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**ERIKA KÖRTVÉLY**

# **Verb conjugation in Tundra Nenets**

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# 1. Introduction

## *1.1. The aims and framework of this dissertation*

The aim of my dissertation is to provide a comprehensive analysis and overview of Tundra Nenets verb conjugation both from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective. The synchronic investigation aims to describe the verb conjugation types of Tundra Nenets and their use as well as to briefly outline the pragmatic functions of the choice of verb conjugation types. The diachronic part of my dissertation describes the development of Tundra Nenets verb conjugations, their origins in Proto-Uralic, and the history of the inflectional affixes.

Even though in the case of Uralic languages it is obvious that we can speak about conjugation or even conjugations, among the world's languages it is not at all obvious that the subject (and sometimes the object) of the sentence can be referred to with verb inflections. Thus, before providing a detailed discussion of Tundra Nenets conjugation, I consider it important to also discuss conjugation as a linguistic phenomenon as well as describe the origin of the inflections in a brief typological overview (see Chapter 2).

The Tundra Nenets verb conjugation system is, of course, not an independent phenomenon and thus cannot be discussed without reference to the verb conjugation systems of other Uralic languages or of the Siberian languages which surround Nenets and which are typologically very similar to it. This makes it necessary to outline the verb conjugation systems of Uralic languages and of the languages of the same linguistic area which might have affected Tundra Nenets, and to show and analyze their similarities and differences. Besides tracing the origin of Tundra Nenets verb inflections, one of the main goals of this dissertation is to discuss and critique the theories regarding the source language origin of the three types of verb conjugations of Uralic languages (the indeterminative, the determinative, and the reflexive-medial conjugations) (see Chapters 3 and 4).

In Tundra Nenets, verbs can be grouped into four classes on the basis of their conjugations: the intransitive, the transitive, the transitive-reflexive, and the reflexive-medial. Depending on which one of the four classes the verb belongs to, its conjugation can be bound or free. Verbs belonging to the intransitive class can only take indeterminative personal affixes, and those belonging to the reflexive-medial class receive only reflexive-medial affixes. However, the verbs that belong to the transitive class can be conjugated in both the determinative and the indeterminative paradigm, and, within the bounds of the grammatical rules of the conjugations, transitive-reflexive verbs can be

conjugated in any of the four paradigms, depending on the speaker's intentions and the speech situation. The use and function of Tundra Nenets verb conjugations can be best shown through an investigation of the conjugation of verbs that do not belong to one paradigm only. In my paper I want to demonstrate that, contrary to opinions voiced in previous literature on the subject, the speaker's choice between the determinative and indeterminative conjugation is not connected with the expression of syntactic focus. A summary of the grammatical rules and tendencies operating in the choice of conjugations as well as an analysis of the conjugations in various sentences are provided in Chapter 5.

Since the results of an investigation of individual sentences do not provide a satisfactory explanation for the use of conjugations, an examination of Tundra Nenets conjugation in texts is indispensable. In this dissertation I will show the deictic use of Tundra Nenets determinative conjugation as a basic function of this conjugation and will examine a possible connection between and influence of topic-comment relations on the choice of conjugations. As, unlike in the Ob-Ugric language, in the latter there does not seem to be a clear connection, I want to underline the role of the extent of transitivity manifested in the linguistic situations and of the different intents of the speakers. Thus, the use of the reflexive-medial conjugation can most likely be explained with the logical or, sometimes, emotional, connection between the starting point of the action expressed in the sentence and its result or process (see Chapter 6).

My investigations of Tundra Nenets verb conjugations are based on the Tundra Nenets literary language and are aimed to describe this variety. My dissertation, thus, does not contain data on regional dialects of Tundra Nenets, and I do not aim to study any possible regional dialectal differences in the use of conjugations.

In this dissertation I do not aim to analyze the phonetic, morphophonetic or functional aspects of verb roots or of how verb roots and verbal personal suffixes (or other verbal inflections) attach to each other. Thus, I do not discuss verb moods, aspects or tenses, the relationships of verbal conjugation. In discussing the history of verbal personal suffixes I touch upon imperative and optative suffixes (which are considered already unanalyzable synchronically at the present time) only very briefly.



## 1.2. The data

The Tundra Nenets linguistic data I have used and analyzed for this dissertation is based on the literature on Samoyedic languages as well as on published texts. In addition to this, I have also used native speakers of Tundra Nenets to check some data and to clarify various issues in connection with the use and functions of the conjugations.

In describing the use of the determinative conjugation, especially in evaluating and systematizing data, I have received considerable help from Ljudmilla Taleeva, Tatjana Taleeva, and Margarita Latyševa, whom I met in January 2000 during their stay in Tallinn on a fellowship. Besides written sources, my overview of the relationship of the extent of transitivity and Tundra Nenets verb conjugation is based on Ljudmilla Taleeva's data. I have received much help from numerous consultations with Roza Laptander, a Nenets student at the Herzen Institute in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The published sources I have used for my dissertation are various grammars, dictionaries and anthologies of Tundra Nenets. Even though Tundra Nenets is the most studied and best described Samoyedic language, only one modern grammar of it exists, Salminen's 1997 *Tundra Nenets Inflection*. Although this work does not (aim to) deal with derivation, it is seminal for the investigation of Tundra Nenets word structure, morphophonology and morphology providing a secure base for studying verbs and their inflection. Describing Nenets phonology and morphology, Salminen's terse summary of Tundra Nenets grammar, *Nenets* (1998b), also discusses, albeit briefly, the issue of derivation.

Of the traditional grammars, Castrén (1854) provided important data and insights for my investigation of conjugation. Even though some grammatical explanations Castrén provides can no longer be accepted in the light of newer research or only with substantial criticism, his comprehensive description and presentation of the verb conjugation provides important information.

Of the Russian school of Samoyedic studies, I have found most useful Prokof'ev's 1937 grammar, Tereščenko's grammatical summaries (Pyrerka and Tereščenko 1948, Tereščenko 1947, 1956, 1965), and Kuprijanova et al.'s 1985 school grammar. Even though it often aims at simplification and normativizing, Almazova's 1961 *Samouchitel' neneckogo jazyka* provided a lot of important data for my work.

Péter Hajdú's *Chrestomathia Samoiedica* (1968) is the most complete of the traditional grammars and has the most detailed overview of the Tundra Nenets language. Familiarity with its proposed system of rules and corpus of examples is indispensable for an investigation of verb conjugation.

In my investigation of the history of Tundra Nenets verb conjugation I have used studies on this topic by Mikola, Künnap, Honti and Keresztes (see, for instance, Mikola 1998, 1998-1999, Künnap 1973, 1976, Honti 1996, 1998-1999, and Keresztes 1999, 1998-1999).

Most of the examples used in the present dissertation are from the above mentioned works. I have found Tereščenko's 1965 *Nenecko-russkij slovar'* most useful. I have organized its 9,000 example sentences for the synchronic analysis of Tundra Nenets verb conjugation presented in this paper. I have also used data from Lehtisalo (1956), Kuprijanova (1965), and Susoj (1990) as examples.

In classifying verb and verb types, I have followed Salminen's comprehensive work, *A morphological dictionary of Tundra Nenets* (1998a). (This work contains more than 19,000 Tundra Nenets words and their alternations as well as a description of their morphological structure, and is based on data from Tereščenko (1965) and Lehtisalo (1956).)

### 1.3. The Tundra Nenets phonological system and orthography

1.3.1. As Tundra Nenets is among the Samoyedic languages that have been studied for a long time and described relatively well, it has been written in various orthographic systems. Western linguists studying Nenets have been publishing works writing Nenets in Latin script, and Russian researchers have used Cyrillic, especially after the Cyrillic script has become widespread in the 1940s. Latin-based transcriptions (with the exception of Lehtisalo's phonetic one) have aimed to reflect Nenets phonemes (cf. Hajdú's, Janhunen's, and Salminen's work), while the Cyrillic script, with its relatively limited number of symbols and the adaptation of the rules of Russian, did not turn out to be capable of that. (Of the Latin-based transcriptions, Salminen's is the most modern and most precise.)

The most widely used systems used for the transcription of Nenets are illustrated in Table 1:

orthographic form	Hajdú 1968	Salminen 1997	meaning
нохо	<i>noxo</i>	<i>noxa</i>	'arctic fox'
ва"ав	<i>waʔaw</i>	<i>waqw<sup>o</sup></i>	'bed'
еҥа	<i>jeŋa</i>	<i>jenga</i>	'brook'
orthographic form	Hajdú 1968	Salminen 1997	meaning
еҥга	<i>jeŋka</i>	<i>jengka</i>	'step'
хібя	<i>xīb'e</i>	<i>xíbya</i>	'who?'
луца	<i>lūca</i>	<i>lúca</i>	'Russian'
хэм'	<i>xäemʔ</i>	<i>xæm</i>	'blood'

Table 1. A comparison of Tundra Nenets orthography and Hajdú's and Salminen's systems of transcription.

As is frequently the case in other Uralic languages, the symbols of the Cyrillic-based orthography do not correspond exactly to the actual phonemes of even the standardized, written variety of Tundra Nenets. The problems of orthography in Nenets are not as grave as in the other Northern Samoyedic languages. However, because most of my examples are from Tereščenko and I quote them in the orthography used by her, I consider it important to provide a brief overview of the relationship of the phonemic system of Nenets and the orthography.



As the title of my dissertation already suggests, the topic of my work is primarily morphological. A knowledge of phonetics and phonology, however, is indispensable in the analysis of morphological phenomena even if, as is the case here, the research is not directed primarily to the phonetic structure of word forms. As phonemes of Tundra Nenets do not correspond either in number or in their quality to the symbols of orthography used for it today, a brief overview of the differences is necessary (see Salminen 1997:31–35).

The Tundra Nenets system of consonant and vowel phonemes is as follows.

		labial	palatalized labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
oral stops	tense	<i>p</i>	<i>py</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>ty</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>q, h</i>
	lax	<i>b</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>dy</i>		
fricatives				<i>s</i>	<i>sy</i>	<i>x</i>	
affricates				<i>c</i>	<i>cy</i>		
nasal stops		<i>m</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>ng</i>	
glides		<i>w</i>			<i>y</i>		
liquids	laterals			<i>l</i>	<i>ly</i>		
	trills			<i>r</i>	<i>ry</i>		

Table 2. *The Tundra Nenets system of consonant phonemes.*

Consonants are transcribed faithfully (reflecting palatalized sounds according to the rules of Russian orthography):

phonemes	<i>m</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>ng</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>q/h</i>
(Salminen 1997)	<i>my</i>	<i>py</i>	<i>by</i>		<i>ny</i>	<i>ty</i>	<i>dy</i>	<i>cy</i>	<i>sy</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>ly</i>	<i>ry</i>	<i>ng</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>x</i>	
orthography	<i>м</i>	<i>п</i>	<i>б</i>	<i>в</i>	<i>н</i>	<i>т</i>	<i>д</i>	<i>ц</i>	<i>с</i>	<i>ӱ</i>	<i>л</i>	<i>р</i>	<i>ӥ</i>	<i>к</i>	<i>х</i>	<i>"/'</i>

Table 3. *A comparison of Tundra Nenets consonant phonemes and Cyrillic-based orthography. (Source: Salminen 1997:38)*

The Tundra Nenets system of vowels and their orthographic realization, however, do not correspond.

<b>reduced vowel</b>	$\emptyset$	
<b>schwa</b>	◦	
	<b>rounded</b>	<b>unrounded</b>
<b>high</b>	<i>u</i>	<i>i</i>
<b>mid</b>	<i>o</i>	<i>e</i>
<b>low</b>	<i>a</i>	

Table 4. The short vowel phonemes of Tundra Nenets

	<b>rounded</b>	<b>unrounded</b>
<b>high</b>	<i>ú</i>	<i>í</i>
<b>mid</b>		
<b>low</b>		<i>æ</i>

Table 5. The long vowel phonemes of Tundra Nenets

<b>phoneme (Salminen 1997)</b>	$\emptyset$	◦	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>æ</i>	<i>í</i>	<i>ú</i>
<b>orthography</b>	<i>a</i> ( <i>ǎ</i> ) <i>я</i>		<i>a, я</i>	<i>э, e</i>	<i>o, ё</i>	<i>ы, u</i>	<i>у, ю</i>	<i>э</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>у, ю</i>

Table 6. A comparison of Tundra Nenets vowel phonemes and Cyrillic-based orthography.

The most important discrepancy, in my opinion, between the orthographic system and, accordingly, the previous views on the Tundra Nenets sound system<sup>1</sup> is that the actual system of Tundra Nenets phonemes contains not only full vowels but one reduced vowel phoneme and a schwa as well.<sup>2</sup> The former is sometimes marked in the orthography (albeit very inconsistently), while the latter is not.

The diphthong *æ* as well as *í* and *ú* can be considered phonemes as well, even though none of them are marked consistently (or at all) in orthography (see Tereščenko 1965).

<sup>1</sup> I consider it important to note that sources prior to Salminen (1993) do not mention the Tundra Nenets schwa phoneme, which results in its being absent from not only the Cyrillic-based orthography but also from the Latin-based transcriptions.

<sup>2</sup> Even though I do not regard these terms very precise, I follow Salminen (1993) in using them.

1.3.2. I do not make a choice between the several systems of transcription for Tundra Nenets to be used exclusively in this paper. Thus, the examples used are given in the original form as they appear in the source work. Example sentences elicited from native speakers of the language are given in Cyrillic, following the Nenets orthography used today. Because phonological matters are irrelevant in this paper (especially in the investigation focusing on language use issues), I did not carry out a transliteration of Cyrillic forms into Latin-based transcription.

## 1.4. Terminology

1.4.1. I use the usual terminology for the description of verb conjugation and system of conjugations accepted in Uralic linguistics. However, since this terminology is not unified in all respects, I consider it necessary to briefly discuss and support the choice of the terms I have chosen to use (perhaps, in some cases, arbitrarily) from among the available variants.

The three conjugation types found in Uralic languages are referred to with several designations, depending on the author and language in question. In the Hungarian terminology they are usually called *alanyi* ('subjective' or 'indefinite'), *tárgyas* ('objective' or 'definite') and *visszaható* ('reflexive'), although, even in Hungarian, sometimes the designations *szubjektív*, *objektív* and *reflexív* are used. The last of the conjugation types has not been in the center of Uralic linguistic investigations as much as the two former types, and, thus, does not have as many alternative designations either. Since it is not only truly reflexive verbs that belong to this category but also medials as well, I consider it important to reflect this in my choice of terms as well: I use the term *reflexive-medial* instead of *reflexive* for both this conjugation type and the inflections because, although this term is perhaps somewhat more complicated, it better expresses the essence of the phenomenon.

In the literature of the much better researched indefinite and definite conjugations it is quite frequent that the term *transitive* is used instead of *objective*. There is essentially no difference between the terms mentioned so far and the terms *indeterminative* (or *indetermined*) and *determinative* (or *determined*), which are also in use. Often, as, for instance, in English, too, the terms *indefinite* and *definite* are also employed.

As I have mentioned above, I see no considerable difference between the terms *objective* and *determinative*. However, I do not regard the term *transitive conjugation* a useful one in reference to Tundra Nenets since its use could cause misunderstanding when talking about transitive phenomena or situation types. In this paper I will be using the term *determinative* for the definite conjugation and its inflections.

1.4.2. Throughout the paper, I use the thematic role designations *agent* and *patient* not only for classic agent and patient roles but also for agent-like and patient-like roles, respectively. Accordingly, in the various situation types *agent* can refer to the agent, the experiencer, a natural force, a stimulus, or a mental source, whereas *patient* can refer to the patient, the recipient, or the beneficiary. In this approach, then, *agent* refers to the source of an action or happening, and *patient* to the end point. (These latter two terms refer to the macro-roles *initiator* and *endpoint*, respectively, which appear as

two participants of the prototypical transitive situation; see, for instance, Givón 1984, Langacker 1987, and Kemmer 1993.)

1.4.3. In the part of my dissertation where I discuss issues of language use, I frequently use the term situation type, which I use in the sense of Kemmer (1993:7): “situation types can be thought of as sets of situational or semantic / pragmatic contexts that are systematically associated with a particular form of expression”.



## 2. Conjugation

It is not a general feature of the languages of the world to express the person and number of the subject in the verb. It is even less frequent for a language to refer to the object on the verb, in addition to the person and number of the subject – this is only a characteristic of agglutinative languages.

Just like nominal affixes, affixes that appear on verbs can be derivational or inflectional. Drawing a clear distinction between derivational or inflectional affixes is not unproblematic or, according to some authors (e.g. Kenesei 2000:128–133), is not even possible. In order to be able to outline the characteristics of morphemes referring to the person and number of the subject (and, sometimes, of the object) on the verb, the differences between derivational and inflectional affixes and the difficulties of separating them have to be reviewed, however briefly.

### *2.1. Derivation and inflection*

Even though derivation and inflection are not categories that can be differentiated precisely and clearly, there are guiding principles on the basis of which we can nevertheless identify an affix as derivational or inflectional in most cases. These principles are, by nature, not categorical or of general validity. (Thus, there are exceptions to each of them.)

A number of attempts have been made to separate derivational and inflectional affixes in the general linguistics literature. Most stress the role of inflections in sentence formation. Greenberg (1954:19) claims that the appearance of a derivational morpheme does not cause a change in the structure of a sentence. The same view is basically propagated by Matthews (1974) and Anderson (1982), who underline the role of inflectional morphemes in syntax. The issue is approached from a different perspective by Nida (1946:99), who characterizes derivational morphemes as “inner” formations (i.e. appearing closer to the stem than inflectional morphemes) and as being statistically more numerous in any given language than inflectional formations. Bybee (1985:83–109) describes derivation and inflections not as clearly separable categories but as forming a continuum.

Salminen (1997) does not aim to provide a precise definition of derivation and inflection but stresses the importance of “paradigm structure coherence” (51) as a criterion judged by him as most practical and, thus, most usable as a working hypothesis. According to his view, the inflectional paradigm needs to be regular, productive and

well-structured as much as possible. (On this basis, Tundra Nenets nominal case affixes should be considered inflectional affixes, as they form complete paradigms and can be combined with other categories expressing, for instance, number. This criterion is, however, not met by, for instance, Tundra Nenets derived denominal adverbs *ngæ* (essive) and *syiq* (caritive), which behave like case suffixes as far as their functions are concerned but cannot be combined with number markers.) This and similar other cases point to the fact that separating derivation and inflection is sometimes almost impossible – but, perhaps, is not even necessary. Because derivation and inflection form a continuum and cannot be defined precisely, in my opinion it is enough to have definitions of “a prototypical derivational affix” and of “a prototypical inflectional affix” and use these when categorizing affixes.

In general, we can say that inflection, unlike derivation, cannot change the part of speech categorization of the stem it operates on and does not usually change the argument structure of the stem verb. Inflections alone do not form forms that can appear as individual lexical entries. This also entails that inflections are semantically more regular (i.e. they do not form forms that would have to be entered into the lexicon separately because of their noncompositional meaning.) Unlike derivational affixes, inflections are syntactically defined, that is, there is a syntactic structure that corresponds to an inflectional morpheme – which is not the case with derivational affixes. Inflectional affixes play a role in agreement (they can attach to a syntagm as well, which derivational affixes cannot). And also, inflections can attach not only to open class items like derivational affixes, but also to pronouns. This all can be summarized in the following Table 7, from Kenesei (2000:133):

		Derivation	Inflection
<b>Changes part of speech affiliation</b>		+✓	–
<b>Changes argument structure</b>		+✓	–
<b>Semantically regular</b>		–✓	+
<b>Syntactically defined</b>	<b>involves agreement</b>	–	+✓
	<b>syntagmatically bound</b>	–	+✓
	<b>can attach to pronouns</b>	–	+✓

Table 7. The most important characteristics of derivational and inflectional affixes.

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Hungarian linguistics traditionally divides inflectional affixes of agglutinative languages like the Uralic languages into two main classes called in Hungarian *jel* and *rag*. The difference between the two is that while the latter occur as closing morphemes at the word boundary, the former do not obligatorily close the word form. (This distinction is contradicted by the fact that in Nenets and Enets past tense verb forms the past tense marker *sy°* and *ši* both traditionally categorized as *jel*, occur after verbal personal suffixes, which are traditionally categorized as *rag*.)

In the verbal paradigm, morphemes expressing the person and number of the subject (and, in some cases, those of the object, or the gender of the subject etc. if the language in question has these) are inflectional affixes, and belong, without exception, to the category *rag* in Uralic languages.

## 2.2. Verbal inflection expressing person and number in the world's languages

To the best of my knowledge, no typological study investigating the distribution of verbal person marking in the world's languages has been carried out so far. One reason for this could be that dividing inflection to *jel* and *rag* morphemes is not a widespread distinction in general linguistics. However, verbal inflection has been studied as far as its functions are concerned.

2.2.1. The first typological investigation that discusses the nature of verbal inflection is Greenberg's 1963 *Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements*. The author discusses thirty rather haphazardly selected languages and regards conclusions drawn from them as universal or at least near-universal. In the part of the paper focusing on morphological issues Greenberg talks about the ordering of the derivational and inflectional morphemes in relation to the stem but also mentions a hierarchy of occurrence of inflectional categories in the languages under investigation as well. According to him, in the languages that have verbal inflection, the following implications can be found:

tense and mood > number, person, gender marking

As Greenberg (1963) does not focus on the characteristics of verbal inflection, I will not discuss this paper in further detail in my overview of the characteristics and features of inflectional morphemes expressing the person and number of the subject and those of the object.

2.2.2. Bybee's 1985 investigation of verbal inflection is based on the slightly modified examples of Perkins (1980), taken from fifty languages.<sup>3</sup> The languages chosen for the sample have been selected very carefully so that conclusions drawn from the analysis could be valid for the world's languages in general. The range of languages is varied as far as the genetic and areal affiliations of the languages are concerned, but, in my opinion, it is still not such that could be regarded as truly general. Besides having a surprisingly high ratio of North American native American languages and isolates, the sample does not contain any Uralic language and contains only one each of Indo-European and Altaic languages. (The genetic affiliation of the representative of the

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<sup>3</sup> Perkins' work has not been published yet, so I use the data, analysis and conclusions drawn from it as referred to in Bybee (1985). Despite the fact that Bybee has slightly modified Perkins' material from the point of view of her own line of investigation, she refers to it as "the Perkins sample" throughout her work. I will use the same way of referring to Perkins' data.

latter, Korean, is also highly debated at the present.) The composition of the Perkins sample that Bybee uses is, thus, not very fortunate. A discussion of her results, however, is vitally necessary when providing an overview of investigations concerning verbal inflection, since there is, first, no other work that would be more complete or representative than Bybee's, and, second, we can gain useful or even indispensable information from it despite the disadvantages stemming from the composition of the data.

Bybee's study of verbal inflection covers fifty languages. As part of the investigation, a list of categories expressed through inflection in any of the fifty languages has been compiled (which I will discuss in more detail below), and then for each of the categories the exact and special meanings were also listed. The elements of the lists of precise meanings contain the type of inflection expressing them – which can be a suffix, a prefix, a zero morpheme, or a sound alternation in the stem. When defining each of the elements, not only the type of inflection was listed, but information regarding the ordering of morphemes was also given, and any additional information about irregular or suppletive forms and basic word order of the given language was also entered.

The main categories expressed through verbal inflection in the languages under investigation were the following: valency, genus verbi, aspect, tense, mood, gender, as well as – the most important categories from the perspective of my own investigation – person and number. The latter two categories are directed to the expression of the person and number of the subject and of the object on the verb (discussing separately direct vs. indirect objects). As my investigation of Tundra Nenets does not concern the expression of grammatical gender, tense, or mood, and touches upon morphemes affecting the argument structure, genus verbi and aspect only in as much as these can influence the various conjugations,<sup>50</sup> I will discuss only those of Bybee's results that pertain to the expression of the person and number of the subject and object.

Despite the fact that Bybee marked each major category – the person and number of the subject and object among them – for the type of inflection that expresses it in a given language, she does not provide detailed information on this when discussing her results. Thus, only the ratio of morphemes expressing the two categories in the languages under investigation is provided.

On the basis of Bybee's investigation it seems probable that the presence of verbal inflection in a language is greatly dependent on the type that the given language belongs to. Analytical languages have much less inflection than synthetic ones. Ac-

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<sup>50</sup> In Tundra Nenets, the use of the various conjugations is closely related to the transitivity expressed in the sentence. (The extent of transitivity does not, of course, exclusively define the way the conjugations are used.) With the increase of transitivity, the choice of the conjugation, the aspect, the genus verbi, and, possibly, even the argument structure of the verb changes, which, in turn, renders a separation of verbal inflections and these categories, in my opinion, impossible.

According to the Perkins sample, 28% of the languages do not have any verbal inflection at all. In these languages categories expressed through inflection in other languages are expressed, instead, by syntactic means, derivation, compounding or reduplication (cf. Bybee 1985:45).

As can be seen from the figures concerning the presence or absence of inflection in languages, in the languages of the Perkins sample more languages have inflection than do not. The category expressed most frequently by inflection in the languages under investigation is that of mood, followed by person and then by number. According to Bybee's results, 72% of the studied languages have inflectional morphemes expressing aspect, tense or mood, and only 56% have inflections referring to the subject. In those languages where the person and number of the subject are expressed by inflection, these two categories are usually inseparable since the same (synchronically unanalyzable) morpheme expresses both. The same is true of verbal inflections expressing the person and number of the object (which are actually much less frequent in the sample): only 28% of the investigated languages have them.

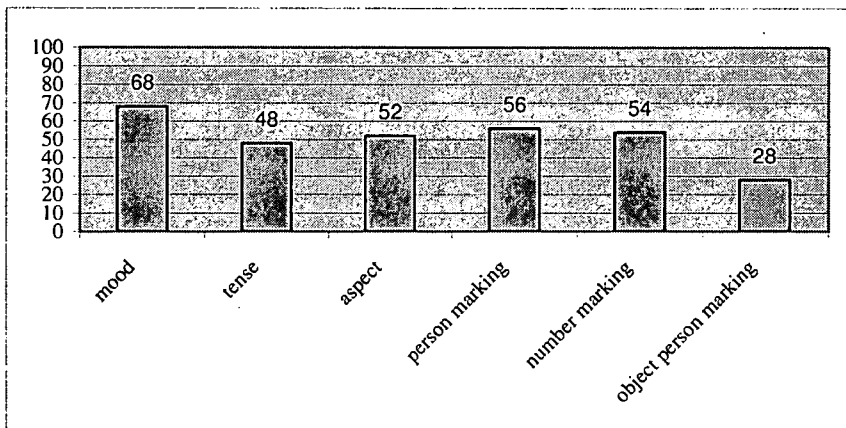


Figure 1. The distribution of the most frequent inflectional affixes in the languages of the Perkins sample (Bybee 1985:30).

In the investigated languages, the verbal inflections expressing person and number are found at the ends of verb forms, following suffixes expressing aspect, tense, and mood.<sup>5</sup> This ordering conforms with the hierarchy of occurrence of such morphemes proposed by Greenberg (1963) (see section 2.2.1 above) and confirmed by Bybee (1985). Because the morphemes expressing the person and number of the subject (or of

<sup>5</sup> I want to point out again that, unlike in the cases referred to here, both in Tundra and Forest Nenets and also in Enets there are inflectional morphemes (namely, those expressing past tense) that occur at the very end of the verb form; cf. section 2.2.

the object) are further away from the stem than other morphemes, the Perkins sample provides no example for a language where these categories are expressed by some kind of stem alternation alone. (Naturally, the possibility that attaching the inflectional morphemes in question might cause some kind of alternation in the stem cannot be excluded.)

Bybee's findings (1985:54) also contain important information regarding which inflections tend to be marked and which ones unmarked out of the verbal inflections expressing person and number in the case of languages that have these at all. In 78% of the languages investigated by her the singular number was unmarked, and only 7% had the plural number as unmarked. The dual and trial numbers, in the languages that had them, were never unmarked.

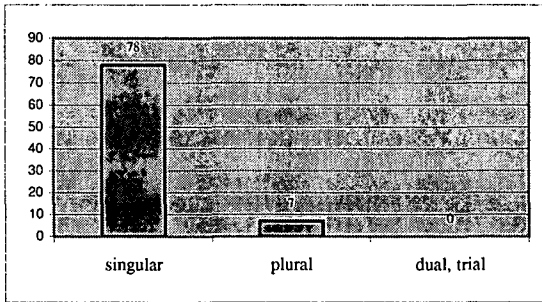


Figure 2. Inflection expressing number in an unmarked way.

As far as the expression of person – both of the subject and of the object – is concerned, the figures are more varied. In the expression of the person of the subject, the third person was found expressed by a zero morpheme in 54% of the languages, while the first person was unmarked relatively often, in 14% of the cases. The second person was unmarked in 7% of the investigated languages. In the languages that have inflections marking the person of the object, the third person was unmarked in the greatest proportion (57%) of the cases as well, and the first and second person was unmarked in 7% of the cases each.

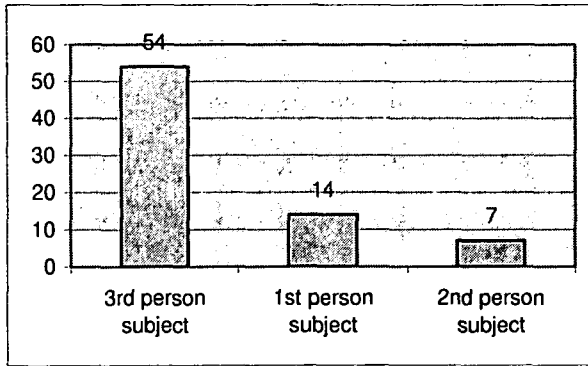


Figure 3. Inflection expressing the person of the subject in an unmarked way.

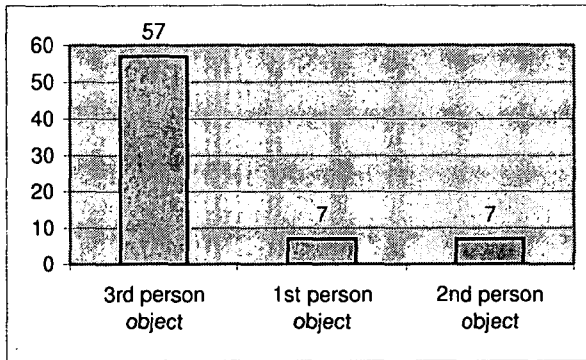


Figure 4. Inflection expressing the person of the object in an unmarked way.

As is clear from the above, Bybee's investigation provides a comprehensive picture about the frequency of occurrence of verbal inflections expressing the person and number of the subject and the object and about the proportions of these being unmarked.



### 2.3. The development of conjugation

Inflections which refer to the person and number (possibly even the gender) of the subject and, sometimes, of the object (and which I will call personal verbal inflections due to their position in the verb form) are very often the results of a process of morphologization. Just like in the case of other grammaticalization processes, their origin lies in lexemes which are able to express the person and number of the subject of the sentence. These lexemes are personal pronouns which first become cliticized and then turn into inflections in the process of morphologization:

lexeme > clitic > affix

The morphologization of personal pronouns can be studied in many languages since personal affixes usually originate in personal pronouns diachronically. In some languages, like in Buryat, discussed below, the grammaticalization of personal pronouns happened only recently, in the Modern Buryat period. Historical evidence shows that there were no personal suffixes in Old Buryat, and the person and number of the subject was expressed by a personal pronoun preceding the verb. The morphologization of the personal pronouns has been completed in this language, but their relative recency is signaled by the fact that the personal inflections transparently show their origin in the pronouns:

		personal pronoun	inflected verb	meaning
<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>би</i>	<i>ябанаб</i>	'I go'
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>ши</i>	<i>ябанаши</i>	'you [sg.] go'
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>[тэрэ]</i>	<i>ябана</i>	's/he goes'
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>бидэ</i>	<i>ябанабди</i>	'we go'
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>та</i>	<i>ябанат</i>	'you [pl.] go'
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>тэдэ</i>	<i>ябана / ябанад</i>	'they go'

Table 8. Personal pronouns and personal inflections in Buryat.<sup>6</sup>

Phenomena illustrated by the Buryat data can be found in numerous other agglutinative languages. Although it is well known that many of the world's languages do

<sup>6</sup> I thank Bajarma Khabtagaeva, a native speaker of Buryat, for information on Buryat verbal inflections and for the data included here.

not have personal verbal inflections, identifying the person and number of the subject does not cause problems. There are also languages (like Buryat) which did not have personal inflections at all and only developed a system of these relatively late. This raises the question of why and how the process of grammaticalization begins, the result of which is the development of the system of personal verbal inflections in languages that previously did not have it.

In connection with Mongolian possessive personal affixes, Comrie (1980) identifies three factors that can aid the morphologization of personal pronouns. The first of these stems from the unifying tendencies of agglutinative languages: as suffixation is a common process in such languages, previously unsuffixed word classes begin to receive suffixes by analogy with other word classes. Another factor identified by Comrie are prosodic phenomena. In Mongolian languages no unstressed element can precede the head of a syntactic unit. Thus, if speakers want to emphasize the possessor in a possessive construction, they have to use a different form than when emphasizing the thing possessed. In the latter case the thing possessed needs to precede the possessor, which, at least as far as the ordering is concerned, can serve as the possibility for the beginning of the morphologization.

Classical Mongol	<i>minü morin</i> 'MY horse'
	<i>morin minü</i> 'my HORSE'
Kalmyk	<i>mörem</i> 'my horse'
	<i>minī mörem</i> 'my horse'

(source: Comrie 1980: 90)

The third possible factor is syntactic and concerns the basic word order of the languages in question. If a language has VO as its basic word order, it usually allows the separation of the heads of syntactic units from their direct complements by other words. Thus, if the possessor precedes the thing possessed, the two do not obligatorily have to occur next to each other. This, however, is not possible if the possessor follows the thing possessed – so in such cases their ordering and occurrence next to each other become permanent.

It is not, of course, possible to expect that the factors described by Comrie in connection with the development of the system of possessive personal paradigm in Mongolian languages be equally valid for all processes of grammaticalization, but, in my opinion, they can play an important role in the development of verb conjugations as well as in possessive personal affixes, since the only significant difference between the two phenomena is that the former is verb-based while the latter is noun-based.

As we will see below, systems of verb conjugations in Uralic languages are results of the morphologization of Proto-Uralic personal or demonstrative pronouns, regardless of the fact whether the given language has one or more verb conjugations. (It is, however, not the case that every verbal personal ending can be traced back to a proto-language pronoun, since other elements – e.g. derivational suffixes and analogy – have played an important role as well.)



### 3. The development of Tundra Nenets conjugation

The development of Tundra Nenets conjugation is not a feature inherited solely from Proto-Uralic. An important role was played in its development by the linguistic environment and various internal linguistic changes. In order to be able to carry out an investigation of the possible proto-language origin of the modern Tundra Nenets verb conjugations I will now outline and briefly overview the system of conjugations in the Uralic languages. Since, as I will show in detail below, as far as their most essential features are concerned, the Tundra Nenets conjugations can be traced back to the proto-language, I will discuss Tundra Nenets conjugations together with those of other Uralic language, providing a comparative analysis.

Tundra Nenets cannot be separated completely from the related languages of the same linguistic area that have affected it throughout its individual development (like Khanty, Komi, Enets and Nganasan) or from the typologically similar languages of the same area that belong to other language families either. Thus, after discussing the conjugations of Uralic languages, I will also outline the conjugations of Yukaghir, Yakut, Evenki, and Chukchi. I will also briefly sketch out the conjugation of Ket, which is not typologically similar to Nenets but has in various respects influenced Samoyedic languages.

#### *3.1. The conjugations of Uralic languages*

As is well known, there are Uralic languages that have a determinative conjugation in addition to the indeterminative one, through which – with the help of verbal personal suffixes – these languages can refer to the person and number of the object as well as those of the subject.

No objective conjugation can be traced at all in the Baltic-Finnic languages. In Permian languages there are signs that point to the possibility that these languages used to have the means to differentiate between transitive and intransitive verb forms in earlier times, even if only in a limited way (Rédei 1998–1999: 125). Mari also has verb forms which, albeit very tentatively, might have possibly been used to express, on the verb, the presence of the object (Mikola 1998–1999: 121). There is a separate determinative verbal paradigm in Mordva, in the Ob-Ugric languages, and in the Samoyedic languages. In the languages of the northern branch of the latter, there are not two but three different conjugations – separate both morphologically and as far as their functions are concerned: an indeterminative, a determinative as well as a reflexive-medial

conjugation. Phenomena close to the latter conjugation, at least in its function, are the *-ik* conjugation of Hungarian (see Helimski 1982: 70–83) or the system of Baltic-Finnic personal verbal suffixes, categorized by Posti (1961 and 1980) as reflexive, which carry a medial meaning. As objective and reflexive-medial conjugations (which sometimes do not, however, form complete paradigms) can be found in some Uralic languages but not in others, the question that needs to be answered is whether these verbal categories (conjugation types) originate in the proto-language or are the result of coincidental and independent parallel development.

In Uralic linguistics, there is a considerable body of literature discussing the proto-language origin of the objective conjugation. According to some researchers (cf. Janhunen 1982: 35, Honti 1996), the proto-language already had the possibility to refer to a definite object with a verbal suffix. Others (e.g. Hajdú 1966:7 4–77) accept the existence of the bases of an objective conjugation, while, for example, Keresztes (1999), on the basis of Mordva, considers the development of the determinative paradigm the result of independent development and, out of the personal verbal endings, considers only the third person singular suffix as originating in the proto-language. Attempts have been made to trace the origin of the reflexive-medial conjugation (cf. Posti 1980, Mikola 1984 and 1988), but, unlike works addressing the issue of the objective conjugation, these have not prompted much debate in Uralic linguistics.

