0. Introduction

*Ket:*

- an endangered language spoken in Central Siberia (the north of Krasnoyarsk Province)
- the last surviving member of the Yeniseian family
- hard to pigeonhole within a single typological account due to a peculiar process of structural mimicry, or ‘typological accommodation’

1. Contact situation in Central Siberia

Five distinct genetic language units:

- Yeniseian
- Samoyedic
- Tungusic
- Turkic
- Ob-Ugric

Yeniseian contacts:

- intensive contacts with *Turkic* tribes (south) and *Selkup* (east)
- sporadic contacts with *Nenets* and *Enets* (north) and *Evenki* (west)

2. Core typological features of Yeniseian

*Typological profiles in Central Siberia:*

- **Turkic, Tungusic, Samoyedic and Ob-Ugric**
  - ✓ non-tonal
  - ✓ suffixing
  - ✓ agglutinating

- **Yeniseian**
  - ✓ tonal
  - ✓ prefixing
  - ✓ polysynthetic
• **Phonemic tones**

(1) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ket</th>
<th>Yugh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qām</td>
<td>χām</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṓd</td>
<td>ṓd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḫīl</td>
<td>ḫīl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q̂j</td>
<td>ɔ̄j</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ket</th>
<th>Yugh</th>
<th>Kott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>na-qu’s</td>
<td>da-f’p</td>
<td>ṃ-yo:p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3AN.PL-PL-tent</td>
<td>3SG.M-son</td>
<td>1SG.POSS-father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘their birch-bark tent’</td>
<td>‘his son’</td>
<td>‘my father’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• **Possessive prefixes**

(3) 

(4) 

• **Prefixing verbal morphology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>morphemes outside the phonological verb</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>verb base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject NP</td>
<td>shape</td>
<td>animacy</td>
<td>tense, mood, aspect</td>
<td>undergoer</td>
<td>(bare root or verb deriving prefix d, l + root)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complement (adverb, object NP)</td>
<td>classifier: (d, n, h^, etc.)</td>
<td>classifier:</td>
<td>(originally auxiliary verb s, ya, a, o + suffix l, n)</td>
<td>subject agreement (1 or 2 p)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Figure 1. Proto-Yeniseian finite verb (Vajda, forthcoming) |

• **Polysynthetic verbs**

(5) 

(6) 

(7) 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ket</th>
<th>Yugh</th>
<th>Kott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dbilbet</td>
<td>dayusi’rget</td>
<td>bapajəŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d{i}b-d’-l-bed</td>
<td>d{a}v-usi’-d’-l-ked</td>
<td>b^5–a^3–paj^8–an^3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG8-3N3-PST2-make</td>
<td>3F14-tent13-PST3-make</td>
<td>3N^2-NPST^1-make9-1SG^3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I made it.’</td>
<td>‘She made a birch-bark tent.’</td>
<td>‘I make it.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) bāṅkə ‘on the ground’ [< baŋ ‘ground’ + ka (locative morpheme)].

(9) bóktis ‘flint’ [< bo’k ‘fire’ + ti’s ‘stone’]

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1 There are no actual audio recordings of the other Yeniseian languages, but systematic peculiarities in the transcription of these languages show rather convincingly that they had at least the high and laryngealized tones (cf. Verner 1990).

2 The Yugh verb and the Kott verb below are analyzed according to the position model proposed by Werner (1997b: 132).

3 Typological accommodation

Unlike ‘metatypy’ or ‘grammatical calquing’, **typological accommodation** does not represent a replacement of an original feature but rather its adaptation to a different morphological type creating a rather unique hybrid structure (Vajda, forthcoming).

**Typological accommodation at the phonological level**

**Phonemic tones** are restricted to the domain monosyllabic words only (cf. ex. 1 above) and get eroded upon suffixation (8) or compounding (9) under the influence of the root initial agglutinating languages (cf. Vajda, forthcoming).

(8) bāṅkə ‘on the ground’ [< baŋ ‘ground’ + ka (locative morpheme)].

(9) bóktis ‘flint’ [< bo’k ‘fire’ + ti’s ‘stone’]
**Typological accommodation at the morphological level**

Prosodic behavior of the **possessive prefixes** (cf. exs. 2-4 above) is similar to what is called ‘ditropic clitics’ (cf. Cysouw 2005) mimicking the possessive or genitive suffixes of the surrounding languages (cf. Vajda, forthcoming).

