LEXICAL CATEGORIZATION OF PROPERTY CONCEPT WORDS IN THE SAMOYEDIC LANGUAGES

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In this paper I try to find some grammatical factors of motivation for lexical categorization of property concepts in Nganasan and in Tundra Nenets. I am looking for some grammatical and semantic reasons for different lexical categorizations of adjectivals in these languages. In the first part of the paper I show the typological and theoretical background of my investigation, then, in the second part, I show and interpret the relevant data of the languages in question.

1. Definition of Property Concept Word and Lexical Word

First of all, I clear up the terms included in the title. I adopt Thompson's (1988) phrase 'property concept word' to refer to the functional category of concepts which in adjective-forming languages turn up as adjectives, and 'adjective' to refer to a syntactically distinct category of such words. Adjectives as a distinct word class can be defined by multiple (pragmatic, syntactic, morphological and semantic) criteria. Property Concept Words are defined by a semantic criterion only: they denote prototypical adjectival meanings. So, working with the PCW-definition, we can investigate not only adjectives, but also adjectivals such as nouns, verbs and manner adverbs which denote prototypical properties or states (e.g. stative verbs or nouns referring to some human propensity like *genius* in English, or *durak* in Russian). So by using this term I can examine diverse lexical forms of property concept words, such as participles, nouns, adjectives, etc. As is well known, there are languages with no distinct identifiable adjective category (Dixon 1977/1981). The adjectival category is not universal, as opposed to the category of nouns or verbs. I argue that, while adjectival s t r u c t u r e, as Dixon has shown in his articles, is not universal, adjectival f u n c t i o n is.

L e x i c a l c a t e g o r i z a t i o n is the assignment of concepts to a lexical word class. A l e x i c a l w o r d is semantically not compositional, and its meaning cannot be traced back to the meaning of its components. All components are lexical words, which are listed in the dictionary. For example, in Nganasan *tuuŋənduj* 'steamship' (fire + ship) and *tuubiδi"* 'firearm' (fire + gun) are lexical words; however, in the case of some compounds, their compositionality is questionable, e.g.:

kuubjɲi 'pearl necklace' < 'pearl' + 'string'
d'aʎid'ər 'midday' < 'day' + 'middle'

In Nganasan we can regard such phrases as lexical words, given that their meaning is not compositional and vowel-harmony or gradation do not necessarily cover all components of the phrase.

The definition of predicative adjectival constructions is a „prototype" definition in various respects. Thus the focus of the investigation is on the predicative adjectival constructions in expressions that are referred to as kernel sentences. Further on, the investigation concentrates on the grammatical behaviour of prototypical adjectivals. Prototypical property concepts are defined here as property concepts which are included in Dixon's semantic types of age, dimension, value, colour, speed, physical property and others.

The typological theory I apply to my investigation is called Tensedness Hypothesis (Wetzer 1996). Wetzer's hypothesis is based on the Noun-Adjective-Verb continuum theories of the last few decades. These theories argue that a language encodes property concepts depending upon specific grammatical characteristics of the nominal-verbal system of the language in question (e.g. concept dominancy: Capell 1965; continuum hypothesis: Ross 1972, Comrie 1975, Pustet 1989, semantic prototypes: Dixon 1982, time-stability hypothesis: Givón 1979, discourse analysis: Hopper – Thompson 1984).

Wetzer selected a sample of 115 languages. He divided the language sample into two groups on the basis of the presence (type-A languages) or absence (type-B languages) of a relatively clear morpho-syntactic distinction between verbal and nominal predicates. The language sample is representative both from an areal and a genetic point of view. This is confirmed by the Uralic languages: Wetzer investigates three of them, Finnish as a Finn-Permic language, Hungarian as a Ugric one, and Nenets as one of the Samoyedic languages.

The first group of the languages is called type-A languages where there is a clear morpho-syntactic distinction between intransitive verbal and nominal predicates.

Wetzer suggests that in his sample 43 languages fall under the category of nominal languages (e.g. Finnish, Hungarian, Russian, Turkish, etc.), and 37 languages belong to the verbal languages (e.g. Dakota, Vietnamese, Yukaghir, etc.).

There is a subgroup of type-A languages, namely mixed-type languages (18 in all, e.g. Japanese, West-Greenlandic). The mixed-type languages can be divided into two groups. In mixed languages of the split-adjective type prototypical adjectivals are distributed across diverse lexical categories, so that some properties are expressed as nouny adjectivals, whereas others find their expression through verby adjectivals.

In mixed languages of the switch-adjective type, property concept words can be described as categorially ambivalent. Since the very same adjectival items appear in both nouny and verby forms, without any overt derivational process being involved, there is no reason to assume that adjectivals are primarily nouny or verby.