Uralic languages can be categorized in four different groups depending on what types of conjugations they have. Languages in the first group have only one conjugation, the indeterminative conjugation<sup>7</sup> (e.g. Saami). The second group comprises languages that have the indeterminative and determinative conjugations (e.g. Mordva). The third group contains languages that have indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations (e.g. Veps), while the fourth group includes languages with indeterminative, determinative and reflexive-medial conjugations (e.g. Nganasan).

### *3.1.1. Uralic languages with only one conjugation*

Determining which of the Uralic languages existing today have only one verbal paradigm is quite problematic. If we examine the standard variety of the language (in the cases where there exists such a variety), we get a very different result than if we examine the characteristics of regional dialects as well (in the case of Estonian, for

<sup>7</sup> The term "indeterminative" is not a fortunate designation in this case since in a language with only one conjugation that one conjugation is not indeterminative but general. The same is true for the languages in the third group, since in languages with the indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations the two conjugations are in opposition not based on determinativeness. However, in order to preserve a unity in the terminology, I will not modify the designations concerning the conjugations depending on their function in a given language.

instance). It is quite common in the case of both determinative and reflexive-medial conjugations that a language does not have a full paradigm, only some (often regional) verb forms which signal the (at least partial) existence of the conjugation. Because of this, in my overview of the conjugations of the Uralic languages I will consider data also from regional dialects as well as data from incomplete paradigms and use these as evidence supporting the existence of the given conjugation.

With the above caveat, the only Uralic language which has only one conjugation is Saami. However, I will also consider Finnish, Karelian, Mari, and the Permian languages as belonging to this group. Mari and the Permian languages, in their present state, do not distinguish between two functionally separable conjugation types, while Finnish and Karelian (or their dialects) do not have a real reflexive-medial conjugation, only derivational suffixes referring to reflexivity and verbal endings formed out of connecting personal verbal suffixes, which cannot be considered separate verbal paradigms.

3.1.1.1. Without wanting to provide a detailed overview of the personal verbal suffixes of Saami (or, for that matter, of any of the other Uralic languages), I only want to refer to the present tense indicative verb forms in tables below, since these provide enough indication of whether the verbal endings are of one or two functions.

*gārrât* 'tie into' (Lakó 1986: 92)

<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>gārâm</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>gārâk</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>garra</i>
<b>Dual</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>gārri</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>gārrâbæt'te</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>gārrâbâ</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>gārrâp</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>gārrâbēttit</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>gārrik</i>

Table 9. Saami conjugation.

3.1.1.2. Present day Komi and Udmurt have only one verbal paradigm each: Komi *šet-* 'give' (Rédei 1978: 81)

<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>šeta</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>šetan</i>
<b>Singular</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<i>šete</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>šetam</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>šetanniđ, šetad</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>šetenj</i>

Table 10. Komi conjugation.

Udmurt *mjini* 'go' (Csúcs 1990: 51)

<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>mjiniško</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>mjiniškod</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>mjine</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>mjiniškom(i)</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>mjiniškodj</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>mjino</i>

Table 11. Udmurt conjugation.

Even though in their present form neither Komi nor Udmurt have determinative verb forms, according to Rédei (1998–1999:125) it is possible to show historically that “an objective conjugation was under development at one time in the Permian languages as well, but this process was later stalled”.<sup>8</sup> Similarly to one of the possible ways of the development of the Mordva determinative conjugation (see section 3.1.2.3), this process must have started with past tense 3rd person forms in Permian languages as well and must have originally been in connection with the perfective-resultative nature of the action.

It is important to note, further, that in Udmurt it is possible to add the *-šk-* derivational suffix to expand the basic meaning of the verb to express greater transitivity, usually with a reflexive and medial meaning.<sup>9</sup> However, as this connection between

<sup>8</sup> In the present-day Komi third person singular preterite form there is an *-s* element which is phonologically a regular reflex of the Proto-Uralic \*sV personal pronoun. According to Rédei (1989:19), this *-s* occurs primarily on transitive verbs, although for analogical reasons it can also sometimes appear on intransitive verbs as well.

<sup>9</sup> I thank István Kozmács for pointing this out to me.



derivational and inflectional suffixes can be considered an independent conjugation type even less than the Karelian reflexive-medial verbal affixes, I do not categorize Udmurt as a Uralic language that has more than one conjugation type.

3.1.1.3. In Mari, two conjugation types can be distinguished, but this does not have any functional significance, according to the latest literature on the subject. According to this view, consonant stem verbs belong to the first conjugation type, while vowel stem verbs belong to the second. According to Serebrennikov's highly debated theory, most of the verbs belonging to the first conjugation are intransitive, while most of those belonging to the second are transitive. Based on this we cannot exclude the possibility that, similarly to Permian languages, at least the possibility of marking the object on the verb started to develop in Mari, too, as tentatively claimed by Mikola (1998–1999:121). Thus, the verb form with the *-š* inflection in the 3rd person singular preterite imperfect may have served to differentiate between transitive and intransitive verb forms at an earlier stage.

However, because the separation of verbs and conjugation types has little validity at the present stage, I categorize Mari together with Permian languages in the group of Uralic languages with one conjugation, the indeterminative one.

*tolam* 'come' and *ilem* 'live' (Bereczki 1990:53)

		eastern dialect		western dialect	
		1st conj.	2nd conj.	1st conj.	2nd conj.
<b>Singular</b>	1st	<i>tolam</i>	<i>ilem</i>	<i>tolam</i>	<i>əlem</i>
	2nd	<i>tolat</i>	<i>ilet</i>	<i>tolat</i>	<i>əlet</i>
	3rd	<i>toleš</i>	<i>ila</i>	<i>toleš</i>	<i>əlä</i>
<b>Plural</b>	1st	<i>tolana</i>	<i>ilena</i>	<i>tolana</i>	<i>əlenä</i>
	2nd	<i>toləda</i>	<i>ileđa</i>	<i>toləda</i>	<i>əleđa</i>
	3rd	<i>tolət</i>	<i>ilat</i>	<i>tolət</i>	<i>əläät</i>

Table 12. Mari verb conjugation.

3.1.1.4. Of the languages of the Baltic-Finnic branch of the Uralic language family that have only one conjugation, I will refer only to Finnish and Karelian. In literary Finnish there is only one verbal paradigm:

*istua* 'sit (down)'

<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>istun</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>istut</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>istuu</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>istumme</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>istutte</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>istuvat</i>

Table 13. Finnish verb conjugation.

In Karelian there is also only one verbal paradigm. Verbs of a reflexive or medial meaning usually receive a derivational suffix expressing reflexivity/mediality, which precedes personal verbal inflections, just like in Finnish dialects (cf. Posti 1980). Unlike, for instance, Southern Estonian, Karelian cannot be said to have a separate reflexive-medial conjugation, since the verb forms that were categorized by Mikola (1984:398) as inflected reflexive forms are just derived verbs.

Karelian (Tikhvin dialect, cited in Mikola 1984:398–399):

<b>Sg1</b>	<i>istuočen</i> 'sit.down'+reflVxSg1
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>šuoŕiečet</i> 'prepare'+reflVxSg2
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>istuoččō</i> 'sit.down'+reflVxSg3
<b>P11</b>	<i>luadiečemma</i> 'change clothes'+reflVxP11
<b>P12</b>	<i>e'lätte'iečel'tä</i> 'reside'+reflVxP12
<b>P13</b>	<i>kattuačetaa</i> 'cover oneself'+reflVxP13

Table 14. Karelian medial verb forms.

### 3.1.2. Uralic languages distinguishing between indeterminate and determinative conjugations

In the Uralic language family, the languages having two conjugations, the indeterminate and determinative conjugations, are the Ob-Ugric languages, Mordva, Selkup, and two Southern Samoyedic languages which have died by now, Mator and Kamas. Also, even though Selkup has, as a reflexive derivational suffix, the *j*-element characteristic of reflexive-medial conjugations found in Northern Samoyedic languages, it would not be valid to state that in present day Selkup there are three rather

than two conjugations. As far as it is possible to deduce from the data available on Kamas and Mator, these languages had two conjugations, an indeterminate and a determinative one.

3.1.2.1. Khanty and Mansi determinative verb forms express the person and number of the subject as well as the number of the object but do not define the person of the object any more precisely. The full paradigm of the determinative conjugation can only be found in some dialects (mostly the northern ones) of both these Ob-Ugric languages.

Mansi *toti* 'bring' (Kálmán 1976:58):

	Indeterminative	Determinative		
		one object	two objects	plural object
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>totēy<sup>u</sup>m</i>	<i>totil<sup>u</sup>m</i>	<i>totijay<sup>u</sup>m</i>	<i>totijan<sup>u</sup>m</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>totēyən</i>	<i>totilən</i>	<i>totijayən</i>	<i>totijan</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>toti</i>	<i>totite</i>	<i>totijayə</i>	<i>totijane</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>totimen</i>	<i>totil<sup>u</sup>men,</i> <i>totilamen</i>	<i>totijaymen</i>	<i>totijanamen</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>totēyən</i>	<i>totilən</i>	<i>totijayən</i>	<i>totijan</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>totēy</i>	<i>totiten</i>	<i>totijayen</i>	<i>totijanen</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>totew</i>	<i>totiluw</i>	<i>totijayuw</i>	<i>totijanuw</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>totēyən</i>	<i>totilən</i>	<i>totijayen</i>	<i>totijan</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>toteyət</i>	<i>totijanəl</i>	<i>totijayanəl</i>	<i>totijanəl</i>

Table 15. Mansi indeterminate and determinative verb paradigms.

Khanty *tu-*, *tuy* 'bring' (Honti 1984: 107):

	Indeterminative	Determinative		
		one object	two objects	plural object
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>tulām</i>	<i>tulim</i>	<i>tulāylam</i>	<i>tullam</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>tuwān</i>	<i>tulim</i>	<i>tulāylan</i>	<i>tullantul</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>tuwəl</i>	<i>tultā</i>	<i>tulyāl</i>	<i>tulāl(lā)</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>tulmān</i>	<i>tulimān</i>	<i>tulāylamān</i>	<i>tullamān</i>

	Indeterminative	Determinative		
		one object	two objects	plural object
<b>Du2</b>	<i>tulētān</i>	<i>tulētān</i>	<i>tulāylīn</i>	<i>tullīn</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>tulyān</i>	<i>tulētān</i>	<i>tulāylīn</i>	<i>tullīn</i>
<b>PI1</b>	<i>tulōy</i>	<i>tuluy</i>	<i>tulāylōy</i>	<i>tullōy</i>
<b>PI2</b>	<i>tultāy</i>	<i>tulētān</i>	<i>tulāylīn</i>	<i>tullīn</i>
<b>PI3</b>	<i>tuwālt</i>	<i>tulīl</i>	<i>tulāylal</i>	<i>tullal</i>

Table 16. Khanty indeterminative and determinative verb paradigms.

3.1.2.2.1. Of the Samoyedic languages, the three languages of the Southern Samoyedic branch (Selkup, Kamas, and Mator) have two conjugations.

Even though I categorize Selkup together with Khanty and Mansi in this group, I have to note that in Selkup the two existing conjugations are not so much connected with determinativeness and indeterminativeness<sup>10</sup> but with the transitivity of the verbs or the linguistic situation. The view proposed by Hajdú (1968:144–145), according to which indeterminative (“intransitive”) inflections can attach to both intransitive and transitive verbs while determinative (“transitive”) inflection can only attach to transitive verbs, is valid but overly general and, thus, does not provide any insight into the use of Selkup conjugations. I also have to note that the literature concerning the use and function of the Selkup determinative conjugation is by far not unanimous, and, unlike the functions of the conjugation types of the other Samoyedic languages, the rules of its usage have not been clarified by Samoyedic experts yet. The two Selkup paradigms are as follows:

*tü-* ‘arrive’ : *qo-* ‘find’ (Hajdú 1968:146)

	Indeterminative	Determinative
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>tü-ŋak</i>	<i>qo-ŋam</i> <sup>11</sup>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>tü-ŋantī</i>	<i>qo-ŋal</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>tü-ŋa / tü-ŋī</i>	<i>qo-ŋītī</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>tü-ŋej</i>	<i>qo-ŋej</i>

<sup>10</sup> It is important to add that Skribnik (2000) argues very convincingly that, contrary to previous opinions, determinativeness or indeterminativeness of the object does not affect the choice of the conjugation in Mansi either.

<sup>11</sup> In Selkup verbal personal suffixes attach to the stem with the help of the *-ŋV-* coaffix.

	Indeterminative	Determinative
<b>Du2</b>	<i>tü-ñilij</i>	<i>qo-ñilij</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>tü-ñâqi</i>	<i>qo-ñitij</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>tü-ñimit</i>	<i>qo-ñimit</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>tü-ñilit</i>	<i>qo-ñilit</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>tü-ñâtijt</i>	<i>qo-ñâtijt</i>

Table 17. The Selkup indeterminative and determinative verbal paradigms.

3.1.2.2.2. Two conjugations, the indeterminative and the determinative conjugation, can be distinguished in Kamas. The use of these conjugations is described by Castrén (1854:379) and Klumpp (2002:49–50, 77–78), although the latter does so very briefly and without going into much detail. Thus, in Kamas mostly the indeterminative conjugation was used, and determinative suffixes occurred very rarely even on transitive verbs. The two paradigms are as follows (Donner 1944:152):

*ķ'ânqzâi* 'go', *ķuŝŝêr̥* (*ķu iŝŝêr̥*) 'kill'

	Indeterminative	Determinative
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫm</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ĩm</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫl</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ul</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫi, ķ'âllẫ, ķalâ</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'uda, ķu<sup>hL</sup>l'ũda</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫb<sup>u</sup>i</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũb<sup>u</sup>i</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫl<sup>u</sup>i</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũl<sup>i</sup>i</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫg<sup>u</sup>i</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũd<sup>i</sup>i</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫbâ'</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũbâ'</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫlâ', ķalloya'</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũlâ'</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>ķ'âllẫi'e'</i>	<i>ķu<sup>vL</sup>l'ũdũn</i>

Table 18. The Kamas indeterminative and determinative verbal paradigms.

In Mator, even though the verbal personal suffixes cannot be strictly categorized into two paradigms, the two conjugation types can be distinguished on the basis of the different present tense markers that can precede them.

In Mator, three present tense markers were used: the *ŋ*, which has a reflex in other present-day Samoyedic languages and can thus be safely regarded a Proto-Samoyedic present tense marker; the *j* element, which is, according to Helimski (1997:153), a Mator innovation, at least in this function; and a possible zero present tense marker. The latter can be considered a characteristically Samoyedic feature. It is possible that, in Mator, the verb forms occurring with different present tense markers also differed from each other in function. According to Helimski (1997: 152):

“Es gibt eine augenscheinliche Disproportion im Gebrauch der ersten zwei Präsensformen bei intransitiven und transitiven Verben. Die meisten Beispiele [...] zeigen uns das *-ŋ*-Präsens bei den Intransitiva, und das *-j*-Präsens bei den Transitiva. Das *-ŋ*-Präsens bei Transitiva findet man nur ungerfähr halb so oft wie jede der zwei obigen Kombinationen, jedoch bleibt die Anzahl der Beispiele groß genug. Schließlich ist die Anzahl der Formen des *-j*-Präsens bei den Intransitiva ganz gering und [...] manche problematisch.”

As we do not have data containing full paradigms from Mator (on the basis of the surviving data, only 1st and 3rd person singular verb endings cannot be safely identified), I will illustrate Mator conjugation with a few unsystematic examples:

*джядер-г-амь* ‘go’+VxSg1 (Helimski 1997: 154)

*адым-г-а* ‘seem’+VxSg3 (Helimski 1997: 153)

*ансыансы-ямь* ‘grill meat’+VxSg1 (Helimski 1997: 157)

*кадь-ямь* ‘kill’+VxSg1 (Helimski 1997: 157)

3.1.2.3. Of the Uralic languages, Mordva has the most complex objective paradigm. In both Erzya and Moksha Mordva, the person and number of the object can be expressed with verbal inflection. The morphological structure of the verb forms is the same in Erzya and Moksha, but because verb forms of the two dialects are different, I will present the verbal paradigms of both dialects (cf. Keresztes 1999:18–19).

Erzya *palams* 'kiss'

	Indet.	Det Sg3	Det Pl3	Det Sg2	Det Pl2	Det Sg1	Det Pl1
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>palan</i>	<i>palasa</i>	<i>palasiñ</i>	<i>palatan</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	–	–
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>palat</i>	<i>palasak</i>	<i>palasiť</i>	–	–	<i>palasamak</i>	<i>palasamiž</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>pali</i>	<i>palasi</i>	<i>palasiñže</i>	<i>palatanzat</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	<i>palasamam</i>	<i>palasamiž</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>palatano</i>	<i>palasiñek</i>	<i>palasiñek</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	–	–
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>palatado</i>	<i>palasink</i>	<i>palasink</i>	–	–	<i>palasamiž</i>	<i>palasamiž</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>palit'</i>	<i>palasiž</i>	<i>palasiž</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	<i>palatadiž</i>	<i>palasamiž</i>	<i>palasamiž</i>

Table 19. Erzya Mordva verbal paradigms.

Moksha *palams* 'kiss'

	Indet.	Det Sg3	Det Pl3	Det Sg2	Det Pl2	Det Sg1	Det Pl1
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>palan</i>	<i>palasa</i>	<i>palasajñe</i>	<i>palat'ä</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	–	–
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>palat</i>	<i>palasak</i>	<i>palasajť</i>	–	–	<i>palasamak</i>	<i>palasamašť</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>palaj</i>	<i>palasi</i>	<i>palasiñe</i>	<i>palatanza</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	<i>palasamañ</i>	<i>palasamaž</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>palatama</i>	<i>palasašk</i>	<i>palasašk</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	–	–
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>palatada</i>	<i>palasašť</i>	<i>palasašť</i>	–	–	<i>palasaašť</i>	<i>palasamašť</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>palatajť</i>	<i>palasaž</i>	<i>palasaž</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	<i>palat'ädäž</i>	<i>palasamaž</i>	<i>palasamaž</i>

Table 20. Moksha Mordva verbal paradigms.

According to Keresztes (1999:107–108), there are three possible origins for the development of the extremely complex determinative conjugation in Mordva. One is a past tense verb form that originates in the verb stem and a third person personal pronoun (or, possibly, a demonstrative pronoun) agglutinated to it, which stood in opposition to an uninflected verb form (which had no pronoun agglutinated to it and, thus, did not refer to an object). Important roles were played by the 2nd person singular imperative verb forms referring to the 1st person and by a derivational suffix deriving a participial form which most likely contained a palatal sibilant.

3.1.2.4. It is clear from the above overview that in the Uralic languages that have an objective conjugation (see section 3.1.4 as well), the morphological structure of the verb forms is considerably similar, but the paradigms and the inflections do not exhibit a similarity that would signal a proto-language origin of the system of the determinative conjugation. However, there is no evidence against the proposition that at least the inception of the determinative conjugation was found already in the proto-

language. (On the possible proto-language origin of the determinative conjugation, see section 3.1.5.)

### 3.1.3. Uralic languages distinguishing between indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations

In the Uralic language family, some languages of the Baltic-Finnic branch distinguish between indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations. Even though the paradigm of the reflexive-medial conjugation is often not complete in these languages and these forms are often found only in regional dialects, the phenomenon definitely exists at the present stage of these languages.

It has been shown before that in some Baltic-Finnic languages and dialects (e.g. in Veps and Southern Estonian) there is a considerable number of verbs whose conjugation is different (at least) in indicative mood third person singular and plural from their conjugation in the corresponding literary variety:

Southern Estonian (Posti 1961: 351–352)

	indeterminative	reflexive-medial
Sg3	<i>añD</i> 'give'	<i>kazvaž</i> 'grow'
Pl3	<i>añdva?</i>	<i>kazvaze?</i>
Sg3	<i>nägè</i> 'see'	<i>nežeš</i> 'rise'
Pl3	<i>nägèvä?</i>	<i>nežeàže?</i>
Sg3	<i>tulè</i> 'come'	<i>sal'is</i> 'love'
Pl3	<i>tulèvq?</i>	<i>sal'ize?</i>

Table 21. Southern Estonian 3rd person Sg and Pl reflexive-medial verb forms.

Veps *pesta* : *pestas* 'wash : wash oneself' (Posti 1980: 111)

	indeterminative	reflexive-medial
Sg1	<i>pežen</i>	<i>pežmoi</i>
Sg2	<i>pežed</i>	<i>pežtoi</i>
Sg3	<i>pežeb</i>	<i>pežeš</i>
Pl1	<i>pežmei</i>	<i>pežmoiz</i>



	indeterminative	reflexive-medial
P12	<i>pezətęi</i>	<i>pezətqiš</i>
P13	<i>peštas</i>	<i>pezęsqi</i>

Table 22. *Veps indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugation.*

(I do not intend to provide further examples from Baltic-Finnic languages as I do not have sufficient data for a full paradigm. For examples from other Baltic-Finnic languages see Lehtinen 1999, Posti 1961, 1980, and Tunkelo 1924.)

The reflexive-medial conjugation of Baltic-Finnic languages was investigated from both a semantic and morphological aspect by Posti. According to Posti (1980), the 3rd person reflexive-medial inflections found in some Baltic-Finnic languages can be reconstructed as Sg *\*-kse(n)* and Pl *\*-kset*, where the *-k* element is a present tense marker, *-sen* a proto-language 3rd singular personal pronoun agglutinated as a person marker, and the *-t* element in the 3rd plural form a plural marker. (I have to point out that Posti does not consider the reflexive-medial conjugation and inflections of the Baltic-Finnic languages a legacy of the proto-language. On the contrary, he attributes its development to the influence of the Russian medial conjugation. As I will demonstrate in section 3.1.5 below, there is no phonological or semantic evidence that could be demonstrated to disclaim a proto-language origin, although the strong influence of the Russian language on Baltic-Finnic cannot be excluded as a possibility in this case either.)

### 3.1.4. *Uralic languages distinguishing between three conjugation types*

Of the Uralic languages, Hungarian, Nenets, Enets and Nganasan distinguish between three conjugation types: indeterminative, determinative, and reflexive-medial conjugations. Hungarian and the Northern Samoyedic languages do not behave in a clearly parallel fashion, but, as I will demonstrate, many shared features exist in them.

3.1.4.1. In Hungarian, in addition to the indeterminative conjugation there exists a determinative one, which makes reference to the third person definite object of the action. If the subject is first person singular, the *-lak* inclusive inflection (Lotz 1976: 179–184) expresses the second person object as well.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Although according to the traditions of Hungarian linguistics the *-lak* inflection is not part of the definite paradigm, I regard it as such on the basis of its function.

The reflexive-medial conjugation type is represented by the -ik-conjugation in Hungarian. I consider it important to spell out that I do not regard the same the group of verbs traditionally categorized as reflexive or medial in Hungarian linguistics and the group of verbs of the -ik-conjugation since in Hungarian linguistics the reflexive and medial verbs are semantically much more limited than the group of verbs categorized as solely intransitive -ik-conjugation verbs. (For further details see Károly 1967, E. Abaffy 1978, Forgács 1991, and H. Tóth 1996.)

	indeterminative	determinative		reflexive-medial
		referring to third person	referring to second person	
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>nézek</i>	<i>nézem</i>	<i>nézlek</i>	<i>késem</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>nézel</i>	<i>nézed</i>	–	<i>késel</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>néz</i>	<i>nézi</i>	–	<i>késik</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>nézünk</i>	<i>nézzük</i>	–	<i>késiünk</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>néztek</i>	<i>nézitek</i>	–	<i>késitek</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>néznek</i>	<i>nézik</i>	–	<i>késnek</i>

Table 23. The conjugations of Hungarian.

As can be seen in Table 23, the paradigm of the reflexive-medial conjugation is not complete in Hungarian: its inflections are different from those of the indeterminative conjugation only in the singular.

3.1.4.2. In the Northern Samoyedic languages, in addition to the indeterminative conjugation, there is a determinative and a reflexive-medial one as well. As far as its morphology is concerned, the determinative conjugation is very similar to its counterpart in the Ob-Ugric languages in being able to express the number of the third person object. Unlike in other Uralic languages with a determinative paradigm, in Enets and Nenets the past tense marker does not precede the person marker but follows it.

Among the Uralic languages it is the Northern Samoyedic languages that the reflexive-medial conjugation occurs in to the fullest extent. In Nenets, Enets and Nganasan it forms a separate and complete paradigm which clearly differs from the other two conjugations.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> As I have no access to a full range of examples from the Enets reflexive paradigm, and as the inner structure of the Enets verb form is identical to that of Nenets, I will not cite Enets examples here.

	indeterminative	determinative			reflexive-medial
	<i>nūs</i> 'stand'	<i>madās</i> 'cut'			<i>t'ores</i> 'cry out'
		one object	two objects	plural object	
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>nūdm'</i>	<i>madāw</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajun</i> <sup>14</sup>	<i>madā-jn</i> <sup>15</sup>	<i>t'orejuw''</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>nūn</i>	<i>madār</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajud</i>	<i>madā-jd</i>	<i>t'orejan</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>nū</i>	<i>madāda</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajuda</i>	<i>madā-jda</i>	<i>t'orej''</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>nūni'</i>	<i>madāmi'</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajuñi'</i>	<i>madā-jñi'</i>	<i>t'orejñi'</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>nūd'i'</i>	<i>madāri'</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajud'i'</i>	<i>madā-jd'i'</i>	<i>t'orejd'i'</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>nūxu'</i>	<i>madād'i'</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajud'i'</i>	<i>madā-jd'i'</i>	<i>t'orejxa'</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>nūwa''</i>	<i>madāwa''</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajuna''</i>	<i>madā-jna''</i>	<i>t'orejna''</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>nūda''</i>	<i>madāra''</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajuda''</i>	<i>madā-jda''</i>	<i>t'orejda''</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>nū''</i>	<i>madādo'</i>	<i>madā-(ŋa)xajudo'</i>	<i>madā-jdo'</i>	<i>t'orejad''</i>

Table 24. The conjugations of Tundra Nenets.

Nganasan<sup>16</sup> *koδu-tə-* 'kill' (Helimski 1994: 216):

	indeterminative	determinative			reflexive-medial
	<i>koδu-tə-</i> 'kill'	<i>koδu-tə-</i> 'kill'			<i>koδu-tə-</i> 'kill (oneself)'
		one object	two objects	plural object	
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>koδu-təndum</i>	<i>koδu-tətumə</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəiñə</i>	<i>koδu-təndañə</i>	<i>koδutə-tanə</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>koδu-tənduŋ</i>	<i>koδu-təturə</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəi'tə</i>	<i>koδu-tənda'tə</i>	<i>koδutə-ndaŋ</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>koδu-tətu</i>	<i>koδu-tətuδu</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəi'tü</i>	<i>koδu-tənda'tü</i>	<i>koδutə-taδə</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>koδu-tətumi</i>	<i>koδu-tətumi</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəiñi</i>	<i>koδu-təndañi</i>	<i>koδutə-tani</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>koδu-təturi</i>	<i>koδu-təturi</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəi'ti</i>	<i>koδu-tənda'ti</i>	<i>koδutə-ndati</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>koδu-tətuŋəj</i>	<i>koδu-tətuδi</i>	<i>koδu-tətu-gəi'ti</i>	<i>koδu-tənda'ti</i>	<i>koδutə-ndati</i>

<sup>14</sup> Before elements starting with *x*, the *ŋa* coaffix obligatorily attaches to the verb stem before person markers; *xaju* is the marker of the dual number of the object. According to Nenets descriptive grammar, *madāŋaxaju-* is a general allomorph of the *madā-* stem (a dual object substem; see Salminen 1997: 96).

<sup>15</sup> The *j* suffix marks the plurality of the object. According to Nenets descriptive grammar, *madāŋaxaju-* is a general allomorph of the *madā-* stem (a dual object substem; see Salminen 1997: 96).

<sup>16</sup> As the structure of the verb forms is the same, I demonstrate only continuous aorist forms.

	indeterminative	determinative			reflexive-medial
		one object	two objects	plural object	
P11	<i>koδu-tatumu</i> "	<i>koδu-tatumu</i> "	<i>koδu-tatu-gaiñü</i> "	<i>koδu-tandañü</i> "	<i>koδutə-tanu</i> "
P12	<i>koδu-taturu</i> "	<i>koδu-taturu</i> "	<i>koδu-tatu-gaiñü</i> "	<i>koδu-tandañü</i> "	<i>koδutə-ndatu</i> "
P13	<i>koδu-tandu</i> "	<i>koδu-tatuδuj</i>	<i>koδu-tatu-gaiñüj</i>	<i>koδu-tandañüj</i>	<i>koδutə-ndatə</i> "

Table 25. Nganasan conjugations

### 3.1.5. Summary

As the classification and short introduction to conjugation systems of the Uralic languages shows, the conjugation systems of the languages of this language family are very varied but demonstrate several parallelisms as well as differences. As the above examples show, most Uralic languages have more than one conjugation, and most of those languages that (functionally, at least) have only one conjugation are demonstrated to have had, at an earlier stage in their history, a process pointing towards the possible separation of two conjugations, the indeterminative and the determinative one.

In those Uralic languages that distinguish between two conjugations functionally also, the 3rd person singular form of the indeterminative conjugation is unmarked and the 3rd person singular form of the determinative conjugation (or the reflexive-medial conjugation, or both) is marked, from which it can be concluded that, if there had existed different conjugations in Proto-Uralic, the agglutinated and grammaticalized person and number marking verbal suffix attached to the non-indeterminative verb form. This unmarked vs. marked opposition in the third person could have been the basis of the development of a similar opposition in the other persons and numbers between the verb forms marked with elements that morphologized from proto-language personal pronouns. This is supported by the fact that, in the majority of Uralic languages that distinguish between determinative and indeterminative conjugations or between reflexive-medial and indeterminative conjugations, the indeterminative forms are unmarked (or less marked) compared to the others.<sup>17</sup> (In the Baltic-Finnic languages that distinguish between indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations, the third person singular suffix of the indeterminative conjugation, at least historically, is not a zero morpheme, but it is still more marked than the corresponding reflexive-medial verbal suffix.)

<sup>17</sup> In Khanty, this occurs differently in the various dialects: in some of the dialects the third person singular determinative suffixes are not more marked than the indeterminative ones. I provide examples from the Nizjam dialect.

<b>Hungarian</b>	<i>tör</i> 'break'+0indetVxSg3	<i>töri</i> 'break'+detVxSg3
<b>Mansi</b>	<i>toti</i> 'bring'+0indetVxSg3	<i>totite</i> 'bring'+detVxSg3
<b>Khanty</b>	<i>mät</i> 'give'+indetVxSg3	<i>mätte</i> 'give'+detVxSg3
<b>Mordva</b>	<i>ловны</i> 'read'+indetVxSg3)	<i>ловносы</i> 'read'+detVxSg3
<b>Nenets</b>	<i>mada</i> <sup>o</sup> 'cut'+0indetVxSg3	<i>madada</i> 'cut'+detVxSg3
<b>Enets</b>	<i>kazā</i> 'kill'+0indetVxSg3	<i>kometaza</i> 'love'+detVxSg3
<b>Nganasan</b>	<i>коду-тату</i> 'kill'+0indetVxSg3	<i>кодутатуду</i> 'kill'+detVxSg3
<b>Selkup</b>	<i>tüŋa</i> 'arrive'+coaff. +0indetVsSg3	<i>čattiŋiti</i> 'shoot'+detVxSg3
<b>SEst</b>	<i>tulë</i> 'come'+indetVxSg3	<i>kōlēš</i> 'die'+refl-medVxSg3
<b>Veps</b>	<i>pezëb</i> 'wash'+indetVxSg3	<i>pezëšq</i> 'wash'+refl-medVxSg3
<b>Hungarian</b>	<i>hall</i> 'hear'+0indefVxSg3	<i>hallik</i> 'hear'+refl-medVxSg3
<b>Nenets</b>	<i>pudabta</i> <sup>o</sup> 'pour(out)'+0indetVxSg3	<i>pudabtey</i> <sup>o</sup> <i>q</i> 'pour(out)'+refl-medVxSg3
<b>Enets</b>	<i>manā</i> 'say'+0indetVxSg3	<i>nebrez</i> 'run(up)'+refl-medVxSg3
<b>Nganasan</b>	<i>кодутату</i> 'kill'+0indetVxSg3	<i>кодутатани</i> 'kill'+refl-medVxSg3

The idea that verbal person marking endings are morphologized forms of pronouns (most often of personal pronouns) attaching to verb stems is widely held in Uralic linguistics, just like in general linguistics. In those Uralic languages that have more than one verbal paradigm, due to the great number of verbal endings we have to posit another source for the endings in addition to personal pronouns. In addition to personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and various derivational suffixes can also be sources of verbal endings (see in Mordva, Finnish, and Hungarian). The verbal endings of the Uralic languages, however, cannot always be traced back to Proto-Uralic: in several cases the languages have developed verbal endings independently or borrowed endings between paradigms.

In those Uralic languages that have a determinative conjugation, the morphological structure of the verb forms is approximately similar, but not to the extent that the verb endings could be traced back unequivocally to the same source. In Uralic linguistics the most widely held view in this respect is that, besides the indeterminative conjugation, the origins of the determinative conjugation were already present in Proto-Uralic, and that the determinative paradigms developed individually in the various languages. This is somewhat contradicted by Janhunen (1982: 35), who goes beyond positing the origins of the determinative conjugation in the proto-language:

"[...] convincing evidence suggests that in PU there existed a separate objective conjugation, referring to the definite object of a transitive verb. The objective conjugation was formed by substituting the possessive suffixes of the nominal declension for the ordinary verbal endings (actor)."

This, however, as we will see below, does not mean that Janhunen can demonstrate the presence of determinative verbal inflections other than the Sg3 form in Proto-Uralic.

Uralic linguists (e.g. Rédei 1998–1999, Honti 1998–1999, Janhunen 1989, Helimski 1982, Hajdú 1973 etc.) seem to agree that at the time of the split in the language family, the eastern group of the Uralic languages was developing a definite conjugation. Thus, even if the entire paradigm was not separate yet, this conjugation already existed in the third person and could spread to the other persons and later to the other numbers from here. This third person suffix is, most likely, either the Proto-Uralic *\*sš* third person singular personal pronoun or its accusative form, reconstructed by Honti (1998–1999: 109) as *\*sšt*. The verb form which referred to the object and arose through the agglutination of the third person personal pronoun thus formed an opposition with the verb form which was unmarked compared to it and did not refer to the object. This can also serve as an explanation as to why in the Uralic languages the verbal inflections formed from personal pronouns became part of the determinative paradigm in the other persons and numbers, too, and why we often find inflections of non-pronoun origin among the inflections of the indeterminative conjugation. It is not true of every Uralic language that its indeterminative inflections are more often of non-pronoun origin than those of the determinative conjugation: in Northern Samoyedic languages both the indeterminative and determinative inflections are reflexes of the same proto-language personal pronouns.

Even though in Uralic linguistics the opposition of the indeterminative and determinative conjugations (at least in the third person singular) is widely accepted, I want to briefly refer to one differing view from Hungarian linguistics, namely E. Abaffy's (1991: 124–132), regarding the development of the Hungarian indeterminative vs. determinative opposition. In Hungarian historical linguistics, even though the view is accepted that the inflections of the determinative paradigm developed from Uralic personal pronouns, the development of the indeterminative vs. determinative opposition is claimed to have happened much later, in the beginning of the Old Hungarian period (1000 B.C. – 9th century A.D). According to this position, the paradigm that resulted from the morphologization of the Uralic personal pronouns was a kind of general conjugation, and it started to refer to the object only from the beginning of the Old Hungarian period. At this time in Hungarian the object was most likely unmarked, since neither the Uralic *\*-m* object marker was present any more nor the modern *-t* object marker was there yet. But if the utterance contained a definite object, its marking with morphological means became necessary. On the one hand, the accusative ending and, on the other, the personal verbal endings began to refer to determinativeness: by analogy to the Uralic Sg3 indeterminative (zero morpheme) : determinative (Sg3 verbal

personal ending) opposition the already existing verbal personal endings started to refer to the definite object in the other persons as well, and new endings developed for the indeterminative paradigm.

This explanation is in accord with the view held by Keresztes (1999) and formulated in connection with the development of the Mordva determinative verb conjugation, according to which the bases of the determinative conjugation are Uralic, but the development of the whole paradigm happened in the individual phase of the language's later development. These two views, however, are largely incompatible with Helimski's (1982: 82) attempt to show parallels between Samoyedic and Hungarian verbal inflections in such forms (e.g. *indetSg1 -k*) that, according to the stands accepted in Hungarian linguistics, cannot have Proto-Uralic reflexes, at least not in their current functions. (I consider it important to mention that there are no phonological obstacles to positing such Proto-Uralic reflexes.) It also has to be stated that the development of indeterminative and determinative (and reflexive-medial, see below) conjugations in Samoyedic languages is posited much earlier in time than in Finno-Ugric languages. According to this view, separate indeterminative and determinative paradigms developed already in Proto-Samoyedic and are not the result of independent development of the Samoyedic languages.

