

## Relative clauses in Kolyma Yukaghir

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Kolyma Yukaghir has three non-finite verb forms used as predicates in relative clauses. This paper describes and analyzes relative clauses in Kolyma Yukaghir, focusing on the differences among the non-finite verb forms. After overviewing the grammatical properties of this language and the basic information on relative clauses, I will discuss the possible syntactic roles of head nouns in relative clauses and will point out that previous studies' results need to be partially modified. Then, I will discuss the functional characteristics of individual non-finite verb forms, focusing mainly on the definiteness of noun phrases and pragmatic status of relative clauses. I will also point out that some syntactic positions tend to prefer one of the three non-finite verb forms and that this choice is based on the verb form's functional characteristics.

Keywords: Kolyma Yukaghir, relative clause, non-finite verb form

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### 1. Introduction

Kolyma Yukaghir is a language spoken in northeastern Siberia. It is one of the two members of the Yukaghir languages (the other is Tundra Yukaghir), which are considered in general to be an isolated language group and included among the Paleosiberian languages for convenience, although their genetic affiliation with Uralic languages has been discussed.

This paper<sup>1</sup> describes and analyzes relative clauses (RCs) in Kolyma Yukaghir.

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<sup>1</sup> The discussion in this paper is based on the text data and elicited data from the author's own fieldwork, and text data previously collected and published by other researchers (Nikolaeva 1989, Nikolaeva 1997, Maslova 2001). Examples that are not cited are from the author's data. The fieldwork undertaken in this study is partially funded by (1) Grant-in-aid for scientific research on priority research (A) "Endangered Languages of the North Pacific Rim [ELPR]" (#11171101, 1999-2003, headed by Osahito Miyaoka) MEXT, (2) Grant-in-aid for scientific research (C) "Descriptive study of Kolyma Yukaghir" (#19520329, 2007-2010, headed by Iku Nagasaki) JSPS, and (3) Grant-in-aid for scientific research (B) "A Study of Digital Archive Environment and Language Documentation for Minority Languages in North-East Eurasia" (#23401025, 2011-2014, headed by Iku Nagasaki) JSPS. I would like to express

Kolyma Yukaghir has three non-finite verb forms used in RCs (the JE-form, L-form, and ME-form). Previous studies on RCs in this language were mainly concerned with the possible syntactic roles of head nouns in RCs with respect to each non-finite verb form. However, little is known about the differences among the forms. Although one of the three, the ME-form, has certain restrictions with regard to the relativization of some arguments and transitivity, all the forms are likely to be used to express nearly the same situation. Focusing on the differences among the non-finite verb forms, this paper explores not only the syntactic roles of head nouns in RCs but also the functional characteristics of each non-finite verb form with regard to the definiteness of NPs and the pragmatic status of RCs.

## 2. Basic grammatical properties of Kolyma Yukaghir

Kolyma Yukaghir has agglutinating (partially fusional), suffix-dominant morphology<sup>2</sup>. The lexical items are divided into nouns, verbs, adverbs, postpositions, determiners, particles, and interjections. Adjectives do not exist as a distinct grammatical category: adjectival (property) concepts are usually expressed by intransitive verbs.

### 2.1. Noun phrases

NPs are characterized by head final constituent order. Nouns, determiners, and RCs can serve as modifiers in NPs. N+N phrases are divided into four types according to the respective marking of modifier (dependent) and head: (a) juxtaposition, (b) head marking, (c) dependent marking, and (d) double marking. In the case of the first or second person modifier, two nouns are always simply juxtaposed; that is, the modifier noun appears in the nominative (zero-marked) case (1a). Juxtaposition is also possible for the third person modifier (1b), with the exception of the third person pronouns and NPs with the third person possessive suffix. There are two types of dependent marking: (c1) genitive modifiers and (c2) attributive modifiers. A genitive modifier is possible only for the third person pronouns and NPs with the third person possessive suffix, each of which has special genitive forms (*tudel* [3SG(NOM)] vs. *tude* [3SG:GEN]; *tittel* [3PL(NOM)] vs. *titte* [3PL:GEN]; *-gi~ki* [-POSS.3(NOM)] vs.

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<sup>2</sup> Kolyma Yukaghir has 6 vowels /i/, /e/, /ø/, /u/, /a/, /o/ and 22 consonants /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /s/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʰ/[tʰ~ç], /dʰ/[dʰ], /k/, /g/, /q/[q~ç], /ʁ/, /r/, /m/, /n/, /nʰ/[ɲ], /l/, /lʰ/[ɬ], /w/, /j/, of which /s/ is marginal and appears in loanwords in most cases. When examples are cited from Nikolaeva (1989), the Cyrillic transcription has been transliterated into Roman (phonological). The different symbols used for one phoneme in various sources are changed into mine to avoid confusion, except for /ə/, which is used in Nikolaeva (1997), and /sʰ/, which is used in Nikolaeva (1989), Nikolaeva (1997), and Maslova (2001). The glosses and English translations are mine.

*-de~te* [-POSS.3:GEN]), ((1c), (1d)). On the other hand, attributive modifiers (with the attributive suffix *-d~n*), which exclude “possessor” interpretation of the modifier, are possible only for common nouns (1e).

- (1) a. *met t'ovoje* 'my knife'  
1 SG knife  
b. *meeme t'uge* 'traces of a bear/the bear, bear trace'  
bear track  
c. *tude nier* 'his clothes'  
3 SG:GEN clothes  
d. *miid'ii-pe-de igeje-gele* 'the rope of their sledge'  
sledge-PL-POSS.3:GEN rope-ACC  
e. *meeme-n t'uge* 'bear trace'  
bear-ATTR track

The third person possessor is optionally marked on head nouns by the third person possessive suffix ((2a), (2b)) and often accompanies the omission of the modifier (possessor) noun ((1d), (2c)). Note that the genitive form of the third person possessive suffix *-de~te* is also the form followed by the case suffixes ((2b), (2c)).