In both cases an explanation for these phenomena can possibly be found within the domain of semantics, and in the diachronic development of the languages involved.

Finally, type-B languages are characterized by the absence of a clear differentiation in formal encoding of (intransitive) verbal, adjectival and nominal predicates in kernel sentences (their number is 17, e.g. Basque, Hindi, Nootka, Tagalog), and also Nenets is classified as a type-B language.

Wetzer found a connection between the tense-aspect system and the type of adjectival predication:

	verby adjectivals	nouny adjectivals
tensed language	–	+
non-tensed language	+	–

Tensedness Universals:

a) If a language has an open class of nouny adjectivals, then it will be tensed. If a language is tensed, then it will have an open class of nouny adjectivals.
b) If a language has an open class of verby adjectivals, then it will be non-tensed. If a language is non-tensed, then it will have an open class of verby adjectivals.

He considers languages to be „tensed" or tense oriented if they have a grammatical category of tense (i) which is restricted to verbs and (ii) which minimally involves a distinction between past and non-past time reference.

I agree with Bhat (1999) and Stassen (1997) who argue that this tendency cannot be considered as universal. Stassen established that the distinction between tensed and non-tensed languages can be recognised by the type of adjectival predication. In case of TP-languages adjectival predication is non-verbal. Tense-prominent languages tend to have no stative verbs as such or very few irregular stative verbs. The adjectival predicates, which are prototypically state predicates, tend to have non-verbal encoding in these tense-prominent languages. Stassen's semantic explanation argues that adjectives are more time-stable than verbs and hence tense-marking is not as relevant for them as for verbs.

I show two simple examples. The first one is the English language, which is a typical tensed language. And as we can see, the structure of the adjectival predicate is very similar to that of the nominal predicate. The adjectival predicate requires a copula just as the nominal predicate does:

English: TP-language

(1) *The boy sleeps.*

(2) *The boy is tall.*

(3) *The boy is a singer.*

The other example is from Supyire, a non-tensed language, and shows the system of encoding adjectival predicates as verbs, as can be seen from the following sentences.
Supyire: AP-language

(4) *kafáága a péé*
stone (DEF) PERF big
'The stone is big.'

(5) *sikáŋa a bó*
goat (DEF) PERF kill
'The goat has been killed.'

(6) *yire wá pyí yé*
they (EMPH) be (they) children
'They are children.' (Carlson 1994, cited by Bhat 1999)

The predicate *péé* 'big' in (4), and the verbal predicate *bo* 'kill' in (5) occur directly with the perfective marker, whereas the nominal predicate *ye* 'children' in (6) requires an auxiliary support.

Stassen suggests that the adjectival drift from verbiness towards nouniness goes hand in hand with an increase in the tense orientation of the verbal system (Stassen 1997: 518). So it does not mean a chronological order, and a causal relation can hardly be presumed, either.

2. Problems and questions

The status of the adjectival category in the Samoyedic languages, namely whether it is classified as a main category or as a subcategory of substantives, is irrelevant in this respect. I pay attention primarily to the tense-aspect system as well as the structure of the adjectival predicates of the languages in question.

Wetzer argues that one of the most serious counterexamples to the tensedness universal is provided by the Nenets language. In Tundra Nenets, on the one hand, there is a morphological distinction between past and non-past tense, and on the other hand, adjectivals (and all nominals) can take personal suffixes directly.

The situation is almost the same in the case of the Nganasan language. The difference between the nominal predicates of these two languages is found in inflection, namely what inflectional category can be taken directly by a noun or an adjective in predicative position. In Nenets, the category of mood, whereas in Nganasan and Selkup

the categories of mood and tense are expressed supported by a copula. The suffixes of these categories cannot be taken directly by a noun.

Further differences between Nenets and Nganasan can be established in the order of the verbal inflectional suffixes. Nenets suffixes have a really extraordinary order: the suffix of tense follows the personal suffixes.

Nganasan:

STEM + (derivational suffixes) + TENSE / MOOD + PERSONAL ENDINGS

Nenets:

STEM + (derivational suffixes) + PERSONAL SUFFIX + TENSE

One of the aims of this paper is to show how the structure of nominal predicates may have developed in two different ways in these languages. First, in the following section, I survey the tense-aspect system of the Samoyedic languages.

3. Tense in Samoyed

Among the three Samoyedic languages investigated it is Nganasan that has the most differentiated tense-system. The neutral tense (aorist) is morphologically marked by coaffixes that show the perfectiveness or imperfectiveness of the verb. Furthermore, in Nganasan two different coaffixes have developed, and the choice between them is determined by the aspect of the verb (see section 4). Besides the aorist, there are four suffixes that can be classified as suffixes of tense in the indicative mood.

