Evenki

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To Viktor Bulatov
in memoriam
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Abbreviations:

A aspect
ABL ablative
ACC accusative
ADJ adjective
ALIEN alienable possession
ALL allative
ANAP anaphor
ANT anteriority
ANTIC anti-causative
AOR aorist
ATR advanced tongue root
CAUS causative
CM comitative
CMP comparison
COLL collective
COM comitative (nominal)
COP compitative degree
CON concurrence
COND conditional
CVN convert
CVI impersonal convert
CVP personal convert
D diathesis
DAT dative
DEB deative
DEPT deictic mood
DEP deictic
DEPAR departure
DFUT distal future
DIMIN diminutive
DIR POSS direct possessive
DPS past
DUAL dual
DUR durative
EA Evenki
ELA relative
EVA evaluative suffix
EVID evidential
EXCL exclusive
FUT future
GO ‘go VERB’ (derivational)
HABT habitual subspect
IMPF imperfective aspect
IMPR imperative
INCL inclusive
INCP inclusive
INDF indefinite
INGR ingressive
INSTR instrumental
INT intention
INTER interjection
ITER iterative
LIM limit
LOC locative
M mood
NEG negative
NFUT non-future
NOM nomniative
NSIM non-simultaneity
NPR present perfect
NUM non-binary
ONLY only
PASS passive
PERP perfect
PL/pl plural
POST posteriority
PRES present
PRO prospective
PRP present perfect
PRF present
PST past
PURP purposive
RA Russian
R Russian
RECIP reciprocal
REFL reflexive
SIM simultaneous
SG singular
SING singular
SIM singularity
V vowel; represents one of a series of possible vowels
VO vowel harmony
PF particle
MBF morpheme boundary
PB particle boundary

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1.0 The Evenki language and people

Evenki is the largest of the Tungusic languages spoken in Siberia, belonging to the Northwestern (or Evenki) branch of Manchurian-Tungusic. Until the beginning of the 20th century Evenki was called Tungus or sometimes Orochen. The Evenki ethnic population in Russia currently numbers roughly 30,000 people; approximately one third of the population speaks Evenki. The Evenki people live throughout Siberia, in the Evenki Autonomous Region of the Krasnoyarsk district, in the Taimyr Autonomous Region, and in parts of Burutia and Yakutia—in the Republic of Sakha, in Irkutsk, Tomsk, Chita, Amur and Sakhalin regions and in Khabarovsk district. Outside of Russia, there are Evenki living in China and Mongolia.

Evenki is spoken in regions with heavy multilingualism. In their daily life the people come into contact with Russian, Buriat and Yakut, and each of these languages has had an impact on the Evenki language. Russian is the lingua franca of the region, while the use of Buriat and Yakut varies with the local population. Accordingly, part of the Evenki population is bilingual, and part trilingual. All Evenki know Russian relatively well, with the exception of some individual elderly Evenki. There is widespread loss of Evenki, and the language can be considered seriously endangered. For example, many Evenki living in Yakutia have taken on Yakut as a second language, with Russian as their primary language, and have completely lost Evenki. The same is true of Evenki living in Buriatia. For discussion of the impact of Yakut on Evenki phonetics, morphology and lexicon, see Myerev et al. (1975). For an overview of Evenki impact on Russian lexicon of Siberia, see Ankin (1990).

1.1 Classification of Evenki dialects

Despite its relatively small size in terms of population, the Evenki language is characterized by vast dialectal variation: the three main dialect groups can be broken down into a total of 51 recognized distinct dialects. The Evenki language is divided into dialect groups according to the distribution of [s] and [h]. Even this division is controversial: Russian linguists (e.g. Bulatova 1987), see three main dialects, while others (e.g. Gerten 1977) see four. In the Southern group [s] is found both word-initially and intervocally (e.g. asi ‘woman’, sulake: ‘fox’, while in the Northern group [h] occurs in these same positions (ohluk:)), and in the Eastern group [h] in intervocalic position and [s] word-initially (ohluk:)). Each of these larger dialect groups split into numerous dialects.

1.2 Establishment of the literary language

A literary language was first established in 1931 using the Latin alphabet; this was changed to Cyrillic in 1936-37, with the addition of a symbol to represent the velar nasal. The first dialect to serve as the basis of the literary language was the Nepa dialect of the southern dialect group (spoken in the area of Irkutsk). Then in 1952 this was changed, and the basis was shifted to the dialects of the Podkamenya Tunguska subgroup, in particular the Poligus dialect, one of the southern dialects (with [s] in both word-initial and intervocalic position). Today, in regions with a relatively dense population of Evenki, the language is taught in preschools and as a separate, required subject in the primary schools. In a few places it is taught through the 8th grade as an optional subject. Literature, both native and translated, has been published in the form of school textbooks up to the 9th grade, in Literary Evenki. Yet despite all this, Literary Evenki has not yet achieved the status of a norm which cuts across dialects and is understood by speakers of some dialects with great difficulty. (For more details, see Bulatova 1992.)

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1 Research on this project was supported by NSF grant BSR-9710091 and support from the John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding. We would like to thank V. D. Atkin, A. L. Malchukov, and Lindsay Whaley for comments and earlier versions of this work.
2.0 Phonology

2.1 Vowel system

There are 11 vowel phonemes in Evenki: all but the mid front vowel /e/ are phonemically paired, short and long:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i, i'</td>
<td>a, a:</td>
<td>u, u:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o, o:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a, a:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positional variants include [i] and [a], [e] and [e], and [o]. Vowel length is phonemic, as illustrated by such minimal pairs as o:s;i kta 'star' and ost;kta 'mail', or bu: 'give' and bu:dè 'die'.

Evenki suffixation follows the rules of vowel harmony. In Evenki, vowel harmony applies across morphemes. The high vowels (i, i', u, u') are neutral and do not trigger harmony in suffix vowels. They may also occur in a root after any vowel. This is the result of historical merger and means that which suffix vowel occurs is unpredictable from a synchronic point of view, as seen in: mu:nom, mu:-βaACC 'water'; šu:nom, šu:-βaACC 'house'.

ATR (advanced tongue root) vowel harmony applies for the non-neutral vowels. Roots with the vowel /a/, /o/ take suffixes with this same vowel: ar:nom, ar:-βaACC 'that'; ar:nom, ar:-βaACC 'mountain'. Roots with the vowels /e/, /æ/, /o/ take suffixes with the vowel /a/, /o/, except in cases of labial harmony: as:tnom, as:tna:ACC 'girl'; bir:nom, bir:-βaACC 'river'; s:nm, s:nmaACC 'ear'. In this latter group, labial harmony applies when the final stem vowel is /o/, /ɑ:/ these roots take suffixes with the same vowel, as in: er:nom, er:moaACC 'reindeer', but d:tnom, d:tna:ACC 'night'.

Certain suffixes never undergo harmony, i.e., have only one variant and do not participate in the rules of vowel harmony. Examples of neutral affixes are those with high vowels (such as the allative case -ki or the comitative -mu). Some morphemes have multiple variants, as in the comparative -dira/-eira, or the locative -dula/-dula; (after consonantal stems) These tend to be polysyllabic morphemes, although some morphemes of this type do have rounded variants (for example, the allative-locative case suffix -i-kla/-i-kla). Another important factor in the disintegration of basic rules of vowel harmony is that many speakers currently do not know the language well, and speak it only as a second or even third language. For this reason, a number of speakers use simply the vowels /a/, /o/ in "harmonizing" suffixes and disregard the rules of vowel harmony.

2.2 Consonantal system

There are 18 consonant phonemes in Evenki; these are given in Table 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teeth</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Dorsal</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Pharyngeal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stops</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricatives</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>ʰm</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the consonants have positional variants: word-final /a/ deviates to [ɪ]. Also, /a/ lenites in intervocalic position and becomes [y].

2.3 Stress

Word stress is free and unpredictable in Evenki, although there is some correlation between the number of syllables, syllabic structure, and stress position. Stressed vowels show increased intensity and length, although phonetically long vowels are not necessarily stressed. Further study with instrumental measurements is called for, but certain patterns have been identified. There is a tendency for bisyllabic words to exhibit stress on the second and final syllable when the first syllable is open (birêr ‘river’; uðlin ‘rain’ and on the first syllable when that first syllable is closed (òllo ‘fish’; hältta ‘blanket’). In polysyllabic words, stress is predominantly word-final, with a secondary stress on the antepenultimate syllable (pattern in cvecv or ceccvecv) isgæp ‘heavy’ and sîlkigærm ‘washes’. This pattern is violated by non-initial word-internal closed syllables: there is a strong tendency for them to be stressed; šiïkku ‘intestine’ (See Konstantinov, 1964:28-29; Lebedeva et al. 1985:24). Furthermore, the pattern may be violated when long vowels occur within the word, as they tend to be stressed. Stress in Evenki needs further investigation and has not been subjected to instrumental analysis.

2.4 Intonation

In assertive utterances, intonation is characterized by a gradual lowering, usually across the predicate:

\[
\text{bu: aːruːt bítarəp.}
\]

"We live badly"

In questions, intonation rises in the beginning of the clause, on the interrogative word or other phrase in the scope of the question:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{oːn sɹ: bɪzən̩\text{n}i} & \quad \text{"How are you?"} \\
\text{we bədə yə} & \quad \text{"How are you?"}
\end{align*}
\]

In comparison to the intonational curves of affirmative utterances, intonation is somewhat higher at the end of questions.

Imperatives are characterized by high intonation on the first word, followed a sharp drop in intonation; this drop is much sharper than in assertive or interrogatives utterances.

\[
\text{gaːŋaːkəl hɪmət aduːk!}
\]

"Go away from here quickly!"

2.5 Phonotactics and morphophonemics

Syllables in Evenki may be either open (mu: ‘water’; s-ma:ʃa: [they] come) or closed (mo: ‘trees’; a-sat-kar: ‘girl’) although there is a strong tendency toward open syllables. Words may begin with any vowel or consonant except r-. Consonant clusters do not occur word-initially, and are limited word-externally, and foreign borrowings conform to Evenki phonotactics. This is especially clear in the case of the many borrowings from Russian. To avoid initial consonant clusters, either a vowel is added word-initially (isčëlə < R. ščëlə ‘school’; ispîšə < R. špîšə ‘match’) or a vowel is inserted to break up the cluster (kčələ <
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R klub 'club'; tirakder < R traktor 'tractor'). If the borrowed word begins with the consonant r, either a vowel is added word-initially (urubl < R rubl 'ruble') or the r-metathesizes (urubeka < R rubeska 'shirt').

Consonant assimilation occurs across morpheme boundaries. Assimilation processes are primarily progressive, although some regressive assimilation does occur. Progressive voiceless consonants k, s, t, p, q, with /l/ → /l/ and /l/ → /l/. For example: hunez-qa → hunezapace 'girl'; dotun → dotun'lar 'loud'. The consonants /s, g, b/ assimilate to a preceding nasal consonant: oron-ba → oronbaCC 'reindeer'; gikun-si → gikunbaCC 'dog'. In addition, /s, g/ assimilate to a preceding vowel: dawg-kal → dawgka'per 'cross river'.

2.6 Orthography

Evenki is written in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet with the addition of the letter С (for the velar nasal consonant). Vocalic length is not marked in the written language (although it is usually marked in linguistic transcriptions). If /a/, /o/, /u/ follow the alveopalatals /s, b, l/, the vowels are written with Cyrillic letters 4, 6, 9, to indicate the palatalization of the preceding consonant (which have no Cyrillic correspondents). For example, mako [mako] 'stone', no [nu] 'house'. The phoneme /i/ is written with one of two letters: the letter a is used word-initially and after /l/ and /l/, and the letter e elsewhere. The phonemes /i/, /e/ are written with the letter a when they follow /l/ and /l/ and in all other positions are written u. The bilabial fricative /g/ is written a. Phonemic variants are not usually marked in the regular orthography.

3.0 Nominal morphology

3.1 Morphological structure

Evenki is an agglutinating language. Morphemes are strictly ordered and easily divisible. It has extensive inflectional and derivational morphology. Roots are largely mono- or bi-syllabic; suffixes adhere to strict ordering. Words, including all suffixes, must conform to the principles of vowel harmony (§2.1.1) and adjacent consonants assimilate.

All nominal categories (nouns, adjectives, pronouns and nominalized participles) may be morphologically marked for the grammatical categories of number, case, possession and forms of subjective evaluation. Note that Evenki lacks grammatical gender (e.g. naga to 'night'). In the description of individual parts of speech, we will consider only those features specific to a given part of speech.

3.1.1 Number

Evenki distinguishes singular and plural numbers; the marking for the singular is a zero morpheme. The primary plural suffix is -<i>. It is joined directly to stems ending in a vowel. Adjectives form the plural as do nouns, as in the word 'good' aja → ajat. With stems which end in a consonant, the vowel -<i> is used to affix the morheme to the base. An exception is nouns ending in the consonant -<i>: this -<i> is dropped and the plural morpheme -<r> is added instead of -<i>:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'mountain'</td>
<td>ara</td>
<td>ura-r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'not'</td>
<td>adil</td>
<td>adil-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'deer'</td>
<td>oron</td>
<td>oro-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'good'</td>
<td>aja</td>
<td>ajat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'white'</td>
<td>bagdar</td>
<td>bagdari</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2 Case

Evenki is traditionally defined as having 13 cases, although there is dialectal variation in the number of cases. The Evenki cases can be divided into core cases versus peripheral cases. Some cases (the nominative, accusative, accusative indefinite, dative, instrumental and locative) are used more frequently and are less subject to dialectal variation than others (the allative, ablative, dative, ablative-locative, allative-prolative and comitative). In some dialects, certain cases may be used with a broader range of functions, or alternate suffixes may be used. (For example, there is widespread dialectal variation in the comitative case; many dialects do not use the allative-locative and the ablative-prolative cases; the Yergobodon dialect is reported to have the use of a second dative in -al-; see Vasilevich 1948.) We summarize the most basic of the case uses in the literary language here.

The case suffixes are subject to the regular rules of vowel harmony and show further morphophonemic alternations, depending upon the final consonant of the stem. The distribution of allomorphs is determined by voicing assimilation, or assimilation to a preceding nasal consonant:

Participles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'one who is coming'</td>
<td>ama-ja-ra-ri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'one who has sung'</td>
<td>baga-jo-ri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A small group of exceptions is constituted mostly by kinship terms and other terms to refer to people. These nouns form a plural in -ol (dial. -ul), as in hajam - hajamol 'rich person'; nami - nami:ol 'lead deer'; sana - sam:sa:ol 'summer'; anfa - anfa:ol 'meadow'; asi - asa:ol 'woman'. The suffixes -il and -ul also occur with kinship terms: ami - amil 'father'; aji - ajil 'mother'; aki - akil 'older brother'; ak - akil 'sister'; askan - askanil 'younger brother or sister'.

Last, the numerals and a small number of nouns with a collective meaning do not form a grammatical plural: bulikta 'dried meat'; kruka 'meat, cooked and dried and cut into small pieces'; tanukka 'cloud'; siliska 'dew'; imanma 'snow'; sa:ka 'blood'; and a few others. Numerals do require that dependent arguments be marked in the plural (as in lan ma: 'three trees').

Pronouns show some additional characteristics in forming the plural. The 1st and 2nd person personal pronouns form the plural by means of suppletion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi:</td>
<td>bu:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>si:</td>
<td>su:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third person pronoun forms the plural according to the model of stems with a final -<i> plus the suffix -rin: 3rd sg. naga: → 3rd pl. naga:r-in. The reflexive pronouns formed from the stem man- follow analogous plural morphology, as in the reflexive pronoun 'self' sg. man:mi; pl. man:mi'r and the reflexive possessive 'own' sg. ma:n:gi:pli; pl. ma:n:gi:pli'r, etc.