- (2) a. *arnuujaa-die nutneje-gi* 'the wolverine's navel'  
wolverine-DIM navel-POSS.3  
b. *nutneje ped'e-de-gen* 'because of the smell of [his] navel'  
navel smell-POSS.3-PROL  
c. *aat'e-de-jle / foromo-p-t-in / nume-de-ge*  
reindeer-POSS.3-ACC person-PL-POSS.3-DAT house-POSS.3-LOC  
'his reindeer / to his relatives / in his house'

As can be seen in (1c), (1d), and (2), the third person possessor may be indicated by either the third person pronouns or the third person possessive suffix. They are clearly differentiated in the non-subject position. The third person possessive suffix indicates that the possessor is not co-referential with the subject (3a), and the third person pronouns are used reflexively; that is, they refer back to the subject of the clause (3b) (Maslova 2003: 319).

- (3) a. *t'olboroaa-die taj azuu-pe-de-jle medi-m.*  
hare-DIM that word-PL-POSS.3-ACC hear-IND.TR.3  
'The hare heard their words. (The hare heard the words they spoke.)'  
b. *tude nugen-gele ajle-m.*  
3 SG:GEN hand-ACC wash-IND.TR.3  
'[He] washed his hands.'

Double marking combines the genitive form of modifier noun and the third person possessive suffix on head noun. The use of double-marked NPs seems to be restricted

to the subject position (4).

- (4) a. *tude noj-gi jukoo-j.*  
 3SG:GEN leg-POSS.3 be.small-IND.INTR.3  
 ‘His legs are short.’  
 b. *tude n’uu-gi alandin oo-l’el.*  
 3SG:GEN name-POSS.3 Alandin be-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘His name was Alandin.’ (Nikolaeva 1989(2): 34)

Determiners are a closed word class that contains a small number of items. They always serve as noun modifiers. Most of them indicate deixis/anaphora/definiteness or number/quantity.

- (5) a. *taj paj* ‘that woman’  
 b. *ien paj* ‘other woman’  
 c. *irkin paj* ‘one woman, a woman’  
 d. *jaan foromo* ‘three people’  
 e. *mut’in foromo* ‘various people’

## 2.2. The structure of main clauses

Main clauses (MCs) are divided into finite clauses, nominal predicate clauses, and focus constructions.

### 2.2.1. Finite clauses

In a finite clause, the verb is inflected for the person and number of the subject. There are four inflectional paradigms of finite verbs categorized by mood and transitivity: indicative intransitive ((6a), (6b)), indicative transitive ((3), (6c)), optative (imperative) (6d), and interrogative (6e). Tense (-Ø [NON-FUTURE] vs. *-te~t* [FUTURE]) is marked in the indicative (intransitive/transitive) and interrogative forms. Both intransitive subject (S) and transitive subject (A) in a finite clause appear in the nominative (zero-marked) case. Object (O) may also appear in the nominative case when A is the first/second person and O is the third person (6c); otherwise, it takes accusative ((3), (6d)) or instrumental case (6e).

- (6) a. *pulun-die kie-t’.* ‘The old man came.’  
 old.man-DIM come-IND.INTR.3  
 b. *tudel ubuj kel-te-j.* ‘He will indeed come.’  
 3SG indeed come-FUT-IND.INTR.3  
 c. *met moʋo iide.* ‘I sewed a hat.’  
 1SG hat sew:IND.TR.1SG  
 d. *met-ul qamie-k.* ‘Help me.’  
 1SG-ACC help-IMP

- e. *kin nume-le aa?* ‘Who built the house?’  
 who house-INS make:INTERR.3

There are two special types of intransitive verbs: propriative and copula. The propriative verbs are derived from nouns by affixation of the suffix *-n'e~-n'*, which commonly expresses possession (7a) and sometimes existence. The derived verbs retain internal nominal syntax, as they can appear with their own modifiers (7b) (Maslova 2003: 123, Nagasaki 2012).

- (7) a. *met nume-n'e-je.* ‘I have a house.’  
 1SG house-PROP-IND.INTR.1SG  
 b. *ataqun uθ-n'e-j.* ‘[She] has two children.’  
 two child-PROP-IND.INTR.3

A copula clause typically expresses a property ((8a), (8b)). The copula verb *oo~ηoo-* is also used for equative meaning ((8c), (8d)). Unlike ordinary intransitive verbs, it takes two arguments in the nominative case: copula subject and copula complement<sup>3</sup>.

- (8) a. *tet odol oo-d'ek?* ‘Are you Yukaghir?’  
 2SG Yukaghir be-IND.INTR.2SG  
 b. *ugujelme pen<sup>4</sup> tibo ηoo-te-j.* ‘It will be rainy tomorrow.’  
 tomorrow LN rain be-FUT-IND.INTR.3  
 c. *tude n'uu-gi alandin oo-l'el.* ‘His name was Alandin.’  
 3SG:GEN name-POSS.3 Alandin be-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 (= (4b))  
 d. *met alandin uujsii-gi ηoo-d'e.* ‘I am Alandin’s laborer.’  
 1SG Alandin laborer-POSS.3 be-IND.INTR.1SG  
 (Nikolaeva 1989(2): 34)

## 2.2.2. Nominal predicate clauses

A nominal predicate clause expresses a meaning similar to that of copula clauses. It is used only in specifiable circumstances: in unmarked tense/evidentiality, and when the subject is the third person; otherwise, a copula clause is used (8). In a nominal

<sup>3</sup> There are a few instances where the verb *oo~ηoo-* is used to express existence or occurrence ((i), (ii)). Since the “copula” verb in such cases takes only the subject, it is better treated as an ordinary intransitive verb.

