

# *Evenki*

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*To Viktor Bulatov  
in memoriam*

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**Abbreviations:**

A	aspect	HABT	habitual subaspect
ABL	ablative	IMPF	imperfective aspect
ACC	accusative	IMPR	imperative
ADJV	adjectivalizer	incl	inclusive
ALIEN	alienable possession	INCEP	inceptive
ALL	allative	INDF	indefinite
ANAP	anaphor	INGR	ingressive
ANT	anteriority	INSTR	instrumental
ANTIC	anti-causative	INT	intent
AOR	aorist	INTER	interjection
ATR	advanced tongue root	ITER	iterative
CAUS	causative	LIM	limit
CM	comitative diathesis	LOC	locative
CMP	comparison	M	mood
COLL	collective	NEG	negative
COM	comitative (nominal)	NFUT	non-future
COMP	comparative degree	NOM	nominative
CON	concurrence	NSIM	non-simultaneity
COND	conditional	P	participle
CV	converb	PART	particle
CVI	impersonal converb	PASS	passive
CVP	personal converb	PERF	perfect
D	diathesis	PL/pl	plural
DAT	dative	POSS	possessive
DEB	debitive	POST	posteriority
DEBT	debitive mood	PRES	present
DEO	deontic	PRO	prolative
DEPAR	departure	PRPF	present perfect
DFUT	distal future	PST	past
DIMIN	diminutive	PURP	purposive
DIR.PSS	direct possessive	R	Russian
DPST	distal past	RA	RA participle
DUAL	dual	RECIP	reciprocal
DUR	durative	REFL	reflexive
E	Evenki	RFL	reflexive diathesis
EA	extended action	QA	aspect of quick action
ELA	elative	SG/sg	singular
EVAL	evaluative suffix	SIM	simultaneity
EVID	evidential	V	vowel; represents one of a series of possible vowels
excl	exclusive		
FUT	future		
GO	'go VERB' (derivational)	-	in vowel harmony
		=	morpheme boundary
			particle boundary

**1.0 The Evenki language and people<sup>1</sup>**

Evenki is the largest of the Tungusic languages spoken in Siberia, belonging to the Northwestern (or Siberian) branch of Manchu-Tungus. 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 Buriatia 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 a discussion of the impact of Yakut on Evenki phonetics, morphology and lexicon, see Myreeva et al. (1975). For an overview of Evenki impact on Russian lexicon of Siberia, see Anikin (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. Doerfer 1978) see four. In the Southern group [s] is found both word-initially and intervocalically (e.g. *asi* 'woman', *sulaki*: 'fox'), while in the Northern group [h] occurs in these same positions (*ahi*, *hulaki*:), and in the Eastern group [h] in intervocalic position and [s] word-initially (*ahi*, *sulaki*:). 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 Podkammenaya 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 8th 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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## 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 1. Evenki vowel phonemes

	front	central	back
high	i, i:		u, u:
mid	e:	ə, ə:	o, o:
low	a, a:		

Positional variants include [ɪ] and [ɪ:], [e] and [e:], and [ɔ]. Vowel length is phonemic, as illustrated by such minimal pairs as *o:si:ktā* 'star' and *osi:ktā* 'nail', or *bu:-* 'give' and *bu-* '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'; *ʒu:NOM, ʒu:-βaACC* 'house'.

ATR (advanced tongue root) vowel harmony applies for the non-neutral vowels. Roots with the vowel /ə, ə:/ take suffixes with this same vowel: *ət:NOM, ət-əACC* 'that'; *urə:NOM, urə-βaACC* 'mountain'. Roots with the vowels /e:, a, a:, o, o:/ take suffixes with the vowel /a, a:/, except in cases of labial harmony: *asatka:NOM, asatka:n-maACC* 'girl'; *bira:NOM, bira-βaACC* 'river'; *se:n, se:n-maACC* 'ear'. In this latter group, labial harmony applies when the final stem vowel is /o, o:/: these roots take suffixes with the same vowel, as in: *oron:NOM, oron-moACC* 'reindeer', but *dolboni:NOM, dolboni:-βaACC* '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 *-nu:n*). Some morphemes have only two variants, as in the comparative *-čira/-čirə*, or the locative *-dula:/-dulə:* (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-klə/-i-klə*).

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, a:/ 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 2. Consonantal system

	bilabial		alveodental		palatal	velar		pharyngeal
stops	p	b	t	d		k	g	
fricatives	β		s					h
affricates			č	ʃ				
nasals		m		n	ɲ		ŋ	
		l			j			
		r						

Some of the consonants have positional variants: word-final /β/ devoices to [f]. Also, /g/ lenites in intervocalic position and becomes [ɣ].

### 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 phonemically 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 (*birá* 'river'; *udún* 'rain') and on the first syllable when that first syllable is closed (*óllo* 'fish'; *hállla* 'blanket'). In polysyllabic words, stress is predominantly word-final, with a secondary stress on the antepenultimate syllable (pattern in *cVvcV* or *cvcVvcV*) *úrgəpčú* 'heavy' and *silkižarán* 'washes'. This pattern is violated by non-initial word-internal closed syllables: there is a strong tendency for them to be stressed: *silúkta* 'intestine' (See Konstantinova 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:

<i>bu: əru:t bižərəβ.</i>	
we badly live	'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:

<i>o:n si: bižənni?</i>	
how you are	'How are you?'

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.

<i>ŋənəkəl himat əduk!</i>	
go quickly from.here	'Go away from here quickly!'

### 2.5 Phonotactics and morphophonemics

Syllables in Evenki may be either open (*mu:* 'water'; *ə-mə-ʒə-rə* '[they] come') or closed (*mo:l* 'trees'; *a-sat-ka:n* '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-internally, 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 (*iskola* < R *škola* 'school'; *ispiska* < R *spička* 'match') or a vowel is inserted to break up the cluster (*kilub* <



R *klub* 'club'; *tiraktor* < 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 (*urbaska* < R *rubaska* 'shirt').

Consonant assimilation occurs across morpheme boundaries. Assimilation processes are primarily progressive, although some regressive assimilation does occur. Progressive voicing assimilation is found with the consonants /d, g, β, ʒ, r/ which devoice when they follow the voiceless consonants /k, s, t, p, č/, with /β/ → /p/ and /t/ → /t/. For example: *huna:t-βa* → *huna:tpa*<sub>ACC</sub> 'girl'; *dət-du:* → *dəttu:*<sub>DAT</sub> 'tundra'. The consonants /s, g, β/ assimilate to a preceding nasal consonant: *oron-βo* → *oronmo*<sub>ACC</sub> 'reindeer'; *gikakin-si* → *ginakinni*<sub>POSS.2SG</sub> 'dog'. In addition, /t/ assimilates to a preceding /l/ or /r/.

Regressive assimilation occurs with a few phonemes, mostly involving the bilabial fricative: /β/ undergoes voicing or nasal assimilation to a following /k, g, d, ʒ, m/, as in *ʒəβ-mə:ttə* → *ʒəmmə:ttə* '[they] ate together'. Regressive assimilation also occurs when the bilabial fricative is preceded by one of these consonants. A voiced velar consonant will assimilate to a following voiceless velar: *da:g-kal* → *da:kka*<sub>IMPER</sub> 'cross.river'.

## 2.6 Orthography

Evenki is written in the Russian Cyrillic alphabet with the addition of the letter ѣ (for the velar nasal consonant). Vocalic length is not marked in the written language (although it is usually marked in linguistic transcriptions). If /a, a:, ə, ə:, o, o:, u, u:/ follow the alveo-palatals /ʒ, ɲ, j/, the vowels are written with Cyrillic letters я, е, ё, ю to indicate the palatalization of the preceding consonant (which have no Cyrillic correspondents). For example, дѣло [ʒolo] 'stone', дѣо [ʒu:] 'house'. The phoneme /e:/ is written with one of two letters: the letter э is used word-initially and after /t/ and /d/, and the letter е elsewhere. The phonemes /i, i:/ are written with the letter ы when they follow /t/ and /d/ and in all other positions are written и. The bilabial fricative β is written в. 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 bisyllabic; 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. *nugan* 'he/she/it'). 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 *-l*. It is joined directly to stems ending in a vowel. Adjectives form the plural as do nouns, as in the word 'good' *aja* ~ *ajal*. With stems which end in a consonant, the vowel *-i* is used to affix the morpheme to the base. An exception is nouns ending in the consonant *-n*: this *-n* is dropped and the plural morpheme *-r* is added instead of *-l*:

Nouns	singular	plural	Adjectives	singular	plural
'mountain'	<i>urə</i>	<i>urə-l</i>	'good'	<i>aja</i>	<i>aja-l</i>
'net'	<i>adil</i>	<i>adil-i-l</i>	'pretty'	<i>guʒəj</i>	<i>guʒə-i-l</i>
'deer'	<i>oron</i>	<i>oro-r</i>	'white'	<i>bagdarin</i>	<i>bagdari-r</i>

Participles	singular	plural
'one who is coming'	<i>əmə-ʒə-ri:</i>	<i>əmə-ʒə-ri:-l</i> (present participle)
'one who has sung'	<i>həgə:-čə:</i>	<i>həgə:-čə:-l</i> (past participle)

A small group of exceptions is constituted mostly by kinship terms and other terms to refer to people. These nouns form a plural in *-sal* (dial. *-hal*), as in *bajan* ~ *bajasal* 'rich person'; *ɲami:* ~ *ɲami:sal* 'lead deer'; *sama:n* ~ *sama:sal*; 'shaman'; *aβlan* ~ *aβlasal* 'meadow'; *asi:* ~ *asa:l* 'woman'. The suffixes *-til* and *-nil* also occur with kinship terms: *ami:* ~ *amtil* 'father'; *əɲi:* ~ *əntil* 'mother'; *aki:* ~ *aknil* 'older brother'; *əkɪ:* ~ *əktil* 'older sister'; *nəkun* ~ *nəknil* 'younger brother or sister'.

Last, the numerals and a small number of nouns with a collective meaning do not form a grammatical plural: *huliktə* 'dried meat'; *kukrə* 'meat, cooked and dried and cut into small pieces'; *tannaksa* 'cloud'; *siləksə* 'dew'; *imanna* 'snow'; *sə:ksə* 'blood', and a few others. Numerals do require that dependent arguments be marked in the plural (as in *ilan mo:-l* '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:

	singular	plural
1st person	<i>bi:</i>	<i>bu:</i> (exclusive)
2nd person	<i>si:</i>	<i>su:</i>

The third person pronoun forms the plural according to the model of stems with a final *-n* plus the suffix *-tin*: 3rd sg. *nugan* ~ 3rd pl. *nuga-r-tin*. The reflexive pronouns formed from the stem *mən-* follow analogous plural morphology, as in the reflexive pronoun 'self' sg. *mə:n-mi:*, pl. *mə:-r-βər* and the reflexive possessive 'own' sg. *mə:n-ɲi:-βi:*, pl. *mə:-r-ɲi:-βər*, etc.

#### 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, prolativ, ablative, elative, allative-locative, allative-prolativ and comitative).<sup>2</sup> 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 allative-prolativ cases; the Yergobochen dialect is reported to have the use of a second elative in *-lak-*; 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:

<sup>2</sup>Nedjalkov (1997: 142) labels some cases somewhat differently: his Allative corresponds to our Locative *-IV* and his Locative-allative to our Allative *(-tki)*.



Table 3. Case

Case	Vowel	STEM TYPE		
		Consonants		
		voiced	voiceless	-m, -ŋ, -n
NOM	∅	∅	∅	∅
ACC*	-βa/-βə/-βo	-βa/-βə/-βo	-pa/-pə/-po	-ma/-mə/-mo
ACC	-ja/-jə/-jo	-ja/-jə/-jo	-ja/-jə/-jo	-ja/-jə/-jo
INDEF*				(-a/-ə/-o after n)
DAT	-du:	-du:	-tu:	-du:
INSTR	-t	-i-t	-i-t	-ʒi
LOC	-la:/lə/-lo:	dula:/dulə:	-tula:/tulə:	-dulə:
ALL	-tiki:	-tiki:	-tiki:	-tiki:
PROL	-li:	-duli:	-tuli:	-duli:
ABL	-duk	-duk	-tuk	-duk
ELA	-gi:t	-gi:t	-ki:t	-ŋi:t
ALL-LOC‡	-kla:/-klə:/-klo:	-i-kla:/-i-klə:/-i-klo:	-i-kla:/-i-klə:/-i-klo:	-i-kla:/-i-klə:/-i-klo:
ALL-PRO‡	-kli:	-i-kli:	-i-kli:	-i-kli:
COM	-nu:n/-ŋu:n	-nu:n/-ŋu:n	-nu:n/-ŋu:n	-nu:n/-ŋu:n

\*after the plural ending, the accusative case usually takes the form (-ba/-bə/-bo) and the accusative indefinite (-a/-ə/-o)

‡these cases are rarely used in modern Evenki

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

- (1) *Akin-mi: min-du: tunŋa-βa ŋami:-βa ani:-ra-n.*  
father-POSS.1SG 1SG-DAT five-ACC female.deer-ACC give-AOR-3SG  
'My father gave me five female deer.'
- (2) *bu: dolboni:-βa haβal-ʒa-ča:-βun.*  
1PL.ex night-ACC work-IMPV-PST-1PL  
'We worked all night.'

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

- (3) *bi: asi:-βa ə:ri-m.*  
1SG woman-ACC call-1SG  
'I call the woman.'

The accusative can be contrasted to the **accusative indefinite** (-jV), 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) *ʒəβgə:-jə gami:, aja bi-mčə.*  
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:čin* 'is not':

- (5) *agi:-du: ŋina-ja a:čin e:kun ajan bi-ʒəŋə:-n.*  
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) *nuŋartin bəjətkə:n-du: oron-mo ani:-ra-ə.*  
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 *aŋi:-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) *bəjətkə:n-du: kniga bisi-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) *ər ʒugani:-du: bi: am-ti:l-dula:-βi: irəmə:-ʒəŋə:-β.*  
this summer-DAT 1SG parent-PL-LOC-POSS.1SG go.visit-FUT.1-1SG  
'This summer I will go visit my parents.'

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

- (9) *ŋəkə: bəjumimni:-du: ʒaβa-β-ča:*  
sable hunter-DAT catch-PASS-P.ANT  
'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 bəi-i-t-pi: garpa-kal*  
2SG that gun-INST-REFL shoot-FUT.IMPR.2SG  
'Shoot that one with your gun.'
- (11) *asi: kiŋnə:-1-ʒi ami:n-dula:-βi: is-ča:-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 prolativ case is more frequent here:



- (12) *oron-ži-βi: palatka-βa žugət-čə:-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) *sulaki: bira-la: əβ-rə-n*  
 fox river-LOC 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) *kə, hutə, girki-lə:-βi: tuksa-maldo:-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) *ilan be:ga-l-dula: haβa:-βa ətə-ŋə:t-i-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 literary language uses the allative case here:

- (16) *Kadarčə:n gunə-ri: ulgučə:n-i-pki: ami:-n-dula:-βi:*  
 Kadarchan say-P.SIM tell-P.HABT father-POSS.3SG-LOC-POSS  
 Kadarchan, as he is called, is telling his father [a story].'