The suffix of past tense: -SUƏ: *ńilʲi-dʲiə-m* 'I lived'
kotu-dʲüə-ŋ 'you killed'

The suffix of future tense: -"SUTƏ: *hoδətə-"suδə-m* 'I will write'

Both suffixes are frequent. Besides these tenses, grammars distinguish two other tense-suffixes that do not appear frequently.

The suffix of past perfect: -SUƏDʲƏƏ: *kotü-dʲüəd'əə-m* 'I had killed'
(From a diachronic point of view: reduplication: ? *-SUƏ + -SUƏ.)
The suffix of future-in-the-past: -"SUTƏDʲƏƏ: *koδu-"sutəd'əə-m* 'I had to kill (him/her).'
(From a diachronic point of view: future + past: -"SUTƏ + -SUƏ.)
In the last two cases the origin of the second element *-d'əə* is questionable phonologically, but it may be a result of grammaticalization, as has been mentioned above.

In Tundra Nenets (Salminen 1998) the inflectional category of tense comprises two tenses, the aorist and the preterite. In the indicative mood, the aorist has no marker, although in some cases it is marked, but then the morphological element does not refer to the aspect of the verb.

The preterite suffix is *-ś,* which occurs at the end of a morphological word, following the personal suffix. The tense suffix and the personal suffix can hardly be distinguished, though the border between the two morphemes can be recognised.

The future tense is expressed by derivational suffixes.

In Selkup, besides the aorist, we find future and past tense. The status of the aorist is similar to Tundra Nenets. The aorist is marked (*-ŋ-*) in some cases (like in Nenets), but it does not indicate the aspect, it has just a morphophonological role.

tü-ŋa-k 'I come' *amiŗ-na-k* 'I eat'

The suffix of the past tense is *-s*, which follows the stem directly.

tü-sa-k 'I came' *amiŗ-sa-k* 'I ate'

The suffix of the future tense is *-l*, which follows the stem directly.

qo-lä-p 'I will find'

The *-sä* particle that refers to remote future can occur after the suffix of future + verbal personal suffix.

4. Aspect in Samoyed

In the indicative mood, the Nganasan aorist has an indefinite character and its value depends on the aspect of the verb. The main aspectual distinction in Nganasan is between perfective and imperfective.

The aorist form is marked, it has two different suffixes showing the aspect of the verb. For this reason, they are not tense suffixes: it is the aspect of the verb that determines which suffix to choose. (However, there are a few verbs with double aspect: *h"aŋkuďa*: *h"aŋku"əm* 'I got drunk', *h"aŋkutum* 'I am drunk'.)

- coaffix of perfective verbs: -"Ə
  tuj-śa 'to come' *tuu-"ə-m* 'I came'
- coaffix of imperfective verbs: -NTU
  ńiliį-ďi 'to live' *ńiliį-tį-m* 'I live'

In Nenets „the verbs are divided into two groups with regard to their temporal relations. For momentaneous verbs, the indicative aorist expresses immediate past, and the indicative preterite expresses more remote past. For continuous verbs, the indicative aorist expresses present, and the indicative preterite expresses simple past" (Salminen 1998: 531).

	momentaneuos verb	**continuous verb**
indicative aorist	immediate past	present
indicative preterite	more remote past	simple past

Also in Selkup there is a coaffix (*-ŋ-*); it has just a morphophonological role, almost the same as in Tundra Nenets.

5. Tense and Aspect in the Uralic Languages and in the Languages of the Area

It is generally said that aspect was not a characteristic of Proto-Uralic (e.g. Pusztay 1977). The theories on the typicality of aspect in Proto-Uralic is based on primarily the Samoyedic languages. The only reconstructed tense suffix for PU is *-*ś* for past tense.

In Proto-Samoyed aspect or aktionsart must have been more prominent as it plays a more visible role in the Samoyedic verbal systems than it does in other Uralic languages. The reconstructed form of aorist is PS *-*ŋ(a)*-. As Janhunen remarks, „In the functional sense, the aorist is an archaic feature preserved only in Northern Samoyedic, but the category has formal parallels in Southern Samoyedic" (Janhunen 1998: 472).

The reconstructed form of past tense is *-*sa*-, whose continuation can be found in the North-Samoyedic languages and in Selkup. No other tense suffix can be reconstructed.

I selected three languages from the Central Siberian area. The Yenisei languages are represented by the Ket language, Yukaghir is an isolated language and Evenki represents the Mandzchu-Tungusic languages.