(P10) \( \text{́pdå} #búl/ \)
father=3.M.SG leg

(P11) \( \text{́skàr} #búl/ \)
when=3.M.SG foot

(P12) \( \text{́dabúl}/ \)
3.M.SG=foot

All the **productive verb patterns** in Modern Ket have their semantic head placed at the left most margin (slot P7), so that the positions that follow it might be regarded as suffixes like in the surrounding languages (cf. exs. 13-14) (cf. Vajda, forthcoming).

![Figure 2. Position classes in Modern Ket](image)

**Typological accommodation at the syntactic level**

**Polysynthetic languages:**
- tend to avoid overt subordination (Heath 1975, Mithun 1984)
- tend not to have truly non-finite forms (cf. Nichols 1992)

**Polysynthesis** is not compatible with the existence of nonfinite clauses (Baker 1996)

**Adverbial clauses**

In Turkic, Tungusic, Samoedic and Ob-Ugric languages, various types of adverbial relations are coded by **case-marked non-finite constructions** (cf. Anderson 2004).
- **Participle**

(P15) Evenki, Tungusic

\( \text{minduk pekture villume ganadukan bega ittenen} \)

I-NOM make-PAST-REFL gun-ACC take-PART-ABL-3 month pass-NFUT-3

‘A month had passed since he took my gun from me.’ (Nedjalkov 1997: 51)
(16) Tuvan, Turkic

men kelgenimde ažildaarmen
men kel-gen-im-de ažildaarmen
1SG come-PST.PTCP-1-LOC work-PRES/FUT1

‘When I come (here), I work’ (Anderson & Harrison 1999: 73)

- **Verbal noun**

(17) Selkup, Southern Samoyedic

qumitit kit qanti tüptääqin časiq esikka
qum-tit kit qan-ći tü-p-tää-qin časiq es-ikka
person-PL river bank-IILL come-VN-LOC cold become-HAB.3.PAST

‘When the people were approaching the river, it was getting cold.’ (Anderson 2004: 67)

- **Bare verb stem**

(18) Enets, Northern Samoyedic

sIra? niñ kodiahadən nọ:ñ desuma?
sIra? niñ kodia-haad-ön nọ-ñ desuma?
snow.GEN on sleep-ABL-PROX.1SG leg-1SG get.sick-AOR.3SG

‘Since I was sleeping on the snow, my leg got sick.’ (Künnap 1999: 35)

- **Converb**

(19) Eastern Khanty, Ob-Ugric

tʃɨm-ali amisminno, ni mɔnəyn juyato
tʃɨm-al-ı amis-min-n-o ni mɔnə-yn juy-a-t-o
a.little-DIM sit-CVB-LOC woman go-PST0.3SG gather.woods-PST0.3SG

‘After sitting awhile, the woman went off to gather firewood’ (Filchenko 2010: 470)

In Ket, relational morphemes are attached directly to a **fully finite verb** form

(20) ām dɔtʃət-ka ᵈn bɔn’ dasqans’an
ām daʰ-ʃət-ka ən bɔn’ də-sasqan’s-s-ə-ń’
mother 3F̩-TH¹-NPST⁴-LOC 1PL NEG 1ª-stories²-NPST²-speak³-AN.PL-¹

‘When mother sleeps, we don’t speak.’

**Relative clauses**

Turkic, Tungusic, Samoedic and Ob-Ugric languages share a common relativization pattern of **proposed participial relative clauses** with a ‘gapped’ relativized noun phrase (Pakendorf 2012).