The locative case can be contrasted with the **allative** (-tki:); 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) *tirgaka:kin bira-tki: ollo-mo:-sin-a-β*  
 noon river-ALL fish-GO-INCEP-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'; *təpkə-* 'shout'):

- (18) *girki-tki:-βi: tara-βə gu:-kəl*  
 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 **prolative** (-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 hoktoron-duli: hukti-žə-čə:-tin.*  
 deer-PL path-PROL run-IMPF-PST-3PL  
 'Deer were running along the path.'
- (20) *nonon nəkə:-li: oron-mo bu:-ŋki-tin.*  
 formerly sable-PROL deer-ACC give-DPST-3PL  
 'They used to give a deer (in exchange) for a sable.'
- (21) *bi: nadalla:-li: muču:-žiga:-β.*  
 1SG seven.day-PROL return-FUT I-1SG  
 'I will return after seven days.'

In addition, the prolative case is also used to signal the meaning 'about' as in 'to speak about someone or something':

- (22) *nugan girki:-li:-βi: ulgučə:n-žə-rə-n*  
 3SG friend-PROL-POSS tell.story-IMPF-AOR-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) *kuŋaka:-r bira-duk əmə-rə-ø.*  
 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) *bolŋi:-duk bi: aqi:-la: bulta-na:-ŋna-m.*  
 fall-ABL 1SG taiga-LOC hunt-GO-A.HABT-1SG  
 'From the beginning of the fall, I would go to the taiga to hunt.'
- (25) *əkin-mi: me:ta-duk kumala:n-ma ulli-rə-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) *murin oron-duk gugda-tmar.*  
 horse deer-ABL tall-COMP  
 'A horse is taller than a deer.'
- (27) *tigdə-duk bira mu:də:-rə-n.*  
 rain-ABL river flood-AOR-3SG  
 'The river flooded from the rain.'



The **elative** (-*gi:t*) 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) *ŋinakin gogon-i-n urə-gi:t do:ldi-β-ʒa-ra-n.*  
 dog bark-POSS.3SG mountain-ELA hear-PASS-IMPF-AOR-3SG  
 'The dog's barking is heard from the mountain.'

The **allative-locative** (-*klV:*) and the **allative-prolative** (-*kli:*) 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) *əŋnəkə:n samŋin-i-klə togo-ro-n.*  
 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:

- (30) *su: urə-kli: nulgi-kəllu.*  
 2PL mountain-ALL.PROL move-FUT.IMPR.2PL  
 'Move along the mountain!'

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

- (31) *ŋami: əŋnəkə:n-nu:n bira-βa daβ-ʒa-ra-ø.*  
 female.deer fawn-COM river-ACC cross-IMPR-AOR-3SG  
 'The she-deer crosses the river with the fawn.'
- (32) *bi: əkin-nu:n-mi: təβlə:-m.*  
 1SG sister-COM-REFL.SG collect.berries-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:

<i>amar</i>	'back'	<i>daga</i>	'proximity'
<i>ʒulə</i>	'in front of'	<i>goro</i>	'distance'
<i>aŋgida:</i>	'right side'	<i>do:</i>	'inner part'
<i>ʒəŋiŋidə:</i>	'left side'	<i>hərgidə:</i>	'lower part'
<i>ojo</i>	'up'	<i>solə:ki:</i>	'up along the river current'
<i>hərgi</i>	'down'	<i>əjə:ki:</i>	'down along the river current'

Relator nouns are located after the word they modify and so take on grammatical forms for the spatial relations they signify. Most typically the relator noun is marked in the dative or locative case, signaling location. They also are marked with possessive affixes (§3.1.4), indicating a "possessed" relation between the space referenced by the relator noun and the head:

- (33) *ʒu: amar-du:-n*  
 house back-DAT-3SG  
 'behind the house' (*lit.* 'at the back of the house')
- (34) *amut daga-la:-n urə ojo-du:-n*  
 lake close-LOC-POSS.3SG mountain top-DAT-3SG  
 'closer to the lake' 'at the top of the mountain'
- (35) *kuŋaka:-r bira bargida:-du:-n əβi:-ʒə-rə-ø.*  
 child-PL river opposite-DAT-POSS.3SG play-IMPF-AOR-3PL  
 'The children are playing on the other side of the river.'

The relator noun *ʒa:rin* 'for, for the sake of' declines only for number, as in *aja ʒa:rin* 'for goodness' sake'; *nugartin ʒa:ritin* '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

	singular			plural			
	1st	2nd	3rd	1st excl.	2nd incl.	3rd	
Stem final							
Vowel	-β	-s	-n	-βun	-t	-sun	-tin
Consonant	-i-β	-i-s	-i-n	-βun	-i-t	-sun	-tin
-n	-mi:	-ni:	-i-n	-mun	-ti	-nun	-tin
Plural suffix	-βi:	-li:	-i-n	-βun	-ti	-lun	-tin
		-ti:				-run	



Table 5. Reflexive possessive suffixes

	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>
<b>Stem final</b>		
Vowel	-βi:	-βar
Consonant		
voiced	-βi:	-βar
voiceless	-pi:	-βar
-n	-mi:	-mar
<b>Plural suffix</b>	-βi:	-βar

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

- (36a) *dil-iβ*                      (36b) *dil-i-ŋi-β*  
 head-POSS.1SG                      head-ALIEN-POSS.1SG  
 'my head'                              'the head [of an animal] which belongs to me'

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

The alienable possessive suffix *-ŋi-* should be distinguished from the direct possessive suffix *-ŋi:-* (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 atirka:n-ŋi:-β*                      *ər kniga kuŋaka:n-ŋi:*  
 that deer wife-DIR.POSS-POSS.1SG                      this book child-DIR.POSS  
 'that deer belongs to my wife'                      'this book belongs to the child'

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 (*dunnə-ŋi-β* 'my land', *atirka:-ŋi-β* 'my wife'). Note that *-ŋi-* is attached to the nominal which references the possessed object. In contrast, the direct possessive suffix *-ŋi:* is attached to the possessor, and may be used with personal possessive suffixes (38a) or without them (38b):

- (38) *a:βun asi:-ŋi:-β*  
 hat wife-DIR.POSS-POSS.1SG  
 'the hat belongs to my wife'
- (38b) *a:βun kuŋaka:n-ŋi:*  
 hat child-DIR.POSS  
 'the hat 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 signaled in the base noun. These nominals are declined for case. For further details, see Bulatova (1987: 33–7).

Independent constructions formed with the direct possessive suffix *-ŋi:-* are often used in response to the question *ŋi:ŋi:*, *e:kun-ŋi:* 'whose':

- (39) "tar ŋi:ŋi: oron?"                      "ətirkə:n-ŋi:."  
 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 oron ətirkə:n-ŋi:* 'that deer is belonging to the old man'.

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

- (40) *əβəŋki: bi-čə: ilan huna:ži-či:*  
 Evenk be-P.ANT three girl-POSS  
 'There was an Evenk who had three daughters'

Possessive constructions in *-či:-* can be contrasted to negative possession formed with *a:čin*; 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.] – [number] – [case] – [inalienable 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. *-ksa/-ksə/-kso* is used to create nouns for animal fur: *ŋəkə:-ksə* 'sable fur';
2. *-ruk/-luk* is used to create the names of various receptacles, formed from the noun signifying the article(s) to be contained: *damga-ruk* 'tobacco pouch'; *inmə-ruk* 'needle holder';
3. *-ma:n/-mə:n/-mo:n* creates the names of people who are characterized by certain passions or predilections: *ullə-mə:n* 'fish lover'; *asi:-ma:n* 'womanizer';
4. *-tka:n/-tkə:n/-tko:n* creates names of children and young animals: *bəjə-tkə:n* 'boy'; *homotı:-tka:n* 'bear cub'; *uluki:-tka:n* 'young squirrel';
5. *-sag/-səg/-kag/-kəg/-g* forms collective nouns: *gu:lə* 'house' ~ *gu:lə-səg* 'village'; *čalban* 'birch' ~ *čalbu-ka:g* 'birch grove';
6. *-ŋa:t/-ŋə:t/-ŋo:t* forms nouns according to their purpose, as in: *asi:-ŋa:t* 'future wife'; *kokollo-ŋo:t* 'material for sleeves'.

*Derivational morphemes for verbal stems (used to create nouns):*

1. *-ki:t* is used to name the place where an action always takes place, or where it occurs at the moment of speech: *bi-ki:t* 'living place' (from the verbal stem *bi-* 'be, live'); *mo:la-ki:t* 'place for preparing firewood' (from *mo:la-* 'prepare firewood');
2. *-žə:k/-žə:k/-žo:k* forms words for place names with past significance: *nəlki-žə:k* 'former stopping place in the spring' (from the root *nəlki-* 'spend springtime');



3. *-βun* and *-ŋki*: form the names of objects used to carry out the action named by the verbal root, as in *igdi-βun* 'comb' (noun) from *igdi-* 'comb' (verb); *mu:lə-ŋki*: 'bucket' from *mu:lə-* 'go for water';
4. *-m̄ni*; *-m̄ŋu* is used for professions or to name an activity: *alagu:-m̄ni*: 'teacher', from *alagu:-* 'teach'. This same suffix forms the names of women according to nationality or clan, as in *əβə-m̄ni*: 'Evenki woman', or dialectical *əβə-m̄ŋu*; *buta:-m̄ni*: 'woman from the Buta clan';
5. *-la:n/-lə:n/-lo:n* forms the names of people according to the actions they perform, specifying that they are specialists or masters, as in *ikə:-lə:n* 'master singer' from *ikə:-* 'sing'.

### 3.3 Negation and nominal phrases

In Evenki the negation of the presence or existence of an object requires a special construction using the negative nominal *a:č̄in* '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:č̄in*:

<i>bəjə a:č̄in</i>	'there is no man'
<i>aja a:č̄in</i>	'there is nothing good'
<i>haβaβan: a:č̄in</i>	'there is no one working'
<i>nuŋan a:č̄in</i>	's/he is not [here]'

The negated nominal does not decline, but the negative *a:č̄in* 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) *bəjə a:č̄in*  
'there is no man'

(41b) *bəjə a:č̄in-ma:n ə-č̄ə:β 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:č̄in* 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 *bəjə* is uninflected. This is similarly seen in (42), where *a:č̄in* is marked for number, case, and possession:

(42) *oro-r a:č̄r-du:-ūn dərumki-ʒəŋə:-t.*  
deer-PL NEG-PL-DAT-3PL rest-FUT 1-IPLin  
'We will rest in the deer's absence.'

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

(43) *haβa:-β a:č̄in-du:n irəmə-də:-βi:.*  
work-POSS.1SG NEG-DAT-3SG come.visit-IMPR.DFUT-REFL  
'I have no work; come visit.'

In the nominative case, *a:č̄in* often functions as the grammatical subject of the clause:

(44) *bira-du: kuŋaka:-r a:č̄i-r bi-č̄ə:-tin.*  
river-DAT child-PL NEG-PL be-PST-3PL  
'The children were not at the river.'

#### Negation of possession

*A:č̄in* can also be used to indicate the lack of possession or ownership. In this case, the (negatively) possessed noun is marked in the accusative indefinite case (*-V-/jV-*). 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 indefinite. This is illustrated in the following examples:

(45) *hutə-jə a:č̄in asi:*  
child-ACC.INDEF NEG woman  
'a childless woman'

When the possessor is plural, the negative *a:č̄in* is plural as well:

(46) *hutə-l-jə a:č̄i-r a-sa:l*  
child-PL-ACC.INDEF NEG-PL woman-PL  
'women without children'

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

(47) *hutə-l-jə a:č̄in asi:*  
child-PL-ACC.INDEF NEG woman  
'a woman without children'

Gorcevskaja (1941:78) defines these constructions as "negative adjectives" or "adjectives of negation," while Konstantinova (1964:77) sees them as "forms of lack of possession."

These combinations (as in 45–7 above) form phrasal 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) *hutə-jə a:č̄in asi:-βa ič̄ə-ə-m.*  
child-ACC.INDEF NEG woman-ACC see-AOR-1SG  
'I saw the childless woman.'

(48b) *hutə-jə a:č̄in asi:-du: oron-mo ani:-č̄a:-β*  
child-ACC.INDEF NEG woman-DAT deer-ACC give-PST-1SG  
'I gave a deer to the childless woman.'

(48c) *hutə-jə a:č̄in asi:-tki: ŋəŋə-kəl.*  
child-ACC.INDEF 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:č̄in* becomes the grammatical head and takes case inflection:

(49) *hutə-jə a:č̄in-tiki: ŋəŋə-kəl.*  
child-ACC.INDEF NEG-ALL go-IMPR.2SG  
'Go to the childless one.'



These constructions are widely used in colloquial speech in a metaphorical sense, as in *dəɾə-jə a:č̣in* 'without face' [literally], used in the metaphorical sense 'unscrupulous', 'shameless'. The correlation between the accusative indefinite and the negative *a:č̣in* 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:č̣in*, e.g. *dil-ja a:č̣in bəjə* 'stupid person' (lit. 'headless'); *se:n-a a:č̣in* 'disobedient' (lit. 'without ear') or *e:sa-ja a:č̣in* 'unconscionable' (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 (Charekov 1990: 33–42, 54–73, 103–7, 115–36). For example, *aja* can be either adjectival 'good', or substantival 'goodness'; the same is true of *gugda* 'high' or 'height' and *sugta* '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 is morphosyntactically a noun phrase:

- |     |            |             |     |            |             |                             |              |
|-----|------------|-------------|-----|------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| (a) | <i>aja</i> | <i>bəjə</i> | (b) | <i>bi:</i> | <i>bəjə</i> | <i>aja-βa:-n</i>            | <i>sa:-m</i> |
|     | good       | man         |     | 1SG        | man         | good-ACC-POSS.3SG           | know-1SG     |
|     | 'good man' |             |     |            |             | 'I know the man's goodness' |              |
- 
- |     |                     |              |     |                |   |                 |                 |
|-----|---------------------|--------------|-----|----------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) | <i>tar mo:</i>      | <i>gugda</i> | (b) | <i>tar mo:</i> | <i>gugda-n</i>                            | <i>ilan</i>     | <i>metr-i-l</i> |
|     | that                | tree         |     | that           | tree                                      | height-POSS.3SG | three           |
|     |                     | tall         |     |                |   |                 | meter-PL        |
|     | 'that tree is tall' |              |     |                | 'The height of that tree is three meters' |                 |                 |

Adjectives in Evenki are divided into two categories on the basis of certain morphological characteristics: *descriptive* and *relative* adjectives. There 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. Denominal 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'; *əru:*, *usa* 'bad'; *səgdi:* 'old'; *ədər* 'young'; *bali:* 'blind'; *e:pu:* 'warm'; *ɲama* 'hot'; *urgə* 'heavy'; *maɲa* 'hard'; *gugda* 'high'; and *ɲonim* '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'; *koɲno-ri:n* ~ *koɲnomo* 'black'; *hula-ri:n* ~ *hula-ma* 'red'; *čutu-ri:n* ~ *čutu-ma* 'blue, green'; and *siɲa-ri:n* ~ *siɲa-ma* 'yellow'. The affix *-ri:n* forms other adjectives which describe a person's physical appearance or character: *bultə-ri:n* 'bug-eyed'; *mačə-ri:n* 'fat'; *čukču-ri:n* 'stooped'; *bilčə-ri:n* 'energetic'. This same affix can be used to create adjectives which describe the surface

of an object: *səβe-ri:n* 'furry'; *ɲilbi-ri:n* 'slippery'; *napta-ri:n* 'flat, level'; *tuggu-ri:n* 'round'. Forms with the suffix *-mV* are used in dialects of the Northern and Eastern groups.