Nedjalkov (1997: 142) labels some cases somewhat differently; his Allative corresponds to our Locative-<i>l<i> and his Locative-<i>l<i> to our Allative-<i>l<i>.
### Table 3. Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Voiced</th>
<th>Voiceless</th>
<th>-m/-n/-n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>-jā/-bā/-ā</td>
<td>-jā/-bā/-ā</td>
<td>-jā/-jā/-jo</td>
<td>-jā/-jā/-jo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-jā/-jā/-jo</td>
<td>-jā/-bā/-ā</td>
<td>-jā/-jā/-jo</td>
<td>-jā/-jā/-jo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEF*</td>
<td>-du:</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>-dā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTR</td>
<td>-ā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>-lā/-tā/-o:</td>
<td>-ā/-lā/-o:</td>
<td>-ā/-lā/-o:</td>
<td>-ā/-lā/-o:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROL</td>
<td>-lā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>-dā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>-tā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>-gā/-gā/-gā</td>
<td>-gā/-gā/-gā</td>
<td>-gā/-gā/-gā</td>
<td>-gā/-gā/-gā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-LOC</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
<td>-kā/-kā/-kā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-PRO</td>
<td>-kā</td>
<td>-kā</td>
<td>-kā</td>
<td>-kā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>-nā/-nā/-nā</td>
<td>-nā/-nā/-nā</td>
<td>-nā/-nā/-nā</td>
<td>-nā/-nā/-nā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a after the plural ending, the accusative case usually takes the form (-a/-b/-o) and the accusative indeclinable (-a/-o)

These nominative case (O) signals the subject of the clause. The **accusative** (-V), in addition to signaling the direct object, is used for measurements, as of time, space or quantity:

1. **Akin-mi: min-du: tanga-ba pani-ba ani-ra+a.**
   - [father-POSS.1SG 1SG-DAT five-ACC female.deer-ACC give-AOR-3SG]
   - *My father gave me five female deer.*

2. **B a c: dolboni:-ba bəpət:-ba:-bəm.**
   - [1PL.ex night-ACC work-IMPF-PST-1PL]
   - *We worked all night.*

In some dialects, verbs of speech govern the accusative case:

3. **Bi: asi-ba ari-m.**
   - [1SG woman-ACC call-1SG]
   - *I call the woman.*

The accusative can be contrasted to the **accusative indefinite** (-V), which signals an unknown or indefinite direct object. It is also often used to mark the direct objects of negated transitive verbs. Use of the accusative indefinite is illustrated in (4), which shows it for a non-specific direct object:

4. **ți-ga:-jo gami:- aja bi-məs.**
   - [food-ACC.INDEF take good be-COND]
   - *It would be good to get some (any) food.*

There is a correlation between use of the accusative indefinite and certain verbal categories: the accusative indefinite is most frequently found with predicates in the imperative, the future indicative, or with negated verbs. In particular the accusative indefinite is widely found in conjunction with the negative adverb *a:*in is not:

5. **a:-du: pəna:-ja a:nəm ex:kən a:nə bi-pə:na:-a.**
   - [taiga-DAT dog-ACC.INDEF nothing what good be-FUT.1-3SG]
   - *Nothing good will come of being in the taiga without a dog.*

For further discussion of the use of the accusative indefinite with negation, see §3.3.

The **dative** (-du:-) serves a number of functions. It is used to signal the indirect object:

6. **nipun: bəjəkə:-n-du: oron-mo ani:-ra+a.**
   - [3PL boy-DAT deer-ACC give-AOR-3PL]
   - *They gave the boy a deer.*

It is also used to signal the location of something, as seen in example (5), with a:-du: 'in the taiga'. This is one of the most frequently used functions of the dative case.

The dative is also used to signal possession, with the possessor in the dative case, and the possessed in the nominative. This is illustrated in (7):

7. **bəjəkə:-n-du: kaŋə bəsi-n.**
   - [boy-DAT book be-3SG]
   - *The boy has a book.*

Furthermore, the dative case is used for the time when an event or action occurs:

8. **or ʒugani:-du: bi: am-ii:-i-dula:-bi: izoma:-ʒa:-β.**
   - [this summer-DAT 1SG parent-PL-LOC-POSS.1SG go-visit-FUT.1-3SG]
   - *This summer I will go visit my parents.*

The agent in a passive construction is marked in the dative:

9. **pəko: bəjənəməni:-du: ʒa:-βa:-βə: əsə.**
   - [sable hunter-DAT catch-PASS-PART]
   - *The sable was caught by the hunter.*

The **instrumental** (-t) signals the instrument used in performing an action (10); it is also used to signal means of transportation (11):

10. **si: tara bor-i-t:pi: ʒa:pa:-kal**
    - [2SG that gun-INST-REFL shoot-FUT.IMPRESS.2SG]
    - *Shoot that one with your gun.*

11. **asi: kəŋa:-l:si ami:n-dula:-βi: is:-βa:-n.**
    - [woman ski-PL-INST father-LOC-POSS go-PST-3SG]
    - *The woman on skis went up to her father.*

It also used for the object of exchange, although the prolicative case is more frequent here:
(12) oron-zi-βi: palatka-βa șugat-ča-β Deer-INST-POSS tent-ACC exchange-PST-1SG

"I exchanged a tent for his deer."

The locative (-IV) case signals motion directed toward a point, or the endpoint or limit of a motion event (translated into English as ‘up to’ or ‘as far as’):

(13) sulak-ı: bira-1 aβ-re-n Fox-LOC-POSS go-AOR-3SG

'The fox went down to the river.'

The locative is also used when the goal of the motion is the addressee (i.e. the addressee’s location):

(14) ka, huta, girkî-1a-βi: tiksa-malîc-kal INTER child friend-LOC-POSS run-QA-FUT.IMPR.2SG

'Well, child, run quickly to your friend.'

The locative is also used to signal the time period during which an action occurs:

(15) ḫun bega-1-dula: ḥaβa-βa ata-ga-1-t three month-PL-LOC work-ACC finish-DEB-1PL.in

'We are supposed to finish the work in three months.'

In some folkloric texts, the locative is used with speech verbs to indicate the addressee. The literature language uses the allative case here:


'Kadarech, as he is called, is telling his father [a story].'

The locative case can be contrasted with the allative (-ski): whereas the locative case is used to specify the goal, the particular endpoint of the motion event, the allative is used to signal the place toward which the motion is directed. That is, the locative specifies a point, while the allative signals a direction, as determined by the overall location of the goal. (A similar contrast is found in English to versus toward):

(17) tirike-a:kin bira-ski: ollo-mo: sin-1-β noon river-ALL fish-GO-INCNP-1PL.ex

'At noon we went to the river to fish.'

In the majority of dialects, the allative may also be used for the addressee with certain speech verbs (such as gun-‘speak’, tapka-‘shout’):

(18) girkî-ski-βi: tara-βa go: kaš Friend-ALL-POSS REFL this-ACC say-FUT.IMPR.2SG

'Tell your friend this.'

In most dialects, however, the dative is more frequently used than the allative with speech verbs. This is true of the literary language, which does not permit the allative with these verbs.

The prolatative (-duli) has a number of diverse functions: It signals the place along which or through which a motion takes place (19); it marks an item which is given or used in exchange for something else (20); and it is used to signal the time period after which an action will be completed (21):

(19) oro-r hokten-1dul: bukti-βa-1-tin. Deer-pl. path-PROL run-IMPF-PST-3PL

'Deers were running along the path.'

(20) nonon neko-li: oron-mo bu-βi-1-tin. formerly sable-PROL deer-ACC give-DPRST-3PL

'They used to give a deer (in exchange) for a sable.'

(21) bi: nadala-li: muču-βu-1-tin. 3SG seven-day-PROL return-FUT 1.1SG

'I will return after seven days.'

In addition, the prolatative case is also used to signal the meaning ‘about’ as in ‘to speak about someone or something’:

(22) suqan girkî-ski-βi: uguex-ni-1-re-n 3SG friend-PROL-POSS tell-story-IMPR-3SG

'He is talking about his friend.'

The ablative (-duk) is used to signal the source of an event or motion. This means that it may be used for the person from whom something is taken, or the place from which something is taken:

(23) kurgi-1: bira-duk ana-re-n. child-pl river-ABL come-AOR-3PL

'The children came from the river.'

It is also used with a temporal meaning, again of source, to signal the time which names the beginning of an action (24); to signal the material which is used for making something (25): in comparative constructions for the object of comparison (26); and it is also used for the object which is the cause of an action or state (27):

(24) boboli-duk bi: agi-1a: nula-na-gaa-m. fall-ABL. 1SG taiga LOC hunt-GO-HABT 1-ABG

'From the beginning of the fall, I would go to the taiga to hunt.'

(25) skiri-mi: meta-duk kumala-n-1-ma utio-re-n. sister-POSS.1SG fur-from head-ABL. kumalan-ACC sew-AOR-3SG

'My sister sewed a "kumalan" fur rug from the furs of deer heads.'

(26) mūnir oron-duk gudja-tmar. horse deer-ABL tall-COMP

'A horse is taller than a deer.'

(27) uqda-duk bira muđa-re-n. rain-ABL river flood-AOR-3SG

'The river flooded from the rain.'
The **relative** (-gi-) case signals the source of an action or event, i.e., the place, thing or person from whose direction something happens, is heard, etc.:  

(28) **ginskín** gopaa-i-na ura-gi:t do:ki:-β-γa-ra:n.  
**dog** bark-3SG **mountain-ELA** hear-PASS-IMPF-AOR-3SG  
'The dog's barking is heard from the mountain.'

The **allative-locative** (-kiV:) and the **allative-prolative** (-ki:) are extremely limited in use and distribution and are not found at all in some dialects. The allative-locative is used for the object or reference point near which or in whose direction the action takes place:  

(29) **aga:ko:n** sumpin-i-kla togo-ro-a.  
**fawn** smoke-POT-ALL-LOC lie-AOR-3SG  
'The fawn laid down across from the smoke pot.'

The allative-prolative is used to signal the object along which, or along whose edge, something happens:  

2PL mountain-ALL-PROL move-FUT.IMP.2PL  
'Move along the mountain!'

The **comitative** (-nu:n) is used to signal the person or being together with whom the action takes place:  

female-deer fawn-COM river-ACC cross-IMPR-AOR-3SG  
'The she-deer crosses the river with the fawn.'

(32) hi: akin-nun-mi: ta:bba:-m.  
1SG sister-COM-REFL-3SG collect-berrries-1SG  
'I went with my sister to pick berries.'

The comitative most frequently conjoins two subject NPs. It may also conjoin two direct objects, in which case the second, conjoined NP may or may not have overt accusative case marking. Because it can be combined with the accusative, it has been argued that the comitative is not a bona fide case in Evenki: no other "cases" permit more than one case in the same word (see especially Kilby 1980). However, in spontaneous speech it rarely co-occurs with any case marking, even when used with a direct object NP.

### 3.1.3 Relator nouns

The meaning of the cases can be expressed by means of relator nouns (often somewhat misleadingly called postpositions). As a general rule, these relator nouns signal spatial relations. In these constructions, the head noun does not take case affixes. Relator nouns are formed from nouns which signal a locator or direction relative to some object (another noun); among the most frequent in Evenki are the following:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relator Noun</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>amar</strong></td>
<td>'back'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>βala</strong></td>
<td>'in front of'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>angida</strong></td>
<td>'right side'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>γagindia</strong></td>
<td>'left side'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>γo</strong></td>
<td>'up'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>hargin</strong></td>
<td>'down'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relator noun **mum** 'for', for the sake of' declines only for number, as in **mum γa:nin** 'for goodness' sake'; **mum γaritin** 'for their sake': it is not inflected for case.

#### 3.1.4 Possession

Possession is morphologically marked in two ways in Evenki: through the use of possessive pronouns (see §3.5.3) and through suffixation. Both may be found in combination. Suffixation is the preferred strategy, in the sense that it may occur alone or in combination with the possessive pronouns, while the possessive pronouns are not used alone, without additional suffixation on the possessed NP. That is, suffixation is obligatory and use of the possessive pronouns optional. Moreover, the eastern Evenki dialects do not use possessive pronouns, but personal pronouns instead. In addition these morphological devices, syntactic possessive constructions are also found. Evenki distinguishes alienable and inalienable possession. Inalienable suffixes are further divided into personal and reflexive. Reflexive suffixes are used when the possessor is co-referential with the grammatical subject, and personal possessive suffixes in those cases where the possessor and subject are different entities. The personal possessive suffixes are inflected for all grammatical persons and numbers, while the reflexive suffixes are inflected only for singular versus plural number, as person is recoverable.

The forms of both sets of possessive suffixes are summarized in Tables 4 and 5:

#### Table 4. Personal possessive suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem final</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>1st excl.</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vowel</td>
<td>-β</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-pun -u</td>
<td>-sun -i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td>-β</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-pun -i</td>
<td>-sun -i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural suffix</td>
<td>-ii</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-mun -i</td>
<td>-mun -i</td>
<td>-tan -i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4. Personal possessive suffixes**
Table 5. Reflexive possessive suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem final</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vowel</td>
<td>-βi:</td>
<td>-βar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consonant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>-βi:</td>
<td>-βar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiceless</td>
<td>-pi:</td>
<td>-mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-mi:</td>
<td>-mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural suffix</td>
<td>-βi:</td>
<td>-βar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alienable possession is signalled by the suffix -gi- plus the personal possessive suffix. The following minimal pair illustrates the contrast between alienable and inalienable possession: where inalienable possession is signalled with the personal possessive suffix:

(36a) dit-βi
  head-POSS.1SG  'my head'

(36b) diki-βi
  head-ALIEN-POSS.1SG  'the head of an animal which belongs to me'

These two examples differ only in terms of the use of -gi- in (36b), signaling alienable possession.

The alienable possessive suffix -gi- should be distinguished from the direct possessive suffix -gi-: (with a long vowel). The latter is a remnant of the genitive case and has often been confused with it in older grammatical descriptions.

(37) tar učak stikka-n:gi-βi
  that deer wife-DIR.POSS.POSS.1SG  ‘this book child-DIR.POSS
  ‘that deer belongs to my wife’

Use of the alienable possessive suffix is very limited. It occurs only with a limited number of nouns: domesticated animals and their body parts, parts of the natural world (sky, land, plants and so on), natural phenomena. Moreover, it occurs only in conjunction with possessive suffixes (duuna-: gi-βi ‘my land’, stikka-: gi-βi ‘my wife’). Note that -gi- is attached to the nominal which references the possessed object. In contrast, the direct possessive suffix -gi- is attached to the possessor, and may be used with personal possessive suffixes (38a) or without it (38b):

(38a) a:fun asli:gi-βi
  hat wife-DIR.POSS.POSS.1SG  ‘the hat belongs to my wife’

(38b) a:fun kusaka:n:gi-βi
  child-DIR.POSS  ‘the child belongs to the child’

The direct possessive suffix can be used to create new words with the meaning ‘something belonging to someone or something’ which is signalled in the base noun. These nominals are declined for case. For further details, see Bulatova (1987: 33-7).

Independent constructions with the direct possessive suffix -gi-: are often used in response to the question gi-βi, e:ku:n:gi- whose:

(39) "tar gi:gi: oran?"  "stikka:n:gi-"  "This whose reindeer?  old.man-POSS
  ‘Whose reindeer is this?’  ‘The old man’s.’

This same suffix may be used in constructions which have a descriptive function, as in tar oran stikka:n:gi-: ‘that deer is belonging to the old man’.

Finally, a possessive construction may be formed with the suffix -e:ci-, which is attached to the possessed nominal. It does not occur in conjunction with -gi-. Possessive constructions with the suffix -e:ci- are very frequently used in Evenki (oro-e:ci- ‘having a reindeer’; asli-e:ci- ‘having a wife’). These are used descriptively; they can often be translated into English with a relative clause:

(40) ašenaki:  bi-e:ci:  ilan huna:ši:ci:
  Evenki  be-PANT three girl-POSS
  ‘There was an Evenki who had three daughters’

Possessive constructions in -e:ci- can be contrasted to negative possession formed with a:či; see §3.3 for a discussion.

3.2 Nouns

Evenki nouns are inflected for number, possession and case. There is no grammatical gender. Derivational morphemes follow the stem and precede inflectional morphemes. Evenki nominal inflectional morphemes follow strict ordering:

stem - deriv. - [indirect poss.] - [direct poss.] - [number] - [case] - [alienable poss.] - [personal/reflexive poss.]

Evenki has a rich system of derivational morphology; what follows are only some of the most frequent productive affixes used to derive nouns:

Derivational morphemes for substantive stems:
1. -kšu-kšai-kša is used to create nouns for animal fur; paka:ša ‘sable fur’;
2. -ruk-šaš is used to create the names of various receptacles, formed from the noun signifying the article(s) to be contained: dašma-ruk ‘tobacco pouch’; išma-ruk ‘needle holder’;
3. -ma:n- / -ma:n / -ma:n creates the names of people who are characterized by certain passions or predilections: ušaˌma:n ‘fish lover’; asšiˌma:n ‘womanizer’;
4. -tšaˌma:n / -tšaiˌma:n creates names of children and young animals: bazaˌtšaiˌma:n ‘boy’; homoloˌtšaiˌma:n ‘bear cub’; ulikiˌtšaiˌma:n ‘young squirrel’;
6. -gaiˈtšaiˌpauŋ / -gaiˈtšaiŋ forms nouns according to their purpose, as in: ašiˌtšaiŋ ‘future wife’; kokoˌtšaiŋ ‘material for sleeves’.

