

Mouton Grammar Library

Elena Maslova

A Grammar of Kolyma Yukaghir



Mouton Grammar Library 27

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Mouton de Gruyter
Berlin · New York

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of Kolyma Yukaghir

2003

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Mouton de Gruyter (formerly Mouton, The Hague)
is a Division of Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Maslova, Elena. A grammar of Kolyma Yukaghir / by Elena Maslova. p. cm – (Mouton grammar library ; 27) Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN 3 11 017527 4 1. Yukaghir language – Grammar. I. Title. II. Series. PM20.1 .M37 2003 494'.6–dc21 2002154398
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ISBN 3 11 017527 4

Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie;
detailed bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <<http://dnb.ddb.de>>.

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*In memory of my grandparents,
Sarra S. Maslova-Lashanskaya and Juri S. Maslov*

Acknowledgements

Since I began to study Yukaghir in 1985, so many people have helped me in various ways or influenced my thinking about language in general and about Yukaghir in particular that expressing my gratitude in full length would constitute a book in itself.

First and foremost, I am indebted to my informants: Vasiliy Shalugin, Akulina Shadrina, Lyubov' Dyomina, Ivan Dolganov, Vasiliy Spiridonov, Maria Turpanova, and Elizaveta Dolganova. Without their generous help, interest and patience, this book would never have come to be. I owe the most for my knowledge of Yukaghir to Vasiliy Shalugin, with his fascinating talent and intuition, and his constant readiness to tell stories in Yukaghir and answer all possible questions in the most revealing and insightful way.

I am grateful to the linguists who helped me take my first steps in linguistics: Juri Maslov, Nikolay Vakhtin, Alexander Volodin, Evgueni Golovko, Vladimir Nedyalkov, Maria Polynski, Vladimir Plungyan, and Yakov Testelec. Their readiness to comment on my drafts and to discuss mysteries of the Yukaghir grammar cannot be overestimated. I am particularly grateful to my friend and colleague Nikolay Vakhtin, who has spent many hours and weeks teaching me what descriptive linguistics and field research is all about. I would also like to express my gratitude to Leon Stassen and Frederik Kortlandt for feedback on an early draft of this grammar and for their encouragement at the time when it was most needed.

My field research was made possible by the financial support of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Soros Foundation.

Eugene Levine developed a software application that facilitated both analysis and description of my data.

I would like to thank Bernard Comrie, Christian Lehmann, Dafydd Gibbon and Werner Kummer, who reviewed an earlier version of this grammar; their comments and remarks have been both helpful and encouraging. Some of them have been taken into account in the final version of this book; others will doubtless help me in my future research. Irina Nikolaeva has read the phonetic chapter of this book and suggested a number of improvements. Bernard Comrie read the revised version of the manuscript; his help in preparing this manuscript for publication was invaluable. Boris Maslov and Tatiana Nikitina helped me to proofread the camera-ready copy.

Neither my field research nor any other activities of mine would have been possible without the support and assistance of my mother, Nina Maslova. Special thanks are due to my husband, Eugene Levine, and to my son, Boris Maslov, for their patience, emotional support and understanding, as well as for their technical help in preparation of this book.

San Francisco, July 2002

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Abbreviations

ABL	Ablative	HORT	Hortative
ACC	Accusative	IMP	Imperative
ADV	adverb	INCH	Inchoative
AFF	Affirmative	INDF	indefinite
ANR	Action Nominalizer	INFR	Inferential
APPL	Applicative	INGR	Ingressive
ATTR	Attributive	INSTR	Instrumental
AUG	Augmentative	INTR	intransitive
BP	Body-Part form	INTS	Intensifier
CA	connective adverbial	IPFV	Imperfective
CAUS	Causative	IRLS	Irrealis
COM	Comitative	ITER	Iterative
CONC	Concessive	ITR	Interrogative
COND	Conditional	LOC	Locative
CONJ	conjunction	LOCNR	Locative Nominalizer
CONN	connective	NEG	Negative
COP	copula	NOM	Nominative
CP	connective particle	NR	nominalizer
DAT	Dative	NONIT	Non-Iterative
DEM	emonstrative	OF	O-Focus
DESD	desiderative	OPT	Optative
DETR	detransitivizer	ORD	ordinal
DIM	Diminutive	PFV	Perfective
DIR	Directional	PL	Plural
DLM	Delimitative	POSS	Possessive
DP	discourse particle	PRED	Predicative
DS	Different-Subject marker	PROH	Prohibitive
DSJ	disjunction (particle)	PROL	Prolative
DSTR	Distributive	PRPR	Propriative
FRQ	Frequentative	PRSP	Prospective
FUT	Future	PRV	Privative
HAB	Habitual	PURP	Purposive

QLT	qualitative	SS	Same-Subject marker
RECP	Reciprocal	STAT	Stative
REFL	Reflexive	SUP	Supine
RELNR	Relative Nominalizer	SUPERL	Superlative
RES	Resultative	TMP	temporal
RNR	Result Nominalizer	TR	transitive
RSMP	resumptive	TRNSF	Transformative
SBNR	Subject Nominalizer	VR	verbalizer
SF	S-Focus		
SG	Singular		

Abbreviations of the sources of the example sentences:

F Nikolaeva, Irina (ed.) 1989. *Foljklor jukagirov verhnej Kolymy /Folklore of Upper Kolyma Yukaghirs*. Yakutsk: Yakut State University Press.

K Maslova, Elena (ed.) 2001. *Yukaghir texts*. Tunguso-Sibirica, 7. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

T Appendix 3 of this book

I field notes (elicited examples)

No source is given for sentences from unpublished texts.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Kolyma Yukaghir and its genetic affiliation

Kolyma Yukaghir is spoken by about 50 people in the settlements Nelemnoye and Zyryanka, Upper Kolyma district, Yakutia (Sakha) Republic and in Seymchan and Balygychan, Magadan region, Russia. Until very recently, Kolyma Yukaghir has not been written; the writing system used for the first publication of Yukaghir folklore (Nikolaeva 1989) and currently employed in the school in Nelemnoye is based on the Cyrillic alphabet. This grammar describes the variety of Kolyma Yukaghir spoken by the oldest generation of Yukaghirs in Nelemnoye.

Kolyma Yukaghir is one of two existing Yukaghir languages (which used to be referred to as dialects of Yukaghir in the literature). Another Yukaghir language, Tundra Yukaghir, is spoken mainly in the settlements Andryushkino and Kolymskoye, Lower Kolyma district, Yakutia. The Yukaghir languages are conventionally considered a genetically isolated group; yet they can probably be affiliated with the Uralic family (Angere 1956; Bouda 1941; Collinder 1940, 1960, 1965; Nikolaeva 1988a; 1988b).

2. An overview of Kolyma Yukaghir grammar

2.1. Phonology and morphophonemics

The vowel system comprises six short vowels, as represented in (1), and their long counterparts.

Table 1. Consonants

	Labial	Dental	Palatalo- alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular
Plosive	<i>p</i>	<i>t d</i>			<i>k g</i>	<i>q</i>
Affricates				<i>č d'</i>		
Fricatives			<i>š ž</i>	<i>[s']</i>		<i>h</i>
Nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>n'</i>	<i>ŋ</i>	
Laterals		<i>l</i>		<i>l'</i>		
Rolled		<i>r</i>				
Glides	<i>w</i>			<i>j</i>		

- (1) $\begin{array}{l} /i/ \\ /e/, /ø/ \\ /a/ \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} /u/ \\ /o/ \end{array}$

The long vowels $/\bar{e}/$, $/\bar{o}/$, $/\bar{\ø}/$ can be pronounced as the falling diphthongs $/ie/$, $/uo/$, $/u\ø/$.

The consonant system is represented in Table 1.

The syllable structure is very simple: with few exceptions, there exist only syllables of the form CV , CVC (at the beginning of words, also V , VC). Hence, there are no vowel clusters. Voiced obstruents are impossible in word-initial and syllable-final position; in syllable-final position, voiced obstruents alternate either with their voiceless counterparts or with sonorants. Voiced and voiceless consonants cannot co-occur within a consonant cluster, hence syllable-initial voiced obstruents are regularly devoiced at morphemic boundaries after obstruents.

Two types of morphophonemic strategies are employed to maintain the transparent syllabic structure: first, a number of Yukaghir suffixes show allomorphic variation of the form $-Ce- \sim -C-$ (below, syllabic vs. consonantal allomorphs). Basically, the allomorphs are chosen in such a way as to create a sequence of the form $\{\dots - C_1e - C_2 - C_3e - \dots\}$ or $\{\dots - C_1 - C_2e - C_3 - \dots\}$, i.e., a consonantal morph is selected after a syllabic morph, and vice versa. Secondly, the epenthetic submorphs $-u-$ and $-l-$ can be inserted in order to avoid consonant and vowel clustering at morphemic boundaries.

There are two kinds of harmonic alternations which can be conventionally termed palatal and labial, yet both affect only a very restricted number of suffixes, only one of which is productive. Palatal harmony contrasts the vowels /i/, /e/, /ø/, /u/ (with their long counterparts) and the vowels /a/, /o/ (with their long counterparts); to some extent, it also determines distribution of the velar obstruents and their uvular counterparts. Labial harmony produces the alternation /e/ ~ /o/ in some suffixes after roots with /o/ or /ō/ in the first syllable.

Word stress is mobile; to a large extent, it is determined by the syllable structure: closed syllables and open syllables with long vowels attract the stress to the end of a word.

2.2. Morphology

Yukaghir is a highly synthetic and essentially agglutinative language; suffixation prevails. There are five prefixes (two prefixes of polarity, the reflexive, the reciprocal, and the prefix of irrealis); these morphemes are characterized by a looser connection with the stem than the suffixes, so that the boundary between a prefix and its stem may be described as internal open juncture. Fusion phenomena at morphemic boundaries are marginal.

The major open classes of lexical items are nouns and verbs; they can be easily distinguished by morphological criteria. Words denoting qualities constitute a sub-class of verbs; in the attributive function, they take the verbal Attributive form (see (5)).

2.2.1. Nouns

Nouns are inflected for number (Singular, Plural), case (Nominative, Predicative, Accusative, Instrumental, Dative, Locative, Ablative, Prolative, and Comitative), and Possession (cross-reference suffixes for third Person Possessor only). This paradigm is exemplified in Table 2 for the noun *āčē* ‘domestic deer’.