2. *-mku:n* is used for adjectives which describe size or volume: *nə-mku:n* 'thin'; *sili-mku:n* 'narrow'; *uru-mku:n* 'short', and the like.

3. *-pču* (and in some dialects the suffix *-si:-/hi:-*) forms adjectives which indicate the state of the described object: *igini-pču:* ~ *igini-si:* 'cold'; *ɲə:ri-pču:* ~ *ɲə:ri-si:* 'light'; *səβə-pču:* ~ *səβə-si:* 'happy, joyful'. This affix can also form adjectives from verbal stems: *uruni-pču* 'glad', from *urun-* 'be glad'; *mərgə-pču* 'sad', from *mərgə-* 'be glad'.

#### 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:* 'feminine', from *asa:* 'woman'), or time interval (*dolbor* 'nighttime', *dolboni:* 'night') or quantity (*ilanma: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. *-ma/-mə/-mo* for indicating the material from which something is made: *mo:* 'wood', *mo:-ma* 'wooden'; *sələ* 'iron' [noun], *sələ-mə* 'iron' [adjective].
5. *-di:-ti:* is used to identify an object according to language, clothing or clan: *əβə-di:* *turə:n* 'Evenki language'; *lučə-di:* *ɲimɲaka:n* 'Russian fairytale'.
6. *-r* is used to form adjectives which indicate the season: *nəlkin:* 'spring' [noun], *nəlki-r* 'spring' [adjective]; *tugəni:* winter [noun], *tugə-r* 'winter' [adjective].
7. *-pti* is used to form adjectives for other time periods: *anɲani:-pti* 'annually'; Adjectives which indicate the seasons, as well as other time periods, are often created by the use of both suffixes (*-r*- and *-pti-*) combined: *boło-r-i-pti* 'fall'; *tiniβə:-r-i-pti* 'yesterday's'.
8. *-kin* for signaling a feature derived from the action or state of the base: *ʒəmu:-kin* 'hungry'; *ʒula:-kin* 'barefoot'; *olgo:-kin* 'dry'.
9. *-gu:-ɲu:* forms adjectives which signal location: *amar-gu:* 'back'; *ojo-gu:* 'upper'.
10. *-kas/-kəs/-kos* forms adjectives which signal a human trait: *ɲə:lə-kəs* 'cowardly'; *haβal-kas* 'industrious'.
11. *-ki:* is close in meaning to *-kVs*; it also signals a human characteristic: *ɲə:lə-ki:* 'cowardly'; *uči-ki:* 'crooked'.

#### 3.4.3 Comparative forms and constructions

The comparative degree of adjectives is expressed by means of a syntactic construction in Evenki.<sup>3</sup> In this construction, the adjectives take one of the following suffixes: *-tmVr* (with

<sup>3</sup>Note 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/-tmər/-tmor*, after vocalic stems, and *-dimar/-dimər/-dimor* after consonantal stems); *-čira/-čirə*; 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 leftmost 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) *irə:ktə-ø čalban-duk gugda-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-ø-i-β sinŋi:-duk aja.*  
deer-NOM-POSS.1SG 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 *-tikin* is used to mark the time period:

- (52) *bi: anŋani:-tikin sagda-tmar o:-ʒa-ø-m.*  
1SG year-ADV old-COMP make-IMPF-PRES-1SG  
'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 Myreeva 1964: 35 define it as a comparative suffix, seeing it as slightly augmenting the quality indicated by the base.)

- (53) *tigə-βə gugda-čira nə:-kəl.*  
dishes-ACC high-COMP put-IMPR.2SG  
'Put the dishes up a bit higher.'
- (54) *unta-1-ba tijə:-čirə ulli-čə: bi:si-ø-nni.*  
unt-y-PL-ACC tight-COMP sew-P.ANT 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<sup>4</sup>. With adjectives it singles out the referent as

<sup>4</sup>construction has been identified (for Even see Novikova 1960: 120; for Nanai see Avrorin 1959: 208; Sunik 1958: 76 and for Oroch see Petrova 1967: 62). This construction is used to form comparative and superlative comparisons. The Evenki facts are in line with this analysis.

<sup>4</sup>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 *ədəri-rgu*: 'the one who is younger'. With nouns it singles out a distinguishing feature or the base noun which defines the referent (*asi-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 *-tku* (or its allomorph *-digu*: ~ *-diyū*), which is found after consonantal stems) is used to form the superlative degree of adjectives: *həgdi-tku*: 'the tallest'; *ŋonim-digu*: 'the longest'.

An even higher degree of the adjectival quality can be signaled 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:

<i>upkat-tuk</i>	<i>gugda-tmar</i>	<i>upkat-tuk</i>	<i>ŋonim</i>
all-ABL	tall-COMP	all-ABL	long
'tallest of all'		'longest of all'	

Finally, it should be noted that a high degree of the qualified adjective can be expressed by use of the adverb *so*: 'very' as in *so:goropti* '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 inclusive and exclusive 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 *sin-*) and the 2nd person plural (*sun-*). 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 infelicitous in the personal pronouns.

Table 6. Personal Pronouns

	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>bi:</i>	1st excl. <i>bu:</i> 1st incl. <i>mit</i>
2nd	<i>si:</i>	2nd <i>su:</i>
3rd	<i>nugan</i>	3rd <i>nugartin</i>

Personal pronouns are negated with the negative *a:čín*. Two different types of constructions can be identified: *minə ~ minijə a:čín* 'without me'; *sinə ~ sinijə a:čín* 'without you<sub>SG</sub>'; *nugana ~ nuganiŋja a:čín* 'without her/him'; *munə ~ miunijə a:čín* 'without us<sub>excl</sub>'; *mitjə ~ mitijə a:čir* 'without us<sub>incl</sub>'; *sunə ~ sunijə a:čir* 'without you<sub>PL</sub>'; *nugara ~ nugartinjə a:čir* 'without them'. In addition, the following forms are used: *bi: a:čindu:β* 'in my absence'; *si: a:čindu:s* 'in your<sub>SG</sub> absence'; *nugan a:čindu:n* 'in his/her absence'; *bu: a:čirdu:βun* 'in our<sub>excl</sub> absence'; *mit a:čirdu:t* 'in our<sub>incl</sub> absence'; *su: a:čirdu:sun* 'in your<sub>PL</sub> absence'; *nugartin a:čirdu:tin* 'in their absence'.

(Romanova and Myreeva 1964: 36). Both these interpretations overlook its widespread uses with other parts of speech, which can be united 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 7. Personal Pronouns

	1st singular	1st plural exclusive	1st plural inclusive
NOMINATIVE	bi:	bu:	mit
ACCUSATIVE	minə (minəβə)	munə (munəβə)	mitpə
ACC-INDEFINITE	—	—	—
DATIVE	mindu:	mundu:	mittu:
INSTRUMENTAL	minži	munži	mitit
LOCATIVE	mindulə:	mundulə:	mittulə:
DIRECTIVE	mintiki:	muniki:	mitiki:
PROLATIVE	minduli:	munduli:	mittuli:
ABLATIVE	minduk	munduk	mittuk
ELATIVE	minpit	munpit	mitkit
ALL-LOCATIVE	miniklə:*	muniklə:	mitiklə:
ALL-PROLATIVE	minikli:*	munikli:	mitikli:
COMITATIVE	minnu:n	munnu:n	mitnu:n

Personal Pronouns, *continued*

	3rd singular	3rd plural
NOMINATIVE	nuḡan	nuḡartin
ACCUSATIVE	nuḡanma:n	nuḡarβatin
ACC-INDEFINITE	—	—
DATIVE	nuḡandu:n	nuḡardu:tin
INSTRUMENTAL	nuḡanžin	nuḡaržitin
LOCATIVE	nuḡandula:n	nuḡardula:tin
DIRECTIVE	nuḡantiki:n	nuḡartiki:tin
PROLATIVE	nuḡanduli:n	nuḡarduli:tin
ABLATIVE	nuḡandukin	nuḡarduktin
ELATIVE	nuḡanpidin	nuḡarpižitin
ALL-LOCATIVE	nuḡanikla:n	nuḡarikla:tin
ALL-PROLATIVE	nuḡanikli:n	nuḡariklitin
COMITATIVE	nuḡannu:n	nuḡarnu:ntin

### 3.5.2 Reflexive pronouns

There are three types of reflexive pronouns in Evenki, formed from the base *mə:n-* 'self'. *Reflexive pronouns* are formed with the reflexive endings and have the singular form *mə:nmi:* and the plural form *mə:rβər*. 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 (*mə:nmi:* SG and *mə:rβər*SG); other case morphemes precede the reflexive suffix (e.g. dative: *mə:ndu:mi:* SG).

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 8. Personal reflexive pronouns

	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>mə:nmi:</i>	1st (excl) <i>mə:rβun</i> 1st (incl) <i>mə:rti</i>
2nd	<i>mə:nni:</i>	2nd <i>mə:rrun</i>
3rd	<i>mə:nin</i>	3rd <i>mə:rtin</i>

These forms decline, with the case suffix located after the base *mə:n-* and before the personal possessive suffix:

- (55) *si:* *mə:n-du:-βi:* *oron-o* *si:nma-kal.*  
2SG self-DAT-POSS deer-ACC.INDEF choose-FUT.IMPR.2SG  
'You go pick out a deer for yourself.'

In addition, there are *indefinite (anaphoric) reflexive pronouns* in Evenki: *mə:nəkə:n* SG and *mə:nəkə:r* PL '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 9. Personal possessive pronouns

	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>mingi:</i>	1st (excl) <i>munḡi:</i> 1st (incl) <i>mitḡi:-mutḡi:</i>
2nd	<i>singi:</i>	2nd <i>sunḡi:</i>
3rd	<i>nuḡanḡi:n</i>	3rd <i>nuḡarḡi:tin</i>

The *reflexive possessive pronouns* are formed from the base *mə:n-*, plus the possessive suffix *-ḡi:-* plus the reflexive *-βi:*, and are morphologically marked for number. They distinguish grammatical number in the possessor (singular versus plural subjects) and in the possessum (singular versus plural objects). These forms are summarized in Table 10:

Table 10. Reflexive possessive pronouns

	singular possessum	plural possessum
singular subject	<i>mə:n-ḡi:-βi:</i>	<i>mə:nḡi:-l-βi:</i>
plural subject	<i>mə:r-ḡi:-βər</i>	<i>mə:r-ḡi:-l-βər</i>

As Table 10 suggests, plural of the possessum is marked with the plural suffix *-l-*, while plural of the possessor is marked on the pronominal base (*mə:r-*) and on the reflexive suffix (*-βər*).

The definite possessive pronouns 'one's own' are formed again from the base *mə:n-*, plus the direct possessive suffix *-ḡi:-*, 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

Singular		Plural			
1st	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-β</i>	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-l-βi</i>	1st (excl)	<i>mər-ŋi:-βun</i>	<i>mər-ŋi:-l-βun</i>
			1st (incl)	<i>mər-ŋi:-t</i>	<i>mər-ŋi:-l-ti</i>
2nd	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-s</i>	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-l-li</i>	2nd	<i>mər-ŋi:-sun</i>	<i>mər-ŋi:-l-lun</i>
3rd	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-n</i>	<i>mə:n-ŋi:-l-i-n</i>	3rd	<i>mər-ŋi:-tin</i>	<i>mər-ŋi:-l-tin</i>

### 3.5.4 Deictic pronouns

In Evenki there is a two-way deictic spatial system of proximal versus distal, as reflected in the deictic pronouns. These can be divided into the proximal deictics *ər, əril* 'this', 'these' and the distal deictics *tar, taril* 'that', 'those'. The stem final *-r-* is lost in the dative, locative, prolativ and elative 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 *ədu*: 'here' (or 'at this [place]'); the dative of the distal deictic *tadu*: 'there' (or 'at that [place]'); the locatives *əla*: 'hither'; *tala*: 'thither' and so on.

### 3.5.5 Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns include the pronouns *ŋi*: 'who', *e:kun* 'what', *aŋi*: 'who', 'what', 'where'; *anti*:, *e:kuma*, *e:kudi*:, 'what kind of'; *e:kuči*:, *e:kutaj* 'having what'; *e:kupti*: 'what kind' or 'which'; *adi*:, *o:ki*, *asu:n* 'how many'; *i:r* 'where'. These interrogatives are inflected for both number and case. They are used to form questions and stand in the first position in the clause:

(56) *ŋi:-du*    *kniga-βa*    *bu:-rə-əʔ*  
 who-DAT    book-ACC    give-AOR-3SG  
 'Who did they give the book to?'

(57) *e:kun-ma*    *ičə-čə:-sʔ*  
 what-ACC    see-PST-2SG  
 'What did you see?'

(58) *i:du*    *hutə-l-tiʔ*  
 where    child-PL-POSS.1PL  
 'Where are our children?'

The pronoun *aŋi*: 'who', 'what', 'where' is of particular interest.<sup>5</sup> Its semantic range is considerably broader than that of the pronouns *ŋi*: 'who' or *e:kun* 'what'. The interrogative *aŋi*: is used with reference both to humans and inanimate objects. It is used when either 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, *aŋi*: fulfils the function of interrogative pronouns such as 'who', 'what', 'which', 'how many', 'where', as in (59):

<sup>5</sup>The pronoun *aŋi*: has been understudied. Cincius et al. (1975–77: I:45) notes its use only in the Podkammeno-Tungus and Northern Baikal dialects, as meaning (1) 'what'; (2) *aŋ*, used as an exclamation; (3) 'the same [one], the very [one], this', as in *aŋ bəjə* 'this person'.

(59) *aŋi:-βa*    *nuŋan*    *bu:-rə-nʔ*  
*aŋi*:-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 s/he give?' 'How many did s/he give?' or 'What kind did he give?'

In assertive statements, *aŋi*: 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

Indefinite pronouns are formed from the interrogative pronominal bases with the suffixes *-βVI*, *-mVI*, *-nVn*, *-dV*, *-tV*: *ŋi:-βal* 'someone'; *ŋi:-də* 'anyone'; *e:kun-mal* 'anyone', 'anything'; *o:n-mal* 'somehow'; *o:kin-mal* 'whenever'; *i:rgəči:n-βal* 'however', and so on.

In sentences with a negated predicate, the indefinite pronouns in *-da*, *-ta* acquire a negative meaning, as in *ŋi:-də əsin sa:rə* '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:-βun-ta-*    'use for what purpose'  
*e:ku-ki-t-*    'foreshadow something'  
*e:-ma:-*    'do what for'; 'why come'  
*e:-na:-*    'go why'  
*e:-ka:t-(čə)-*    'imitate what', 'depict what', 'play what'  
*e:-(ku)-ti:-*    '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) *hurkə:-kə:n*    *e:-lidi-ža-ra-n*    *sun-nunʔ*  
 boy-DIM    what-COM-IMPRES-3SG    2PL-COM  
 'What is the boy doing with you?'

(61) *su:*    *əmə-ri:-du:-hun*,    *e:-žač:-tin*    *nuŋartinʔ*  
 2PL    come-P.SIM-DAT-2PL    what-IMPRES-PST-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:-ra-n*    *tar*    *bəjəʔ*  
 what-for-PST-3SG    that    man  
 'Why did that man come?'