Derivational morphemes for verbal stems (used to create nouns):
1. -kši is used to name the place where an action always takes place, or where it occurs at the moment of speech: biˌkši ‘living place’ (from the verbal stem bi‘be, live’); molaiˌkši ‘place for preparing firewood’ (from molaiˌprepaˌfirewood’);
2. -šaˌkšiˌšaˌkšiˌšoŋ ‘former stopping place in the spring’ (from the root nalkiˌšaŋ ‘spend springtime’);
3. -fun and -gki: form the names of objects used to carry out the action named by the verbal root, as in igi-fun ‘comb(noun) from igi- ‘comb(noun)’; muta-gki: ‘bucket’ from muta: ‘go for water’;

4. -nji: -nji: is used for professions or to name an activity: alas: -nji: ‘teacher’, from alas: ‘teach’. This same suffix forms the names of women according to nationality or clan, as in afa-nji: ‘Eventi woman’, or dialectical afa-nji: ‘woman from the Buta clan’;

5. -la:nj:la:nj:la:n forms the names of people according to the actions they perform, specifying that they are specialists or masters, as in ika: -la:nj: ‘master singer’ from ika: ‘sing’.

3.3 Negation and nominal phrases
In Eventi the negation of the presence or existence of an object requires a special construction using the negative nominal a:nin ‘NEG’. This adverbial combines with all nominal phrases. Two types of negative constructions can be identified: (1) negation of existence or presence; and (2) negation of possession.

Negation of existence
When the existence or presence of a person or object is negated, the noun is found in an analytic construction with the negative a:nin:

bajo a:nin ‘there is no man’
afa a:nin ‘there is nothing good’
hafa:gur a:nin ‘there is no one working’
megnu a:nin ‘s/he is not [here]’

The negated nominal does not decline, but the negative a:nin declines as a 3rd person noun, marked for case and with possessive suffixes (§3.2.3). That is, the negated nouns behave like specifiers, as illustrated with the isolated phrase in (41a), and its use in a full sentence in (41b):

(41a) bajo a:nin
‘there is no man’

(41b) bajo a:nin:ma: a a-la: sa: -ra.
man NEG-ACC-3SG NEG-PST-1SG know-RA
‘I didn’t know about the man’s absence.’

In (41b), the negative a:nin functions as an argument of the verb and takes case, reflecting its grammatical role within the clause. Note that it is the grammatical head of the phrase; the negated noun bajo is uninflcted. This is similarly seen in (42), where a:nin is marked for number, case, and possession:

(42) oro: t a:la:nin dornim: 3po: -l.
der-PL NEG-DAT-3PL rest:FUT-1-PLin
‘We will rest in the deer’s absence.’

The nominals in the scope of negation can also take possessive suffixes:

(43) bajo: ~ a:nin: -a
work-POSS.1SG NEG-DAT-3SG come:visit:IMPR:DFUT:REFL
‘I have no work; come visit.’

Negation of possession
A:nin can also be used to indicate the lack of possession or ownership. In this case, the (negatively) possessed noun is marked in the accusative indeclinable case (V-V). Thus the distinction between negation of existence and negation of possession is signaled by the case marking of the possessed nominal: in the former case, there is a zero case marking, and in the latter, the accusative indeclinable. This is illustrated in the following examples:

(45) huta:ja a:nin asi:
child-ACC:INDDEF NEG woman ‘a childless woman’

When the possessor is plural, the negative a:nin is plural as well:

(46) huta:Ja-fo a:nin a:sa:1
child-PL-ACC:INDDEF NEG-PL woman-PL ‘women without children’

The (non-)possessed object may take the plural suffix:

(47) huta:Ja-fo a:nin asi:
child-PL-ACC:INDDEF NEG woman ‘a woman without children’

Gorovjukaja (1941:78) defines these constructions as “negative adjectives” or “adjectives of negation,” while Konstantinova (1966:77) sees them as “forms of lack of possession.” These combinations (as in 45–7 above) form pronominal constituents. The possessor is the head of the phrase. Only this head is inflected to signal its grammatical role in the clause: in (48a) asi: ‘woman’ is in the accusative case as direct object of the verb; in (48b) in the dative as indirect object; and in (48c) in the allative as the goal of the motion:

(48a) huta:Ja a:nin asi: -Ja: iez-a: -m.
child-ACC:INDDEF NEG woman-ACC see:AOR-1SG
‘I saw the childless woman.’

(48b) huta:ja a:nin asi: -du: cron:mo ani: -la: -beta
child-ACC:INDDEF NEG woman-DAT deer-ACC give:PST-1SG
‘I gave a deer to the childless woman.’

(48c) huta:Ja a:nin asi: tki: gana-kal
child-ACC:INDDEF NEG woman-ALL go:IMPR:2SG
‘Go to the childless woman.’

When the (non-)possessor can be identified from context, it is often omitted. In such instances a:nin becomes the grammatical head and takes case inflection:

(49) huta:Ja a:nin tki: gana-kal
child-ACC:INDDEF NEG-ALL go:IMPR:2SG
‘Go to the childless one.’
These constructions are widely used in colloquial speech in a metaphorical sense, as in dara-ja a:cin ‘without face’ (literally), used in the metaphorical sense ‘unsurpassable’, ‘shameless’. The correlation between the accusative indefinite and the negative a:cin is seen in the colloquial phrases used to create what are usually negative characteristics. These are formed on the basis of negation of (the existence of) body parts with a:cin, e.g., dil-ja a:cin baza ‘stupid person’ (lit. ‘headless’); se:a-n a:cin ‘disobedient’ (lit. ‘without ear’) or e:sa-ja a:cin ‘unconscious’ (lit. ‘without eyes’).

3.4 Adjectives
Adjectives are used both attributively and predicatively in Evenki. When used attributively, they precede the nominal head and agree with it in number and case. In their predicative use, they occur in clause-final position, and agree with the subject in number (and in case, the nominative). As a distinct morphological category, adjectives have been largely ignored in linguistic studies of Evenki, although most studies do point to the fact that they can be used substantivally (Chirekov 1990: 33-42, 34-73, 103-7, 113-36). For example, aja can be either adjectival ‘good’ or substantival ‘goodness’. The same is true of guda ‘high’ or ‘height’ and supa ‘deep’ or ‘depth’. Vasilevich (1958: 702-3) considers them a distinct class of elements which can fulfill different syntactic functions. These differences are illustrated in the following examples, where in the (a) versions, the form is adjectival, and in the (b) versions, it is morphosyntactically a noun phrase:

(a) aja baza (b) baza aja-pla-n
    good man                             1SG man
    ‘good man’                           good-ACC-POS.3SG
    ‘I know the man’s goodness’

Adjectives in Evenki are divided into two categories on the basis of certain morphological characteristics: descriptive and relative adjectives. These are both derived and non-derived descriptive adjectives in Evenki, while relative adjectives are always derived. Non-derived adjectives and participles used adjectivally (see §4.7) take nominal affixes for number, case and, occasionally, for possession. Derivational adjectives do not take personal or reflexive possession markers.

3.4.1 Descriptive adjectives
Descriptive adjectives can be divided into derived and non-derived and differ from relative adjectives in that only descriptive adjectives can form the comparative (§3.4.3) and superlative (§3.4.4) degrees.

Non-derived adjectives include the following, as well as many others: aja ‘good’; aru, usa ‘bad’; saag ‘old’; saar ‘young’; bali: ‘blind’; e:pe ‘warm’; nama ‘hot’; urgo ‘heavy’; guda ‘high’; and noma ‘long’.

Derived adjectives, as a rule, are formed by what in modern Evenki are non-productive suffixes. They may be derived from both nominal and verbal roots, and from numerals. The most frequently used derivational morphemes are:

1. -ri:n or -mV for color terms: bagda-ri:n ~ bagda-ma ‘white’; koggo-ri:n ~ kognom ‘black’; hula-ri:n ~ hula-ma ‘red’; e:wu-ri:n ~ e:wu-ma ‘blue’, green; and siga-ri:n ~ siga-ma ‘yellow’. The affix -ri:n forms other adjectives which describe a person’s physical appearance or character: bulu-ri:n ‘bug-eyed’; ma:ri:n ‘fat’; eku-ri:n ‘stunted’; bila-ri:n ‘energetic’. This same affix can be used to create adjectives which describe the surface of an object: safe-ri:n ‘furry’; pilbi-ri:n ‘slippery’; na:pi-ri:n ‘flat, level’; sugga-ri:n ‘round’. Forms with the suffix -mV are used in dialects of the Northern and Eastern groups.

2. -mkusi:n is used for adjectives which describe size or volume: na:mkusi:n ‘thin’; sili-mkusi:n ‘narrow’; ura-mkusi:n ‘short’, and the like.


3.4.2 Relative adjectives
Relative adjectives are formed from nominal and verbal roots, and from numerals. Lexically they differ from descriptive adjectives in that they indicate a property or characteristic of the modified, relative to some other object (asa:di: ‘female’, from asa: ‘woman’), or time interval (dolgor ‘night’, dol:bi: ‘night’) or quantity (huma:n ‘third’, ilan ‘three’). Morphologically they differ in that they do not form the comparative and superlative degrees. The following suffixes are among those most frequently used in derivation:

4. -m/ma:-mo: for indicating the material from which something is made: ma: ‘wood’, ma:-ma: ‘wooden’; sola ‘iron’ [noun], sola:mo: ‘iron’ [adjective].

5. -di:ti: is used to identify an object according to language, clothing or clan: aja-di:ti: ‘Evenki language’; tura:di: ‘pimpaka’; ‘Russian fairytale’.

6. -r is used to form adjectives which indicate the season: narki: ‘spring’ [noun], narki-r ‘spring’ [adjective]; tagan: ‘winter’ [noun], tagan-r ‘winter’ [adjective].

7. -pl is used to form adjectives for other time periods: angani-pl ‘annually’. Adjectives which indicate the seasons, as well as other time periods, are often created by the use of both suffixes (-r and -pl) combined: buli-ri-pl ‘fall’; tarte:ri-pl ‘yesterday’s’.

8. -kin for signifying a feature derived from the action or state of the base: yamu:kin ‘hungry’; yula:kin ‘barefoot’; olge:kin ‘dry’.


10. -kaiki-kos forms adjectives which signal a human trait: ga:lo-ka ‘cowardly’; habal-ka ‘industrious’.


3.4.3 Comparative forms and constructions
The comparative degree of adjectives is expressed by means of a syntactic construction in Evenki. In this construction, the adjectives take one of the following suffixes: -mV or

3Note that Konstantinova (1964: 105-9) and Lebedeva et al. (1985: 88-9) identify what they call a comparative degree of adjectives in Evenki. In contrast, in other Tungusic languages, a comparative
its allomorphs -tmar-tmar-tmar, after vocalic stems, and -dimar-dimar-dimar after consonantal stems). -čira/-čira; and -rgu. Each of these suffixes has a different function.

1. The suffix -tmvr
The suffix -tmvr creates a comparative form of the adjective. In this comparative construction, the compared noun is the lefmost constituent in the clause and is in the nominative case. It is followed by the standard of comparison (the noun to which it is compared), in the ablative case. In the literary language and many Evenki dialects, adjectives with the comparative suffix -tmvr take the plural marker -sal. The adjective, with the comparative suffix, is clause-final:

(50) ıra:kta-s čuljan-duk gudqa-tmar.
larch-NOM birch-ABL tall-COMP
'A larch is taller than a birch tree.'

In some Evenki dialects the adjective is used without any comparative suffix:

(51) ukčak-o-β singi-duk aja.
der-PL-NEG POSS.ISG POSS.2SG-ABL good
'My (riding) deer is better than yours.'

When the relevant feature changes throughout the course of time, comparative constructions are also found without a compared noun in the ablative case. In such instances, a temporal adverbial with the suffix -tkin is used to mark the time period:

(52) bi: angant-tkin səgda-tmar q:ja-a-m.
ISG year-ADV old-COMP make-IMPF-PRES-ISG
'With each year I get older.'

2. The suffix -čirv
The suffix -čirv can either strengthen or weaken the lexical force of the root, i.e., it forms comparisons of greater or lesser degrees, with its interpretation dependent upon context. (Note that Vasilevich 1958: 798 defines it solely in its weakening function, while Romanova and Myereva 1964: 35 define it as a comparative suffix, seeing it as slightly augmenting the quality indicated by the base.)

(53) tiga-ša gudqa-čira na:-kol.
dishes-ACC good COMP put-IMPER-2SG
'Put the dishes up a bit higher.'

(54) unca-t-ka tija-čira uli-ča: bi: si-a-ani.
unty-PL-ACC tight-COMP sew-PANT be-AOR-2SG
'You made the unty [fur boots] too tight.'

3. The suffix -rgu:
Adjectives with the suffix -rgu are frequently used. This suffix functions pragmatically to single out the feature represented by the base. With adjectives it singles out the referent as

construction has been identified (for Even see Novikova 1960: 120; for Nanai see Avrarin 1959: 208; Sunik 1958: 76 and for Orok see Petrova 1967: 62). This construction is used to form comparative and superlative constructions. The Evenki facts are in line with this analysis.

We note that this suffix has been defined differently in previous linguistic studies, either as a suffix which augments the lexical meaning of base (Vasilevich 1958: 786), or as a marker of the superlative degree

more X, as in aja-rgu: 'the one who is better', or ada-rgu: 'the one who is younger'. With nouns it singles out a distinguishing feature or the base noun which defines the referent (a:sga-rgu: 'the one who is a woman'), and with pronouns specifies the referent by person features (nuga-rgu: 'the one who is he').

3.4.4 Superlative degree
The suffix -tkv: (or its allomorph -digu: -diye:, which is found after consonantal stems) is used to form the superlative degree of adjectives: hagad-ctkv: 'the tallest'; gona-duck: 'the longest'.

An even higher degree of the adjectival quality can be signified analytically, with the noun upkat- 'all' in the ablative case (upkat-tuk) used in conjunction with the comparative form of the adjective in -vr, or without the comparative form:

upkat-tuk gudqa-tmar tall-ABL all-ABL
'tallest of all'

Finally, it should be noted that a high degree of the qualified adjective can be expressed by use of the adverb sa: 'very' as in sa: gora:pu 'very old'.

3.5 Pronouns
There are eight morphological classes of pronouns in Evenki: the personal reflexive, determinative, possessive, deictic, interrogative, indefinite and the negative pronouns.

3.5.1 Personal pronouns
Evenki distinguishes singular and plural in the personal pronouns, and distinguishes a 1st person singular and plural in the plural. The personal pronouns decline as do other nominal categories, although the 1st person singular and plural exclusive use a suppletive stem (min- ) in the oblique cases, as do the 2nd person singular (oblique stem is sini- ) and the 2nd person plural (sin- ). In the 2nd persons stem-final -n is lost in the nominative case. The personal pronouns do not form an accusative indefinite, which is pragmatically felicitous in the personal pronouns.

Table 6: Personal Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>bi:</td>
<td>bw:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st excl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>si:</td>
<td>mit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd incl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>nuga:</td>
<td>nuga:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd incl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal pronouns are negated with the negative a:ćin. Two different types of constructions can be identified: mina- minija a:ćin 'without me'; sìna- sìnjija a:ćin 'without young'; nuna- nuna:ja a:ćin 'without her/him'; sìna- sìnjija a:ćin 'without me'. In addition, the following forms are used: bi: a:ćindu: 'in my absence'; si: a:ćindu: 'in your absence'; nuna a:ćindu: 'in your absence'; su: a:ćidu: 'in our absence'; a:ćindu: 'in their absence'.