Comrie states that Ket distinguishes past from non-past, the latter (though not for all verbs) having a zero morph. It is possible that Ket at an earlier stage was non-tensed (Comric 1981).

There is no systematic past/nonpast distinction in the Yukaghir language. The unmarked tense-aspect form indicates both present and past time reference, while the suffix *-t(e)-* signals the future. Some grammars mention a different tense-system, e.g. Nikolaeva lists the aorist, analytical past tense (remote) and future tense (Nikoleva 2000), while Maslova (2003) writes about Tense-Aspect-Mood (TAM) forms.

There are twelve tense forms in Evenki: eight synthetic and four analytic (7 for past, 2 for present, 3 for future), and all of them have morphological markers (Nedjalkov 1997). The earlier studies mentioned fewer tense forms (e.g. Konstantinova 1968: aorist, past, recent past, and three future forms), but it can be established that in Evenki the tense-system is very differentiated.

6. Adjectival and Nominal Predication in the Samoyedic Languages

6.1. Nenets

In 3rd person present there is no copula. The special characteristic feature of Nenets is that the copula is missing also in the preterite. In the case of preterite, the verbal suffixes of the indicative preterite appear in nominal predicates, where the suffix of tense precedes the personal suffix. A copula appears only when expressing mood.
Let us see some examples of Nenets adjectival predicates:

(7) *Мань пирця-дм'.*
I tall-PrxSg1
'I am tall.'

(8) *Мань пирця -дамзь.*
I tall-PRET.PrxSg1
'I was tall.'

(9) *Петра пирця.*
Peter tall.
'Peter is tall.'

(10) *Петра пирця-зы.*
Peter tall- PRET.PrxSg3
'Peter was tall.'

The attributive adjective does not take a personal suffix at all.

(11) *Мань пирця хасава ӈацекэдм'.*
I tall man boy-PrxSg1
'I am a tall boy.'

(12) *Мань пирця хасава ӈацекэдамзы.*
I tall man boy-PRET.PrxSg1
'I was a tall boy.' (Roza Laptander, informant)

6.2. Nganasan

The construction of nominal predication is similar to that of Selkup since the suffixes of mood and tense are taken by a copula. What the predicative noun or adjective takes directly are only the personal suffixes. The personal suffix appears not only on the adjective, but also on the copula:

(13) *Мәпә ńaagəə-m.*
I good-PrxSg1
'I am good.'

(14) *Мәпә ńaagəə-m i-śüə-m.*
I good-PrxSg1 be-PERF-VxSg1
'I was good.'

The next example shows that in a mood other than the indicative the adjectival predicate requires a copula, and both elements take the personal suffix, but the suffix of past tense occurs only on the copula.

(15) *Тәпә četua bah^{i}a-ŋ ńandi̯-ti̯-ŋ.*
you very bad-PrxSg2 seem-Kimp-Sg2
'You seem to be a very bad (person).' (Labanauskas 2001: 55)

(16) *Təŋə-ďa hotəmə śürü-ďa sị̈rajkuə i-muŋh"a-ndu-". (Kəhị̈)*
summer-All grey winter-All white be-Vhab-Kimp-VxPl3
'In summer it is grey, in winter it is white. (partridge)' (Labanauskas 2001: 23)

There is a special group of adjectives that can occur in predicative position as verbs and in attributive position as adjectives and/or participles, derived by a -KƏƏ nominal suffix. The passive stem seems to be nominal, so this phenomenon can be explained by an overt zero-suffix.

təŋkəgəə 'strong' (usually attributive)

(17) *Bənsəmu" numaŋkumu", **təŋgə-tị̈-mị̈"**.*
all-PxPl1 young-PrxPl1 be.strong-Kimp-VxPl1
'We are all young and strong.' (Labanauskas 2001: 83)

(18) *Ɒanuə matənu **hojmi-nti**.*
real tent-Loc be.dark-Kimp-VxSg3
'There is darkness in the tent.' (Labanauskas 2001: 45)

However, there are some words with the -KƏƏ suffix in predicative position:

(19) *Śürüəďaδə" ďalị̈" kəəľikü", śürüəďaδə" hii" **najbəgəə"**.*
winter-Pl day-Pl short-Pl winter-Pl night-Pl long-Pl
'The winter days are short, the winter nights are long.' (Tereščenko 1973: 226)

6.3. Selkup

In a short article Alitkina (1983) argues that using a copula in the case of predicative adjectives is not obligatory, it can be a part of the nominal predicative construction.