2. from the interrogative pronoun *ŋi*: 'who':  
*ŋi:-tə-*    'use someone in what capacity'

3. from the reflexive pronoun *mə:nŋi:-βi*:  
*mə:nŋi:-tə-*    'use for oneself'



4. from the deictic pronouns *ər* 'this' and *tar* 'that':  
*ər-i-ŋ-tə-* 'use in the capacity of this'  
*tari-ŋ-ta-* 'use in the capacity of that'

The verb *aŋi-* from the pronoun *aŋ* (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) *nugan aja-t aŋi:-du: aŋi:-ʒa-ra-n*  
 3SG good-ADV taiga-DAT ANAP-IMPF-PRES-3SG  
 'S/he 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) *aŋi: aŋi:-βa aŋi:-ʒa-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* = *two tens*; *thirty* = *three tens*, and so on. Counting progresses from the highest numeral to the lowest, such that  $3,259 = \textit{ilan ti:sača žu:r nama:ʒi tunŋa ʒa:r jəgin}$ .

<i>umun, umukə:n</i>	one	<i>ʒa:n umun</i>	eleven
<i>ʒu:r</i>	two	<i>ʒa:n ʒu:r</i>	twelve
<i>ilan</i>	three	<i>ʒa:n ilan</i>	thirteen
<i>digin</i>	four	<i>ʒu:r ʒa:r</i>	twenty
<i>tunŋa</i>	five	<i>ilan ʒa:r</i>	thirty
<i>nugun</i>	six	<i>digin ʒa:r</i>	forty
<i>nadan</i>	seven	<i>umukə:n nama:ʒi</i>	one hundred
<i>ʒapkun</i>	eight	<i>ʒu:r nama:ʒi</i>	two hundred
<i>jəgin</i>	nine	<i>ʒu:r ti:sača</i>	two thousand
<i>ʒa:n</i>	ten	<i>ilan ti:sača</i>	three thousand

Ordinal numerals are formed with the suffix *-i-* or *-gi-*, with the exception of the ordinals 'first' and 'second', which have suppletive forms: *ələkəsipiti:* 'first', *ge:* 'second', *ili:* 'third', *digi:* 'fourth', *tunŋi:* 'fifth', *nuni:* 'sixth', *nadi:* 'seventh', *ʒapki:* 'eighth', *jegi:* 'ninth', *ʒa:gi:* 'tenth', *ʒa:n ələkəsipiti:* 'eleventh', *ʒa:n ili:* 'thirteenth', and so on.

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

		two	three	four	five
humans	<i>-ni/-ri</i>	<i>ʒu:ri</i>	<i>ilani:</i>	<i>digini</i>	<i>tunŋani:</i>
animals	<i>-ŋna/-ŋnə</i>	<i>ʒu:ŋnə</i>	<i>iləŋna</i>	<i>diginŋə</i>	<i>tunŋaŋna</i>
days	<i>-lla/-llə</i>	<i>ʒu:llə</i>	<i>ilalla</i>	<i>digillə</i>	<i>tunŋalla</i>
things	<i>-ra:gda/-rə:gdə</i>	<i>ʒu:rə:gdə</i>	<i>ilara:gda</i>	<i>digirə:gdə</i>	<i>tunŋara:gda</i>

Numerals indicating repetition are formed with the suffix *-ra/-rə:* *umnə* 'one time'; *ʒu:rə* 'two times'; *ilara* 'three times'. Numerals indicating multiple layers are formed with the suffix *-ma:n/-mə:n:* *umummə:n* 'one layer'; *ʒu:rmə:n* 'two layers'; *ilanma:n* 'three layers'; *diginmə:n* 'four layers'.

### 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, converbs 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 deverbal nouns: for example, with the imperfective suffix: *bi-ʒə-mi:* 'living'; 'life'; *duku-ʒa-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:

- ma-/-mə-/-mo-* forms verbs with the meaning 'to go fetch someone/something', as in *bəju-mə-* '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.
- la-/-lə-/-lo-* forms verbs with the meaning 'to go for someone/something', as in *mo-la-* 'go for wood'; *hilti-lə-* 'go for piece of rotten wood'; *asi-la-* 'get married' [*lit.* 'go after a woman']. Verbs formed with this suffix are close in meaning to those in the suffix *-mV-* suffix (1) above, with a difference in the base noun as well as in the suffix.
- la-/-lə-/-lo-* cognate to suffix (2), forms verbs which signal use of an object or instrument to carry out an action, as in *ma:βut-la-* 'catch with a lasso'; *mirə-lə-* 'carry on one's back'.
- la-/-lə-/-lo-* forms verbs which signal a constantly unfinished action, as in *mu-lə-* 'carry water'; *əuču-lo-* 'scrape with a scraper'.
- li-* forms verb stems to signal an action which repeats constantly: *oŋko-li-* 'eat/feed on moss'; *nə:ku-li-* 'store in a ware-house' (*nə:ku* 'ware-house').
- ŋi/-ŋ-* forms verbs which indicate making the object which is expressed in the base noun: *ʒu-ŋ-* 'make a house'; *ʒa:βi-ŋ-* 'make a boat' (*ʒa:β* 'boat'); *kolobo-ŋ-* 'bake bread' (*kolobo* 'bread').
- ta-/-tə-/-to-* forms verbs which signal the use or appropriation of the object signaled by the base noun, as in *asi-ta-* 'have as a wife'; *ʒu-ta-* 'live in a house, own a house'; *gərbi-tə-* 'have a name'.
- mi-* forms verbs which signal a constant action which is directed at the base noun, as in *ulu-mi-* 'hunt for squirrel'; *ollo-mi-* 'catch fish'.
- ti-* forms verbs which indicate that the object signaled by the base noun is a source of food or nourishment: *čaj-ti-* 'drink tea'; *oro-ti-* 'eat reindeer meat'.
- ltu-* forms verbs which have the meaning of acquiring someone or thing: *hutə-ltu-* 'have a child'; *bər-i-ltu-* 'arm oneself with a gun'.
- da-/-də-/-do-* (*-ta-/-tə-/-to-*) forms verbs in which the action is carried out by the object named in the base: *bəgə-də-* 'cure with medicine'; *mujəllə-də-* 'embroider with hair from neck of reindeer'; *ʒal-da-* 'think' (*ʒal* from 'mind').
- 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 (*-ldi-*) and the causative (*-βka:n-/-βkə: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:

<i>Diathesis</i>	<i>Suffix</i>
active	∅
passive	-β- {-p-, -mu-}
comitative	-ldi-
reciprocal	-ma:t- {-č-}
causative	-βka:n- {-βkə:n-/-βko:n-}
anti-causative	-rga- {-rgə-, -rgo-}

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 converb) has passive marking. The passive is used with transitive verbs. The agent stands in the dative case:

- (66) *qina-β dolbosik-i-l-du: ʒəβu-β-rə-n.*  
 dog-POSS.1SG wolf-PL-DAT feed-PASS-PST.PF-3SG  
 'My dog was eaten by wolves.'

The **reciprocal** diathesis signals that the action is carried out by several agents and that they are also the mutual recipients 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:

- (67) *omɔ:lgi-ča:r əβikə:n-m ə taŋčə-ma:t-čə-čə-tin.*  
 boy-DIM-PL toy-ACC take.away-RECIP-IMP-F-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 (*-ldi-*) is used for an action where several agents are involved; the agents mutually perform the action.<sup>6</sup> 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.

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

- (68) *min-nu:n agi:-la: suru-ldi-kəl.*  
 1SG-COM forest-LOC go-COM-FUT.IMPR.2SG  
 'Go to the forest with me.'
- (69) *bi: ʒa:l-βi bira-du: baka-ldi-ča:-β.*  
 1SG relative-REFL river-DAT find-COM-PST-1SG  
 'I met my relatives at the river.'

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) *tuksa-ʒa-ri:-l kuqaka:-r na:-ldi-ma:t-ta-σ.*  
 run-IMP-F.P.EA-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 *ičə-ldi-βkə:n-ə-n* 'made it possible to see one another').

The **causative** (*-βkV: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 incites the action is the grammatical (nominative subject):

- (71) *ami:n-mi nə:ku:-βə o:-βka:n-a-n.*  
 father-POSS.1SG grainery-ACC make-CAUS-3SG  
 'My father caused a grainery to be built.'

- (72) *əpəkə: me:ta-l-duk kumala:n-ma ulli-βkə:n-ə-n.*  
 grandmother fur-PL-ABL fur.rug-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 *bagda-rga-* 'become white'. It can be used with inherently transitive stems as well, as illustrated in (73):

- (73) *oron usi-n əti:-rgə-rə-n.*  
 deer bridle-POSS.3SG tear.off-ANTLC-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 Bojčova (1975), Gorelova (1979) and Lebedeva et al. (1985). We will treat



the system as having ten possible aspects and subspects, or *Aktionsarten*, as summarized in Table 12:<sup>7</sup>

Table 12. Aspects and subspects in Evenki

	Aspect	Morpheme
1.	perfective	∅
2.	imperfective	-ʒa-/-ʒə-/-ʒo- {-čə-/-čə-/-čo-}
3.	inceptive	-sin-
4.	ingressive	-l-
5.	stative	-čə-/-čə-/-čo-
6.	durative	-t- {-či-}
7.	habitual	-ŋna-/-ŋnə-/-ŋno-
8.	iterative	-kta-
9.	repetitive	-bat-/-bat-/-bot- {-ban-/-bən-/-bon-}
10.	quick action	-ma:lčə-/-mə:lčə-/-mo:lčə-
11.	desideratives	-mu:- and -ksa-/-ssa-

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 subspects combines with a particular syntactic or semantic category of verbs. A single verbal stem can take more than one subspect suffix. For example, the ingressive (-l-) is often found in combination with other subspects, such as the iterative, inceptive, durative, or habitual. These subspects 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) *ər bira-li: bi: ʒuga kətə-rə girku-cta-ʒa-ŋki-β.*  
 this river-PROL 1SG in.summer many-time walk-A.ITR-IMP-3SG  
 'This summer I walked along the river many times.'

(74b) *ər bira-li: bi: ʒuga girku-cta-∅-ŋki-β.*  
 this river-PROL 1SG in.summer walk-A.ITR-PF-3SG  
 '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.

<sup>7</sup> As Nedjalkov (1992) points out, not all suffixes that are traditionally categorized as aspectual are necessarily such: 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 subspect. (In some cases Nedjalkov's label captures a secondary meaning more precisely, as in the case of the inceptive sub-aspect, which he calls a semelfactive.) In order to avoid terminological confusion, we will summarize these here: *sovershennyj* = perfective (IN: perfect); *nesovershennyj* = imperfective; *mnogkratnyj* = iterative (IN: dispersive); *obychnyj* = habitual; *povtornyj* = repetitive (IN: iterative); *prodolzhenyj* = durative (IN: distributive); *sostojanija* = stative (IN: resultative/stative); *nachinatel'nyj* = ingressive; *isxodnyj* = inceptive (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 lexico-semantics of the verbal base and of the aspectual suffix. Many of the suffixes can be combined; again these combinations are dependent upon the semantics of the aspects and verbal base. Accordingly, certain sub-aspects (such as the habitual, durative and iterative) are most often found together with the imperfective suffix.

We further note that the distribution and frequency of some of these sub-aspects varies from dialect to dialect. The perfective and imperfective aspects are found in all dialects, as are the inceptive, ingressive, durative and habitual sub-aspects. An intensive aspect (-ja:t-/-jə:t-/-jo:t-) is found in the Eastern dialects.

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

(75) *ŋina-kin gogo-sin-a-n.*  
 dog bark-A.INCEP-3SG  
 'The dog started barking.'

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

(76) *bi: ʒu:-Ja:-βi: ŋənə-sin-i-m.*  
 1SG home-LOC-POSS go-A.INCEP-1SG  
 '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) *nʊŋan təpkə-sin-ə-n.*  
 he shout-A.INCEP-3SG  
 'He cried out.'

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

(78) *nuči:-sin-ək-i-s nanna-βa, aja-tmar o:-ʒaŋa:-n.*  
 smoke-A.INCEP-CVP.COND-2SG hide-ACC good-COMP do-FUT.1-3SG  
 'When you smoke the hide a bit, it will get better.'

3. The **ingressive** (-l-) 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 1987:52).

(79) *kuŋaka:n so:t soŋo-l-lo-n.*  
 child very cry-INGR-PST-3SG  
 'The child started crying hard.'

4. The **stative** (-čəV-) is used to indicate a state or condition, as in *haku:-mi:* 'to close' versus *haku:-čə-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):



- (80) *digin oron-du: ugu-ča-ža-ra-ø.*  
four deer-DAT ride-A.STAT-IMPF-PRES-3PL  
'They are riding on four reindeer.'

5. The **durative** (-*r*-) has widespread use, especially in the indicative. It signals an action as taking place over a period of time:

- (81) *kuḡaka:n kumalan-du: təgə-t-čə-rə-n.*  
child fur.rug-DAT sit-DUR-IMPF-PRES-3SG  
'The child is sitting on the fur rug.'

6. The **habitual** (-*ḡnV*-) 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.

- (82) *si: min-tiki: o:kin=da irə-mə:-ḡnə-kəl.*  
2SG 1SG-ALL any.time=PART come-visit-HABT-IMPR.2SG  
'Come visit me any time.'

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

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

- (83) *gələ:-ktə-čə:-n=gələ:-ktə-čə:-n, ə-čə baka-ra.*  
look-A.ITER-IMPR.3SG=look-A.ITER-IMPR.3SG NEG-PST find-RA  
'He looked and looked but didn't find [it].'

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

- (84) *ə-kəl ju-βə:t-tə, ḡnmakta-l palatka-la: i:žəḡə:-tin.*  
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 -*ktV*- is more frequent, although the latter is used chiefly with verbs signaling motion.

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

- (85) *təgə-mə:lčə-kəl otu:-βa ila-ma:lčə-kal.*  
stand.up-A.QA-IMPR.2SG fire-ACC light-A.QA-IMPR.2SG  
'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. *ala:t-mə:lčə-mi*: 'having waited a bit').

10. The **desiderative** suffixes -*mu*- and -*ksa*-/*ssa*- are used to signal the wish or desire to perform an action. The suffix -*mu*- adds the meaning 'want', 'desire': *haβal-mu*- 'want to work'; *ḡnə-mu*- 'want to laugh'; *ksa*- signals the desire or attempt to carry out an action: *žəβa-ksa*- 'want, try to catch'. These have been alternatively classified as markers of modality (Konstantinova 1964), or derivational suffixes (Nedjalkov 1997). Here we follow Vasilevich (1958) and classify them as sub-aspects on the basis of their semantics.

For more details about the use and distribution of aspect in Evenki, see especially Gorelova (1979).

#### 4.4 Mood

Evenki has a rich system of moods: the indicative, the imperative, the conditional, the optative and the deontic moods, along with a system of evidentials, which distinguishes degrees of probability. Both the indicative and the imperative moods are distinguished by tense categories, while the remaining moods are tenseless.

There are three conjugations of person/number suffixes found with verbs; Conjugation III is a mixed set which combines affixes from both Conjugations I and II. These person/number suffixes follow the mood and aspect morphemes:

##### Conjugation I

singular		plural	
1st	-m	1st (excl)	-β
		1st (incl)	-p
2nd	-nni	2nd	-s
3rd	-n	3rd	-ø

##### Conjugation II

singular		plural	
1st	-β	1st (excl)	-βun
		1st (incl)	-t
2nd	-s	2nd	-sun
3rd	-n	3rd	-tin

##### Conjugation III (mixed)

singular		plural	
1st	-m	1st (excl)	-βun
		1st (incl)	-ti
2nd	-nni	2nd	-šun
3rd	-n	3rd	-ø

#### 4.5 The indicative mood

There is no single suffix for the indicative mood; instead the indicative mood has obligatory tense suffixes. Each suffix indicates both person and number categories. In Literary Evenki there are seven different tense categories in the indicative mood. Evenki dialects show widespread variation in the use and distribution of these tenses; some dialects show more distinctions, others less. The interpretation of the temporal reference of some Evenki tenses remains controversial; we have provided one possible schema here; further research is needed on all the tenses.