(Romanova and Myereva 1964: 36). Both these interpretations overlook its widespread uses with other parts of speech, which can be unified in terms of its pragmatic function as stated here.)
The declension of personal pronouns is summarized in Table 7; the 2nd person singular \( si, \) sin- declines as the 1st person singular \( bi, \) min-, and the 2nd person plural \( su, \) sun- declines as the 1st person plural exclusive \( bu, \) mun-, so their paradigms are omitted here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOMINATIVE</th>
<th>1st singular</th>
<th>1st plural exclusive</th>
<th>1st plural inclusive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( si, )</td>
<td>( bu, )</td>
<td>( mun, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCUSATIVE</td>
<td>( mina, )</td>
<td>( muna, )</td>
<td>( mina, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC-INDEFINITE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATIVE</td>
<td>( minu, )</td>
<td>( munu, )</td>
<td>( minu, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>( minji, )</td>
<td>( munji, )</td>
<td>( minji, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>( munda, )</td>
<td>( munula, )</td>
<td>( minula, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRECTIVE</td>
<td>( minik, )</td>
<td>( munik, )</td>
<td>( minik, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROLATIVE</td>
<td>( minik, )</td>
<td>( munik, )</td>
<td>( minik, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>( minuk, )</td>
<td>( munuk, )</td>
<td>( minuk, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELATIVE</td>
<td>( minig, )</td>
<td>( munig, )</td>
<td>( minig, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-LOCATIVE</td>
<td>( minikla, )</td>
<td>( munikla, )</td>
<td>( minikla, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-PROLATIVE</td>
<td>( minikle, )</td>
<td>( munikle, )</td>
<td>( minikle, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMITATIVE</td>
<td>( minuawu )</td>
<td>( munuawu )</td>
<td>( minuawu )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal Pronouns, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOMINATIVE</th>
<th>3rd singular</th>
<th>3rd plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( mungan )</td>
<td>( mungari )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCUSATIVE</td>
<td>( munganu, )</td>
<td>( mungariu, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC-INDEFINITE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATIVE</td>
<td>( mungu, )</td>
<td>( mungariu )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>( mungji, )</td>
<td>( mungariji, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>( mungula, )</td>
<td>( mungariulu, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRECTIVE</td>
<td>( mungik, )</td>
<td>( mungariiku, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROLATIVE</td>
<td>( mungik, )</td>
<td>( mungariiku, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>( munguk, )</td>
<td>( mungariuk, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELATIVE</td>
<td>( mungig, )</td>
<td>( mungariig, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-LOCATIVE</td>
<td>( mungiklak )</td>
<td>( mungariiku, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL-PROLATIVE</td>
<td>( mungikle, )</td>
<td>( mungariiku, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMITATIVE</td>
<td>( mungau, )</td>
<td>( mungariuall )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.2 Reflexive pronouns

There are three types of reflexive pronouns in Evenki, formed from the base \( maa, \) 'self'. Reflexive pronouns are formed with the reflexive endings and have the singular form \( maa, \) and the plural form \( maa,\bar{\text{ar}}. \) They do not distinguish person but do decline. The antecedent of the reflexive pronoun is the subject of the clause which contains the reflexive. The accusative case of these pronouns is a zero morpheme (\( maa, \) sing. and \( maa,\bar{\text{ar}}, \) pl.); other case morphemes precede the reflexive suffix (e.g. dativ: \( maa,\bar{\text{du}},, \) sing. and \( maa,\bar{\text{ar}},,\bar{\text{du}},, \) pl.).

In contrast, the personal reflexive pronouns are formed from the base plus the personal possessive endings, such that they do distinguish grammatical person. They are used anaphorically; their forms are summarized in Table 8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>1st ( (excl), maa,\bar{\text{pi}}, maa,\bar{\text{pi}}, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>2nd ( maa,\bar{\text{ru}},, maa,\bar{\text{ru}}, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>3rd ( maa,\bar{\text{ti}},, maa,\bar{\text{ti}}, )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These forms decline, with the case suffix located after the base \( maa, \) and before the personal possessive suffix:

\[
(55) \quad xi: \ maa,\bar{\text{du}}-\bar{\text{fi}},, \text{aron-} \quad \text{si:} \ maa,\bar{\text{ku}}-\text{kal}.
\]

![25G SELF-DAT-POSS DEER-ACC.INDEF CHOOSE-PUT.IMPR.2SG](image)

"You go pick out a deer for yourself."

In addition, there are indefinite (anaphoric) reflexive pronouns in Evenki: \( maa,\bar{n},, s, maa,\bar{n},, s, \) and \( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n},, \) "self". These do not distinguish person and do not decline, but they are morphologically marked for number.

3.5.3 Possessive pronouns

There are three types of possessive pronouns: the personal possessive pronouns; the reflexive possessive pronouns ('own'); and the definite possessive pronouns (as in 'one's own').

The personal possessive pronouns are summarized in Table 9:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>1st ( (excl), maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>2nd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>3rd ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reflexive possessive pronouns are formed from the base \( maa, \) plus the possessive suffix \( -\bar{\text{gi}}-, \) plus the reflexive suffix \( -\bar{\text{bi}}-, \) and are morphologically marked for number. They distinguish grammatical number in the possessor (singular versus plural subjects) and in the possessee (singular versus plural objects). These forms are summarized in Table 10:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular possessum</th>
<th>Plural possessum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular subject ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n}, )</td>
<td>plural subject ( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n},, )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n},, )</td>
<td>( maa,\bar{n},, maa,\bar{n},, )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 10 suggests, plural of the possessor is marked with the plural suffix \( -\bar{\text{ar}}, \) while plural of the possessee is marked on the pronounal base \( (maa,\bar{\text{ru}},) \) and on the reflexive suffix \( (\bar{\text{bi}},) \).

The definite possessive pronouns 'one's own' are formed again from the base \( maa, \) plus the direct possessive suffix \( -\bar{\text{gi}}-, \) plus personal possessive endings. Plural forms can
be created by the addition of the plural affix -l- before the personal ending. The resulting pronouns conform to Evenki phonotactics:

Table 11. Definite possessive pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>mə'n-gi: -β</td>
<td>mə'n-gi:n -β</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|        | mə'n-gi:n -β   | mə'n-gi:n -fl-
| 2nd    | mə'n-gi: -s    | mə'n-gi:n -s  |
|        | mə'n-gi:n -s   | mə'n-gi:n -sun|
| 3rd    | mə'n-gi:n -n   | mə'n-gi:n -n  |
|        | mə'n-gi:n -n   | mə'n-gi:n -un |

3.5.4 Definite pronouns
In Evenki there is a two-way deictic spatial system of proximal versus distal, as reflected in the definite pronouns. These can be divided into the proximal deictics ar, ari ‘this’, ‘these’ and the distal deictics tar, tari ‘that’, ‘those’. The stem final -r- is lost in the dative, locative, prolate and ablative cases. The oblique forms of these deictics often correspond to spatial adverbs in Indo-European languages, e.g. the dative case of the proximal deictic adu ‘here’ (or ‘at this [place]’); the dative of the distal deictic tada ‘there’ (or ‘at that [place]’); the locatives ata ‘hither’; tala ‘thither’ and so on.

3.5.5 Interrogative pronouns

‘Who did they give the book to?’

(57) e:kun-ma tebo-s? what-ACC see-PST-2SG
‘What did you see?’

(58) i:du: bula-i? where child-PL.POS.1PL
‘Where are our children?’

The pronoun aji: ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘where’ is of particular interest. Its semantic range is considerably broader than that of the pronouns gi: ‘who’ or e:kun ‘what’. The interrogative aji: is used with reference both to humans and inanimate objects. It is used when nothing is known about the referent or, when everything is known, from linguistic or extra-linguistic context. Thus the meaning of the pronoun depends upon the nature of the speech act (interrogative or assertive), and whether the referent is known. In questions, aji: fulfills the function of interrogative pronouns such as ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘which’, ‘how many’, ‘where’, as in (59):

(59) aji:-βa nuγan bu:-ra? aji:-ACC 3SG give-AOR-3SG
‘What/who/how many/what kind did he give?’

The question here can be translated differently according to context, as in ‘What did he give?’ ‘Who did she give?’, ‘How many did she give?’ or ‘What kind did he give?’

In assertive statements, aji: takes on a deictic function and can be translated as ‘this’, acquiring the role of a substantivized pronoun, 3rd person, singular or plural.

3.5.6 Indefinite and negative pronouns

In sentences with a negated predicate, the indefinite pronouns in -da, -ta acquire a negative meaning, as in gi:-d ota sara ‘no one knows’.

3.5.7 Pronouns and verb formation
Some pronominal roots can be used as the bases in verb formation. Consider the following categories:

1. From the interrogative pronoun e:kun ‘what’:
   e:- ‘do what’
   e:-ku:-ta- ‘use for what purpose’
   e:kun-ki- ‘foreshadow something’
   e:ma:- ‘do what for’, ‘why come’
   e:ma:- ‘go why’
   e:kun- (βa) ‘eat what’

Such verbs are widely used in Evenki. The verb e:- ‘do what’ is especially high-frequency; it is illustrated in (60) and (61):

(60) haruka-ka:n e:di:βa ra a sun:un?
boy-DIM who-ACC the sun?
‘What is the boy doing with you?’

(61) su: ama-ri:-du: hun, e: βa:-un
2PL come-PST-DAT-2PL what-ACC IMPF-3PL 3PL
‘When you arrived, what were they doing?’

The verb e:ma:- ‘why come’ is formed from the interrogative e:- and the suffix -ma: which is used to create verbs with the meaning ‘go for something’, as illustrated in (62):

(62) e:ma:-ma:ra βex
what-PST-3SG that man
‘Why did you come?’

2. From the interrogative pronoun gi: ‘who’:
   gi:-ta- ‘use someone in what capacity’

3. From the reflexive pronoun ma:n-gi:-βi: ma:n-gi:-ta- ‘use oneself’

5 The pronoun aji: has been understudied. Cincius et al. (1975–77: 1:45) notes its use only in the Polkamam-Tungus and Northern Baikali dialects, as meaning (1) ‘what’; (2) ag, used as an exclamation; (3) the same [one], the very [one], this, as in ag boya ‘this person’.
4. The verb agi- from the pronoun ag (see §3.5.5) can be used anaphorically to replace nearly any verb. This verb is used its interpretation is clear from context, as in (63):

(63) nagan agi-t. agi-du: agi-za-ra-n
3SG good-ADV take-DAT ANAP-IMPF-PRES-3SG
'She lives well in the taiga.'

(64) is felicitous when the situation is visible to the interlocutors, and so can be readily understood. Alternatively, this verb can be used in questions when nothing is known about the action. In (65), the root is used throughout:

(65) agi: agi-ja agi-ja-ra-n?
ANAP-NOM ANAP-ACC ANAP-IMPF-PRES-3SG
'Who is doing what?'

Use of this verb is widespread in some Evenki dialects, including those of the Podkamennaya Tunguska group, which constitute the basis of the literary language.

3.6 Numerals

Cardinal numerals are formed according to what might be called "mathematical" principles. The numerals 1-10 form the basis for all other forms. For example, eleven = ten one; twelve = ten two; twenty = ten tens; thirty = three tens, and so on. Counting progresses from the highest numeral to the lowest, such that 3,259 = ilan ti:saca 3ar pama:za tunga 3ar jegin.

umun, umuk:m:n one jasn umun eleven
uzur two jasn jzur twelve
ilan three jasn ilan thirteen
digan four jzur jzr twenty
tunga five ilan jzr thirty
pakan six jzr jzr forty
nadan seven umakan pama:zi one hundred
zakpuna eight jzr pama:zi two hundred
jegin nine jasn il:sa two thousand
il:ten ten jasn il:sa three thousand


There are a number of different suffixes used for collective numerals in Evenki; the distribution of these is dependent upon the collective nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>two</th>
<th>three</th>
<th>four</th>
<th>five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>humans</td>
<td>-nil:ri</td>
<td>ilan:</td>
<td>digi:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animals</td>
<td>-gial:ga</td>
<td>jzg:</td>
<td>digipa:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>days</td>
<td>-l:lla</td>
<td>jz:ilo</td>
<td>ilada:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>things</td>
<td>-r:ga/la/la</td>
<td>jz:er:rga/ga</td>
<td>ilara:ga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.0 Morphology of verbs

The Evenki verb is morphologically marked for tense, mood, aspect, voice, person and number. Only finite verbs are marked for tense and mood; all other categories are found in nonfinite verbs, convers and participles. Morphemes follow a strict order:

stem-voice-aspect-mood-tense-person-number

Evenki lacks an infinitive form of the verb. The citation form of the verb usually given in dictionaries and grammars is with the suffix -mi-, which is used to form deverb nouns; for example, with the imperfective suffix: bi:ja:mi- 'living'; life: bi:ja:ma:mi- 'writing'. (The impersonal conditional converb is also formed with the suffix -mi-; see §4.8.)

4.1 Word formation

There is a rich system of derivational suffixes used to derive verbs from nominal stems. The following list includes only productive morphemes which can derive new forms:

1. -zu-/-mu-/-mo-: forms verbs with the meaning 'to go fetch someone/something', as in ba:kja:ma-: 'go hunt for moose'; ollo-mo-: 'go fishing'. As these examples suggest, verbs of this type are formed from nouns which denote animals and fish.
2. -ja:/-ja:-/-ja:-: forms verbs with the meaning 'to go for someone/something', as in mo:ja:-: 'go for wood'; ba:kja:ma-: 'go for piece of rotten wood'; asi:ja:-: 'get married' [lit. 'go after a woman']. Verbs formed with this suffix are close in meaning to those in the suffix -mi:- suffix (1) above, with a difference in the base noun as well as in the suffix.
3. -ja:-/-ja:-/-ja:-: cognate to suffix (2), forms verbs which signal use of an object or instrument to carry out an action, as in mu:jur:ja:-: 'catch with a lasso'; miro:ja:-: 'carry one's back'.
4. -ja:-/-ja:-/-ja:-: forms verbs which signal a constantly unfinished action, as in mu:ja:-: 'carry water'; eu:la:-: 'scrape with a scraper'.
5. -li:- forms verb stems to signal an action which repeats constantly: azko:li:-: 'eat/fed on moss'; na:ku:li:-: 'store in a ware-house' (nak:u: ware-house').
6. -gi:- forms verbs which indicate making the object which is expressed in the base noun: jas:gi:-: 'make a house'; jas:bi:gi:-: 'make a boat' (jas:bo: boat'); Kolob:gi:-: 'bake bread' (kolob:bread').
7. -la:-/-la:-/-la:-: forms verbs which signal the use or appropriation of the object: signaled by the base noun, as in as:la:-: 'have as a wife'; jas:la:-: 'live in a house, own a house'; garb:la:-: 'have a name'.
8. -mi:- forms verbs which signal a constant action which is directed at the base noun, as in olu:mi:-: 'hunt for squirrel'; ollo:mi:-: 'catch fish'.
9. -ti:- forms verbs which indicate that the object signaled by the base noun is a source of food or nourishment: ba:j:t:ti:-: 'drink tea'; oro:ti:-: 'eat reindeer meat'.
10. -la:-/-la:-/-la:-: forms verbs in which the action is carried out by the object named in the base: baga:la:-: 'cure with medicine'; mujjo:la:-: 'embroider with hair from neck of reindeer'; jaj:la:-: 'think' (jaj from 'mind').
11. -mu:- forms verbs which signal the spread of the object's smell: ollo:mu:- 'smell fishy'.
4.2 Voice, diathesis and valency

In this section we consider valency-changing operations such as voice, diathesis, and causative constructions. Diathesis is understood here as the grammatical marking of the relationship between the action, the agent and the patient of the action. Diathesis is thus a broader term which encompasses not only traditional voice categories of active and passive, but also reflexive and reciprocal. In this section we will also discuss two related suffixes, the comitative (-liri-) and the causative (-βka:n/-βkα:n/-βko:n-), which can also be considered diatheses according to this definition, and according to the morpheme slot that they occupy. The Evenki language has a rich system of diatheses; the verb shows the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diathesis</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>active</td>
<td>σ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive</td>
<td>-p{(p,-mu{)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comitative</td>
<td>-liri-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reciprocal</td>
<td>-met{ (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>causative</td>
<td>-βka:n- (βka:n/-βko:n-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-causative</td>
<td>-rge- {rge, rgo}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The passive voice follows the prototypical passive pattern, where the patient of the action is in the nominative case, and the verb (finite form, or participle or convenor) has passive marking. The passive is used with transitive verbs. The agent stands in the dative case:

(66) ginσ β oλoσσικ i-1-du: ỹaβoσ ρa-α.
     dog-PSS,1.SG wolf-PL-DAT feed-PASS-PST.PF-3SG
     'My dog was eaten by wolves.'

The reciprocal diathesis signals that the action which is carried out by several agents is carried out by the reciprocal of the action(s). Only a limited number of verbal stems can take this suffix due to the semantic restrictions imposed by the nature of this reciprocal action. The agents are grammatical (nominative) subjects in this construction, as illustrated in (67) where 'the boys' are agents and are also acted upon:

     boy-DIM.PL toy-ACC take.away-RECIP-IMPF-PST-3PL
     'The little boys took the toy from one another.'

