *Ik*-quantifiers can also occur in quantitative constructions (14b).⁸

(14) Hungarian

[*A barátaim meglátogattak Londonban.*]

‘My friends visited me in London.’

- | | | | | |
|----|--|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| a. | *Valamilyen | <i>lányt</i> | <i>elvisz-ek</i> | <i>vacsorázni.</i> |
| | some | girl.ACC | PREF.take.PRS-1SG | dine.INF |
| | ‘I will take some girl out for dinner.’ | | | |
| b. | <i>Valamily-ik</i> | <i>lányt</i> | <i>elvisz-em</i> | <i>vacsorázni.</i> |
| | some-1K | girl.ACC | PREF.take.PRS-1SG >3 | dine.INF |
| | ‘I will take some (lit. a certain) girl out for dinner.’ | | | |
| c. | [_{DP} valamily-ik
some-1K | [_{QP} (valamily-ik)
some-1K | [_{NP} lányt]]
girl.ACC | |
| d. | [_{DP} valamily-ik
some-1K | [_{NP} lányt]]
girl.ACC | | |

⁸ Jackendoff (1977) argues that partitive constructions contain 2 NPs, while in quantitative constructions there is only one NP, see the contrast between (ia) and (ib), see also Martí-Girbau 2002.

- (i) a. Each boy visited some friends; quantitative
b. Each of the boys visited some friend; partitive

In (ia), the subject is a quantised NP, or to use an up-to-date term, a QP, which is specific, but it is not partitive, but quantitative, see also the Hungarian examples (12a-c) versus (12d-e) represented in (13a-c) versus (13d-e).

Ik-quantifiers are interpreted as specific both in quantitative constructions and in partitive constructions as opposed to existential quantifiers, see the contrast between (14a) and (14b). They must have an antecedent in the discourse both in partitive and quantitative constructions. *Ik*-quantifiers trigger object agreement also in quantitative constructions, see (14b). There is one major difference that can be attested in the behaviour of *ik*-quantifiers in quantitative and partitive constructions. In partitive constructions, *ik*-quantifiers can be marked with the possessive suffix, as in (12e) and (13e), while this strategy is not available in quantitative constructions (15).

(15) Hungarian

*[...] *Valamely-ik-ük* lányt elviszem vacsorázni.
some-*ik*-3PL girl.ACC PREF.take.PRS.1SG>3 dine.INF
‘[My friends visited me in London.]’ Intended to mean: ‘I will take some (lit. a certain) girl out for dinner.’

In quantitative constructions, there is no recoverable superset for the *ik*-quantifier, so it cannot exhibit the person and number features of any superset. It cannot be marked for the person and number of the antecedent either, as in (15).

3.4 Number and Person Features of the Superset Marked on the Subset

In Section 3.1, we discussed the nature of the possessive suffix on different syntactic categories in Hungarian. Now we take a glance at the number and person features that Hungarian encodes in quantifiers.

In proper partitive phrases, the number of the possessive suffix is always plural, as the understood superset is, by definition, plural. The person encoded by the marker is first, second, or third. The whole possessive agreement paradigm in Hungarian subset marking is illustrated in (16). We disregard free allomorphic variation of the suffixes.

(16) which of DP2

- a. *mely-ik-ünk*
which-*ik*-1PL
‘which of us’
- b. *mely-ik-etek*
which-*ik*-2PL
‘which of you’
- c. *mely-ik-ük*
which-*ik*-3PL
‘which of them’

While, as a result, reference to the superset is always morphologically plural, the antecedent is not necessarily morphologically plural, see (17).

(17) Hungarian

[*Minden hallgató eljött a bulira.*]
every student.SG[NOM] PREF.COME.PST.3SG DEF party.SUBL
'Every student came to the party.'

a. *Ők nagyon kedves-ek volt-ak.*
she-PL[NOM] very nice-PL be.PST-3PL
'They were very nice.'

b. *Egy-ik-ük korán elment.*
one-1K-3PL[NOM] early PREF.go.PST.3SG
'One of them left early.'

In (17), the antecedent *minden hallgató* is in the singular, but the personal pronoun *ők* 'they' in (17a) and the quantifier *egyikük* 'one of them' in (17b) is marked for plural. We must assume that the person and number marker on the quantifier comes from the superset, a silent pronoun in the superset DP2, not from the antecedent (17).