> „В отличие от других самодийских языков, в селькупском языке имя прилагательное может выступать как именная часть составного именного сказуемого. В связи с этим следует сказать, что простое именное сказуемое можеть быть образовано в селькупском языке только от имён существительных и прилагательных." (Alitkina 1983: 33)

However, Tamás Janurik mentioned[1] that the distinction between adjectival and nominal predicates is obligatory, namely copula has to be a part of the adjectival predicative construction. Obligatory or not, it is obvious that the adjective at least c a n differ from the noun with respect to whether a copula occurs in the predicative construction or not.

(20) *mat nätäŋa-ŋ*
I girl-Coaf-PrxSg1
'I am a girl.'

(21) *me some-ŋị̈-mịt*
we good-Coaf-PrxPl1
'We are good.'

[1] I am grateful to Tamás Janurik for his comments to my presentation at Mikola 2004 Conference (Szeged, 2–4. September, 2004.)

(22) *ta* *iralị* *som* *e-za*
you husband-PxSg2 good be-PRET(-VxSg3)
'Your husband was good.'

A copula occuring in the past tense is not a Selkup peculiarity, since the same construction can be found in Nganasan, and – historically – in Nenets, too. However, in some sources a copula construction occurs also in the aorist:

(23) *mat ətiṗ šar ɛ̄-ŋa.*
I word heavy be-Coaf(-VxSg3)
'My word is heavy.'

(24) *Na qup pirqu ɛ̄-ŋa (pirqɛ̄ŋa).*
this man tall be-Coaf-(VxSg3)
'This man is tall.' (Kuznecova 1980: 266)

(25) *tat kịpľa ǟ-ŋa-ntị*
you small be-Coaf-VxSg2
'You are small.' (Hajdú 1968: 153)

(26) *mat orsịmịľ* *qum-ak* *ɛ̄-sa-k*
I strong man-PrxSg1 be-PRET-VxSg1
'I was a strong man.'

Comparing (25) and (26) we can see that while an adjectival predicate cannot take a personal suffix, a predicative noun can. Nenets fundamentally differs from the Selkup-type construction:

A COP-Vx (e.g. (25))
N-Prx COP-Vx (e.g. (26))

In other words, in the Selkup language only non-derived adjectives behave in this way. The number of these ancient adjectives is low:

soma 'good'	PS (SW: 132–133)
tɔ̄ntu 'wide'	PS (SW: 32)
wərqu 'big'	PS (SW: 19)
pirqu 'high/tall'	PS (SW: 125)
ńarkị 'red'	PS (SW: 107)
sərị 'white'	PS (SW: 138)
sarum 'thick, fat'	PS (SW: 36) ?

(The prevailing words in Nganasan have a -KƏƏ adjectival suffix /primarily dimensional adjectives/ or a -KUƏ suffix /primarily colour terms/: *tantəgəə* 'wide', *hirəgəə* 'tall/high', *sịrajkuə* 'white'.)

7. Encoding Adjectival Predication in the Uralic Languages and in the Languages of the Area

The structure of nominal predicates in the Finno-Ugric languages is basically non-verbal. Kangasmaa-Minn established three subtypes of the Finno-Ugric languages on the basis of the structure of adjectival predicates (Kangasmaa-Minn 1993):

I. The copula normally appears in the predicative construction even when it represents active indicative present 3rd person singular in the Balto-Finnic and Saami languages.

(27) Finnish: *Taivas **on** sininen ja valkoinen.* 'The sky is blue and white.'

II/a. The copula does not appear in a predicative construction representing active indicative present singular and plural 3rd person (Mari and Hungarian).

(28) Mari: *üdər čeber* 'The girl (is) pretty.'
üdərblak čeber 'The girls (are) pretty.'

II/b. In Mordvin, as opposed to Mari and Hungarian, in indicative present a nominal predicate lacks the copula in all persons:

(29) Mordvin: *alaša paro* 'The horse (is) good.'
parta-do 'You (are) good.'

III. In the Permian languages the copula is missing in all predicates belonging to the indicative present.

(30) Udmurt: *ćetći umoj* 'Mead (is) good.'
mon vumurt 'I (am) a water spirit.'

IV. The Ob-Ugrian languages show a mixture of Types (II) and (III): the copula is missing in the indicative present 3rd person (Mansi). It may occur in the 1st and 2nd persons (Khanti):

(31) Mansi: *näŋ jäi χum* 'You (are) a big man.'

(32) Khanti: *ma tàus ōsem* 'I am a Tungus.'

8. Adjectival Predication in the Languages of the Area

In Ket, which is classified as a tensed language, the predicative adjectives (and other non-verbal predicates) are marked by predicate suffixes:

(33) *at qä-ŕi* 'I am big.'

(34) *bu qä-ŕu* 'He/She is big.'

Yukaghir belongs to the group of non-tensed languages. Adjectives in Yukaghir are intransitive verbs, both in their predicative and attributive functions.