Other suffixes

Two other suffixes will be mentioned here as the use of these two, like the use of any of the markers diatheses, involves a change in the valency patterns of the verb.

The comitative suffix (-liri-) is used for an action where several agents are involved; the agents mutually perform the action. Moreover, these agents may also be (semantic) patients or recipients of an action. The subject NP may be a plural noun, or two or more NPs may be conjoined. In the latter case, these NPs are often conjoined with the comitative case.

---

6Nedjalkov (1997) calls this a sociative marker, noting that verbs with the sociative marker can express a reciprocal meaning.

---

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(68) ωλι-ν-α νai: λa:  śrou-lidi-kol.
     bird-PL.LOC forest-LOC go-COM-FUT.IMPR-3SG
     'Go to the forest with me.'

     run-IMPF.PASS-PL child-PL strike-COM-RECIP-PST-PF-3PL
     'The children who were running together bumped into one another.'

The comitative suffix is often found in conjunction with the reciprocal diathesis; the agents mutually perform the action and are mutually affected. In such cases, the comitative suffix precedes the reciprocal suffix:

(70) tukσa-ša-ri-α kupa:kα-р na:li-ma:ta-α
     run-IMPF.PASS-PL child-PL strike-COM-RECIP-PST-PF-3PL
     'The children who were running together bumped into one another.'

The comitative suffix also occurs in conjunction with the causative marker (as in iča-lidi-βka:n-α-n 'made it possible to see one another').

The causative (-βV'N-) construction is used to signal that the action performed by one agent is the result of the will of a different agent/subject. Both transitive and intransitive verbs can take the causative suffix. The performer of the action is the grammatical direct object, morphologically marked by the accusative case, while the agent who instigates the action is the grammatical (nominative subject):

(71) amu-n-ri na:ku:oβ-α o-lidi-n-α
     father-PSS.1.SG grainery-ACC make-CAUS-3SG
     'My father caused a grainery to be built.'

(72) ak:σa: meta-ta:du kumula:n-α uλi-lidi:n-α-α
     grandmother fur-PL-ABL fur-RECEP-ACC sew-CAUS-3SG
     'Grandmother had a fur rug sewn from the furs (from the heads of reindeer).'

In addition, there are several non-productive causative suffixes which can be used with a limited number of verbs; see Nedjalkov (1997: 2301). Passive verbal morphology may also be used when the agent is absent.

The anti-causative diathesis is used with a specific meaning, to signal that the grammatical subject is also patient. Anti-causative verbs differ from canonical passives in that the agent is not stated, and the non-derived verbs are not necessarily transitive; for example, anti-causative marking is found with verbs which signal a change in state, such as ᵁgya-rga: 'become white'. It can be used with inherently transitive stems as well, as illustrated in (73):

(73) omu usi-α ati: rga-rν-α
     deer bridle-PSS.3SG tear.off-ANTI.C-PST-3SG
     'The deer's bridle got torn off.'

4.3 Aspect

Evenki has a rich aspectual system. The exact nature of the Evenki aspectual system is disputed, see Bojnova (1975), Gorelova (1979) and Lebedeva et al. (1985). We will treat
the system as having ten possible aspects and sub-aspects, or Aktionsarten, as summarized in Table 12.7

Table 12. Aspects and sub-aspects in Evenki

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Morpheone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perfective</td>
<td>৷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>-6a-/6a-/6o-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>sin-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-2-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-6i-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>gna-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-kta-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-swh-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-ma6a-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>-mu- and -kse-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aspect suffixes follow those for voice but precede mood, tense, person and number suffixes. The imperfective and perfective aspects are considered the primary aspects; the remaining aspects can be considered sub-aspects or Aktionsarten which denote, to varying degrees, differences in the internal contour of the verbal action. Each of the subaspects combines with a particular syntactic or semantic category of verbs. A single verbal stem can take more than one subaspect suffix. For example, the aspective (-s) is often found in combination with other subaspects, such as the iterative, imperative, durative, or habitual. These subaspects may also combine with aspect markers; they precede aspect suffixes.

1. The perfective aspect is marked by a zero morpheme and is in binary opposition to the imperfective. The imperfective aspect is used to signal actions which are incomplete, on-going or continuous in time. The differences are illustrated in the following contrastive pair:

(74a) or bira-li: bi: xaga kota-ro girku-kta-3a-4-30.
this river PROL 1SG in:summer many-time walk-AITR-IMP-PF-DPPST-1SG
'This summer I walked along the river many times.'

(74b) or bira-li: bi: xaga girku-kta-3a-4-30.
this river PROL 1SG in:summer walk-AITR-PF-DPPST-1SG
'This summer I walked along the river.'

The difference between the imperfective and the perfective in these examples is that the imperfective highlights the repetition of the action.

7 As Nedjalkov (1992) points out, not all suffixes that are traditionally categorized as aspectual are necessarily so: many are non-obligatory and could arguably be considered semantic, not grammatical categories. Nonetheless, the suffixes presented here all occur in the aspect "slot" of the verb.

Nedjalkov (1997:246-56) provides different labels for some of these aspects. Our own terminology differs in an effort to provide English labels which more precisely correspond to the traditional Russian labels, and to capture the primary meaning of the subaspect. In some cases Nedjalkov’s label captures a secondary meaning more precisely, as in the case of the imperative subaspect, which he calls a semelfactive.

In order to avoid terminological confusion, we will summarize these here: sovetnjen(y) = perfective (In: perfect); menevren(y) = imperative; mnglern(y) = iterative (In: dispersive); obchnym = habitual; pouturn(y) = repetitive (In: iterative); prodolzn(y) = distal (In: distributive); sosojn(y) = stative (In: resultative-statives); nachnaten(y) = imperative; xundn(y) = iterative (In: semelfactive).

The secondary or sub-aspects further specify the internal temporal contour of the action. Not all bases can combine with all aspects: their distribution is determined by the lexicon-semantics of the verbal base and of the aspectual suffix. Many of the suffixes can be combined in combination; again these combinations are dependent upon the semantics of the aspects and verbal base. Accordingly, certain sub-aspects (such as the habitual, iterative and aspective) are most often found together with the imperfective suffix.

We further note that the distribution and frequency of some of these sub-aspects vary from dialect to dialect. The perfective and imperfective aspects are found in all dialects, as are the imperative, stative, iterative, durative and habitual sub-aspects. An intensive aspect (/-jel/- /-jel/- /-jel/- /-jel/-) is found in the Eastern dialects.

2. The imperative (-sin-) is used with several meanings. In its basic meaning, it signals the beginning of an action.

(75) gina-kin gogo-sin-a-n.
dog bark-AINCP-3SG.
The dog started barking.

It is frequently found with motion verbs in the meaning 'to set off':

(76) bi: xula-3i-bi: gana-sin-i-m.
1SG home-LOC-POS go-AINCP-3SG
'I set off for my home.'

With a number of verbs it has a semelfactive meaning, singling out one instance of an action signaled by a verb which, without this suffix, would signal an action consisting of multiple parts:

(77) nagwa tapka-sin-a-n.
he shout-AINCP-3SG
'He cried out.'

Last, this suffix can be used to signal the completion of the action, as in (78):

(78) pucl: sin-ak-i-s.
nanka-na, aja-tmar o:epgi-n.
smoke-AINCP-CVP,COND-2SG hide-ACC good-COMP do-FUT.I-3SG
'When you smoke the hide a bit, it will get better.'

3. The stative (-jel-) signals the onset or beginning of an action. In some dialects, although not in the literary language, it can signal lack of completion as well (Bulatova 1982:52).

(79) kupaka: a so: soja-1-lo-n.
child very cry-INGP-PST-3SG.
The child started crying hard.'

4. The stative (-4v-) is used to indicate a state or condition, as in haku-mi: 'to close' versus haku-3a:mi: 'to be closed', with the stative sub-aspect, where the suffix signals a change in valency as well as a state.

This stative sub-aspect can also be combined with the imperfective aspect suffix, in which case the verb is interpreted as signaling a durative and on-going (and incomplete) action.
5. The durative (-t-) has widespread use, especially in the indicative. It signals an action as taking place over a period of time:

child fur.rug-DAT sit-DUR-IMPF-PRES-3SG
"The child is sitting on the fur rug."

6. The habitual (-paV-) is used for an action which repeats, or with an action or state usual for the subject. It is often found in combination with the imperfective suffix.

2SG ISO-ALL any.time=PART come-visit-HABIT-IMP.2SG
"Come visit me any time."

This subaspect is more frequently used by the Evenki of the northern and southern dialect groups.

7. The iterative (-kwV-) is used for actions which occur repeatedly, in particular with motion verbs (come, go, etc.), or verbs that signal some kind of movement (fill, look for). It most frequently co-occurs with the imperfective aspect, signaling a repeated action as it is being carried out:

look-AITER-IMPR.3SG:look-AITER-IMPR.3SG NEG-PST find-RA
"He looked and looked but didn't find it."

8. The repetitive (-pYV-) is also found most frequently in combination with the imperfective aspect and is used to signal repeated actions:

NEG-IMPR.2SG go.out-A.REP-RA mosquito-PL tent-LOC fly.FUT-1.3PL
"Don't go in and out all the time; mosquitoes will fly into the tent."

In contrast to the iterative, the repetitive aspect has fewer lexical restrictions and may occur with a wide range of verbs. However, the repetitive is relatively infrequently used, while the iterative -kwV- is more frequent, although the latter is used chiefly with verbs signaling motion.

9. The aspect of quick action (-mV-ë:tV-) is used mostly with telic verbs, signaling an action that is rapidly completed:

"Stand up quickly and quickly light the fire."

When occurring with stative verbs, this aspect has an attenuative meaning, indicating that the state was maintained for a brief period of time (e.g. alat:mo:lo:ko:mi: 'having waited a bit').
In Future III, the morpheme -gira is a compound morpheme, formed with the imperfect suffix -gia plus the ingressive subspect marker -a-. It is therefore interpreted as a "future" tense, i.e., as indicating action which will take place in the future, but it could more accurately be analyzed as an instance of the ingressive subspect.

4.5.3 The past tense

Three past tenses are distinguished in Literary Evenki, a present perfect (Past I), a past (Past II) and a more distal past (Past III). The present perfect signals an action or event which occurred immediately prior to the moment of speech, while the past (II) signals an action which simply occurred in the past. The distal past (III), in addition to signaling distal temporal reference, simultaneously an iterative or, with stative verbs, a durative action.

The present perfect is formed with the suffix -ri- (or its allomorphs -ri-, -ri-, -rri-, -ri-) in all but the 1st and 2nd persons singular, plus first conjugation person suffixes. In some dialects, including Literary Evenki, a small set of verbs (omi: 'do', gami: 'take', nam: 'place' and bumi: 'give') can form this past with the suffix -ri- in all persons, instead of the suffix -ri-. Past II is formed with the suffix -ri- and second conjugation person suffixes, and Past III with the suffix -giri- and second conjugation person suffixes.

Table 16. The Past Tenses of omi 'come'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>Present Perfect (I)</th>
<th>Past (II)</th>
<th>Distal past (III)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>amar-m</td>
<td>ama-č-a-β</td>
<td>ama-č-k-i-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>amar-n</td>
<td>ama-č-a-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-k-i-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>amar-n</td>
<td>ama-č-a-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-k-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st excl</td>
<td>ama-ri-β</td>
<td>ama-č-a-r-n</td>
<td>amar-k-i-γ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>amar-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-a-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-k-i-γ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>amar-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-a-r-β</td>
<td>ama-č-k-i-γ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these indicative forms, certain participles can be used predicatively and can be combined with inflected forms of bumi: 'be' to form periphrastic tenses; for a discussion of the participial forms, see §3.10. There are four different periphrastic tenses: a present habitual and a past habitual, which are formed from the habitual participle and the present or past of bumi: 'to be' and a past perfect and a pluperfect, formed from the participle of anteriority and the present/past of the auxiliary. These are summarized for the verb bumi: 'to give' in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17. The Present and Past Habitual of bumi: 'give'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>present habitual</th>
<th>past habitual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-m</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-ni</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-n</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-ni</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-r-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st excl</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-γ</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-r-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-γ</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-r-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-si-γ</td>
<td>bu-čki: bi-č-a-r-β</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18. Past Perfect and Pluperfect of bu-: ‘give’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>perfect</th>
<th>pluperfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-čaβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (excl)</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl)</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bu-ča:</td>
<td>bu-ča:β</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.5 Irregular verbs in the indicative mood

Four verbs form an irregular present tense without the imperfective -3β or the tense suffix -rV. These are the verbs α.- ‘do’, bi.- ‘be’, ga.- ‘take’ and bu.- ‘die’. The present paradigms are given in Table 19:

Table 19. Irregular verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>bu- ‘be’</th>
<th>bu- ‘die’</th>
<th>ga- ‘take’</th>
<th>α.- ‘do’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>bi-ši-m</td>
<td>bu-da-m</td>
<td>ge-m</td>
<td>o:-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bi-ši-ni</td>
<td>bu-da-ni</td>
<td>ge-ni</td>
<td>o:-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bi-ši-ni</td>
<td>bu-da-ni</td>
<td>ge-ra-n</td>
<td>o:-ra-n-o:-da-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>bi-ši-β</td>
<td>bu-da-β</td>
<td>ge-β</td>
<td>o:-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (excl)</td>
<td>bi-ši-β</td>
<td>bu-da-β</td>
<td>ge-β</td>
<td>o:-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl)</td>
<td>bi-ši-β</td>
<td>bu-da-β</td>
<td>ge-β</td>
<td>o:-β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bi-ši-s</td>
<td>bu-da-s</td>
<td>ge-s</td>
<td>o:-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bi-ši-s</td>
<td>bu-da-s</td>
<td>ge-s</td>
<td>o:-s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 The imperative, conditional, optative and deontic moods

In addition to the indicative, there are four moods in Evenki: the imperative, the conditional, the optative and the deontic. In addition to these moods, forms which indicate the speaker’s assessment of probability are traditionally classified as moods of probability. They will be treated here as evidentials.

4.6.1 The imperative

Two tenses, a future and a distal future, are distinguished in the imperative, which has morphological categories for all persons and numbers. The second-person imperatives are the most frequently used. The future imperative is used to signal an action that should be immediately performed. It is distinguished from the distal future, which signals that an action that should be performed at some point more distant from the moment of utterance. Moreover, this action is usually signaled as sequential, i.e., as occurring after some other action. The future imperative is formed with one set of affixes:

Table 20. The imperative forms of bu-: ‘give’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>bu-ktu</th>
<th>bu-k-βn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>bu-ktu</td>
<td>bu-k-βn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>bu-κal</td>
<td>bu-got</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>bu-κin</td>
<td>bu-ktin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the distal future imperative, two forms are used, formed with the suffix -da- and second conjugation endings: the second person singular (bu-: da- : βn) and the second person plural (bu-: da- : βt).

4.6.2 The debitive mood

The debitive mood is used for signaling an action which the speaker suggests should be performed. There are two forms of the debitive, a synthetic and an analytic form. The synthetic debitive is formed with the suffix -mVεi:n without personal endings. (In many dialects, the suffix -γVεi:n is used instead of -mVεi:n. In contrast, -γVεi:n is used with personal endings. Note that this suffix has been analyzed as an optative in Literary Evenki; see konstantinov 1964:188–9; nedjalkov 1997:263. However, in many dialects it is used as a debitive, not an optative.) The debitive conveys a deontic modality often translatable into English as ‘should’ or ‘must’.

The suffix -mVεi:n is most frequently used in analytic constructions with the auxiliary verb bu- ‘be’ or o- ‘do’. This auxiliary is inflected for tense, aspect, number and person; -mVεi:n is suffixed to the verbal base without further inflection. Thus tense is marked on the auxiliary alone. The present tense is seen in (86) and (87); the past is given in (88), and the future in (89):

(86) bu: amo-mačin bi-si-m. 1SG come-MDEB be-PRES-1SG
     ‘I should come.’
(87) si: amo-mačin bi-si-nai. 12SG come-MDEB be-PRES-2SG
     ‘You should come.’
(88) nugan amo-mačin bi-čo-n. 3SG come-MDEB be-PST-3SG
     ‘S/he should have come.’
(89) kugaka:n girku-mačin ov-θapa-n. 3SG walk-MDEB do-PUT-1:3SG
     ‘This child will ought to be walking.’