The Possessive marker cross-references either the possessive modifier or a possessor outside the NP. It can be used only for a third person Possessor that is not coreferential with the subject

Table 2. Noun inflection (Case, Number, Possession)

	Singular	Plural	Possessed ('his')
Nominative	<i>āče</i>	<i>āče-pul</i>	<i>āče-gi</i>
Predicative	<i>āče-lek</i>	<i>āče-p-lek</i>	
Accusative	<i>āče-gele</i>	<i>āče-pul-gele</i>	<i>āče-de-gele (āče-de-jle)</i>
Instrumental	<i>āče-le</i>	<i>āče-p-le</i>	<i>āče-de-le</i>
Dative	<i>āče-ŋin</i>	<i>āče-pul-ŋin</i>	<i>āče-d-in (āče-de-ŋin)</i>
Locative	<i>āče-ge</i>	<i>āče-pul-ge</i>	<i>āče-de-ge</i>
Ablative	<i>āče-get</i>	<i>āče-pul-get</i>	<i>āče-de-get</i>
Prolative	<i>āče-gen</i>	<i>āče-pul-gen</i>	<i>āče-de-gen</i>
Comitative	<i>āče-n'e</i>	<i>āče-pul-n'e</i>	<i>āče-de-n'e</i>

of the clause; otherwise, the possessive form of a personal pronoun is used to express the possessive relationship.

When combined with the Possessive cross-reference marker, the Plural may denote the number of the Possessed, the Possessor, or both, so that a form like *āče-p-ki* (deer-PL-3(NOM)) is ambiguous among 'his/her deer (many)', 'their deer (one)' and 'their deer (many)'.

Nouns have an Attributive form in *-d/-n* which can be used only non-referentially (e.g., *āče-n legul* 'deer-food, food for deer') and two "verbal" forms, the Propriative form, which is built by means of the suffix *-n'e- ~ -n'-* (*āče-n'-* 'to have (a) deer, to be with deer'), and the Stative form derived by the bound variant *+ŋō-* of the copulative verb *ō-* 'to be' (*āče+ŋō-* 'be (a) deer').

Nouns also have a Transformative form which is derived from the Stative form by means of the suffix *-n/-t*, e.g., *āče+ŋō-n* 'as a deer, (become) a deer', a Privative form built by the combination of the standard negative prefix *el-* and the postfix *+čuoŋn*, e.g., *el+ače+čuoŋn* 'without (a) deer', and an (almost obsolete) Prospective form, e.g., *pulut+možu* 'fiancé' (from *pulut* 'husband').

There is a number of nominal derivational suffixes, only two of which are productive, the Diminutive, *-die-*, e.g., *āče-die* 'little deer' and the Augmentative, *-tege- ~ -tke-*, e.g., *āče-tke* 'large deer'; these suffixes follow the Possessive markers within a word form. Nouns can also be built by compounding and by lexicaliza-

Table 3. Indicative and Imperative finite forms

	Intransitive Verbs		Transitive Verbs		Imperative
	Main	SF	Main	OF	
1Sg	<i>modo-je</i>	<i>modo-l</i>	<i>ā</i>	<i>ā-me</i>	
2Sg	<i>modo-je-k</i>	<i>modo-l</i>	<i>ā-mek</i>	<i>ā-me</i>	<i>modo-k, ā-k</i>
3Sg	<i>modo-j</i>	<i>modo-l</i>	<i>ā-m</i>	<i>ā-me-le</i>	<i>modo-gen, ā-gen</i>
1Pl	<i>modo-je-jl'i</i>	<i>modo-l</i>	<i>ā-j</i>	<i>ā-l</i>	<i>modo-ge, ā-ge</i>
2Pl	<i>modo-je-met</i>	<i>modo-l</i>	<i>ā-met</i>	<i>ā-met</i>	<i>modo-ŋi-k, ā-ŋi-k</i>
3Pl	<i>modo-ŋi</i>	<i>modo-ŋi-l</i>	<i>ā-ŋā</i>	<i>ā-ŋi-le</i>	<i>modo-ŋi-gen, ā-ŋi-gen</i>

tion of nominal verb forms.

2.2.2. Verbs

Verbs fall into two major classes, transitive and intransitive. Each class has two series of Indicative finite forms, for main clauses which are neutral with respect to grammatical Focus (Main forms) and for clauses with intransitive subject (S) or direct object (O) marked for grammatical Focus (SF and OF forms, respectively). The finite verb agrees in person/number with the subject (the OF paradigm and especially the SF paradigm are less distinctive than the Main one). The Imperative is expressed by a distinct series of forms, which are shared by transitive and intransitive verbs. Illustrative paradigms are given in Table 3 (for the verbs *modo-* 'sit, stay' and *ā-* 'make').

There are Interrogative forms which are used only in question-word questions in which the questioned constituent is not S/O (in the latter case, the respective Focus-indicating forms are used). For the first person subject, there are special Interrogative person markers, *-m* 1SG, *-ōk* 1PL. The second and third person Interrogative forms differ from the Main Indicative forms only in absence of the (in)transitivity morphs *-j(e)-* / *-m(e)-* (e.g., (*qodo*) *ā-k* '(how) you (SG) made', (*qodo*) *ā-met* '(how) you (PL) made', (*qodo*) *ā* '(how) he made', (*qodo*) *ā-ŋi* '(how) they made').

The verb morphology is clearly aspect-dominated; the regularly marked aspect meanings are Imperfective, Ingressive, Resultative, and Habitual:

(2) Productive Aspect markers:

Imperfective	- <i>nu</i> -	<i>ā-nu-m</i> ‘he is/was making, he makes’
Habitual	- <i>nun(nu)</i> -	<i>ā-nunnu-m</i> ‘he used to make’
Ingressive	- <i>ā</i> -/ <i>-ie</i> -	<i>ā-l-ā-m</i> ‘he began to make’
Resultative	- <i>ō(l)</i> -	<i>ā-l-ō-j</i> ‘it is made’

The only obligatorily marked tense distinction is Future vs. Non-Future (the suffix *-te~t-* for Future, zero marking for Non-Future), although the Past may be expressed through periphrastic verb forms. The Periphrastic Past is built by putting the Subject Nominal or Relative Nominal verb form in the predicative position:

(3) Tense marking:

Non-Future	<i>ā-m</i>	‘he is making/made’
Future	<i>ā-te-m</i>	‘he will make’
Periphrastic	<i>ā-l-bed-ek</i>	‘(smb) has/had made’
Past	make-ANR-RELNR-PRED	

The verb is inflected for several moods; major mood forms are Inferential (the marker is *-l’el-*), Prospective (*-moži:-*), and Irrealis (marked by a pre-verbal morpheme *ot-/et-*). There is also a Periphrastic Prospective form made up as a combination of the Supine form with the existential verb *l’e-* ‘be’:

(4) Major Mood forms:

Inferential	<i>ā-l’el-u-m</i>	‘he appears to have made’
Prospective	<i>ā-moži-m</i>	‘he is going to make’
Irrealis	<i>ot+ā-m</i>	‘he would have made’
Periphrastic		
Prospective	<i>ā-din l’e-m</i>	‘he is about to make, is making’

The verb has a rich system of various nonfinite forms. The major nonfinite forms are illustrated in (5) by the verb *šubeže-* ‘run’:

- (5) Nonfinite forms:
- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---|
| Action Nominal | <i>šubeže-l</i> | ‘(a situation of) running’ |
| Result Hominal | <i>šubež-ōl</i> | ‘(a situation of) having
run, a result of running’ |
| Subject Nominal | <i>šubeže-jōn</i> | ‘one who is running’ |
| Relative Noyinal | <i>šubeže-j-ben</i> | ‘somebody who is running’ |
| Attributive | <i>šubeže-j</i> | ‘running’ |

Same-subject converbs:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Imperfective converb | <i>šubeže-t</i> | ‘while running...’ |
| Perfective converb | <i>šubeže-lle</i> | ‘having run...’ |
| Conditional converb | <i>šubeže-ηide</i> | ‘if (X) run(s)...’ |

Different-subject converbs (3SGforms):

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ordinary converb | <i>šubeže-de-ge</i> | ‘when he was
running...’ |
| Conditional converb | <i>šubeže-de-h-ne</i> | ‘if he runs...’ |

There are four regular valence-changing means, the Reciprocal (pre-verb *n'e+*), the Reflexive (pre-verb *met+*), the Causative (suffixes *-š-*, *-š-čil'e-*), and the Resultative (*-ō(l)-*), and a number of nonproductive valence-changing suffixes.

2.2.3. Shared morphological items

A number of morphological items are shared by nouns and verbs: they have a formally identical Privative form (‘without’), built by the negative marker *el-* and the postfix *+čuoŋ*, e.g., *el+āče+čuoŋ* ‘without deer’, *el+ā+čuoŋ* ‘without making/having made’, the Connective (Comitative) form in *-n'it*, e.g., *āče-n'it* ‘and/with deer’, *ā-n'it* ‘and made, while making’; and similar Prospective marking, cf. *terike-možū* ‘fiancée (wife-to-be)’ and *ā-možī-m* ‘he is going to make’. Besides, formally identical suffixes are employed to express Causation (if attached to a verb stem) and Causation of Possession (if attached to a nominal stem), cf. *terike-š-* ‘marry somebody, give wife’ and *ā-š-* ‘cause to make’. There are also some other less transparent affinities.

2.2.4. Pro-forms

There are three series of demonstrative pronouns and pronominal adverbs, Proximate, Separated and Distal; Interrogative pro-forms; a number of Indefinite pronouns; and Personal pronouns. Demonstrative and Interrogative stems have Nominal, Attributive and a number of Adverbial (Locative) forms; they are illustrated in (6) for distal pro-forms.

- (6) Pro-forms (distal series)
- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| <i>tabun</i> | ‘that one’ |
| <i>taŋ</i> | ‘that (Attributive)’ |
| <i>tā</i> | ‘there’ |
| <i>tā-ŋide</i> | ‘thither’ |
| <i>tā-t</i> | ‘from there, thus’ |

Pronouns proper (that is, nominal pro-forms) have the regular nominal paradigm, with the exception of the Possessive markers. Personal pronouns have some additional forms: Pronominal Accusative (*met-ul* ‘me’), Possessive form (*tude* ‘her/his’), and Intensified form (*tud-id’ie* ‘he himself’).