(35) *met mer-uu-jeŋ* 'I am going/I went.'

(36) *met me-wewe-jeŋ* 'I am strong.'

(37) *tudel me-werwe-j* 'He/She is strong.' (Hajdú 1975)

Evenki (Tungusic): Stassen points out that from the point of view of semantics, the verbal systems in Tungusic must be rated as having an originally aspectual orientation. The appeareance of the copula is not obligatory in Sg3.

(38) *bi alagumni bi-che-v*
I teacher be-PRET-VxSg1
'I was a teacher.'

(39) *minngi amim bejumimni (bi-si-n)*
my father-PxSg1 hunter be-PRES-VxSg3
'My father is a hunter.'

(40) *Ami-m engesi (bi-si-n).*
father-PxSg1 strong (be-PRES-Sg3)
'My father is strong.' (Nedjalkov 1997)

9. Stative Verb or Adjective?

Tundra Nenets and Nganasan are different in that in Nganasan adjectives are marked by (mostly non-productive) adjectival suffixes, while in Tundra Nenets nominals and stative verbs can be found, and the criteria of adjectives can hardly be established.

The main distinction between Nenets and Nganasan adjectives, according to my research, seem to be in the number of adjectival suffixes: in Nganasan there are more adjectival suffixes; most of them, however, are non-productive, and their origin is not clear. I try to expose a possible motivation of development in Nganasan.

In the sense of the Tensedness Hypothesis we expect that in Nenets, where

(a) fewer tense suffixes have developed,

(b) the aspect has no morphological marker,

property concept words should be lexicalised predominantly and more systematically as stative verbs.

I introduce lexicalised forms of some prototypical property concepts in Nenets and in Nganasan. (The table is representative, it does not include all prototypical property concepts.)

	Nenets	**Word class**		**Nganasan**
COLOUR				
'white'	*сэрако*	N (Adj)	Adj	*sirajkuə*
'muddy'	*яёна* *яёлтăна*	PtImp	Adj	*ďoďako*
'yellow'	*тасехэй*	Pt?	Adj	*toďakuə*
'black'	*пăриденя*	PtImp	Adj	*tusajkuə*

	Nenets	Word class		Nganasan
			N (Adj)	*heŋkə*
'red'	*няръяна*	PtImp	Adj	*ďabakuə*
'green'	*илебей*	Pt?	Adj	*toďako*
			Nder	*ńotərəku*
'blue'	*танзена*	PtImp	Adj?	*ŋindia"siə*
DIMENSION				
'big'	*ӧарка*	N (Adj)	Adj	*ani"ka*
'small'	*нё"лёко*	N (Adj)	Adj	*əliɣaku śiə"laku*
'tall/ high'	*пирця*	N (Adj)	Adj	*hirəgəə*
'low'	*ламту*	N (Adj)	Adj	*magəľükü*
'wide'	*лата*	N (Adj)	Adj	*tantəgəə*
'narrow'	*тыя(к)*	N (Adj)	Adj	*ďoptagəə*
'long'	*ямб*	N (Adj)	Adj	*najbagəə kuntiə*
'short'	*хэм' хэбиць*	N (Adj)	Adj	*kəəľikü*
'deep'	*ёря*	N (Adj)	Adj	*ďürəgəə*
'shallow'	*тора, торик*	N (Adj)	N (Adj)	*tiɣraa*
PHYSICAL PROPERTY				
'cold'	*тецьда ялда*	PtImp	Adj	*česəgəə*
			Pt	*češitiə*
'hot'	*ядембӑда*	PtImp	Adj	*hekəgəə*
			Pt	*hekutiə*
'hard'	*тоенана*	PtImp	Adj	*tuďaruə nosəgəə*
			PtImp	*tuďajkuə nośüčüə*
'soft'	*нюлӑк*	N (Adj)	Adj	*ńaməgəə lomnajkuə*
'heavy'	*сӑŋговота*	PtImp	Adj	*səŋkəgəə ďamələkə*
			PtImp	*səŋkutuə*
'light'	*сӣбя*	N (Adj)	Adj	*holəgəə*

	Nenets	Word class		Nganasan
				holə"ľikü
'bitter'	*ибцяда* *вăряăда*	PtImp	Adj	*tasəgəə*
			PtImp	*tasütüə*
VALUE				
'good'	*сăва*	N (Adj)	Adj	*ńaagəə*
'bad'	*вэва(ко)*	N (Adj)	Adj	*nəŋhə* *bah^{i}a*
SPEED				
'fast'	*мерета*	PtImp	Adj	*merəgəə* *meriṭiə*
	сăта	N (Adj)	PtImp	
'slow'	*яăна*	N (Adj)	PtImp	*ləδujśa*
				ďontaaga
AGE				
'young'	*ŋауь*	N	N (Adj)	*numajka* *numəə*
'old'	*вэсэй*	N	N (Adj)	*bəjkuə*
	пуху			*hünśərəə*
'new'	*еðэй*	N (Adj)	Adj	*meńďaďə*
'ancient'	*òă"и*	N	N (Adj)	*manuə*

