A partial and impartial view on partitives

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Semantics and morphology: a ”partitive” mismatch

- Several Uralic languages have cases that are referred to as ”partitive”.
- The semantics of these cases diverges from the generally assumed notion of ”partitive”.
- It is useful to distinguish between
  - ”partitive semantics” (and cases that express it)
  - and ”partitive cases” (and the semantics they express).
Partitive in the case paradigm

Morphological partitives:
Finnic, Sami

Semantic partitives:
Almost all Uralic cases have one or more cases for ”separation”
Partitive and source cases: Estonian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Morpheme</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>book</td>
<td>raamat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>of a book</td>
<td>raamatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partitive</strong></td>
<td><em>(of) a book</em></td>
<td>raamatu-t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illative</td>
<td>into the book</td>
<td>raamatu-sse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inessive</td>
<td>in a book</td>
<td>raamatu-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elative</td>
<td>from (inside) a book</td>
<td>raamatu-st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allative</td>
<td>onto a book</td>
<td>raamatu-le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adessive</td>
<td>on a book</td>
<td>raamatu-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ablative</strong></td>
<td><em>from the book</em></td>
<td>raamatu-lt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translative</td>
<td>in(to), as a book</td>
<td>raamatu-ks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminative</td>
<td>until a book</td>
<td>raamatu-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essive</td>
<td>as a book</td>
<td>raamatu-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abessive</td>
<td>without a book</td>
<td>raamatu-ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitative</td>
<td>with a book</td>
<td>raamatu-ga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Source cases: ablative, elative, delative, egressive, and excessive

- **Ablative** (Erzya, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Mansi, Vepsian, Votic, etc) denotes movement away from something (e.g., away from the house)
- **Elative** (Erzya, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Lule Sámi, Pite Sámi, Votic, etc) denotes "out of something" (e.g., out of the house).
- **Delative** (Hungarian) denotes movement from the surface (e.g., from (the top of) the house)
- **Egressive** (Veps, Udmurt) marking the beginning of a movement or time (e.g., beginning from the house)
- **Exessive** (Karelian, Ingrian, Livonian, Votic, Estonian, etc) transition away from a state (from a house)
- **Genitive-ablative** (Komi) source of information, resource
What is the partitive? Separation, motion...
... and identical matter (identity)
Separation, motion, identity

• In terms of spatial relationships, the Partitive Concept instantiates a **separative relationship** of an individual or matter to another individual or matter.

• In terms of identity, the partitive instantiates **the same kind identity** (not difference or similarity).
Kinds of N and amounts of N

“separable part of N that belongs to the same kind with N”

versus

“amount of N”

Some/part of my children vs some water
Part/kind-of-N and TAM extensions

The emergence of functional partitives, the TAM categories
a. “part of N” → 
b. → “part of V” (N-obj has the morphological partitive marking)
c. → (N-object is a non-finite, deverbal nominalization and partitive marked)
d. → “indirect evidence” (V-nonfin (main predicate) has the morphological partitive formative)
e. → “part of/incomplete evidence” (V-nonfin (main or embedded predicate) has the morphological partitive formative)
f. → “part of/incomplete evidence for the completion/completablety of the event” (partitive object case)
The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking

a. “part of N” (the morphological partitive marking has disappeared) →
b. → “amount of N” (has the morphological partitive marking)
c. → “amount of V” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
d. → “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
e. → Adpostion “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
The emergence of functional partitives, the TAM categories

a. “part of N” →

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c. (N-object is a non-finite, deverbal nominalization and partitive marked)

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e. “part of/incomplete evidence” (V-nonfin (main or embedded predicate) has the morphological partitive formative)

f. “part of/incomplete evidence for the completion/completability of the event” (partitive object case)
(7) Estonian

Mari sõ-i ?õuna / õuna-st.
M[nom] eat-pst.3sg apple.par apple-ela

‘Mary ate some quantity of the apple.’ (bounded event, nonquantized apple)
The emergence of functional partitives, the TAM categories

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f. → "part of/incomplete evidence for the completion/completability of the event" (partitive object case)
M[NOM] eat-pst.3sg apple.par
‘Mary was eating an apple.’ (unbounded event, quantized or nonquantized apple)
Aspectual object case alternation

Mari küpsetas kooki.
Mari baked cake. PAR
‘Mary was baking a cake.’
(atelic, imperfective, unbounded VP)

Mari küpsetas koogi.
Mari baked cake. ACC
‘Mary baked a cake.’
(telic, perfective, bounded VP)
Some verbs are atelic (thus object is partitive)

Mari kuul-is lindu.
M[nom] hear-pst.3sg bird.par
‘Mary heard a bird.’ (unbounded event, quantized bird)
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V+v(present participle suffix)+t(partitive)