4 Comparing the Possessive Strategies in Mari and Hungarian

In Mari and Hungarian, the subset and the superset can be linked via a spatial case or a postposition meaning 'from (among)'. Both languages use also possessive marking with the number and person features of the superset to encode the superset-subset relation via the possessive suffix. In both languages, the locus of the marking can also be the postposition linking the two sets to each other, not only the subset (the quantifier). Yet, there are crucial differences between Hungarian and Mari in the use of these strategies. In what follows, we present the data about the differences.

4.1 Mari

4.1.1 Superset Marking Via a Case or a Postposition

In Mari, the superset can be overt; see example (6) in Section 2 above and example (18) here below; (6b) is repeated here as (18b). The subset and the superset can be linked either by means of the postposition (18a) or the inessive case (18b). In (18a), *student* [student.[NOM.SG]] ‘students’ is the superset, which is linked to *kokyt-šo* [two-3SG] ‘two’, the subset, via the postposition *gyč* ‘from among’. In (18b), *ikty-žy-m* [one-3SG-ACC] ‘one’ is the subset. It is related to the superset via the inessive case suffix *-yšte* in *kum uškal-yšte* [three cow-INE] ‘of three cows’.

(18) Mari

- a. [...] *Student gyč kokyt-šo provalitl-en.*
 student[NOM.SG] from two-3SG[NOM] fail-PST2.3SG
 ‘Two from among the students failed.’ (Elena Vedernikova, pers. comm.)
- b. [...] *Kum uškal-yšte ikty-žy-m užal-em.*
 three COW-INE[SG] one-3SG-ACC sell-PRS.1SG
 ‘I will sell one from among (the) three cows.’ (Bereczki 1990, 38)

4.1.2 Possessive Marking on the Quantifier

In Mari, the possessive suffix can attach to the quantifiers, but its form is invariantly in the 3rd person and singular, see (18) and (19). The superset is plural, so one might expect plural agreement on the quantifier in (19a), but the quantifier ‘two’ is ungrammatical with the 3rd person plural marking. At the same time, example (19b) demonstrates that the 1st person plural superset is grammatical with the 3rd person singular marking instead.

(19) Mari

- a. [...] **Kokyty-št-lan kugu kol verešt-yn.*
 two-3PL-DAT large fish[NOM] fall_preyl_PST2.3SG
 ‘[Ten men went fishing.] Two from among them caught large fish.’
 (Elena Vedernikova, pers. comm.)
- b. [...] *Kokyt-šo provalitl-en-na.*
 two-3SG[NOM] fail-PST2-1PL
 ‘[We took the exam.] Two from among us failed.’
 (Elena Vedernikova, pers. comm.)

As can be seen from the above data, the 3rd person singular possessive suffix does not reflect the number and person features of the superset. The plural agreement *kokyty-št-lan* [two-3PL-DAT] ‘two of them’ is not grammatical in (19a), despite the plurality of the superset. The 3rd person agreement is grammatical in (19b), despite the 1st person feature of the superset (the suffix *-na* in *provalitl-en-na*). The quantifier *kokyt-šo* [two-3SG] ‘two’ (or ‘the two of them’) can be related both to the third and the non-third person plural supersets. Given the agreement data in (18) and (19), we regard the 3rd person singular suffix as the default agreement marker that is bleached in its meaning.

4.1.3 Possessive Marking on the Postposition

Postpositions can agree with the DPs they subcategorise for also in Mari.⁹ In partitive constructions, the postposition can agree with DP2 (the superset), but the agreement is optional. There is a contrast between the postpositional phrases *nunyn koklašty-št* [they.GEN among-3PL] ‘of them’, where the postposition bears the number-person features of DP2 it subcategorises for, and *nunyn koklašte* [they.GEN among] ‘of them’, where there are no agreement features on the postposition; compare (20a) and (20b), respectively.

(20) Mari

- a. *Nunyn koklašty-št kokyt-šo dene kutyrenam.*
 they.GEN among-3PL two-3SG[NOM] with speak.PST2.1SG
 ‘I spoke with two of them.’ (Elena Vedernikova, pers. comm.)
- b. *Nunyn koklašte kokyt-šo dene kutyrenam.*
 they.GEN among two-3SG[NOM] with speak.PST2.1SG
 ‘I spoke with two of them.’ (Elena Vedernikova, pers. comm.)