- (i) *taj ... emej-pə-gi oo-l'əl, ...*  
 that mother-PL-POSS.3 be-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘That, ... their mother was [there], ...’ (Nikolaeva 1997: 29)  
 (ii) *qanin svad'ba oo-te-j, mon-u-t ...*  
 when wedding(Rus.) be-FUT-IND.INTR.3 say-E-CVB  
 ‘When will the wedding be?’ [they] asked and ...’ (Nikolaeva 1989(I): 26)

<sup>4</sup> The subject in example (8b) *pen* can be regarded as a light noun, which has little semantic content of its own. It is often used as the subject in a clause which describes natural phenomena, physical or mental condition, etc.

predicate clause, the predicate noun is usually marked by the focus suffix *-(le)k~-ek* (9a). Proper nouns, nouns referring to possessed object, and third person pronouns, however, are incompatible with the focus suffix and always appear in the nominative case as predicate nouns (9b).

- (9) a. *tudel odul-ek.* ‘He/She is Yukaghir.’  
 3SG Yukaghir-FOC  
 b. *n’uu-gi pieter berbekin.* ‘His name is Pieter Berbekin.’  
 name-POSS.3 Pieter Berbekin

### 2.2.3. Focus constructions

Focus constructions in Kolyma Yukaghir are used for focusing on either S or O, for instance, when the S/O is questioned in a content question, when it introduces new information into discourse, when it selects one item from among a set of alternatives, etc. In a focus construction, the focused argument appears in the same form as the predicate noun in a nominal predicate clause; that is, it is usually marked by the focus suffix *-(le)k~-ek* ((10a), (10b), (10c)), but the special NP types such as proper nouns, nouns referring to possessed object, and third person pronouns appear in the nominative case even when they are semantically focused ((10d), (10e)). Recall that the focus suffix is incompatible with these NP types in nominal predicate clauses (see section 2.2.2). Moreover, the verb in the focus construction appears in a non-finite verb form: the L-form for focusing on S and the ME-form for focusing on O. These non-finite verb forms can also serve as predicates in RCs (for information about the inflection of the L-form and ME-form, see section 3).

- (10) a. – *kin-tek<sup>5</sup> kelu-l?* ‘Who came?’  
 who-FOC come-L  
 – *erpeje-lek kelu-l.* ‘An Ewen came.’  
 Ewen-FOC come-L  
 b. – *tet lem-dik ooze-t-me?* ‘What will you drink?’  
 2SG what-FOC drink-FUT-ME.2SG  
 – *met t’aaj-ek ooze-t-me.* ‘I will drink tea.’  
 1SG tea-FOC drink-FUT-ME.1SG  
 c. *taɲnigi tet-ek lek-te-mle, mon-i, taat tamun*  
 in.that.case 2SG-FOC eat-FUT-ME.3 say-IND.INTR.3 then that.one  
*jalaat met-ek lek-te-mle.*  
 after 1SG-FOC eat-FUT-ME.3  
 ‘In that case, [she] will eat you,’ [he] said, ‘then after that, [she] will eat me.’’

<sup>5</sup> The interrogative pronouns *leme* ‘what’ and *kin* ‘who’ take the special focus markers: *lem-dik* [what-FOC] and *kin-tek* [who-FOC].

- d. *tudel kelu-l* ‘He came.’  
 3SG come-L
- e. *tudel met nojl egiere-mle*. ‘He stepped on my foot.’  
 3SG 1SG foot step.on-ME.3

Although the copula verb is intransitive with regard to its morphological behavior in finite clause (see section 2.2.1), it seems that it never appears in focus construction for focusing on S. This restriction is explained by the fact that the subject of a copula clause inherently serves as the topic, while the verb itself serves to provide the comment (or a part of the comment).

### 2.3. Peripheral arguments and adjuncts

Peripheral arguments are marked by case suffixes (*-le~-e* [INS], *-ŋin* [DAT], *-ge~-ke* [LOC], *-get~-ket* [ABL], *-gen~-ken* [PROL], *-n’e* [COM], *el=...-t’uən* [ABES], *-ŋoot* [TRANS], and *-ŋoon* [ESS]), while adjuncts are marked by various postpositions. Most postpositions refer to spatial/temporal and locational/source/path/directional concepts: *jalaa/jolaa* ‘behind, after’, *jalaat/jolaat* ‘from behind, after’, *al’aa* ‘near, at the side of’, *al’in* ‘toward’, *laŋin* ‘to, towards, until’, etc. Nouns and L-forms of verbs may appear as complements of postpositions. The complement of a postposition usually appears in the nominative case ((11a), (11b)), although third person pronouns, nouns with a third person possessive suffix, and L-forms of verbs with a third person possessive suffix appear in the genitive case ((11c), (11d), (11e))<sup>6</sup>.

- (11) a. *taŋ tuujes-pe-gi=de* *ooŋii al’aa*  
 that bucket.from.birch.bark(Rus.)-PL-POSS.3=only water near  
*qodoo-ŋi, ...*  
 lie-PL:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘There were only her buckets lying near the water (= the river).’
- b. *moj-ŋi-k, met kelu-l laŋin*.  
 hold-PL-IMP 1SG come-L until  
 ‘Hold [it] until I’ll come [to you].’
- c. *tude jalaa qon-d’e*.  
 3SG:GEN behind go-IND.INTR.1SG  
 ‘[I] went after him.’
- d. *taa aŋd’e-de budie al’be-f-u-m,*  
 there eye-POSS.3:GEN on spill-CAUS-E-IND.TR.3  
*joo-de budie*.  
 head-POSS.3:GEN on  
 ‘[He (= Pieter Berbekin)] poured [the boiled water] on his (= ogre’s) eyes,

<sup>6</sup> The syntactic behavior of postpositions is quite similar to that of head nouns in NPs. This can be explained by the fact that most postpositions originate from the combination of a noun root and fossilized case suffix.