- **Participle**

(21) Evenki, Tungusic

bi Turudu alaguvgərildu asatkardu meŋurve bu:m
bi Turu-du alaguvgar-ı DAT girl-PL-DAT give.NFUT-I-1SG
1SG T.-DAT study-SIM.PTCP-PL-DAT girl-PL-DAT money-ACC give.NFUT-I-1SG

‘I gave money to the girls who study in Tura.’ (Pakendorf 2012: 258)

(22) Tuvan, Turkic

bistin dü:n čora:n čerivis čaraš boldu
bistin dü:n čor-a:n čerivis čaraš bol-du
1PL.GEN yesterday go-PPT place-POSS.1PL beautiful be-PSTII.3SG

‘The place we went yesterday was beautiful.’ (Anderson & Harrison 1999: 20)
(23) Enets, Northern Samoyedic

\[ ot\ddot{i}dar\ en\ddot{\check{c}}r\ ni\ tu\? \]

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{oft-da-r} & \text{en\ddot{\check{c}}-r} \\
\text{wait-SIM.PTCP-POSS.2SG.NOM} & \text{person-POSS.2SG.NOM} \\
\text{NEG.S:3SG} & \text{come.CONNEG} \\
\end{array} \]

‘The person you are waiting for didn’t come.’ (Pakendorf 2012: 263)

(24) Selkup, Southern Samoyedic

\[ qorq\ddot{i}t\ q\ddot{a}tpi\ddot{i} \ddot{\check{\varepsilon}}t\ddot{\check{a}} \]

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{qorqi-t} & \text{q\ddot{a}tpi\ddot{\check{\varepsilon}}t} \\
\text{bear-GEN} & \text{kill-PST.PTCP} \\
\end{array} \]

‘a reindeer killed by a bear’ (Spencer 2013: 389)

(25) Eastern Khanty, Ob-Ugric

\[ m\ddot{\imath}a\ werm\ddot{\imath}l\ r\ddot{\imath} \]

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{m\ddot{\imath}a} & \text{wer-m-\ddot{\imath}l} \\
\text{1SG} & \text{do-PP-3SG} \\
\end{array} \]

‘The canoe that I’ve made.’ (Filchenko 2010: 466)

In Ket, preposed relative clauses with **fully finite verbs** is the major relativization pattern (cf. Nefedov 2012).

(26) \[\ddot{\imath}t\ \ddot{\imath}\ddot{\imath}p\ \text{duta}\ddot{\imath}\ddot{\imath}t\ \text{bisep} \text{tsitej}\ddot{\imath}\ddot{\imath}t\ddot{\imath} \ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}t\ddot{\imath} \ddot{\imath} \]

\[ \begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{\ddot{\imath}d} & \text{\ddot{\imath}\ddot{\imath}p} & \text{du\ddot{\imath}t}\ddot{-a\ddot{-a\ddot{-a\ddot{-quat}}} \ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}t} & \text{biseb} & \text{d\{i\}^8\text{-sitej}} & \text{-q\ddot{\imath}t} & \text{-a\ddot{-a\ddot{-a\ddot{-t}}} \ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}j\ddot{\imath}t} \\
\text{1SG} & \text{1SG.POSS} & \text{3M\ddot{\imath}-TH\ddot{\imath}-NPST\ddot{\imath}-be.in.position} & \text{sibling} & \text{1\ddot{\imath}-wake\ddot{-TH\ddot{\imath}-3M\ddot{\imath}-MOM} & \text{0} \\
\end{array} \]

‘I wake up my sleeping brother.’

4. Conclusion

Although Ket clearly imitates complex structures of the surrounding languages, it resists accommodating a participle-like morphology and remain fully finite, which reflects the general tendency among polysynthetic languages not to have non-finite forms.

Retaining a fully finite verb in subordinate constructions structurally similar to those with non-finite verbs in the surrounding languages is a further evidence supporting the idea about the hybrid nature of Ket grammatical structure where alongside an overlay of areal features the core features have remained intact.

References


**Glosses:**

1. first person
2. second person
3. third person
4. ABL Ablative
5. ACC Accusative
6. AGR agreement
7. AN animate
8. ANOM action nominal
9. AOR Aorist
10. CVB converb
11. CONNEG connegative converb
12. DAT Dative
13. DIM diminutive
14. F feminine
15. GEN Genitive
16. HAB habitual
17. ILL Illative
18. ITER iterative
19. LOC Locative
20. M masculine
21. MOM momentaneous
22. N neuter/inanimate
23. NEG negative particle
24. NFUT non-future
25. NOM Nominative
26. NPST non-past
27. PL plural
28. POSS possessive
29. PPT past participle
30. PRES present
31. PTCP participle
32. PST past
33. PROX proximate
34. S subject of intransitive clause
35. SG singular
36. SIM simultaneous
37. TH thematic consonant
38. VN verbal noun