(Nenets sources: Tereščenko 1965, 1948; Nganasan sources: Wagner-Nagy ms; Kosterkina 2001)

According to the behaviour of property concept words we can distinguish four subtypes of adjectival constructions:

GROUP 1

	Tundra Nenets	Nganasan
DIMENSION	N	ADJ (der)

Property concepts have a nominal nature in both languages. In Nganasan they have a nominal nature in both syntactic roles, and are marked morphologically (by non-productive suffixes).

The dimensional concepts constitute a group of words very different from colour terms. If we compare the dimensional adjectives of Nganasan and Nenets, we find a different situation compared to colour terms. In both languages, the type of dimension

is nominal. As it can be seen in both languages, the type of dimensional adjectives shows homogeneity. However, there is further difference in this type: in Nganasan it is clear, because the -KƏƏ suffix occurs almost in all adjectives, although they can appear without this suffix as well. This suffix occurs in other semantic types, too.

GROUP 2

COLOUR	V – N	ADJ

In Nganasan the basic colour terms have their own marker (-KUƏ). In Nenets the colour terms have a basically verbal nature, however there are some nominals, too, as Salminen illustrates that negative and attributive constructions exhibit the opposition clearly (Salminen 1993: 259):

(41) *wørk° nyí* *pøryidyeq*
bear not-Sg3 be.black.CONNEG
'The bear is not black.'

(42) *wørk° ser nyí ngaq.*
bear white not-Sg3 be-CONNEG
'The bear is not white.'

(43) *pøryidyenyâ wørk°*
be.black-PtImp bear
'black bear'

(44) *wørk° ser*
white bear
'white bear'

The basic colour terms show homogeneity as a nominal type field, the only exception being *hojməgəə / hojmintiə*, which is however not a basic colour term. There are other colour terms, derived from nouns by a similative suffix. This table does not include these lexemes. The use of these words is unclear:

'smoke' / 'fog' → 'blue, gray' Tne *śunraha* ~ Ng *kintərəku*
'gall' → 'yellow, green' Tne *paďeraha*
'grass' → 'green' Wne *jilŋī tōraha* 'grasgrün' (Lehtisalo 1956: 129a); Ng *ńotərəku*
'crow' → 'black' Ng *kularəku*
'sky' → 'blue' Ng *ŋuə śahịrəkị*

In Tundra Nenets the colour terms belong to the category of verb as stative verbs. In attributive position they occur as a participle.

GROUP 3

AGE	N	N (AdjRel)
VALUE	N	N (ADJ)

These types have a basically nominal nature in both languages. The two prototypical concepts 'good' and 'bad' as qualifiers seem to be nominal based. Tundra Nenets *sawa* is from Proto-Samoyed, Nganasan *ńaagəə* was loaned from Evenki. The -KƏƏ ending is just homonymous with the -KƏƏ adjectival suffix; however, the motivation of borrowing could be this. And this type has no morphological marker in Nganasan.

GROUP 4

SPEED	V – N	V/ADJ
PHYSICAL PROPERTY	V – N	V/ADJ

If we compare the relevant data of these languages, the following conclusions can be drawn: in Nenets we can establish a „split" and in Nganasan a morphologically marked „switch". While in Nenets concepts are lexicalised as a noun or a stative verb, in Nganasan there are stems that can occur in a verbal (as a participle) as well as a nominal (as adjectival) attributive construction. The marker of the adjectives is the same -KƏƏ suffix as in groups 1, 2 and 3. In predicative constructions – in contrast to dimensional adjectives – these words occur as stative verbs. As I see, the boundary can be drawn between the semantically homogeneous as well as closed prototypes and the other types. For this reason in the main semantic types, e.g. the type of COLOUR, the prototypical property concepts are lexicalised mainly as verbs, whereas the small, contradictorial types (AGE, VALUE, DIMENSION) are primarily nominal.