In my view, the possibility of drawing parallels between the Hungarian and Samoyedic verbal inflections (either in the indeterminative or the *-ik*-conjugation) or positing shared proto-forms for them cannot be discarded solely because of wanting to adhere to the view of the Hungarian linguistic tradition according to which, before the Old Hungarian period, Hungarian did not have any verbal inflections besides the determinative inflections and the (zero!) *indetSg3* inflection. If we accept Hajdú's (1981: 140) supposition that one of the possible reasons for the Uralic *\*-m* accusative marker's loss was its identity in form with the *Sg1 \*-m* possessive personal suffix and the consequent pooling of the functions of the two,<sup>18</sup> there is no reason we should not accept the following: although the full development of Hungarian indeterminative verbal inflections cannot have happened before the Old Hungarian period, it cannot be a coincidence that the new verbal inflections were formed from exactly those derivational and inflectional suffixes that at an earlier stage already carried in themselves at least the possibility of becoming verbal inflections.

As we have seen, so far I have demonstrated that three very different branches of the Uralic language family have conjugation types which are connected to the (broadly defined) reflexive-medial group of verbs and which can be shown to be related, at least as far as their function is concerned. This fact evokes the question

<sup>18</sup> This is one of the reasons why definite objects can be unmarked in Hungarian possessive phrases like *veszem a kalapot* 'I'll take my hat'

whether this is a coincidence or due to proto-language origin (at least in its basis, similarly to the case of the determinative conjugation).

Linguistic research concerning both Baltic-Finnic (Posti 1961 and 1980) and Samoyedic (Mikola 1984, 1988, and 1997b) reflexive-medial verbs and their conjugation has demonstrated that proto-language origin cannot be excluded on phonological grounds. According to Mikola (1984: 403 and 1988: 255), similarly to the development of the determinative conjugation, the reflexive-medial paradigm also developed gradually, through the third person verb forms spreading first to the other persons, and only later to the other numbers and moods. As I have mentioned before, according to Posti (1980), in Baltic-Finnic languages the third person reflexive-medial verbal inflections can be reconstructed as (Sg) *\*-kse(n)* and (Pl) *\*-kset*, where the *-k* element refers to the present tense, *-sen* is the Proto-Uralic Sg3 personal pronoun which agglutinated as a person marker, and the *-t* element in the Pl3 form is a plural marker. In Posti's (1961: 364) view, as far as their meanings were concerned, the *\*-sen* / *\*-set* inflections in Baltic-Finnic languages were medial forms, which, attaching to the *\*-δa ~ \*-δä* passive derivational suffix, formed the basis of the Baltic-Finnic passive. In reconstructing third person personal inflections in the Northern Samoyedic languages, Mikola (1988: 255) arrives at a view similar to Posti's, namely by tracing them back to Proto-Samoyedic (Sg) *\*-tVn* and (Pl) *\*-tVt* reflexes. These in Samoyedic are regular reflexes of Proto-Uralic pronouns *\*sVn* / *\*sVt*. Helimski (1982: 82) also considers the Hungarian *-ik*-conjugation a phenomenon similar to the Samoyedic reflexive-medial conjugation when he makes a connection between the Hungarian *-ik* suffix and the corresponding Northern Samoyedic reflexive-medial verbal inflections. I have to mention that Helimski, arguing for basing the Hungarian *-ik*-conjugation and the Samoyedic reflexive-medial conjugation on the same platform and considering the Baltic-Finnic reflexive-medial conjugations a new development, does not agree<sup>19</sup> with Mikola's (1988: 255) view according to which the Baltic-Finnic reflexive-medial conjugations and the Samoyedic reflexive-medial conjugations can be supposed to have a common origin. In my view, in investigating the origin of the Baltic-Finnic reflexive-medial conjugation, we cannot either exclude the possibility of the reinforcing influence of the Russian language or ignore their phonological and functional similarity with the third person inflections of the Samoyedic reflexive-medial conjugation.

Even though on the basis of its function the Hungarian *ik*-conjugation is a phenomenon parallel to those above and the *-ik* personal ending could possibly originate from the *\*s<sub>j</sub>* personal pronoun and the *\*-kk* emphasizing element (or, according to Farkas 1956: 254, from a nominal derivational suffix) at least phonologically, this conjugation can only be connected to the present discussion if we, at least partly, dis-

<sup>19</sup> I thank the author for pointing this out to me.



card the opinion accepted in Hungarian historical linguistics regarding its origin. According to the view proposed by Mészöly (1941) and accepted in Hungarian linguistics, the basis of the *-ik*-conjugation is a change in the information structure of the sentence, and the *-ik* inflection is the result of the reevaluation of the P13 indeterminative verbal personal ending. Similarly to the separation of the determinative and indeterminative conjugations, the formation of the *-ik*-conjugation must have occurred in the early Old Hungarian period but before the other occurrence. According to E. Abaffy's (1991: 125) claim, it could be connected to the object, unmarked at that time – this is what made it possible for the active P13 verb to become a medial Sg3 verb:

Fa	török.	→	Fa	török.
tree (object)	break.P13.active		tree (subject)	break.Sg3.medial
'They break the tree.'			'The tree breaks.' (E.Abaffy 1991: 126)	

If we accepted E. Abaffy's argumentation, we would also have to accept that the Hungarian *-ik*-conjugation could not develop before the early Old Hungarian period, so in this case we would have to reject the view that it is related to the Baltic-Finnic and Northern Samoyedic reflexive-medial categories overviewed above.

It is important to mention at this point, however, that the view that the *-ik* suffix of the *ik*-conjugation originates in the third person plural *-ik* suffix of the determinative conjugation is not widely held in Uralic linguistics. Although the "post-Mészöly" literature considers as a possible explanation the theory of the unmarked object and change in the sentential segmentation, it also seeks to disprove it (see, for instance, Farkas 1956) and considers it somewhat inadequate (Mikola 1984: 401) due to the small number of linguistic examples supporting this. Since if we look for causative-medial verb pairs in Hungarian that differ only in their conjugation, we do not find any examples other than the ones quoted by Mikola (*hall – hallik* 'hear – sound', *tör – török* 'break(intr.) – break(trans.)', *szeg – szegik* 'cut [bread] – [for the bread to] be cut').

In my opinion, the Hungarian *ik*-conjugation and its possible parallels in third person singular forms in related languages are not coincidental, just like the similarities in the determinative conjugation are not coincidental either. Although the view on the *ik*-conjugation rooted in traditional Hungarian linguistics seems plausible and logical, we cannot disregard the fact that several Uralic languages have conjugation systems

that share the same function as the Hungarian *ik*-conjugation and also have, as far as at least the third person singular inflections are concerned, unproblematic phonologically derivable correspondences. On the basis of this I consider it possible that the inception of the reflexive-medial conjugation, or at least the possibility of its development, can be proposed for the proto-language.



### 3.2. Verb conjugation in Yakut, Yukaghir, Evenki, Chukchi and Ket

In this section I will provide a brief overview of the conjugation systems of the most important languages of the Siberian language area, which Nenets is also part of. As it would be impossible to include all the Turkic, Manchu-Tungus and Palaeosiberian languages of the area, I will only discuss the most significant languages of the Northern Eurasian Sprachbund that Tundra Nenets is part of, namely, Yakut, Evenki, Ket, Yukaghir and Chukchi. These languages are not genetically related:<sup>20</sup> Yakut is a Turkic language, Evenki is Manchu-Tungus, Chukchi is Chukchi-Kamchatkan, and Yenisey Ket and Yukaghir are Palaeosiberian. Although none of these languages are genetically related to either each other or to Nenets, they exhibit a number of similar phenomena,<sup>21</sup> which, even if they cannot be attributed to direct influence, signal the existence of a language area.

#### 3.2.1. Languages with one conjugation

All of the above mentioned languages have person marking in their verb conjugations. In Yakut and Evenki we find only one general conjugation.

Yakut *бар* 'go' (Korkina 1970: 35)

Singular	1st	<i>барабын</i>
	2nd	<i>бараһын</i>
	3rd	<i>барар</i>
Plural	1st	<i>барабыт</i>
	2nd	<i>бараһыт</i>
	3rd	<i>бараллар</i>

Table 26. Yakut verb conjugation.

<sup>20</sup> It would be beyond the scope of my dissertation to argue a stand on the issue of whether Yakut and Evenki are genetically related or not on the basis of both belonging to the (highly questionable) Altaic language family.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. the expression of three directions of locatives in the case system or a predicative declination of nominals, etc.



Evenki *o* 'do' (As in Evenki perfective verbs forms are unmarked, I provide perfective forms in the table below. Konstantinova and Lebedeva 1958: 146)

<b>Singular</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>ом</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>онин</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>оран</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<b>1st</b>	<i>орав</i>
	<b>2nd</b>	<i>оран</i>
	<b>3rd</b>	<i>орас</i>

Table 27. Evenki verb conjugation.

In Yakut the single verb conjugation paradigm is most likely a Turkic feature, while in Evenki it may be due to areal influence since most of the Manchu-Tungus languages do not have verbal personal markers.

### 3.2.2. Languages with more than one conjugation

3.2.2.1. Similarly to other Chukchi-Kamchatkan languages, Chukchi has, in addition to an indeterminative conjugation, a determinative one which refers to the number and person of the object as well.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Indeterminative</b> <i>чейв</i> 'go'	<b>Determinative</b> <i>льу</i> 'see'
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>ты-чейв-ыркын</i>	<i>ты-льу-ркынигым</i> 'I see you(Sg)'
		<i>ты-льу-ркых</i> 'I see him/her'
		<i>ты-льу-ркынимык</i> 'I see you(Pl)'
		<i>ты-льу-ркынэт</i> 'I see them'
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>чейв-ы-ркын</i>	<i>инэ-льу-ркын</i> 'you see me'
		<i>льу-ркын</i> 'you see him/her'
		<i>льу-тку-ркын</i> 'you see us'
		<i>льу-ркынэт</i> 'you see them'

Subject	Indeterminative	Determinative
Sg3	<i>чейв-ы-ркын</i>	<i>инэ-луу-ркын</i> 's/he sees me'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркын-игым</i> 's/he sees you(Sg)'
		<i>луу-ркынин</i> 's/he sees him/her'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынимык</i> 's/he sees us'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынитык</i> 's/he sees you(Pl)'
		<i>луу-ркынинэт</i> 's/he sees them'
Pl1	<i>мыт-чейв-ыркин</i>	<i>мыт-луу-ркынигым</i> 'we see you (Sg)'
		<i>мыт-луу-ркын</i> 'we see him/her'
		<i>мыт-луу-ркынитык</i> 'we see you(Pl)'
		<i>мыт-луу-пкынэт</i> 'we see them'
Pl2	<i>чейв-ы-ркынимык</i>	<i>инэ-луу-ркынитык</i> 'you see me'
		<i>луу-ркыниткы</i> 'you see him/her'
		<i>луу-ткуркынитык</i> 'you see us'
		<i>луу-ркыниткы</i> 'you see them'
Pl3	<i>чейв-ы-ркыт</i>	<i>нэ-луу-ркынигым</i> 'they see me'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынигым</i> 'they see you(Sg)'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркын</i> 'they see him/her'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынимык</i> 'they see us'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынитык</i> 'they see you(Pl)'
		<i>нэ-луу-ркынэт</i> 'they see them'

Table 28. Chukchi indeterminative and determinative conjugations.

3.2.2.2. In Yukaghir also we find not one but more conjugations, not only depending on the transitivity or intransitivity of the verb but also on the status of the utterance, which is dependent on the intention of the speaker.

If in the linguistic situation the logical emphasis is on the subject, the emphatic subject conjugation is used, if it is on the object, the emphatic object conjugation is employed, whereas if the logical emphasis is on the predicate of the sentence, the emphatic predicate conjugation is applied. In addition to these three paradigms, verbs in Yukaghir can be divided into two basic groups: to transitive and intransitive verbs. In the case of intransitive verbs, one of two paradigms can be used, the emphatic verb

conjugation and the emphatic subject conjugation, of which only the emphatic verb conjugation has verbal person marking inflections different from those used with transitive verbs. Transitive verbs can be conjugated in all three conjugations, which, in view of the above, means that in Yukaghir there are four different paradigms.

*ejrā*-‘go’, *jodo*- ‘tie together’ (Nikolaeva 2000a: 49)

		Intransitive verbs	Transitive verbs
Singular	1st	<i>ejrāl</i>	<i>jodol</i>
	2nd	<i>ejrāl</i>	<i>jodol</i>
	3rd	<i>ejrāl</i>	<i>jodol</i>
Plural	1st	<i>ejrāl</i>	<i>jodol</i>
	2nd	<i>ejrāl</i>	<i>jodol</i>
	3rd	<i>ejrəñil</i>	<i>jodoñil</i>

Table 29. The emphatic subject paradigm of Yukaghir.

*ejrā*-‘go’, *kudedā*- ‘kill’ (Nikolaeva 2000a: 48)

		Indeterminative	Determinative
Singular	1st	<i>ejrəjə</i>	<i>kudedā</i>
	2nd	<i>ejrəjək</i>	<i>kudedəmək</i>
	3rd	<i>ejrəj</i>	<i>kudedəm</i>
Plural	1st	<i>ejrəjli</i>	<i>kudedəj</i>
	2nd	<i>ejrəjəmət</i>	<i>kudedəmət</i>
	3rd	<i>ejrəji</i>	<i>kudedəñam</i>

Table 30. The emphatic predicate paradigm of Yukaghir.

*kudedā*-‘kill’ (Nikolaeva 2000a: 49)

		Determinative
Singular	1st	<i>kudedəmə</i>
	2nd	<i>kudedəmə</i>
	3rd	<i>kudedəmlə</i>

		Determinative
Plural	1st	<i>kudedəl</i>
	2nd	<i>kudedəmət</i>
	3rd	<i>kudedəjilə</i>

Table 31. The emphatic object paradigm of Yukaghir.

As can be seen from the data above, in the Yukaghir emphatic subject paradigm we do not find different verbal inflections except in P13: in all other persons and numbers the verbs occur in the exact same form, and the person and number of the subject can be expressed with pronouns. Furthermore, in this paradigm there is no difference in the conjugation of transitive and intransitive verbs, although in the case of intransitive verbs an emphasis on the subject (in the “indeterminative” conjugation) can be expressed with the emphasis marker *-ek* attached to the personal pronoun of the sentence (Pusztay 1990: 91–91). In the paradigm of the emphatic predicate (also in the indeterminative conjugation) the emphasis of the predicate can be signaled with the *-mer* element also, and the indeterminative and determinative conjugations have clearly separable verbal inflections. In the emphatic object paradigm the object is marked with the *-leŋ* element (Pusztay 1990: 92).

3.2.2.3. Due to the different nature of the Ket language, Ket conjugation is more complex and intricate than the systems of conjugation of the languages discussed above. Just like in the case of the previously mentioned languages, I do not wish to provide a detailed overview of Ket conjugation. Instead, I will concentrate on features which make it essentially similar to Nenets.<sup>22</sup>

Ket uses a considerable number of paradigms for the linguistic expression of categories regarding participants of a situation (“Partizipantenkategorien”, Werner 1994: 87). The types of verbal affixes can be divided into two major groups along such categories, namely, B-affixes and D-affixes. The former have four different paradigms, the latter five.

In Ket it is possible to express the directionality of the action at a specific participant of the situation with verbal affixes. On the basis of this, three verb paradigms can be distinguished in Ket, as the example of D-affixes below shows. One is a kind of neutral, morphologically unmarked conjugation, the second one expresses directedness at the subject, the third at the object. The latter also refers to the person of the object, as the examples below show. As Werner (1994: 120) mentions in connection with the

<sup>22</sup> For more grammatical details regarding Ket verbs, see Werner 1994: 85–125.

conjugation that could be considered reflexive, these conjugation types cannot be regarded as indeterminative, determinative or reflexive, since they are connected to the role and characteristics of the participants of the speech situation rather than to genus verbi.<sup>23</sup>

“Zu diesen D-Formen gehören heute jene, die man immer wieder als Reflexivformen zu deuten versucht, obwohl sie unseres Erachtens auch heute noch als Versionsformen auftreten.” (Werner 1994: 120)

The above mentioned three verbal paradigm are the following (Werner 1994: 121–122):

**Neutral paradigm:**

*d-ul'akŋ* ‘I wash’  
*k-ul'akŋ* ‘you(Sg) wash’  
*d-ul'akŋ* ‘he washes’  
*da-ul'akŋ* ‘she washes’

**Paradigm referring to the subject:**

*d-ul'ä-di-γaŋ* ‘I wash myself’  
*k-ul'ä-γu-γaŋ* ‘you(Sg) wash yourself’  
*d-ul'ä-ja-γaŋ* ‘he washes himself’  
*da-ul'ä-ja-γaŋ* ‘she washes herself’

**Paradigm referring to the object:**

*d-ul'd-ad-gaŋ* ‘he washes me’  
*d-ul'd-ak-gaŋ* ‘he washes you(Sg)’  
*d-ul'd-aj-gaŋ* ‘he washes him’  
*d-ul'd-ij-gaŋ* ‘he washes her’

**3.2.3. Conclusion**

3.2.3.1. As we have seen, the discussed non-Uralic languages spoken in Northern Siberia show a varied picture as far as their conjugations are concerned. The conju-

<sup>23</sup> As I have no detailed knowledge of Ket in general or Ket conjugation specifically, I hesitate to question Werner's view regarding this. However, I consider it important to mention that in Nenets, despite the fact that there are verbs which are bound in their conjugation to e.g. the reflexive-medial conjugation, the majority of verbs can take inflections of any of the conjugations and, this way, to express a directionality towards specific participants in the speech situation. This, however, is no sufficient reason to use the term "Versionskategorie" instead of terms like indeterminative, determinative or reflexive-medial conjugations.



gations of Turkic languages, of the Manchu-Tungus language Yakut, and of Evenki do not share features with Nenets beside the mere fact that they all use verbal inflections.

The Paleosiberian languages, however, which have several types of conjugations, do display phenomena that can be shown to have parallelisms with Tundra Nenets conjugation, even if these parallelisms are not very close. In these languages the person and number of the subject as well as of the object can be expressed on the verb. As we have seen in the overview of section 3.1, in Nenets determinative verbal inflections can express the person and number of the subject as well as the number of the object. The reflexive-medial conjugation of Tundra Nenets has characteristics that are similar in their meaning and range of use to Ket verb forms in “Subjektversion”.

I have to emphasize, however, that the similarities between the verb conjugation systems of Nenets and the above mentioned Palaeosiberian languages are not exact and direct correspondences, so I do not wish to engage in speculations regarding them. However, I consider it important to briefly discuss, through what have been called medial pairs (by Komlósy 2001: 30 and 31), the most situation dependent (and not lexically bound) use of Tundra Nenets verb conjugation which expresses, with the help of verbal inflections, the directionality of the action to the participants of the linguistic situation. This role of Nenets verb conjugation probably cannot be regarded independent of an outside influence which manifests itself in linguistic thinking rather than in the paradigms themselves or in the specific morphemes.

3.2.3.2. *From the languages of the area, Ket can be mentioned as similar to Nenets in its characteristic of having inflectional medial pairs, i.e. verbs that belong to the reflexive-medial group and can be used, according to the intention of the speaker (depending on the situation, and employing different conjugations), in causative and medial senses.*

Nenets has a great number of verbs that, depending on what context they occur in and on which of the three conjugations is used with them, belong to different genus verbi. Such verbs can usually be used both in a transitive (usually causative) role and a role of lower transitivity (medial):

- (1) *Nye ngøcyeki nyabyi loxøna ngæda syidyerødmh tølø°dasy.*  
 girl other corner+locat. be+ window+acc. close+  
 part.imperf. praet.detVxSg3  
 ‘The girl closed the window in the other corner.’ (Laptander)
- (2) *syidyer° tøli°q. myercya tølwekeda.*  
 window close+ wind close+part.perf.  
 refl-medVxSg3 +probabil.+detVxSg3  
 ‘The window closed. Probably the wind closed it.’ (Laptander)

The term “medial pair” brings up the question why we have to regard as verb pairs such verbs that do not differ from each other at all in their lexical forms. Despite the fact that they could be considered as variants of the same verb, their separation is motivated by the fact that in their use they can be clearly identified as belonging to one or the other genus verbi, i.e. which member of the pair it is. As is clear from the above view, I approach the issue of Nenets medial pairs from a semantic point of view, on the one hand, and from a syntactic one, on the other. The importance of semantics in this case is underscored by the fact that the inflectional medial pairs I will discuss below do not exhibit a difference in their behavior from pairs one member of which contains a derivational affix (most frequently a causative one). I agree with Komlósy’s (2001: 21) statement made about a parallel Hungarian phenomenon:

“[...] it seems that the set of causative verb pairs is not held united by anything besides the supposed identity of the meaning relationship between their members: on the basis of this, we can suspect only some kind of content element, a meaning relationship as common in them (and as serving as a feature defining causativity). [...] in the case of a solely semantic definition the form of the linguistic expressions describing the basic event and expressing the causative content can differ in any possible manner: in principle, no formal limitation can be justified (let alone required) in connection with them.”

Tundra Nenets derivational and inflectional medial pairs do not differ from each other in their characteristic that the number of their arguments changes in medial situations and in situations with a much higher transitivity (i.e. causative situations, according to the terminology used here). In medial situations only one argument, the agent, is present, whereas in the situations of high transitivity (which are usually causatives) there are two, the agent and the patient.

In use, the medial and the causative members of the inflectional medial pair differ from each other morphologically only in their conjugation: the transitive/causative member of the pair receives an indeterminative or determinative inflection, whereas the medial member a reflexive-medial inflection. In situations of high transitivity, when the speaker wants to refer to the object with the verb, the verb receives an indeterminative or determinative inflection, however, when the action/event refers to the person that sets off the action/event, the verb receives a reflexive-medial inflection:

*нэсь* ‘open’

(3)	<i>лабтэйм'</i> box+acc.	<i>варе"на</i> with.difficulty	<i>нэва"</i> open+detVxPII
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‘We opened the box with difficulty.’ (Tereščenko 1965: 327)



### 3.3. The possible bases of Tundra Nenets conjugation

After an overview of the systems of conjugation of the Uralic languages and of the unrelated Northern Siberian languages, we can state that Tundra Nenets conjugation has a Uralic origin. In the course of its separate development Tundra Nenets found itself in a linguistic environment where its ability inherited from the proto-language was positively influenced to develop three separate paradigms, the indeterminative, determinative, and reflexive-medial conjugations.

Nenets conjugation shows close parallels with Enets and Nganasan conjugations. Not only the systems of conjugation, but also most of the inflections themselves can be traced to the same origin. All this means that in Proto-Northern-Samoyedic the three conjugation types had already developed, and in the determinative paradigm the possibility for marking the number of the object emerged. As we saw in the overview of the conjugation types of the Uralic languages, in the only present-day Southern Samoyedic language, Selkup, only two conjugations are distinguished at present, where the determinative paradigm refers only to a third person object and does not express any other person or number. Because of such a difference in the Southern branch, Mikola (1988: 249) reconstructs the possible system of Proto-Samoyedic conjugation as follows:

	Indeterminative	Indeterminative-determinative	Determinative
Sg1		<i>mV</i>	
Sg2		<i>rV / lV</i>	
Sg3	<i>0</i>		<i>tV</i>
Du1		<i>miñ</i>	
Du2		<i>riñ / liñ</i>	
Du3	<i>kañ</i>		<i>tiñ</i>
Pl1		<i>mat</i>	
Pl2		<i>rat / lat</i>	
Pl3	<i>t</i>		<i>tVn / tVt</i>

Table 32. Reconstructed verbal inflections of Proto-Samoyedic (Mikola 1988)

Helimski's view (1982: 81) is somewhat different from Mikola's. Helimski regards it possible that the reflexive-medial conjugation was already developing in Proto-Samoyedic. This is supported by the fact that in Northern Samoyedic languages the

stems taking the reflexive-medial conjugation have a *-j* element, which is the reflex of a derivational suffix of reflexive function originally, and which is also found in Selkup.

Although the reflexive-medial conjugation could not have existed in Proto-Samoyedic in a form similar to its present-day form, basing it on the above *\*-j* element, Helimski (1982: 81) reconstructs a reflexive-medial conjugation in addition to the indeterminative and determinative conjugations:

	Indeterminative	Determinative	?Reflexive-medial	
Sg1	*-( <i>tʃ</i> ) <i>m</i> , *- <i>k</i>	*- <i>m</i> ( <i>ʒ</i> )	(*- <i>j</i> š-)	?
Sg2	*- <i>ntʃ</i> , *- <i>n</i>	*-š( <i>ʒ</i> )	v. (*-š-)	*- <i>ntʃ</i> , *- <i>n</i>
Sg3	*∅	*- <i>tʃ</i>		*- <i>k</i>

Table 33. Reconstructed verbal inflections of Proto-Samoyedic (Helimski 1982)

In my opinion, the *\*j* mentioned by both authors, the reconstructed third person singular reflexive-medial inflections, and the results of the research on the possible Uralic precursors of the reflexive-medial conjugation all serve as a basis for considering it plausible to suggest antecedents for the reflexive-medial conjugation in Proto-Samoyedic, the proto-language of both the Northern and the Southern Samoyedic languages.

The most recent treatment of Samoyedic personal inflections and, in particular, of Samoyedic verbal personal inflections is Janhunen (1998: 470-471). According to him, the system and structure of personal inflections that can be reconstructed for Proto-Samoyedic is very similar to that found in present-day Nenets. Thus, besides a complex case dependent system of possessive suffixes,<sup>24</sup> Proto-Samoyedic might have had a category (called predicative suffix by Janhunen), which connected to verbal roots and provided the indeterminative verbal suffixes. Opposing Mikola's 1988 view and supporting Helimski (1982), Janhunen suggests the existence of an independent, although demonstrably incomplete reflexive verbal paradigm in Proto-Samoyedic as well. As is clear from Table 34, according to him, the reflexive-medial paradigm has reconstructable proto-forms only in first and third person singular and third person plural, which shows that Janhunen considers the analogical "filtering" through of reflexive-medial forms from the other verbal paradigms a development of the post Proto-Samoyedic stage.

<sup>24</sup> Janhunen (1998: 470-471) reconstructs four different paradigms for Proto-Samoyedic possessive personal suffixes depending on whether the possessive suffix is in the nominative, the accusative, in an oblique case, or whether it is in the dual or the plural. (Cf. Table 34.)

	Predicative	Possessive (Nom.)	Possessive (Acc.)	Possessive (Oblique cases)	Possessive (Pl / Du)	Reflexive
Sg1.	*-m	*-m $\emptyset$	*-0-m $\emptyset$	*-0-n $\emptyset$	*-n $\emptyset$	*-m- $\emptyset$ -q
Sg2.	*-n(t $\emptyset$ )	*-r $\emptyset$	*-m-t $\emptyset$	*-n-t $\emptyset$	*-t $\emptyset$	
Sg3.	*-0	*-ta	*-m-ta	*-n-ta	*-ta	*-0-q
Du1.	*-mi- $\acute{n}$	*-mi- $\acute{n}$	*-0-mi- $\acute{n}$	*-0-ni- $\acute{n}$	*-ni- $\acute{n}$	
Du2.	*-ti- $\acute{n}$	*-ti- $\acute{n}$	*-m-ti- $\acute{n}$	*-n-ti $\acute{n}$	*-ti- $\acute{n}$	
Du3.	*-k $\emptyset$ - $\acute{n}$	*-ti- $\acute{n}$	*-m-ti- $\acute{n}$	*-n-ti $\acute{n}$	*-ti- $\acute{n}$	
Pl1.	*-ma-t	*-ma-t	*-0-ma-t	*-0-na-t	*-na-t	
Pl2.	*-ta-t	*-ra-t	*-m-ta-t	*-n-ta-t	*-ta-t	
Pl3.	*-0-t	*-ton	*-m-ton	*-n-ton	*ton	*-0-t- $\emptyset$ -q

Table 34. The system of proto-Samoyedic personal suffixes (Janhunen 1998: 471).

In connection with the suggestion that the reflexive-medial conjugation was present in the Proto-Samoyedic language, it is important to mention that Mikola (1997: 23) also says that this conjugation type might be an older phenomenon, which is something that is not necessarily suggested by his table summarizing the determinative and indeterminative verbal personal suffixes of Uralic personal pronoun origin. From the fact that he proposes an historical connection between the third person singular and plural Northern Samoyedic reflexive-medial verbal personal suffixes on the one hand and the Baltic-Finnic and Hungarian reflexive-medial conjugations and verb forms, it clearly follows that this conjugation – at least as far as its bases are concerned – cannot be a purely Northern Samoyedic innovation

## 4. The Tundra Nenets verbal inflections

In this chapter I discuss the system of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections from both a synchronic and a diachronic aspect.

### 4.1. The system of verbal inflections at the present

As is evident from the discussions of the previous chapters, three different conjugation types can be identified in Tundra Nenets. Since in the case of the determinative conjugation the number of the third person object can be expressed as well, but objects in the dual and plural number are referred to with the same verbal inflectional suffixes, there are in fact four paradigms in Tundra Nenets. They are the following:

		No.	Sg (C <sup>25</sup> )	Sg (S)	Sg (H)	Du (C)	Du (S)	Du (H)	Pl (C)	Pl (S)	Pl (H)
In- det.		1st	əm/m'	d°m	dm°/m°	nu'	nyih	ni?	əa''	waq	wa?
		2nd	h	n°	n	du'	dyih	di?	da''	daq	da?
		3rd	–	–	–	xV'	x°h	xV?	"	q	?
Det.	Sgobj	1st	ə	w°	w	mu'	myih	mi?	əa''	waq	wa?
		2nd	p	r°	r	pu'	ryih	ri?	pa''	raq	ra?
		3rd	əa	da	da	du'	dyih	di?	do'	doh	do?
	Du/ Plobj	1st	h	n°	n	nu'	nyih	ni?	na''	naq	na?
		2nd	ə	d°	d	du'	dyih	di?	da''	daq	da?
		3rd	əa	da	da	du'	dyih	di?	do'	doh	do?
Refl- med.		1st	ə''	w°q	w?	nu'	nyih	ni?	na''	naq	na?
		2nd	h	n°	n	du'	dyih	di?	da''	daq	da?
		3rd	"	q	?	xV'	x°h	xV?	ə''	d°q	d?

Table 35. Tundra Nenets verbal inflections.

On the basis of their elements referring to person, Salminen (1997: 104–105) categorizes verbal inflections in two major groups: the indeterminative-reflexive group and the determinative group. Even though, due to historical reasons discussed in more detail below, many similarities can be detected in the person marking of the reflexive-

<sup>25</sup> C: Cyrillic orthography, cf. for instance Tereshchenko (1965); S: Salminen's (1997) transcription; H: Hajdú's (1968) transcription.

medial and the indeterminative paradigms, in my opinion, the three conjugations, i.e. the four paradigms, should be dealt with separately, due to the differences and the similarities to the person marking of the determinative paradigm.

#### 4.1.1. *The verbal inflections*

The above mentioned elements referring to the person and marking the number of the subject play the most important role in the structure of the verbal inflections. In addition to these, we can identify a reflexive element in the inflections of the reflexive-medial conjugation, and an element referring to the number of the object in the paradigm expressing an object of the dual and plural number. (In the case of the indeterminative conjugation, naturally, only elements referring to the person and number of the subject are distinguished from each other, in this order. In the case of the determinative paradigms the elements listed are those referring to determinacy, the number of the object and the person of the subject, and the number of the subject, also in this order. In the case of the reflexive-medial conjugation, the element expressing reflexivity appears between the elements referring to the person and number of the subject.) The structure of the inflections of the three conjugation types can be defined as follows (cf. Janhunen 1986, Salminen 1997).

	Indeterminative	Determinative		Reflexive-medial
		Sg object	Du /Pl object	
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>tøm / møh</i>	<i>m-ø</i>	<i>n-ø</i>	<i>m-t</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>n-tø</i>	<i>r-ø</i>	<i>t-ø</i>	<i>n-t-ø</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>0</i>	<i>t-(y)a</i>	<i>t-(y)a</i>	<i>t</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>n-yih</i>	<i>m-yih</i>	<i>n-yih</i>	<i>n-yih</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>t-yih</i>	<i>r-yih</i>	<i>t-yih</i>	<i>t-yih</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>xøh</i>	<i>t-yih</i>	<i>t-yih</i>	<i>xøh</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>m-aq</i>	<i>m-aq</i>	<i>n-aq</i>	<i>n-aq</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>t-aq</i>	<i>r-aq</i>	<i>t-aq</i>	<i>t-aq</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>q</i>	<i>t-(y)oh</i>	<i>t-(y)oh</i>	<i>t-q</i>

Table 36. *The underlying structure of the Tundra Nenets verbal inflections, I.*

In connection with the underlying phonological structure of the inflections, reflecting Salminen's (1997: 104–105) view and presented in the table above, I have to mention that it can only be accepted if we do not consider the phonemes making up the verbal inflections as elements that are not part of an arbitrary sequence of phonemes.



Because if we accept the fact that they are not part of an arbitrary sequence but form an inflection and stand in clearly definable and bound phonological positions, it becomes obvious that the structure of the above system has to be changed. Let us overview the phonemes in question and the phonetic positions in which they play a part in inflection creating roles.

*T* can be found in the underlying structure of most Tundra Nenets verbal inflections. It can be realized as zero, *d* or *q* in any environment, for instance:

*myaT* 'tent' – underlying structure

*myat<sup>o</sup>h* 'tent'+lat. (*мят'*)

*myad<sup>o</sup>m* 'tent'+acc. (*мядм'*)

*myaq* 'tent' – Sgnom. (*мя"*)

As can be seen from a comparison of these forms and the ones included in Table 35, the *T* occurring at the final position of verbal inflections is always realized as a glottal stop (*q*), for instance:

*xørwa<sup>o</sup>waq* 'want'+indetVxP11 (*харвава"*)

*nyodaq* 'no (verb expressing prohibition)+indetVxP12 (*нёда"*)

*tæwiød<sup>o</sup>q* 'arrive'+refl-medVxP13 (*тэвыд"*)

As it can never be realized as a *t* or *d* in this position, Salminen (1997: 104–105) establishes *q* and not *T* as part of the underlying structure, with this satisfying the requirement that the phoneme proposed for the underlying structure should surface in its actual realization. (He follows the same procedure in connection with verbal inflections ending in the glottal stop, which is marked with *h* and can be nasalized: because the nasalizing glottal stop, which can be proposed as *N*, never occurs in the final position of a verbal inflection as anything else but *h*, Salminen marks it as such.) But he does not follow this principle consistently, since in the case of refl-medVxSg1 and refl-medVxSg3, the inflection-final element *T*, which surfaces as a *q* and refers to reflexivity, does not appear as a glottal stop in his work (cf. 1997: 104).

*masi<sup>o</sup>q* 'wash oneself'+refl-medVxSg3 (*масы"*)

*tæwiøw<sup>o</sup>q* 'arrive'+refl-medVxSg1 (*тэвыв"*)

Suffix-initial *T*, which is consistently realized as *d*, does not occur in any other form either in Tundra Nenets, the reason for which lies in the verb stems and suffixation possibilities of Tundra Nenets.

### 4.1.2. Tundra Nenets verb stems

In Tundra Nenets verbal inflections can belong to three stem types: to general stems, dual object stems,<sup>26</sup> and plural object / reflexive-medial stems (called general finite stems, dual object substems, and special finite stems, respectively, by Salminen 1997: 99–103).

4.1.2.1. Vowel stem verbs have two variants of the general stem: one ends in  $\emptyset$ , the other receives the *-nga* morpheme (the latter is used if the element standing after the verb stem begins with *x*). We can state, then, that the general stem is always a vowel stem in case of verbs ending in a vowel.

*tosy*<sup>o</sup> ‘come’ – inf. (*мось*)

*to*<sup>o</sup>*q* ‘come’+indetVxPI3 (*мо"*)

*tongax*<sup>o</sup>*h* ‘come’+indetVxDu3 (*моҥаха'*)

Vowel stem verbs always use the *-nga* element to connect verbal affixes, so the general stem of this group of verbs always ends in a vowel. (In the case of verbs ending in *-m*, the nasal of the *-nga* element is deleted, following the corresponding morphophonological rule.)

*podyerngada* ‘harness’+detVxSg3 (*нодeрyгaдa*)

*s#wumaq* ‘improve’+indetVxPI3 (*савyмa"*)

The general stem of verbs ending in the glottal stop (*q*) also receives a  $\emptyset$  or *nga* element, so in the case of this group of verbs we can also talk about vowel stem as the general stem.

*meqnga* ‘keep, use’+0indetVxSg3 (*мэ"ҥa*)

*maneqw*<sup>o</sup> ‘see’+detVxSg1 (*maneqew*, Hajdú 1968: 59)

The stem final vowel of alternating stem verbs changes depending on the original ending and the type of the verb, but – and this is significant in view of suffixation – it always changes to a vowel: stem-final  $\emptyset$  and *o* change to *i* and *u*. (I do not wish to discuss in more detail the stem-final vowel changes of alternating stem verbs and the system of rules regarding them; for such a discussion, see Salminen 1997: 81–83.)

*yangko-* : *yangku* ‘not be, be missing’+0indetVxSg3 (Salminen 1997: 100)  
(*яҥy*)

*pæwφ-* : *pæbyi* ‘be dark’+0indetVxSg3 (*uo.*) (*нэби*)

<sup>26</sup> I call the “dual object substem” a stem despite the fact that it is composed of a real stem and a coaffix.

4.1.2.2. The stem of the dual object is formed from the general stem by adding the dual object marking  $x\phi yu$  element to it. This stem type occurs only in the determinative conjugation. From the point of view of suffixation it is important to mention that the stem of the dual object always ends in a vowel, just like the general stem.