##### 4.5.1 The present tense

There are two morphological forms which have been classified as present tenses, one with the suffix -*rV*-, and the other formed with two suffixes, the imperfective suffix -*žV*- along with the tense suffix -*rV*-. We will treat only the latter as the present tense. The present in



-*ǰV-rV-* takes first conjugation person/number endings. In the 1st and 2nd persons singular, *-rV-* is replaced by a zero morpheme:

Table 13. Present tense forms of *haβa-* 'work':

<i>singular</i>		<i>plural</i>	
1st	haβal-ǰa-ø-m	1st (excl)	haβal-ǰa-ra-β
		1st (incl)	haβal-ǰa-ra-p
2nd	haβal-ǰa-ø-nni	2nd	haβal-ǰa-ra-s
3rd	haβal-ǰa-ra-n	3rd	haβal-ǰa-ra-ø

The most controversial of the tenses is the one formed with the suffix *-rV-*. It has alternately been analyzed as a simple past, an aorist or a present tense suffix. This controversy has arisen from the fact that its temporal interpretation varies, depending upon its combination with different aspect morphemes. We gloss it here as an aorist (AOR) to capture the indefinite or undefined nature of the suffix alone. It signals three different temporal reference points—present, present perfect, and future—depending on morphological distribution. It forms a present tense when used in combination with the imperfective suffix *-ǰV-*, a present perfect when it is used alone, and an imminent future when used in conjunction with the ingressive subspect (*-l-*). In the future tense, the suffix *-ra-* assimilates to the preceding *-l-*, producing *-l-lV-*. This form is treated as Future 3; see §3.8.3.

Table 14. Present perfect forms of *o:-* 'do':

<i>singular</i>		<i>plural</i>	
1st	o:-ø-m	1st (excl)	o:-ra-β
		1st (incl)	o:-ra-p
2nd	o:-ø-nni	2nd	o:-ra-s
3rd	o:-ra-n	3rd	o:-ra-ø

#### 4.5.2 The future tense

Literary Evenki distinguishes three future tenses: (1) Future I (*-ǰVǰV-*), the most frequently used future, signals an action which is seen as definitely taking place in the future; (2) Future II (*-ǰV-*) is an imminent future; and (3) Future III (*-ǰVI-lV-*) is a more distal future. Only Future I is found in all dialects. In some dialects, Future III can be better interpreted as a past inceptive than a future: it signals an action which began in the past and is ongoing at the moment of speech. These are given, together with the person suffixes they take, in Table 14:

Table 15. Future tenses

<i>singular</i>	<i>Future I</i>	<i>Future II</i>	<i>Future III</i>
1st	-ǰaǰa:-β	-ǰa:-β	-ǰali-m
2nd	-ǰaǰa:-s	-ǰa:-s	-ǰali-nni
3rd	-ǰaǰa:-n	-ǰa:-n	-ǰal-la-n
<i>plural</i>			
1st (excl)	-ǰaǰa:-βun	-ǰa:-βun	-ǰal-la-β
1st (incl)	-ǰaǰa:-t	-ǰa:-t	-ǰal-la-p
2nd	-ǰaǰa:-sun	-ǰa:-sun	-ǰal-la-s
3rd	-ǰaǰa:-tin	-ǰa:-tin	-ǰal-la-ø

In Future III, the morpheme *-ǰal-la* is a compound morpheme, formed with the imperfective suffix *-ǰa-* plus the ingressive subspect marker *-l-*. It is therefore interpreted as a "future" tense, i.e., as indicated in action which will take place in the future, but it could more accurately be analyzed as an instance of the inceptive 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 *-rV-* (or its allomorphs *-lV-*, *-tV-*, *-nV-*, *-V-*) 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 (*o:mi*: 'do', *gami*: 'take', *nə:mi*: 'place' and *bu:mi*: 'give') can form this past with the suffix *-dV-*, in all persons, instead of the suffix *-rV-*. Past II is formed with the suffix *-ǰV-* and second conjugation person suffixes, and Past III with the suffix *-ǰki-* and second conjugation person suffixes.

Table 16. The Past Tenses of *əməmi* 'come'

<i>singular</i>	<i>Present Perfect (I)</i>	<i>Past (II)</i>	<i>Distal past (III)</i>
1st	əmə-ø-m	əmə-čə:-β	əmə-ǰki-β
2nd	əmə-ø-nni	əmə-čə:-s	əmə-ǰki-s
3rd	əmə-rə-n	əmə-čə:-n	əmə-ǰki-n
<i>plural</i>			
1st (excl)	əmə-rə-β	əmə-čə:-βun	əmə-ǰki-βun
1st (incl)	əmə-rə-p	əmə-čə:-t	əmə-ǰki-t
2nd	əmə-rə-s	əmə-čə:-sun	əmə-ǰki-sun
3rd	əmə-rə-ø	əmə-čə:-tin	əmə-ǰki-tin

In addition to these indicative forms, certain participles can be used predicatively and can be combined with inflected forms of *bimi*: '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 *bimi*: '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 *bu:mi*: 'to give' in Tables 17 and 18:

Table 17. Present and Past Habitual of *bu:-* 'give'

<i>singular</i>	<i>present habitual</i>	<i>past habitual</i>
1st	bu:-βki: bi-si-m	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-β
2nd	bu:-βki: bi-si-nni	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-s
3rd	bu:-βki: bi-si-n	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-n
<i>plural</i>		
1st (excl)	bu:-βki: bi-si-β	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-βun
1st (incl)	bu:-βki: bi-si-p	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-t
2nd	bu:-βki: bi-si-s	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-sun
3rd	bu:-βki: bi-si	bu:-βki: bi-čə:-tin



Table 18. Past Perfect and Pluperfect of *bu-* 'give'

singular	perfect	pluperfect
1st	bu:-čə: bi-si-m	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-β
2nd	bu:-čə: bi-si-nni	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-s
3rd	bu:-čə: bi-si-n	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-n
<i>plural</i>		
1st (excl)	bu:-čə: bi-si-β	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-βun
1st (incl)	bu:-čə: bi-si-p	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-t
2nd	bu:-čə: bi-si-s	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-sun
3rd	bu:-čə: bi-si	bu:-čə: bi-čə:-tin

#### 4.5.5 Irregular verbs in the indicative mood

Four verbs forms an irregular present tense without the imperfective  $\text{-}\check{z}V\text{-}$  or the tense suffix  $\text{-}rV\text{-}$ . These are the verbs *o-* 'do', *bi-* 'be', *ga-* 'take' and *bu-* 'die'. The present paradigms are given in Table 19:

Table 19. Irregular verbs

singular	<i>bi-</i> 'be'	<i>bu-</i> 'die'	<i>ga-</i> 'take'	<i>o-</i> 'do'
1st	bi-si-m	bu-də-m	ga-m, ga-da-m	o:-m
2nd	bi-si-nni	bu-də-nni, bu-nni	ga-nni	o:-nni
3rd	bi-si-n	bu-də-n	ga-da-n, ga-ra-n	o:-ra-n, o:-da-n
<i>plural</i>				
1st (excl)	bi-si-βun	bu-də-β	ga-da-β	o:-ra-β
1st (incl)	bi-si-p	bu-də-p	ga-da-p	o:-ra-p
2nd	bi-si-s	bu-də-s	ga-da-s	o:-ra-s
3rd	bi-si-ø	bu-də-ø	ga-da-ø, ga-ra-ø	o:-ra-ø, o:-da-ø

#### 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 disjunct 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':

singular	<i>plural</i>
1st	1st (excl) bu:-ktə 1st (incl) bu:-kβun
2nd	2nd bu:-kəl bu:-kəllu
3rd	3rd bu:-gin bu:-ktin

In the **distal future imperative**, two forms are used, formed with the suffix  $\text{-}də\text{-}$  and second conjugation endings: the 2nd person singular (*bu:-də:-βi:*) and the 2nd person plural (*bu:-də:-βər*).

##### 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  $\text{-}mVč̣in$  without personal endings. (In many dialects, the suffix  $\text{-}ŋV:t-$  is used instead of  $\text{-}mVč̣in$ . In contrast,  $\text{-}ŋV:t-$  is used with personal endings. (Note that this affix has been analyzed as an optative in Literary Evenki; see Konstantinova 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  $\text{-}mVč̣in$  is most frequently used in analytic constructions with the auxiliary verb *bi-* 'be' or *o-* 'do'. This auxiliary is inflected for tense, aspect, number and person;  $\text{-}mVč̣in$  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) *bi: əmə-məči:n bi-si-m.*  
1SG come-M.DEB be-PRES-1SG  
'I should come.'
- (87) *si: əmə-məči:n bi-si-nni.*  
12SG come-M.DEB be-PRES-2SG  
'You should come.'
- (88) *nuŋan əmə-məči:n bi-čə-n.*  
3SG come-M.DEB be-PST-3SG  
'S/he should have come.'
- (89) *kuŋaka:n girku-mači:n o:-žaga:-n.*  
3SG walk-M.DEB do-FUT.1-3SG  
'This child will ought to be walking.'

In many dialects, the suffix  $\text{-}mVč̣i:n$  is not used. Instead, these dialects use a synthetic construction with the suffix  $\text{-}ŋa:t-$ , inflected for person and number. This is illustrated in Table 21:

Table 21. The debitive forms of *o-* 'do' in  $\text{-}ŋa:t-$ 

singular	<i>plural</i>
1st	1st (excl) o:-ŋa:t-i-β 1st (incl) o:-ŋa:t-i-t
2nd	2nd o:-ŋa:t-i-s o:-ŋa:t-i-sun
3rd	3rd o:-ŋa:t-i-n o:-ŋa:t-i-tin

##### 4.6.3 The conditional

The conditional is formed with the suffix  $\text{-}mč̣V$ . 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 3rd 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'

singular		plural	
1st	bu:-mčə-β	1st (excl)	bu:-mčə-βun ~ bu:-mčə-l-βun
		1st (incl)	bu:-mčə-t ~ bu:-mčə-l-ti
2nd	bu:-mčə-s	2nd	bu:-mčə-sun ~ bu:-mčə-l-1un
3rd	bu:-mčə-σ	3rd	bu:-mčə-tin ~ bu:-mčə-l-tin

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'

singular		plural	
1st	sa:-rka-β	1st (excl)	sa:-rka-βun
		1st (incl)	sa:-rka-t
2nd	sa:-rka-s	2nd	sa:-rka-sun
3rd	sa:-rka-σ	3rd	sa:-rka-tin

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'

singular		plural	
1st	sa:-rgu:-m	1st (excl)	sa:-rgu:-βun
		1st (incl)	sa:-rgu:-t
2nd	sa:-rgu:-nni	2nd	sa:-rgu:-sun
3rd	sa:-rgu:-n	3rd	sa:-rgu:-tin

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) *nugan ti:ni-βə əmə-čə: bi-rkə-n.*  
 3SG yesterday-ACC come-P.ANT be-EVID-3SG  
 'He probably came yesterday.'

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

- (91) *nugartin əmə-žəŋə: bi-rgu:-tin.*  
 3PL come-P.POST be-HABT.EVID-3PL  
 'They are supposed to come, probably.'
- (92) *su: əmə-čə:-l bi-rkə-sun.*  
 2PL come-P.ANT-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 converb (*-mi:*) or with the personal purposive converb (*-dV:-*). (See §4.8 for a discussion of converbs.) These converbs provide the subordinate lexical verb. An exception is the modal verb *ŋəkə-* 'want', 'do', 'occur', which itself has lexical meaning. The following are among the most widely used modal verbs:

1. *alba-* '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: toki:-βa ta:la-du: alba-m ala:t-ča-mi:.*  
 1SG moose-ACC salt.lick-DAT be.unable-1SG wait-IMPV-CVI.COND  
 'I couldn't wait for the moose at the salt lick.'

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

- (94) *kugaka:n ba:-rə-n e:kun-ma=da o:-ža-mi:.*  
 child not.want-AOR-3SG what-ACC=PART do-IMPV-CVI.COND  
 'The child did not want to do anything.'

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

- (95) *huna:t ŋami:-βa sir-mi: mulli-rə-n.*  
 girl lead.deer-ACC milk-CVI.COND be.unable-AOR-3SG  
 'The girl was unable to milk the lead deer.'

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

- (96) *kugaka:n žəb-də:-βi: əjə:t-čə-rə-n.*  
 child eat-CVP.PURP-REFL want-IMPV-AOR-3SG  
 'The child wants to eat.'

5. *ŋəkə-* '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 converb, since it carries lexical meaning:



- (97) *ər kuḡaka:n e:-βa nəkə-ʒə-rə-n?*  
 this child what-ACC want/do-IMPF-AOR-3SG  
 'What does this child want to do?' or 'What is this child doing?'

#### 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) *ikə:-ʒə-ri: asa:tka:n i:-rə-n.*  
 sing-IMPF-P.SIM girl enter-AOR-3SG  
 'The singing girl came in.'

- (98b) *tar asa:tka:n ikə:-ʒə-ri:.*  
 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 *ikə:-ʒə-ri:* 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

Participle	Morpheme
simultaneity	-ri:/-ʒari:
anteriority	-čV:
habitual	-βki:/-pki:
perfect	-na
posteriority	-ʒaŋa:
debitive	-mači:n; -ŋa:t
immediate future	-ItVk
fictitious	-ksan
impersonal debitive	-βka
debitive-intentional	-ŋa:t
RA	-ra

#### 1. Simultaneity (-ri:) or (-ʒV-ri:)

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

- (99) *o:-ʒa-ri: əβikə:n-mə*  
 make-IMPF-P.SIM toy-ACC 'the one making a toy'

Participles of simultaneity are often substantivized and function as nominals:

- (100) *gərbə-ʒə-ri:-βa amaski: muču:β-kallu.*  
 make-IMPF-P.SIM-ACC back return-IMPER.2PL  
 'Bring back the running-away one.'

Without the imperfective suffix (-ʒV-), 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) *əmə-čə: ilə*  
 come-P.ANT person  
 'the person who came'
- (101b) *ilə əmə-čə:*  
 person come-P.ANT  
 '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 (-βki:/-pki:)

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

- (102) *tar kuḡaka:n soḡo-βki:.*  
 that child cry-P.HABT  
 'That child is always crying.'

#### 4. Perfect (-na)

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 substantively to indicate the result, either as an attribute or as a noun which is the result of an action, as in (103):

- (103) *haβal-na-li:-β min-ə kəŋə:-rə-σ.*  
 work-P.PF-PROL-POSS.1SG ISG-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 (-ʒaŋa:)

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) *nuḡan ʒu:-βa mə:n-i-n o:-ʒaŋa:.*  
 he house-LOC REFL-3SG make-P.POST  
 'He himself will possibly be able to make a house.'

#### 6. Debitive (-mači:n)

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'.



- (105) *oro-r*      *əmə-məči:-r*  
 deer-PL      come-P.DEB-PL  
 'The deer are supposed to come'

In dialects of the Eastern group, participles in *-məči:n* are not used. (See also §4.6, for a discussion of the debitive mood, where a similar distribution of morphemes is found in the dialects.) Instead, the debitive participle is formed with the suffix *-ŋV:t*, again with a debitive meaning:

- (106) *əmə-ŋə:t*      *bəjə*  
 come-P.DEB      man      'the man who is supposed to come'

#### 7. Impersonal debitive (-βka)

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

- (107) *tar*      *həβa:-βa*      *o:-βka*.  
 that      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 *-β-* which underscores the impersonal meaning, and it can also be used without the passive suffix to signal a habitual action.