2.2.5. Numerals

Cardinal numerals have Attributive and Predicative forms, cf. *ataq-un* ‘two’ and *ataq-lō-* ‘be two’. The Predicative forms are used for predication of quantity and have verbal inflection. Ordinal numerals are built as Possessive nouns, e.g., *ataq-leš-ki* ‘the second one’. Numerals have an adverbial Frequentative form, e.g., *ataq-lid’e* ‘twice’.

2.2.6. Adverbs and postpositions

Spatial adverbs and postpositions have the locative paradigm comprising unmarked (Locative), Ablative (*-t*), Prolicative (*-n*) and Directional (*-ŋide*) forms.

Manner adverbs regularly contain the suffix *-n*; the same suffix can be used to derive adverbs from qualitative verbs.

Some postpositions can take the nominal Possessive marker which cross-references the argument of the postposition.

2.3. Syntax

Word order patterns in Kolyma Yukaghir are overwhelmingly head-final. This order is obligatory in noun phrases (attribute – noun, numeral – noun, possessor – possessee, etc.), postpositional phrases (noun – adposition) and non-finite clauses (SOV), and it is preferred in main clauses. However, in the latter case, other word orders are possible.

NPs are easily dropped whenever recoverable from the discourse context and/or speech situation.

There is virtually no coordination, either between NPs or between clauses. The main strategy of NP conjunction is comitative marking, and the main strategy of clause conjunction is clause chaining.

2.3.1. Case marking and grammatical Focus

Case marking patterns in main clauses are dominated by the Focus system. Grammatical Focus is marked by means of the Predicative case and an appropriate verb form (see Table 3). This marking works on an ergative basis, that is, it can be applied to intransitive subjects and direct objects, as shown in (7):

- (7) a. *tāt touke-lek jedej-l*
 CA dog-PRED appear-SF
 ‘Then a/the **dog** appeared.’ [K3]
- b. *ločil-ek tī-tā picet-nu-l’el-mele*
 fire-PRED here-there kindle-IPFV-INFR-OF:3SG
 ‘(She) made **campfires** here and there.’ [K3]

The major function of the grammatical Focus is to delimit the scope of assertion from the preceding material (either within or outside the given clause), whereby the NP marked for Focus is conceived as the left-most (i.e., the first in the linear order) constituent within the scope of assertion.

If a clause is marked for grammatical Focus, no other case marking of core participants is needed. Similarly, if the subject is first or second person, and the direct object is third person, both occur

in the Nominative (unmarked) case (8a). Otherwise, the case-marking pattern is nominative-accusative (8b)–(8c).

- (8) a. *met tolow kudede*
 I(NOM) deer(NOM) kill(TR:1SG)
 ‘I killed a deer.’ [I]
- b. *met tet-ul juø*
 I(NOM) you-ACC see(TR:1SG)
 ‘I saw you (SG).’ [I]
- c. *tudel met kønme-gele juø-m*
 he(NOM) my friend-ACC see-TR:3SG
 ‘He saw my friend.’ [I]

If the direct object is represented by an indefinite NP, the Instrumental case form is used instead of the Accusative:

- (9) *tudel tolow-le kudde-m*
 he(NOM) deer-INSTR kill-TR:3SG
 ‘He killed a deer.’ [I]

Examples (8)–(9) show that Yukaghir lacks a uniform direct object encoding; the choice of marking depends on placement of the Focus, person of the subject, and the referential properties of the NP itself.

2.3.2. Clause chaining

Kolyma Yukaghir makes extensive use of clause chaining, where non-finite verb forms marked for switch reference (converbs) are used for all clauses except the final one:

- (10) a. *tāt gonu-t juø-de-ge omnī čumu*
 [CA go-SS:IPFV] [see-3SG-DS] [people all
iŋžū-l’el-ŋi
 asleep-INFR-3PL:INTR]
 ‘He walked around and saw that all the people had
 fallen asleep.’ [F1]

- b. *tamun-pe čuge ā-ŋi-de-jne tāŋide*
 [this-PL road make-PL-3-DS-COND] [there:DIR
kewe-j-čl'i
 go-PRV-FUT:INTR:1PL]
 'When/if they build the road, we will go there.'
- c. *aŋdile šār meru-še-t mudde-s'*
 [hawk something fly-CAUS-SS:IPFV] [pass-INTR:3SG]
 'A hawk passed by, flying and carrying something.'
- d. *ajā-t apl'itaj tī-tā*
 [rejoice-SS:IPFV] [A. here-there
egu-žu-de kelu-nu-j
 walk-ITER-SS:ITER] [come-IPFV-INTR:3SG]
 'Delighted, Opletaj is walking around (going away and coming back).' [F31]

The range of functions covered by the converbs in Kolyma Yukaghir is extremely broad. Clause chaining is the main strategy for describing a sequence of temporally adjacent or related events, as well as for conditional and concessive constructions. This construction is also regularly used to describe the situation of perception, where the situation being perceived is expressed as the finite clause (cf. (10a)). Another noteworthy application of converbs is for aspect-like internal structuring of a single event, as in (9c) and (10d).

2.3.3. Relativization and complementation

Relative clauses are built by means of the Attributive verb forms, the Action Nominal, and, far less frequently, by the Result Nominal. The syntactic roles accessible for relativization are the subject (11a), the direct object (11b), the spatial or temporal adverbial (11c), and the Possessor of the intransitive subject (11d).

- (11) a. *purk-in šoromo lē-je šoromo*
 [seven-ATTR person eat-ATTR] person
 'a person who has eaten seven people'

- b. *tit īde-met anil*
 [you catch-ATTR:2PL] fish
 ‘the fish that you have caught’ [T2]
- c. *odu-pe modo-l jalhil-pe-gi*
 [Yukaghir-PL live-ANR] lake-PL-POSS
 ‘the lake where the Yukaghirs lived’ [K3]
- d. *noj-de čitne-j nodo-k*
 [leg-POSS:ATTR long-ATTR] bird-PRED
 ‘a bird whose legs are long’

The main complementation strategy makes use of the Nominal verb forms, Action Nominal and Result Nominal:

- (12) a. *omo-s’ tet gamie-d’e-l met-in*
 good-INTR:3SG [you help-DETR-ANR I-DAT]
 ‘It is good that you have helped me.’ [F11]
- b. *tātmie-d’ōn juø-l-ōl nilgi-n*
 [such-SBNR see-0-RNR] nobody-DAT
el+pundu-je
 NEG+tell-INTR:1SG
 ‘I did not tell anybody that I had seen such a thing.’ [K2]

3. About this grammar

3.1. Purpose

The history of Yukaghir studies features the names of two brilliant researchers, Woldemar Jochelson and Eruhim Krejnovich, who have provided the basic grammatical descriptions of the Yukaghir languages (Jochelson 1898; 1900; 1905; Krejnovich 1955; 1958; 1968; 1979; 1982). The Kolyma Yukaghir language has been briefly described by Jochelson (1905) and Krejnovich (1979); the former source (which is apparently best known to the English-reading audience) is based on the rich data collected by Jochelson at the end of the XIXth century (1898; 1900). Krejnovich’s essay in *Encyclopedia of the languages of Asia and Africa* (1979) is based both on Jochelson’s materials and on Krejnovich’s own

data collected in 1959. Finally, Krejnovich's last work (1982) represents the most detailed and comprehensive source of information on a range of significant issues for both Yukaghir languages. These works constitute the major sources of first-hand data on Kolyma Yukaghir,¹ which have served as the basis for a number of papers dealing with some specific topics, as well as for typological studies involving Yukaghir data. A detailed description of Kolyma Yukaghir phonology based on new field data constitutes a part of Irina Nikolaeva's unpublished Ph.D. thesis (1988b).

Thus, there is no book which might serve as a reference grammar of Kolyma Yukaghir. Further, some important aspects of the language have not been described at all. This grammar is intended to fill that gap, drawing both on the previous descriptions of Yukaghir and on the results of my own field work, and thus to make Kolyma Yukaghir data available for further studies, as well as for cross-linguistic research.²

The grammar attempts to cover all attested forms and constructions of contemporary Kolyma Yukaghir; in this restricted sense, it is intended to be comprehensive. It is clear, however, that no single book can provide a truly "comprehensive" description of any human language, at least not at the present stage of development of linguistics. Writing a grammar inevitably involves making a number of choices, so that some aspects of the language structure may be described and exemplified in more detail, others only briefly sketched, and possibly some may be omitted from the description. Insofar as such decisions have been made consciously, I have attempted to write this grammar in such a way as to "let the language speak", rather than to force it to answer any particular theoretically pre-determined questions. In other words, I have tried to concentrate on those constructions and grammatical distinctions that appear to be of importance in Yukaghir grammar and discourse, rather than on those that play a major role in current linguistic theories.

3.2. *The structure of the grammar*

This grammar has a rather traditional structure: it comprises a sociolinguistic introduction (Chapter 2), Phonology (Chapter 3), Morphology (Chapters 4-7), Syntax (Chapters 8-14), and Texts (Appendix 3). The lexicon is represented by two Appendices: a Yukaghir-English vocabulary (Appendix 1) and an exemplified list of nonproductive verbal derivational suffixes (Appendix 2). The *Morphology* is divided into chapters according to the classification into parts of speech, which is introduced in Chapter 4. The further structuring of each chapter is essentially determined by two kinds of considerations, which can be called paradigmatic and semantic:

Whenever some morphological items clearly constitute a paradigm, they are treated as such. Normally, I start a description of a paradigm with a listing of opposed items and their form(s), which is followed by a semantic (functional) description of each particular item. If it appears that some morpheme can be more appropriately described separately, not as a member of any paradigmatic opposition (this is the case for some derivational morphemes), its form and meaning are treated together. In both cases, I take the form-to-function approach, that is, I describe the meaning(s) (or function(s)) of grammatical items singled out on formal grounds. These considerations determine the “micro-structure” of the morphological description.

On the other hand, the “macro-structure” of each chapter follows the function-to-form approach, that is, it features such general semantic categories as, e.g., “Aspect” or “Demonstrative pronoun”, under which various paradigms or separate morphological items are subsumed on functional grounds. In practice, this means that considerations of semantic affinity prevail over distinctions in the grammatical status, in particular, over the opposition between inflection and derivation. For instance, the section on Aspect deals with all morphological means employed for expressing aspectual meanings, regardless of their regularity, productivity, and the like. This is not to say, of course, that such properties are not explicated for each item. Normally, each section starts with a general overview of the morphological means it describes, their (formal

and semantic) relations to each other, grammatical status, etc.