*pojomtangax\phi yuda* 'make others quarrel'+detDuobjVxSg3 (*ноёмдайахаюда*)

*pun°syal°mtawex\phi yuda* 'make things indistinguishable'+narrat.+  
detDuobjVxSg3 (*пунсялмдавэхэюда*)

4.1.2.3. The stem type used before determinative verbal inflections referring to a plural object and before reflexive-medial verbal inflections is realized differently in the case of verbs ending in  $\phi$ , other vowels, consonants, or in the case of alternating stem verbs, too.

The stem-final vowel of  $\phi$ -final verbs changes to  $i$ , and the verb stem used for the plural object and the reflexive-medial conjugation is realized with the  $\phi$  element. In the case of stems belonging to the reflexive-medial paradigm, before suffixes ending in  $x$  (refl-medVxDu3), this change does not happen: a  $y\phi$  element is attached at the end of the verb in these cases.

*xaqmi°q* 'fall (down)'+refl-medVxSg3 (*ха"мы"*)

*sulm°y\phi x°h* 'fall over dead'+refl-medVxDu3 (*сулмъяха*)

Verb stems ending in a vowel other than  $\phi$  and those ending in consonants receive the  $y\phi$  ending before determinative verbal inflections of plural object reference as well as before reflexive-medial verbal inflections:

*tyorye°q* 'cry out'+refl-medVxSg3 (*тёрей"*)

*tan°x\phi l\phi w°q* 'go up to'+refl-medVxSg (*танхальюв"*)

The stem of verbs with alternating stems is the same as the general stem before verbal inflections of plural object reference as well as before reflexive-medial verbal inflections:

*lyark°rpyid°* 'own'+detPIObjVxSg2 (*ляркарнид*)

*m\phi q°lampyin°* 'collect'+detPIObjVxSg1 (*ма"ламбин*)

4.1.2.4. As can be seen from the short overview above, in Tundra Nenets all stems in all paradigms can end only in vowels. Because in verbal inflections the morpheme-initial  $T$  thus occurs in postvocalic position, it never gets realized as a  $t$ , only as a  $d$ .

Similarly, the suffix-initial *w* phoneme of the *detVxSg1* ending and that of the *refl-medVxSg1* ending could be represented underlyingly by *m* in an arbitrary phoneme sequence, but in these verbal inflections, in the given positions they could never be realized as anything but a *w*. The  $\emptyset$  of verbal affixes in this position does not occur as an  $\emptyset$ , only as an  $^{\circ}$ . So, if we want to posit underlying structures of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections that do not contain phonemes that are never realized in the same form, we have to slightly modify the data provided in Table 36. After modifications, as can be seen from Table 37, we get forms that are the same as surface forms.

Based on the above, the Tundra Nenets verbal inflections are as follows:

	Indeterminative	Determinative		Reflexive-medial
		Sg object	Du /Pl object	
<b>Sg1</b>	$d^{\circ}m / m^{\circ}h$	$w^{\circ}$	$n^{\circ}$	$w-q$
<b>Sg2</b>	$n^{\circ}$	$r^{\circ}$	$d^{\circ}$	$n^{\circ}$
<b>Sg3</b>	$0$	$d-(y)a$	$d-(y)a$	$q$
<b>Du1</b>	$n-yih$	$m-yih$	$n-yih$	$n-yih$
<b>Du2</b>	$d-yih$	$r-yih$	$d-yih$	$d-yih$
<b>Du3</b>	$x^{\circ}h$	$d-yih$	$d-yih$	$x^{\circ}h$
<b>Pl1</b>	$m-aq$	$m-aq$	$n-aq$	$n-aq$
<b>Pl2</b>	$d-aq$	$r-aq$	$d-aq$	$d-aq$
<b>Pl3</b>	$q$	$d-(y)oh$	$d-(y)oh$	$d-q$

Table 37. The "underlying structure" of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections.

If we look at the system of verbal inflections in isolation, as a system independent of the other person marking inflections, the verbal inflections presented in Tables 35 and 37 could be seen as the underlying forms of verbal suffixes. I consider it important to mention that the presentation of the verbal inflections in Tables 35 and 37 satisfies the requirement that the underlying structure should not contain phonemes that actually never surface. But exactly because of this it also considers as given certain changes of phonemes that follow from their phonetic position, for instance the voicing of *t* and the spirantization of *m*. However, because here we have phonemes in clearly defined positions, occurring as parts of inflections, and unchanging due to their situation, I consider it acceptable to modify the underlying structure of the inflections in this way.

I have to mention that verbal inflections in Tundra Nenets should not be viewed independently of other person marking systems in every respect.<sup>27</sup> It is widely known that, as far as their structure is concerned, indeterminative verbal inflections are completely identical with predicative suffixes that can attach to nominal stems. Thus, certain morpheme-initial phonemes (such as *t*) can occur in predicative suffixes that do not occur in indeterminative verbal inflections, for instance:

*tawit*<sup>o</sup>*m* ‘Nganasan’+PrexSg1 (*tawiq* ‘Nganasan’, Salminen 1997: 76)

The situation is the same in the case of determinative verbal inflections of singular object reference since these verbal inflections, as far as their origin and structure are concerned, are identical with the possessive personal suffixes. As they attach to nominal stems, possessive personal suffixes can also contain a suffix-initial *t* and, in Sg1, also an *m*.

The third possible argument in support of the fact that in the underlying structure of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections the obligatory changes that are attributable to the phonological position should not be marked comes from the inflection-final glottals and their behavior. As I have mentioned above, the inflection-final T and N are realized as the glottal *q* or as *h*. However, if we also take into account the verbal inflections of the preterite, in which the past tense marker *-sy*∅ always occurs at the end of the word and, thus, of the inflection, we can see that in past tense verbal inflections the underlying *N* is not realized as a glottal but as *n*:

*l*∅*x*<sup>o</sup>*nakurngax*∅*n**cy*<sup>o</sup> ‘discuss, talk’+praet.indetVxDu3 (*лаханакурҥаханзъ*)

Taking all of this into consideration, despite the fact that the system of verbal inflections in itself can be described as in Tables 35 and 37, it is not reasonable to define verbal inflections independently of and differently from other elements of the language – from determinative verbal inflections of singular object reference or indeterminative verbal inflections, which have the same structure but occur in different phonetic environments than possessive personal suffixes, or from predicative personal suffixes.

In Table 38, the verbal inflections are presented in forms which do not reflect the obligatory changes of the phonemes occurring in them that follow from their positions.

<sup>27</sup> I want to thank Tapani Salminen for comments and feedback regarding this issue.

	Indeterminative	Determinative		Reflexive-medial
		Sg object	Du /Pl object	
<b>Sg1</b>	<i>TØm / mØN</i>	<i>mØ</i>	<i>nØ</i>	<i>MT</i>
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>n~TØ</i>	<i>rØ</i>	<i>TØ</i>	<i>nØ</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>0</i>	<i>T(y)a</i>	<i>T(y)a</i>	<i>T</i>
<b>Du1</b>	<i>nyiN</i>	<i>myiN</i>	<i>nyiN</i>	<i>nyiN</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>ryiN</i>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>TyiN</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>xØN</i>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>xØN</i>
<b>Pl1</b>	<i>maT</i>	<i>maT</i>	<i>naT</i>	<i>naT</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>TaT</i>	<i>raT</i>	<i>TaT</i>	<i>TaT</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>T</i>	<i>T(y)oN</i>	<i>T(y)oN</i>	<i>TT</i>

Table 38. The underlying structure of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections, III.

#### 4.1.3. Complex verbal inflections

As Hajdú (1968: 62–63) mentions, special complex verbal inflections are used in Tundra Nenets imperfect and imperative forms.

The forms of the imperfect are fairly transparent, since in their case it is clear that the past tense marker *X* (*syø*), or a form of it modified by one of the assimilation rules, is attached to the verbal inflections. Despite the fact that Hajdú considers past tense verbal inflections a separate paradigm, in my opinion these verbal inflections do not have to be separated from the other verbal inflections since the past tense forms are formed in a regular fashion, by adding the past tense marker, and not through fused and unanalyzable past tense verbal inflections.

In connection with the imperative suffixes, Hajdú also states that the verbal inflections of the imperative originate in the mood marker and the verbal person markers being connected to each other and that “they form historically analyzable but descriptively dissectable units” (Hajdú 1968: 62–63). I have to add that Hajdú considers third person verb forms expressing summons to be imperative forms as well, which are analyzed as optative and not imperative in Salminen’s (1997: 107) grammar of a more modern perspective. As, in respect to mood, I follow Salminen’s views in my paper, I accept his position regarding the categorization of moods expressing summons as well, according to which strictly only second person forms should be regarded as imperative. The verbal inflections used in the imperative and optative moods differ from the verbal inflections used in the indicative and the other moods. As we will see in section 4.2.4

below, this has a historical reason. The verbal inflections of the imperative and optative moods are the following:

	Indeterminative		Determinative Sg object		Determinative Du/Pl object		Reflexive-medial	
<b>Sg2</b>	<i>T</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>T∅</i>	<i>∂</i>	<i>n∅T</i>	<i>н"</i>	<i>T∅T</i>	<i>∂"</i>
<b>Du2</b>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>∂u'</i>	<i>ryiN</i>	<i>pu'</i>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>∂u'</i>	<i>TyiN</i>	<i>∂u'</i>
<b>Pl2</b>	<i>TaT</i>	<i>∂a"</i>	<i>raT</i>	<i>pa"</i>	<i>TaT</i>	<i>∂a"</i>	<i>TaT</i>	<i>∂a"</i>
<b>Sg3</b>	<i>ya</i>	<i>я</i>	<i>mTa</i>	<i>m∂a</i>	<i>T∅mTa</i>	<i>∂ам∂a</i>	<i>mT∅T</i>	<i>m∂"</i>
<b>Du3</b>	<i>yax∅N</i>	<i>яxa'</i>	<i>mTyiN</i>	<i>m∂u'</i>	<i>T∅mTyiN</i>	<i>∂ам∂u'</i>	<i>x∅mT∅T</i>	<i>xVм∂"</i>
<b>Pl3</b>	<i>yaT</i>	<i>я"</i>	<i>mToN</i>	<i>m∂o'</i>	<i>T∅mToN</i>	<i>∂ам∂o'</i>	<i>T∅mT∅T</i>	<i>∂ам∂"</i>

*Table 39. Tundra Nenets imperative and optative verbal inflections.*

## *4.2. The history of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections*

In the section discussing the possible Proto-Uralic antecedents of Tundra Nenets conjugation (section 3.1.5), I argued that the three conjugation types that currently occur in Tundra Nenets can possibly have their roots in the proto-language. The development of the paradigms, however, must have occurred in the separate Samoyedic and Nenets phases. Most of the Samoyedic languages' material of verbal inflections is structured similarly and made up of the same elements, but there are many differences between the verbal inflections of the various languages. In this part of the dissertation I will overview the history of Tundra Nenets verbal inflections and, at the same time, discuss the possible origins of the elements that make up the verbal inflections.

### *4.2.1. The history of the determinative verbal inflections*

In Samoyedic languages the development of the determinative paradigm started already in the Proto-Samoyedic period. Parallel with this was the occurrence of the determinative : indeterminative opposition, which was first manifested in third person forms and then was extended to the other persons.

The determinative verbal inflections of modern Tundra Nenets (similarly to those of other Samoyedic languages) are largely of Proto-Uralic personal pronoun origin.

#### *4.2.1.1. Third person determinative verbal inflections*

##### *VxSg3 -da*

As the discussions of the various positions of the Uralic linguistics literature in section 3.1.5 and of the data from today's Uralic languages demonstrate, in Uralic languages verb forms with person marking suffixes (i.e. with morphologized, third person personal pronouns) historically referred to the object of the sentence, whereas verb forms with no inflections only to the person and number of the subject. It was in the third person singular that the determinative : indeterminative opposition involving the expression of person developed. Determinative verbal inflections must have developed in the third person plural and dual next. Within the determinative paradigm, the personal verbal inflections capable of expressing the plurality of the object must have constituted a later development. This is suggested partly by the fact that this phenomenon is not found in all Samoyedic languages, only in the Northern Samoyedic branch, and partly because, due to the identical nature of the third person verbal inflections in the determinative paradigms, we have to consider analogy – the spreading of verbal



person marking inflections referring to the object into the paradigms of plural and dual object reference.

In Tundra Nenets, accordingly, the *-da* determinative verbal inflection can be said to be the reflex of PS *\*-ta*, which, in turn, is the reflex of PU *\*sV Sg3* personal pronoun. In other Samoyedic languages we find forms expressing the same function that go back to the same PS *\*-ta*:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>da</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ɔa</i>	<i>tu (ti)</i>	<i>t̥i</i>	<i>t</i>

NenetsT <sup>28</sup>	<i>pya°da</i> ‘begin’+detVxSg3 ( <i>няда</i> )
NenetsF	<i>juñējata</i> ‘ask’+detVxSg3 (Verbov 1973: 169)
EnetsB	<i>mi'aða</i> ‘cut’+detVxSg3 (Gluhij et al. 1981: 151)
Nganasan	<i>konda"atu</i> ‘carry’+detVxSg3 (Tereščenko 1979: 205)
SelkupN	<i>qoŋit̥i</i> ‘find’+detVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 146)
Kamas	<i>pārgaŋ'at</i> ‘cut(perf.)’+detVxSg3 (Donner 1944: 155)

### *VxDu3 -dyih*

The third person dual verbal inflection can be considered a complex inflection since it is composed of the PU Sg3 personal pronoun and the dual marker. The *-dyih* inflection developed from the PS *\*-tiñ* verbal inflection, whose personal pronoun element is a reflex of PU *\*-sV*. On PS determinative dual verbal inflections the dual is marked with the *\*-ñ* element, which, in my opinion, is identical with the *\*ñ* element of PS dual possessive personal suffixes (see Labádi 1967: 422–423). In Nenets, *ñ* developed into a glottal that can be nasalized in a regular fashion, just like *n* and *ŋ*. We find similar detDu3 verbal inflections in the other Samoyedic languages as well:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>dyih</i>	<i>tʔ</i>	<i>zi'</i>	<i>ɔi</i>	<i>tij</i>	<i>d'i</i>

NenetsT	<i>nyumtye°dyih</i> ‘name’+detVxDu3 (Tereščenko 1965: 331) ( <i>нюмдѐду'</i> )
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<sup>28</sup> For a list of the languages and dialects, see the Appendix. Even though Forest Nenets and Tundra Nenets are usually considered dialects of Nenets, due to the great differences between the two (in verbal inflections as well) I will provide examples from both dialects.

NenetsF	<i>matayajʔ</i> 'cut(perf.)'+detVxDu3 (Verbov 1973: 94)
EnetsB	<i>nobzazi'</i> 'let down'+detVxDu3 (Tereščenko 1973: 281)
Nganasan	<i>koδutatuδi</i> 'kill'+imperf.–Cimp+detVxDu3 (Helimski 1998: 504)
SelkupN	<i>qoŋiitu</i> 'find'+detVxDu3 (Helimski 1998: 567)
Kamas	<i>pargaldʲi</i> 'carve'+detVxDu3 (Mikola 1988: 250)

### *VxPI3 -doh*

The third person plural determinative verbal inflection is very similar in its structure to the dual form: it is made up of the Sg3 personal pronoun of Proto-Uralic origin and the plural marker.

The verbal inflection *-doh*, then, is also of personal pronoun origin, from PU \*-sV Sg3 personal pronoun plus the \*-n plural marker via PS \*-ton. The inflection-final *n* element is realized in modern Tundra Nenets as a nasalizable glottal. The joining together of the personal pronoun and the plural marker can be seen in the determinative third person plural inflections of the other Samoyedic languages as well:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Kamas
<i>doh</i>	<i>toŋ</i>	<i>zu'</i>	<i>tuŋ, (tiŋ)</i>	<i>den, dən</i>

NenetsT	<i>yolcye°doh</i> 'finish'+detVxPI3 ( <i>ēnyedo'</i> )
NenetsF	<i>matanatoŋ</i> 'cut'+detVxPI3 (Verbov 1973: 94)
EnetsB	<i>kadagazu'</i> 'take away'+detVxPI3 (Gluhij – Susekov – Sorokina 1981: 146)
Nganasan	<i>njintiðiŋ</i> 'no (neg.verb)'+Cimp+detVxPI3 (Helimski 1998: 504)
Kamas	<i>tawomaden</i> 'keep'+detVxPI3 (Mikola 1988: 251)

(In Selkup a verbal inflection identical with the indeterminate VxPI3 is used in the determinative paradigm as well. The *t*-ending shows that in this language the plural marker \*-t, rather than the plural marker \*-n, can be identified in the earlier phase.)

#### 4.2.1.2. The first person determinative verbal inflections

##### *VxSg1 -w°*

The person marker *-w°* is also of Proto-Uralic origin and can be traced back to the PU \*-mV Sg1 personal pronoun, which went through regular sound change of spi-

rantization in Tundra Nenets. As can be seen from the other examples as well, most of the Samoyedic languages preserved the verbal inflection that goes back to the Proto-Uralic personal pronoun:<sup>29</sup>

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>w°</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>bo</i>	<i>mə</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>m</i>
NenetsT	<i>syertaøw°</i> 'do'+detVxSg1 (Tereščenko 1965: 362) ( <i>cepmaø</i> )				
NenetsF	<i>ŋamŋām</i> 'eat'+detVxSg1 (Lehtisalo 1947: 135)				
EnetsB	<i>beabo</i> 'throw'+detVxSg1 (Castrén 1855: 93)				
Nganasan	<i>bəu"suomə</i> 'swim' across+praet.+detVxSg1 (Tereščenko 1979: 268)				
Selkup	<i>orqilnam</i> 'catch'+detVxSg1 (Hajdú 1968: 146)				
Kamas	<i>pārgəlām</i> 'cut'+detVxSg3 (Donner 1944: 155)				

### *VxSg1 -n°*

The *-n°* singular determinative inflection of dual and plural object reference is most likely not of Proto-Samoyedic but of Proto-Northern-Samoyedic origin, since with this same function it can be found in all three Northern Samoyedic languages but not in the languages of the Southern branch. This can be explained with the fact that the system of verb conjugations of Southern Samoyedic languages is much simpler than those of the Northern Samoyedic ones: even if they contain more than one verbal paradigm, they do not indicate the number of the object with the help of verbal inflections.

According to Künnap (1976: 80, 85), this inflection developed from the joining together of an *\*-n* coaffix and *\*-mV* via the PNS *\*-nø* form. The fact that it became a determinative verbal inflection was probably aided by the sameness of its form with the Sg1 *-n* inflection of the genitive possessive person marking system. The connection between the possessive person marking system and of the determinative conjugation is very close in Nenets, similarly to the other Samoyedic languages. The explanation for this is that most determinative inflections and possessive person markers are of Proto-Uralic pronoun origin and of almost completely the same form. This way, I consider it possible that, through analogy, possessive person markers played a role in the development of the determinative verbal paradigm.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Among the correspondences and the examples I do not quote forms that are not cognate with the Tundra Nenets inflection under discussion. Thus, I do not provide forms from other Samoyedic languages and dialects.

<sup>30</sup> The question whether the development of the possessive person markers preceded in time the formation of

In Northern Samoyedic languages the first person singular verb forms of plural object reference are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>n°</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>nə</i>

NenetsT *møq°lampyin°* ‘collect+detPIObjVxSg1’ (Tereščenko 1965: 693)  
(*ма"ламбин*)

NenetsF *šearurəkājjijen* ‘tie to something+detPIObjVxSg1’ (Lehtisalo 1947: 418)

EnetsCh *no’ahuno* ‘peel+detPIObjVxSg1’ (Castrén 1854: 499)

Nganasan *’enįšitiñə* ‘know+fut.+detPIObjVxSg1’ (Mikola 1970 : 66)

### *VxDu1 -myih*

The *-myih* inflection is composed of the PU *\*-mV* personal pronoun and the *\*-ń* dual marker. (The latter has already been discussed in connection with the dual third person determinative inflection above.) This inflection developed through regular sound change from the PS *\*-miñ* form. The corresponding Samoyedic inflections are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>myih</i>	<i>jʔ</i>	<i>i', j', bi'</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ej, m̄</i>	<i>b̄i</i>

NenetsT *núl°ta°myih* ‘stop(trans.)+detVxDu1 (Tereščenko 1965: 853)  
(*nyлtamu'*)

NenetsF *matāñajʔ* ‘cut’+detVxDu1 (Verbov 1973: 94)

EnetsK *tenej'* ‘know’+detVxDu1 (Mikola 1980: 225)

Nganasan *’enįntimi* ‘know(be familiar) ’+Cimp+detVxDu1 (Mikola 1970 : 65)

Selkup *orqilnej* ‘catch’+detVxDu1 (Hajdú 1968: 146) ~ *qoñimu*  
‘find’+detVxDu1 (Helimski 1998: 567)

the determinative verbal inflections and, as a consequence of this, whether the strong possessive person marking system influenced the development of the conjugations and of the inflections themselves is usually answered by stating that a possessive person marking system is primary over verb conjugation. The basis of their development and formation is the same, and the only difference between them is that possessive person markers attach to nouns, whereas verbal inflections attach to verbs. Thus, it is not very surprising that, due to a need for inflections, certain elements could spread from the possessive person marking system over to the determinative verbal paradigms.

Kamas *pārgəlbʷi* 'cut'+detVxDu1 (Donner 1944: 155)

### *VxDu1 -nyih*

Similarly to the VxSg1 form, the dual inflection *-nyih* of plural object reference came about in an analogical fashion. It, too, is of Proto-Uralic origin, just like the inflections discussed so far, since the *\*mV* pronoun can be traced in it, from which the detVxDu1 PS form *\*-miñ* developed. It is very probable that, due to the above mentioned need for inflections, it spread from the genitive paradigm of the possessive person marking system into the determinative paradigm of dual and plural reference.

This inflection has a form identical with the genPxDu1 possessive person marker *-nyih*, which developed from the PS *\*-n+miñ* form via PNS *\*niñ*.

Beyond the PxDu1 analogy, it contains the VxSg1 *-n* determinative form with a regular dual marker of plural object reference.

The *-nyih* inflection has the following corresponding forms in the Northern Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>nyih</i>	<i>jʔ</i>	<i>ń'</i>	<i>ńi</i>

NenetsT *pyay<sup>o</sup>nyih* 'begin'+detPIObjVxDu1 (Tereščenko 1965: 624)  
(*няйну'*)

NenetsF *matājajʔ* 'cut'+detPIObjVxDu1 (Verbov 1973: 94)

EnetsB *d'aztačuń'* 'find'+necess.+detPIObjVxDu1 (Tereščenko 1973: 197)

Nganasan *tenišitińi* 'know'+fut.+detPIObjVxDu1 (Mikola 1970: 66)

### *VxPl1 -waq*

Similarly to the other inflections of singular object reference, the inflection *-waq* can also be traced back to Proto-Uralic. It has its origin in the joining together of PU *\*-mV* first person singular personal pronoun and the plural marker *\*-t* via PS *\*-mat*. (Of the latter, the *\*t* element changed into a non-nasalizable glottal in Tundra Nenets.) The following correspondences can be found in the Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>waq</i>	<i>maʔ</i>	<i>ba'</i>	<i>mu'', (mı'')</i>	<i>mīt, mīn</i>	<i>ba', βa'</i>

NenetsT	<i>yaqmø°waq</i> 'unable'+detVxP11 (Tereščenko 1965: 637) (я"мава")
NenetsF	<i>kōŋ"ŋamma</i> " <i>Ɔ</i> 'carry away'+detVxP11 (Lehtisalo 1947: 136)
EnetsCh	<i>motadaba</i> 'cut'+detVxP11 (Susekov 1983: 142)
Nganasan	<i>hotægumu</i> " 'write, study'+imperat.+fut.+detVxP11 (Tereščenko 1966: 431)
Selkup	<i>čattâmj̄t</i> 'shoot'+detVxP11 (Hajdú 1968: 146)
Kamas	<i>ḡādār'īāba</i> 'guard'+detVxP11 (Donner 1944: 156)

### VxP11 -*naq*

Similarly to the VxSg1 inflection *-n* of dual and plural object reference and to the VxDu1 inflection *-nyih* of plural object reference, this inflection was also formed by analogy from the genitive paradigm of the possessive person marking system. Thus, we can find the PS *\*-n+mat* person marker, made up of the genitive *-n* element and the *\*mV+t*, which received its present day form via PNS *\*-nat*. This inflection can be explained not only as originating in the possessive person marking system but also as the result of the joining together of PNS VxSg1 *\*-nø+\*t* (the latter for plural). In my opinion neither explanation can be discounted since it is very probable that the stabilization of the *-naq* element as a verbal inflection was aided by its morphological similarity with the other plural verbal inflections and its regularity.

The VxP11 determinative inflection *-naq* of dual and plural object reference has the following corresponding forms in other Northern Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>naq</i>	<i>naʔ</i>	<i>na''</i>	<i>ńü'', ńi''</i>

NenetsT	<i>pyay°naq</i> 'begin'+detPIObjVxP11 (Tereščenko 1965: 679) (няйна")
NenetsF	<i>matājanaʔ</i> 'cut'+detPIObjVxP11 (Verbov 1973: 94)
EnetsB	<i>puŋahūnat</i> 'put up, put down'+detPIObjVxP11+praet. (Prokof'ev 1937: 89)
Nganasan	<i>huuləküüńü''</i> 'begin seeking'+imperat.+fut.+detPIObjVxP11 (Kosterkina et al. 1997: 177)

## 4.2.1.3. Second person determinative verbal inflections

**VxSg2 -r°**

Similarly to determinative person marking inflections, the Sg2 verbal inflection of singular object reference can also be traced back to a Proto-Uralic personal pronoun, namely the PU Sg2 *\*tV*. In Southern Samoyedic languages we do not find verbal inflections that would have an *r*-element in this person and number, thus, although the detVxSg2 inflection is also the morphologized reflex of the PU *\*tV* personal pronoun, the Northern Samoyedic detVxSg2 inflection containing the *r*-element is a Northern Samoyedic feature. The sound change which is observable in the inflection (and which does not constitute a general sound change) PU *\*t* > PNS *\*r* can be explained with Proto-Samoyedic sound changes and morphological phenomena resulting from them (cf. Mikola 19888: 241). PU *\*s* regularly became PS *\*t* and merged with PU *\*t* > PS *\*t*. As determinative verbal inflections of second and third person are the result of the morphologization of Proto-Uralic personal pronouns, the second and third person indeterminate verbal inflections became identical as a result of the above sound changes. In order to end this homonymy, the *\*t* element of detVxSg2, which became positioned intervocalically, weakened and then turned into *r* and *l*. In Southern Samoyedic languages the person marker containing the *l*-element was stabilized, while in Northern Samoyedic languages the one containing the *r*-element did. The forms corresponding to Tundra Nenets detVxSg2 -r° in Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>r°</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>r, ro</i>	<i>rə</i>	<i>l</i>

NenetsT *syertaφr°* 'do'+detVxSg2 ( 1965: 235) (*cepmap*)

NenetsF *kāttanār* 'kill'+detVxSg2 (Lehtisalo 1947: 344)

EnetsK *mudar* 'take'+detVxSg2' (Pusztay 1978: 9)

Nganasan *biaragora* 'open'+imperat.+fut.+detVxSg2 (Mačkinis 1980 : 28)

Selkup *qoŋal* 'find'+detVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 146)

**VxSg2 -d°**

Similarly to the other determinative verbal inflections of dual and plural reference discussed so far, the inflection -d° of dual and plural reference (and the person marking inflections that are related to it and have a similar function) occur only in Northern Samoyedic languages. Künnap's (1976: 85) position is that the modern Tundra Nenets VxSg2 -d° resulted from PNS *\*(-n)-tV* (or, according to findings since

Künnap's work, from PNS \*(-n)-tθ). This can be considered a regular sound change which, as far as both its base form and its line of development are concerned, is the same as the *-d°* element of the Sg2 *-nd°* person marker of the genitive paradigm of the possessive person marking system (see Mikola 1988: 241–242). The analogical influence of the possessive person marking system, in my opinion, cannot be discounted in the case of this verbal inflection either.

The determinative VxSg2 *-nd°* of dual and plural reference has the following forms in the other Northern Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>d°</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>ʒ</i>	<i>tə</i>

NenetsT *temtabyid°* 'sell'+detPObjVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1965: 265)  
(*тэмтабыд*)

NenetsF *matājat* 'cut'+detPObjVxSg2 (Verbov 1973: 94)

EnetsB *kaziz* 'kill'+detPObjVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1973: 73)

Nganasan *teninti'tə* 'know (be familiar)'+Cimp+detPObjVxSg2 (Mikola 1970: 66)

### VxDu2 *-ryih*

The determinative Du2 verbal inflection can be considered of Proto-Uralic origin since the PU \*tV personal pronoun can be detected in it, which provides the inflection in question through joining together with the PS *n̄*. All this indicates that, as far as its structure is concerned, *-ryih* is similar to other dual person markers of Nenets. Its corresponding forms in Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>ryih</i>	<i>lʔ</i>	<i>ri'</i>	<i>ri</i>	<i>lij</i>

NenetsT *yemp°qngaryih* 'dress somebody'+detVxDu3 (Salminen 1998a: 533)

NenetsF *mānniʔŋāL* 'see'+detVxDu2 (Sammallahti 1974: 74)

EnetsB *kazari* 'kill'+detVxDu2 (Tereščenko 1966: 450)

Nganasan *d'il'sitiŋiri* 'hear, listen'+interrog.+detVxDu2 (Tereščenko 1979: 215)

Selkup *čatalij* 'shoot'+detVxDu2 (Hajdú 1968: 146)



**VxDu2 -dyih**

Just like the determinative verbal inflections of dual and plural object reference, *-dyih* has also become part of the conjugation system analogically, under the influence of the possessive person marking system. We can find the PS *-ń* dual marker in it, so as far as its structure is concerned, it fits among the modern Tundra Nenets dual forms. Its Northern Samoyedic parallels are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>dyih</i>	<i>tʔ</i>	<i>zi'</i>	<i>t'i</i>

NenetsT *yemp°qngax°yudyih* 'dress somebody+detDuobjVxDu2' (Salminen 1998a: 533)

NenetsF *matājatʔ* 'cut'+detPIObjVxDu2 (Verbov 1793: 94)

EnetsB *I have found no examples in the available sources*

Nganasan *tenjntikajti* 'know', be familiar+detPIObjVxDu2 (Mikola 1970: 66)

**VxPI2 -raq**

The verbal inflection *-raq* is also based on the PU *\*-tV* Sg2 personal pronoun, to which the *\*-t* plural marker was attached and which developed through regular sound change via PNS *\*-rat* (Mikola 1988: 253).

It has the following corresponding forms in the Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>raq</i>	<i>Łaʔ</i>	<i>ra''</i>	<i>ru'' (rj'')</i>	<i>lijt</i>

NenetsT *pæ°rngaraq* 'do'+detVxPI2 (Tereščenko 1965: 505) (*негыра*)

NenetsF *maniʔhālaʔ* 'see'+detVxPI2 (Sammallahti 1974: 74)

EnetsK *tənəra'* 'know, be familiar'+detVxPI2 (Mikola 1980: 225)

Nganasan *hotəguoru''* 'write, study'+imperat.+fut.+detVxPI2 (Tereščenko 1979: 215)

Selkup *qoŋaljt* 'find'+detVxPI2 (Hajdú 1968:146)

*VxPI2 -daq*

This person marker can be explained similarly to the VxPI1 member of the plural reference paradigm, so it is probably based jointly on the spreading of the personal suffix *-daq/-taq* of the possessive person marking system to the determinative verbal paradigm and the relationship between the VxSg2 *-d°* of plural object reference and the *\*-t* plural marker.

Its corresponding forms in the other Northern Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>daq</i>	<i>taʔ</i>	<i>sa''</i>	<i>tü'', fi''</i>

NenetsT *yemp°qyødaq* 'dress somebody'+detPIObjVxPI2 (Salminen 1998b: 534)

NenetsF *matājataʔ* 'cut'+detPIObjVxPI2 (Verbov 1973: 94)

Enets *puŋida'* 'put down'+detPIObjVxPI2 (Gluhij et al. 1981: 153)

Nganasan *t'enid'ij'i''* 'know, be familiar'+praet.+detPIObjVxPI2 (Mikola 1970: 66)

**4.2.2. The history of indeterminative verbal inflections**

As I have already mentioned it in section 4.2.1 above, in Samoyedic languages the determinative : indeterminative opposition was first manifested in the third person singular, where the marked determinative verb form was in opposition with the unmarked indeterminative verb form. The complete separation of paradigms happened, in all likelihood, later. In Nenets the determinative verbal inflections are, as we could see, the grammaticalized continuations of the Proto-Uralic personal pronouns of the respective person and number. The great majority of the indeterminative personal suffixes are also of Proto-Uralic personal pronoun origin, but because they are, as far as their structure is concerned, more complex than the determinative ones, they date from a later time period and can be considered secondary to the determinative verbal inflections.

In connection with indeterminative verbal inflections it has to be mentioned that, with the exception of Kamas, Samoyedic languages all have predicative noun declination systems. The predicative person markers in Northern Samoyedic languages are so similar to indeterminative verbal inflections that Janhunen (1998: 470–471) does not even reconstruct separate paradigms for the Proto-Nenets predicative suffixes and indeterminative verbal inflections: the difference between them is only that the predica-

tive suffixes attach to nominal stems whereas the indeterminative verbal inflections to verbal stems. It is important to mention that among Southern Samoyedic languages there are two number and person slots in Selkup, where the predicative suffix and the indeterminative verbal inflection are not the same. One of them is the first person dual (PrexDu1 *-mij* : indetVxDu1 *-ej*), the other one is the third person plural (PrexP13 *-t* : indetVxP13 *-tjt*). In these cases, accepting Mikola's (1988: 258) position, we can say that the predicative suffixes can be considered more archaic than the verbal inflections, since the former preserved the original form of the inflection.

#### 4.2.2.1. Third person indeterminative verbal inflections

Unlike the determinative ones, third person indeterminative verbal inflections in Tundra Nenets do not have pronominal antecedents that have agglutinated during the course of the history of the language. The [inflection] : [zero morpheme] opposition observable in the third person singular of the various conjugation types appears in a [verbal inflection + number marker] : [number marker] opposition in the other numbers, as we will see below.

#### *VxSg3 0*

The indeterminative third person singular verbal inflection is a zero morpheme in Tundra Nenets just like in the other Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	<i>to°</i> 'come'+0indetVxSg3 ( <i>mo</i> )
NenetsF	<i>kajeä</i> 'go, run away'+0indetVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 200)
EnetsK	<i>pire</i> 'cook, bake'+0indetVxSg3 (Puszta 1978: 5)
Nganasan	<i>čal'ititi</i> 'run'+Cimp+0indetVxSg3 (Tereščenko 1979: 64)
Selkup	<i>tüŋa</i> 'arrive'+0indetVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 145)
Kamas	<i>amnä</i> 'sit'+0indetVxSg3 (Donner 1944: 86)

#### *VxDu3 -x°h*

The structure of the indeterminative third person dual verbal inflection in Tundra Nenets is the same as that of the other Samoyedic languages, that is, it only contains the Proto-Uralic number marker of dual.

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>x°h</i>	<i>haŋ</i>	<i>hi'</i>	<i>kəj, gəj</i>	<i>qi</i>	<i>γ<sup>i</sup><sub>i</sub>, g<sup>u</sup><sub>i</sub></i>

NenetsT	<i>ngædalix<sup>o</sup>h</i> 'walk'+indetVxDu3 ( <i>гэдалыхы</i> )
NenetsF	<i>jilijahaj</i> 'hunt'+indetDu3' (Lehtisalo 1947: 79)
EnetsK	<i>d'uridahi</i> 'speak'+indetVxDu3 (Mikola 1980: 225)
Nganasan	<i>d'il'sitil'i"ægəj</i> 'hear, listen'+inchoat.+Cperf+indetVxDu3 (Tereščenko 1973: 304)
Selkup	<i>amirndāqj</i> 'eat'+indetVxDu3 (Hajdú 1968: 146)
Kamas	<i>nerēlg<sup>u</sup>i</i> 'get frightened'+indetVxDu3 (Donner 1944: 146)

### VxPl3 -q

Similarly to its dual counterpart, the indeterminative third person plural verbal inflection of Tundra Nenets contains only a number marker, which can be traced back to the Proto-Uralic \*-t plural marker.

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Kamas
<i>q</i>	<i>ʔ</i>	"	"	<i>je', i'</i>

NenetsT	<i>lɔx<sup>o</sup>nɔ<sup>o</sup>q</i> 'speak'+indetVxPl3 ( <i>лахана</i> )
NenetsF	<i>kōŋja"ə</i> 'find'+indetVxPl3 (Lehtisalo 1947: 82)
EnetsK	<i>baðe"</i> 'speak'+indetVxPl3 (Mikola 1980: 225)
Nganasan	<i>d'ambütü"</i> 'swim'+Cimp+indetVxPl3 (Tereščenko 1973: 125)
Kamas	<i>b<sup>ə</sup>ðəLə<sup>u</sup>ji</i> 'drink'+indetVxPl3 (Donner 1944: 154)

### 4.2.2.2. First person indeterminative verbal inflections

Unlike in the indeterminative third person verbal inflections, in the first person we find zero morphemes as well as number markers and person markers also.