- on his head.’
- e. *joŋʒuu-pe-de*                      *jolaat lej-nunu-l’el-u-m*                      *emilme*.  
 fall.asleep-PL-POSS.3:GEN after eat-HBT-INFER-E-IND.TR.3 at.night  
 ‘After [they] had fell asleep, [he] ate [them] at night.’

### 3. Relative clauses — Preliminaries

The type of RC in Kolyma Yukaghir is prenominal and gapping; that is, an RC, similar to the other types of modifiers in NPs, always precedes its head noun, and a relativized NP is usually not formally expressed inside the RC (except in the case of possessor relativization, see section 4.4).

Case marking of core arguments in RCs differs from that in finite clauses in some respects: (a) S/A sometimes appears in the genitive case (if it is expressed by a third person pronoun or NP with the third person possessive suffix); (b) O sometimes appears in the nominative case (even if the respective finite clause requires the accusative/instrumental case, see section 2.2.1). The head noun sometimes takes the third person possessive suffix, which is co-referential with the S/A in RC.

As mentioned in section 1, there are three non-finite verb forms used as predicates in RCs: the JE-form, L-form, and ME-form<sup>7</sup>. Two of them—JE-form (*-d’e~t’e~je~j* [NON-FUTURE] vs. *-te-j~-t’t’e* [FUTURE]) and L-form (*-l* [NON-FUTURE] vs. *-te-l~-t-u-l* [FUTURE])—are inflected only for tense, while the ME-form exhibits full inflection for tense and person and number of subjects (Table 1).

TABLE 1 ME-form endings

	NON-FUTURE	FUTURE
1SG	<i>-me</i>	<i>-te-me~-t-me</i>
2SG	<i>-me</i>	<i>-te-me~-t-me</i>
3SG	<i>-mele~-mle</i>	<i>-te-mle~-t-mele</i>
1PL	<i>-l</i>	<i>-te-l~-t-u-l</i>
2PL	<i>-met</i>	<i>-te-met~-t-met</i>
3PL	<i>-ŋile</i>	<i>-ŋi-te-mle</i>

It should be noted that a relatively clear difference among the non-finite verb forms is observed with respect to the frequency of occurrence. Table 2 indicates that, in Nikolaeva (1989), the JE-form is the most frequently used, and the L-form appears a little less often than the JE-form, while the ME-form is used quite rarely.

<sup>7</sup> Researchers are not entirely in agreement on the classification and labeling of these verb forms (Krejnovich 1979, 1982; Maslova 2003; Endo 2005; Nagasaki 2009, 2010, 2011). However, I do not focus on this issue in this paper.

TABLE 2 Frequency of occurrence of three verb forms in Nikolaeva (1989)

JE-form	L-form	ME-form	Total
207 (52.7%)	179 (45.5%)	7 (1.8%)	393

#### 4. Syntactic roles of head nouns in RCs

According to the results of analyses conducted in previous studies, almost all syntactic positions on Keenan and Comrie's (1977) accessibility hierarchy are accessible to relativization in Kolyma Yukaghir<sup>8</sup>, but there are certain restrictions/restriction tendencies in this respect. Maslova (2003, 417-418), for instance, points out the following:

- (12) a. The JE-form cannot relativize a locative noun.  
 b. The L-form almost never relativizes O.  
 c. The ME-form cannot relativize S/A and possessor.

However, the above restrictions must be partially modified. Only (12c) can be confirmed, but counterexamples to (12a) and (12b) are found in the data consulted in this study.

##### 4.1. Subject relativization

S-relativization and A-relativization are possible with the JE-form and L-form. No examples of S/A-relativization with the ME-form were found; moreover, such examples were rejected by my consultants as well.

- (13) [*mit-n'e kel-d'e / kelu-l / \*kel-mele*] *foromo*  
 1PL-COM come-JE come-L come-ME.3 person  
 'the person who came with us'
- (14) [*mit-kele zyrjanka-ge joq-to-je / joq-to-l /*  
 1PL-ACC Zyrjanka(Rus.)-LOC reach-CAUS-JE reach-CAUS-L  
 \**joq-to-mle*] *foromo*  
 reach-CAUS-ME.3 person  
 'the person who brought us to Zyrjanka'

As mentioned earlier (section 2), property concepts are usually rendered by intransitive verbs in Kolyma Yukaghir. Therefore, the following examples with the JE-form and L-form are regarded as S-relativization.

<sup>8</sup> Only the examples of relativization on the object of comparison have not been attested so far.

- (15) *tit-ke* [ *omo-t'e* ] *marqil' l'ie-l'el*.  
 2PL-LOC be.good-JE girl exist-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 'You have a beautiful daughter.'
- (16) *d'e tabun-gele* [ *omo-l* ] *igeje-pul-gele ijer faqal'af-u-m*.  
 INTJ that-ACC be.good-L rope-PL-ACC separately gather-E-IND.TR.3  
 '[He] gathered the good ropes separately.' (Nikolaeva 1989(2): 30)

#### 4.2. Object relativization

Unlike subjects, all three non-finite verb forms can be used for O-relativization.

- (17) [ *tit iide-je* / *iide-l* / *iide-met* ] *ani-pe ket'ii-nj-k*.  
 2PL catch-JE catch-L catch-ME.2PL fish-PL bring-PL-IMP  
 'Bring the fish you caught.'