#### 8. Immediate future (-ItVk)

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

- (108) *huna:ʒ-i-β*      *ədi:lə-Itək*.  
 daughter-POSS.ISG      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) *soŋo-kson*      *ə-kəl*      *o:ra*.  
 cry-P.FICT      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 Evenki 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:*      *ukčək-ki:*      *ʒəβa-ča:-β*.  
 ISG      riding.deer-POSS.REFL      catch-P.ANT-1SG  
 'I caught my riding deer.'

- (111) *tigdə*      *goro-βo*      *tigdə-ri:-n*.  
 rain      long-ACC      rain-P.SIM-3SG  
 'It poured rain for a long time.'

#### 10. RA participles (-rV)

The RA participles form analytic constructions with the negative verb *ə-*. The RA participle 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 participle *əčin*. 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:

- (112) *əčin-du:*      *əmə-rə*      *bəjə-du:*      *ločoko:-βi:*      *əmə:n-ə-n*.  
 P.NEG-DAT      come-RA      man-DAT      saddle-POSS.REFL      leave-AOR-3SG  
 'He left his saddle to the man who had not yet arrived.'

Participles in Evenki 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 participle 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) *hunat*      *ʒu:-du:-βi:*      *əmə:nmu-čə:*.  
 girl      home-DAT-REFL      stay-P.ANT  
 'The girl stayed at her home.'

- (114) *bi:*      *ʒu:-du:-βi:*      *əmə:nmu-čə:*      *bi-čə-β*.  
 ISG      home-DAT-REFL      stay-P.ANT      be-PST-1SG  
 'I stayed home.'

#### 4.8 Converbs

Converbs<sup>8</sup> are defined as nonfinite verb forms whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination (Haspelmath 1995: 3). In Evenki they can be divided into two categories: impersonal and personal converbs. Impersonal converbs are used when the superordinate and subordinate clauses have the same subject. They do not take personal suffixes. In contrast, personal converbs 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 converbs signal same subject. In sum, the personal converbs 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 converbs (the conditional converb *-rV:k-* and the personal converb of accompanying action *-ʒVnmV-*) can be used with either personal or reflexive suffixes. The conditional and accompanying action personal converbs can only signal that the subjects of the clauses differ.

<sup>8</sup>A more complete study of Evenki converbs is presented in Nedjalkov (1995). For the sake of consistency, we have maintained his labels for the converb 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

	Impersonal same subject	Personal same or different	different subjects
Simultaneity	-nV	-ḡVsi:-	
Anteriority	-ksV:	-čVIV:-	
Posteriority	-mme:n	-dVIV:-	
Conditional	-mi:		-rV:k-
Concurrence	-mnVk		-žVnmV-
Purposive		-dV:-	
Limit		-knV-	
Intent		-βunV-	
Bounds		-žVli-	

*Impersonal converbs (same subject):*

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

- (115) *urə-βə alan-ža-na-l, bu: to:ki uža-βa:-n*  
 mountain-ACC transfer-IMPF-CVI.SIM-PL 1.PL ex moose track-ACC-POSS.3SG  
*ičə-čə:-βun.*  
 see-PST-1PLex  
 'While crossing the mountain, we saw the tracks of a moose.'

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

- (116) *gulubun-mə ila-ksa:, žəβgə:-βə iri-l-čə:-n.*  
 fire-ACC light-CVI.ANT food-ACC cook-A.INGR-PST-3SG  
 'Having lit the fire, he started to prepare the food.'

3. **Conditional** (-mi:) 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-t haβa-l-mi:-l bəjə-l o:žəgə:-sun.*  
 good-ADV work-A.INGR-CVI.COND-PL, person-PL make-FUT.I-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) *əmə-mme:n, iri-l-i-σ-m.*  
 come-CVI.POST cook-A.INGR-PRES-1SG  
 'As soon as I arrive, I start cooking.'

5. **Concurrence** (-mnak/-mnək/-mnok). 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, əβi:-mnək-i-l, mo:-l-βa taβ-ra-σ.*  
 child-PL play-CVI.CON-PL wood-PL-ACC gather-AOR-3PL  
 'While playing, the children gathered brushwood.'

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

- (120) *unta-βa ulli-mnək, sumuj-ə o:-kal.*  
 unty-ACC sew-CVI.PURP thread-ACC.INDEF make-IMPR.2SG  
 'Make thread (from tendons) in order to sew unty (fur 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** (-čala:-/-čələ:-/-čəlo:-). As with impersonal converbs of anteriority, the personal converbs signal that the subordinated action precedes that of the main verb:

- (121) *si: əmə-čələ:-s, nuḡartin nulgi-žəgə:-tin.*  
 2SG come-CVP.ANT-2SG 3PL wander-FUT.I-3PL  
 'When you come, they will [strike camp and] move on'

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

- (122) *du:nnə olgo-rok-i-n, kugaka:-r tuli:-lə: əβi:-ktin.*  
 ground dry-CVP.ANT-2SG child-PL street-LOC play-IMPER.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** (-dala:-/-dələ:-/-dolo:-) is used to signal that the action of the subordinate clause precedes that of the main clause:

- (123) *əmə-dələ:-β, nuḡan haβal-ža-ča:-n.*  
 come-CVP.POST-1SG 3SG work-IMPF-PST-3SG  
 'He worked until I came.'

Alternatively, converbs with this prefix may signal an action concurrent but secondary to the action of the main clause:

- (124) *bi: kumala:n-ma ulli-dələ:-β, si: kokollo-βo oḡo:-kol.*  
 1SG kumalan-ACC sew-CVP.POST 2SG sleeve-ACC embroider-IMPR.2SG  
 'Embroider the sleeve while I sew the kumalan (fur rug).'



Last, this same converb can be used to signal the limits of the main action:

- (125) *gina-βa*      *žəmu:-l-dələ:-n*      *ujčə-kəl.*  
dog-ACC      hunger-A.INGR-CVP.POST-3SG      keep.tied-IMPR.2SG  
'Keep the dog tied up until it is hungry'

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

- (126) *oro-r*      *aja-t*      *oŋko-do:-tin,*      *bargiski:*      *ilbə-kəllu.*  
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:-/gəsi:-/gosi:-*): these personal converbs signal that the two actions, main and subordinate, occur at the same time:

- (127) *hutə-s*      *baldi:-gasi:-n,*      *bi:*      *a:č in*      *bi-čə:-β.*  
child-2SG      born-CVP.SIMUL-3SG      1SG      neg      born-PST-1SG  
'I wasn't [there] when your child was born.'

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

- (128) *haβa:-βi:*      *ətə-knə-s,*      *bi:*      *alat-čigə:-β*  
work-REFL      finish-CVP.LIM-2SG      1SG      wait-FUT.1-1SG  
'I will wait until you finish your work'

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

- (129) *ičə-βunə-β*      *potokartočka-ja*      *ani:-kal.*  
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** (-*žali:-/žəli:-/žoli:-*) 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) *nugan*      *iri:-žə-žəli:-n*      *bi:*      *mu:-lə:-ktə.*  
3SG      cook-A.IMPF-CVP.BD-3SG      1SG      water-carry-IMPER.1SG  
'While she is cooking, let me go fetch water.'

- (131) *nəku:n-ni*      *a:-žə-žəli:-n,*      *si:*      *ə-kəl*      *ŋənə-rə.*  
yg.brother-2SG      sleep-A.IMPF-CVP.BD-3SG      2SG      NEG-IMPR.2SG      go-RA  
'Your younger brother is still sleeping; don't leave.'

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

- (132) *kuŋaka:n*      *dəri-knə-βi:*      *soŋo-čə:-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 converbs are formed according to one and the same principle, from the negative verb *ə-* 'not be' and the RA participle. The negative verb *ə-* is the head verb in this construction and is inflected for tense, person and number. The RA participle takes suffixes for aspect and mood:

- (133) *atirka:n*      *ə-či-n*      *sukə-βə*      *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 *ə-* is used in all participial forms except the debitive (-*mVči:n-*), which is practically not used in negative constructions. With the negative verb *ə-*, the participle of simultaneity (positive suffix *-ri:-* or *-žV-ri:-*) takes the suffix *-si:-*. The negated participles are summarized in Table 26 and negated converbs in Table 27:

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

	Positive	Negative
simultaneity	<i>sa:-žə-ri:</i> 'knowing'	<i>ə-si: sa:-rə</i> 'not knowing'
anteriority	<i>sa:-ča:</i>	<i>ə-čə: sa:-rə</i>
perfect	<i>sa:-nə-s</i>	<i>ə-nə-s sa:-rə</i>
possible action	<i>sa:-žəŋə:</i>	<i>ə-žəŋə: sa:-rə</i>
habitual	<i>sa:-βki:</i>	<i>ə-βki: sa:-rə</i>
impersonal debitive	<i>sa:-βka:</i>	<i>ə-βkə: sa:-rə</i>
fictitious action	<i>sa:-ksa:n</i>	<i>ə-ksə:n sa:-rə</i>
contact posteriority	<i>sa-ltak</i>	<i>ə-ltak sa:-rə</i>

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

	Positive	Negative
<i>Impersonal</i>		
simultaneity	<i>sa:-žə-na</i> 'knowing'	<i>ə-nə sa:-rə</i> 'not knowing'
anteriority	<i>sa:-ksa:</i>	<i>ə-ksə: sa:-rə</i>
conditional	<i>sa:-mi:</i>	<i>ə-mi: sa:-rə</i>
posteriority	<i>sa:-mme:n</i>	<i>ə-mme:n sa:-rə</i>
concurrence	<i>sa:-mnak</i>	<i>ə-mnək sa:-rə</i>
<i>Personal</i>		
simultaneity	<i>sa:-gəsi-β</i> 1SG	<i>ə-gəsi-β sa:-rə</i>
anteriority	<i>sa:-čala:-β</i> 1SG	<i>ə-čələ:-β sa:-rə</i>
posteriority	<i>sa:-dala:-β</i> 1SG	<i>ə-dələ:-β sa:-rə</i>
purposive	<i>sa-da:-s</i> 2SG	<i>ə-də:-s sa:-rə</i>
limit	<i>sa:-kna-n</i> 3SG	<i>ə-knə-n sa:-rə</i>
bounds	<i>sa:-žəli:-β</i> 1SG	<i>ə-žəli:-β sa:-rə</i>



Negative forms of the converbs of intent ( $-\beta VnV-$ ) are virtually not used. The personal conditional converb ( $-rV:k-$ ) uses the suffix  $-sik-$  in the negative, as follows:

positive:	<i>sa:-rək-i-β</i> 1SG	'if I will know'
negative:	<i>ə-sik-i-β</i> 1SG <i>sa:rə</i>	'if I will not know'
	<i>ə-sik-i-s</i> 2SG <i>sa:rə</i>	'if you will not know'
	<i>ə-sik-i-n</i> 3SG <i>sa:rə</i>	'if s/he will not know'

### 5.0 Forms of evaluation

In Evenki 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 semantic range. They may be subjectively "positive" or "negative;" they may be diminutive or augmentative, and they may be used for comparisons, or 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.  $-ka:ku:n$  This is a compound suffix, from the suffix  $-ka:n-$  which has a diminutive or affectionate use, and the suffix  $-ku:n-$ , 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 affectionate meanings. The following examples illustrate use of this suffix with each different part 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	<i>dolboni:-ka:ku:n</i> <i>haktira-ma</i>	night-EVAL	dark-ACC	'a dark night'	
adjective	<i>aJa-ka:ku:n</i> <i>dolboni:</i>	good-EVAL	night	'a wonderful night'	
numeral	<i>ge:-ka:ku:n</i> <i>dokolok</i>	second-EVAL	lame	'the poor/dear second one is lame'	
pronoun	<i>si:-kə:ku:n</i> <i>ə-tə:-nni</i> <i>tərə:-rə</i>	2SG-EVAL	NEG-FUT-2SG	endure	'you can't take it, poor thing'
participle	<i>haβal-ka:ku:n-ʒa-ri:-βa</i> <i>ə:ri-kəllu.</i>	work-EVAL-IMPV-P.SIML-ACC	call-IMPR.2SG		
converb	<i>haβa:-βi:</i> <i>ətə-ksə:-kə:ku:n,</i> <i>muču-ča:-n.</i>	work-REFL	finish-CV.I.ANT-EVAL	return-PST-3SG	'When the poor/dear one had finished his work, he returned.'
verb	<i>goroβo</i> <i>bi-kə:ku:n-ʒə-rə-ø</i> <i>tadu:.</i>	long.time	live-EVAL-IMPV-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 decrepitness:

noun	<i>bəjə-mi:</i>	<i>təti:-mi:</i>
	person-EVAL	clothes-EVAL
	'bad person'	'old,bad clothes'

adjective	<i>kogno:lo-mi:</i>	black-EVAL	'black' (with shade of disdain)			
numeral	<i>ʒu:ri:-mi:</i> <i>binəl,</i> <i>o:n</i> <i>ə-čə:-sun</i> <i>βa:-rə</i>	two.together-EVAL	be-CVI.SIMUL-PL	how	NEG-PST-2SG	kill-RA
pronoun	<i>si:-mi:</i> <i>aja-t</i> <i>o:-ʒaga:-s=tə?</i>	2SG-EVAL	good-ADV	do-FUT.1-2SG=PART		
participle	<i>ajaβ-ʒə-ri:-mi:=gu</i> <i>tar-i-ŋi-s?</i>	love-IMPV-P.SIML-EVAL=PART	that-ALIEN-POSS.2SG			
converb	<i>əmə-mi:-ʒə-nə=də,</i> <i>əgə:t</i> <i>balət-tə</i>	come-EVAL-IMPV-CVI.SIM=PART	NEG	help-RA		{with shade of scorn}
verb	<i>e:da</i> <i>goroβo</i> <i>təgət-čə-mi:-rə-n</i>	why	long.time	sit-IMPV-EVAL-AOR-3SG		'Why on earth is he sitting [there] such a long time?'

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

noun	<i>hunat-ma-βa-β</i> <i>əjə:t-čə-rə-n.</i>	daughter-EVAL-ACC-POSS.1SG	want-IMPV-AOR-3SG	'It's [precisely] my daughter he wants.'
adjective	<i>sagdi-ma-du:</i> <i>bu:kəl.</i>	old-EVAL-DAT	give-IMPR.2SG	'Give this to only/precisely the old person.'
numeral	<i>ila-lla-ma-βa</i> <i>nulgi-rə-β.</i>	three-day-EVAL-ACC	wander-AOR-1PL	'We wandered for three whole days.'
pronoun	<i>minə-mə-βə</i> <i>sinma-ča:-n.</i>	1SG.ACC-EVAL-ACC	choose-PST-3SG	'He chose just me, only me.'
participle	<i>soŋo-ʒori:-ma</i> <i>o:-ča:.</i>	cry-P.SIM-EVAL	become-PST	'She became nothing but a crybaby.'
converb	<i>ju:-ʒə-mə-rək-i-β</i> <i>tigdə-l-čə:-n.</i>	exit-IMPV-EVAL-CVP.ANT-1SG	rain-INGR-PST-3SG	'It started to rain right when I went out.'
verb	<i>tigdə-mə-l-lə-n=də</i> <i>tigdə-l-lə-n.</i>	rain-EVAL-INGR-AOR-3SG=PART	rain-INGR-AOR-3SG	'It started to rain really hard, it started to rain.'