### VxSg1 -d<sup>o</sup>m

The verbal inflection -d<sup>o</sup>m is most likely a complex inflection. According to Künnap (1973: 195–196), it can be traced back to \*-tVmVn, a form that can be identified in Northern Samoyedic languages as well as in Kamas. I have to add that Künnap holds this position despite the fact that there is no linguistic element in either Nganasan or Selkup that would point to the present or past existence of the entire complex inflection. Künnap posits the origin of the \*-tVmVn inflection in the fusion of the morpheme

\**tV* of a so far unclear origin, considered a derivational suffix by Mikola (1988: 254), and the \**mVn* element. In a later paper, Künnap (1974: 16–17) reconstructs two indeterminate verbal inflections for Proto-Samoyedic: the inflections \**-tV-mV* and \**-mV*.

Helinski (1982: 80–81) holds a view somewhat different from Künnap's, considering well-motivated, on the basis of evidence from languages closely related to Tundra Nenets, the reconstruction of the forms \**-tɛm* (with no inflection-final vowel and a definable inflection-medial vowel) and \**-m* instead of \**-tVmV* and \**-mV*. Of the two, the latter can be traced back to \**-mān* of Proto-Samoyedic origin, whereas the former to \**tɛ* plus a (probably) derivational suffix.

Mikola (1988: 254) does not take apart the indeterminative first person singular verbal inflection to its components but reconstructs it as \**-tVmV* for Proto-Samoyedic, adding that the inflection, together with \**tV*, can only be found in stimulative mood in Nganasan.

Janhunen (1998: 471) does not posit another predicative first person singular inflection for Proto-Nenets but \**-m*, from which we can conclude that he does not accept the variant with the inflection-final vowel either.

In my opinion, the positing of the variant with no inflection-final vowel is more acceptable, since the positing of such a variant is not substantially motivated on the basis of the Samoyedic languages that have the indeterminative verbal inflection in question. This position is further supported by the fact that in Tundra and Forest Nenets complex past tense inflections where the person and number marking element is connected to the marker of the past tense (cf. Tundra Nenets *-dømcy*<sup>o</sup> and Forest Nenets *-tamś*), the past tense marker connects to the *-m*, with no other elements in between them. In my opinion, the indeterminative first person singular verbal inflection \**-m*, reconstructable for Proto-Samoyedic, has the same origin as the determinative first person singular inflection, that is, it can be considered the reflex of the Proto-Uralic first person singular personal pronoun. Homonymy in Tundra Nenets did not occur because, unlike the indeterminative verbal inflection, the determinative one preserved the vowel after the *m*, which went through spirantization, and also because in the indeterminative conjugation it often occurred together with the \**tV* element.

The corresponding indeterminative first person singular inflections in the other Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>d<sup>o</sup>m</i>	<i>tm, t</i>	<i>δ', ro'</i>	<i>m</i>

NenetsT *xøɣad<sup>o</sup>m* 'go'+indetVxSg1 (*хяяδm*)

NenetsF *tɛ''ŋat* 'pick (berries)+indetVxSg1 (Lehtisalo 1947: 102)

EnetsCh *θγumado* 'recover from illness+indetVxSg1 (Susekov 1983: 141)

Nganasan *basutum* 'hunt'+Cimp+indetVxSg1 (Tereščenko 1979: 211)

(As we can see, no Selkup or Kamas examples are provided. The reason for this is that the Selkup indeterminative first person singular inflection cannot be considered a cognate of the Tundra Nenets indetVxSg1, while in Kamas in most tenses and moods the inflections, outside of the third person, are the same as the determinative ones (cf. Donner 1944: 169).)

### *VxDu1 -nyih*

The indeterminative first person dual verbal inflection is also of Proto-Uralic origin, since we can find the first person singular personal pronoun *\*mV* marked for the dual in it, which can be reconstructed for Proto-Samoyedic as *\*miñ*. The structure of the inflection is probably the same as that of the determinative *-nyih* inflection of dual and plural object reference, that is, it is probably the reflex of PS *\*-n-miñ* > PNS *\*-niñ*. As I mentioned in section 4.2.1.2 above, the *n* element of the determinative inflection *-nyih* of dual and plural object reference cannot be demonstrated to have a meaning referring to the object and the role of analogy cannot be discounted in its development. In my opinion, the same is true also of the indeterminative *VxDu1 -nyih*. It is possible that this inflection spread over from the possessive person marking system, and its difference in structure from the determinative *VxDu1* inflection (*n*) does not carry any special elements of meaning but can be considered the sign of giving in to the pressure to be different from the already existing inflection.

The indeterminative inflection *-nyih* has the following correspondences in the other Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>nyih</i>	<i>j'</i>	<i>j', bi'</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>nej</i>

NenetsT *to°nyih* 'come'+indetVxDu1 (*moñu*)

NenetsF *jiñaj'* 'live'+indetVxDu1 (Verbov 1973: 93)

EnetsB *d'iřej* 'live'+indetVxDu1 (Susekov 1977: 37)

Nganasan *dərəbađutumi* 'greet'+Cimp+indetVxDu1 (Helimski 1994: 106)

Selkup *amjnej* 'eat'+indetVxDu1 (Hajdú 1968: 146)

*VxPII -waq*

The indeterminative first person plural inflection *-waq* is of pronominal origin, just like the first person inflections discussed above. It is composed of the Proto-Uralic *\*mV* personal pronoun and the Proto-Uralic *\*-t* plural marker, and it reached its present form via the Proto-Samoyedic form *\*-mat* through regular sound changes.

The first person plural inflections in the determinative paradigm of singular object reference and in the indeterminative paradigm are identical. This is a phenomenon unique to Tundra Nenets verb conjugation since in the case of the other verbal inflections there is an opposition of determinative (of singular object reference) : indeterminative paradigms, while in the case of other paradigms the exact correspondence of forms is frequent.

The indeterminative first person plural inflection has the following corresponding forms in the other Samoyedic languages:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>waq</i>	<i>maʔ</i>	<i>a", ba"</i>	<i>tu", (mī")</i>	<i>mīt</i>
NenetsT	<i>nømtø°waq</i> 'hear'+indetVxPII ( <i>намдава"</i> )			
NenetsF	<i>jilijamaʔ</i> 'live'+indetVxPII (Verbov 1973: 93)			
EnetsB	<i>d'aguzā"</i> 'not be, be absent'+indetVxPII (Tereščenko 1966: 455)			
Nganasan	<i>čid'iəmj"</i> 'go in'+perf.+indetVxPII (Čeremisina and Kovalenko 1986 : 35)			
Selkup	<i>amjrnimjīt</i> 'eat'+indetVxPII (Hajdú 1968: 146)			

*4.2.2.3. Second person indeterminative verbal inflections*

Similarly to other inflections discussed so far, second person indeterminative verbal inflections in Tundra Nenets can be traced back to Proto-Uralic personal pronoun origins. Just like in the case of first person indeterminative verbal inflections, we can see that the dual and plural number personal inflections are composed of *\*tV* and the respective Proto-Samoyedic (or Proto-Uralic) number marker (indetVxDu2: *\*tV+n̄*, indetVxPI2: *\*tV+t*). However, the second person singular verbal inflection, which, in addition to *\*tV*, contains historically an *\*n* element as well, is a complex verbal inflection containing a new element. In connection with this new element, Janhunen (1998: 471) states the following:

“From the proto-Uralic point of view, one of the most interesting features is that the second-person singular predicative ending seems to have been *\*n* in proto-Samoyedic, as opposed to *\*t* in most sub-branches of Finno-Ugric.”

### *VxSg2 -n°*

The indeterminative second person singular Tundra Nenets inflection can be derived from the already mentioned *\*-ntV* [*\*ntϕ*], of which *\*tV* [*\*tϕ*] can be considered the agglutinated reflex of the Proto-Uralic Sg2 personal pronoun.

The *\*n* element can be demonstrated in this person and number in other Samoyedic languages as well. With the exception of Nganasan, where the indeterminative second person singular inflection is simply a *-ŋ*, in all other languages it is only one part of the inflection. Thus, we can conclude that while most Samoyedic languages preserved the PU *\*-tV* second person inflection of personal pronoun origin, in the singular (probably the most frequently used number) it was necessary to differentiate the bare *\*-tV* from further elements, that is, to insert a new element into the inflection. (As I have already mentioned, in the case of Nganasan this new element became an inflection by itself.) This phenomenon can be explained by a need to avoid homonymy between morphemes containing the *\*t* element which functioned as person marking inflections and which were most likely overloaded in Proto-Samoyedic.

As we could see in section 4.2.1.3, in the development of determinative *VxSg2* (*-r° < PNS \*rϕ < PS \*-tϕ*) a very important role was probably played by the fact that during the sound changes of Proto-Samoyedic it must have been identical for a while with the determinative *VxSg3* (*-da < PNS \*-ta < PS \*-ta*), and this resulted in an irregular sound change. In my opinion, in Proto-Samoyedic the determinative : indeterminative opposition already existed for the second person,<sup>31</sup> so the inflections of *detVxSg2*, *detVxSg3* as well as of *indetVxSg2* were all of very similar structure. If we add to this that all three of these forms are frequently used, and the homonymy also existed, in addition to the conjugations, in the possessive person marking system as well as in the predicative declination of nominals, the need for clear differentiation seems a very likely explanation for their further development.

The forms corresponding to the *-n°* inflection in Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup
<i>n°</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ddo</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>nti</i>

<sup>31</sup> This is further supported by the fact that the indeterminative verbal inflection which can be traced back to *\*ntV* can be shown to have existed not only in Northern Samoyedic languages but also in Selkup (*indetVxSg2 nti*).



NenetsT	<i>si°rŋan°</i> 'look'+indetVxSg2 ( <i>сырҕан</i> )
NenetsF	<i>tj̄l̄l̄ipin</i> 'steal'+indetVxSg2 (Lehtisalo 1947: 72)
EnetsB	<i>jiredo</i> 'live'+indetVxSg2 (Prokof'ev 1937: 87)
Nganasan	<i>čiiŋiŋ</i> 'go in'+interrog.+indetVxSg2 (Kosterkina et al. 1997: 73)
Selkup	<i>āŋantj</i> 'be'+indetVxSg2 (Hajdú 1968: 153)

### *VxDu2 -dyih*

The indeterminative second person dual verbal inflection can also be considered of Proto-Uralic origin on the basis of the fact that one of the two morphemes it is composed of is the reflex of the PU second person singular personal pronoun *\*tV*, while the other one is the reflex of the Proto-Samoyedic *\*ń* dual marker, modified through regular sound change.

With the exception of Forest Nenets, we do not find any language in either the northern or southern branch of Samoyedic where the *\*-tV + \*-ń* structure for the indeterminative second person dual inflection has been retained and these elements were affected by regular sound change. In the other Samoyedic languages we find the reflexes of, most likely, PNS *\*-r∅* and PSS *\*-l∅*, familiar from the determinative paradigm. One reason for this may be that, at least in comparison with first person forms, this inflection is much less frequent.

I illustrate the occurrence of the inflection *-dyih* from Tundra and Forest Nenets:

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>dyih</i>	<i>tʔ</i>

NenetsT	<i>to°dyih</i> 'come'+indetVxDu2 ( <i>modu'</i> )
NenetsF	<i>jil̄iŋatʔ</i> 'steal'+indetVxDu2 (Verbov 1973: 93)

### *VxPl2 -daq*

Similarly to the dual inflection, in Tundra and Forest Nenets the indeterminative second person plural inflection is not the same as the corresponding inflection of the determinative paradigm of singular object reference like they do in the other Samoyedic languages. From among them, we find the reflexes of PNS *\*-r∅ + \*-t* in the languages of the northern branch and those of PSS *\*-l∅ + \*-t* in the southern branch.

In Nenets in the case of the indeterminate second person plural inflections two possible origins can be posited, just like in the case of the second person dual. One of the possible origins is that the phonemes of elements making up the inflection (that is, of the second person singular personal pronoun *\*-tV* and of the *\*-t* number marker, both of Proto-Uralic origin) went through regular sound changes and reached their present forms this way. According to the other possibility, the inflection in question spread over into both the indeterminate paradigm and the determinative paradigm of dual and plural object reference from the possessive person marking system.

I illustrate the *-daq* inflection and its Forest Nenets counterpart with the following examples:

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>daq</i>	<i>taʔ</i>
NenetsT	me°daq 'do, be'+indetVxPI2 (мэда")`
NenetsF	<i>kajjeta</i> "Э'go'+indetVxPI2 (Lehtisalo 1947: 82)

#### 4.2.3. The history of the reflexive-medial inflections

Analogy played a significant role in the development of the inflections of the reflexive-medial paradigm, as we will see below. Because of this, although all of them have some kind of clearly identifiable Proto-Uralic antecedent, the reflexive-medial conjugation is not altogether traceable to Proto-Uralic. Of the reflexive-medial inflections only the third person forms can be traced back unequivocally to Proto-Uralic bases, and the development of the conjugation type reminiscent of its present day form can be posited for an even later period, that of Proto-Northern-Samoyedic. Janhunen (1998: 471) reconstructs, for pre-Proto-Nenets, first and third person singular as well as third person plural forms that belong specifically to the reflexive-medial conjugation (see Table 34).

Many inflections got into the reflexive-medial paradigm by analogy from both the indeterminate and determinative paradigms. Regarding the fact that these were mostly from among inflections of dual and plural object reference, I agree with Mikola's (1988:256) observation that the spreading of forms from these paradigms into the reflexive-medial paradigm was greatly affected by the presence of the *-j-* element (of the same form although with different functions)<sup>32</sup> in both forms of plural object reference and in the reflexive-medial conjugation.

<sup>32</sup> The *-j-* element of determinative verb forms of plural object reference refers, obviously, to the plurality of the object, while in the reflexive-medial conjugation the element of the same form is a reflex of a *\*-j-* reflex-

According to Salminen's view,<sup>33</sup> the reflexive-medial verbal inflections are more in connection with indeterminative person marking inflections. The plausibility of such an argument can be accepted from the point of view that a closer connection can be supposed between indeterminative and reflexive-medial conjugations due to their relative intransitivity than between the determinative and reflexive-medial conjugations. As we could see above, the (most likely) less frequently used indeterminative inflections and determinative inflections of dual and plural object reference are often identical in their forms, and, what is more, it is probable, as I have mentioned, that the indeterminative inflections came about by the spreading of determinative inflections of dual and plural reference over into the indeterminative conjugation.

It cannot be discounted, of course, that the analogical reflexive-medial verbal inflections, in most cases (with the exception of refl-medVxPI1), can be explained by the influence of the indeterminative paradigm. But, in my opinion, Mikola's view is more plausible, since the similarity of their phonological and morphological structure (i.e. the same verb stems) might have had a greater influence on the triggering of the mechanism of analogy than the low transitivity, which connects the reflexive-medial and indeterminative conjugations.

Based on the above mentioned *-j-* element, the reflex of which occurs in Selkup as a reflexive derivational affix, both Helimski (1982: 81) and Mikola (1988: 255) consider it possible that the reflexive-medial conjugation was present in Proto-Samoyedic at least in an incipient form. In my opinion, this view can be accepted, but we should not presume the existence of a conjugation in Proto-Samoyedic of its present form. According to evidence from present day Samoyedic languages, in the third person singular and plural there may have existed reflexive-medial verbal inflections, but the inflections of the other persons and numbers developed only later. As I have mentioned in section 3.3, it seems very probable that in Proto-Uralic, in addition to the early stages of the determinative : indeterminative opposition, the rudimentary beginnings of the determinative : indeterminative : reflexive-medial opposition may have also existed, at least in the case of third person forms (even if not in the rest of the language).

The presupposition that the differentiation of medial verbs (and, with this, perhaps of the conjugation as well) is not more recent than the determinative : indeterminative opposition is not a historically and typologically controversial position. If we accept Havas's (2002) train of thought, we can agree that in the stage of the development of the language when transitivity did not yet exist as a principle of sentence or-

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ive derivational affix (Lehtisalo 1936: 78). Descriptively, there is no difference between them (see Salminen 1997: 96).

<sup>33</sup> I formulated this interpretation based partly on my consultations with Tapani Salminen, and partly on his writings (1997: 103–104) on the issue.

ganization (or was still developing), a “semantically based logic of sentence organization” was in place instead of the syntactic organization observable in the modern Uralic languages today. Havas’s view is as follows:

“[...] it is possible that the *verba sentiendi et affectuum* was the turning point in the development of the principle of transitivity, since [...] some verbs of perception are conjugated as active rather than as stative ways in some of the active languages as well when they are directed at a (definite) object, e.g. ‘I see your house’. [...] The principle according to which the intransitive – transitive opposition was preceded by the differentiation of verbs of action versus of verbs of state has been recognized for Indo-European, Kartvelian, Yenisey, Afroasiatic, Quechumaran and even Turkic languages. The development (from an earlier, undifferentiated state which brought forth the medial) of Indo-European passive *genus verbi* also points to the historic occurrence of the intransitive – transitive opposition at a period for which we already have attestations.”

Returning to the issue of the Proto-Samoyedic reflexive-medial conjugation, although it is possible that a reflexive-medial conjugation was starting to develop in the southern branch of Samoyedic languages as well, there is no sufficient evidence available that would support a claim along these lines. As the reflexive-medial paradigm found in the Northern Samoyedic languages does not exist in the southern branch, in presenting Tundra Nenets reflexive-medial inflections I will only be showing examples and correspondences from Northern Samoyedic.

#### *4.2.3.1. Third person singular and plural reflexive-medial inflections*

##### **VxSg3 -q**

Two phonologically and semantically acceptable explanations can be posited for the reflexive-medial first person singular inflection. According to Helimski (1982: 81), the inflection can be traced back to a Proto-Samoyedic *\*k* element, while others (e.g. Mikola 1988:255) consider it to have Proto-Uralic antecedents of personal pronoun origin just like several of the already discussed Tundra Nenets inflections. Although neither view can be refuted unequivocally, I consider Mikola’s view to be more plausible in light of the correspondences between Tundra Nenets and related languages. The refl-med VxSg3 inflection, which can be traced back to *\*k*, must have developed in a parallel fashion with the *\*sVn*-based inflection in the Northern Samoyedic languages, and their functions must have been completely identical. This view is also supported by

the fact that in Nganasan two refl-medVxSg3 inflections have been preserved up to today, of which one can be traced back to \**k*, the other to \**sVn*.

The Tundra Nenets refl-medVxSg3 inflection can be traced back to PU \**sV* + \**-n*, of which \**sV* is the Proto-Uralic third person singular personal pronoun, and \**-n* is possibly a nominal derivational affix. The Proto-Samoyedic \**-tøñ* element is posited as a possible antecedent of this complex morpheme, which developed through the deletion of the inflection-final nasal and vowel into a glottal. Positing such an origin for the inflection is not unproblematic since such extensive deletion of the material of the inflection is unusual even in a word-final position. The Northern Samoyedic correspondences of the reflexive-medial third person singular inflection are as follows:

NeNETS <sup>T</sup>	NeNETS <sup>F</sup>	Enets	Nganasan
<i>q</i>	<i>ʔ</i>	<i>ð; ðo'</i>	<i>ðə</i>
NeNETS <sup>T</sup>	<i>wødyelj°q</i> 'hunch up'+refl-medVxSg3 ( <i>šadenü</i> "		
NeNETS <sup>F</sup>	<i>ʔäleräxalle</i> " <i>ej</i> " <i>ʔ</i> 'start to call'+refl-medVxSg3 (Lehtisalo 1947: 146)		
Enets <sup>B</sup>	<i>d'azuliz</i> ' 'start out'+refl-medVxSg3 (Tereščenko 1966: 453)		
Nganasan	<i>čentirj</i> " <i>idə</i> 'prepare'+Cperf+refl-medVxSg3 (Kosterkina et al. 1997: 166)		

### VxPl3 -*d°q*

Similarly to the Sg3 inflection, the -*d°q* reflexive-medial third person plural inflection did not get into the conjugation through analogy but has Proto-Uralic antecedents. It can be derived from an \**sVt* element – the result of the joining together of the Proto-Uralic \**sV* third person singular personal pronoun and the \**t* plural marker – a proto-Northern-Samoyedic reflex of which can be posited as \**-tøq*. Forms corresponding to it can be found in Northern Samoyedic languages, although as Mikola (1988: 256) states: "die refl. Personalendung der 3. P. Plur. \**j-tVt* wurde teilweise (so im Ngan.)<sup>34</sup> oder völlig (im Enz.) durch \**tVn* (VxPl der det. Konjugation) verdrängt."

NeNETS <sup>T</sup>	NeNETS <sup>F</sup>	Enets	Nganasan
<i>d°q</i>	<i>tʔ</i>	<i>zo</i> "	<i>ntə</i> "

<sup>34</sup> Mikola's opinion can be accepted only partially, since positing a phonological connection between the Nganasan inflection and the inflection used in the determinative conjugation (-*tuj*) can be discounted as impossible.

NenetsT	<i>tyoryeyød°q</i> 'cry out'+refl-medVxPI3 ( <i>mēpeяd°</i> )
NenetsF	<i>täëwjst°</i> "Э 'arrive'+refl-medVxPI3(Lehtisalo 1947: 419)
EnetsCh	<i>taezo</i> " 'arrive'+refl-medVxPI3 (Labanauskas 1992: 11)
Nganasan	<i>bi°ajta</i> " 'go away'+Cperf+refl-medVxPI3 (Kosterkina et al. 1997: 175)

#### 4.2.3.2. Inflections from the determinative paradigm

##### VxSg1 -w°q

The reflexive-medial first person singular inflection occupies a special place among the analogical inflections of the paradigm. On the one hand, this is the only inflection which can be posited to originate from the inflections of the determinative conjugation of singular object reference (< detVxSg1 -w°), and, on the other hand, it has a glottal as part of it, which is most likely to have become part of the inflection due to the glottal of the reflexive-medial third person singular inflection (cf. Mikola 1988: 256: "Die Endung -" der 3. P. Sing. wurde analogisch dem VxSg1 angefügt."). Because it contains elements identical with the detVxSg1 of singular object reference -w° and the refl-medVxSg3 -q of Proto-Uralic origin, the reflexive-medial first person singular inflection cannot be excluded from among the group of Tundra Nenets inflections of Proto-Uralic origin.

On the same basis, the other analogical reflexive-medial inflections can also be considered the grammaticalized reflexes of the Proto-Uralic personal pronouns of the respective person and number, just like in the case of some determinative inflections of plural object reference and of the indeterminative inflections.

In Samoyedic languages – exactly because the reflexive-medial paradigms filled up individually in each language – there are few parallels besides the structure and changes observable in the third person singular and plural inflections. The refl-medVxSg1 -w°q has a phonologically corresponding form only in Forest Nenets. We find a somewhat different analogical form of the same function in Enets and a strikingly different one in Nganasan. (For more details, see Mikola 1988: 257.)

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>w°q</i>	<i>m°</i>

NenetsT	<i>lidabtareyøw°q</i> 'become embarrassed'+refl-medVxSg1 ( <i>лыдабтарэюв°</i> )
NenetsF	<i>taεwjam°</i> 'arrive'+refl-medVxSg1 (Verbov 1973: 95)

***VxDu1 -nyih***

The reflexive-medial first person dual form also originates in the determinative paradigm of dual and plural object reference (unlike the first person singular inflection, which originates in the determinative paradigm of singular object reference). Such a spreading of inflections happened similarly in Enets and Nganasan as well. (This, of course, does not mean that these inflections have the same origin, only that these related languages demonstrate similar tendencies of individual development.)

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>nyih</i>	<i>jʔ</i>	<i>ni'</i>	<i>ni</i>

NenetsT *peday°nyih* 'become tired'+refl-medVxDu1 (*пэдаяни'*)

NenetsF *taɣwjaʔ* 'arrive'+refl-medVxDu1 (Verbov 1973: 95)

EnetsB *kunuruɣuɲi* 'run' away+refl-medVxDu1 (Gluhij et al. 1981: 151)

Nganasan *matu''ini* 'cut'+refl-medVxDu1 (Castrén 1854: 449)

***VxDu2 -dyih***

The reflexive-medial second person dual inflection is also identical with the determinative inflection of the same person and number of plural object reference. A similar parallel can be detected between Du/PlobjdetVxDu2 and refl-medVxDu2 in Forest Nenets, Enets and Nganasan as well:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>dyih</i>	<i>iʔ</i>	<i>di'</i>	<i>ti</i>

NenetsT *tey°dyih* 'flow'+refl-medVxDu2 (*мэйдү'*)

NenetsF *taɣwjaʔ* 'arrive'+refl-medVxDu2 (Verbov 1973: 95)

Enets *no example found in the available sources*

Nganasan *d'eŋhid'i''iti* 'get dressed'+Cperf+refl-medVxDu2 (Tereščenko 1979: 209)

*VxPI1 -naq*

Similarly to refl-medVxDu1-2, the reflexive-medial first person plural inflection also originates in the paradigm of dual and plural object reference. In the other Northern Samoyedic languages we can also find a similar borrowing of inflections:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>naq</i>	<i>naʔ</i>	<i>na"</i>	<i>-nu"</i>

NenetsT *walyey°naq* 'discuss'+refl-medVxPI1 (*валейна"*)

NenetsF *taɣwjanaʔ* 'arrive'+refl-medVxPI1 (Verbov 1973: 95)

EnetsB *neɣrina"* 'stand up, stop'+refl-medVxPI1 (Tereščenko 1979: 451)

Nganasan *tamtüd'ü"ünü"* 'crawl'+refl-medVxPI1 (Wagner-Nagy 2002: 109)

*VxPI2 -daq*

The reflexive-medial second person plural inflection is the last one that can be traced to the determinative paradigm of dual and plural object reference. In the related Northern Samoyedic languages similar analogy can be found in Forest Nenets and in Enets:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets
<i>daq</i>	<i>taʔ</i>	<i>da"</i>

NenetsT *yıbyedoli°daq* 'think'+refl-medVxPI2 (*убедольда"*)

NenetsF *taɣwjataʔ* 'arrive+refl-medVxPI2' (Verbov 1973: 95)

EnetsB *moteda'* 'cut'+refl-medVxPI2 (Castrén 1854: 502)

#### 4.2.3.3. Reflexive-medial inflections that spread over from the indeterminative conjugation

The reflexive-medial third person dual and second person inflections can be explained by the spreading over of inflections from the indeterminative conjugation.

*VxSg2 -n°*

The spreading over of the reflexive-medial second person inflection *-n°* occurred not only in Tundra Nenets but also in Forest Nenets and Nganasan. In the case of Enets we see that there was a period in the history of the language when *-ddo*, the



indeterminative person marker of the respective person and number, was used as a reflexive-medial second person inflection just like in the other Northern Samoyedic languages (see Castrén 1854: 501–502). Grammars reflecting a later state of the language (e.g. Prokof'ev 1937 and Tereščenko 1966) quote a different verbal inflection, *-di* or *-d'*.

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan
<i>n<sup>o</sup></i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ddo</i>	<i>ŋ</i>

NenetsT	<i>tørpjøn<sup>o</sup></i> 'step out'+refl-medVxSg2 ( <i>mapnyu</i> )
NenetsF	<i>tašwjjan</i> 'arrive+refl-medVxSg2 (Verbov 1973: 95)
Enets	<i>motaddo</i> 'cut'+refl-medVxSg2 (Castrén 1854: 502)
Nganasan	<i>d'eŋhid'i"iŋ</i> 'get dressed+Cperf+refl-medVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1979: 209)

#### *VxDu3 -x<sup>o</sup>h*

The reflexive-medial third person dual inflection probably also originates in the indeterminative paradigm. A similar borrowing of inflection can only be observed in Forest Nenets, as in the other Northern Samoyedic languages inflections were added to the conjugation through different cases of analogy.

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>x<sup>o</sup>h</i>	<i>hVŋ</i>

NenetsT	<i>núlŷøx<sup>o</sup>h</i> 'stop (intrans.)'+refl-medVxDu3 ( <i>нуляха'</i> )
NenetsF	<i>tašwjjihŋ</i> 'arrive'+refl-medVxDu3 (Verbov 1973: 95)

4.2.3.4. As we can see, most verbal inflections that can be explained by analogy are found in the dual, however, there are no borrowed verbal inflections in either the third person singular or plural. These, as I mentioned before, are of Proto-Uralic origin. The analogical development of the reflexive-medial paradigm and the spreading over of the verbal person markers into it must have happened in a way suggested by Mikola's (1984, 1988) claim as far as the quantitative or the person and number distributional aspects were concerned, namely that after the original third person singular

and plural inflections the singular, plural and, finally, the less frequently used dual were filled up from the other three paradigms.

#### 4.2.4. *The history of the imperative and optative verbal inflections*

As has already been mentioned in section 4.1.4, in Tundra Nenets the imperative and optative verbal inflections are different from the inflections used in the other moods. This is due to the fact that the imperative and optative verbal inflections are complex inflections in which the inflection marking the imperative and the person markers form units unanalyzable at the present stage.

The inflections of these two moods have been little researched so far. In his work on the history of Samoyedic morphology, Mikola (1988: 246–248, 257) mentions two inflections of specifically imperative function: the indeterminative second person *\*-k+0* and determinative second person *\*-tV* inflections.

Mikola discusses various elements reconstructable as markers of the imperative for Proto-Samoyedic. Of them, in his opinion, *\*-k* occurred only in the second person of the indeterminative conjugation, while the *\*-jV-* in the third person of the same conjugation. The form *\*-mtV* must have contained a third person inflection of what Mikola calls the imperative, reconstructable for the Proto-Samoyedic determinative conjugation (used in Nenets and Enets also in the reflexive-medial paradigm).

According to Janhunen (1998: 474), the imperative mood and the imperative verb forms occupy a special place in the conjugation systems of Samoyedic languages in a number of ways (both Janhunen and Mikola use the term imperative as a cover term for what I refer to as the categories of imperative and optative): “[...] it not only varies considerably from language to language, it also shows a conspicuous lack of structural coherence within each individual language.” In his opinion it is not possible to decide unequivocally whether the imperative found in present day Samoyedic languages refers only to second person forms or whether we need to consider third person forms as falling under this category as well. Similarly to Mikola, he posits a *\*-k* imperative marker for Proto-Samoyedic, which had filled the same function in Proto-Uralic. This *\*-k* element plays the role of the second person imperative inflection of the indeterminative conjugation without any other morpheme attaching to it, forming an opposition with the *\*-t∅* element of the determinative conjugation. Another one of Janhunen’s observation also agrees with Mikola’s position, namely that besides these in Proto-Samoyedic there existed a *\*-ya* element and a *\*-(∅)-m* element as well, which had imperative functions in the third person forms of the indeterminative, and determinative and reflexive-medial paradigms, respectively. Their earlier origin is unknown.

The second and third person verb forms expressing imperative have to be differentiated also from the point of view of the fact that the real (i.e. second person) imperative suffixes do not attach to the general verb stem (see section 4.1.2), while the majority of the optative (i.e. third person) ones do (see section 4.2.4.3). (In the case of some groups of verbs inflections attach to stems characteristic solely of the optative, identical with the general stems of vowel stem verbs.) In my opinion, this can be explained in the following way. The imperative using only *\*-k* is of Proto-Uralic origin, not only as far as the imperative marker but also the structure of the verb forms expressing the imperative are concerned. The *imperat.detVxSg2* form, which is in opposition with it, is a later development; it can be considered a Proto-Samoyedic feature, but, possibly exactly because of the strong second person indeterminate : determinative opposition, the verb forms are of a different structure than the other verb forms, agreeing with that of the *\*-k* imperative.

Because analogy played a significant role in the development of the system of imperative and optative verbal inflections in Tundra Nenets, I will discuss them in two groups, that of inflections of analogical origin on the one hand and of Proto-Uralic origin on the other.

#### 4.2.4.1. The imperative verbal inflections of Proto-Uralic origin

##### *indetVxSg2 -q*

In the indeterminate paradigm of Tundra Nenets the imperative inflection is *-q*, which can be traced back through regular reconstruction to Proto-Uralic *\*-k*. In the other Samoyedic languages it corresponds to the following forms:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>q</i>	<i>ʔ</i>	"	"	<i>(ŋ)äšik</i> <sup>35</sup>	"

NenetsT *tuq* 'come'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (*my*)

NenetsF *toχurrqā* "Э 'teach'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (Lehtisalo 1956: 491a)

EnetsCh *kadda* "kill'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (Labanauskas 1992: 6)

Nganasan *heđjŋ* "go'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (Aron – Momde 1992: 48)

Selkup *nekiräšik* 'write'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (Hajdú 1968: 148)

<sup>35</sup> The Selkup inflection is different from the other Samoyedic inflections in containing a present tense coaffix in addition to the imperative marker. Because, unlike the optative inflections of Selkup discussed in section 4.2.4.3.2, in my opinion this is not a significant difference in structure, I will be quoting among etymologically parallel forms the Selkup forms that contain this coaffix as well.

Kamas *nere* 'get frightened'+imperat.indetVxSg2 (Donner 1944: 147)

#### *detVxSg2 -d°*

The determinative second person singular imperative inflection of singular object reference is of Proto-Uralic origin, just like its indeterminative counterpart: it can be traced back to the Proto-Samoyedic \**t*∅ element. In the Samoyedic sister languages the following corresponding forms can be found:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Nganasan	Selkup	Kamas
<i>d°</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d, δ</i>	<i>tə, δə</i>	<i>tj</i>	<i>t, də, tu</i>

NenetsT *syertad°* 'do'+imperat.detVxSg2 (*cepmað*)

NenetsF *ñièrət* 'drink'+imperat.detVxSg2 (Lehtisalo 1956: 24b)

EnetsB *izidj* 'hang (trans.)'+imperat.detVxSg2 (Sorokina 1974: 76)

Nganasan *hotəðə* 'write, study'+imperat.detVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1973: 151)

Selkup *amij* 'eat'+imperat.detVxSg2 (Hajdú 1968: 148)

Kamas *pārgēt* 'carve'+imperat.detVxSg2 (Donner 1944: 155)

#### 4.2.4.2. Analogical imperative verbal inflections

The imperative inflections of the determinative singular of plural object reference, the reflexive-medial, and of all four paradigms of dual and plural object reference are of analogical origin.

#### *detVxSg2 -n°q*

The determinative imperative inflection *-n°q* of dual and plural object reference contains most likely the indicative verbal inflection (*-n°*) of the corresponding person and number, which, also through analogy, is supplemented by the indeterminative second person imperative *-q*. Among the Samoyedic languages differentiating between dual and plural object reference, similar borrowing of inflection and inflection structure can be found only in Enets. (The origin of imperat.Du/PlobjdetVxSg2 in both Forest Nenets and Nganasan is the Sg2 inflection of dual and plural object reference, respectively, but in these languages the inflection contains no glottal.)

NenetsT	Enets
<i>n°q</i>	<i>n", no</i>

NenetsT	<i>tæw°ran°q</i> 'lead up to'+imperat.Du/PlobjdetVxSg2 ( <i>тэвран</i> )
EnetsB	<i>kadan</i> " 'kill'+imperat.Du/PlobjdetVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1966: 451)

### *refl-medVxSg2 -d°q*

It is possible that the reflexive-medial second person singular imperative inflection also spread over from the determinative (indicative) paradigm of dual/plural reference (cf. Du/PlobjdetVxSg2 *-d°*) and was supplemented with the glottal *-q* similarly to the imperat.Du/PlobjdetVxSg2 inflection.

In connection with the origin of this inflection the question might arise whether it is the determinative imperative Sg2 inflection of singular object reference that appears in it. In my opinion, this is just as possible as the previous explanation, since, despite the fact that in the reflexive-medial paradigm there are numerous elements that originate from the determinative paradigm (especially from the determinative paradigm of plural object reference), the investigation of the full verb forms indicates as more likely the borrowing of Sg2 imperative inflection of singular object reference.

As I have already discussed above, the imperative inflections of singular number do not attach to the general verb stem, like the other verbal inflections, but to the lexical stem of the verb (see Salminen 1997: 105). The reflexive-medial paradigm and the determinative paradigm of dual/plural object reference are not connected (descriptively) by a shared verb stem in this case, which, in turn, does not aid the possible borrowing of stems between the two paradigms. But the singular imperative verb forms uniformly follow the <lexical stem + verbal inflection> structure, thus making it probable that the imperat.refl-medVxSg2 inflection (which is probably of later origin and of less frequent use than imperat.indetVxSg2 or imperat.detVxSg2) contains the imperative inflection and the glottal *-q* (referring to reflexivity or to mediality).

This explanation is supported by the imperat.refl-medVxSg2 analogical *-t* inflection found in Forest Nenets (cf. imperat.detVxSg2 *-t*). We find analogy in Enets, just like in Nenets:

	NenetsT	Enets
	<i>d°q</i>	<i>δ'</i>
NenetsT	<i>ngamtød°q</i> 'sit down'+imperat.refl-medVxSg2 ( <i>γамтəдə</i> )	
EnetsB	<i>adəs'</i> 'sit down'+imperat.refl-medVxSg2 (Tereščenko 1973: 90)	

*Dual and plural imperative inflections:**indetVxDu2 -dyih**detVxDu2 -ryih**Du/PlobjdetVxDu2 -dyih**refl-medVxDu2 -dyih**indetVxPI2 -daq**detVxPI2 -raq**Du/PlobjdetVxPI2 -daq**refl-medVxPI2 -daq*

The dual and plural imperative inflections are identical with the indicative inflections of the corresponding person and number. I will not repeat the explanations regarding their origin as they would be the same as those I have already discussed. These inflections are of analogical origin. Among the other Samoyedic languages we find similar systematic borrowing of inflections in Enets, but because I cannot illustrate every relevant form from Enets due to the nature of the available sources, I will only bring examples from Tundra Nenets:

*indetVxDu2 -dyih: me°dyih* 'take'+imperat.indetVxDu2 (*мэду*)*detVxDu2 -ryih: me°ryih* 'take'+imperat.detVxDu2 (*мэру*)*Du/PlobjdetVxDu2 -dyih: mey°dyih* 'take'+imperat.detPlobjVxDu2 (*мэйдү*)*refl-medVxDu2 -dyih: tey°dyih* 'flow'+imperat.refl-medVxDu2 (*мэйдү*)*indetVxPI2 -daq: yurk°bta°daq* 'wake up (trans.)'+imperat.indetVxPI2  
(*юркабтада*)*detVxPI2 -raq: syerta°raq* 'do'+imperat.detVxPI2 (*сертара*)*Du/PlobjdetVxPI2 -daq: tyid°xølyebyidaq* 'direct'+imperat.Plobj detVxPI2  
(*тидхалебида*)*refl-medVxPI2 -daq: xoney°daq* 'fall asleep'+imperat.refl-medVxPI2  
(*хонэйда*)*4.2.4.3. Optative inflections*

Similarly to the singular number imperative inflections, the optative inflections are also different, in their structure and in their way of connecting to stems, from those found in the indicative and the other moods. The extent of this difference is not as great as in the imperative, since it is only manifested in the verbs of alternating stems and in irregular verbs.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> The verb groups mentioned create a verb stem identical to the general stem of vowel stem verbs, to which, then, optative inflections can attach (for details, see Salminen 1997: 107).