The *Syntax* is structured according to similar considerations. It is divided into seven chapters associated with more or less traditional topics in syntax, as determined by general classification of syntactic units and types of syntactic relations. The internal structure of each chapter is determined by grammatical distinctions expressed in Yukaghir, that is, the constructions are classified according to functional considerations, which helps to highlight the contrasting features of functionally similar constructions. On the micro-level, the description of each construction takes the form-to-function approach: my aim is to describe and exemplify various constructions and the meaning(s) associated with these constructions.

I believe that this combination of the form-to-function approach to the description proper and the function-to-form approach to classification of items into chapters and sections of a grammar appropriately suits the objectives of this endeavor: on the one hand, it provides a reasonable degree of accessibility of information on the basis of rather general and semantically motivated headings determined by the more or less widely assumed view on what a descriptive grammar should cover; on the other hand, on the micro-level it licenses a description of grammatical items and associated semantic configurations, as they are attested in the specific language, rather than mapping of linguistic constructs and concepts onto that language.

To be sure, at a number of points these approaches turn out to be in contradiction, i.e., the range of functions associated with a morphological item or syntactic construction crosses the “boundaries” set by the general semantic considerations. There is no one way to solve the descriptive problems produced by such contradictions that can be applied throughout the grammar. However, there are two technical devices which are intended to override these contradictions: cross-references between the relevant fragments of the grammar and special sections providing summaries of interrelated phenomena treated in different parts of the grammar (e.g., there is a summary of properties which identify the

syntactic function of subject in Yukaghir; since these properties manifest themselves in various types of syntactic constructions, they are described in detail in different sections of the grammar). To sum up, the macro-structure of the description offered here is determined by how I understand what descriptive linguistics is about; in many respects, it follows such general guidelines for descriptive linguists as *Lingua Descriptive Questionnaire* (Comrie and Smith 1977) and *Language Typology and Syntactic Description* (Shopen 1985). The micro-structure is determined by what I know of Kolyma Yukaghir and represents an attempt to describe the language “in its own terms”.

3.3. Data for this study and exemplification

This grammar is based on two types of data: authentic texts in contemporary Kolyma Yukaghir and linguistic interviews with its native speakers (see *Acknowledgments*). My text database comprises texts published by Irina Nikolaeva in 1989 and texts written down by Nikolay Vakhtin (1987) and myself (1987, 1992);³ some of the latter are published in (Maslova 2001), and some are included in this grammar (see *Appendix 3*); in order to increase the reliability of data, all controversial and/or questionable sentences of these texts have been double-checked with native speakers.⁴

As discussed in Chapter 2, Kolyma Yukaghir has been under strong pressure from Russian for at least several decades. This, in combination with the well-known methodological drawbacks of interviews, makes this sort of data far less reliable than those elicited from authentic texts. That is why I tried to use only text examples for illustrative purposes. As a result, some of these examples might seem too long and complex for the point they are intended to illustrate. Unfortunately, it is too often the case that an authentic sentence “simplified” by a linguist for some didactic purposes is not a reliable example anymore. In the case of such languages as Yukaghir, the “unnecessary” complexity of examples is the price to be paid for reliability of data. Even if I had a simpler and, in some sense, “clearer” example in my field notes, I always chose in favor of a text example.⁵ In some cases, where

this seemed to be inevitable, I did “shorten” illustrative sentences; note that all such omissions are shown by <...>; such examples should not be taken as “complete sentences”.

There is, of course, a range of phenomena which cannot be appropriately described in this fashion because they are absent or rare in the texts, but are readily produced by my informants in an interview. These phenomena are described in the grammar on the basis of my field notes, but with explicit reservations concerning the source of the data. If an example elicited in an interview is included in the grammar (in order to avoid loss of significant information), the source is indicated by the letter “I” after the idiomatic translation.

3.4. Terminology and glossing conventions

In choosing grammatical terms for Yukaghir phenomena, as well as in interlinear morphemic translations of the examples, I followed the EURO-TYP guidelines (Bakker et al. 1992). All phrasal examples are provided with morpheme-to-morpheme interlinear translations; the syntactic structure is indicated by brackets. The boundaries between independent finite clauses are indicated by the symbol “[”. In some sections, angled or curly brackets are used for some additional information (e.g., to indicate the scope of assertion in the section on the semantics of Focus).

Chapter 2

Kolyma Yukaghir and its speakers

1. The Kolyma Yukaghirs

1.1. Population figures and geographical location

The Yukaghirs are a people living in the northeastern part of Russia, in the basin of the Kolyma River. Nowadays, this people consists of several small communities speaking two almost completely mutually incomprehensible languages, called Kolyma (Southern) and Tundra (Northern) Yukaghirs. There used to be no sense of ethnic identity between Tundra and Kolyma Yukaghirs, yet recently some efforts for reunification have been made (for example, the Congress of Yukaghirs in 1992, which featured common festival activities, discussions of the Yukaghir future, etc.).

Roughly speaking, there are nowadays two groups of Kolyma Yukaghirs: most of them live in Nelemnoye, where Yukaghir is still used for everyday communication; others have left the village and either constitute tiny minority groups in other places or live within Russian or Yakut-speaking groups. In Nelemnoye, there are ca. 150 Yukaghirs (see 1.2); the total of other groups of Kolyma Yukaghirs is not much higher than this, although this is only an approximate estimate. This grammar describes the variety spoken in Nelemnoye; the sociolinguistic situation in the village is described in Section 2.

According to the 1989 census, there are 1,100 Yukaghirs in Russia (this is the sum total of Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir). Strikingly, the 1979 census gives the figure of 500 Yukaghirs (Bruk 1981:215). Presumably, this difference is due to the unsteady eth-

nic consciousness characteristic of the region (see 1.3).

1.2. The village of Nelemnoye

Nelemnoye is located in the Upper Kolyma district, Yakutia (Sakha) Republic, approximately 70 km from the district center Zyryanka. It was established in 1931, when the nomadic Yukaghirs living in the basins of Yasachnaya and Korkodon Rivers were organized into the collective farm “Bright life” (kolkhoz “*Svetlaya zhiznj*”). The original name of the village was *nungeden aŋil* ‘the Rassokha mouth’ (the Rassokha is a tributary of the Yasachnaya). Later the village was renamed Nelemnoye, a Russian-based toponym, presumably motivated by the etymology of the Yukaghir *nungeden*: *nunge* is a sort of fish, like trout, which is called *nel’ma* in Russian. In 1956-58 the village was moved to a new place, about 75 km down the Yasachnaya River, since the old place near the mouth of the Rassokha River turned out to be too low (Vakhtin 1992:48).

Communication between Nelemnoye and Zyryanka is by car in winter and by motorboat in summer; there is also sporadic communication by helicopter. According to the settlement household book, the population of Nelemnoye was 245 in 1987, including 133 Yukaghirs (Vakhtin 1992:48). There is a school, a kindergarten, a shop, a post office, and a club in the village. The main economic activity is fur trade. Most of the men are hunters and fishermen, as they have been for ages. The women are employed within the village; they work in the school, in the kindergarten, in the local shop, etc.

The ethnic groups of Nelemnoye are Yukaghirs (~ 54%), Yakuts (~ 22%), Russians (~ 19%), and Evens (~ 4%);⁶ the languages spoken, in order of prevalence, are Russian, Yakut, Yukaghir, and Even. Of the 133 Yukaghirs, only nine named Yukaghir as their first language; for about 50 it is the mother tongue, i.e., it was acquired in childhood from parents (Vakhtin 1992:53, his Table 6). The oldest segment of the population is multilingual, so that Yukaghir is spoken by some Evens and Yakuts as well.

1.3. Some remarks on Yukaghir history

Apparently, the vast territories from the Lena river across modern Yakutia to the eastern coast of Chukotka were populated by the Yukaghirs in the 17th century. After the Evenki (Tungus), Yakuts, and Evens penetrated the territory, the Yukaghirs were slowly squeezed out. The Russian colonization (since the middle of the 17th century) has largely destroyed the traditional subsistence system of the Yukaghirs, resulting in a sharp decline of the Yukaghir population (Tugolukov 1979). The first scholar of Kolyma Yukaghir, Woldemar Jochelson predicted as early as in 1900 that the language could disappear and the tribe would cease to exist within a few decades (Jochelson 1900:xv).

Until recently, multilingualism was widespread, and Yukaghir, Even, Chukchi and Yakut served alternatively as languages of intercultural communication in different cultural situations (Maslova and Vakhtin 1996:999). This situation is still preserved in the oldest generation of Yukaghirs (above 60): they generally speak Yukaghir, Russian and Yakut, and often also Even, choosing an appropriate language depending on the particular situation, addressee's ethnic affiliation, etc. Russian gained the leading position in Nelemnoye after World War II, and at the same time the process of Yukaghir language loss became most active. Nowadays, Russian is the only language spoken by all inhabitants of the village.

1.4. On ethnonyms

The etymology of the ethnonym *Yukaghir* (alternative spellings are *Yukagir*, *Jukagir*, Russian *jukagir*, *jukagirskij*) is unclear; this is what Yukaghirs usually call themselves when they speak Russian. The alternative ethnonym *Odul* (Russian *odul*, *odul'skij*) corresponds to the Kolyma Yukaghir self-designation *odul*; the Tundra Yukaghir counterpart of this ethnonym is *wadul*. Strikingly, the Tundra Yukaghirs sometimes call themselves *odul* when speaking Russian.

Table 4. The role of Yukaghir in Nelemnoye (1987)

Role of Yukaghir	Number of speakers	Average age (year of birth)
First language	9	64 (1923)
Second language	13	50 (1937)
Third language	7	43 (1944)
Total	29	53 (1934)

Table 5. Average language competence for Nelemnoye Yukaghirs (Vakhtin 1992:64, Table 9)

Age groups (years of birth)	Yukaghir	Russian
> 70 (before 1917)	2.3	3.9
61-70 (1918-1927)	2.9	3.1
51-60 (1928-1937)	4.6	1.6
41-50 (1938-1947)	5.9	1.0

2. Sociolinguistic situation in Nelemnoye

According to a sociolinguistic investigation undertaken by Nikolay Vakhtin in 1987 (1992), 29 Nelemnoye Yukaghirs spoke the Yukaghir language, although it was the first language for only nine of them, see Table 4.