In Mari, we show a relevant difference between the marking strategy on the quantifier and the postposition. While the form of the possessive marker on the quantifier is a default person-number suffix, as shown in Section 4.1.2, the form of the person-number marker on the postposition must reflect the person-number features of the superset. The genitive pronoun *nunyn* [they.GEN] ‘their’ is in the 3rd person and the plural number in (20). The suffix on the postposition *koklašty-št* [among-3PL] ‘of them’ is also in the 3rd person but in the plural

⁹ Individual postpositions may behave differently in this respect. This phenomenon is not considered here. For more details see Riese, Bradley, Yefremova (2022, 154 ff).

number, unlike the suffix used on quantifiers; compare the grammatical form of the quantifier *kokyt* ‘two’ with the singular ending in examples (20a-b) and (18a) to its ungrammatical counterpart with the plural suffix in (19a).

In sum, quantifiers but not postpositions in Mari are always marked for the 3rd person singular, so Mari quantifiers have a bleached possessive partitive marker, similar to the Hungarian *-ik*. Mari postpositions have agreement. The 3rd person singular suffix on Mari quantifiers can be considered a default possessive agreement marker or a semantically bleached suffix that has gained the function of marking proper partitivity, which we conclude based on the sentences (18) to (20). Postpositions, on the other hand, can optionally have the number and the person suffix, whose values are identical with the person and number features of the superset. The superset can overtly cooccur with the agreement marked postposition and the quantifier.

4.2 Hungarian

4.2.1 Superset Marking Via a Case or a Postposition

In Hungarian, the superset and the subset can be related with either a case or a postposition, see example (3) in Section 2, repeated here as (21a), and (21b).

(21) Hungarian

- a. *Megevett hármat az almá-ból*
 PREF.eat.PST.3SG three.ACC DEF apple[SG]-ELA
 /?? *hármat az alma közül.*
 three.ACC DEF apple[NOM.SG] from
 ‘He ate three of the apples.’
- b. [...] *Kettő a diákok közül*
 two[NOM] DEF student.PL[NOM] from
 /?? *kettő a diákok-ból hazakísért.*
 two[NOM] DEF student.PL-ELA home_accompany.PST.3SG
 ‘[Ten students took the exam.] Two of the students accompanied me home.’

Either the relative case links the subset to the superset or the postposition *közül* ‘from’ is used (21).

4.2.2 Possessive Marking on the Postposition

If the superset is a personal pronoun, as in examples (8e-h) in Section 3.1, the Hungarian postpositions must be marked for the number and person suffix associated with the number and person features of the superset. Conversely, postpositions cannot be marked for the superset when it is a lexical NP. The contrast between pronominal and lexical NPs is illustrated by (22a) and the ill-formed (22b) as compared to the lexical NPs in (22c-d). In (22a), the superset is in the 1st person plural and the suffix on the postposition reflects the same features. The superset, the pronoun itself (*mi* ‘we’), is optionally overt. Example (22b) illustrates the lack of agreement between the 1st person plural superset and the postposition; therefore, the structure is ill-formed. In (22c-d), the superset is a lexical expression (‘the freshmen’), so agreement by the postposition is not grammatical. Thus, (22c) is well-formed, while (22d) is not.

(22) Hungarian

- a. [...] *Péter beszélt az egyikkel (mi) közül-ünk.*
 Peter[NOM] speak.PST.3SG DEF one.INST we[NOM] from-1PL
 ‘Peter spoke with one from among us.’
- b. [...] **Péter beszélt az egyikkel (mi) közül.*
 Peter[NOM] speak.PST.3SG DEF one.INST we[NOM] from
 Intended to mean: ‘Peter spoke with one from among us.’
- c. [...] *Péter beszélt az egyikkel az elsőévesek közül.*
 Peter[NOM] speak.PST.3SG DEF one.INST DEF freshman.PL[NOM] from
 ‘Peter spoke with one from among the freshmen.’
- d. [...] **Péter beszélt az egyikkel*
 Peter[NOM] speak.PST.3SG DEF one.INST
az elsőévesek közül-ük.
 DEF freshman.PL[NOM] from-3PL
 Intended to mean: ‘Peter spoke with one from among the freshmen.’