The restriction on O-relativization with the L-form (12b) described in Maslova (2003) seems to be incorrect, because such examples can be found in the text data consulted in this study, as can be seen in (18).

- (18) a. [ *met kudede-l* ] *t'omoolben founbe-n'-i*,  
 1SG kill-L elk fat-PROP-IND.INTR.3  
*founbe-n'-i*.  
 fat-PROP-IND.INTR.3  
 'The elk that I killed is fat, fat.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 118, Maslova 2003: 421)
- b. *taas'ilə* [ *foromə moj-tə-l* ] *end'oon-njin but'un qoqs'in-ek*  
 then person hold-FUT-L animal-DAT various hoof-FOC  
*a-l'əl-mələ*, ...  
 make-INFER-ME.3  
 'Then [he] made various hooves for the animals which would be kept by humans, ...' (Nikolaeva 1997: 34)

#### 4.3. Relativization on peripheral arguments

Relativization on dative (19a), instrumental (20a), and locative ((21a), (21b)) arguments seems to be possible using all three non-finite verb forms. Base constructions are shown in (19b), (20b), and (21c).

- (19) a. [ *met kinige tadi-je* / *tadi-l* / *tadi-me* ] *pajpe naqaa*  
 1SG book(Rus.) give-JE give-L give-ME.1SG woman very  
*omo-t'e pajpe oo-d'uəd-ek*.  
 be.good-JE woman be-JE.FN-FOC  
 'The woman to whom I gave a book was very good.'

- b. **kin-in** *tadi-te-mek,* *tiŋ kinige?*  
 who-DAT give-FUT-IND.TR.2SG this book  
 ‘Whom will you give this book to?’
- (20) a. *kife-k* [*tet lot'il t'ine-je / t'ine-l / t'ine-me*]  
 show-IMP 2SG firewoods chop-JE chop-L chop-ME.2SG  
*n'umud'ii.*  
 axe  
 ‘Show [me] the axe which you chopped wood with.’
- b. *tude terike-gele t'umu t'oboje-le t'ine-l'el-u-m,*  
 3SG:GEN wife-ACC all knife-INS chop-INFER-E-IND.TR.3  
*amdaa-l'el.*  
 die-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘[He] chopped his wife completely with the knife, [then she] died.’
- (21) a. [*titte modo-je / modo-l*] *gorot-ke jaqa-jiili.*  
 3PL:GEN live-JE live-L town(Rus.)-LOC arrive-IND.INTR.1PL  
 ‘[We] arrived in the town where they live.’
- b. *tittel [modo-ŋile] gorot-ŋin kebej-ŋi.*  
 3PL live-PL:ME.3 town(Rus.)-DAT go.away-PL:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘They went away to the town where [they] had lived.’
- c. *irkin gorot-ke pieter berbekin modo-l'el* ...  
 one town(Rus.)-LOC Pieter Berbekin live-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 ‘In one town, there lived Pieter Berbekin ...’

Examples of relativizations of peripheral arguments are quite rare in the text data consulted in this study. Only some examples of locative relativization are found. However, they include not only the L-form and ME-form but also the JE-form, as in (22), contrary to Maslova’s (2003) analysis, cf. (12a).

- (22) *irkin foromə jaqdat'ə-lə irkin [omnii modo-jə] meestə-ŋin*  
 one person horse-INS one people live-JE place(Rus.)-DAT  
*kebe-t'.*  
 go.away-IND.INTR.3  
 ‘One man went by horse to a place where the people were living.’ (Nikolaeva 1997: 21)

Intransitive verbs denoting property concepts seem to be never used in the ME-form. Examples of such verbs as in (23) were rejected by my consultants, nor are they found in the text data consulted in this study.

- (23) *mit nug-i* [lebejdii ninge-j / ninge-l /  
 1PL find-IND.TR.1PL berry be.many-JE be.many-L  
 \*ninge-mle] mieste.  
 be.many-ME.3 place(Rus.)  
 ‘We found the place with a lot of berries.’

Example (24a) indicates that a locative argument with the meaning of time can be relativized only with the L-form. Although I do not have enough data to state conclusively, it may be more suitable to analyze the construction ‘[... L-form] + *paraa-ge*’ not as locative relativization but as an adverbial clause, where the noun *paraa* ‘time’ together with the locative case suffix *-ge* became a postposition, since some postpositions with the L-form express time/temporal sequence as adverbial clauses (recall that postpositions never take the JE-form and ME-form as their complements, see section 2.3).

- (24) a. [*met magadan-ge* \**kit’ie-je* / *kit’ie-l* / \**kit’ie-me*]  
 1SG Magadan(Rus.)-LOC study-JE study-L study-ME.1SG  
*paraa-ge*  
 time-LOC  
 ‘when I studied in Magadan’  
 b. *d’e taat irkin paraa-ge tudel qon-i.*  
 INTJ then one time-LOC 3SG go-IND.INTR.3  
 ‘Well, then he went [there] once.’ (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 106)

#### 4.4. Possessor relativization

Similar to S/A-relativization, possessor relativization is possible only with the JE-form and L-form. The example with the ME-form in (25) was rejected by my consultants. Note that possessor relativization is always accompanied by the retention of the third person possessive suffix on the possessee noun inside the RC, which cross-references the head noun (i.e., possessor).