None of them spoke only Kolyma Yukaghir, all spoke Russian, and all but four spoke Yakut. Table 5 presents some statistical data on the degree of language competence among the Nelemnoye Yukaghirs. It was assessed by means of expert ratings, according to a seven-point scale, "1" being the highest (excellent language knowledge), "7" the lowest (no knowledge of the language).⁷

As shown by these tables, the first language of all Yukaghirs under 60 is Russian, although many have Yukaghir as their mother tongue. The youngest generation is practically monolingual. Their native language is evidently Russian, which is the only language used at school and at the kindergarten. Yukaghir has been taught at school since 1985/86, yet this does not seem to have changed the situation drastically.

These data give clear evidence of the extremely rapid decline of Kolyma Yukaghir. Yet, one must assume that a similar sociolinguistic situation was found by Jochelson at the end of the 19th century (2.1.3). How, then, has the language been maintained for

so long? A possible hypothesis is that the language competence of the middle-aged group is always underestimated by the eldest generation and by themselves, and that when a group of speakers grows older, they return to communication in their mother tongue (Vakhtin 1992:79). This hypothesis is supported by a recent slight (but nevertheless apparent) rise of the role of Yukaghir, due mainly to the global rise of ethnic self-awareness on the territory of the former Soviet Union. As far as I could observe in 1992, many relatively young Yukaghirs (of about 45-50) seemed to have "recalled" their mother tongue, which they had pretended not to speak at all in 1987, and now spoke Yukaghir with their elder fellow-citizens rather often. This "regressive shift" apparently indicates that the language competence of the middle-aged group is actually higher than was assessed in 1987. However, the different generations clearly speak distinct varieties of the language: generally, the younger the speaker, the more notable contact phenomena in their language (see Section 3 on age-defined varieties, Section 4 on the effect of language contact on Kolyma Yukaghir).

3. Accents and varieties

Given the small number of speakers nowadays, any notes about dialectal or social varieties of Kolyma Yukaghir can only be speculative. However, the currently spoken idiolects are so distinct as to prevent the best Yukaghir speakers from rating each other's language competence highly; Table 5 shows that not one got the highest rating for language competence from any expert. These distinctions, as well as the reluctance to acknowledge each other's competence, seem to result from two factors of language variation:

First, the Yukaghirs currently living in Nelemnoye represent two regional groups of Yukaghirs which used to exist before the collectivization in 1931. One group roamed mainly along the Korkodon River, the other along the Yasachnaya River. These groups apparently spoke two distinct varieties of Kolyma Yukaghir. The most notable phonological distinction concerned the labial vowel harmony, which was characteristic of the Korkodon variety and is

still maintained in the speech of some Kolyma Yukaghirs; one of my consultants, A. E. Shadrina, a daughter of a Korkodon Yukaghir, regularly labializes vowels in suffixes after /o/, which distinguishes her accent from that spoken by most of my consultants. The same distinction was described by E. A. Krejnovich on the basis of her father's accent (Krejnovich 1982:21-22).

Secondly, and most importantly, the Kolyma Yukaghir language is undergoing an extremely fast modification, so that the varieties of the language spoken even by neighboring generations are clearly distinct. This seems to be a part of the survival strategy chosen by the language in the aggressive sociolinguistic environment. Each generation faces a simple choice: given that their mother tongue is not their first language, they can either reject speaking that language and let it disappear, or simply speak as they can (cf. Vakhtin 1992:79-80). So far, each successive age group has chosen the second alternative. Quite predictably, the resulting variety differs from that spoken by their parents in being more significantly influenced by Russian. Furthermore, it can be rated as "corrupted" not only by the previous generation, but by the speakers themselves. Yet, to some extent, this strategy of "survival through modification" is approved by the oldest speakers, that is, the speakers of the "purest" existing variety: they themselves do use a special simplified Yukaghir-based jargon when addressing younger people, just in order to be understood, yet to maintain communication in their mother tongue.

Now, it is clear that this strategy has been applied at least since the end of the 19th century, which means that the current group of "best speakers" used to represent a "corrupted" version a couple of dozens years ago. Some of them are aware of the differences between their own language and the language their parents used to speak (occasionally, my questions were answered like "I would say it this way, but my father would have said it differently"). Even more so, they are aware of "mistakes" in the language spoken by their fellow-citizens, hence low ratings of their language competence.

4. The effect of language contact on Kolyma Yukaghir

The most important contact languages have been Yakut and Russian. Now the contact with Russian is more significant. Russian loanwords play an eminent role even in the Yukaghir everyday vocabulary, e.g.:

(13)	Yukaghir		Russian
	<i>terike</i>	‘wife, old woman’	<i>starukha</i>
	<i>korobe</i>	‘cow’	<i>korova</i>
	<i>šøštok</i>	‘staff’	<i>shestok</i>
	<i>užžuo</i>	‘gun’	<i>ruzhjo</i>

Now Russian lexical items are being borrowed practically without phonetic changes. Moreover, the borderline between the Yukaghir lexicon and the Russian one is likely not to be “taken into account” in the course of natural communication: almost nobody hesitates to insert a Russian word into a Yukaghir utterance. In contrast with this, the words borrowed earlier (like those given in (13)) used to be changed according to the Yukaghir phonetic rules and generally preserve their Yukaghir phonetic form in the contemporary speech.

The instances of occasional code-mixing are numerous, cf. the following examples (Russian grammatical and lexical items are in boldface):

- (14) a. *potomu čto bogatyj-ŋo:-t* *gude-j*
 [because rich-TRNSF-SS:IPFV become-INTR:3SG
tudel tamun-ŋō-t *vzad-vperjod ejre-ŋi*
 he] [this-COP-SS:IPFV there.and.back go-INTR:3PL]
 ‘Because he became a rich person, that is why they used
 to go there and back (swarm around him).’ [F38]
- b. *davaj tude-gele and’i-ŋā* *davaj kebe-s’l’i da*
 INGR he-ACC ask-TR:3PL [HORT go:1PL CONJ
kebe-s’l’i
 go:1PL]
 ‘They began to ask him (repeatedly), let us go, let us
 go.’ [F36]

- c. *hodi numø-ŋin*
 go:IMP house-DAT
 ‘Go home!’ [F36]

None of the Russian items involved in these utterances can be viewed as integrated into Yukaghir grammar and/or lexicon; these examples are intended just to represent a possible source of contact changes. Yet some grammatical items of Russian origin are used very regularly and can be assumed to have replaced their original Yukaghir counterparts. One of the most notable examples is the Russian intensifier *sam* ‘self’ (in various phonetic forms):

- (15) a. *sam el-ožā-nu-j*
 self NEG-drink-IPFV-INTR:3SG
 ‘He himself didn’t drink.’ [K4]
- b. *tude-gele kudde-m tude-sam āj amde-j*
 [he-ACC kill-TR:3SG] [he-self CP die-INTR:3SG]
 ‘He killed that one and died himself, too.’ [K3]

Cf. the Yukaghir emphatic form of personal pronouns marked by the suffix *-id’ie*, e.g., *tude-l* ‘he’ > *tud-id’ie* ‘he himself’.

In the most general terms, the effect of Russian contact on Kolyma Yukaghir grammar can be described as a shift from original Yukaghir synthetic grammatical patterns to newly introduced analytical patterns. In some cases, the new pattern involves a grammatical item borrowed from Russian. For example, obligative modality is now expressed almost exclusively by a construction with a Russian predicative loanword *nado* ‘is-necessary’ and a nominalized form of a verb (as in (16a)), which is rapidly replacing Yukaghir modal suffixes (the old pattern is illustrated by (16b)), e.g.:

- (16) a. *tamun min-gi nado*
 that take-POSS necessary
 ‘It is necessary to take it.’
- b. *tamun min-možī*
 that take-PRSP(TR:1SG)
 ‘It is necessary/inevitable to take it, I should take it.’

Another subclass of these contact phenomena comprises various expansions of Russian-like grammatical patterns construed by means of Yukaghir morphology, which squeeze out Yukaghir synthetic patterns and take over their functions. For example, Yukaghir has a verbal suffix *-jī-* designating movement in order to perform the action denoted by the stem. This suffix can occur either in a finite verb form as in (17a), or in a same-subject form dominated by a verb of movement as in (17b). Both patterns are being rapidly replaced by a construction with the Supine, similar to that found in many European languages (including Russian), e.g. (17c):

- (17) a. *tabud-ek juø-jī-mele*
 this-PRED look-PURP-OF:3SG
 'He went to look at this.'
- b. *aŋs'i-jī-t kewe-s'*
 [search-PURP-SS:IPFV] go-PFV:INTR:3SG
 'He went to look for it.'
- c. *aŋs'i-din kewe-s'*
 search-SUP go-3SG:INTR
 'He went to look for it.'

Although the construction with the Supine is hardly new for Kolyma Yukaghir, it can be assumed to have been a marginal device for expressing this situation type until recently. Now, it is the most common and frequently applied option, while the patterns represented in (17a)-(17b), having no structural parallel in Russian, are squeezed out.

Similar phenomena are found in almost all fragments of Yukaghir grammar and will therefore be described in detail in the respective sections of the book. In general, I will try to present modern Kolyma Yukaghir as it is used in everyday communication (that is, by Yukaghirs over 55-60).

5. Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir

The Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir languages used to be described as dialects, which seems to be misleading in view of the significant

distinctions in lexicon, grammar, and phonology. Presumably due to the extensive language contacts, the lexical distinctions even within the basic vocabulary are so great that glottochronological counts give ca. 2000 years of divergence (Nikolaeva and Helimsky 1997:155-156). The grammatical divergent features seem to have been underestimated in previous studies of Yukaghir, probably because neither of the grammars was known well enough. That is why both existing monographs on Yukaghir (Krejnovich 1958; 1982) treat the two languages together, although some divergent features are mentioned. The present grammar deviates from this tradition and treats Kolyma Yukaghir as a distinct language to be described in its own right.

Chapter 3

Phonology

This chapter introduces basic phonological and phonetic information needed to understand the transcription used throughout the book. Since neither acoustic nor articulatory investigation of Kolyma Yukaghir phonetics has been undertaken so far, the description presented in Sections 1-2 is based on auditory data and distributional analysis only; to a large extent, it should be viewed as an exemplified summary of the previous descriptions (Krejnovich 1982:9-28; Nikolaeva 1988b), although there are some minor differences in interpretation of data. Section 3 gives an overview of phonological and morphological alternations. The word stress (Section 4) is described according to (Nikolaeva 1988b).