4.2.3 Possessive Marking on the Quantifier

The quantifier must be marked for the number and person features of the superset in a structure without a superset DP2 or an adposition. In this structure, the identity (person) of the superset can be recovered via the agreement on the quantifier (23).

(23) Hungarian

- a. [...] (Az) *egyik-ük-**kel*** *beszéltem.*
DEF one-3PL-INST speak.PST.1SG
'I spoke with one from among them.'
- b. [...] (Az) *egyik-**ünk*** *megebukott.*
DEF one-1PL[NOM] PREF.fail.PST.3SG
'One from among us failed.'

The three strategies to mark the relationship are mutually excluded. See their distribution in the well-formed examples in (21), (22a), (22c), and (23), on the one hand, and the ill-formed variants in (24) below, on the other.

(24) Hungarian

- a. [...] *(Az) *egy-ik-**ük*** *a fiúk közül* *eljött.*
DEF one-1K-3PL[NOM] DEF boy.PL[NOM] from PREF.come.PST.3SG
'One from among the boys came.'
- b. [...] *(Az) *egy-ik-**ük*** *közül-**ük*** *eljött.*
DEF one-1K-3PL[NOM] from-3PL PREF.come.PST.3SG
'One from among them came.'
- c. [...] *(Az) *egy-ik* *a fiúk közül-**ük*** *eljött.*
DEF one-1K[NOM] DEF boy.PL[NOM] from-3PL PREF.come.PST.3SG
'One from among the boys came.'

The sentences in (24) are ill-formed, because more than one of the three strategies are employed in them. In (24a), the superset is an overt lexical DP, embedded in a PP, and then the quantifier cannot be marked for the number-person features of the superset. In sentence (24b), the suffix is simultaneously attached to the quantifier and to the postposition: the result is ungrammatical. In sentence (24c), the superset is an overt lexical DP ('the boys'), and the postposition cannot carry the number-person reference to it in that case.

In Hungarian, the superset is always recoverable in the proper partitive constructions, but there is no redundancy in the structure: the superset can be referred to only once in the structure.

4.3 Differences between Mari and Hungarian Proper Partitive Constructions

There are four differences between the two languages. Firstly, in Mari, the quantifier has a default number-person marker, that is, the possessive suffix is always in 3rd person singular. In Hungarian, the quantifier always carries the number-person features of the superset, if these agreement features cannot be recovered on either the postposition or in the overt superset (DP2).

Secondly, in Mari, the agreement suffix optionally attaches to the postposition, and if so, it must exhibit the real values of the agreement features of the superset. In Hungarian, once there is no overt lexical nominal phrase in the superset DP2, the postposition is obligatorily marked for the agreement features of the superset.

Thirdly, in Mari, the three strategies can be applied simultaneously. On the other hand, in Hungarian, these strategies are mutually excluded, but one of the three strategies must be applied in proper partitive constructions.¹⁰

Lastly, the major difference is that in Hungarian, the superset in proper partitive constructions is always recoverable, irrespective of whether the superset-DP is overt. In Mari, if the quantifier is the only overt element in the partitive constructions, then the interpretation is always discourse-based.

5 Discussion

Our article has shown new data on partitive (part-whole, subset-superset) relationships from Uralic. Based on Mari, we can conclude that a default possessive agreement marker has developed or is developing in a marker of partitivity, just as Hungarian has developed in its history. Possessive (agreement) markers have become or are becoming partitive markers in Uralic.

The discussion has contributed to the understanding of the relationship between possessive- and separative-based partitive structures. In the better described languages, such as in English, the preposition ‘of’, originally a marker of separative relation between two

¹⁰ In covert partitive constructions, by contrast, only the subset is overtly present in the structure and the construction is interpreted on the basis of the antecedent (Falco, Zamparelli 2019), as in the Hungarian example (i).