- (25) [*majle-de* t’itne-j / t’itne-l / \*t’itne-mle] *pajpe-k*  
 hair-POSS.3:GEN be.long-JE be.long-L be.long-ME.3 woman-FOC  
*anure-me.*  
 like-ME.1SG  
 ‘[I] like the woman with long hair.’
- (26) *tintaŋ* [n’aas’eqaar-de n’elbet-oo-l] *paj-gele*  
 aforesaid face.skin-POSS.3:GEN skin-RES-L woman-ACC  
*taskan-ŋin* *keudej-ŋam.*  
 Taskan(Rus.)-DAT bring-PL:IND.TR.3  
 ‘[They] brought the woman whose face had been skinned to Taskan.’

(Nikolaeva 1989(2): 48)

## 5. Functional characteristics of non-finite verb forms in RCs

Thus far, I have shown the possible syntactic roles of head nouns in RCs for each non-finite verb form. It has been confirmed that only the ME-form has a restriction on A/S and possessor relativizations, while the JE-form and L-form can be used for any relativization types. Thus, the differences among the non-finite verb forms cannot be fully accounted for by the restrictions on relativization of different syntactic roles as suggested by the previous studies. This section will attempt to account for these differences in terms of the definiteness of NPs and pragmatic status of RCs.

Marking definiteness on NPs is not fully grammaticalized in Kolyma Yukaghir. It is determiners that are often used to indicate definiteness; for instance, the numeral determiner *irkin* ‘one, a’ can be used for indefinite NPs, while the demonstratives determiners *tag* ‘that (not visible)’, *tij* ‘this (proximate)’, *edij* ‘that (distal)’, and *tintaj* ‘aforesaid’ are used for definite NPs.

### 5.1. Indefinite NPs : JE-form

In my data, the numeral determiner *irkin* ‘one, a’ co-occurs only with the JE-form ((27a), (27b)), which suggests that heads of indefinite NPs can be modified only by RCs with the JE-form. This is supported by the fact that the JE-form is used even when the indefiniteness of NPs is only inferred from the previous contexts (27c). The propositions expressed by such RCs are interpreted as being unfamiliar to the hearer, and as being introduced into the discourse as new information.

- (27) a. *qon-u-t qon-u-t qon-u-t qon-u-t...*, *irkin* [t'omoo-d'e]  
 go-E-CVB go-E-CVB go-E-CVB go-E-CVB one be.big-JE  
*t'orqo-ge jaqa-j.*  
 plain-LOC arrive-IND.INTR.3  
 ‘[He] went and went, [then he] arrived in a big plain.’
- b. *irkin foromə jaqdat'ə-lə irkin* [omnii modo-jə] *meestə-ŋin*  
 one person horse-INS one people live-JE place(Rus.)-DAT  
*kebe-s'.* = (22)  
 go.away-IND.INTR.3  
 ‘One man went by horse to a place where the people lived.’ (Nikolaeva 1997: 21)
- c. *met tudaə [amdə-j] foromə əl= juə-je n'ə=qajin.*  
 1SG before die-JE person NEG= see-IND.INTR.1SG NEG=WHEN  
 ‘I never saw dead person before.’ (Nikolaeva 1997: 55)

## 5.2. Definite NPs : JE-form, L-form, and ME-form

Demonstrative determiners can co-occur with all three non-finite verb forms: the JE-form ((28a), (28b)), L-form ((29a), (29b)), and ME-form ((30a), (30b)). There are instances where RCs with three non-finite verb forms are used, when the definiteness of NPs is inferred by the previous contexts ((28c), (29c), (30c)). Therefore heads of definite NPs can be modified by RCs with any non-finite verb forms. Propositions expressed by such RCs, unlike RCs with indefinite head nouns, seem to be familiar to the hearer; that is, they contain presupposed information, as the events described are usually already mentioned or can be inferred from the previous contexts.

- (28) a. *taɲ* [el= l'en-d'e] *foromo-pul pude ... pude*  
 that NEG= be.seen-JE person-PL outside outside  
*kel-l'el-ŋi.*  
 come-INFER-PL:IND.INTR.3  
 'Those invisible people came outside.'
- b. *taa tintaj* [faqal'e-j] *jollo-gele taj tude oo-ge*  
 there aforesaid be.yellow-JE mud-ACC that 3SG:GEN trousers-LOC  
*qodote-m.*  
 fill-IND.TR.3  
 '[He] filled his trousers with the yellow mud at that place.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 52)
- c. *n'amt'e qoli-gele foɓufaa-l'el-u-m,* [er-t'e] *foromo.*  
 bell sound-ACC lose-INFER-E-IND.TR.3 be.bad-JE person  
 '[He] lost the sound of [the girl's] bell, the bad person.'
- (29) a. *taɲ* [el= l'ed-u-l] *foromo-pul mil-l'el-ŋaa.*  
 that NEG= be.seen-E-L person-PL take-INFER-PL.IND.TR.3  
 'Those invisible people carried [her] off.'
- b. *edij* [met marqil' leg-u-l] *alme juø-k!*  
 that 1SG girl eat-E-L shaman look-IMP  
 'Look at that shaman who ate my daughter!' (Nikolaeva 1989(2): 22)
- c. [met kudede-l] *t'omoolben founbe-n'-i,*  
 1SG kill-L elk fat-PROP-IND.INTR.3  
*founbe-n'-i.* = (18a)  
 fat-PROP-IND.INTR.3  
 'The elk that I killed is fat, [it is] fat.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 118, Maslova 2003: 421)