1. Segmental phonological units

1.1. Vowels

1.1.1. Vowel inventory

Table 6. Vowels

	+front				-front	
	-rounded	+rounded		non-rounded	rounded	
high	<i>i</i>	<i>i:</i>			<i>u</i> <i>u:</i>	
non-high	<i>e</i>	<i>e:</i>	<i>ø</i> <i>ø:</i>	<i>a</i> <i>a:</i>	<i>o</i> <i>o:</i>	

1.1.2. Allophonic alternations

1.1.2.1. The long vowels /e:/, /ø:/, /o:/ can be pronounced as the falling diphthongs [ie], [uø], [uo] in stressed syllables and before syllables with {E} (Nikolaeva and Helimsky 1997:158); see 3.4 for a description of the morphoneme {E}.

1.1.2.2. The short vowels are reduced in unstressed syllables.

1.1.2.3. /i/ has a facultative allophone [ɪ] after nonpalatal consonants.

1.1.2.4. [uo] can be advanced within front stems (2.4.1).

1.2. Consonants

1.2.1. Consonant inventory

Table 7. Consonants

	Labial	Dental	Postal- veolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Plosive	<i>p</i>	<i>t d</i>			<i>k g</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>ʔ</i>
Affricates				<i>tʃ dʒ</i>			
Fricatives			<i>ʃ ʒ</i>			<i>χ</i>	
Nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>ɲ</i>	<i>ŋ</i>		
Laterals		<i>l</i>		<i>ʎ</i>			
Rolled		<i>r</i>					
Glides	<i>w</i>			<i>j</i>			

1.2.1.1. The glottal /ʔ/ has a rather marginal status; it occurs only in some interjections: *maʔ* 'take!', *taʔ* 'come on!' (Krejnovich 1989:14).

1.2.1.2. The uvular phonemes /q/, /χ/ are being rapidly replaced by the velar fricatives /x/, /ɣ/ respectively, which can be viewed as a part of the general process of switching to Russian-based articulations. The current situation can be described alternatively as coexistence of two age-based accents with different consonant inventories, or as free allophonic variations [q] ~ [x], [χ] ~ [ɣ]. Here, the latter variant is chosen, cf. 1.2.2.3-1.2.2.4.

1.2.1.3. Consonants that occur only in *ad hoc* borrowings from Russian (not incorporated into the Yukaghir phonetics), e.g., /s/ and /v/, are not included in Table 7.

1.2.2. Allophonic variations

1.2.2.1. The glide /w/ is pronounced as [b] in word-initial position and after consonants, e.g., [binnə] ‘apparently, evidently’ (from colloquial Russian *vidno* ‘apparently, evidently’), [ʃøjɫbul] ‘mouse’. In intervocalic position, these allophones vary freely, cf. [kewəç] ~ [kebeç] ‘(he) left’, [tawun] ~ [tabun] ‘that’.

1.2.2.2. The glide /w/ is commonly pronounced as [u] at the end of syllables, cf. [tolow] ~ [tolou] ‘deer’, [toloupe] (PL); [jowɫ’el] ~ [jouɫ’el] ‘disease’, [lew] ~ [leu] ‘(I) eat’.

1.2.2.3. The uvular plosive /q/ has a free velar fricative variant [x], cf.: [qar] ~ [xar] ‘animal skin’, [ʃaqaɫa:ŋi] ~ [ʃaxaɫa:ŋi] ‘(they) gathered’.

1.2.2.4. The uvular fricative /ɣ/ has a free velar variant [ɣ], cf. [ʃoxieɟ] ~ [ʃoxieɟ] ‘(he) has lost his way, (it) is lost’; [aɣurpeɟ] ~ [aɣurpeɟ] ‘(he) suffers’.

1.2.2.5. The uvular fricative /ɣ/ is pronounced as uvular plosive [ɟ] after /ŋ/, e.g., [aŋɟaje] ‘snow-storm’; [aŋɟi:m] ‘(he) has scratched’.

1.2.2.6. The affricate /tʃ/ has a free palatal fricative variant [ç] in intervocalic position and in word-final position, cf.: [a.tʃə] ~ [a:çə] ‘domestic deer’, [etʃie] ~ [eçie] ‘father’, [omotʃ] ~ [omocç] ‘(it) is good; well’. Before consonants, [ç] is preferred, e.g., [edieçtin] ‘to call’. Word-initial [ç] occurs mainly in loanwords, yet it is also occasionally possible (at least in some idiolects) if the second syllable of a word begins with this sound, cf. [tʃa:tʃa:] ~ [ça:ça:] ‘elder brother’.

1.2.2.7. The affricate /dʒ/ has a palatal fricative variant [j].

Table 8. Transcription symbols

IPA	This book	IPA	This book	IPA	This book
<i>f</i>	<i>š</i>	<i>tʃ</i>	<i>č</i>	<i>ç</i>	<i>s'</i>
<i>ʒ</i>	<i>ž</i>	<i>dʒ, dʒʰ</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>ʋ, ʎ</i>	<i>h</i>
<i>ʎ</i>	<i>l'</i>	<i>ɲ</i>	<i>n'</i>	<i>a:</i>	<i>ā</i>

1.3. Transcription

The transcription used in this book is essentially phonemic, yet some allophonic variations are consistently reflected. This concerns major free alternations, as well as the alternations with potentially controversial phonological interpretation. More specifically, the transcription distinguishes the allophones that are described in 1.1.2.1, 1.1.2.4, 1.2.2.2 and 1.2.2.6. Deviations from the IPA conventions are summarized in Table 8.

2. Phonotactics

2.1. Syllable structure

2.1.1. Syllable types

The only types of syllables are *CV*, *CVC* and *CV_jL* (*L* stands for liquids, nasals, /t/, and /k/). In the following examples, syllable boundaries are marked with “=”.

- (18) *CV*
šø=gi ‘(he) came in.’
ta=dī ‘(I) gave’

- (19) *CVC*
a=ŋil'=ge ‘in the hole’
šān=hār ‘bark, scales’

- (20) *CV_jL*
šøjl ‘stone’
ša=ša=ha=dajm ‘(he) tore (smth)’

Voiced obstruents are disallowed in syllable-final position (see 3.1); for examples of syllable-final sonorants, see (19)–(20). Syllable-final voiceless consonants are exemplified in (21).

- (21) $\emptyset n = \mathbf{mep} = te = ge$ 'in their minds'
 $\mathbf{mot} = lor = qoj$ 'thin'
 $i = \mathbf{lek} = l\bar{o}j$ 'four'
 $e\check{s} = ke = \mathbf{r\bar{i}k}$ 'attack!'

2.1.2. Word-initial syllables

Word-initial syllables can begin with a vowel ($\#V$, $\#VC$, $\#VjL$):

- (22) \bar{a} '(I) made'
 $a = \eta a$ 'mouth'
 $\bar{a}j$ 'again'
 $el = \check{s}\emptyset w$ '(he) did not come in'
 $\bar{u}jl$ 'work'

The initial consonant can be either voiceless or sonorant, i.e., voiced obstruents do not occur in word-initial position. There are two exceptions: the verbs *kude-* 'become' and *kudel'e-* 'be going to do something, get ready' can be pronounced as /*gude-*/ and /*gudel'e-*/ respectively, which probably hints at an initial stage of grammaticalization of these verbs, cf.:

- (23) a. *pulun-die* $u\emptyset\text{-}\eta\bar{o}\text{-}d'e$ $adil+\eta\bar{o}t$
 old:man-DIM [child-STAT-ATTR] guy+TRNSF
kude-j
 become-INTR:3SG
 'The old man became a young guy.' [F15]
- b. *tabun* $\bar{a}j$ $n'ied'\bar{i}\text{-}l+\eta\bar{o}t$ ***gude-l'el***
 this CP tell-ANR+TRNSF become-INFR(INTR:3SG)
 'This became a legend.' [F34]
- (24) a. $\bar{a}s'e\text{-}n'\text{-}u\text{-}l$ $\check{s}oromo\text{-}pul$ $kel\text{-}din$
 [deer-PRPR-0-ANR] person-PL come-SUP
me-kudel'e-\eta i
 AFF-get:ready-3PL:INTR:
 'The people with deer are getting ready to come.' [K1]
- b. *petr* *berbekin* $\check{s}ejrej\text{-}din$ ***gudel'e-nu-j***
 P. B. run:away-SUP get:ready-IPFV-INTR:3SG
 'Petr Berbekin was getting ready to run away.' [F31]

The consonants /r/ and /ŋ/ also do not occur in word-initial position (see 5.5.5.3).

2.2. Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters are disallowed in word-initial position; the only cluster that is allowed in word-final position is *jL* (see 2.1.1). In most cases, there is a morpheme boundary within such a cluster; there is only a closed set of roots containing clusters /*jl*/, /*jl'*/:

- (25) *qoʒl* 'God'
šøʒl 'stone'
šøʒl'bul 'mouse'

The constraints on two-consonant clusters at syllable boundaries partly follow from the regularities of syllable structure described in 2.1: the initial consonant of a cluster can be either sonorant or voiceless. There are two additional constraints:

1. A voiceless and a voiced obstruent cannot co-occur within a cluster; thus, a cluster either contains a sonorant, or consists of two voiceless obstruents; see (19)–(21) and 3.2.1.
2. The glide /*j*/ cannot occur as the final consonant of a cluster; the only exception is the cluster /*wj*/, e.g., *šøwʒemet* 'you (PL) came in', see 3.2.2, 3.3.

The only possible three-consonant clusters are {*jlC*}, {*jl'C*} in the inflection forms of stems ending in /*jl*/ and in *šøʒl'bul* 'mouse':

- (26) *qoʒl-ŋin* 'to God'
qoʒl-geŋ 'from God'
qoʒl-n'e 'with God'
qoʒl-pe 'gods'

The only exception from this generalization in my data is the compound *marqil'+uø* (girl+child) 'daughter', which is pronounced as [marqɫ'uø] or [martɫ'uø], hence, two more three-consonant clusters: [rɫɫ'] and [rtɫ'] due to the loss of /*i*/ in the first stem. The resulting word is sometimes pronounced as [mašɫ'uø], so that the three-consonant cluster is avoided.