In the optative we find two elements expressing optative mood of Proto-Samoyedic origin (discussed in section 4.2.4 above): the *\*-ya* and the *\*-(ø)-m*. The former occurs in the indeterminative paradigm, the latter in the determinative and reflexive-medial paradigms, attaching to verbal person marking inflections of the given person and number.

Although, as I mentioned in the introduction, my dissertation is based primarily on Tundra Nenets literary language, I have to mention the phenomenon that reflects dialect differences in regard to optative inflections. The (normative) dual and plural optative inflections of the literary language are not used in the Siberian dialects of Tundra Nenets (that is, in the dialects spoken by the majority of Tundra Nenets speakers), and instead of them the corresponding forms of the indicative inflections are used (by analogy), in a similar fashion as we have seen in the case of the imperative.

However, as there exist and are in use (in both the dual and the plural), without doubt, forms that are characteristic of only the optative, I will discuss them below.

#### 4.2.4.3.1. The history of indeterminative optative verbal inflections

##### *indetVxSg3 -ya*

The indeterminative third person singular optative inflection can be considered of Proto-Samoyedic origin, traceable back to the “fusion” of a *\*ya* element expressing summons referring to a third person and of the morphologically unmarked indeterminative third person singular verbal inflection. Its correspondences in the other Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Selkup	Kamas
<i>ya</i>	<i>ja</i>	<i>j, b'</i>	<i>ɲijä, nijä</i>	<i>gui, k<sup>uu</sup>i</i>
NenetsT	<i>to°ya</i> ‘come’+optat.indetVxSg3 ( <i>тоя</i> )			
NenetsF	<i>jiiñaja</i> ‘live’+optat.indetVxSg3 (Verbov 1973: 95)			
EnetsB	<i>manaj</i> ‘say’+optat.indetVxSg3 (Susekov 1977: 37)			
Selkup	<i>ilijijä</i> ‘live’+optat.indetVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 148)			
Kamas	<i>uzzug<sup>uu</sup>i</i> ‘fall’+optat.indetVxSg3 (Donner 1944: 148)			

*indetVxDu3 -yax°h*

The indeterminative optative inflection used in the dual is also traceable back to Proto-Samoyedic \*-ya, to which the dual marker of Proto-Uralic origin is attached. Its parallels among the Samoyedic languages can be found in Forest Nenets and in Selkup:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Selkup
<i>yax°h</i>	<i>jahaŋ</i>	<i>ŋijäqi, nijäqi</i>

NenetsT	<i>me°yax°h</i> 'take (away)'+optat.indetVxDu3 ( <i>мэяха'</i> )
NenetsF	<i>jitiŋajahaŋ</i> 'live'+optat.indetVxDu3 (Verbov 1973: 95)
Selkup	<i>tiŋijäqi</i> 'sit in boat'+optat.indetVxDu3 (Prokof'eva 1966: 408)

*indetVxPI3 -yaq*

The indeterminative plural optative inflection is built up in the same way as inflections in the dual, that is, of Proto-Samoyedic \*-ya and the plural marker of Proto-Uralic origin. (Just like in the dual, the structure of this inflection can be interpreted as the fusion of \*-ya and the indetVxPI3 inflection, since the latter does not contain anything else besides the number marker of Proto-Uralic origin. This possibility is supported by the fact that in Selkup not only the plural marker but an element identical with indetVxPI3 is also part of the inflection.) Of the most closely related languages, we find corresponding forms of this inflection in Forest Nenets, Enets, Selkup, and Kamas.

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets	Selkup	Kamas
<i>yaq</i>	<i>ja²</i>	<i>j", b'"</i>	<i>ŋijätit, nijätit</i>	<i>g<sup>li</sup>'i, gu'iu'</i>

NenetsT	<i>ngæ°yaq</i> 'be'+optat.indetVxPI3 ( <i>гэя"</i> )
NenetsF	<i>jitiŋaja²</i> 'live'+optat.indetVxPI3 (Verbov 1973: 95)
EnetsB	<i>d'adaj'</i> 'say'+optat.indetVxPI3 (Susekov 1977: 37)
Selkup	<i>mēŋijätit</i> 'do'+optat.indetVxSg3 (Hajdú 1968: 148)
Kamas	<i>uzzugu'iu₂'</i> 'fall'+optat.indetVxPI3 (Donner 1944: 148)



#### 4.2.4.3.2. The history of determinative optative inflections

In the determinative paradigm we find a Proto-Samoyedic element similar to *\*-ya* expressing summons referring to a third person. Together with the *\*-tø* element, *\*-(ø)-m* is also used not only in the determinative paradigm but also in the reflexive-medial paradigm as well.

##### *detVxSg3 -mda*

The determinative optative inflection of singular object reference is built up of the above mentioned *\*-(ø)-m* and *\*-tø* elements. In my opinion, the latter may be identical with the Sg3 verbal inflection of the determinative paradigm of singular object reference, so it can be considered the reflex of the Proto-Uralic personal pronoun. Optative inflections of a similar structure can be found in Forest Nenets and in Enets as well. (In Selkup we find the sound combination traceable back to *\*-mtø* in the inflection expressing third person summons, but the structure of the inflection – *-ñimijä*, *-ñimijä* – is not the same as the Tundra Nenets and Enets inflections.)<sup>37</sup>

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets
<i>mda</i>	<i>mta</i>	<i>dda, da</i>

NenetsT *pøngk°lngamta* ‘spin (yarn) ’+optat.detVxSg3 (*наһгалһамда*)

NenetsF *mataŋamta* ‘cut’+optat.detVxSg3 (Verbov 1973: 95)

EnetsK *d’utoda* ‘strike’+optat.detVxSg3 (Pusztay 1978: 7)

##### *detVxDu3 -mdyih*

The inflection of the Tundra Nenets third person dual optative can also be considered of archaic origin since it can be traced back to the fusion of the above mentioned Proto-Samoyedic *\*-m* and the Proto-Uralic personal pronoun (*\*sV > PS \*ta*), modified by the dual marker. The *-dyih* element found in the inflection is identical with the determinative Sg3 verbal inflection of singular object reference. Its correspondences in the other Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets
<i>mdyih</i>	<i>mtʔ</i>	<i>d’i’</i>

<sup>37</sup> The same can be seen in Selkup dual optative inflections of singular object reference: the *-mij* element is contained in all of them, but because the structure of the inflection does not agree with the inflections of Nenets and Enets, I do not provide examples of them.

- NenetsT *me°mdyih* 'take (away)'+optat.detVxDu3 (*мэмду*)  
 NenetsF *mataŋamɫʔ* 'cut'+optat.detVxDu3 (Verbov 1973: 95)  
 EnetsK *śarodʔi*<sup>38</sup> 'dress somebody'+optat.detVxDu3 (Pusztay 1978: 8)

### *detVxPI3 -mdoh*

In the optative mood the determinative plural inflection of singular object reference also contains the Proto-Samoyedic \*-*m* characteristic of the determinative and reflexive-medial paradigms, which is connected to the *-doh* element identical with the PI3 inflection of singular object reference from the determinative conjugation.

As has already been discussed in section 4.2.1.1 above, the *-doh* element can be traced back to the agglutinated and pluralized form of the Proto-Uralic third person personal pronoun. Its correspondences in the Samoyedic languages are as follows:

NenetsT	NenetsF	Enets
<i>mdoh</i>	<i>mtoŋ</i>	<i>di'</i>

- NenetsT *me°mdoh* 'take (away)'+optat.detVxPI3 (*мэмдо*)  
 NenetsF *mataŋāmtoŋ* 'cut'+optat.detVxPI3 (Verbov 1973: 95)  
 Enets *motāddi'* 'cut'+optat.detVxPI3 (Castrén 1854: 505)

### *Optative inflections of dual and plural object reference*

#### *Du/PlobjdetVxSg3 -dømda*

#### *Du/PlobjdetVxDu3 -dømdyih*

#### *Du/PlobjdetVxPI3 -dømdoh*

The determinative optative inflections of dual and plural object reference are the longest members in this mood. They are built up of two clearly separable elements: on the one hand, the inflection identical with the inflection of singular object reference of the corresponding person and number, and, on the other hand, of the *-dø* element, which refers to the duality or plurality of the object. The origin of the latter is not clear, but because we do not find elements corresponding to it even in the optative paradigm

<sup>38</sup> For Enets, I was able to find only examples of the inflection variant that does not contain the glottal stop. Deletion of the word final glottal stop is characteristic not only of the imperat.detDu3 inflection but also of all the inflections in the examples provided by the author of the source of data.

of plural object reference in the languages most closely related to Tundra Nenets, we can consider it as a specifically Tundra Nenets development.

As the optative inflections of dual and plural object reference differ only in the presence of the  $-d\emptyset$  from those of singular object reference, in order to avoid repetition, I will not discuss their history separately, only illustrate their use with examples.

Du/PlobjdetVxSg3  $-d\emptyset mda$ : *mey°d\emptyset mda* (Salminen 1998a: 25)

Du/PlobjdetVxDu3  $-d\emptyset mdyih$ : *mey°d\emptyset mdyih* (Salminen 1998a:25)

Du/PlobjdetVxPl3  $-d\emptyset mdoh$ : *mey°d\emptyset mdoh* (Salminen 1998a: 25)

#### 4.2.4.3.3. The history of reflexive-medial optative inflections

The reflexive-medial optative inflections are also very complex inflections. They contain, on the one hand, the  $*-m$  element of Proto-Samoyedic origin which can be found in the determinative optative paradigms as well, and, on the other hand, the glottal stop as an inflection final element, possibly due to analogy.

#### *refl-med VxSg3 -md°q*

In my opinion, the reflexive-medial optative singular inflection originates by analogy from the determinative optative paradigm of singular object reference and received, also by analogy, the glottal stop used in the reflexive-medial indicative inflection. A similar structure can be observed in Forest Nenets:

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>md°q</i>	<i>mt°</i>

NenetsT *nyoy\emptyset mt°q* 'no (neg. verb)'+optat.refl-medVxSg3 (нѣямд°)

NenetsF *tæwjamt°* 'arrive'+optat.refl-medVxSg3 (Verbov 1973: 96)

#### *refl-med VxDu3 -x\emptyset md°q*

In dual we find the  $-md°q$  inflection of analogical origin, which is augmented by a  $-x\emptyset$  element. This element is identical with the Du3 verbal inflection used in the indicative, and, as such, can be traced back to the archaic dual marker. The structure of the optative reflexive-medial Du3 inflection is unique, since, if we accept that the  $-x\emptyset$  element really refers to the dual, then, unlike in the inflections discussed so far, it contains the number marker inflection-initially rather than in an inflection final position.

In my opinion, this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that the optative reflexive-medial paradigm developed relatively late, and the probably more frequently

used Sg3 inflections were taken over in fossilized forms into the dual and plural. As number had to be marked but the number marker could not follow the reflexive-medial inflection, it was placed in the inflection-initial position. This process was most likely aided by the fact that in the inflection-initial position of the inflections of the determinative paradigm of dual and plural reference there is also a *-dø* element added.

As there are not verbal inflections in the other Samoyedic languages that would be like the optat.refl-medVxDu3 in their structure, this inflection can be illustrated only from Tundra Nenets.

*tey°xømd°q* 'flow'+optat.refl-medVxDu3' (мэўхамд")

***refl-med VxPI3 -dømd°q***

The same can be said about the structure of the optative reflexive-medial inflection as about the dual one, with the difference that inflection-initially we find an element referring to plurality. This inflection is of analogical origin but also contains archaic elements since we find in it the reflexes of PS *\*-m* and of the Proto-Uralic Sg3 personal pronoun. The plurality marking *-dø* element is also related to the Proto-Uralic *\*-t* plural marker. The *-dømd°q* inflection is most likely the result of the individual development of Nenets, since in Samoyedic languages we do not find forms parallel with it, although see the discussion concerning Forest Nenets below.

In Forest Nenets, as Verbov's (1973) grammar attests, the verbal inflection *-tamtʔ* is used as the optative reflexive-medial, but in his example illustrating the conjugation we find the form *-mtʔ*, which is identical with the Sg3 optative inflection. (Besides this one example, I was not able to find in Forest Nenets materials a verb form that contained an optat.refl-medVxPI3 verbal inflection, and no form like that is known to Forest Nenets expert Tapani Salminen either.<sup>39</sup>) If we accept the inflection to be *-tamtʔ* and the example is flawed, we can say that in Forest Nenets, the language most closely related to Tundra Nenets, the structure of the inflection is the same as in Tundra Nenets.

The fact that in the dual we find a form that does not occur in Forest Nenets either and that the plural verbal inflection is identical in the two languages, again, supports the position that the development of the paradigms follows the singular > plural > dual order (as I have already mentioned in the discussion of reflexive-medial inflections).

Another explanation can also be considered plausible, too, namely that Verbov's (1973: 96) example is correct, but the table summarizing the inflections is flawed due

<sup>39</sup> I want to thank Tapani Salminen for the information.

to a printing error or due to the fact that the author based his table solely on the Tundra Nenets system of inflections.

In such a case, similarly to the optative inflections of dual and plural reference, the reflexive-medial optative inflections have to be considered specifically Tundra Nenets developments which contain archaic elements as far as their component parts are concerned but whose development in the given form and with the given function occurred in the individual period of the life of the language.

NenetsT	NenetsF
<i>dømd°q</i>	<i>tamt°</i>

NenetsT     *tey°dømd°* 'flow'+optat.refl-medVxPI3 (*тэүдамд°*)

NenetsF     *taεwjamt°* 'come'+optat.refl-medVxPI3 (Verbov 1973: 96)

### *4.3. Conclusion*

In chapter 4 I have provided a synchronic and diachronic overview of the Tundra Nenets verbal inflections.

In the synchronic description my aim has been to present verbal inflections as a system integrated in the larger system of person marking inflections. This approach has been motivated by the fact that in Tundra Nenets person marking inflections are closely connected with each other in their morphological material, structure and history, and, due to the borrowing of inflections, we can perhaps even say that they are interconnected with each other.

In connection with the history of the verbal inflections it has to be stressed that, as far as the morphological material of the inflections is concerned, the Tundra Nenets system of conjugation is based on the Proto-Uralic personal pronouns. In all of the verbal inflections we find elements that can be traced back to the Proto-Uralic personal pronoun of the given person and number. This claim is true in the analogical cases as well as in the cases of paradigms that contain complex inflections of, undoubtedly, later development of the language, such as the determinative paradigm of dual/plural object reference, the reflexive-medial paradigm, or the imperative and optative paradigm.

In addition to elements of Proto-Uralic origin, the verb conjugation system of present day Tundra Nenets contains Proto-Samoyedic, Proto-Northern-Samoyedic, Proto-Nenets elements as well as elements that originate in the individual development of Tundra Nenets. Analogy played a very important role in the filling up of the various paradigms.

In my opinion, the bases of the paradigms were developing in Proto-Uralic already, although the development of the entire conjugation system, the formation of the inflections making up the system, and the stabilization of their functions date back to later times. In connection with the direction of the development of the paradigms I essentially accept Mikola's (1988, 1997) position. Based on it and on the investigation of the inflection material, we can say that in Tundra Nenets the oppositions between the determinative and the indeterminative, and later between the determinative conjugation of dual/plural object reference and the reflexive-medial conjugation first occurred in the third person (in the singular first and then in the plural). The conjugation types must have developed first in the singular number, then in the plural, and finally in the dual.

## **5. A functional investigation of Tundra Nenets conjugations on the sentence level**

In this chapter I attempt to provide an overview of the use of Tundra Nenets conjugation types. I will formulate the rules of the use of the inflections that are known so far and present my views on the possible linguistic roles of the conjugations.

Before investigating the verbs in context, I will discuss the Tundra Nenets groups of verbs and the conjugation types that they are related with. As I have mentioned in the introductory part of this paper, I do not wish to deal in a detailed way with the verbs whose conjugation is lexically bound and whose behavior on the level of the sentence or of the text is not affected by grammatical rules and tendencies, by the intention of the speaker, or by the context.

In this chapter I will also provide an overview of the literature on the use and functions of Tundra Nenets verb conjugations, an analysis and critical discussion of the results and conclusions of the authors. As the literature on the use of Tundra Nenets verb conjugations does not study units larger than the sentence, I will also analyze sentence-level tendencies and draw conclusions from the results.





The following three verbs are examples of verbs conjugated only in the determinative conjugation:<sup>40</sup>

*варилибтесъ* 'run (lifting feet high)'

- (12) *һацеқы"* *хардахандо'* *варилибтесдо'*  
'child'+PI 'house'+lat.+genPxPI3 'run (lifting feet high)'+detVxPI3

'The children quickly ran into their house.' (Tereščenko 1965: 46)

*һултасъ* 'stop (trans. or intrans.)'

- (13) *һэ* *седу"* *махан'* *һултасми'*  
'rock' 'hill'+PIgen. 'top, back'+lat. 'stop (with a sleigh)'+detVxDuI

'We stopped on top of the hill (with the reindeer sleigh).' (Tereščenko 1965: 242)

*вэлцирибтасъ* 'go out to a wet place'

- (14) *сарёхона* *мякад* *һиваси"* *вэлцирибтада*  
'rain'+locat. 'tent'+ablat. 'boot'+privative 'go out to a wet place'+detVxSg3

'S/he went out of the house into the rain with no shoes on.' (Tereščenko 1965: 70)

The following verbs are bound in the reflexive-medial conjugation:

*һарһесъ* 'step out from somewhere'

- (15) *хардаханданда* *һин'* *һарһесми"*  
'house'+ablat.+PxSg3 'out into the street' 'step out'+refl-medVxSg3

'S/he came out of his/her house.' (Tereščenko 1965: 636)

*һа"һасъ* 'come down, fall down'

- (16) *һи'* *сырада* *һа"һесми"*  
'night'+gen. 'snow'+gen. 'come down, fall down'+refl-medVxSg3

'Snow came down during the night.' (Tereščenko 1965: 763)

*һэвасъ* 'arrive'

- (17) *һяд'* *һэван'* *һэвесми"*  
'tent'+gen. 'side'+lat. 'arrive'+refl-medVxSg3

'S/he came back to his/her tent.' (Tereščenko 1965: 797)

<sup>40</sup> Among verbs belonging into this category it is frequent for the verb to semantically include an object – such as in the case of the verbs *варилибтесъ* or *һултасъ*, which probably motivates the use of the determinative conjugation.

As I have mentioned before, I will not be discussing verbs of this type, i.e. verbs whose use with the different conjugations does not depend on the linguistic situation, since, due to being lexically defined, they are not suitable for investigating the issues of use of the various conjugations or for gaining a closer understanding of the functions of the conjugations.

### 5.1.2. Verbs not bound in their conjugations

Conjugations (the determinative, the indeterminative, and, most of the time, the reflexive-medial) can be chosen freely, depending on the linguistic situation and the intention of the speaker in the case of transitive verbs, on the one hand, which, unlike those illustrated in examples in section 5.1.1 above, do not contain an element of meaning or of morphology that would bind them in a specific conjugation, and, on the other hand, in the case of transitive-reflexive verbs. (Verbs belonging into the transitive group can take indeterminative and determinative inflections. The verbs of the transitive-reflexive group are the most free in their conjugations: they can take the inflections of any of the three paradigms.)

The transitive group contains, among others, the verb *пэрцэ* 'do':

- (18) *намгэм'*                      *пэрцэн?*  
'what'+acc.                      'do'+indetVxSg2

'What are you doing?' (Tereščenko 1965: 505)

- (19) *пэртямда*                      *намгэмда*                      *мер'*                      *нида*                      *пэр"*,  
'done'+accPxSg3                      'something'+accPxSg3                      'quickly'                      'not'+detVxSg3                      'do' (conneg.)

*валакада*                      *тяхасовна*                      *пэрцада*  
'only, but'                      'thoroughly'                      'do'+detVxSg3

'S/he does not do her/his things quickly, but s/he does them thoroughly.'  
(Tereščenko 1965: 38)

The transitive-reflexive group is illustrated by the *мись* 'do necessary things, get into obvious situation':

- (20) *сыв'*                      *ня'*                      *ты"*,                      *нохо"*                      *таредо'*                      *ми"*  
'winter'+gen.                      'for, to'                      'reindeer'+Pl.                      'arctic fox'+Pl.                      'coat of fur'+PxPI3 'do'+  
(postp.)                                                                                                                               indetVxPI3

'The reindeer and the arctic foxes changed their coats for the winter.'  
(Tereščenko 1965: 257)

- (21) *ты"*                      *нямдодо'*                      *мийдо'*  
'reindeer'+Pl.                      'antler'+PxPI3                      'do'+detVxSg3

'The reindeer shed their antlers.' (Tereščenko 1965: 257)

- (22) *нохо'*            *мапта*    *мий"*  
'arctic fox'+gen 'fur'+PxSg3 'do'+refl-medVxSg3

'The arctic fox has shed its coat.' (Tereščenko 1965: 257)

I will not be separately dealing with the indeterminative conjugation. As will be clear below, this conjugation type, in my opinion, serves the role of a default conjugation: that is, it is used if there is no specific reason for the speaker to use the determinative or reflexive-medial conjugation. Because of this, the issues connected with the use of the indeterminative conjugation are closely connected to those of the determinative and reflexive-medial conjugations and will be discussed together below.

## 5.2. *The use of the determinative conjugation in Tundra Nenets*

### 5.2.1. *Previous literature on the use of the determinative conjugation*

#### 5.2.1.1. *Castrén (1854)*

In his 1854 grammar of Samoyedic, Castrén is the first to discuss the types of Nenets conjugations and briefly talks about the characteristics of use of the various conjugations (379):

“1) In Verbindung mit den Praedicataffixen giebt das transitive Zeitwort zu erkennen, dass die Handlung sich auf ein *bestimmtes Object* [emphasis mine, E.K.] bezieht; z. B. *ńań muem*, ich nahm das Brot.

2) Die possessiven Pronominalaffixe werden an den Singular gehängt, wenn bloss ein einziges *unbestimmtes Object* [emphasis mine, E.K.] vorhanden ist; z. B. *ńań mueu*, ich nahm Brot, eigentlich Brot (war) mein Nehmen.

3) Bezieht sich die Handlung auf zwei Objecte, so nimmt das transitive Verbum die Possessivaffixe des Duals an; z. B. *ńańaha' muehajun*, ich nahm zwei Bröte, eig. zwei Bröte waren meine zwei Nimmungen.

4) Giebt es aber mehrere Objecte, so werden die Possessivaffixe des Plurals an das Verbum gefügt; z. B. *har' mueajen*, ich nahm Messer.

5) Endlich werden Reflexivaffixe gebraucht, wenn das Subject und Object aus einer und derselben Person bestehen; z. B. *madaju'*, ich hieb mich. Es muss jedoch bemerkt werden, dass im Jurakischen Reflexivaffixe seltener an das transitive Verbum gefügt werden.”

Castrén's interpretation is, then, that in transitive situations if the object of the action is definite, the indeterminative conjugation is used. In those cases where the object of the action is indefinite but it is of a definite number, the determinative conjugation is used. (I have to mention in connection with this that I consider the existence of such an object doubtful at best.)

As Castrén's later critics (Wickman 1970: 210, Ristinen 1973b: 22) also mention, the above statements are most likely the results of misunderstanding, but it is clear

from them that Castrén saw the definiteness or indefiniteness of the object of the action to be the key to the use of the determinative conjugation.

### 5.2.1.2. Tereščenko (1956)

Tereščenko's (1956) view differs from Castrén's in that she explains the choice of conjugations with sentential stress rather than the nature of the object. In her view the indeterminative conjugation is used if the sentence contains a direct object that receives what she calls "logical emphasis". If the verb, that is, the action, is what receives logical emphasis, the determinative conjugation is used, as the following examples from Tereščenko's work also demonstrate:

(23) *Нисяв тикы газетам толаби-0* (indetVxSg3)

'Мой отец читает эту газету.' (Tereščenko 1956: 114)

'It is this paper that my father is reading.'

(24) *Нисяв тикы газетам толаби-да*(детВжСг3)

'Мой отец читает эту газету.' (Tereščenko 1956: 114)

'What my father does with this paper is read it.'

It is important to stress that in spite of formulating the above rule and illustrating it with examples, Tereščenko is not consistent in her interpretation of the role of the indeterminative conjugation. In the following examples illustrating the use of the conjugation types, which are from a later work of hers, we can see that (26) has a direct object and the determinative conjugation is used, but if there is logical emphasis in it, it is not on the verbal part of the sentence but on the object.

(25) *Тюку яля' хардахандо' мядонди ма"ла"*(indetVxP13)

'Они собрали сегодня в свой дом гостей.' (Tereščenko 1973: 188)

'They invited guests to their house today.'

(26) *Мядонди тюку яля' хардахандо' ма"лэйдо'* (detVxP13)

'Гостей они сегодня в свой дом собрали.' (Tereščenko 1973: 188)

'It is guests that they invited to their house today.'

(27) *Тюку яля' хардахандо' мядонда" ма"лыд"* (refl-medVxP13)

'Сегодня в их доме собрались гости.' (Tereščenko 1973: 188)

'Today they had guests coming together at their house.'

### 5.2.1.3. Ristinen (1973)

Despite the contradiction discussed above, Tereščenko's view based on stress relations has had a significant effect on later investigators, of whom Ristinen (1973a, 1973b) introduced the notion of "focus-conjugation".

Ristinen distinguishes between two basic cases in the use of the determinative conjugation. The first one is when there is logically a direct object in the sentence but it is not overtly expressed – the conjugation which is used in this case is the determinative. (I will be discussing this phenomenon below as the anaphoric use of the determinative conjugation.)

Ristinen believes that, if the sentence has an overtly expressed direct object, the speaker can use either the indeterminate or the determinative conjugation, depending on the speech situation. (In cases like this, even though the use of either one is perfectly grammatical, Ristinen presupposes slight differences in meaning, but he does not elaborate on what they are.) In his view, Tereščenko's hypothesis of logical emphasis is fully plausible, but I consider it important to emphasize that Ristinen does not use the notion of "logical emphasis" in his work but that of syntactic focus, which he clearly equates with the former. He also states that "the nature of the DO [direct object] probably has nothing to do directly with the use of S [subjective] and O [objective] conjugations in Samoyedic" (1973b: 343). As we will see below, I completely agree with him as far as Tundra Nenets is concerned.

### 5.2.1.4. Janhunen (1993)

Similarly to Ristinen, Janhunen talks about focus-conjugation in connection with Nenets, that is, in sentences that have a direct object, he attributes a focusing role to the choice of conjugation, as we will see from the following examples:

(28) *Tim xadaφ-dφm.* (indetVxSg1) 'I killed a reindeer.'

(29) *Tyuku tim xadaφ-wφ.* (detVxSg1) 'I killed this reindeer.'

(30) *Tyuku tim xadaφ-dφm.* (indetVxSg1) 'I killed this reindeer.'

### 5.2.1.5. Pusztay (2001)

Pusztay (2001) is the latest work addressing the issue of the use of Tundra Nenets determinative conjugation. According to him (Pusztay 2001: 70, 72), the use of the determinative conjugation is vacillating in Nenets. In great probability, it can be used even when the sentential object is "very definite" or when the logical emphasis is on the predicate. He considers the latter case, that is, the focus hypothesis more plausible,

so it can be concluded that he essentially accepts the view – traditional in Samoyedic linguistics since Tereščenko's work – that focus has a role in the choice of conjugations.

### 5.2.2. *An evaluation of the previous literature on the use of the determinative conjugation*

Several comments can be made in connection with the positions overviewed above.

5.2.2.1. The view of the post-Castrén literature, according to which the indefiniteness or definiteness of the object in the linguistic situation does not have a direct effect on the choice of conjugations, is supported by the following examples. In (31)-(32), the speaker uses the indeterminative conjugation independently of whether the object is indefinite or definite; whereas in (33)-(34) we see that even though the object is definite in both sentences, in (33) the determinative conjugation is used, while in (34) the indeterminative is.

- (31) *Ңока ирий пыда хибяри вабцм' нисъ намд".*  
 'many' 'month' 's/he' 'somebody' 'speech'+acc. 'not (neg. verb) 'hear'  
 +praet.indetVxSg3 (conneg.)  
 'S/he hasn't heard a human voice for months.' (L. Taleeva)

- (32) *Пыда мале ҥока ирий нянда вабцм' нисъ намд",*  
 's/he' 'already' 'many' 'month' 'friend'+ 'speech' 'not' (neg. verb) 'hear'  
 genPxSg3 +acc. +praet.indetVxSg3 (conneg.)  
*теда пыда нянда звониҥу.*  
 'now' 's/he' 'friend'+genPxSg3 'call up'+indetVxSg3  
 'S/he hadn't heard her/his friend's voice for months when s/he [=the friend] called her/him up.' (L. Taleeva)

- (33) *Мань мале' ҥодмэва ҥарка ҥэрм' явм' манэ"ҥавась.*  
 'I' 'already' 'once' 'big' 'northern' 'sea'+acc. 'see'+praet.detVxSg1  
 'I have seen the North Sea once.' (L. Taleeva)

- (34) *Пирибтя сидя ҥарка халям' сямби.*  
 'girl' 'two' 'big' 'fish'+acc. 'clean'+0indetVxSg3  
 'The girl is cleaning the two big fish.' (L. Taleeva)

In connection with the definiteness or indefiniteness of the verb it has to be mentioned that even though it seems plausible that it is not the defining factor in the choice of the conjugations, its effect on this choice cannot be discounted (see in more detail below).

5.2.2.2. In regard to “focus conjugation” I have to make the following observations as far as “logical emphasis” and the notion and interpretation of focus are concerned.

5.2.2.2.1. On the one hand, I do not consider plausible the generally accepted view of the post-Tereščenko literature that Tereščenko’s term logical emphasis is necessarily equateable with syntactic focus. (Despite this, Tereščenko most likely did not object to the equating of the two notions, as she never referred to that in her later writings.)

5.2.2.2.2. Even if we do accept that logical emphasis and syntactic focus refer to the same phenomenon, we still have to state that the rule attributed to Tereščenko does not work. According to it, every Tundra Nenets sentence that contains a direct object and a verb in the indeterminative conjugation should be a sentence where the direct object is in syntactic focus, and if we find a verb form bearing determinative inflection and having a direct object, the sentence would have to contain syntactic focus of the verb. Based on my investigation, I have to say that the linguistic evidence does not bear this out.

I examined the general validity, or at least of the regularity, of the “focus conjugation” in the following fashion.

I examined 836 example sentences from Tereščenko’s (1965) Nenets–Russian dictionary which contained verbs in the determinative conjugation. According to Tereščenko’s rule, these would have to contain focus, while those that had a direct object with the determinative verb would have to contain focus on the verb. I asked three speakers of Tundra Nenets to evaluate the sentences as far as focus was concerned, to establish whether they were focused or focus-neutral, or, perhaps “focus-suspect”. The speakers marked the sentences, and within the sentences, the parts of the sentences which, in their opinion, contained or at least possibly contained extra emphasis.

It is important to point out that this examination is not of statistical nature. This is due to the fact that the examination used written material where even native speaker subjects can have difficulty establishing the stress and emphasis relations and where subjective, sometimes momentary, impressions can play too great a role. I asked the subjects to mark every sentence where they thought any extra stress possible. The aim of the examination was not to try and express results in a quantitative way but to see if Tereščenko’s rule really did work or not, that is, if the combination of direct subject and determinative conjugation really triggered focus in the sentence whether it was verb focus or not; and if not, whether there was a tendency for the extra stress to be associated with a particular phrase or part of the sentence.



Of all the examined sentences, 556 contained a determinative verb and a direct object as well – these, according to Tereščenko's rule, would have to have focus, specifically focus on the verb. As the material under investigation came from the example sentences of a dictionary, already at this phase of the investigation it was possible to formulate the presupposition that it was not possible that the example sentences of a dictionary would contain such a high proportion of non-neutral sentences. The same was supported by the evaluation by the subjects, who rated 210 of these 556 sentences as not containing extra stress at all. The following are examples of such sentences:

- (35) *едм' сирадав*  
'dish'+acc. 'fill with snow'+detVxSgI

'I filled the dish with snow.' (Tereščenko 1965: 574)

- (36) *тябибтавы сянакомда няханда нуямлада*  
'old, uninteresting' 'toy'+accPxSg3 'friend'+lat. 'give away'+  
+genPxSg3 +detVxSg3

'S/he gave her/his old toy to her/his friend.' (Tereščenko 1965: 405)

- (37) *уудин масынась*  
'hand'+Pl.acc. 'wash'+  
+PxSgI praet.PlobjdetVxSgI

'I washed my hands.' (Tereščenko 1965: 239)

Of those sentences that contained both a direct object and a determinative verb and were marked by the native speaker subjects as having (or possibly having) focus, subsequent analysis showed that no tendency could be identified as defining the place of the focus in the sentence. In all of them extra emphasis could be associated with actions, events, predicates expressing state, with objects, subjects or even particles.

The following sentences (may) contain verb focus, according to the native speaker raters.

- (38) *нохомда туним' уэдава' уэсонд' тэвада*  
'arctic fox' 'at a gunshot's distance' 'chase away'+detVxSg3  
+accPxSg3

'S/he chased the arctic fox away at a gunshot's distance.'<sup>41</sup> (Tereščenko 1965: 416)

<sup>41</sup> In the translations of the sentences I'm attempting to express the stress relations presupposed by the native speaker subjects. Because of the native speakers' subjective evaluations, these translations do not always correspond with the Russian translations provided in Tereščenko's dictionary. It is also very important to bear in mind that the focus relations marked in the sentences are not obligatory but possible focus interpretations.

- (39) *пибита си няюта нибяхана павдэйда*  
 'boot'+PlPxSg3 'hole'(Pl.acc.) 'thick' 'needle'+locat. 'sew'+  
 PlobjdetVxSg3  
 'S/he sewed up the holes on the boots with a thick needle.' (Tereščenko 1965: 427)
- (40) *хар' сeнд' харамда ныхыри' няпрада*  
 'knife'+gen. 'sheath'+lat. 'knife'+ 'with difficulty' 'sheathe, tuck in'+detVxSg3  
 acc.PxSg3  
 'S/he tucked the knife into the sheath with difficulty.' (Tereščenko 1965: 345)
- (41) *енсида мерхалейда*  
 'step' (Pl.acc.) +PxSg3 'quicken'+Plobj.detVxSg3  
 'S/he quickened her/his steps.' (Tereščenko 1965: 249)

The following sentences have object focus, according to the native speakers' evaluation:

- (42) *Җарка нямдо' нани' яхаданда санабтадо'*  
 'great, old' 'friend'+ 'again' 'place'+ablat. 'make stand up'+  
 accPxPI3 +genPxSg3 detVxPI3  
 'They made their old friend stand up from his/her seat again.' (Tereščenko 1965: 528)
- (43) *манзаина" малэйна"*  
 'work'+PlPxPI1 'finish'+PlobjdetVxPI1  
 'We finished our work.' (Tereščenko 1965: 221)
- (44) *уацекым' малндав*  
 'child'+acc. 'cover up'+detVxSg1  
 'It is the child I covered up.' (Tereščenko 1965: 223)
- (45) *не нюмд мэнелмэв*  
 'girl, daughter'+accPcSg2 'fall in love with'+detVxSg1  
 'It is your daughter I fell in love with.' (Tereščenko 1965: 270)
- (46) *нинеками иням' хархана мадада*  
 'brother'+PxSg1 'nerve'+acc. 'knife'+locat. 'cut'+detVxSg3  
 'It is the nerve my brother cut with the knife.' (Tereščenko 1965: 214)
- (47) *хадада хасава нюмда падута нюцяда*  
 'grandmother'+PxSg3 'grandson'+accPxSg3 'cheek'+PxSg3 'kiss'+detVxSg3  
 'It is her grandson that the grandmother kissed.' (Tereščenko 1965: 335)

As the following examples will illustrate, the extra emphasis can be placed in the sentence onto an adverbial phrase or even a particle:

- (48) *ты ват' сюрлабтайдо'*  
 'reindeer'+Pl.acc. 'pen'+lat. 'drive in'+detVxPI3  
 'It is into the pen that they drove the reindeer.' (Tereščenko 1965: 590)
- (49) *вэвако хобам' сидя ян' удартав*  
 'bad, poor' 'fur, pelt'+acc. 'into two' 'fold'+detVxSgI  
 'It is into two I folded the bad pelt.' (Tereščenko 1965: 372)
- (50) *тюку тэми саць мэнев*  
 'this' 'reindeer'+PxSgI 'very much' 'like'+detVxSgI  
 'It is very much that I like this reindeer of mine.' (Tereščenko 1965: 269)
- (51) *нюдя нэвани мальуана нунтормам' саць мэневась*  
 'young' 'being'+genPxSgI 'at the time' 'shooting with arrow'+acc. 'very much' 'like'+  
 praet.detVxSgI  
 'It is very much that I liked to shoot with an arrow when I was a small child.' (Tereščenko 1965: 410)

In some cases, such as in (52) below, even the subject of the sentence can be in an emphasized position, according to the native speaker subjects.