*Mari kuul-is lindu laul-va-t.*
M[NOM] hear-PST.3sg bird.PAR sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR
‘Mary heard a singing bird.’
The emergence of functional partitives, the TAM categories

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Mari kuul-is, et lind laul-va-t.
‘Mary heard that the bird was singing.’
Mari ütle-s, et lind laul-va-t.
'Mary said that the bird was singing.'
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(Mari ütle-s, et) lind laul-va-t.
M[nom] say-pst.3sg that bird[nom] sing-pers.prs.ptcp-par
‘(Mary said that) the bird was singing.’
Indirect Evidential

Lind laul-va-t.

bird[NOM] sing-PERS.PRS.PTCP-PAR

‘ Allegedly, the bird is singing.’
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Bounded event, partitive (psych predicates)

Silvi üllata-s Toomas-t.
S[NOM] surprise-pst.3sg T-PAR
‘Silvia surprised Thomas.’
The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking

a. “part of N”

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Estonian

noorim  mu  laste-st
young.sup  sg1.gen  child.pl-ela

‘the youngest of my children’
(7) Estonian

Mari sõ-i ?õuna / õuna-st.
M[NOM] eat-PST.3SG apple.PAR apple-ELA

‘Mary ate some quantity of the apple.’ (bounded event, nonquantized apple)
The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking

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e. → Adpostion “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
kaks          jõge
two[nom]    river.par
‘two rivers’
A digression before number phrases with partitive Uralic semantic partitive and information structure

- In the Uralic languages, the semantic partitive is generally expressed by the elative case. If there is no dedicated elative case, then the semantic partitive is expressed by the ablative.
- The morphological partitive is more characteristic of pseudopartitive constructions. Pseudopartitive constructions and number phrases are expressed predominantly via juxtaposition.
- Objects are accusative marked or unmarked depending on their information structural status.
Unmarked/accusative alternation
New versus old information

Udmurt: unmarked/accusative opposition

a.  \textit{n'an}' \textit{s'i-i}  \\
    bread[ACC]   eat-INF  \\
    ‘to eat (a piece of) bread.’

b.  \textit{n'an'-ez} \textit{s'i-i}  \\
    bread-ACC   eat-INF  \\
    ‘to eat (a piece of) this bread up.’
Nominative argument heads for telic...
remnant of information structural DOM

The state dried up two rivers
(one would expect **Accusative**
in Estonian)

*Riik kuivatas ära

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
kaks & jõge \\
two[\text{nom}] & \text{river.par} \\
\text{‘two rivers’}
\end{array}
\]
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  M[NOM]  eat-pst.3sg  apple.par
  ‘Mary was eating an apple.’ (unbounded event, quantized or nonquantized apple)
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d. → “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)

e. → Adpostion “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
M[nom] love-3sg J-par
‘Mary loves John.’

b. *Mari* vaata-b *jõge*.
M[nom] look-1sg river.par
‘Mary is looking at the river.’

c. *Mari* kuul-is *lindu*.
M[nom] hear-pst.3sg bird.par
‘Mary heard a bird.’
The emergence of default (structural) partitives, complement marking

a. “part of N” (the morphological partitive marking has disappeared) →

b. → “amount of N” (has the morphological partitive marking)

c. → “amount of V” (N has the morphological partitive marking)

d. → “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)

e. → Adpostion “N-obj” (N has the morphological partitive marking)
mööda  jõge
along  river.par
‘along the river (prepositional phrase)’

jõge  mööda
river.par  along
‘along the river (postpositional phrase)’
Summary

• There are many Source (separative) cases in a language with a developed morphological partitive.
• There is a mismatch between part-of and amount-of semantics vs the partitive case form.
• The interaction between TAM, definiteness, and the partitive can be observed in many areas.
  • Aspectual DOM
  • Definiteness effects, telicity, and partitive arguments
  • Case on non-finites and verb stems
• Partitive has also become an abstract case.
Partitive: stages of development in Estonian

1) an NP-stage (Krifka 1992), that is, the stage where the meaning of the partitive pertains to parts of a whole
2) an aspectual stage (Larjavaara 1991, Laanest 1975, Krifka 1992),
3) epistemic modal and evidential phase (Campbell 1991, Aikhenvald 2004).

• The NP-partitive relates to the referential properties of nouns
• The aspectual partitive marks objects in sentences describing incomplete events, and
• The partitive evidential appears in sentences that encode incomplete evidence compared to the expectation of complete evidence
• See my article in Luraghi and Huumo’s book for the references and further details (only the part of numeral heads and nominative marking is an addition).