2.3. Vowel clusters

As is clear from 2.1, there are generally no vowel clusters. This section presents some exceptions from this generalization.

2.3.1. Reciprocal prefix

The reciprocal prefix *n'e* (6.4.5.1) can be attached to a vowel-initial stem, e.g.:

- (27) *n'e+anure-* 'love each other'
n'e+es'keri- 'attack each other'
n'e+irkuore- 'be afraid of each other'
n'e+uldō- 'be tied to each other'

2.3.2. Vowel clustering at the phonetic level

2.3.2.1. Diphthongs [uo], [uø], [ie], see 1.1.2.1.

2.3.2.2. Clusters [ou], [øu], [eu], where [u] represents the glide /w/, see 1.2.2.2.

2.3.2.3. The initial /j/ of the intransitive 1PL agreement marker [jīl'i] is sometimes not pronounced after /e/, hence a vowel cluster [eī], cf.: [egejīl'i] ~ [egeīl'i] '(we) stand up'.

2.4. Vowel harmony

There are two kinds of harmonic alternations which can be conventionally termed palatal⁸ and labial, yet both affect only a very restricted number of suffixes, only one of which is productive.

2.4.1. Front stems vs. back stems

The palatal harmony contrasts the vowels /e/, /ø/ (with their long counterparts) and the vowels /a/, /o/ (with their long counterparts). The stems fall into two classes (front stems vs. back stems) according to the quality of the first vowel. A native Yukaghir root has either only front vowels or only back vowels, except for /e/ corresponding to the morphoneme {E} (see 3.4) and the

vowels /i/, /u/ (and their long counterparts), which are transparent to vowel harmony:

- (28) Front stems
- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| <i>øndie</i> | ‘brook’ |
| <i>kørnme</i> | ‘partner’ |
| <i>ečie</i> | ‘father’ |
| <i>čebil’</i> | ‘tundra’ |
| <i>mēmē</i> | ‘bear’, etc. |

- (29) Back stems
- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>šanaha-</i> | ‘crackle’ |
| <i>ažū</i> | ‘word, language’ |
| <i>čolhoro</i> | ‘hare’ |
| <i>joŋžā</i> | ‘beak’ |
| <i>aŋs’i-</i> | ‘look for’, etc. |

Stems with /i/, /u/ in the initial syllable normally belong to the class of front stems:

- (30)
- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| <i>čilge</i> | ‘branch’ |
| <i>čičele</i> | ‘hazel grouse’ |
| <i>šubed’e</i> | ‘heart’ |
| <i>jūke</i> | ‘far’, etc. |

Most exceptions from this tendency are associated with the phoneme /i/, which occurs in the initial syllable of some back stems:

- (31)
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| <i>čibal’</i> | ‘stove’ |
| <i>čiqaha-</i> | ‘squeak’ |
| <i>mido-</i> | ‘roam’ |
| <i>pipol’</i> | ‘sandpiper’ |
| <i>tiboħo-</i> | ‘twinkle, wink’, etc. |

2.4.2. Consonants within the scope of palatal harmony

The velar and uvular consonants participate in harmonic rules as well: the velars /g/, /k/ occur in front stems only, the uvulars /h/, /q/, in back stems only.

- (32) Front stems
šøgī ‘bag’
čugø ‘track’
kødiel ‘wolf’
kebej- ‘leave’, etc.
- (33) Back stems
šouho ‘plate’
ahī ‘in secret’
qon- ‘go’
laqil ‘tail’, etc.

The phonemic distinction between velar consonants and their uvular counterparts exists due to the inconsistent behavior of /i/, /u/, multiple borrowings, and a wide set of productive suffixes which are outside of the scope of harmonic alternations (see 2.4.3). As a result, the velar and uvular consonants can occur in identical phonological positions, cf. the following quasi-minimal pairs:

- (34) *nohī* ‘thimble’ vs. *aŋagi* ‘his mouth’
omoluhī- ‘feel shy’ vs. *īlugī-* ‘miss’
šōloqok ‘ashes (PRED)’ vs. *jukō-* ‘be small’
motlorqo- ‘be thin’ vs. *irkōre-* ‘frighten’
mošolupkā ‘owl’ vs. *pon’qārā* ‘birch’

2.4.3. Suffixes showing palatal harmonic alternations

2.4.3.1. The productive Ingressive marker {*Ē*} (6.3.5.1) has the form *-ā-* when attached to a back stem, *-ē-* when attached to a front stem.

- (35) Front stems
ørn’e- ‘shout’ > *ørn’-ē-* ‘begin to shout’
šel’get- ‘break’ > *šel’get-ē-* ‘begin to break’
ibil’e- ‘cry’ > *ibil-ē-* ‘begin to cry’, etc.
- (36) Back stems
šaqal’eš- ‘gather’ > *šaqal’eš-ā-* ‘begin to gather’
ahītes’- ‘hide’ > *ahītes’-ā-* ‘begin to hide’
ahurpe- ‘suffer’ > *ahurp-ā* ‘begin to suffer’, etc.

2.4.3.2. The non-productive inchoative suffix $\{K\bar{E}\}$ ($\{K\}$ stands for a velar or a uvular voiceless consonant) has the form $-k\bar{e}-$ in a front stem, $-q\bar{a}-$ in a back stem (there is in fact only one clear instance of the latter case).

- (37) Front stems
čel- ‘be cold (v)’ > *čel-kē-* ‘get cold’
čejlū ‘be far, be remote’ > *čejlu-kē-* ‘become remote’
eldel- ‘be boring’ > *eldel-kē-* ‘bore’

- (38) Back stem
jow- ‘ache (v)’ > *jow-qā* ‘begin to ache’

2.4.3.3. The non-productive derivational suffix $\{GE\}$ ($\{G\}$ stands for a velar or a uvular voiced consonant; see 6.4.3.3.3) has the form $-ge-$ in a front stem, $-ha-$ in a back stem.

- (39) Front stems
šel’-ge-j- ‘break in two’ (vi)
menme-ge-j- ‘jump’
čiče-ge-j- ‘stretch, lengthen’ (vi)

- (40) Back stems
šaša-ha-j- ‘tear’ (vi)
janme-ha-j- ‘twitch, jerk’

2.4.3.4. The non-productive causative suffix $\{dE\}$ (6.4.3.3.3) has the form $-de-$ when attached to a front stem, $-da-$ when attached to a back stem (occasionally, this alternation is also possible for the suffix $\{tE\}$, e.g., *čahi-ta-j-* ‘blush’).

- (41) Front stems
šel’-ge-de-j- ‘break in two’ (vt)
čiče-ge-de-j- ‘stretch, lengthen’ (vt)
jømge-de-j- ‘surround, encircle’

- (42) Back stems
šabaha-da-j- ‘hit’ (vt)
amla-da-j- ‘swallow’ (cf. *amla-j-* ‘fall in, come down’)
šaša-ha-da-j- ‘tear’ (vt)

2.4.4. Labial harmony

Labial harmony exists only in some idiolects (see 2.3) and affects the phonemic realization of {*E*} (see 3.4.2.1). If the first vowel of a root is /*o*/ or /*ō*/, the final {*E*} of the root and of some non-productive suffixes can be pronounced as /*o*/.

- (43) {*šobol'E*-} 'stop, cease' /*šobol'ok*/ (IMP:2SG)
 {*čolgorE*} 'hare' /*čolgoro*/
 {*modo-tE*-} 'put, seat, plant' /*modotomle*/ (OF:3SG)

3. Phonological and morphophonemic alternations

3.1. Syllable-final consonant alternations

Final voiced obstruents /*d*/, /*d'*/, /*g*/, /*h*/ alternate either with voiceless obstruents or with sonorants in syllable-final position.⁹ Since voiced obstruents are disallowed in this position, these alternations follow from the phonotactics. On the other hand, only a closed set of morphemes end in a voiced obstruent, and there are many phonological options which can be applied in order to avoid it in syllable-final position, some of which are apparently morphologically and/or lexically restricted.

3.1.1. Syllable-final devoicing

In a number of verb stems of the syllable structure C_1VC_2 , where C_2 is /*d*/, /*g*/, the final consonant alternates with the corresponding voiceless obstruent /*t*/, /*k*/ in word-final position (i.e., in the transitive 1SG form and in the 2SG Imperative form) and before an obstruent-initial suffix of the syllable structure CVX . A stem-final /*h*/ alternates with /*q*/ only at word-internal syllable boundaries (see 3.1.2.6).

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|
| (44) | 3SG | Imperative | Perfective converb | |
| | <i>pad-um</i> | <i>pat</i> | <i>pat-telle</i> | 'cook' |
| | <i>kød-um</i> | <i>køt</i> | <i>køt-telle</i> | 'pull' |
| | <i>leg-um</i> | <i>lek</i> | <i>lek-telle</i> | 'eat' |
| | <i>šøg-i</i> | <i>šøk</i> | <i>šøk-telle</i> | 'come in' |
| | <i>čoh-um</i> | <i>čow</i> | <i>čoq-telle</i> | 'cut' |

3.1.2. Syllable-final sonorization

3.1.2.1. Obstruent ~ nasal assimilation. Before a nasal-initial suffix, the final voiced consonant alternates with a nasal. Most commonly, /d/, /d'/ alternate with /n/, and /g/, /h/ alternate with /ŋ/. In some cases, assimilation of /g/ into /m/ before /m/ is attested.

(45)	TR:3SG	OF:3SG		TR:3PL	
	<i>pad-um</i>	<i>pan-mele</i>		<i>pan-ŋā</i>	'cook'
	<i>čoh-um</i>	<i>čoŋ-mele</i> ~ <i>čom-mele</i>		<i>čoŋ-ŋā</i>	'cut'
	<i>leg-um</i>	<i>lem-mele</i>		<i>leŋ-ŋā</i>	'eat'

3.1.2.2. Word-final nasalization. Stem-final /d'/ alternates with /n/, /n'/ in word-final position.

(46)	TR:3SG	Imperative	
	<i>mid'-um</i>	<i>min</i>	'take'
	<i>ed'-i</i>	<i>en'</i>	'live, be alive'

The final /d/ of the verb stems *jad-* 'to send', *jed-* 'be visible' shows the same alternation.