- (52) *хора нянда нямдм' ваделабтавэда*  
 'reindeer bull' 'fellow'+genPxSg3 'antler'+acc. 'break off'+perf.+detVxSg3  
 'It was the reindeer bull that broke off its fellow reindeer's antler.'  
 (Tereščenko 1965: 33)

As can be seen from the examples, the sentences that contain both a direct object and a verb in the determinative, no extra emphasis needs to occur. If there is extra emphasis in the sentence, or, at least, focus can be presupposed, it does not have an obligatory position, that is it can be placed on any part of the sentence, depending practically on the given situation and the speaker's interpretation.

On the basis of all this, we can say that, because the joint presence of the determinative conjugation and the direct object in the sentence does not trigger focus, the tradition of Tereščenko's "focus-conjugation" does not appear plausible, and, thus, cannot be considered a rule. The use and function of determinative and indeterminative conjugations, thus, cannot be unequivocally connected with the stress relations of the sentence.

5.2.2.3. A further observation can be made in connection with the positions of the previous literature on the issue. Of those working on the topic, no one has investi-

gated the use of the determinative conjugation in a context larger than a sentence. As we will see below, it is vitally important to do so in the examination of the choice between the determinative and indeterminative conjugations. I will return to this question in chapter 6 below.

### 5.2.3. *The grammatical rules of the use of the determinative and indeterminative conjugations*

The choice between the indeterminative and determinative conjugations in Tundra Nenets does not always depend on the intention of the speaker or the actual speech situation. There are grammatical rules which permit, and others that prohibit, the occurrence of a certain construction in the sentence.

In Tundra Nenets those sentences that contain both a direct object and a verb in the determinative conjugation, two basic cases can be distinguished on the basis of whether there is another part of a sentence occurring between the direct object and the verb or not. If there is, another distinction can be made on the basis whether it is a particle that does so or not, because the presence of a particle between the direct object and the verb does not have a bearing on the grammatical rules defining the choice between the conjugations. It is important to emphasize that these distinctions are irrelevant in the case when the direct object of the sentence is a pronominal object. (See sections 5.2.3.1 through 5.2.3.2 below.)

5.2.3.1. If the sentence contains a pronominal direct object, the indeterminative conjugation is usually used, as the examples below illustrate.

- (53) *Варк тута, сидни' нгамда.*  
 'bear' 'come'+fut.+indet 'us' 'eat up'+ fut.+indetVxSg3  
 VxSg3

'The bear is coming, it'll eat us up!' (Neko: 18)

- (54) *saŋko'armi? miŋe šit xānaŋkuŋi?*  
 'fold'+genPxDu1 'inside' 'you' 'take, carry'+fut.+indetVxDu1

'We'll take you in the folds of our clothing.' (Hajdú 1968: 83)

- (55) *ŋanu' ŋamgэм' ё"ŋan?*  
 'again' 'what'+acc. 'lose'+indetVxSg2

'What have you lost again?' (Tereščenko 1965: 127)

5.2.3.2. If an element different than the particle occurs between the direct object and the verb in the sentence, the determinative conjugation is used; whereas if the direct object immediately precedes the verb, either the indeterminative or the determinative conjugation can be used. These conditions can be summarized as follows:

DO + Vindet

DO + Vdet

DO + <any part of speech other than a particle> + Vdet

\*DO + <any part of speech other than a particle> + Vindet

In my paper I refer to these as the Susoj Rule, since this observation was made by Susoj, even though it does not occur anywhere in his publications.<sup>42</sup> As examples (56)-(60) show, the Susoj Rule works in the majority of the cases, but because I have found exceptions to it in the data I have studied where in the construction <DO + any part of speech other than a particle + V> the verb occurs in the indeterminate rather than the determinative conjugation (e.g. in (61)-(63) below), I take this rule into account but do not regard it as a general one.

Example (56) illustrates the DO + Vindet construction:

- (56) *Хыдьян' идм хамда.*  
 'dish'+lat. 'water'+acc. 'pour'+indetVxSgI  
 'S/he poured water into the dish.' (Neko: 6)

In (57) the DO + Vdet construction is illustrated:

- (57) *[...] не нё сивня тюуганя сырамда ланомлада*  
 'woman' 'doorway'+prolat. 'come in'+part.imperf. 'snow'+accPxSg3 'lock out'+detVxSg3  
 'The woman locked out the snow coming in through the doorway.'  
 (Tereščenko 1965: 177)

The DO + <any part of speech other than a particle> + Vdet construction is also grammatical, as the following examples illustrate:

- (58) *Пырям' мань шаревась [...] си"ив яля нэсоңгана.*  
 'pike'+acc. 'I' 'fry'+ 'a week ago'  
 praet.detVxSgI  
 'I fried the pike [...] a week ago.' (Laptander)
- (59) *халям' юркана жарэда*  
 'fish'+acc. 'lard'+locat. 'fry'+detVxSg3  
 'I fried the fish in lard.' (Tereščenko 1965: 128)

<sup>42</sup> I know of Susoj's views on the issue from personal communication with Tapani Salminen.

- (60) *мерця* *наном* *ид'* *варан'* *лабцеда.*  
 'wind' 'boat'+acc 'water'+gen. 'bank'+lat. 'sweep  
 out'+detVxSg3

'The wind swept the boat out to the bank.' (Tereščenko 1965: 165)

The following examples, (61)-(62), contradict the Susoj Rule. In connection with these and similar examples I have to say that they occur very rarely in the examined corpus of data.

- (61) *Нюдяко* *не* *уацекы* *веняком'* *харад'* *хэвхана* *манэ''э.*  
 'young' 'girl' 'puppy'+acc. 'yard'+gen. 'at.edge' 'notice'+  
 0indetVxSg3'

'The little girl saw a puppy in the yard.' (Laptander)

- (62) *Тызям'* *ханхадан* *мэм'.*  
 'bow'+acc. 'sled'+ablat. 'take'+indetVxSg1  
 +PxSg1

'I took out my bow from my sled.' (Kuprijanova 1965: 372)

Examples (63) and (64) illustrate those cases when only a particle occurs between the direct object and the verb of determinative conjugation in a sentence. As we can see, in these cases, as far as their grammaticality is concerned, the constructions are the same as if nothing were occurring between the direct object and the verb of determinative conjugation, that is, either the determinative or the indeterminative conjugation can be used.

- (63) *тюку* *падарми* *вадри'* *таив*  
 'this' 'paper, writing'+PxSg1 'sometime' 'bring'+detVxSg1

'I'll bring that paper sometime.' (Tereščenko 1965: 35)

- (64) *Вэняко* *лы* *нули'* *мэне.*  
 'puppy' 'bone'+Pl.acc. 'very much' 'like'+indetVxSg3

'The puppy likes bones very much.' (Laptander)

#### 5.2.4. Other sentence level phenomena related to the use of the determinative conjugation

5.2.4.1. As we have seen in chapter 1 above, in order to map up the usage of the determinative conjugation it is unnecessary to examine units larger than a sentence when the grammatical rules discussed above can explain the choice of conjugation. This is also unnecessary in the case of collocations and idiomatic phrases in which the

words and their grammar (their conjugation, among other things) are bound and unaffected by the context. For instance:

*манзь ханада*(detVxSg3) 's/he says' ~ "s/he leads saying"

*(ныда) тарем' ма-0*(indetVxSg3) 's/he says'

*ихинян мам'*(indetVxSg1) 'I think' ~ "I say in my mind"

*хобцокоми ход*(imperat.detVxSg2) 'solve my riddle'

etc.

5.2.4.2. In those sentences where either the determinative or the indeterminate is grammatical, the morphological difference is due to a semantic or pragmatic reason. I cannot support this claim with evidence, however, since I have been unable to create a test that would produce such evidence. In any case, I cannot exclude the possibility that the reinterpretation of Tereščenko's logical stress based hypothesis might provide some insight into the distinction.

If we do not interpret logical stress as syntactic focus – that is, a part of the sentence having extra emphasis, word order, or another kind of indication – but as an element considered to be important from the point of view of the speaker, then the usage difference seems perceptible, even if just barely.

(65) *Маси Нeko пэсьняюв' халям' сявмба ёлцеңгуда.*  
'perhaps' 'Neko' 'by evening' 'fish'+acc. 'clean' (inf.) 'finish'+fut.+detVxSg3  
'Neko might be done cleaning the fish by evening.' (L. Taleeva)

(66) *Маси Нeko пэсьняюв' халям' сявмба ёлцеңгу.*  
'perhaps' 'Neko' 'by evening' 'fish'+acc. 'clean' (inf.) 'finish'+fut.+0indetVxSg3  
'Neko might finish cleaning the fish by evening.' (L. Taleeva)

In my opinion it is possible that in (65) the speaker uttering the sentence considered it important to stress that the fish that Neko is cleaning will be done by evening, while in the latter sentence the speaker may have considered more important the process, the person or work of the person doing the work, or the completion of the work.

The same can be seen in the following example sentences, where, according to the native speaker subjects evaluating the sentences, both (68) and (69) are grammatical questions that can be used, but in the case of the latter the speaker is more interested in the result of the action than in the former.

- (67) *He yацeкy хaлyм' сyвмдa пэвсумнyнa.*  
 'girl' 'fish'+acc. 'clean'+detVxSg3 'by evening'  
 'The girl will clean the fish by evening' (Laptander)
- (68) *He yацeкy yаркa хaлyм' сyвмбa мaлeцy?*  
 'girl' 'big' 'fish'+acc. 'clean' (inf.) 'finish, be done  
 with'+fut.+0indetVxSg3  
 'Will the girl finish the cleaning of the big fish?' (Laptander)
- (69) *He yацeкy yаркa хaлyм' сyвмбa мaлeцyгyдa?*  
 'girl' 'big' 'fish'+acc. 'clean' (inf.) 'finish, be done with'+fut.+ detVxSg3  
 'Will the girl be surely done with the cleaning of the big fish?' (Laptander)

The plausibility of such differentiation seems to be supported by the following sentences.

- (70) *Tыкy хacаvа yацeкy пuxиня пyм' пэпy.*  
 'that' 'boy' 'outside' 'wood'+acc. 'cut'+0indetVxSg3  
 'That boy is cutting up wood outside.' (L. Taleeva)
- (71) *(Хacаvа yацeкy мaлe цоkа yлy пu пэпy.)*  
 'boy' 'already' 'many' 'day' wood'+ 'cut'+0indetVxSg3  
 Pl.acc.  
*Macи хyнyнa пyдa тыкy мaнзaямдa ёльцeцyгyдa.*  
 'perhaps' 'tomorrow' 's/he' 'this' 'work'+accPcSg3 'finish'+fut.+detVxSg3  
 '(The boy has been cutting up wood for days.) Maybe by tomorrow he'll  
 be done with this work.' (L.Taleeva)

In example sentence (70) we see the description of a process, where the result of the process is not mentioned. By contrast, in (71) the completion of the process and, indirectly, its result is also referred to. It is important to stress in connection with the above sentences, however, that the above mentioned presupposition (according to which, if the result of the action is considered important by the speaker, the determinative conjugation will most likely be used, whereas if the process (and the result of it is not even mentioned), the indeterminative conjugation is used) cannot be considered proven beyond doubt at all.

At the same time, we can see a certain difference in intensity in the sentences where the determinative conjugation is chosen as a result of the freedom of choice between conjugations, which is provided by the grammatical rules. The emotionally (more) charged sentences contain the determinative conjugation more frequently than the indeterminative one:



- (72) *түюкү тэми сацъ мэнев*  
'this' 'reindeer'+PxSgI 'very much' 'like'+detVxSgI  
'I like this reindeer of mine so much.' (Tereščenko 1965: 269)
- (73) *Мань паской ембдеро мэнем'*  
'I' 'beautiful' 'garment'+Pl.acc. 'like'+indetVxSgI  
'I like beautiful clothes.' (L. Taleeva)

### 5.3. The use of the reflexive-medial conjugation

As has been briefly mentioned in section 5.1 above, reflexive-medial inflections in Tundra Nenets are attached to the verbs of the reflexive and the transitive-reflexive groups. The former group is bound in its conjugation, and the use of the reflexive-medial conjugation is motivated by the fundamentally reflexive or medial nature of the verb in question. Most verbs of this type belong among one of the following semantically based groups.<sup>43</sup>

#### *Actions or events (often of an intensive nature) that have to do with one's own body or mind*

Those reflexive and medial verbs belong in this semantic type that express change of position, actions (often of an intensive nature) carried out with the whole of one's body, movement, or change in body posture. For example:

- (74) *Хов, хабэвкор муй'*  
'well' 'little ptarmigan'+PxSg2 'fly off'+refl-medVxSg3  
'Well, the little ptarmigan has flown off.' (Neko: 25)

- (75) *хүнана jurkīdʔ*  
'morning' 'get up'+refl-medVxPl3  
'They got up in the morning.' (Hajdú 1968: 79)

#### *Verbs of (inherently) reflexive nature, verbs of collective nature*

*ныхы"лась* 'argue'

- (76) *poŋkanand'iʔ tæeri pixiʔlixiʔ*  
'between'+locat.+PxDu3 'this way' 'argue'+refl-medVxDu3  
'They started to argue between themselves.' (Hajdú 1968: 78)

#### *Change of state (beginning, end, movement); being in a (intensive) state*

*нисьлась* 'start to laugh'

- (77) *лэркабт' нулй", нисьлы"*  
'suddenly' 'stop'+refl-medVxSg3 'start to laugh'+refl-medVxSg3  
'Suddenly he stopped and started to laugh.' (Tereščenko 1965: 205)

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<sup>43</sup> Even though my dissertation does not aim to discuss in detail the semantically reflexive and medial verbs, I have to briefly introduce the semantic groups that these verbs belong to.

Verbs belonging to the transitive-reflexive group receive reflexive-medial inflections when they are used in reflexive or medial situations.

The present section, section 5.3, discusses verbs of the latter group and their conjugation in the given situation. For this it is necessary to describe the medial and reflexive linguistic situation.

### ***5.3.1. The notion of medial in general linguistics***

5.3.1.1. There are several interpretations of the notion of “medial” in linguistics<sup>44</sup> – of these the most obvious is the “basic medial”, that is the ancient Greek verbal category (defined on formal grounds), from which the name of the notion originates. According to other approaches (e.g. Lyons 1969), the medial should be considered a purely semantic phenomenon. Generative linguistics has offered attempts, primarily of a functional point of view, at exploring the nature of the medial (e.g. Babby 1975).

Very little attempt has been made to offer a typological, comparative approach to the investigation of the medial. Barber (1975) and Klaiman (1982) worked on the medial systems of Indo-European languages, differentiating between various types of the medial on the grounds of the extent of the directedness at the subject. Faltz (1985), Genušiene (1987) and Lichtenberk (1985) carried out general investigations overviewing the verbal systems of many languages, but their works do not specifically deal with the medial and the medial systems of the various languages but with other phenomena as well.

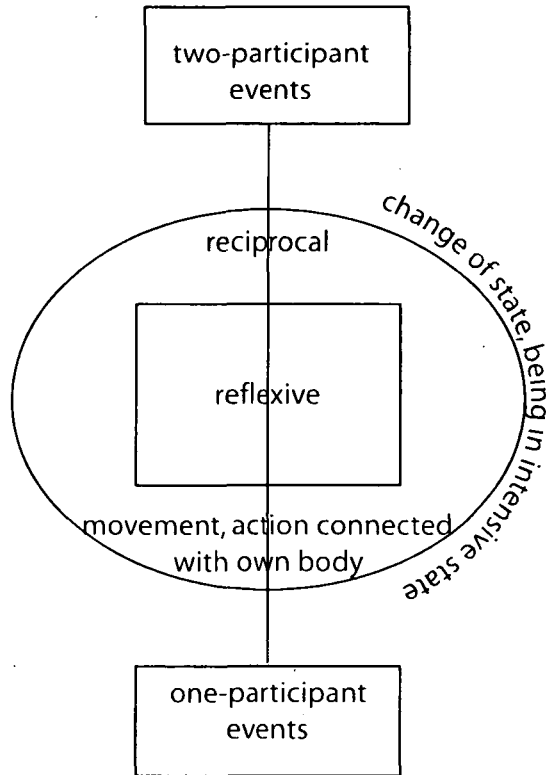
The first (and, as far as I know, only) typological work on the issue is Kemmer (1993), examining thirty-two languages. The author compares the medial types of the various languages, attempting to provide a comprehensive view of the “phenomenon of the middle”. Her approach is semantic and morphological at the same time: she connects the medial primarily to semantic situations while considering taking into account morphological markedness.

5.3.1.2. In Kemmer’s interpretation of the medial an important role is played by the notion of granularity, which could be understood as the speaker’s intent to make fine distinctions in linguistic expression. This intention is closely related to expressive and economical motivation, that is, which phenomena and/or situations are linguistically marked in each language and which are unmarked. The operation of the two motivations is of different extent in every language (this is what Kemmer calls the degree of granularity of the given language), which is what explains why various phenomena in the given language can be expressed in different ways and with different degrees of intensity.

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<sup>44</sup> I do not consider it my aim to provide an exhaustive overview of the literature on the topic. Therefore, I will only discuss positions which I consider the most important and crucial to the investigation of the medial.

This is also true in the case of the medial, which fills a relatively wide semantic field in the classification of verbs, and the morphological manifestation of which can be classified into several types. In order to interpret the medial, we need to locate reflexive as a semantic phenomenon.



In Figure 5,<sup>45</sup> the end points of the axis are one-participant and two-participant actions and events.<sup>46</sup> We can see that here the main point is not activity and passivity, since both poles are active (although not to the same extent), but the number of participants in the situation and, thus, indirectly, transitivity and intransitivity. The nodes of the figure are the categories marked in the circles, that is, (active) one-participant actions, two-participant actions, passive phenomena, and, half-way between one- and two-participant actions, the reflexive phenomena. Proceeding from bottom to top along

<sup>45</sup> The figure is based on Kemmer's (1993: 202) ideas, but, because I have been aiming to describe the usage of the Tundra Nenets medial phenomena and these are not entirely the same as the situation types discussed by Kemmer, the figure is not Kemmer's beyond the basic outline.

<sup>46</sup> Below, for brevity's sake, I will be using the terms "one-participant and two-participant events and actions", so, in some cases, situations expressing happenings and existence may receive this label as well.

the vertical axis the extent of transitivity increases and, together with it, the relative elaboration of events (Kemmer 1993: 3, 8, 97, 109–119, 208–210) expressed in the situations does too. Let us examine what the relative elaboration of events means.

In basic intransitive situations, because the verb has one argument by definition, the number or the thematic role of the participants of the action/event is not an issue. In purely transitive situations it is not an issue either, since the two participants, the agent and the patient (i.e. the starting point or originator of the action, and the end point or sufferer of the change which is brought about) can be clearly differentiated from each other. The reflexive category is situated half way between the two end points: in this situation the agent and the patient can be distinguished only “half way”. In a reflexive situation the agent is the same as the patient, that is the starting and end points of the action are the same. In the figure, the situations that form a circle around the reflexive node refer to those actions and events where the agent and the patient, that is, the starting and end point of the action, cannot be clearly differentiated. These situation types and the verbs occurring in them are less elaborated and morphologically more unmarked.

In connection with Kemmer’s interpretation of the medial, the question might arise how the reciprocal situation was included among those discussed above. Because of the basic characteristic of the reciprocal situation we cannot talk of one or two participants: inherently, two or more participants occur in it. What satisfies the above mentioned criterion of indistinguishability refers to actions and events occurring in a parallel fashion. (The degree of the distinguishability of the participants supplies the definition of the *degree of linguistic elaboration*: “We can define the property of relative elaboration of events as the degree to which the facets in a particular situation, i.e. the participants and conceivable subevents in the situation, are distinguished.” (Kemmer 1993: 208))

Also at this point, before the overview of the formal manifestation of the medial, the relationship between the medial and intransitivity have to be briefly referred to. In the generative literature, the medial occurs almost exclusively in connection with intransitivity that can be examined formally. The markers of the medial (such as, for instance, the Russian *-sja* ending discussed by Babby 1975: 298) are often regarded as intransitivizing elements, which is fully acceptable, since the medial truly is of intransitivizing nature, to a greater or lesser extent. According to Kemmer (1993:210), morphosyntactically expressed intransitivity is the formal equivalent of the above mentioned low degree of elaboration. The markers of the medial, then, make the verb usually functionally intransitive (or at least more intransitive), but this does not mean that their role is limited to this function: they add extra meaning to the base verb, by themselves or attaching to various derivational affixes, depending on their meaning.

5.3.1.3. In the world's languages, the medial is expressed in one of three different ways (cf. Kemmer 1993: 20–28). In some languages the medial is not marked morphologically on the verb. English is a good example of languages like this, where the transitive and intransitive variants of the same verb express the action of a transitive situation and the actions and events of the medial situation, respectively, e.g.:

*I open the door. : The door opens.*  
*John reads the book easily. : The book reads easily.*

In this case the verb itself cannot be regarded as inherently medial, it receives this role only in the medial situation.

The other group contains languages where the medial and reflexive categories are not formally distinguished from each other, that is the same linguistic element expresses either one. Languages in this group include, for instance, German and the Samoyedic languages. The following examples illustrate this type of languages.

German	<i>Er sieht sich.</i> 'He sees himself.' – reflexive <i>Er fürchtet sich.</i> 'He is scared.' – medial <sup>47</sup>
Tundra Nenets	<i>сяцавей масы</i> " (refl-medVxSg2) 'wash oneself' - reflexive <i>я хыдяхад нудабтэй</i> " (refl-medVxSg3) 'The flour poured out of the dish.' – medial sense

In languages of this type it is often difficult to decide whether a verb is medial or reflexive: in most cases this issue can only be decided with the help of the context they occur in.

The third group contains languages that have separate markers to express reflexivity and the medial. This group can be further divided into two subgroups: the first contains languages where the elements expressing reflexivity and the medial are historically independent of each other, whereas the second subgroup includes languages where these markers are etymologically related to each other. Russian is an example of the latter subgroup:

*Он утомил себя.* 'He has exhausted himself.'  
*Он утомился.* 'He is exhausted.'

Hungarian is a good example of the first subgroup, where the reflexive : medial opposition is expressed with the historically unrelated *maga* 'self' versus the *ik-*

<sup>47</sup> The German language literature uses the labels „echte / unechte reflexive Verben" for the verbs in the above examples, in such a way that the term „echte" refers to verbs that I regard as medial. As I consider this a difference primarily of terminology and definition, I will not discuss it in more detail below.

conjugation (with various derivational affixes or purely with derivational affixes and no medial *-ik* affix).

We can see that in the case of both the etymologically related and unrelated forms there is a kind of transitive : intransitive opposition as well, that is, it becomes clear that the reflexive situation – situated half way between the intransitive and transitive phenomena and, therefore, of a “medium degree of elaboration” (cf. Kemmer 1993: 210) – shows signs of transitivity much more than the medial, which has a lower degree of elaboration.

### 5.3.2. *Medial situations in Tundra Nenets*

As is clear from the above discussion, typologically Tundra Nenets belongs, similarly to the other Samoyedic languages, among the languages where the reflexive (and, together with it, the reciprocal) and the medial are not morphologically distinguished from each other. In general, we can say that semantically reflexive and medial verbs are bound as far as their conjugation is concerned, forming what Salminen (1997, 1998b) categorizes as the group of reflexive verbs. The other verbs that belong in the transitive-reflexive group, which are, in my opinion, basically transitive, are conjugated in the reflexive-medial conjugation if they are used in a medial situation. Thus, I do not share Tereščenko's (1965) view that transitive-reflexive verbs have to be listed in the lexicon as independent lexical units, since the basic meaning of the verb is the same, regardless of what conjugation type is used with it, and, in the end, the linguistic situation (that is, the intention of the speaker) is what decides what meaning and argument structure is assigned to it in the sentence.

As I have already mentioned in section 3.2.3.2 in connection with Tundra Nenets inflectional medial pairs, verbs like this most usually occur in pairs in Tundra Nenets. In order to avoid repeating myself, in this chapter I will only argue for the claim that the verbs belonging into the transitive-reflexive group have to be considered primarily transitive in Tundra Nenets. I will also discuss those (basically also transitive) verb derivational suffixes that most often occur in such inflectional medial pairs. In addition, I will also briefly mention those linguistic situation types in which the reflexive-medial conjugation is usually used.

#### 5.3.2.1. *Inflectional medial pairs*

A causative and medial use of verbs is characteristic of languages other than Nenets as well. Basically, the same phenomenon can be recognized in connection with the inchoative-causative verb pairs in English<sup>48</sup> (cf. e.g. Haspelmath 1993):

<sup>48</sup> The term inchoative-causative stands basically for the same phenomenon as the term medial pair. The term

*The door opened.*  
*Jim opened the door.*

In the world's languages the members of medial pairs are differentiated not by inflectional but by derivational affixes. (We can find examples of this in Nenets as well.) For instance:

Hungarian *forog : forgat* 'turn : make turn'  
 Arabic *darasa : darrasa* 'learn : teach' (Haspelmath 1993: 112)

According Haspelmath (1993: 91–92), on the basis of the direction of derivation, medial pairs can be categorized in three groups:<sup>49</sup> *causative* derivation derives causative verbs from underived medial verbs, e.g.:

Finnish *herätä : herättää* 'wake up (intr.) : wake up (trans.)'  
 Arabic *damara : dammara* 'be destroyed : destroy' (Haspelmath 1993: 112)  
 Nenets *tæwasy : tæwrasy* 'get there, get back : take or lead there, take or lead back'

The following type is the anticausative derivation, where the causative member of the medial pair should be considered the basis of derivation:

Russian *kataťsja : katať* 'roll (intr.) : roll (trans.)' (Haspelmath 1993: 118)  
 Lithuanian *jungtis : jungti* 'be connected : connect' (Haspelmath 1993: 117)  
 Nenets *xadasy : xadarasy* 'kill : be killed' (Salminen 1998b: 543)

Haspelmath's (1993: 91, 92) third group of verbs comprises those verb pairs whose members have the same root and are both derived, but neither can be considered primary compared to the other:

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"inchoative" is not used here in the same sense as it is used throughout this paper in connection with Nenets verbs, designating beginning.

<sup>49</sup> As far as form is concerned, Haspelmath (1993) differentiates between two more inchoative/causative types beyond those discussed here (namely, *suppletive* and *labile*), but as these categories are not in closer connection with the way of the derivation of verb pairs, I do not discuss them in my paper.



Japanese	<i>atumaru</i> : <i>atumeru</i> 'gather (intr.) : collect' (Haspelmath 1993: 116)
Armenian	<i>hangčel</i> : <i>hangčnel</i> '(for fire to) go out : put out (fire)' (Haspelmath 1993: 112)
Nganasan	<i>hinsi</i> : <i>hirid'i</i> 'cook (intr.) : cook (trans.)'

The Nenets medial pairs whose members show only inflectional differences compared to each other should be categorized as belonging to the anticausative type, in Haspelmath's (1993: 99) typology. Based on his observation of the Greek active-medial opposition, Haspelmath claims that verbs inflected in the medial are morphologically more marked (we find more complex forms in this paradigm than in the active one), and the active verbs can be considered more productive than members of the medial group.

In Tundra Nenets the criterion of morphological markedness does not predominate significantly, since, beside the fact that the Sg3 zero inflection of the indeterminative conjugation is in opposition with the Sg3 [-y-]q inflection of the reflexive-medial conjugation, there is no quantitative or structural difference of significant extent between the inflections.

The claim regarding productivity, however, suggests that in Nenets also the causative member of the medial pair should be considered primary in comparison with the medial member, since while most Nenets causative verbs can receive reflexive-medial inflections (through which they also acquire a medial meaning) the verbs of basic medial meaning (which obligatorily take the reflexive-medial conjugation) cannot acquire a causative pair through having the reflexive-medial inflections replaced with indeterminative or determinative inflections. See (3), (4) : (78), (79).

(78) *nyísyanyi* *søngoda* *nya°nyi* *xaqmi°q*  
 'father'+genPxSg1 'look'+PxSg3 'onto, towards'+ 'fall'+  
 genPxSg1 refl-medVxSg3  
 'My father's look fell on me.' (Tereščenko 1965: 532)

(79) *nyísyamyi* *søngomta* *nya°nyi* *\*xaqmada* / *\*xaqma*  
 'father'+PxSg1 'look'+accPxSg3 'onto, towards'+ '\*drop+detVxSg3/  
 genPxSg1 indetVxSg3  
 '\*My father threw me a look.' (Laptander)

5.3.2.1.1. The members of the Nenets medial pairs differing from each other only in inflection can be underived or derived verbs as well. Those derived verbs that can take the personal endings of any of the three paradigms are typically derived with transitive-causative derivational affixes or those expressing change of state. Of the verbs derived with transitive-causative derivational suffixes, those derived with *-bita-*, *-ta-* and *-ra-* form medial pairs which are manifested in conjugation, whereas of those

expressing change of state those derived with inchoative *-l-* / *-lϕ-* and momentaneous *-xϕl* do.

5.3.2.1.2. As in the case of verbs derived with transitive-causative, inchoative and momentaneous derivational suffixes we can accept as an explanation of the creation of the verb pair, on the basis of the principle of productivity, the anticausative derivation, and can regard as primary the causative member of the pair, just like in the case of underived verbs of basically transitive meaning. Thus, we have no reason to re-categorize morphemes which so far have been regarded as transitive-causative in the literature as derivational suffixes that derive "neutral" (i.e. either causative or medial) stems, just because verbs derived with them can take reflexive-medial inflections and can occur with medial meanings. There is further evidence against this in the fact that the transitive-causative derivational suffixes occurring in medial pairs have a historically transitivizing function rather than an intransitivizing one (cf. Lehtisalo 1936; Györke 1935).

In the case of verbs with the inchoative and momentaneous derivational suffixes it is much harder to decide whether one or the other member of the verb pair can be considered primary to the other one. These derivational suffixes add transitive meaning characteristics to the verbs derived with them (such as momentariness, dynamicity, perfectivity) while expressing change of state, which, in situations where the expression of change of state is primary, goes together with the use of reflexive-medial conjugation in Tundra Nenets and requires the use of the medial member of the medial verb pair (see section 2.3 above).

***Medial pairs derived with -ta- (-da-) / -tye-***

*нэрцэдась* 'catch, kill (prey)' (*нэрц* 'untidy, negligent', vö. *нэрцэнась* 'lie in an untidy state')

(80) *түоку яля'* *үоюойри* *нохом'* *нэрцэдадм'*  
'today' 'one'+limit. deriv. 'arctic fox'+acc. 'catch (prey)'+indetVxSg1

'I killed only an arctic fox today.' (Tereščenko 1965: 326)

(81) *тунинда* *пендва'* *сер'* *үоб"үа"үокоця та'* *нэрцэдэй"*  
'gun'+genPxSg3 'shoot'+gen. 'due to' 'one' 'duck'+dimin. '-there' 'fall'+  
deriv. refl-medVxSg3

'After s/he shot, a duckling fell.' (Tereščenko 1965: 326)

We can see that the above derivational suffix can be followed by either determinative or reflexive-medial inflections, and in the medial member of the pair the basic meaning of the transitive derivational suffix is kept but is turned around to the starting point of the event (state).

**Verbs derived in -bta- / -btye-**

The same can be seen in the case of medial pairs containing verbs in *-bta-* / *-btye-*:

*пудабтась* 'pour into, out'

- (82) *пудёко сахар хидян' пудабта"*  
 'little' 'sugar' 'dish'+lat. 'pour'+  
 imperat.indetVxSg2

'Pour some sugar into the dish.' (Tereščenko 1965: 484)

- (83) *я хидяхад пудабтэй"*  
 'flour' 'dish'+ablat. 'pour out'+  
 refl-medVxSg3

'The flour poured out of the dish.' (Tereščenko 1965: 484)

*ибкабтась* 'heat up' (*иба* 'warm')

- (84) *харад' мюйм' ибкабта"*  
 'house'+gen. 'the inside of something' 'heat up'+  
 +acc. indetVxPI3

'They heated up the house.' (Tereščenko 1965: 133)

- (85) *нумда ибкабтэй"*  
 'sky, weather'+ 'warm up'+  
 PxSg3 refl-medVxSg3

'The weather warmed up.' (Tereščenko 1965: 133)

**Verbs derived in -ra-**

In the case of verb pairs derived in the transitive derivational suffix *-ra-*, the observations made in connection with the two transitive-causative derivational suffixes above can be accepted: if the starting and end points of the action/event in the situation cannot be clearly separated from each other, the original transitive meaning is directed back at the starting point, and through this, the verb expressing the action/event gets a medial meaning.

*вэугарась* 'remove, lead away (*вэугась* 'run away, run')

- (86) *яхадей нюмда я"сид ян' вэугарада*  
 'reindeer cow' 'child'+ 'far-away'+gen. 'land' 'lead'+detVxSg3  
 accPxSg3 +lat.

'The reindeer cow led its calf to a far-away land.' (Tereščenko 1965: 74)

- (87) *сынгосяда ян' вэңгарэй"*  
 'abandoned' 'land'+lat. 'go away'+refl-medVxSg3  
 'S/he went to an abandoned place.' (Tereščenko 1965: 74)

*вэлрась* 'postpone, prolong' (вб. *вэксуй* 'stretched out, long'; *вэлракось* 'prolong')

- (88) *манзаяна" тяха' вэлрава"*  
 'work'+PxPII 'away, further off' 'postpone'+indetVxPII  
 'We postponed our work.' (Tereščenko 1965: 70)

- (89) *манзаяна" ёльцева вэлрэй"*  
 'work'+genPxPII 'ending' 'prolong'+refl-medVxSg3  
 'The end of our work dragged out.' (Tereščenko 1965: 70)

#### *Verbs derived in -xøl-, -l- and -lø-*

Unlike the group of verbs derived in the above transitive-causative derivational suffix, Tundra Nenets verbs of the reflexive-medial conjugation that are derived with inchoative and momentaneous derivational suffixes cannot be unequivocally explained with the redirecting of the transitivity of the derived verb back to the starting point of the action/event in the case of medial use. Among the examples in my database we can see that the Tundra Nenets language can express changes of state in a very sensitive way. Getting from one state to the other is expressed most often with derivational suffixes referring to beginning and momentariness (*syurxølcы* 'turn suddenly' cf. *syurcy* 'spin'; *wadyeqłøsy* 'start to tell a story' cf. *wadyecы* 'tell a story'), or, if in the given situation it is not the originator and the result of the action/event that are emphasized but the change of state itself, with reflexive-medial verbal inflections attached to the verb. In the cases when the originator of the change is emphasized in addition to the process itself, the causative member of the pair is used in the given speech situation rather than the medial one.

As is clear from the above, in the situations where the originator and the sufferer of the change of state are not linguistically different from each other, the reflexive-medial conjugation is used most often in Nenets. As the (very often intensive) change of state is expressed with verbs derived with inchoative or momentaneous derivational suffixes, it has been a widely accepted claim in Samoyedic linguistics that the reflexive-medial conjugation has, among others, an inchoative function (Mikola 1984: 403). On the basis of my examples, inchoativeness and the reflexive-medial conjugation cannot be connected so unequivocally, since it seems that the choice of the verbal paradigm does not depend on the inchoative/momentaneous character but on the type of the situation. If the verb of change of state occurs in a medial situation, it receives reflex-

ive-medial inflections, if in a transitive one, it gets determinative or indeterminative inflections.

The verbs that take the reflexive-medial conjugation and are derived with inchoative or momentaneous derivational suffixes divide into two groups. The first group is formed by verbs whose base verb is of low transitivity and, thus, do not form medial pairs even without derivation, e.g. *myincy* 'go'. If verbs like this get one of the above mentioned derivational suffixes, they are likely not to form inflectional medial pairs either: *myinxølcy* 'start running' (taking only reflexive-medial inflections).

The other group is formed by verbs that are of high transitivity in their un-derived forms as well, and are, thus, suitable for forming medial pairs, e.g. *pøpøcy* 'shake (trans.) [: shake (intr.)]'. Most verbs derived with inchoative or momentaneous derivational suffixes from such verbs form inflectional medial pairs: *pørxølcy* 'shake (perf.) [: tremble]'. Below, I will discuss this last type of verbs, i.e. inchoative and momentaneous verbs that can be used as causatives as well as medials.