4.  $-ku:n$  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	<i>bira-ku:n-ma</i> <i>hədə-rə-β.</i>	river-EVAL-ACC	cross-AOR-1PLex	'We crossed a big river.'
adjective	<i>o:makta-ku:n</i> <i>ʒu:kča:</i>	new-EVAL	stop	'a brand-new stop'



numeral	<i>ʒu:ri:-ku:n</i>	<i>is-ta-ø.</i>	
	two-EVAL	arrive-AOR-3PL	
	'Only two made it all the way.'		
pronoun	<i>si:=gu</i>	<i>əmə-nni?</i>	<i>bi:-ku:n.</i>
	2SG=PART	come-2SG	1SG-EVAL
	'Is it you who came?'		
participle	<i>nuʒan</i>	<i>əmə-ltək-ku:n.</i>	
	3SG	come-P.CON.POST-EVAL	
	'He'll come any second now.'		
converb	<i>haβal-ʒa-ʒasi:-ku:n-i-n,</i>	<i>aja-t</i>	<i>bi-ŋki-βun.</i>
	work-IMPR-CVP.PAR-EVAL-3SG	good-ADV	live-DPST-1PLex
	'We lived well only when he was working.'		
verb	<i>haβal-ʒa-nni?</i>	<i>haβal-ku:n.</i>	
	work-IMPR-2SG	work-EVAL	
	'Are you working?'		

5. *-gači:n/-ŋači:n* This suffix is used to compare two entities, and indicates a similarity or likeness between them:

noun	<i>kuŋaka:-r-gači:r</i>	<i>əβi-ʒə-rə-ø.</i>		
	child-PL-EVAL	play-IMPR-AOR-3PL		
	'They are playing like children.'			
adjective	<i>gugda-gači:n</i>	<i>bi-čə:-n</i>		
	tall-EVAL	be-PST-3SG		
	's/he was as tall'			
numeral	<i>ʒu:r</i>	<i>bi-nə-l,</i>	<i>ilan-ŋači:n</i>	<i>haβal-la-ø.</i>
	two	be-CVI.SIMUL-PL	three-EVAL	work-AOR-3PL
	'There were two [of them], but they worked like three.'			
pronoun	<i>min-ŋači:n</i>	<i>o:-kal.</i>		
	1SG-EVAL	do-IMPR.2SG		
	'Do as I do.'			
participle	<i>a:ʒa-ča:-gači:n</i>	<i>bi-čə:-n.</i>		
	sleep-P.ANT-EVAL	be-PST-3SG		
	'S/he was as if sleeping.'			
converb	<i>ŋənə-ʒə-nə-gəči:n</i>	<i>ŋənə-ʒə-kəl.</i>		
	go-IMPF-CVI.SIMUL-EVAL	go-IMPF-IMPR.2SG		
	'Go the way you were going.'			
verb	<i>nuʒan</i>	<i>haβal-ʒa-ča:-n-ŋači:n.</i>		
	3SG	work-IMPF-PST-3SG-EVAL		
	'S/he 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/-kə:n* is a diminutive suffix, which can also be used to signal affection:

<i>bira-ka:n</i>	'little river'
<i>guʒəj-kə:n</i>	'pretty [one]' {affectionate}
<i>koŋnori:-ka:n</i>	'black [one]' {affectionate}
<i>ər-gəči:-kə:n</i>	'this little one'; 'such a little one' (from <i>ər-</i> 'this')
<i>haβal-ʒa-ri:-ka:n</i>	'the working one' {affectionate}

7. *-rigda/-rigdə* {alternate forms are: *-riktV*; *-rVgdV*; *-rgV*}: This suffix signals a sense of limit or exclusiveness:

noun	<i>amŋa-rigda</i>	
	'having only a mouth'	
	{the negative evaluation of a person who talks incessantly}	
adjective	<i>aja-rigda=βa</i>	<i>si:nma-kal</i>
	good-EVAL=PART	choose-IMPR.2SG
	'pick only a good one'	
numeral	<i>tunŋa-gda</i>	
	'only five'	
pronoun	<i>nuŋa-rigda</i>	
	'only he'	
participle	<i>ikə-ʒə-ri:-rgə</i>	
	sing-IMPF-P.SIMUL-EVAL	
	'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 *-kun-*, 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) *haβal-ka:kut-ča-ra-n.*  
work-EVAL-IMPF-AOR-3SG 'He is really working hard.'  
{also interpretable as affectionate, depending on the context}

9. *-jə:t* This suffix indicates intensive action:

- (135) *ŋənə-jə:t-čə-rə-n.*  
go-EVAL-IMPF-AOR-3SG 'He is going and going.'
- (136) *ʒəβ-ʒə-jə:t-čə-rə-n.*  
cat-A.STAT-EVAL-IMPF-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 converbs. This is a productive formation. Frequently used qualitative adverbs are *ajat* 'well'; *usat*, *ərut* 'badly'; *himat* 'quickly'; *e:mbut* 'weakly'; *gorot* 'far away'.

**Spatial adverbs** are actually frozen forms of nouns and pronouns, frozen in one of the spatial cases (the dative, locative, prolativ, elative, allative and ablative). For example, we find adverbs: (1) in the dative (*-du*): *amardu*: 'behind'; *di:gida:du*: 'above/up along the slope'; *ŋe:gida:du*: 'below along the slope'; *bugadu*: 'at the side'; (2) in the ablative (*-duk*) such as: *amarduk* 'from behind'; *di:gida:duk* 'from above'; *ŋe:gida:duk* 'from below'; *bugaduk* 'from the side'; (3) in the locative (*-IV*): *amarla*: 'behind'; *di:gida:lə*: 'up above'; *ŋe:gida:lə*: 'below'; *bugala*: 'at the side'; (4) in the allative (*-tki*): *amargida:tki*: 'behind'; *di:gida: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:rtiki*: 'where to' [ALL]; *i:lə*: 'where to' [LOC]; *i:li*: 'along what' [PROL]; *i:rgit*: 'where' [ELA]; *i:duk*: 'where from' [ABL].

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

<i>tirga, inəŋ</i>	'during the day'
<i>tima:nna, təgəltənə</i>	'in the morning'
<i>dolboltono, si:ksə,</i> <i>a:hiltana</i>	'in the evening'
<i>ti:niβə</i>	'yesterday'
<i>tima:tənə, təgəmi:</i>	'tomorrow'
<i>əsitkə:n</i>	'now'
<i>nonon, utə:lə</i>	'formerly'
<i>ələkəs, ŋogu:t</i>	'first'
<i>amargu:t</i>	'then'
<i>anŋanma:n</i>	'this year'
<i>ge:βanŋan</i>	'last year'
<i>goči:n</i>	'next year'

The temporal adverbs used to refer to the seasons are:

<i>tugə</i>	'in the winter'
<i>žuga</i>	'in the summer'
<i>nəlki</i>	'in the [first half of] spring'
<i>ŋəŋŋə</i>	'in the [second half of] spring'
<i>bolo</i>	'in the fall'

## 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 as 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) *čalban=ŋu taβar?*  
birch=PART that 'That's a birch, right?'

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

- (138) *tiku-l-la-n=da,* *ŋənə-rə-n.*  
get.angry-INGR-AOR=PART leave-AOR-3SG 'He got mad and left.'

- (139) *ami:n-mi:=da,* *əni:n-mi:=də:* *minə-βə so:t* *aja:βu-ŋki-tin.*  
father-POSS=PART mother-POSS=PART 1SG-ACC very love-DPST-3PL  
'My father and my mother loved me very much.'

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

- (140) *bi:=də:*, *si:=də:* *ətə:rəp bira-ka:n-ma* *hətəkən-ə.*  
1SG=PART 2SG=PART NEG river-DIM-ACC jump.across-RA  
'Neither you nor I can jump across the stream.'

3. =*kat*/=*kət*/=*kot* is similar in function to =*dV* in affirmative utterances, where it can be translated as 'and'; in negative utterances it can be translated as 'even':

- (141) *hutə-β=kət so:t* *mərgə:-l-čə:*.  
child-POSS.1SG=PART very be.sad-INGR-P.ANT  
'And my child started being very sad.'

- (142) *min-du:=kət kolbo-du:* *burduk-ja* *əčir* *əmə:n-ə* *bisi-s.*  
1SG-DAT=PART grain.house-DAT flour-ACC.INDF NEG leave-RA be-2PL  
'You didn't leave any flour in the storehouse for me.'

4. =*ti* is used for confirmation or affirmation:

- (143) *si:=ti,* *amŋa-s* *do:ldiβ-žə-ra-n.*  
2SG=PART mouth-POSS.2SG hear-IMPF-AOR-3SG  
'Only your voice is heard.'

5. =*βal*/=*βəl*/=*βol* conveys a shade of indefiniteness; it is found most frequently with pronouns and pronominal adverbs, and sometimes with numerals:

- (144) *kə,* *si:=βəl* *ono:-kol.*  
well 2SG=PART go.look.for.deer-IMPR-2SG  
'Well, [perhaps/at least] you go look for reindeer.'

6. =*ŋu:n* is used to signal limits or bounds and can often be translated as 'only':

- (145) *ožo:ki:tpa-tin=ŋu:n,* *ə-kəl* *omŋo-ro.*  
prohibition-POSS.3PL=PART NEG-IMPF.2SG forget-RA  
'Just don't forget their prohibitions.'

7. =*kə* has contrastive force, and can be translated as 'but' or contrastive 'and':

- (146) *i:-lə:=kə* *amin-ti* *ŋənə-rə-n?*  
where-LOC=PART father-POSS.1PLin go-AOR-3SG  
'But where did our father go?'

8. =*kana*:/=*kənə*:/=*kono*: signals contrast, roughly equivalent to English 'but' or 'and':

- (147) *umnə:t* *ŋina* *gogo-l-lo-n,* *bi:=kənə:* *olo-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 uninflected 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 function as independent clauses. The most frequently used exclamatory particles are:

SURPRISE	<i>kə!</i>	'well!'
	<i>ʒə!</i>	'well!'
	<i>o!</i>	'oh!'
DISAPPOINTMENT	<i>ojo!</i>	'oh!'
	<i>o: -ʒə!</i>	'what!'
TO A DOG	<i>pa!</i>	(for disappointment or surprise)
CALLING A DEER	<i>čə!</i>	'away!'
	<i>ma!</i>	'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:

<i>iḡine:!</i>	'oh, how cold!'	<i>čipire:!</i>	'how noisy!'
<i>hiβine:!</i>	'how upsetting!'	<i>mačare:!</i>	'how fat!'

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

<i>a:ma:!</i>	'oh, so sleepy!'	<i>ʒəmo:!</i>	'so hungry!'
<i>dərumo:!</i>	'oh, so tired!'	<i>ḡəlumo:!</i>	'how scary!'

3. *-a:-ə:-o:*

<i>haktira:!</i>	'It's so dark!'	<i>həko:!</i>	'It's so hot!'
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4. *-βse:*

<i>oloβse:!</i>	(fright)	<i>ḡəloβse:!</i>	'how frightening!'
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5. *-ma:jə:/mə:jə:*

<i>ičəmə:jə:!</i>	'how awful to look at!' (from <i>ičə-</i> 'look')
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## 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 adjuncts are most generally in clause-initial position. When there are two such adjuncts, 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:

[temporal/spatial]—[subject]—[oblique object]—[direct object]—[manner adverbial]—[predicate]

This basic word order is illustrated in (148):

- (148) *aḡnan-ma:-n* *ḡirki-β* *kətə* *ḡuʒəji-pčəu-l-βə*  
 year-EVAL-3SG friend-POSS.1SG many beautiful-ADJ-PL-ACC  
*ḡəkə:-l-βə* *əja-t* *bul̄ta:-ra-n*  
 sable-PL-ACC good-ADV hunt-IMPF-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) *i:-lə:* *kḡgaka:-r* *tuksa-ʒa-ra?*  
 where-LOC child-PL run-IMPF-AOR  
 'Where are the children running to?'

- (150) *o:kin* *ʒa-l-ti* *mit-tulə:* *nulḡi-ʒəḡə:-tin?*  
 when relative-PL-POSS.1PLin 1PL-LOC wander-FUT.1-3PL  
 '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) *i:du:* *ʒuga* *si:* *bi-čə:-s?*  
 where-DAT summer 2SG be-PST-2SG  
*ʒu:-du:-βi:* *ʒuga* *bi:* *bi-čə:-β.*  
 house-DAT-REFL summer 1SG be-PST-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 *ʒu:-du:-βi: bi-čə:-β* 'I was at home' or simply *ʒu:-du:-βi:* 'at home' would be appropriate.

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

- (152) *ḡənə-kəllu* *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) *hutə,* *bəlat-kəl!* *əja-t* *haβal-kallu!*  
 child help-IMPR.2SG 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) *ḡama-ha:l-ba* *ui:-rə-β,* *sir-ra-β,* *ti:n-ə-β,*  
 female.deer-PL-ACC tie-AOR-1SG milk-AOR-1SG let.go-AOR-1SG



*tar inəŋi: manaβ-ra-n*  
so day end-AOR-3SG  
'I tied the deer, milked her and let her go; thus ended the day.'

Particles may also be used in coordination; =*da* is one of the most common (155), although other particles, such as =*βəl* and =*mal* are used also (156):

(155) *tolgoki:-l-ba=da suskillā-l-ba=da ajat nə:-kəllu*  
sled-PL-ACC=PART ski-PL-ACC=PART good-ADV place-IMP.R-2PL  
'Put the sleds and the skis away well.'

(156) *bi:=βəl nuŋan=mal sin-dulə: əmə-žəŋə:-βun.*  
1SG=PART 3SG=PART 2SG-LOC come-FUT.1-1PLex  
'Either s/he or I will come [visit] you.'

There are relatively few conjunctions in Evenki. The most commonly used are *taduk* 'then', 'and', 'but'; *tarit* 'therefore'; *tə:li:* 'then (at that time)'; *emi:-βəl* '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: taduk girki-β ollo-mo:-čə:-βun.*  
1SG then friend-POSS.1SG fish-go-PST-1PLex  
'My friend and I went fishing.'

(158) *əmə-mi: taduk a:sin-i-m.*  
come-P.COND then sleep-1SG  
'I arrived and then I fell asleep.'

(159) *so:t tigdə-l-čə:-n, tarit bu: ə-čə-βun nulgi-rə.*  
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:lčat-kal, tə:li taŋ-žəŋə:-β.*  
listen-IMPR.2SG then read-FUT-1SG  
'Listen and then I'll read.'

(161) *nimə:k-i-β aja bi-čə:-n, e:mi:-βəl nuŋan-ma:-n*  
neighbor-POSS.1SG good be-PST-3SG but 3SG-ACC-3SG  
*ə-ŋki-tin aja:β-ra.*  
NEG-PST.ITER-3PL love-RA  
'My neighbor as good but no one liked him.'

Certain pronouns often function as conjunctions: *i:du:* 'where'; *i:lə:* 'whither'; *o:n* 'how'; *o:kin* 'when'; *e:ma* 'which', for example. These often occur in doublets as well, conjoining clauses: *i:du: . . . tadu:* 'where . . . there' or *o:kin . . . tə:li* 'when . . . then'.