(i) Hungarian

[Négy	fiú	jött	vizsgázn.]	Három	megbukott.
four	boy[NOM.SG]	come.PST.3SG	take_exam.INF	three[NOM]	PREF.fail.PST.3SG

‘Four boys came to take the exam.’ ‘Three failed.’

entities, has developed to primarily mark possessivity (Heine 1997, 145-6). The Romance series of prepositions with *de* and the German *von* are also ablative or source structures that have grammaticalised as possessives (Heine 1997, 145-6).

In Uralic, we see the opposite direction in grammaticalisation: from possessives to partitives. One important difference between the partitive marking derived from possessive agreement is the locus of the morpheme in terms of the phrase it attaches to. While the English preposition combines in grammar with the superset ('ten of **the girls**'), the Uralic-type possessive partitive marker combines with the subset instead ('**ten** of the girls'). The Uralic possessive-based partitive marker typically links specific supersets and emerges in proper partitive constructions only. The English separative-based possessive 'of' is not restricted to proper partitives and specific supersets emerging in proper partitives (as in 'the youngest **of** my children'), but it can also be used in pseudo-partitives ('a cup **of** tea').

While we have established that the possessive-based partitive marker never appears in pseudo-partitive constructions in Uralic languages that we studied in more detail, the separative-based marker is not restricted to proper or pseudo-partitive constructions. Therefore, some proper partitive constructions have different partitive markers on supersets and subsets simultaneously; consider Hungarian: *egyik a gyerekeim közül* 'one [proper partitive marker on the subset] from among my children [partitive postposition of the superset]'.

The Finnic languages that have a dedicated morphological marker, the partitive case, are like English. The separative-based marker is not restricted to either proper or pseudo-partitive constructions. The Estonian *osa Euroopast* [part Europe.ELA] and *osa Euroopat* [part Europe.PAR] 'part of Europe' illustrate proper partitives with specific supersets. They have partitive or relative marking on the superset, while the pseudo-partitives have partitive marking on the superset: *tass teed* [cup tea.PAR] 'a cup of tea'.

Additionally, the possessive marker combines with the adposition, as in *belől-e* [from-3SG] 'out of it' (Hungarian); in other words, one could imagine a structure where the English preposition 'of' or the French preposition *de* has a suffix. This is exactly the strategy that also Arabic and Celtic languages have for partitivity; see Póddör, this volume, for Celtic, and Gensler (1993) for Celtic and Arabic. The Germanic languages such as German and Dutch display a possessive strategy like the Uralic one in their pronominal adverbs, such as the Dutch partitive *ervan* 'of it' or its emphatic counterpart *daarvan* 'of it' and the German equivalent *davon* 'of it'. The main difference between the Uralic and the Germanic combinations is in the explicit person and number features in Uralic: the Germanic partitive combinations are restricted to third person. Within this wider picture of possessive-agreement-based partitive markers, the proper partitive structures of Uralic languages are

syntactically far from uniform. In Mari, the three strategies can be applied simultaneously. In Hungarian, these strategies are mutually excluded, and only one of the three strategies must be applied in proper partitive constructions. The major difference is that in Hungarian, the superset in proper partitive constructions is always recoverable, irrespective of whether the superset-DP is an overt lexical DP, while in Mari, if only the quantifier is overt, the interpretation of the partitive constructions is always discourse-based.

6 Conclusion

The major contribution of this essay is clarifying the limits of variation in one of the special and frequently emerging characteristics of Uralic (also other Eurasian languages, such as Turkic), partitive-related possessive marking on quantifiers and partitive marking on adpositions. We have discussed some parallels with other European languages. We have demonstrated two possessive-based partitive strategies and a non-possessive partitive strategy in Mari and Hungarian, and we have explained the structure of the variation between these two languages.

Abbreviations and Notations

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
DAT	dative
DEF	definite article
DEM	demonstrative pronoun
ELA	elative
GEN	genitive
IK	the formative <i>-ik</i>
ILL	illative
INDF	indefinite article
INE	inessive
INF	infinitive
INSTR	instrumental
NOM	nominative
PAR	partitive
PASS	passive
PL	plural
PREF	prefix
PRS	present
PST	past
PST2	second past
SG	singular
SUBL	sublative
1SG>3	verbal agreement indicating the subject (1st person singular) and the object (3rd person)
1SG>PL	non-verbal agreement indicating the possessor (1st person singular) and the number of the possessee (plural)

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