- (30) a. *taŋ* [*alʁudoo-l lebie-get min-mele*] *end'oon-pe-gi*,  
 that be.lower-L land-ABL take-ME.3 animal-PL-POSS.3  
*nodo-pe-gi ɔrd'oo-l lebie-ge jaqa-delle, mieste*  
 bird-PL-POSS.3 be.middle-L land-LOC arrive-CVB.SEQ place(Rus.)  
*el= lejdi-t, legul-pe-gi el= lejdi-t*  
 NEG= know-CVB food-PL-POSS.3 NEG= know-CVB  
*n'e= leg-ie-l'el-ŋi.*  
 RECIP= eat-INCH-INFER-PL:IND.INTR.3  
 'When the animals and birds which [he] had taken from the lower land arrived in the middle land, they knew neither the place nor their foods, and began eating each other.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 38)
- b. *taŋ* [*mət jaβid'ə oo-ʒi-t kes'ii-mə*] *fal t'uqoo-gi*  
 that 1SG stick be-CAUS-CVB bring-ME.1SG tree trace-POSS.3  
*nutn'ə-ʒ, a sam əjɫ'ə.*  
 stand-IND.INTR.3 but(Rus.) oneself(Rus.) not.exist:IND.INTR.3  
 'There was a trace of the stick brought by me which I used as a ski stick, but it itself was not there.' (Nikolaeva 1997: 67)
- c. *tiŋ paj tude pulut-kele leg-i-te-m, [tude*  
 this woman 3SG:GEN husband-ACC eat-E-CAUS-IND.TR.3 3SG:GEN  
*ejre-f-mele] legul-e.*  
 walk-CAUS-ME.3 food-INS  
 'This woman fed her husband with the food that she had brought.'  
 (Maslova 2001: 137)

What is remarkable here is that the L-form, and probably the ME-form too, appear only in definite NPs, which often contain the third person possessive suffix. It seems that the L-form and ME-form are used to designate the information provided in the RC as presupposed. On the other hand, the JE-form itself does not have any relation to the pragmatic status of the RC.

### 5.3. Contrastive meaning : L-form

There exist cases where the L-form conveys a contrastive meaning. For instance, the RC modifying the definite head noun in (31), [*maqloo-l*] *fapadaŋil* 'the nearby door', is used in contrast to [*jaqloo-l*] *fapadaŋil* 'the distant door' referred in the same text. Again in (32), the NP, [*foromə moj-tə-l*] *end'oon* 'the animals that would be kept by humans', can be interpreted as implying that the speaker has some animals in his/her mind different from the animals that the human would keep.

- (31) *met fapadaɲil'-pe tebie-ɲi-k, mon-i, d'e [maqloo-l]*  
 1SG door-PL close-PL-IMP say-IND.INTR.3 INTJ be.nearby-L  
*fapadaɲil' tebie-j.*  
 door close-IND.INTR.3  
 '[He] said: "my doors, close yourself," then the nearby door closed.'
- (32) *taas'ilə [foromə moɟ-tə-l] end'oon-ɲin but'un qoqs'in-ek*  
 then person hold-FUT-L animal-DAT various hoof-FOC  
*a-l'əl-mələ, ...* = (18b)  
 make-INFER-ME.3  
 'Then [he] made various hooves for the animals which would be kept by humans, ...' (Nikolaeva 1997: 34)

Moreover, the L-form frequently co-occurs with head nouns of certain semantic groups such as kin terms (33), body parts (34), temporal references (35), and mythological views of the world (36). Such collocational use of the L-form is likely to arise from the above-mentioned contrastive meanings. According to one of my consultants, if we replace the L-form *jukoo-l* 'small' in (33a) with the JE-form *jukoo-d'e*, the meaning of the NP changes; that is, *jukoo-d'e uə* is translated as 'small child'.

- (33) a. [*jukoo-l*] *uə* 'younger child'  
 be.small-L child  
 b. [*t'omoo-l*] *aduə* 'older son'  
 be.big-L son  
 c. [*emd'oo-l*] *t'aat'aa* 'the younger one of the elder brothers'  
 be.younger-L elder.brother  
 e. [*kiejoo-l*] *pulut-ki* 'her former husband'  
 be.former-L husband-POSS.3
- (34) [*el= n'uu-n'e-l*] *piedit'e* 'ring finger' (lit. 'nameless finger')  
 NEG= name-PROP-L finger
- (35) [*kel-te-l*] *pod'erqo-bo* 'tomorrow'  
 come-FUT-L day-LOC
- (36) a. [*pudoo-l*] *lebie-ge* 'on the upper world'  
 be.top-L land-LOC  
 b. [*ərd'oo-l*] *lebie-ge* 'on the mid world'  
 be.middle-L land-LOC  
 c. [*alɓudoo-l*] *lebie-ge* 'on the lower world'  
 be.lower-L land-LOC

## 5.4. Syntactic positions where indefinite NPs tend to be used

There are three syntactic positions where indefinite NPs tend to be used: a host of the proprietive suffix (37), copula complement/nominal predicate (38), and focused S/O (39). These positions typically serve to provide a comment (focus) about the topic, normally encoded as the subject (and sometimes as other constituents). As mentioned in section 5.1, heads of indefinite NPs are modified only with the JE-form. Accordingly, we can say that the use of the JE-form is associated with new information that is unfamiliar to the hearer.