*надалць* 'set up'

- (90) *сидя мя" ирсу" надалкаюн"*  
 'two' 'tent' 'in line' 'set up'+  
 imperat.detDuVxSg2  
 'Set up two tents in a row.' (Tereščenko 1965: 428)

- (91) *хэнё нумгана якэ" надалцетыд"*  
 'calm' 'sky, weather'+ 'smoke'+Pl. 'rise up'+habit.+  
 locat. refl-medVxPl3  
 'In calm weather the smoke rises straight up.' (Tereščenko 1965: 428)

*таб"лавсь* 'hinder, stop (trans.)' (*таб"* 'obstacle')

- (92) *ханакоми сюри таб"лавась*  
 'sled'+accPxSg1 'on purpose' 'stop+imperf.detVxSg1  
 'I stopped my sled on purpose.' (Tereščenko 1965: 612)

- (93) *тым' нёдавы вэнеко таянку таб"лэй"*  
 'reindeer' 'chase' 'puppy' 'there, this way' 'stop'+  
 +acc. +part.imperf. refl-medVxSg3  
 'The puppy that the reindeer was chasing stopped.' (Tereščenko 1965: 613)

*наволась* 'start to eat'

- (94) *пиревы һамзам' һавола*  
 'cooked' 'meat'+acc. 'start to eat'+  
 indetVxSg3  
 'S/he started to eat the cooked meat.' (Tereščenko 1965: 369)

- (95) *малэ* *уаволы"*  
 'already' 'start to eat'+  
 refl-medVxSg3  
 'S/he already started to eat.' (Tereščenko 1965: 369)

*лабяхалць* 'start to row, row with oar' (*лабя* 'oar')

- (96) *тедахава* *мя"на"* *уэсонд'* *лабяхалкава"*  
 'now'+emphatic 'tent'+genPxPI1 'until' 'start to row'+adhort.+indetVxPI1  
 'Let's go and row now up until their house' (Tereščenko 1965: 169)

- (97) *я'* *няю'* *лабяхаляд"*  
 'bank'+gen. 'towards' 'start to row'+  
 refl-medVxPI3  
 'They started to row towards the bank.' (Tereščenko 1965: 169)

*тидхалесь* 'direct'

- (98) *ханена* *тыда* *уэси'* *няю'* *тидхалейда*  
 'hunter' 'reindeer'+PlacePxSg3 'camp'+gen. 'towards' 'direct'+detPIVxSg3  
 'The hunter directed his reindeer towards the camp.' (Tereščenko 1965: 658)

- (99) *ламбитана"* *пэдара'* *няю'* *тидхалейд"*  
 'skier'+Pl. 'forest'+gen. 'towards' 'start out'+  
 refl-medVxPI3  
 'The skiers started out towards the forest.' (Tereščenko 1965: 658)

The above examples show that verbs derived in *-l-* / *-lφ-* / *-xφl* can all be part of inflectional medial pairs. They take determinative / indeterminative or reflexive-medial inflections depending on whether they occur in transitive or intransitive situations.

### 5.3.2.2. Conclusion

The examples show that we find both among derived and underived verbs such verbs that take indeterminative or determinative inflections in transitive situations and reflexive-medial ones in intransitive situations, and, thus, form medial pairs. On the basis of the linguistic data I investigated I can say that inflectional medial pairs are formed by Tundra Nenets verbs of high transitivity, independently of whether they are derived or underived. Thus, Nenets medial pairs are similar in their "derivation" to verb pairs known from the literature, which differ from each other only in their conjugation, that is with the group of causative-inchoative verbs that Haspelmath (1993: 92–93) considers to be of anticausative derivation.

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The lexically not bound transitive-reflexive verbs (i.e. verbs that are not by their nature reflexive, reciprocal or medial) receive reflexive-medial inflections only when the linguistic situation is of low elaboration (i.e. the starting point is not clearly separable from the end point of the action / event), or if some kind of change (often intensive physical or emotional change) is expressed in the situation. In such cases if the speaker can or wants to name the starting and end points of the action or event, usually the determinative (although sometimes the indeterminative) conjugation is used, or if that is not possible or if, from the perspective of the speaker, the starting point and the process are (more) important, the reflexive-medial conjugation is used.

## 5.4. Summary

As is clear from the above, in Tundra Nenets the choice of conjugation very often depends on the joint effect of several factors.

Some verbs are lexically bound in their conjugation (some of them occurring in collocations). Those that occur in collocations and other phrases that are frozen in form would most likely defy any kind of rule attempting to define the choice of conjugation in their case. In the case of those that are just simply lexically bound, it is most likely the semantics of the verb that explains the choice of conjugation.

The use of the determinative conjugation in Tundra Nenets cannot be attributed unequivocally either to the definiteness/indefiniteness of the object of the sentence or to syntactic focus, as some of the literature on the subject has attempted to claim. We cannot say that Susoj's system of rules is truly of general applicability either. So, we can safely state that investigations on the sentence level have not been able to provide a clear explanation to when and why speakers choose the determinative conjugation in some linguistic situations.

Because it does not seem to be likely that the choice of Tundra Nenets conjugation types is completely optional, the issue has to be approached by means beyond the syntactic. It is my observation that in the cases where the use of either the determinative or the indeterminative conjugation yields similarly grammatical results, there has to be some semantic difference between the two sentences. The nature of such differences and the rules describing them, however, have not been clarified so far.

The lexically not bound use of the reflexive-medial conjugation is most likely dependent on the linguistic situation, that is, it expresses change of state, and very often serves to emphasize intense emotional or physical change going on in those situations where the speaker cannot or does not want to name the starting and end points of the action/event or differentiate them from each other.

In addition, the reflexive-medial conjugation has a function which has not been unequivocally identified yet. On the basis of the very few relevant examples at my disposal, my hypothesis is that the choice between the determinative and the reflexive-medial conjugation can also depend on how the speaker relates to the given situation. In (100), the translator most likely emphasized the subject of the sentence and the action itself, while in (101) the result of the action. In the latter sentence, the person of the actor was not as significant as that of the object, and I consider it possible that it was this semantic difference that made the native speaker choose different conjugations in each case. It is important to stress, however, that this hypothesis is not supported by a sufficient amount of data, and, even though mentioning it can serve as a new aspect



in the investigation of the use of the conjugations, it can only be regarded as a starting point for further research.

(100) *Папане халям' сявнда ёльцей''.*  
 'younger girl' 'fish'+acc. 'clean' (inf.) 'finish'+refl-medVxSg3

'The younger girl finished cleaning the fish.' (L. Taleeva)

(101) *Пыда маля тикы сидя нарка халям' сявндада.*  
 's/he' 'already' 'that' 'two' 'big' 'fish'+acc. 'clean'+detVxSg3

'S/he has already cleaned those two big fish.' (L. Taleeva)

As has been demonstrated in chapter 5, most questions raised in connection with the use of the various conjugation types have not been answered satisfactorily.

We can safely say that some grammatical rules can affect the conjugation of verbs which are not bound in their conjugation, and we can assume that, in addition to the linguistic situation, the way the speaker relates to it can also influence the choice of the conjugation. As, in my opinion, syntactic studies cannot provide new insight into the question, on the one hand, and as I do not have enough data and the right means to clarify the fine semantic distinctions between the sentences, in the rest of this paper I will approach the use of conjugations in greater textual contexts and attempt to clarify their role, as much as it is possible, that way.



## 6. An investigation of the use of Tundra Nenets conjugations in the textual context

On the basis of the conclusions of section 5.1 we can say that in Tundra Nenets the use of conjugations is not clearly tied to syntactic focus or to the determinativeness or indeterminativeness of the object, but a system of rules more complicated and more complex than these aspects can be presupposed to lie behind the use of conjugations and their functions.

In most cases, the use of the reflexive-medial conjugation is not as problematic as that of the determinative conjugation, since if the verb is used in a clearly reflexive or medial situation (i.e. if it is of medium transitivity and is used in a situation of low linguistic elaboration where the starting point of the action or event is either identical with or is not separate from the end point), then that is reflected in the choice of the conjugation type as well.

We could also see that Tundra Nenets has a grammatical rule regarding the use of the determinative conjugation (namely, that if the sentence contains a pronominal direct object, the verb cannot be in the determinative conjugation) which cannot be refuted on the basis of the data available to me. In addition, there is a rule which I call the Susoj Rule, which works in most of the linguistic data I studied, but which I do not accept as general since there are many exceptions to it. Also, we can find numerous places in the texts where the grammatical rule determining the use of the determinative conjugation cannot be observed (since no pronominal direct object is used in the given text) and where the Susoj Rule does not work either, and where no explanation is available as yet as to the choice between the various conjugation types. One possible step in attempting to reach such an explanation is to examine the use of conjugations in a larger context, namely on the level of text.

### *6.1. The effect of topic–comment relations on the choice of conjugation*

Referring back to Tereščenko's focus theory (see section 5.2.1.2 above), I consider it possible that Tereščenko's term "logical emphasis" could be used synonymously not with syntactic focus, but a part of the sentence which contains a new, and logically emphasized element (as opposed to already known and introduced elements, i.e. the topic), that is, pragmatic focus. In this chapter I will investigate the hypothesis

whether there is any connection between topic–comment relations and the use of Tundra Nenets conjugations.

### *6.1.1. The investigation of topic–comment relations in Ob-Ugric languages*

Similar investigations have already been carried out in some Ob-Ugric languages, namely in Khanty (Nikolaeva 2000b) and Northern Mansi (Skribnik 2001), and these investigations have established the existence of connections between topic–comment relations and the use of conjugations in these languages. Although we cannot expect to find the exact same rules in Tundra Nenets as were identified in Khanty and Mansi, I consider Skribnik’s findings as starting points of my investigation of this topic in Tundra Nenets. According to Skribnik, in Northern Mansi indeterminative conjugation is used if there is only one topic in the sentence (namely, the subject), and the direct object is part of the pragmatic focus.

The determinative conjugation is used if the sentence contains two topics (the subject and a topicalized direct object), and the action or event is in the pragmatic focus. Exceptions to these rules are sentences where every part of the sentence is in focus (Skribnik 2001: 233) and sentences which have a contrastive focus on the object (*ibid.*). In the latter kind of case, the direct object is not the topic, but, still, the determinative conjugation is used.

### *6.1.2. A comparison of the use of Northern Mansi and Tundra Nenets conjugations*

In this section I will examine whether the above mentioned rules of Northern Mansi apply in Tundra Nenets as well.

#### *6.1.2.1. The anaphoric use of the determinative conjugation*

In the course of the investigation we have to clearly separate the anaphoric type of the use of the determinative conjugation, since in the cases when the object is logically present but not linguistically overt in the sentence, it is clear that it has to be referred to by some linguistic means – which, in the case of Tundra Nenets, is the determinative conjugation.

- (102) *Мань теньяна халям' тэврамась. Теньяна нямавась.*  
 'I 'yesterday' 'fish'+acc. 'bring'+  
 praet.indetVxSgI detVxSgI  
 'I brought a fish home yesterday. I caught it yesterday.' (Laptander)

- (103) *Письякоця тэмдолаван хая. Ям та. Тадикэхэд юнра:*  
 'little mouse' 'store'+lat. 'go'+ 'flour'+ 'bring'+ 'then' 'ask'+  
 indetVxSg3 acc indetVxSg3 indetVxSg3

“*Хибя хусам сертангзу?*”  
 'who' 'dough'+acc. 'make' fut.  
 indetVxSg3

*Варнээр ма:*  
 'crow'+PxSg2 'say'+  
 indetVxSg3

“*Мань нив сертангзу!*”  
 'I' 'not'+det 'make'+fut. (conneg.)  
 VxSg1

'The little mouse goes to the store and brings flour. Then he asks:  
 "Who will make the dough?"

The crow says:

"I won't make it." (Neko: 6)

### 6.1.2.2. The topicalization model in Tundra Nenets

The topicalization model of Mansi works in many cases in Tundra Nenets as well, as can be seen from the examples.

#### 6.1.2.2.1. DO-topic + determinative conjugation

- (104) *Яхавна нгано нгадимья. Нгано мюня тёняко нгамдёвы.*  
 'river'+ 'boat' 'appear'+ 'boat' 'inside' 'little fox' 'sit'+perf.+  
 prolat.' indetVxSg3' (+gen.) indetVxSg3

*Тубкабцокор хангуланадарев' тёрей':*  
 'little woodpecker' 'like somebody who is sick' 'cry out'+refl-medVxSg3

“*Сава тёняков! Ян нултад. Си'ми нганонд мю' тибте'.*”  
 'good' 'little fox'+bank' 'stop'+ 'me' 'boat'+ 'into' 'pick up'+  
 +voc. +lat. imperat. genPxSg2' imperat.indetVxSg2'  
 detVxSg3'

*Тубкабцо' тёрм намда тёнякояр нганомда тёр няю'*  
 'woodpecker' 'shout' 'hear' 'little fox'+PxSg2 'boat'+ 'shout' 'towards'  
 +gen. +acc. (inf.) accPxSg3' (+gen.)

*тидхаледа.*  
 'turn,  
 direct'+detVdSg3

'[...] The boat appeared on the river. The little fox was sitting in the boat.  
 The little woodpecker cried out in a sick voice:

"My dear little fox! Stop at the river bank. Pick me up into your boat."

Hearing the little woodpecker's shouts, the little fox directed his/her boat  
 towards the shouts.' (Neko: 49)

- (105) *Тёняко'* *тэмбара'мамхамада* *ингнекое ярума.* *Ингнеко'*  
 'little fox' 'cheating'+acc. 'under-stand' 'little wolverine' 'cry'+indetVxSg3 'wolverine'+gen.  
 +gen. (inf.)  
*ярмам* *тубкабцо* *намд'* *нидав'.*  
 'crying'+acc. 'woodpecker' 'hear' (conneg.) 'not'+detVxSg3+emphatic element

'After the fox has cheated him/her like this, the wolverine started to cry. And wasn't the cry of the wolverine heard by a woodpecker?' (Heko: 49)

#### 6.1.2.2.2. DO-focus + indeterminative conjugation

- (106) *Нюдяко* *не няцекы* *вэняком'* *харад'* *хэвхана манэ"э.*  
 'young' 'girl' 'puppy'+acc. 'yard'+gen. 'edge' 'see'+indetVxSg3'  
*Вэняко* *лы* *нули'мэне.* *Пыда нарка* *лым'* *харад'*  
 'puppy' 'bone' 'very' 'like'+indetVxSg3 's/he' 'big' 'bone'+acc. 'yard'+gen.  
*хэвхана* *нормы,* *тикы е"эмня* *хибяхартм'* *хэвханда*  
 'edge' 'eat'+indetVxSg3 'thus' 'nobody'+acc. 'to him/her'  
*нись* *хэдтамбю".*  
 'not'+praet.indet. 'allow' (conneg.)  
 VxSg3

'The little girl noticed a puppy in the yard. The puppy likes bones very much. It was just eating a big bone out in the yard, and was not allowing anyone up to itself.' (Laptander)

Among the sentences in boldface in (106), in the first one we can interpret the use of the indeterminative conjugation as the outcome of the application of the Susoj Rule, since, as we can see, there is only one particle between the direct object and the verb in the sentence. However, in the second one, we find the indeterminative conjugation despite the Susoj Rule.

#### 6.1.2.2.3. Sentences with contrastive focus

According to Skribnik's (2001) rule, in sentences with contrastive focus the determinative conjugation is used even though the object is not in a topic position. As we can see in (107), the Northern Mansi rule can work in Tundra Nenets as well:

- (107) [...] *Теневанась', мань шаревы халям'* *нули" мэнев.* *Тикы е"эмня*  
 'know'+praet. 'I' 'fried' 'fish'+acc. 'very' 'like'+ 'thus'  
 indetVxSg2 detVxSg1

*мань тохона ёрнадамзь. Мань тикахана пырям' тика*

'I'	'lake'+locat.	'fish'+praet. indetVxSgI	'I'	'already'	'pike'+acc.	'and'
<i>карпм</i>	<i>нямадамзь</i>	<b><i>Пырям'</i></b>	<i>мань</i>	<i>шаревась</i>	<b><i>карпм'</i></b>	<i>пиревась</i>
'carp'+acc.	'catch'+ praet.indetVxSgI	'pike'+acc. 'I'	'fry'+praet. detVxSgI	'carp'+acc.	'cook'+praet. detVxSgI	

***си"ив яля нэсоужана. [...]***

'a week ago'

'You know, I like fried fish very much. That is why I was fishing in the lake. I already caught a pike and a carp. I fried the pike, and I cooked the carp a week ago.' (Laptander)

In connection with the sentence in boldface it has to be added that the use of the determinative conjugation in this case can be explained with the Susoj Rule as well.

### 6.1.2.3. Shortcomings of the topicalization model in Tundra Nenets

The examples cited so far have shown that the connections established by Skribnik for Northern Mansi between the topic–comment relations of the sentence and the choice of the conjugation can be supported by evidence from Tundra Nenets as well. Now I want to demonstrate that we can find examples where we find the opposite of what we would expect on the basis of Skribnik's rules for Northern Mansi.

#### 6.1.2.3.1. DO-topic + indeterminative conjugation

- (108) ***Вэсако нганодамди'***    *сертабаванзь*    *пэдаран хая.*  
'old'    'boat'+predest.SxDu3    'to do' (inf.of purpose)    'forest'+lat.    'go'+indetVxSg3'

*Пухуцяда*    ***яха***    *вархана*    *хаи.*    ***Яха***    *вархана*  
'woman'+PxSg3    'river'+(gen.)    'bank'+locat.    'go'+  
indetVxSg3'    'river'+(gen.)    'bank'+locat.

***нгамдэванда сер'***    ***вэсакомда***    ***нгате.***  
'sit'+nom.actionis.'under'    'husband'+accPxSg3    'wait'+  
+genPxSg3'    indetVxSg3

'The old man went to the forest to make a boat for the two of them. His wife went to the river bank. She waited for her husband sitting on the river bank.' (Neko: 47)

In the sentences of (108) and (109) which are in boldface, we can see the indeterminative conjugation used, but this can be attributed to the application of the Susoj Rule as well. In the boldfaced sentence of (109), as we can see, there is only a particle between the direct object and the indeterminative conjugation verb form.

- (109) **Нюдяконе** **уацекы** **вэняком'** **харад'** **хэвхана** **манэ"э**.  
 'young' 'girl' 'puppy+acc. 'yard'+gen. 'edge' 'see'+indetVxSg3'
- Вэняко** **лы** **нули'** **мэне.** **Пыда** **уарка** **лым'** **харад'**  
 'puppy' 'bone' 'very' 'like'+ 's/he' 'big' 'bone'+acc. 'yard'+gen.  
 indetVxSg3
- хэвхана** **нормы,** **тыкы е"э** **мня** **хібяхартм'** **хэвханда**  
 'edge' 'eat'+indetVxSg3 'thus' 'nobody'+acc. 'to him/her'
- нись** **хэдтамбю".** **Пыда** **намзам'** **нули"** **мэнеда**  
 'not'+ 'allow' (conneg.) 's/he' 'meat'+acc. 'very' 'like'+  
 praet.indet.VxSg3 detVxSg3
- уолой** **тарця** **уаварм'** **уояк'** **нормы.**  
 'but' 'such' 'food'+acc. 'rarely' 'eat'+  
 indetVxSg3'

'The little girl noticed a puppy in the yard. The puppy likes bones very much. It was just eating a big bone out in the yard, and was not allowing anyone up to itself. It liked meat very much, too, but ate food like that rarely.' (Laptander)

In the first clause of the sentence in boldface, we can see that the object 'meat' is introduced, as part of the focus. In the second clause, however, it gets topicalized, and here the speaker uses the indeterminative conjugation.

#### 6.1.2.3.2. DO-focus + determinative conjugation

- (110) **Тубкабцокор** **тёняконда** **пумна** **тий'.** **Тёнякомда** **нертеванзэ**  
 'little woodpecker'+ 'little fox' 'after' 'fly'+refl- 'little fox'+ 'pass'  
 PxSg2 + genPxSg3 medVxSg3 accPxSg3 (goal.inf.)

**пэдара** **помна** **црт'** **саям** **ваертада.**  
 'forest' (gen.) 'in the 'straight' 'foreland' 'rove over'+detVxSg3  
 middle of +acc.

'The little woodpecker flew after the little fox. In order to pass the fox, in the forest it flew straight over (roved over) the foreland (the land at the bend of the river).' (Neko: 49)

#### 6.1.2.3.3. Sentences with contrastive focus

Finally, let us examine a piece of text where in a sentence with contrastive focus we find the indeterminative conjugation rather than the determinative (as we saw in 6.1.2.2.3 above).



(11) [...] *Теневанась'*, *мань шаревыхалям'* *уули"* *мэнев*. *Тикы е"эмя*  
 'know'+praet. 'I' 'fried' 'fish'+acc. 'very' 'like'+ 'thus'  
 indetVxSg2 detVxSg1

*мань тохона ёруадамзь*. *Мань тикахана* *пырям'* *тика*  
 'I' 'lake'+locat. 'fish'+praet. 'I' 'already' 'pike'+acc. 'and'  
 indetVxSg1

*карпм* *нямадамзь* *Пырям'* *мань* *шаревась* *карпм'*  
 'carp'+acc. 'catch'+ 'pike'+acc. 'I' 'fry'+praet. 'carp'+acc.  
 praet.indetVxSg1 detVxSg1

*пиревась* *си"ив яля нэсоңгана*. *Шаревы халям'*, *пиревы халям'*  
 'cook'+praet. 'a week ago' 'fried' 'fish'+acc. 'cooked' 'fish'+acc.  
 detVxSg1

*мэнен?*

'like'+indetVxSg2

'You know, I like fried fish very much. That is why I was fishing in the lake. I already caught a pike and a carp. I fried the pike, and I cooked the carp a week ago. Do you like fried fish or cooked fish better?' (Laptander)

In connection with this piece of text, I have to add that the objects 'fried fish' and 'cooked fish' are not logically new but had been already introduced, although they had not occurred before in the same form as in the sentence in boldface. This might be important because two Samoyedic linguists, Helimski and Salminen, believe that it is possible that in Tundra Nenets the only object that counts as a previously introduced one as far as the choice of the conjugation is concerned (i.e. one which can be topicalized and which triggers the use of the determinative conjugation) is one which occurs in the sentence immediately preceding the one in question, either as a topic phrase or in focus, it does not matter which, in this case. According to Helimski and Salminen's suggestion, then, in Tundra Nenets two sentence long stretches of discourse should be examined for topic–comment relations and their connection with the choice of conjugations. I regard it somewhat unlikely (although not impossible) that unequivocal rules can be identified with the help of this method.

## 6.2. *The transitivity model and the use of conjugation types*

From what has been said so far, it seems that no rule can be established as for the use of the determinative conjugation on the basis of either syntactic or pragmatic focus. Thus, the question formulated at the beginning of chapters 5 and 6 is still relevant: what model can be suggested for the description of the use of Tundra Nenets verb conjugation? The findings of research carried out so far by others or by myself are not sufficient for proposing working and unequivocal rules. However, I believe, the following tendency seems to be holding up to scrutiny: *the higher the transitivity of the situation in which the verb occurs in, the greater the probability that it will be conjugated in the determinative conjugation.*

### 6.2.1. *Transitivity and its components*

Transitivity is a complex phenomenon which is closely connected with several components of discourse. Thus, it should be regarded as gradual rather than binary in nature. The essence of transitivity can be most simply defined by examining how and to what extent, in a linguistic situation, the agent (the starting point) has an effect on the patient (the end point of the action, and, possibly, of the event) (cf. Hopper and Thompson 1980: 251). Actions and events, thus, can be of high or low transitivity on the basis of the elements occurring in the linguistic situation (such as the verb, the participants, the topic-comment relations, and their joint effect upon each other). Givón (1994: 7) defines the prototypical transitive situation and its participants as follows:

- a) Agent: The prototypical transitive clause involves a volitional, controlling, actively-initiating agent who is responsible for the event, thus its salient cause.
- b) Patient: The prototypical transitive event involves a non-volitional, inactive, non-controlling patient who registers the events' changes-of-state, thus its salient effect.
- c) Verbal modality: The verb of the prototypical transitive clause codes an event that is "compact" (non-durative), "bounded" (non-lingering), "sequential" (non-perfect) and "realis" (not hypothetical). The prototype transitive event is thus fast-paced, completed, real, and perceptually and / or cognitively salient."

This definition of Givón's can only be accepted, in my opinion, if we add to it that the verb occurring in a situation of high transitivity is not imperfective but, on the

contrary, perfective. (The “non-perfectivity” referred to in the definition seems to be contradicting the term “completed” later on in the text.) In a later paper, Givón (1995: 55) connects the “realis, perfective preterite verb form” with high transitivity, which might mean that the questionable part of the statement in c) is probably due to a misunderstanding.

I summarize the findings from the past two decades concerning transitivity below on the basis of Lindvall (1998).

The most typical components of transitivity are as follows:

**The characteristics of high transitivity:**

Foreground – perfectivity – holistic interpretation – determinateness – telicity – completion – boundedness – countability – referentiality/specificity – definiteness

**The characteristics of low transitivity:**

Background – imperfectivity – partitive interpretation – indeterminateness – atelicity – incompleteness – unboundedness – mass – non-referentiality/specificity – indefiniteness. (Lindvall 1998: 47)

If we supplement the above categorization with the semantic factors of discourse, the verb, and of the object occurring in the situation (such as agentivity, dynamism, directedness, givenness and modality – the type of the event, tense, aspect – the type of object, referentiality, definiteness), we get the following chart (the figure is the same as Lindvall’s 1998: 60):

	<b>high transitivity</b>	<b>low transitivity</b>
<b>Domain</b>	<i>foregrounded</i>	<i>backgrounded</i>
<b>discourse</b>	<i>agentive dynamic affected bounded given</i>	<i>non-agentive static non-affected unbounded non-given</i>
<b>Clause</b>	<i>affirmation realis statement</i>	<i>negation irrealis question</i>
<b>Verb</b>	<i>achievement past completed telic punctual perfective</i>	<i>state present incompleted atelic durative imperfective</i>

	high transitivity	low transitivity
<b>object</b>	<i>human</i> <i>concrete</i> <i>countable</i> <i>referential</i> <i>identifiable</i> <i>definite</i>	<i>inanimate</i> <i>abstract</i> <i>mass</i> <i>non-referential</i> <i>non-identifiable</i> <i>indefinite</i>

Table 40. The components of transitivity

I would like to stress that, as can be seen from the table above, placing the emphasis of the investigation on transitivity and its extent does not at all mean a step back from the analysis of text to the analysis of isolated sentences, since several components of transitivity are concerned with the nature of discourse.

### 6.2.2. The transitivity model and the use of Tundra Nenets conjugations

6.2.2.1. On the basis of examples available to me I can say that the reflexive-medial conjugation occurs in most cases when about half of the components of transitivity are present in the linguistic situation, and the agent is not linguistically separated from the patient. Another important element is that the action / event has to describe (an often intensive) change.

- (112) *Ся'ны нээбта нго'* нумда тангы' нээвы'. Яха  
 'suddenly' 'sky'+PxSg3 'summery'+Pl. 'be'+perf. +indetVxPI3 'river'  
 (+gen.)  
*хэвхана халям нэрнга'.* Нгэмгэ илэбито' малхана  
 'side'+locat. 'fish'+acc. 'deal with'+indetVxPI3 'something' 'live'+cond. 'at the same  
 gerund. time'  
 +genPxPI3  
*небядо'* *еде'лы'.*  
 'mother'+PIPxPI3 'fall ill'+refl-medVxSg3  
 'Suddenly summer arrived. [The children] were fishing on the river bank.  
 As they were living like this, their mother fell ill.' (Neko: 36)
- (113) "šit xāda? nīrb'am?"  
 'you+acc.' 'kill' (conneg.) 'not'+emphatic element+indetVxSgI  
*tarć wādaxa?na tī šuxuñe nīneka, ŋāewa paklaš*  
 'such' 'talk'+Pllocat. 'this way' uncle Suxuñe Barrel Head

<i>niti?</i> 'each other' (Du3)	<i>jawo?lixi?</i> 'behave menacingly'+refl- medVxDu3	<i>řili?</i> 'completely'	<i>labćejaha?</i> 'throw oneself on somebody'+refl-medVxDu3
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“I'll kill you now!”

Amidst talk like this, uncle Suxuńe and Barrel Head attacked each other and threw themselves on each other.’ (Hajdú 1968: 86)

6.2.2.2. Applying the transitivity model in our examination of the texts, we can see that this model can better explain the seeming contradictions in choosing the determinative conjugation than the examination of the topic–comment relations can. In (114) I compare the already quoted contrastive focus sentences according to their level of transitivity.

(114)	<i>Пырям'</i>	<i>мань</i>	<i>шаревась</i>	<i>карпм'</i>	<i>пиревась</i>	<i>си"ив</i>	<i>яля</i>	<i>нэсоңгана.</i>
	'pike'+acc.	'I'	'fry'+ praet.detVxSg1	'carp'+ acc.	'cook'+praet detVxSg1	'a week ago'		

*Шаревы халям', пиревы халям' мэнен?*  
'fried' 'fish'+acc. 'cooked' 'fish'+acc. 'like'+indetVxSg2  
'I fried the pike and cooked the carp a week ago. Do you like fried fish or cooked fish better?' (Laptander)

We can see that the second sentence, in which the speaker used the indeterminative conjugation, does not report of any change. Its subject is not an agent, the situation itself is not dynamic and is not fixed in time. The sentence is not a statement but a question, which also signals a lower lever of transitivity. The object of the sentence is not concrete or countable, and the verb is of imperfective aspect and in present tense. All this shows that the linguistic situation in which the indeterminative verb occurs in is of lower transitivity in several aspects than the one where the verb occurs in the determinative conjugation.

A high level of transitivity can be seen in (110), for example, where the verb bears determinative inflection. In (110) the sentence in boldface reports on change. Its subject is not an agent but can be considered human, and the situation is dynamic – to the extent that it signals a real turn in the story. The sentence is a statement, in *realis*, it does not formulate a question, and the verb is of completed aspect and telic, even though it is a verb of sensation. The object of the sentence is a typical object in a transitive situation: it is concrete, countable, identifiable and definite.

(115)	<b>“Ѓор”!</b>
	'eat'+imperat.indetVxSg2

"Тикым' норман нидм' харва". Мань тамна намгэхэван'  
 'this'+acc. 'eat'+ 'not'+ 'want' 'I' 'something else+lat.'  
 goal.inf. indet (conneg.)  
 VxSg1

*харвадм'.*"

'want'+  
 indet VxSg1

"Eat!"

"I don't want to eat this. I would like something else." (Laptander)

In (115) we can see that even though the sentences of this stretch of text are of quite high transitivity, neither sentence is dynamic or reports on change, the second sentence is not a statement but a negation, the objects of the sentences are non-identifiable and uncountable, and the verbs are neither completed nor in past tense. All in all, we can say that the level of transitivity of the stretch of text accounts for the consistent use of the indeterminative conjugation.

### *6.3. Conclusion*

Having overviewed the above evidence and opinions and discussed possible further avenues of research, I can conclude that in Tundra Nenets we cannot formulate an unequivocal rule or system of rules for the use of the conjugations on the basis of the evidence available right now, although certain tendencies seem to be emerging.

In my opinion, the use of the determinative conjugation in Tundra Nenets is not clearly connected with (syntactic) focus (which has been regarded in the literature so far as a factor determining its use), its position in the sentence, or with topic–comment relations either. Until further investigations provide new and more reliable findings, I suggest that the high level of transitivity be accepted as the explanation for the use of the determinative conjugation in a linguistic situation.





## 7. Conclusion and avenues of further research

The aim of this dissertation has been to provide a comprehensive diachronic and synchronic description of Tundra Nenets conjugation.

In order to do this, it has been essential to give an overview of conjugation as a general typological and historical phenomenon, and, thus, the first part of my paper has focused on the issues of what conjugation is and how it has possibly developed. As there are no results focusing particularly on this topic to date, it has been on the basis of the literature on inflectional verbal affixes that I have tried to draw conclusions regarding the characteristics of verbal affixes, their frequency distributions in languages investigated so far, and the development of conjugation systems.

The second part of my paper has dealt with the possible bases of the Tundra Nenets conjugation system and the development of the verbal affixes. I have attempted to study the system of Tundra Nenets conjugations on the basis of research results and – because it cannot be observed independently of either the Uralic languages or the languages of the Northern Siberian Sprachbund – within the context of the conjugation systems of these languages.

Tundra Nenets conjugation prominently bears various proto-language characteristics. The structure of the indicative verbal affixes almost exclusively goes back to the Proto-Uralic and the Proto-Samoyedic stages: there are a great number of morphemes among them that, after several sound changes, can be traced back to the ancient personal pronouns of the corresponding person and number and the number markers. In the imperative mood, the verbal suffixes themselves and even the structure of the verb forms can be regarded as reflexes of the proto-forms, which are different from the other verb forms in their structure. In addition to this, there are also Tundra Nenets verbal suffixes (e.g. in the optative mood) that developed in the independent stage of Tundra Nenets.

In Uralic linguistics it is widely assumed that of the three conjugation types (and four paradigms) of Tundra Nenets both the determinative and the indeterminative conjugations have Proto-Uralic antecedents. In the literature this is deduced from the <0 : morphologized Sg3 personal pronoun> opposition which occurs in those languages that differentiate between determinative and indeterminative conjugations. In my opinion, in addition to the determinative conjugation, the reflexive-medial conjugation can also have Proto-Uralic antecedents from which the conjugation types of the present day Uralic languages with the reflexive-medial and indeterminative, or indeterminative, determinative and reflexive-medial conjugations could have developed.

The conjugation system of Tundra Nenets may have been affected by those Palaeosiberian and Turkic languages which surrounded Samoyedic languages in the area where the ancestors of these languages as well as of the present day Samoyedic languages were spoken. In my opinion, the Turkic languages of the area did not affect the development of the system of Tundra Nenets conjugations, however, Ket, Chukchi and Yukaghir do have features which resemble some of the phenomena of the Nenets verb conjugation system. All in all, it is probably safe to claim that areal features are secondary in Tundra Nenets to elements and rules inherited from Proto-Uralic and Proto-Samoyedic.

In the third part of my paper I have attempted to provide an overview of the use of the Tundra Nenets conjugation types. As, in my opinion, previous literature does not provide satisfying explanations to the possible functions of the various conjugations, I have attempted to address the issue through a description of grammatical rules as well as through various other methods.

In the investigation of the choice between the determinative and indeterminative conjugations, the analysis of independent sentences taken out of their textual context has not yielded acceptable results. This is partly due to the fact that, on the one hand, there is no evidence to suggest that in such sentences conjugations are connected to syntactic focus, as previous literature on the topic attempts to suggest. On the other hand, at present the linguistic insight necessary for demonstrating the semantic differences which undoubtedly exist in the case of optional conjugation types is not available to researchers.

Investigations carried out in the wider textual context have provided significantly more results in the research into the use of determinative and indeterminative conjugations. On the basis of my currently available results I can state that in Tundra Nenets the most prominent loose rule is that the higher the transitivity of the situation is that a verb occurs in, the more likely it is that it occurs in the determinative conjugation.

The transitivity model can be applied in the case of reflexive-medial verbs as well, since if the details of the linguistic situation are not expressed, the starting point of the action or happening is not separated from the end point, and the transitivity in the context is of medium level, the verb is likely to occur in the reflexive-medial conjugation.

Of the aims of this paper, it is probably the part regarding the description of the use and functions of the conjugations that is hardest to accomplish. This is partly due to the fact that, even though the transitivity model basically seems to work in Tundra Nenets, it does not go beyond being a *model*, that is, it cannot be applied and interpreted as a rule. The other serious problem in connection with research on the topic is

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that I have not yet been able to uncover the semantic differences between sentences having identical structures but employing different conjugation types. The reason for this is that, even though these differences could be tested with the help of native speakers of the language, I have not yet been able to develop a test which would have produced an unequivocally acceptable system of rules. Thus, on the basis of findings established so far, I can only state that in some cases speakers' choice of conjugations is very subjective and vacillating, and the problematic issues of the use of conjugations could be studied in an investigation whose scope would be beyond the present paper's.



# Appendix 1

## List of abbreviations

ablat.	ablative case
acc.	accusative case
accPx	accusative with personal possessive suffix
adhort.	adhortative case
Cimp	coaffix connecting to imperfective verbs
coaff.	coaffix
conneg.	negated verb stem
Cperf.	coaffix connecting to perfective verbs
det	determinative
DO	direct object
Du / Pl obj	dual / plural object
Du	dual number
ess.	essive case
fut.	future tense
gen.	genitive case
(gen.)	covert genitive
genPx	genitive with personal possessive suffix
goal.inf.	goal adverbial infinitive
imperat.	imperative mood
inchoat.	inchoative aspect
indet.	indeterminative
inf.	infinitive (cf. Hajdú 1968)
interrog.	interrogative
lat.	lative case
locat.	locative case
necess.	necessitive mood
nom.	nominative case
optat.	optative mood
part.imperf.	imperfect participle
part.perf.	perfect participle
perf.	perfect
Pl	plural number
Pobj	element referring to a plural object
PNS	Proto-Northern Samoyed
postp.	postposition
praet.	preterite
PredestSx	predestinative personal suffix
Prex	predicative personal suffix

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probabil.	probabilitive
prolat.	prolative /prosecutive case
PS	Proto-Samoyed
PU	Proto-Uralic
Px	possessive personal suffix
refl	reflexive
refl-med	reflexive-medial
Sg obj.	singular object
Sg	singular number
V <sub>det</sub>	verb of determinative conjugation
V <sub>indet</sub>	verb of indeterminative conjugation
Vx	verbal personal suffix

## Appendix 2

### List of languages and dialects used as sources of examples

Buryat  
Mari (Eastern and Western dialects)  
Chukchi  
Enets(B) (Baichai Enets)  
EnetsK (Karasino Enets)  
Estonian (Southern Estonian dialect)  
Evenki  
Yakut  
Yukaghir  
Kalmyk  
Kamas  
Karelian  
Ket  
Sami  
Hungarian  
Motor  
Mongolian  
Mordvin (Erza and Moksha languages or dialects)  
Nganasan  
NenetsF (Forest Nenets)  
NenetsT (Tundra Nenets)  
Khanty  
SelkupN (Northern Selkup)  
Veps  
Mansi  
Udmurt  
Komi





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