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

(162) *gələktə-rə-n, gələktə-rə-n, i ba:-rə-n baka-mi:.*  
look-AOR-3SG look-AOR-3SG and unable-AOR-3SG find-P.COND  
'He looked, looked, and couldn't find [it]'

(163) *sato tak aja*  
but so good  
'But it's so good'

#### 9.4 Agreement patterns

Literary Evenki is characterized by complete agreement of the modifiers with the noun:

*gugda-l-du: mo:-l-du:*  
high-PL-DAT tree-PL-DAT  
'in the high trees'

However, in most dialects adjectives agree in number only, and do not show case agreement (for example *gugda-l-ə mo:-l-du:*):

Demonstrative pronouns agree for number only:

*əri-l-ə bira-l-βa*  
this-PL-ə river-PL-ACC 'these rivers'

In contrast, numerals show case agreement, while the nouns are obligatorily plural:

*tunŋa-βa omo:lgi-l-βa*  
five-ACC boy-PL-ACC 'five boys'

In Eastern dialects, personal pronouns replace possessive pronouns as determiners:

<i>min-ŋi:</i> POSS.1SG-PL-ə 'my friend'	<i>girki-β</i> friend-1SG	<i>bi: girki-β</i> 1SG friend-1SG 'my friend' ( <i>lit.</i> 'I friend')
<i>sin-ŋi:</i> POSS.2SG-PL-ə 'your friend'	<i>girki-s</i> friend-2SG	<i>si: girki-s</i> 2SG friend-2SG 'your friend' ( <i>lit.</i> 'you')

In these constructions, the personal pronoun does not take case inflection:

*si: girki-du:-s*  
2SG friend-DAT-2SG

*Izafet*<sup>9</sup> is a special type of syntactic coordination which is widespread in Evenki. The term *izafet* is used to refer to the morphological marking of syntactic dependency; in Evenki (as in other Tungusic languages), the head of the construction is marked. It is used to signal a relationship between two terms only, and occurs most frequently in those situations when the dependent is a noun or pronoun. The head of this construction is morphologically marked with either a personal or reflexive possessive suffix, which signals the dependency relationship between the head and its dependent:

*amin-mi: aβun-i-n ŋi: žu:-n*  
father-POSS.1SG hat-3SG who house-3SG  
'my father's hat' 'whose house'

<sup>9</sup>*Izafet* is a term borrowed from Turkic linguistic traditions and is also found in some Indo-Iranian languages (e.g. Persian, Tadjik). It was first used in reference to Tungusic constructions by Avrorin (1960).



*nugartin*      *əβi:kə:-r-tin*  
3PL              toy-PL-3PL  
'their toys'

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:*      *ɲa:la-n*  
second hand-3SG  
'of the second hand'

*bira*      *baɣida:-du:-n*  
river      opposite.side-DAT-3SG  
'on the side of the river'

### 9.5 Sentences with participles and converbs

Constructions with participles and converbs 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:

- (164) *əni:*      *min-du:*      *ulli-nə-βə:-n*      *e:da:*      *si:*      *ga-nni?*  
mother 1SG-DAT      sew-P.PERF-ACC-3SG      why      2SG      take-2SG  
'Why did you take that which my mother sewed for me?'

Note here in the Evenki text, the participle *ullinəβə:n* fulfills the function served by a relative clause in English. Consider the following example:

- (165) *ʒa:-l-ti*      *bi-ʒə-ri:-lə:-tin*      *tima:tna*      *mit*      *ɲənə-ʒəɣə:-t*  
relative-PL-POSS.1PLin      be-IMPR-P.SIM-LOC-3PL      tomorrow 1PLin      go-FUT.1-1PLin  
'Tomorrow we will go [to the place where] our relatives live'

Constructions with converbs, especially those with the personal converbs, are syntactically more similar to subordinate clauses than are participial constructions. Brodskaja (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 is often conveyed through intonation, phrase order, and conjunctions or conjunctive particles. Complex sentences can be divided into subordinated and non-subordinated.

- (166) *ədin*      *ədin-i-l-lə-n,*      *tigdə*      *tigdə-l-lə-n,*      *boloni:*      *əmə-rə-n.*  
wind      wind-INGR-AOR-3SG      rain      rain-INGR-AOR-3SG      fall      come-AOR-3SG  
'Wind started to blow, it started to rain—fall had come.'

- (167) *asi:-ɣi-β*      *ʒu:-du:-βi:*      *huta-l-nu:n-mi:*      *təɣəč-i-pki:*  
woman-ALIEN-POSS.1SG      house-DAT-REFL      child-PL-COM-REFL      sit-P.HABT  
*bi:*      *haβal-ʒa-m.*  
1SG      work-IMPF-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:

*oron*                      'domestic reindeer'  
*bagda:ku:*              'wild deer'  
*ɲami:*                    'female deer'  
*siru:*                     'male deer'  
*aktaki:*                 'castrated deer'  
*sačari:*                 'year-old female deer'  
*umiri:*                 'lead deer without calf'  
*βagɣaj*                 'sterile lead deer' (female)  
*aβlaka:n*                'male deer of 1-2 years in age'  
*gərbičə:n*               'male deer of 3 years in age'  
*ugučak, u:kčak,*  
*u:čak*                    'riding deer'  
*ɲo:garka: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 *skovoroda*, E *koβordo* 'frying pan' or R *rubafka*, E *urbakə* 'shirt', and there is a tendency toward open syllables, as in R *xleb*, E *kuləp* 'bread' or R *patron*, E *patoron* '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

- So:*      *goro*      *aŋɣani:-du:*      *ʒu:r*      *nəku:-nən*      *a-ha:l*  
very      far      year-DAT      two      younger-sibling-DUAL      woman-PL
- bi-ʒə-čə:-tin*      *ʒu:-ri:-kə:n.*      "Ami:!"      *gun-də:-tin,*  
live-IMPR-AOR-3PL      two-COLL-DIM      father      say-CVP.PURP-3PL



3. *amin-tin=da* *a:čin*, “*əni!*” *gun-də:tin*, *ənin-tin* *a:čin*.  
father-3PL=PART NEG mother say-CVP.PURP-3PL, mother-3PL NEG
4. *Umnə:-kə:n* *əkin-dəgu:* *təβlə:-čə:* *təβukta-βə*,  
one-day older-EV go.collect-P.ANT berry-ACC
5. *ge:* *žu:-du:-βi:* *əmə:nmu-čə:*.  
other home-DAT-REFL stay-P.ANT
6. *Təβli:-žə-nə*, *təpkən-mə* *də:ldi-ča:*, *e:-duk-ta* *i:g-dí:* *i:g*,  
collect-IMPV-CVI.SIM shout-ACC hear-P.ANT what-ABL-PART loud-ADJ sound
7. *kalan-ma* *čəŋki-ža-ri:-gači:n=ŋu*, *e:kun-ŋači:n=ŋu* *i:g-βə*  
pot-ACC peck-IMPV-AOR-EVAL.CMP=PART what-EVAL.CMP=PART sound-ACC
8. *də:ldi-ča:* *tar* *i:g-βə* *də:ldi-ksa:-ka:n*, *žu:-tki:-βi:* *tuksa-na*  
hear-P.ANT that sound-ACC hear-CVI.ANT-DIM house-ALL-REFL run-CVI.SIM
9. *əmə-nə-n*. *Araǰ<sup>10</sup>* *bəjə=də* *ə-čə* *bi-hi*, *e:kun=da*  
come-P.PF-3SG turn.out person=PART NEG-P.ANT be-P.SIM what=PART
10. *ə-čə* *bi-hi* *ollo:n-du:-βi:* *ukčala-hini-ksa:*, *umun* *e:ha-či:*  
NEG-P.ANT be-P.SIM hook-DAT-REFL sit-NEG-P.ANT one eye-ADJV
11. *ojo-du:-βi:*, *umun* *halga-či:* *nugan-tiki:-n* *dək-čə:*.  
top.head-DAT-REFL one leg-ADJV 3SG-ALL-POSS.3SG fly-P.ANT
12. *əkin-i-n* *bi-čə:* *ŋə:lə-l-i-ksə:* *təpkə-t-tə-n:*  
older.sister-POSS.3SG be-P.ANT fear-INGR-CVI.ANT shout-A.DUR-PST-3SG
13. “*əmə-kəl* *hima:t* *min-dulə:!*” *Tu:ksa-ža-hin-a* *dikən-də:-βər*.  
come-IMPR.2SG quickly 1SG-ALL run-IMPV-A.INCEP-PST hide-CVP.PURP-REFL
14. *tar-i-ŋi-tin* *e:-duk-ta* *hima* *bokon-žigo:-n* *ər-ti*,  
that-ALIEN-POSS.3PL what-ABL-PART fast catch.up-FUT.1-3SG this-PART
15. *ər-ti*, *žaβa-žaŋa:-n*. *Nəku:n-dəgu:* *so:* *žal-i-či:* *bi-čə:*,  
this-PART grab-FUT.1-3SG yg.sister-EVAL very head-ADJV be-P.ANT
16. *əki:n-dəgu:* *so:* *poro:k* *huna:t* *tuksa-ža-na-l*  
old.sister-EVAL very capricious girl run-IMPR-CVI.ANT-PL
17. *tuksa-ža-na-l*, *bira-nža:-la:* *dagama-ča:-l*. *Tar* *bira-nža:-βa*  
run-IMPR-CVI.ANT-PL river-AUG-ALL approach-P.ANT-PL this river-AUG-ACC
18. *o:n=da* *ə-ŋə:t-i-l* *daβ-ra*. *Nəku:n-dəgu:* *gun-i-βki:*  
no.way-PART NEG-PL cross-RA yg.sister-EV.C say-P.HAB

<sup>10</sup>*araj* is a borrowing from Yakut.

19. “*Maǰi:*, *halgan-mi:* *bu:-kəl*, *bira-βa* *daβ-da:-βun!*”  
Maǰi leg-REFL.SG give-IMPR.2SG river-ACC cross-CVP.PURP-1PLExcl
20. *Maǰi:* *halgan-mi:* *bu:-čə:*, *Tar* *halgan-duli:-n* *bira-βa*  
Maǰi leg-REFL.SG give-P.ANT that leg-PROL-3SG river-ACC
21. *tigdilə:n-ə-r* *daβ-ra*. *Bira-βa* *daβ-čala:-tin*, *aβa:hi-ŋi-tin*  
log-P.PERF cross-RA river-ACC cross-CVI.ANT-3PL devil-ALIEN-3PL
22. *ər=də:t* *təpkə-l-čə:* “*Maǰi:*, *halgan-mi:* *bu:-kəl!*”  
this-PART shout-INGR-P.ANT Maǰi leg-REFL.SG give-IMPR.2SG
23. *Maǰi:* *gun-i-βki:* “*urbaka-du:-βi:* *ti:lə-žə-m!*” *Tar maǰi:*  
Maǰi say-P.HAB shirt-DAT-REFL look.for.lice-IMPV-1SG that devil
24. *huni:l-ba* *mula:n-čə*, *huni:-l* *tuksa-maldo:-da:-tin*. *Aβa:hi* *gun-i-βki:*  
girl-PL-ACC pity-P.ANT girl-PL run-A.QA-CVP.PURP-3PL devil say-P.HAB
25. *ŋa:n=da:t:* “*Kə*, *so:t*, *atirka:n*, *halgan-mi:* *bu:kəl!*”  
again-PART PART very old.woman leg-REFL.SG give-IMPR.2SG
26. “*Hərki-čə:n-du:-βi:* *ti:lə-žə-m!*” *žə*, *huni:-l* *tuksa-ča:-l*  
pants-DIM-DAT-REFL.SG look.for.lice-IMPV-1SG INTER girl-PL run-P.ANT-PL
27. *tuksa-čə:-l* *aβa:hi-duk* *goro-l-čə:-l*. *žə*, *təli* *maǰi:* *halgan-mi:*  
run-P.ANT-PL devil-ABL far-INGR-P.ANT-PL PART then devil leg-REFL.SG
28. *bu:-čə:*. *Halgan-mi:* *bu:-čə:lə:-n*, *maǰi:* *halgan-duli:-n* *aβa:hi*  
give-P.ANT leg-REFL.SG give-CVP.ANT-3SG devil leg-PROL-3SG devil
29. *daβ-u-l-čə:*. *Daβ-ža-na*, *gun-i-βki:* “*Si:-mi:* *halgan-ni*  
cross-INGR-P.ANT cross-IMPV-CVI.SIMUL say-P.HAB 2SG-EVAL leg-POSS.2SG
30. *minə-βə* *ə-nə* *ke:j-ra* *kapu-rga-žaŋa:-n*. *Maǰi:* *he:nni-ksa:*,  
1SG-ACC NEG-CV hold-RA break-D.REFL-FUT.1-3SG Maǰi get.angry-CVI.ANT
31. *halgan-mi:* *ma:n-čə:* *aβa:hi-ŋi-n* *bira-la:* *hukəlčə-čə:*.  
leg-REFL.SG pull-P.ANT devil-ALIEN-3SG river-LOC fall-P.ANT
32. *Hukəlčə-ksə:-kə:n*, *təpkə-čə:* “*Bi:* *giramna-l-bi:*, *bi:* *təti:-l-bi:*,  
fall-CVI.ANT-DIM shout-P.ANT 1SG bone-PL-REFL.SG 1SG clothes-PL-REFL.SG
33. *bi:* *unta-l-bi:* *upkat* *uha-t* *o:kallu* *sulama:-l*  
1SG fur.boot-PL-REFL.SG all bad-INST become-IMPR.2PL fox-PL
34. *o:-kallu*, *ŋanmakta-l* *urgakta-l*, *bəjə* *sə:ksə-βə:-n*  
become-IMPR.2PL mosquito-PL gadfly-PL person blood-ACC-POSS.3SG
35. *um-ni:-l* *o:kallu.*” *Tikə:n* *gu:n-žə-nə*,  
drink-P.SIMUL-PL become-IMPR.2PL so say-IMPV-CVI.SIMUL
36. *əjə-čə:* *aβa:hi*.  
drown-P.ANT devil



## 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.<sup>11</sup>

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: "Maŋi give us your leg, so that we can cross the river."

Maŋi 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: "Maŋi, give your leg!"

Maŋi said: "I'm looking for lice in my shirt."

This was because Maŋi took pity on the girls and wanted to help them run away.

The devil said again: "Well, be quick, old woman, give me your leg."

"I'm looking for lice in my underpants."

Well, the girls ran and ran and got far from the devil. Then Maŋi 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 Maŋi's leg. As he was crossing, he said: "Your [lousy] leg won't hold me, it will break!"

Maŋi 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.

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<sup>11</sup>The devil "Maŋi" of this story is often a hero in Evenki folktales. For the Evenki of Sakhalin, Maŋi is the spirit of the earth, frequently portrayed in the form of an old woman.

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The *Coursebook in Feature Geometry* is an undergraduate course introducing students to current phonology through a sustained use of the Feature Geometry framework. It is written as a coherent, accessible, and well-illustrated introduction to the key ideas of Feature Geometry, focusing on rules of assimilation. In its 20 units and 40 exercises, it takes the reader step-by-step through the representational devices of Feature Geometry. The *Coursebook* attempts to present the core ideas of Feature Geometry in a unified way, rather than attempting to incorporate the (considerable) debate concerning almost every aspect of the theory. The version of Feature Geometry underlying the *Coursebook* is basically that found in Sagey's *The Representation of features in non-linear phonology* (1990), revised in accordance with the claims of Lahiri and Evans' 1991 article on *Palatalization and coronality*.

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