- (37) a. *oo, moni, [naqaa omo-t'e]*  
 INTJ say-IND.INTR.3 very good-JE  
*rubakha-n'e-j =ie.*  
 shirt(Rus.)-PROP-IND.INTR.3 =CLT  
 'Oh, [he = the ptarmigan] wears a very good shirt, doesn't he?, [she] said.'
- b. *[purkin faal-e aa-l-oo-j] nume-n'e-j.*  
 seven tree-INS make-E-RES-JE house-PROP-IND.INTR.3  
 '[He] has a house made of seven trees.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 54)
- (38) a. *tit marqil' [ubuj omo-t'e] marqil' oo-l'el.*  
 2PL girl really be.good-JE girl be-INFER:IND.INTR.3  
 'Your daughter seems to be really beautiful girl.'
- b. *mit [amdə-j] foromə-pul o-d'iili.*  
 1PL die-JE person-PL be-IND.INTR.1PL  
 'We are dead people.' (Nikolaeva 1997: 73)
- c. ..., *[nilgi əl= modo-jə] numə-k.*  
 nobody NEG= live-JE house-FOC  
 '[This is] a house where nobody lived.' (Nikolaeva 1997: 72)
- (39) a. *irkin jalkil-ge [ninge-j] omnii-k ed'-u-t*  
 one lake-LOC be.many-JE people-FOC be.alive-E-CVB  
*madaa-l'el-ŋi-l.*  
 live-INFER-PL-L  
 'On the bank of one lake, there lived a lot of people.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 20)
- b. *taat aa-t, ejre-t lebie-gen, tii taa [eris'*  
 like.that do-CVB walk-CVB land-PROL here there badly  
*met= moj-s'e] end'ood-ek, nodo-pe-lek juə-ŋile.*  
 REFL= keep-JE animal-FOC bird-PL-FOC see-PL:ME.3  
 '[They] did like this, walked on the land, and saw here and there animals  
 and birds that kept themselves badly.' (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 40)

The JE-form does not seem to be obligatorily used in these positions. In texts, there are at least two examples where the L-form is used inside the positions of focused O ((40), cf. (39)), and nominal predicate ((41), cf (38)). As for example (40), the NP in the focused O position, [*ərd'oo-l*] *uə-pe-gi* ‘their middle child’, does not carry any new information but is selected from among the three available choices: the elder, middle, and younger children. As for (41), it is possible to interpret it as ‘[she] is the very nice girl’, although this is not clear from the context<sup>9</sup>.

- (40) *'qadi-k lek-te-me?' – mon-u-t juə-de-ge,*  
 which-FOC eat-FUT-ME.1SG say-E-CVB see-POSS.3-LOC  
*mol-l'el, [ərd'oo-l] uə-pe-gi<sup>10</sup>;*  
 say-INFER:IND.INTR.3 be.middle-L child-PL-POSS.3  
 ‘Which [of the three children] should I eat?, – [he] said and saw [them] –, [I will eat] their middle child. (Nikolaeva 1989(1): 74)

- (41) *mon-tji, [ell'oodəj omo-l] marqil'-ək.*  
 say-PL:IND.INTR.3 very be.good-L girl-FOC  
 ‘[People] say, ‘[she] is a very nice girl.’ (Nikolaeva 1997: 32)

## 6. Conclusion

The characteristics of individual non-finite verb forms in RCs are summarized as follows:

- a. The JE-form and L-form can be used for the relativization of any types of arguments, and possessors, while the ME-form is never used for S/A and possessor relativizations (section 4).
- b. The JE-form can modify heads both of definite and indefinite NPs, while the L-form and ME-form modify only heads of definite NPs (sections 5.1, 5.2).
- c. When the NP is indefinite, an RC that contains the JE-form conveys non-presupposed proposition; that is, the event expressed by the RC is unfamiliar to the hearer (section 5.1).
- d. When the NP is definite, an RC that can contain any of the three verb forms conveys presupposed proposition; that is, the event expressed by the RC is familiar to the hearer. It is likely that the L-form and ME-form, which co-occur

<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, in both (40) and (41), the non-finite verb forms (the L-forms) are part of embedded clauses and the main clause predicate is SAY (A. Bugaeva, personal communication, September 11, 2003). This might be accidental, but it seems that examples of the L-form inside the syntactic positions discussed in this section should be searched in more broad data including conversations.

<sup>10</sup> Note that in (40) the predicate of the sentence (‘I will eat’) in question is omitted.

only with heads of definite NPs, are used to designate this pragmatic status of RC (section 5.2).

- e. The L-form sometimes conveys contrastive meaning (section 5.3).
- f. In the following syntactic positions, indefinite NPs are generally preferred: host of the proprietive suffix, copula complement/nominal predicate, and focused S/O. (They serve to provide a comment (focus) about the topic). It follows from what has been mentioned in (b) and (c) above that the JE-form (but not the L-form or ME-form) almost always appears when a NP in one of these positions accompanies a RC, although a small number of examples with the L-form are also found (section 5.4).

As mentioned in section 2.2.3, Kolyma Yukaghir has a special type of main clause, namely the focus construction, where either the L-form or the ME-form is used as predicate according to its transitivity (recall that the L-form is used for focusing on S, and the ME-form is used for focusing on O). Although the formal characteristics of this construction have been analyzed in detail, the diachronic process of its formation has not been fully discussed. This issue requires further attention, but for the time being, we can assume from the analysis in section 5.2 that the use of the L-form and ME-form in the focus construction is probably attributable to the functional characteristics of these non-finite verb forms in the RC, that is, presupposition/familiar information in the discourse.

### Abbreviations

1 – first person, 2 – second person, 3 – third person, ABES – abessive, ABL – ablative, ACC – accusative, ATTR – attributive, CAUS – causative, CLT – clitic, COM – comitative, CVB – converb, DAT – dative, DIM – diminutive, E – epenthesis, ESS – essive, FN – formal noun, FOC – focus, FUT – future, GEN – genitive, HBT – habitual, IMP – imperative, INCH – inchoative, IND – indicative, INFER – inferential, INS – instrumental, INTERR – interrogative, INTJ – interjection, INTR – intransitive, JE – JE-form, L – L-form, LN – light noun, LOC – locative, ME – ME-form, NEG – negative, NOM – nominative, PL – plural, POSS – possessive, PROL – prolativ, PROP – proprietive, Rus. – Russian element, RECIP – reciprocal, REFL – reflexive, RES – resultative, SEQ – sequential, SG – singular, TR – transitive, TRANS – translative

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