In many dialects, the suffix -mVεi:n is not used. Instead, these dialects use a synthetic construction with the suffix -γVεi:n, inflected for person and number. This is illustrated in Table 21:

Table 21. The debitive forms of o-. ‘do’ in -γVεi:n

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>o-γVεi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (excl)</td>
<td>o-γVεi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl)</td>
<td>o-γVεi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>o-γVεi:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>o-γVεi:n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6.3 The conditional

The conditional is formed with the suffix -mεi:n. It is used to signal an action whose performance is dependent upon another action or event. In conditional sentences, both the superordinate and the subordinate clause are non-factual. Verbs in the conditional take conjugation II affixes, except in the third person singular which has a zero morpheme (as
opposed to the expected -n). In the plural, two different sets of forms are found; the plural suffix -l- is found in one set of these forms, as summarized in Table 22:

Table 22. Conditional forms of bu: 'give'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st bu: -mea -b</td>
<td>1st (excl) bu: -mea -fan - bu: -mea -1 -pun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl) bu: -mea -t</td>
<td>bu: -mea -l -ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd bu: -mea -s</td>
<td>2nd bu: -mea -sun - bu: -mea -l -lon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While some speakers prefer the plural forms with the suffix -l-, some do not. Many speakers use both of these forms in free variation.

4.6.4 Evidentials

Evidentials are used when the speaker infers that an action will probably occur; the suffix -rka- is most often found:

Table 23. Evidential forms of sa: 'know'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st sa: -rka -b</td>
<td>1st (excl) sa: -rka -fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl) sa: -rka -t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd sa: -rka -s</td>
<td>2nd sa: -rka -sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd sa: -rka -a</td>
<td>3rd sa: -rka -tin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second suffix, -rgu-, is used when the action is assessed as likely to occur with an additional shade of habituality:

Table 24. Habitual-evidential forms of sa: 'know'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st sa: -rgu -m</td>
<td>1st (excl) sa: -rgu -fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (incl) sa: -rgu -t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd sa: -rgu -ni</td>
<td>2nd sa: -rgu -sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd sa: -rgu -n</td>
<td>3rd sa: -rgu -tin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both the evidential and the habitual-evidential forms are most frequently found in conjunction with the auxiliary bi: 'be', where the verb bi- is inflected for the evidential mood and the lexical verb is a participial form. These constructions are illustrated in examples (90) - (92):

(90) nupan ti:ni -pa ama -s: bi -rka -n. 3SG yesterday-ACC come-PANT be-EVID-3SG

In these constructions, temporal relations are established declaratively by means of the participles. In (90), the participle of anteriority ama -s: signals that the inferred action would have occurred prior to the moment of utterance, while in (91) the participle of posteriority ama -s: signals that it will (probably) take place after the moment of utterance, i.e., in the future:

(91) nupatim ana -s: bi -rgu -tin. 3PL come-PL.POST be-HABIT/EVID-3PL

'They are supposed to come, probably.'

(92) su: ama -s: -I bi -rka -sun. 2PL come-PART-PL be-EVID-2PL

'You probably came.'

See Lebedeva et al. (1985:149-50) for the complete declension of these forms. Further research is required on their exact use and on the nature of the evidence used by speakers in making probability evaluations.

4.6.5 Modality and modal verbs

In addition to the mood suffixes given above, there are a number of modal verbs in Evenki which also signal modal meanings. Like any other verb, modal verbs are marked for tense, mood, aspect, voice, number and person. They form analytic tenses with either the impersonal conditional verb (-mi) or with the personal purposive verb (-DV-). (See §4.8 for a discussion of convert idioms.) These converts provide the subordinate lexical verb. An exception is the modal verb naka- 'want', 'do', 'occur', which itself has lexical meaning. The following are among the most widely used modal verbs:

1. abla- 'be unable': This verb is used to signal the objective impossibility of performing an action which does not depend upon the desires or wishes of the agent.

(93) bi: taki -pa ta -la -da: abla -a mam alaat -ca -mi:. 1SG moose-ACC salt.lick-DAT be-unable-1SG wait-IMPF-CVLCOND

'I couldn't wait for the moose at the salt lick.'

2. bu: - 'not want': This verb is used to signal when the subject does not wish to perform the action:

(94) kupaka : na ba: -ra -n e ku:mu -ma : -da o: -ja -mi:. child not.want-AOR-3SG what-ACC=PART do-IMPF-CVLCOND

'The child did not want to do anything.'

3. multi- 'be unable, incapable': This verb signals an action which the subject is unable to perform:

(95) hunat panti: -fa sir: -mi: multi -ra -n. girl lead.deer-ACC milk-CVLCOND be-unable-AOR-3SG

'The girl was unable to milk the lead deer.'

4. ajat: 'want', 'desire': This verb is used to signal when the subject does not wish to perform the action:

(96) kupaka : na tab da : -bic ajat: -ca -ra -n. child eat-CVP.PURP=DECL want-IMPF-AOR-3SG

'The child wants to eat.'

5. naka- 'want', 'do', 'occur': The interpretation of this verb is determined by context or from the extra-linguistic situation. Unlike the preceding modal verbs, it can be used without a verb, since it carries lexical meaning:
4.7 Participles

In Evenki participles are formed from verbal stems and may be used attributively, substantively, or predicatively. In their substantive use, participles are inflected for case, number and possession suffixes. As verbal categories, they take aspect and voice suffixes. They differ, however, from finite verb forms in that they do not take person suffixes. Consider the following set of examples, where in (98a) the participle is used attributively, and in (98b) predicatively:

(98a) ika-ja-r/: asat'tka:n i-ro-n.
    sing-IMPF-P.SIM   girl enter-AOR-3SG
    'The singing girl came in.'

(98b) tar asat'tka:n ika-ja-r/:.
    that girl sing-IMPF-P.SIM
    'That girl sings.' ('That girl is a singing one'.)

In both its attributive use (98a) and its predicative use (98b), the form of the participle of simultaneity ika-ja-r/: is identical; its grammatical role is determined by its position in the clause.

Ten participles can be distinguished in Evenki, although not all participles are found in all dialects. Their forms are summarized in Table 25:

Table 25. Participles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participle</th>
<th>Morpheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simultaneity</td>
<td>-ra/-jar/:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anteriority</td>
<td>-EV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habitual</td>
<td>-piki/-pki:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect</td>
<td>-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posteriority</td>
<td>-jega:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debitive</td>
<td>-maq:i/-maq:i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediate future</td>
<td>-i've</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fictitious</td>
<td>-ksan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impersonal debitive</td>
<td>-bka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debitive-intentional</td>
<td>-pa:t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>-ra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Simultaneity (-ri:) or (-3Y-ri:)

The participle of simultaneity is usually formed with the imperfective suffix (-3Y-), signaling an ongoing action. For this reason, these participles are usually called 'simultaneous' or 'durative.' They are used either attributively or substantively:

(99) o-ja-ri: asab'k'a:n-ma
    make-IMPF-P.SIM toy-ACC
    'the one making a toy'

Participles of simultaneity are often substantivized and function as nominals:

(100) parha-ja-ri:-ba amaski: mu:nu-kalle.
    make-IMPF-P.SIM-ACC back return-IMPF-2PL
    'Bring back the running-away one.'

Without the imperfective suffix (-3Y-), this participle denotes a substantivized action that has been completed.

2. **Anteriority (-ča:)

Participles of anteriority are used both predicatively and attributively. In their predicative use, they are close in meaning to finite verbs in the past tense; they signal an action which has been completed in the past. In (101a) this participle is used attributively, and in (101b), predicatively.

(101a) ama-ča:  il a
    person come-PANT person
    'the person who came'

(101b)  āsama-ča:
    person come-PANT
    'the person came'

In (101b) the participle of anteriority is used without person suffixes. However, these suffixes are often found when it is used predicatively; see examples (112)-(113) below.

3. **Habitual (-bpiki/-pki:)

The habitual participle most usually denotes an action which is seen to be a characteristic of the individual it describes.

(102) tar kugaka:n sogo-bpiki:.
    that child cry-P.HABT
    'That child is always crying.'

4. **Perfect (-m)

The perfect participle is used to signal a past action whose result has current relevance. These participles occur only in conjunction with possessive suffixes. They are often used substantivally to indicate the result, either as an attribute or as a noun which is the result of an action, as in (103):

(103) ha'gul-na-li:-β min-α kapa-ča-ə.
    work-P-PF-PR-ØS,1SG 1SG-ACC praise-AOR-3PL
    'They praised me for having worked.'

In speech the perfect participle is often found in agentless utterances with a passive-like meaning, as in (103), which could more appropriately be translated as 'I was praised for the work I had done.'

5. **Posteriority (-jega:)

Participles of posteriority signal possible actions which may be completed in the future, posterior to the moment of speech. Similar to the habitual participles, they usually signal a feature or characteristic of the described entity. They are used predicatively:

(104) nukan ʒi-ba ma:n-i-n o:jega:
    he house-LOC refl-3SG make-P.PST
    'He himself will possibly be able to make a house.'

6. **Debitive (-maq:i)

Debitive participles signal a deontic meaning, i.e., an action which should be accomplished. The debitive participles are used only in the 3rd person (singular or plural). These participles can be used attributively as well as predicatively. When used with 1st or 2nd person subjects, they are used in an analytic construction with the verb bi- 'be'.

Without the debitive suffix (-maq:i), this participle denotes a deontic action that has been completed.
In dialects of the Eastern group, participles in -mäč:n are not used. (See also §4.6, for a discussion of the deitative mood, where a similar distribution of morphemes is found in the dialects.) Instead, the deitative participle is formed with the suffix -gVt, again with a deitative meaning:

(106) ama-mäč:n baja come-P.DEB man ‘the man who is supposed to come’

7. Impersonal deitative (-Gk)

The impersonal deitative participle is used predicatively in an impersonal construction to signal an action which should occur, when the agent is unnamed:

(107) tar hasi:ža o-Gk.
which work-ACC do-P.IMPERS.DEB
‘It is necessary to do that work.’

In some dialects it can also be preceded by the passive morpheme -b which underscores the impersonal meaning, and it can also be used without the passive suffix to signal a habitual action.

8. Immediate future (-TVk)

The participle of immediate future signals an action which is perceived as occurring imminently:

(108) huna:ž-i-β adi: la-liak.
daughter-POS:1SG marry-P.IMM.FUT
‘My daughter will get married soon.’

It is often found predicatively in conjunction with the auxiliary bi- ‘be’ or o- ‘do’.

9. Fictitious action (-ksVn)

As its name suggests, the participle of fictitious action is used to signal actions which are pretended or imagined and not actually occurring. For this reason, this participle is often used in negative imperatives or admonitions:

(109) sapsa-kson a-kal o:n.
cry-P.IND NEG-IMPER:2SG do-P.RA
‘Don’t pretend to cry.’

It should be noted that participles can be distinguished from other parts of speech in Enkeni in terms of word-formation and syntactic properties, as well as in terms of their use in different dialects. Not all function as the main predicate, but some (especially the participles of simultaneity, anteriority and the perfect participles) take person suffixes. In so doing, they become indicative verbal forms and function as full-fledged verbs:

(110) bi: ukčak ki: šapa-ča-β.
1SG riding-deer-POS:REFL catch-P.ANT-1SG
‘I caught my riding deer.’

10. RA participles (-V)

The RA participles form analytic constructions with the negative verb a-. The RA particle carries lexical meaning and is marked for aspect, while the negative verb carries tense and person/number inflection. See §4.9 for further discussion of this construction.

RA participles can also be used in combination with the negative particle ači. Like other participial constructions, these can be used predicatively or attributively, as in (112). Note that the negative participle, not the RA participle, takes case and number affixes:

NEG-DAT come-RA man-DAT saddle-POS:REFL leave-AOR-3SG
‘He left his saddle to the man who had not yet arrived.’

Participles in Enkeni can be divided into two categories: those that function predicatively and form periphrastic tenses and those that do not. (Participles in both groups can be used attributively and nominally.) The participles of anteriority and of simultaneity, and the habitual particle do not form analytic tenses. The other participles can be used in combination with inflected forms of bi- ‘be’ in analytic constructions. Participles are used predicatively without an auxiliary with 3rd person subjects only. With 1st and 2nd person subjects, use of the auxiliary is obligatory:

(113) hunaš ži-du:ži: ama:nuš-ča.
girl home-DAT-REFL stay-P.ANT
‘The girl stayed at her home.’

1SG home-DAT-REFL stay-P.ANT be-PST-1SG
‘I stayed home.’

4.8 Converbs

Converbs are defined as nonfinite verb forms whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination (Haspelmath 1995: 3). In Enkeni they can be divided into two categories: impersonal and personal converses. Impersonal converses are used when the superordinate and subordinate clauses have the same subject. They do not take personal suffixes. In contrast, personal converses do take personal suffixes and are used when the subject of the subordinate clause differs from that of the superordinate. When used with reflexive instead of personal suffixes, the personal converses signal same subject. In sum, the personal converses can be used with either reflexive suffixes (for same subject) or with personal suffixes (to signal a change in subject). All but two of the personal converses (the conditional verb -V-k and the personal convorbs of accompanying action -VamV- can be used with either personal or reflexive suffixes. The conditional and accompanying action personal converses can only signal that the subjects of the clauses differ.

A more complete study of Enkeni converses is presented in Nodelkova (1995). For the sake of consistency, we have maintained his labels for the convorbs forms wherever possible. However, many of his labels are not understandable without a thorough knowledge of his theoretical framework. These have been changed to be more readily interpretable.
Table 26. Converbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simultaneity</th>
<th>-nV</th>
<th>-nVči:-</th>
<th>-nVči-</th>
<th>different subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anteriority</td>
<td>-ksV:</td>
<td>-‡VIV:-</td>
<td>-‡VIV:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posteriority</td>
<td>-mme:n</td>
<td>-dVIV:-</td>
<td>-dVIV:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>-mči:</td>
<td>-rV:k-</td>
<td>-rV:k-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrence</td>
<td>-muVči:</td>
<td>-‡VnmV-</td>
<td>-‡VnmV-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposive</td>
<td></td>
<td>-dV:-</td>
<td>-dV:-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit</td>
<td>-knV:</td>
<td>-‡VunV-</td>
<td>-‡VunV-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>-‡Vči-</td>
<td>-‡Vči-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Impersonal converbs (same subject):**

1. **Simultaneity** (-na/-na/-no). This converb is often used with the imperfective aspect (-‡Vči-). The action of the subordinate clause occurs at the same time as that of the main clause:

   (115) uro-βa alan-βa-na,i, bu: toen: uβa-μca:-n mountain-ACC transfer-IMPF-CVL.SIM-PL 1PL ex mooce track-ACC-POSF.3SG
   'While crossing the mountain, we saw the tracks of a mose.'

2. **Anteriority.** This converb is formed with the suffix (-ksa:/-ksa/-kσa:) in the majority of Evenki dialects. In the Podkamennaya Tunguska dialects which provide the basis for the literary language, the suffix (-kσa:/-kσa:) is used. This converb signals that the action of the dependent clause precedes that of the main clause:

   (116) gulaμa-μca ilkksa:, 3βga:-βa iri-ča:-n. fire-ACC light-CVL.ANT food-ACC cook-A.INGR-PST-3SG
   'Having lit the fire, he started to prepare the food.'

3. **Conditional** (-mči:). is used to indicate that the fulfillment of the action of the main clause is dependent upon that of the subordinate clause. The main verb is usually either in the conditional mood or in the indicative mood, future tense.

   (117) aja-č haļa-či-1 bja-1 o-čapa:-sun. good-ADV work-A.INGR-CVL.COND-PL person-PL make-FUT.1-2PL
   'If you would start working well, you will become people.'

4. **Posteriority** (-mme:n). These converbs signal a dependent action which precedes the action of the main clause:

   (118) ama-mme:n, iiri-i-σa:m. come-CVLPOST cook-A.INGR-PRES-1SG
   'As soon as I arrive, I start cooking.'

5. **Concurrence** (-mnak/-mnak/-mnak). Converbs of this type indicate that the action of the subordinate clause is carried out at the same time as that of the main clause (see Lebedeva et al. 1985:179);

   (119) kugaka:-r, aβi-μnaka:-i, ma-1-βa taša-ra-α. child-PL play-CVL.BARE-PL wood-PL-ACC gather-AOR-3PL
   'While playing, the children gathered brushwood.'

   In dialects of the Eastern group, converbs in the suffix -nmVči:- have been defined as "purposive" converbs, purposive because they signal the goal of the subordinate action (see Bulatova 1987; Romanova and Myreeva 1962; Vasilievich 1948).

   (120) usta-βa uli-mnaka, sunu-1-α o:-κal. unity-ACC sew-CVL.PURP thread-ACC.DEF make-IMPR.2SG
   'Make thread (from tendons) in order to sew unity (for boots).'