10. Summary

1) It is a well-known fact that in Proto-Uralic tense(-system) marking by suffixes prevailed over aspect. Although Hajdú considers that aspect could play an important role in Proto-Uralic, his statement is based primarily on the Samoyedic languages. For this reason in the Proto-Uralic (and later in the Proto-Samoyed) language the present tense was unmarked, furthermore a PU *-*ś* > PS *-*sa* tense-suffix can be reconstructed beyond doubt, which denoted the past tense. In other words, in Wetzer's sense the Uralic proto-language was tensed. On the other hand, a *-*ŋ*(*a*)- aorist suffix, which subsisted in all Samoyedic languages is reconstructed. Mikola (1988: 248) argues that this aorist suffix has subsisted in Nganasan as the -*ŋu* suffix of interrogative mood, e.g. *tuj-ŋu-ŋ?* 'Do you come?'. It has no reflex in other Samoyedic languages. But it should be noted that an unmarked aspect-system can hardly be (materially) reconstructed.

Thus, as I mentioned above, the adjectival predicate is similar to the nominal type according to the Tensedness Hypothesis in the tensed languages. I think this hypothesis is also valid for the Uralic proto-language, where the adjectival predicate had a nominal structure. However, it remains an open question whether we can talk about adjectival predication in Proto-Uralic, or rather nominal predication as a whole.

2) The above-mentioned PU *-*ś* past tense suffix has subsisted in all Samoyedic languages. In Selkup, and especially in Nganasan, further tenses and suffixes have developed; in Tundra Nenets this is the only suffix that can be classified as a suffix of tense. The aspectual distinction is a characteristic of all Samoyedic languages, especially of the northern branch. For this reason we can suppose that after the break-up of the Uralic proto-language it had become a typical feature of the area in question.

3) I can offer a functional explanation for the coexistence of the two aspectual coaffixes in Nganasan: the aorist has two different morphological markers, the stem directly takes a suffix, a so-called coaffix. From a synchronic point of view, in fact the redundant markedness of the aspect can be involved in the development of the secondary suffixes of tense, in the sense that before personal suffixes there is a need for tense markers.

4) From a synchronic point of view, there is a separate, different paradigm for past tense in Tundra Nenets. The Vx-Tx order is not common in the languages of the world. I argue that the development and formation of this paradigm, as well as the whole paradigm in Past Tense, can be explained by the existence of this single tense suffix. I do not think that tense suffixes and personal suffixes could merge provided that there are several tense suffixes coexisting. In the case of several suffixes this merger could not be possible. However, it is still questionable and doubtful how the structure of nominal predication, namely (N-Vx Cop-T-Vx) spread over the verbal paradigm.

5) The Tensedness Parameter does answer the question of what kind of correlation there is between expressing time and encoding adjectival predication (e.g. cause and effect, or diachronic order). The drift hand in hand (as Stassen wrote) can mean that the tense-system in Nganasan could develop in a parallel direction with the structure of adjectival predication (stative verb > adjective in some semantic types). The outcome of this process could be the emergence of an adjectival class in some semantic prototypes and syntactic positions. But the characteristic of aspect has also remained dominant.

6) In Tundra Nenets the relative dominance of aspect served the persistence of stative verbs, however the place of the split and the motivation of the development of verbal paradigm in past tense are not clear. I do not believe that further tense suffixes could have been agglutinated following a personal suffix, or that further verbal paradigms could have developed in this way.

7) Of the languages of the area, the Evenki language shows similar characteristics to Nganasan. As Stassen suggests, within the Uralic phylum the Samoyedic languages occupy a position which is similar to the position of the Tungusic languages in the Altaic phylum. I think it is true especially if we compare Evenki to Nganasan.

With regard to the Selkup language, we can consider that Selkup supports the plausibility of the conclusions we have drawn from comparing Nenets and Nganasan in many respects. First, the Selkup language has a complicated time-system with many suffixes, second, the nominal predicate is similar to that of Nganasan. At the same time, aspect is an unmarked, typical category. The Selkup language distinguishes nominal predicates and adjectival predicates; however, as opposed to Nganasan, markers have not developed.

ABBREVIATIONS

Adj	adjective	PRES	present
AdjRel	relational adjective	PRET	preterite
All	allative (postposition)	Prx	predicative suffix
AP	aspect-prominent (language)	Pt	participle
Coaf	coaffix	PtImp	imperfect participle
Conneg	connegative	PS	Proto-Samoyed
COP	copula	PU	Proto-Uralic
DEF	definiteness	Px	possessive suffix
EMPH	emphatic	SW	Janhunen 1977
Kimp	imperfective coaffix	T	tense
Loc	locative	Tne	Tundra Nenets
N	noun	TP	tense-prominent (language)
Nder	derived noun	Tx	tensesuffix
Ng	Nganasan	V	verb
Sg	singular	Vhab	habituative suffix
Pl	plural	Vx	verbal suffix
PERF	perfect	Wne	Forest Nenets

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