(47)	TR:3SG	Imperative	
	<i>jad-um</i>	<i>jan</i>	'send'
	<i>jed-i</i>	<i>jen</i>	'be visible'

3.1.2.3. Syllable-final nasalization. Stem-final /t/, /d/, /d'/ alternate with /n/ before the inflectional morph *-jE* (> *-d'e*, see 3.3.1.1), (48a), the non-productive detransitive suffix *-dE* (48b), and the Diminutive marker *-die-* (48c).

(48)	a.	INTR:3SG	INTR:1SG	
		<i>ajled'-i</i>	<i>ajlen-d'e</i>	'wash oneself'
		<i>ed'-i</i>	<i>en-d'e</i>	'live, be alive'
	b.	TR:3SG	DETR-INTR:3SG	
		<i>pad-um</i>	<i>pan-de-j</i>	'cook'
		<i>leg-um</i>	<i>leŋ-de-j</i>	'eat'
	c.	PRED	DIM	
		<i>pulut-ek</i>	<i>pulun-die</i>	'old man'

3.1.2.4. /d/ ~ /n/ alternation in nominalizers. The final consonant of the nominalizers *-jōd* ~ *-jōn* (6.1.3.1, 6.1.3.6), *-bed* ~ *-ben* (6.1.3.1, 6.1.3.7) is /d/ before vowels, /n/ before consonants and in word-final position. These phonological positions are illustrated by means of the Predicative form, the Nominative Plural form, and the Nominative Singular form, respectively.

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| (49) | (SG)-PRED | PL(NOM) | SG(NOM) | |
| | <i>lejdi-jōd-ek</i> | <i>lejdi-jōn-pe</i> | <i>lejdi-jōn</i> | ‘one who knows’ |
| | <i>čomōl-bed-ek</i> | <i>čomōl-ben-pe</i> | <i>čomōl-ben</i> | ‘something big’ |

3.1.2.5. /d/ ~ /n/ alternation in Attributive forms. The Attributive form of nouns and numerals ends in /d/ before vowel-initial nouns and in /n/ before consonant-initial nouns. This can be viewed as an instance of the same phonologically motivated alternation, if the Attributive form is assumed to constitute a single phonological word with the head noun, as far as the syllable structure is concerned.

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (50) | <i>ilek-ud+anil</i> | <i>ilek-un+čohojo</i> |
| | four-ATTR-fish | four-ATTR+knife |
| | ‘four fishes’ | ‘four knives’ |
| | <i>unu-d+ørd’ō-ge</i> | <i>unu-n+laŋide</i> |
| | river-ATTR+middle-LOC | river-ATTR+DIR |
| | ‘in the middle of the river’ | ‘to the river’ |
| | <i>čolhoro-d+omnī</i> | <i>colhoro-n+šoromopul</i> |
| | hare-ATTR+people | hare-ATTR+person-PL |
| | ‘hare people’ | ‘hare men’ |
| | <i>jō-d+amun-gi</i> | <i>jō-n+kis’il</i> |
| | head-ATTR+bone-POSS | head-ATTR+end |
| | ‘skull’ | ‘forehead’ |
| | <i>lebie-d+emej</i> | <i>lebie-n+pugil’</i> |
| | earth-ATTR+mother | earth-ATTR+lord |
| | ‘Mother Earth’ | ‘Lord of Earth’ |

However, the Attributive form can occasionally end in /n/ before vowel-initial stems as well, e.g., *ilekun anil* ‘four fishes’.

3.1.2.6. Velar/uvular ~ glide. The velar and uvular voiced stem-final consonants alternate with /w/ in word-final position. The same alternation applies at syllable boundaries, most often before obstruents. The latter results in alternative pronunciations of some forms, cf. (44) and (51).

(51)	INTR:3SG	NEG+INTR:3SG	Perfective converb
	<i>šøg-i</i>	<i>el+šøw</i>	<i>šøw-delle</i> ‘come in’
	<i>leg-um</i>	<i>el+lew</i>	<i>lew-delle</i> ‘eat’
	<i>čoh-um</i>	<i>el+čow</i>	<i>čow-delle</i> ‘cut’

3.1.3. Nasal ~ Lateral assimilation

The nasals /n/, /n'/ alternate with the lateral /l/ when the next syllable starts with /l/ or /l'/, for example, before the Inferential suffix -l'el- or the first/second person different-subject marker.

(52)	3SG	INFR:3SG	DS:1/2	
	<i>mon-i</i>	<i>mol-l'el</i>	<i>mol-luge</i>	‘say’
	<i>qon-i</i>	<i>qol-l'el</i>	<i>qol-luge</i>	‘go’

In particular, the Propriative suffix -n'- ‘to have, to possess’ (6.4.2) can undergo this alternation, cf. *emd'e-n'*- ‘to have a younger sibling’ and *emd'e-l-l'el* ‘apparently, he had a younger sibling’.

The final /n/ of the Supine form can be assimilated into /l/ before the auxiliary stem *l'e-* ‘be’ within the Periphrastic Prospective form ((6.2.9.1)):

(53)	Supine	Periphrastic Prospective	
	<i>merej-din</i>	<i>merej-dil+l'e-</i>	‘take off’
	<i>qana-din</i>	<i>qana-dil+l'e-</i>	‘roam’

Stem-final /d/, /d'/ undergo the lateral assimilation only if they are nasalized in word-final position (see 3.1.2.2):

(54)	3SG	Imperative	INFR-3SG	DS:1/2	
	<i>jad-um</i>	<i>jan</i>	<i>jal-l'el-um</i>	<i>jal-luge</i>	‘send’
	<i>mid'-um</i>	<i>min</i>	<i>mil-l'el-um</i>	<i>mil-luge</i>	‘take’

3.2. Syllable-initial alternations of consonants

3.2.1. Progressive devoicing

Suffix-initial voiced obstruents alternate with their voiceless counterparts after voiceless consonants.

- (55) /d/ ~ /t/: PL-POSS-LOC
čugø-pe-de-ge 'track, path, trace'
ønme-p-te-ge 'mind, consciousness'
pieje-p-te-ge 'cheek, knoll'
šoromo-p-te-ge 'man'

- (56) /g/ ~ /k/: POSS:NOM LOC
ønme-gi *ønme-ge* 'mind'
labut-ki *labut-ke* 'floating log'
molut-ki *molut-ke* 'breast'
pulut-ki *pulut-ke* 'old man, husband'

In particular, the progressive devoicing is applied together with the syllable-final devoicing (see 3.1.1) of the previous consonant, so that a combination of two voiced obstruents at a morpheme boundary results in a voiceless consonant cluster (see, for example, the Perfective Converb marker *-delle*, represented as *-telle* in (44)).

3.2.2. Lateral Assimilation of stem-initial /j/

The stem initial /j/ alternates with /l'/ after the negative preverb *el+*; the final /l/ of the preverb is palatalized in this environment.

- (57) *el'-l'ad-* < *el-* + *jad-* 'send'
el'-l'ed- < *el-* + *jed-* 'be visible'
el'-l'uø- < *el-* + *juø* 'see'

This alternation is not obligatory, cf. (57) and *el jen* '(it is) not visible', *el juø* '(I) do not see'.

3.3. Suffix-initial /j/

The initial /j/ of some verbal suffixes alternates with /d'/, /č/ (cf. Krejnovich 1982:197-201):

- (58) /j/~/d'/~/č/ alternations
- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|---|--------|---|-------|
| Subject nominalizer | -jōn | ~ | -d'ōn | ~ | -čōn |
| Attributive, Intransitive | -je | ~ | -d'e | ~ | -če |
| Purposive ('go in order to') | -jī- | ~ | -d'ej- | ~ | -čej- |

In word-final position, suffix-initial /j/ alternates with /i/, /č/; these alternations are restricted to three morphological items: the transitive 1PL marker -j, the intransitive third person marker -j, and the allomorph -j of the Active Attributive marker -jE (see 6.1.1.1, 6.1.2.1).

Partly, these alternations are motivated by the phonotactics, since /j/ cannot be the final consonant of a consonant cluster (see 2.2). This case is described in 3.3.1. In other cases, the same alternations must be described as morphophonemic, since they are restricted to closed classes of lexical items and/or morphological environments (see 3.3.2, 3.3.3)

3.3.1. Phonologically motivated alternations

3.3.1.1. According to general restrictions on consonant clusters (see 2.2), intervocalic /j/ alternates with /d'/ in syllable-initial position after sonorants¹⁰ (except for /j/, see 3.3.3.1-3.3.3.3) and with /č/ after voiceless obstruents.

- (59) /j/-allomorphs
- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| <i>ejre-jē</i> | '(I) walked' |
| <i>ejre-jōn</i> | 'walker, someone who walks.' |
| <i>juø-jī-</i> | 'go in order to see' |
- (60) /d'/-allomorphs
- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>qon-d'e</i> | '(I) went' |
| <i>joŋžā-l'el-d'e</i> | '(I) must have forgotten' |
| forget-INFR-INTR:1SG | |
| <i>mon-d'ōn</i> | 'speaker, someone who speaks' |
| <i>en-d'ōn</i> | 'someone who is alive; animal' |
| <i>min-d'ej-</i> | 'go in order to take' |

- (61) /č/-allomorphs
eire-t-če ' (I) will walk'
 walk-FUT-INTR:1SG
jaqte-t-če ' (I) will sing'
 sing-FUT-INTR:1SG
el+pat-če ' (I) have not cooked'
 NEG+cook-INTR:1SG
pømege-t-čej- 'go in order to turn'
 turn-CAUS-PURP-

3.3.1.2. In word-final position, /j/ alternates with /i/ after consonants (except /j/; see 3.3.3.2-3.3.3.3). In fact, there are only two morphemes to which this phonological condition is applicable, namely, the intransitive 3SG marker *-j* and the transitive 1PL marker *-j*.¹¹

- (62) *mon-i* ' (he) said'
 say-INTR:3SG
piede-t-i ' (it) will burn'
 burn-FUT-INTR:3SG
ajle-t-i ' (we) will wash'
 wash-FUT-TR:1PL
šaqal'e-š-i ' (we) gathered'
 assemble-CAUS-TR:1PL

3.3.2. Morphologically and lexically constrained /d'/-allomorphs /d'/-allomorphs of the suffixes listed in (58) occur with quite a number of vowel-final verb stems, i.e., in the absence of the phonological conditions which might have determined the alternation. These cases fall into several groups: /d'/-allomorphs are used after the Resultative marker *-ō-* (6.3.6.1):