**Personal converbs (different subjects):**

Personal converbs grammatically mark switch reference, signaling that the subject of the subordinate clause differs from the subject of the superordinate clause. Therefore, they are found with grammatical markers of person. There are eight different personal converbs in modern Evenki.

1. **Anteriority** (-da:-/-da:-/-da:-). As with impersonal converbs of anteriority, the personal converbs signal that the subordinated action precedes that of the main verb:

   (121) si: ama-ča:-i, nupur-αi, νup-μi-εa:-i. 2SG come-CVL.ANT-2SG 3PL wander-FUT.1-3PL
   'When you come, they will [strike camp and] move on'

2. **Conditional** (-rak/-rak/-rak). signals the subordinated action, upon which the action of the main verb is dependent:

   (122) du:nu: ola-μrak-i-n, kugaka:-r uila-:a, aβi-κtın. ground dry-CVL.ANT-2SG child-PL street-LOC play-IMPR-3PL
   'When the ground dries, let the children play in the street.'

   (Note: the verbs bi- be- and o- do- have irregular converb forms; see Lebedeva et al. 1985:182.) Conditional personal converbs take only suffixes, and can be used only when the subject of the converb differs from that of the matrix verb.

3. **Posteriority** (-da:-/-da:-/-da:-) is used to signal that the action of the subordinate clause precedes that of the main clause:

   (123) ama-da:-β, kupu-μa haļa-ča:-i. come-CVL.POST-1SG 3SG work-IMPR-PST-3SG
   'He worked until I came.'

   'Embroider the sleeve while I sew the kumalan (for rug).'
Last, this same verb can be used to signal the limits of the main action:

(125) gina-o  jayi:  l-dalo  -n  uje:  kal.
dog-ACC hunger-A.INGR-CVP.POST-3SG keep.tied-IMP.2SG
'Keep the dog tied up until it is hungry'

4. Purposive personal converses ( -da:- / -do:- / -do:- ) signal that the action of the subordinate clause is the goal or purpose of the action of the superordinate clause:

(126) oro:-r  afid:-  ogo:-do:-  iina.
deer-PL good-ADV feed-CVP.PURP-3PL to.that.side.river chase-IMPR.2PL
'In order for the deer to eat well, chase them to the other side of the river.'

5. Simultaneity ( -gasi:- / -gasi:- / -gasi:- ) : these personal converses signal that the two actions, main and subordinate, occur at the same time:

(127) huta:-  bali:-  gisi:-  -n
child-2SG born-CVP.SIMUL-3SG 1SG neg born-FST-1SG
'I wasn't there when your child was born.'

6. Converbs of limit ( -kna:- / -kna:- / -kna:- ) are used to signal a secondary, subordinated action which is the goal, end or result of the main action:

(128) hapa:-  bi:-  a-ka-n  -n
work-REFL  bi:-  a-ka:-  -p.
finish-CVP.LIM-REFL 1SG wait-FUT-1SG
'I will wait until you finish your work.'

7. Converbs of intent ( -buna:- / -buna:- / -buna:- ) signal an action which is the intent or goal of the action of the main clause:

(129) iya:-  buna:-  potokataki:-  jsi:
look-CVP.INT-1SG photograph-ACC.INDEF give-IMPR.2SG
'Give me the picture so that I can look at it.'

8. Converbs of bounds ( -alii:- / -alii:- / -alii:- ) signal a subordinated action which limits the action of the main clause; it is most frequently found in conjunction with the imperfective aspect (130). This converb is widely used with negation (131); see Konstantinova (1964:220) for more information:

(130) nuga:-  ari:-  alii:-  -n
3SG cook-A.IMPR-CVP.BD-3SG 1SG water-carry-IMPER.1SG
'While she is cooking, let me go fetch water.'

(131) naku-ni:-  a:-  alii:-  -n
yogbrother-2SG a:-  alii:-  -p.
sleep-A.IMPR-CVP.BD-3SG 1SG NEG-IMPR.2SG go-RA
'Your younger brother is still sleeping; don't leave.'

Examples (121)-(131) have illustrated personal converses with personal suffixes, used when the subject of the converses differs from that of the main clause. All of these except the conditional convers and the converb of simultaneity can be used when the subject of each clause is the same. In this case, the personal convers take reflexive suffixes. This is illustrated with the personal convers of limit (132) and can be contrasted with example (128), which shows the same converb (of limit) used with a personal suffix:

(132) kugaka:-  dori:-  knas:-  -ni:
sog: -do:-  -n.
child tire-CVP.LIM-REFL cry-PST-3SG
'The child cried until s/he was tired.'

4.9 Negation

Negated forms of verbs, participles and converses are formed according to one and the same principle, from the negative verb a: -not be- and the RA participle. The negative verb a: is the head verb in this construction and is inflected for tense, person and number. The RA participle takes suffices for aspect and mood:

(133) aika:-  a:-  i:-  suka:-  b3a:-  ga:  -mu:-  ra.
old.man NEG-AOR-3SG ax-ACC take-A.DESID-RA
'The old man did not want to take the ax.'

(Note: the verbs bi:- 'be found'; o:- 'do', 'become'; ga:- 'take'; and bu:- 'die' have irregular converb forms; see Konstantinova 1985:194.)

The negative verb a:- is used in all participial forms except the debitive ( -mVci:- / -n ) which is practically not used in negative constructions. With the negative verb a:-, the participle of simultaneity (positive suffix -yi:- or -yi:- ) takes the suffix -si:-. The negated participles are summarized in Table 26 and negated converses in Table 27:

Table 27. Negative participles, sa:- 'know', 'find out'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simultaneity</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect action</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possible action</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habitual</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impersonal debitive</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fictitious action</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact posteriority</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28. Negative converses, sa:- 'know', 'find out'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simultaneity</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anteriority</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditional</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posteriority</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concurrence</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29. Personal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simultaneity</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anteriority</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posteriority</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purpose</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limit</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bounds</td>
<td>sa:-  -ry:-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negative forms of the converses of intent (-βVαV) are virtually not used. The personal conditional converb (+PVk-) uses the suffix -sit- in the negative, as follows:

positive: sa-:rak-i-gi 1SG 'if I will know'

negative: a-sit-i-j1 1SG sa-ra 'if I will not know'
a-sit-i-s 2SG sa-ra 'if you will not know'
a-sit-i-n 3SG sa-ra 'if she will not know'

5.0 Forms of evaluation

In Eevenki there are a number of suffixes which are used to give a shade of emotional or subjective evaluation to a variety of parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns) and cover a wide range. They may be subjectively "positive" or "negative," they may be diminutive or augmentative, and they may be used for comparisons, for specifying some particular feature. Further, they may signal such meanings as affection, scorn or contempt. Some of the most commonly used suffixes are given here, shown in conjunction with different parts of speech. (These are labeled EVAL in the examples below, to distinguish them from the other non-evaluative particles, discussed in §7.0. In addition to morphemic glosses, a loose translation is provided: these evaluative suffixes are largely untranslatable into English.)

1. kə-tə:nə This is a compound suffix, from the suffix -kə:u:n- which has a diminutive or affectionate use, and the suffix -kə:n- which signals an intensification of the lexical meaning of the base. Depending on context and the speech setting, this suffix can be alternatively interpreted as signaling augmentative, diminutive, or affective meanings. The following examples illustrate use of this suffix with different parts of speech; the translations ‘poor/dear’ are intended to convey the shades of either pity or affection which this particle brings to the utterance:

noun dolboni-kə:kə:n hakiru-ma night-EVAL dark-ACC 'a dark night'

adjective ajə-kə:kə:n dolboni: good-EVAL night 'a wonderful night'

numeral ge-kə:kə:n dokolok second-EVAL lame 'the poor/dear second one is lame'

pronoun sa-kə:kə:n a-to-nni taro-ro 2SG-EVAL NEG-PUR-2SG endure ‘you can’t take it, poor thing’

participle hafal-kə:kə:n-a-ci-fa səzi-kə:n work-EVAL-IMPf-PI.SIML-ACC call-IMPL2SG ‘Call the one who is really working hard.’

converb hafə-:fii ato-kə:ka-kə:kə:n, mukət-xa-n work-REFL finish-CLJ.ANT-EVAL return-PST-3SG ‘When the poor/dear one had finished his work, he returned.’

verb gəroffu bi-kə:kə:n-a-rə-x tədu long-time live-EVAL-IMPf-AOR-3PL there ‘The poor/dear ones have lived there a long time.’

2. mi: This suffix signals a disparaging tone of scorn or disdain. When combined with nominals, it can signal deprivations:

noun bəja-mi: tati-mi: person-EVAL clothes-EVAL ‘bad person’ ‘old, bad clothes’

3. -ma'-ma This suffix has a specifying effect, highlighting the exclusivity of the base vis-a-vis other possible entities or properties:

noun hənst-ma-fa-fa daughter-EVAL-ACC-POS-1SG want-IMPF-AOR-3SG ‘It’s [precisely] my daughter he wants.’

adjective səgəj-ma-də: buku: old-EVAL-DAT give-IMPL2SG ‘Give this to only/precisely the old person.’

numeral səla-lla-ma-fa nələ-ro-fa three-day-EVAL-ACC wander-AOR-1PL ‘We wandered for three whole days.’

pronoun mənə-tha-fa 1SGACC-EVAL-ACC choose-PST-3SG ‘He chose just me, only me.’

participle səgo-ʃori-ma o-:ə:a cry-P-PI.SIML-ACC become-PST ‘She became nothing but a crybaby’

convert jə-ʃa-fa-rak-1-fa təgə-la-xa-n exit-IMPF-EVAL-CLJ.ANT-1SG run-INGR-PST-3SG ‘It started to rain right when I went out’

verb təgəs-ma-1-la-xa-n do təgəs-1-la-xa rain-EVAL-INGR-AOR-3SG run-INGR-PST-3SG ‘It started to rain really hard, it started to rain.’

4. kə:n This suffix is most frequently used in a positive answer, strengthening the confirmation. It is also used to intensify the lexical meaning of a word:

noun birə-kə:n-ma hada-ro-fa river-EVAL-ACC cross-AOR-1Pl ex ‘We crossed a big river.’

adjective o:maku-kə:n ʃə:kə new-EVAL stop ‘a brand new stop’
5. -qati:n/'-qati:n This suffix is used to compare two entities, and indicates a similarity or likeness between them:

noun
kupka: r-gač:n
child.PL-EVAL. play-IMPR-AOR-3PL
'They are playing like children.'

adjective
gupha-gač:n
bi-č:n
tail-EVAL. be-PST-3SG
'she was as tall'

numeral
two be-CVLSIMUL-PL three-EVAL. work-AOR-3PL
'There were two of them, but they worked like three.'

pronoun
min-gač:n o-kał.
1SG-EVAL. do-IMPR.2SG
'Do as I do.'

participle
a:ža-ča-gač:n
bi-č:n.
sleep-PART-EVAL be-PST-3SG
'She was as if sleeping.'

converb
gana-ža-za-gač:n
gana-ža-kał.
go-IMPR-CVLSIMUL-EVAL go-IMPR-IMPR.2SG
'Go the way you were going.'

verb
nułan hač:la-ča:n-gač:n.
3SG work-IMPR-PST-3SG-EVAL
'She was working, sort of, it seems.'

There are a number of suffixes which are used largely with nominals, given in (6)-(7):

6. -ka:n/-ka:n is a diminutive suffix, which can also be used to signal affection:

biru-ka:n 'little river'
guša-ja:n 'pretty [one]' [affectionate]
kononi-ka:n 'black [one]' [affectionate]
on-gač:n 'this little one'; 'such a little one' (from on 'this')
hač:la-ri-ka:n 'the working one' [affectionate]

7. -rigda/-rigda (alternate forms are: -rik)V, -rgaV; -rgaV): This suffix signals a sense of limit or exclusiveness:

noun
amga-rigda
'having only a mouth'
[the negative evaluation of a person who talks incessantly]

adjective
aža-rigda=ka
stimna-kał
good-EVAL=PART choose-IMPR.2SG
'not just a good one'

numeral
nułan-ga
'only five'

pronoun
naga-rigda
'only he'

participle
ike-ža-ri-riga
sing-IMPR-P-DECIMAL
'only a singing [person]'

Last, we single out two evaluative suffixes which are used with verbal stems:

8. -ka:kut This is a compound suffix, consisting of the diminutive suffix -ka:n-, the augmentative -ku-, and the durative subaspect -t. It forms verbs with a sense of augmented or intensified action. Alternatively, it may signal a shade of affection:

(134) hač:la-ka:kut:ca-ra-n.
work-EVAL-IMPR-AOR-3SG 'He is really working hard.'
[also interpretable as affectionate, depending on the context]

9. -ja:t This suffix indicates intensive action:

(135) gana-ja:t-ča-ra-n.
go-EVAL-IMPR-AOR-3SG 'He is going and going.'

(136) tažu-ja:t-ča-ra-n.
cat-A.STAT-EVAL-IMPR-AOR-3SG 'He is eating and eating.'

6.0 Adverbs

The Evenki language has a rich system of spatial, temporal and qualitative adverbs. We will examine each of these categories separately; for further information on Evenki adverbs, see Charekov (1977), Gladkova (1970, 1973) and Lebedeva (1960).

Qualitative adverbs are created from the instrumental form of adjectives, numerals and conjuncts. This is a productive formation. Frequently used qualitative adverbs are aja't 'well'; usat, usut 'badly'; hitam 'quickly'; e:mbut 'weakly'; gocor 'far away'.

Spatial adverbs are actually formed from forms of nouns and pronouns, frozen in one of the spatial cases (the dative, locative, prothetic, elative, allative and ablative). For example, we find adverbs: (1) in the dative (-du): amara: 'behind'; di:ga-du: 'above/ upon along the slope'; pe:ga-du: 'below along the slope'; buguda: 'at the side'; (2) in the ablative (-duk) such as amarduk 'from behind'; di:ga-du:k 'from above'; pe:ga-du:k 'from the side'; (3) in the locative (-Ye): amara: 'behind'; di:ga-la: 'up above'; pe:ga-la: 'below'; bugula: 'at the side'; (4) in the allative (-tki): ama:nduk-ki: 'behind'; di:ga:tki: 'up', and so on.
Use of such adverbs is widespread and these forms are found in the interrogatives as well as declaratives: i:du: ‘where’ [DAT]; i:ritiki: ‘where to’ [ALL]; i:le: ‘where to’ [LOC]; i:li: ‘among what’ [PROL]; i:rip: ‘where’ [SLA]; i:duk: ‘where from’ [ABL].

Temporary adverbs are largely frozen forms whose etymology is less transparent. The most frequently used temporal adverbs include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Evenki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘during the day’</td>
<td>tirge, inag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the evening’</td>
<td>tama:na, tagaltana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the morning’</td>
<td>dalbo:tono, si:lsa, a:hitana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘yesterday’</td>
<td>ti:nja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tomorrow’</td>
<td>tama:na, tagami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘now’</td>
<td>asitk:a:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘formerly’</td>
<td>nano:n, ut:a:ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘first’</td>
<td>aloskas, pogut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘then’</td>
<td>samargut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘this year’</td>
<td>angannu:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘last year’</td>
<td>ge:panan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘next year’</td>
<td>go:z:n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The temporal adverbs used to refer to the seasons are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Evenki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘in the winter’</td>
<td>tuga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the summer’</td>
<td>átuga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the [first half of] spring’</td>
<td>natki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the [second half of] spring’</td>
<td>pango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘in the fall’</td>
<td>bolo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.0 **Particles**

Particles are widely used in Evenki. Particles are uninflectable elements which have no lexical meaning and are not used referentially. Rather, they have pragmatic force and function to add supplementary subjective meanings to individual words, phrases, or clauses. The majority of Evenki particles have more than one pragmatic function. They are largely untranslatable; the kinds of meanings they convey are usually signaled in English through intonation. Therefore, the glosses provided here are approximate equivalents at best. Some particles have been described here in forms of evaluation; see §5.0. For more discussion and examples see Bulatova (1987: 71–6); Konstantinova (1964: 251–66).

Evenki particles are clitics which occur at the end of a word. Only particles can follow particles; no other suffix is permitted. Among the most common particles are the following:

1. The interrogative particle =gu (and its allophones =ku and =gu, after nasal consonants) functions to signal questions. It is a clitic, standing after the word which is in the scope of the question:

(137) saibana=gu ta=nja? birch=PART that ‘That's a birch, right?’

2. The particle =da:ni=do:ni=do: is used to conjoin to two phrases of the same type:

(138) tiku:il-a=nda:, gone-ro-3SG ‘He got mad and left.’

In negated sentences, it conjoins the phrases in the scope of negation:


3. =kat=ka=kat is similar in function to =D in affirmative utterances, where it can be translated as ‘and’; in negative utterances it can be translated as ‘even’:

(141) bato=beta=kat so:t marag:ik-e:za. child=POSSESS.1SG=PART very be=sad-INGR-PART ‘And my child started being very sad.’


4. =ti is used for confirmation or affirmation:

(143) si:ti, amga=n do:ldobata:ra-n. 2SG=PART mouth-POSSESS.2SG hear-imper.3SG-NOM ‘Only your voice is heard.’

5. =p=n=pa=p=/a=p is used to convey a shade of indefiniteness; it is found most frequently with pronouns and pronominal adverbs, and sometimes with numerals:

(144) ka, si:beta ona:kol. well 2SG=PART go.look.for.deer-IMPER.2SG ‘Well, [perhaps/at least] you go look for reindeer.’

6. =mu is used to signal limits or bounds and can often be translated as ‘only’:

(145) aje:kitpas=tu:n a-ka ompe-ro. prohibition-POSSESS.3PL=PART NEG-imper.2SG forget-RA ‘Just don’t forget their prohibitions.’

7. =ka has contrastive force, and can be translated as ‘but’ or contrastive ‘and’:

(146) t-la:ka amin-ti gana-3SG:nda? where-LOC=PART father-POSS.1PLin go-3SG go-3SG ‘But where did our father go?’

(147) umnok gina gogo-1-lo-n, bi=kona: ole-m. suddenly dog bark-INGR-AOR-3SG 1SG=PART frighten-1SG ‘Suddenly a dog started barking and I got scared.’
8.0 Exclamations
Exclamations in Evenki are of two types. There are a number of uninflated particles which
function to express a variety of subjective or emotional states, such as surprise, fear,
happiness, and so on. As the examples show, some of these are used in specific situations.
Exclamatory forms can also be created from nominal and verbal bases; see 1–5. These
functions as independent clauses. The most frequently use exclamatory particles are:

SURPRISE  kà!  ‘well!’
    șà!  ‘well!’
    șa!  ‘oh!’
    o!  ‘oh!’
DISAPPOINTMENT  șă!  ‘what!’
    șo!  (for disappointment or surprise)
TO A DOG  șa!  ‘away!’
    șa!  ‘here!’

A number of productive exclamatory affixes are productive; these strengthen or
reinforce the illocutionary force of the exclamation:

1. -e:  This suffix is used with nominal stems. It signals a high degree of an
undesirable state or condition:

   iqane!:  ‘oh, cold!’
   șiqine!:  ‘how noisy!’
   șisne!:  ‘how upsetting!’
   șa!  ‘how fat!’

2. -ma/-me:  Used with verbal stems, exclamations of this type signal a high degree of
the state which results from the performance of the action:

   ama!:  ‘oh, so sleepy!’
   șama!:  ‘so hungry!’
   daroma!:  ‘oh, so tired!’
   golumo!:  ‘how scary!’

3. -a/-a/-o:  haktira!:  ‘It’s so dark!’
            hoko!:  ‘It’s so hot!’

4. -bše:  olofše!:  (fright)
         palořše!:  ‘how frightening!’

5. -maja/maja:  itomaja!:  ‘how awful to look at!’ (from iča- ‘look’)

9.0 Syntax
9.1 Word order and general syntactic typology
Evenki is an agglutinating language with a nominative-accusative case system and SOV
word order. The subject is in the nominative case and usually stands in the beginning of
the clause, the predicate at the end, and modifiers precede the head, indirect object precedes
the direct object, and temporal and spatial adjectives are most generally in clause-initial position.
When there are two such adjectives, the temporal adjunct will be clause-initial, and the other
will be either before the predicate, or after the direct object. This is schematized as:

[time] [space] [subject] [object] [object] [manner] "predicate"

This basic word order is illustrated in (148):

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(148) anpame-qa  girki-b  kata  guži-piçu-l-ba
    year-1SG friend-1SG many  beautiful-ADJ-PL-ACC
    paka-l-ba  ajal-qa  halti-ra-n
    place-PL-ACC good-ADV hunt-IMPR-3SG
    ‘This year my friend hunted well, [getting] many beautiful sables.’

As a general rule, few sentences include all the constituents given here. In colloquial
Evenki, word order may change depending upon topical structure and the nature of the
discourse.

In questions, interrogative words (pronouns, adverbs, and so on) most usually stand in
first position:

(149) iča-ra:  kugaka-i  tuka-qa-ra?
    where-LOC child-PL run-IMPR-AOR
    ‘Where are the children running to?’

(150) o:kin  șa-ra
    when  relative-PL-POSS.1PL
    ‘When will our relatives come visit us?’

Responses to questions normally begin with the comment, i.e., the specific answer to the
question. In (151), this comment/response is underlined:

(151) iča-ra:  șa-ga  si- bi-ča-ƙi
    where-LOC summer 2SG be-PT-2SG
    ku-du-ba:  șa-ga  bi- bi-ča-ba
    house-PL-REFL summer 2SG be-PT-1SG
    ‘Where were you in the summer?’
    ‘I was at home in the summer.’

In colloquial speech, the topic is usually elided, and only the comment is given. In (151),
for example, responses such as ku-dubaga: bi-ča-ba ‘I was at home’ or simply ku-dubaga:
‘at home’ would be appropriate.

In the imperative, word order is VO, with the predicate taking first position:

(152) pana-kaflu  bira-la!
    go-IMPR-2PL  river-LOC
    ‘Go to the river!’

If there is a term of address or vocative in the imperative, or manner adverbials, then they
take first position:

(153) huc-qa  balat-kaflu
    child help-IMPR-2SG
    ajal- qa  halign-kaflu
    good-ADV work-IMPR-2PL
    ‘Child, help!’
    ‘Work well!’

9.3 Subordination and parataxis
In Evenki, like constituents can be joined paratactically. These may be linked simply
through juxtaposition, or particles may be used. Example (154) illustrates basic parataxis,
which is very typical of Evenki syntax:

(154) nampa-ha-qa  wi-qa-ba  tıra-ba  tiča-ba
    female.deer-PL-ACC tie-AOR-1SG milk-AOR-1SG let-AOR-1SG
    ‘My female deer tied the milk [let the milk tying the female deer]’
Particles may also be used in coordination; =da is one of the most common (155), although other particles, such as =pal and =mal are used also (156):

(155) tolgoki-1=ba=da suskilla-1=ba=da ajat aq=kalali
sled-PL-ACC=PART ski-PL-ACC=PART good-ADV place-IMP.R-2PL
'Put the sleds and the skis away well.'

(156) bi=ba=da nugar=mal sin-dola aq=qaγa=βun.
1SG=PART 3SG=PART 2SG-LOC come-FUT.1-1PLex
'Either she or I will come [visit] you.'

There are relatively few conjunctions in Evenki. The most commonly used are tuduk 'then', 'and', 'but'; tarit 'therefore'; to:li: 'then (at that time)'; emi-βal 'although', 'but', 'in any case'; and na:n 'again'. As the following examples illustrate, these are used to conjoin both noun phrases (157) and clauses (158)-(160):

(157) bi: tuduk girki-β olo-mo:co:qun.
1SG then friend-POSS.1SG fish-go-PST-1PLex
'My friend and I went fishing.'

(158) aq=ma:mi: tuduk a:sin-i-m.
come-P-COND then sleep-1SG
'I arrived and then I fell asleep.'

(159) saa tigΔa-1=co:n, tarit bu: a-βa-qun nulgi-ra.
very rain-INGR-PST-3SG therefore 1PLex NEG-PST.1PLex wander-RA
'It started to rain very hard so we didn’t set off wandering.'

(160) do:t=kal, to:li tag-qaγa-β.
listen-IMP.R-2SG then read-FUT-1SG
'Listen and then I’ll read.'

(161) nima:ki-β aja bi-ča:n, e:mi:βal nugar-qa:n
neighbor-POSS.1SG good be-PST-3SG but 3SG-ACC-3SG
aγi:tin ajə=ra.
NEG-PST.TERT-3PL love-RA
'My neighbor as good but no one liked him.'

Certain pronouns often function as conjunctions: i:du: 'where'; i:la: 'whether'; a:n 'how'; o:kin 'when'; e:ma 'which', for example. These often occur in doublets as well, conjoining clauses: i:du: . . . tudü: 'where...there...or o:kin...to:li: 'when...then...'.

In recent years Evenki have started using conjunctions borrowed from Russians, such as i:la:nta: (from Russian 'but') 'but or tak 'so'. These are illustrated in the following examples, where the borrowings are underlined:

(162) galakta-qa:n, galakta-qa:n, ba:ro:n, bula-mi:
look-AOR-3SG look-AOR-3SG and unable-AOR-3SG find-P-COND
'He looked, looked, and couldn’t find it.'

9 Izafe is a term borrowed from Turkic linguistic traditions and is also found in some Indo-Iranian languages (e.g. Persian, Tadzhik). It was first used in reference to Tungusic constructions by Avrorin (1960).
Despite the fact that the possessive suffixes are used, izafet does not signal strict possession per se, but rather a relationship between the head and its dependent, as seen in the following examples:

- **ge:** ga:ta-n
  second hand-3SG
  'of the second hand'

- **bara:** bargida-du:n
  river opposite side-DAT-3SG
  'on the side of the river'

9.5 Sentences with participles and conversbs
Constructions with participles and conversbs are very widely used in Evenki. These are generally translated with subordinate clauses in Indo-European languages, but function somewhat differently. Consider the following example:

mother ISG-DAT sew-P.PERM-ACC-3SG why
'Why did you take that which my mother sewed for me?'

Note here in the Evenki text, the participle uli:na-fo:sa-n fulfills the function served by a relative clause in English. Consider the following example:

(165) a:n: -ti bi:ja:lo:ta:ti
relative-PL-POS.1PL in be:IMPREF-PERM-LOC-3PL
'tomorrow we will go [to the place where] our relatives live'

Constructions with conversbs, especially those with the personal conversbs, are syntactically more similar to subordinate clauses than are participial constructions. Brodkaja (1988), for example, considers them to be complex sentence structures, based on their syntactic properties.

Complex sentence structure is not highly developed in Evenki. Both semantic and syntactic relations between clauses are often conveyed through nomination, phrase order, and conjunctions or conjunctive particles. Complex sentences can be divided into subordinated and non-subordinated.

(166) a:dun a:dn-i-lo:ma, tiga tigo:i-lo:ma, boloni: omo-ro,a,
wind wind-INGR-AOR-3SG rain rain-INGR-AOR-3SG fall come-AOR-3SG
'Wind started to blow, it started to rain—fall came.'

woman-ALIEN-POS.1SG house-DAT-REFL child-PL-REFL sit-P.HABIT
1SG work-IMPREF-1SG
'While my wife sits at home with the children, I work.'

Conjunctions are also used to coordinate clauses; see §4.3.

10.0 Lexicon
The Evenki lexicon has a wide variety of items which reflect the culture and lifestyle of the people. Certain lexical fields are particularly well-developed, such as the names of animals and birds, weapons and methods for hunting wild animals, birds, and fishing. The terminology for deer herding and husbandry can be distinguished here as well; there is a large number of terms to distinguish deer by age, gender, purpose, coloring, and so on. Here are some examples:

- oro: 'domestic reindeer'
- bago:ku: 'wild deer'
- nami: 'female deer'
- siru: 'male deer'
- ak:ta:ka: 'castrated deer'
- sa:ta:ri: 'year-old female deer'
- umi: 'lead deer without calf'
- fi:ppa:ga: 'sterile lead deer' (male)
- nami: 'male deer of 1-2 years in age'
- sa:ta:ri: 'male deer of 3 years in age'
- no:gar:ka:n 'first deer in a row in a caravan'

The lexicon which is used to refer to tanning and working of pelts is also well-developed, showing a detailed vocabulary for the names of different furs and their parts, the instruments used in tanning, and so on. This is all in keeping with the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Evenki people, their reindeer husbandry, hunting and fishing, as well as the particularities of the climate in which they live.

10.1 Language contact
Evenki-Russian linguistic ties can be dated to the 16th century. The history of the development of Evenki-Russian linguistic ties can be divided into two periods: pre-Soviet (from the 17th century to the beginning of the 20th century) and the Soviet (from the early 20th century until the present). The pre-Soviet and Soviet periods differ in the amount of contact and its relative impact on the Evenki linguistic system.

The pre-Soviet period is characterized by a number of lexical borrowings from Russian into Evenki. These borrowed items were adapted to the grammatical and, in part, phonological norms of Evenki. For example, word-initial consonant clusters are simplified, as in R skovoro:da, E ko:po: 'frying pan' or R ruba:ka, E urba:ka 'shirt', and there is a tendency toward open syllables, as in R xeb, E xeb 'bread' or R patra, E patra 'cartridge'. Borrowings come from a number of different spheres, where new items and concepts entered the culture as a result of contacts with Russians, including lexical items for new foods, weapons, household goods, religious terms which arose with the Christianization of the Evenki, and socio-political terminology.

11.0 Sample text

   very far year-DAT two younger-sibling-DUAL 1SG
   'Ami:1' say-CVP.PURP-3PL

2. bi:ja:lo:ma, tiga tigo:i-lo:ma, taga:i-pki,
   woman-ALIEN-POS.1SG house-DAT-REFL child-PL-REFL sit-P.HABIT
   1SG work-IMPREF-1SG
   'While my wife sits at home with the children, I work.'
3. amin-ta-da a:c-ti, "an!:i!-" gun-de:ti, a:tin a:c-ti. father-3PL=PART NEG mother say-CVP.PURP-3PL, mother-3PL NEG

one-day older-EV go.collect-PANT berry-ACC


hear-PART that sound-ACC hear-cvlsim.dim house-all-REFL run-cvlsim

come-P.PF-3SG turn.out person=PRT NEG-PART be:SIM what=PART

10. Araj is a borrowing from Yakut.


25. pain=da: "Ko, sort, attarku:n, halgan:mi: bu:kal!" again-PART PART very old.woman leg-refl.3SG give-IMPR.2SG


28. bu:ca:... Halgan:mi: bu:ca:... devill leg-refl.3SG give-CVP.PURP-3PL devill:ABL run-PART-PL PART then devill leg-refl.3SG


34. o:ka:la,... gana:ka:la: uga:ta... baja so:ksi:fo:-a become-impr.2PL mosquito-PL glossy-PL person blood-ACC.Poss.3SG

35. um:ni...o:ka:la:... Tik:n gu:n:ja:na,... drink-P.SIMUL-PL become-impr.2PL so say-impi-cvlsim
Translation:

A very long time ago, there were two sisters living together. They had no father to call “Father!” and they had no mother to call “Mother!”

One day the older sister went berry picking, and the other sister stayed at home. While picking the berries, she heard a shout, a very loud noise, she heard a noise like something banging inside the pot, or some kind of sound. When she heard this noise, she ran to her house and, when she arrived, it turned out that it wasn’t a person at all and wasn’t anything like a person. Having sat down up on the pot hook, a thing with one eye on her head, and with one leg flew up to her.¹¹

The one who was the older sister got frightened and shouted “Come to me quickly.”

The two of them ran to hide. But that devil of theirs was so quick, in any second she would catch them, in any second she might grab them. The younger sister was very smart, the older sister was very capricious. They ran and ran and came up to a large river. They couldn’t get across this large river.

The younger sister said: “Maji give us your leg, so that we can cross the river.”

Maji gave her leg. They crossed the river along her leg [as if walking along] a log. Just as soon as they had crossed the river, the devil started shouting: “Maji, give your leg!”

Maji said: “I’m looking for lice in my underpants.”

Well, the girls ran and ran and got far from the devil. Then Maji gave her leg only when they were far away from the devil. When she had given her leg, the devil started crossing the river along Maji’s leg. As he was crossing, he said: “Your [lousy] leg won’t hold me, it will break!”

Maji got mad and pulled her leg back, and the devil fell into the river. Having fallen, he shouted:

“My bones, my clothes, my fur-boots—become all bad! Turn into foxes, turn into mosquitoes and gadflies; become a human bloodsucker!”

And so saying, the devil drowned.

12.0 References

This bibliography includes both references cited in this volume as well as recommended supplementary references.


¹¹The devil “Maji” of this story is often a hero in Evenki folklore. For the Evenki of Saxalin, Maji is the spirit of the earth, frequently portrayed in the form of an old woman.

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