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## Clause Linkage In Ket

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## **Chapter 8. Areal influence on Ket syntax**

As we have already pointed out in Chapter 2, Ket is quite complex and hard to pigeonhole within a single typological account. The majority of structural features complicating a clear-cut typological analysis of Ket are the result of a peculiar process of structural mimicry, or ‘typological accommodation’ in Vajda’s (2009) terms. Due to the long-term areal contact with languages of a radically different structural type, the Yeniseian languages have gradually adapted themselves to the structural type of the surrounding languages, while preserving the core features of their grammar that clearly distinguish them from the rest of Central Siberia. The aim of this chapter is to show that in addition to the phonological and morphological levels this peculiar phenomenon can also be observed at the syntactic level, namely in the formation of adverbial and relative clauses.<sup>121</sup>

The structure of the chapter is as follows. Section 8.1 provides a concise overview of the contact situation in Central Siberia. Section 8.2 outlines the core typological features of Ket as opposed to those of the surrounding languages. In section 8.3 we discuss the phenomenon of typological accommodation in Ket at the phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. Section 8.4 summarizes the chapter.

### 8.1 Contact situation in Central Siberia

Central Siberia<sup>122</sup> covers a vast territory in the Asian part of Russia extending from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the borders of Mongolia and China in the south, along the large watershed of the Yenisei River. In the west, the area borders on the easternmost regions of the Ob river watershed, while the westernmost watershed regions of the Lena River and Lake Baikal form its border in the east. This territory is home to a large and highly diverse group of peoples whose languages belong to at

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<sup>121</sup> In this chapter, we consider only the indigenous languages of Central Siberia. The effect of massive Russian contact influence on Ket as well as the other Siberian languages that has mostly occurred over the past century is not relevant to the purposes of this chapter. The information about the Russian influence on clause linkage in Ket, however, can be found in the previous chapters.

<sup>122</sup> Central Siberia is a conventional term with no official geographic or administrative boundaries. In our definition, we follow Anderson (2004: 1). This definition encompasses the following present-day Russian administrative regions: Gorno-Altai, Tuva, Xakasia, Krasnoyarsk Krai, and Tomsk Oblast, as well as eastern Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug and western parts of Irkutsk Oblast.

least five distinct genetic language units: Yeniseian, Samoyedic, Ob-Ugric, Tungusic, and Turkic.<sup>123</sup> The map in Map 8.1 provides a slightly simplified illustration of how these peoples used to be distributed across Central Siberia.



**Map 8.1.** Ethnic groups in Central Siberia (ca. 1600 AD) (Vajda 2004: ix)

As we mentioned in Chapter 2, the Yeniseian-speaking peoples seem once to have occupied a large territory stretching from Northern Mongolia to the Ural Mountains.

<sup>123</sup> The Samoyedic and Ob-Ugric languages are traditionally considered a part of the Uralic language family, while Tungusic and Turkic are argued to be a part of the very controversial Altaic family. Furthermore, they are sometimes united into the even more controversial ‘Uralic-Altaic’ genealogical unit (cf. Sinor 1988).

However, when the first Russians entered Siberia in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, the remaining Yeniseian tribes were spread only along the Yenisei River surrounded by the other Siberian peoples. In the north, these were Nenets, Enets, and Nganasan tribes speaking Northern Samoyedic languages. In the eastern regions lived Selkups speaking a Southern Samoyedic language and the eastern Khanty. The western parts were dominated by Evenki speaking a Tungusic language, while in the south lived a number of Turkic-speaking groups and the now extinct Southern Samoyedic peoples (Mator and Kamassin).<sup>124</sup>

The indigenous peoples of Central Siberia have undergone centuries of interaction, which is reflected in their languages. For example, Selkup used to serve as a lingua franca among the tribes inhabiting the northwest of the region. Thus, it could have been the source of certain features like, for instance, prolative case, spread in these languages (Anderson 2004: 5). Not to mention the occurrence of various mutual loanwords, etc.

The contact situation for the Yeniseian languages depended on whether they belonged to the Northern branch or to the Southern one, though in the latter case there is not so much information available. Arin, Assan and Pumpokol, the Southern Yeniseian languages, became extinct already during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore they were rather scarcely documented. Somewhat more documentation exists on Kott, another representative of the Southern branch, which survived until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, the existing materials on these languages show numerous Turkic loans mainly in the realms of food, stockbreeding, farming, and metallurgy proving that they were in direct association with stockbreeding Turkic-speaking tribes. Moreover, some of the southern Yeniseian groups became later absorbed by their Turkic neighbors: the Kott and Assan mainly shifted to Khakas, while some Arin and Pumpokol, in addition to Khakas, shifted also to Chulym Turkic (Anderson 2004: 8).<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> The Mator language had three dialects: Nuclear Mator, Karagas and Taigi (the latter two are sometimes considered as separate languages). The language became extinct by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century; Taigi was replaced by Turkic varieties spoken in the Altai-Sayan area, while the Karagas shifted to Buryat, a Mongolic language. The Kamassian language had two dialects: Kamas and Koibal; the speakers of the latter shifted to a Turkic language as well.

<sup>125</sup> Interestingly, some groups of Turkic and Samoyedic speaking tribes living in the southern regions probably originally spoke some undocumented Yeniseian language (cf. Anderson 2004: 8-9).

Borrowing in the other direction, i.e. into Turkic varieties, happened as well. For example, Butanaev (2004: 227-8) lists a few dozen miscellaneous Yeniseian loans into Khakas ranging thematically from flora and fauna to natural phenomena and hunting and fishing.

The Northern Yeniseian languages, Ket and Yugh, unlike their southern relatives, had no direct contact with Turkic peoples. They lived as small groups nomadizing in a vast northern taiga forest along the Yenisei surrounded by reindeer-breeding tribes. The contacts with these tribes, the Nenets and Enets in the north and the Evenki in the west, were rather sporadic and tended to be generally hostile. Therefore, there are only a few identifiable loans into the Ket dialects (Northern and Central) from these languages, all belonging to the realm of winter clothing and reindeer breeding. The number of Yeniseian loans into Northern Samoyedic and Tungusic is even smaller, with a notable example being the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns in Forest Enets most likely borrowed from Ket (cf. Hajdú 1983).

Unlike its northern relatives, the Selkup, residing in the eastern territories and speaking a Southern Samoyedic language, developed quite friendly relations with the Ket to the extent that there were a considerable number of intertribal marriages.<sup>126</sup> Selkup borrowings into Ket are more common, though they are likewise mostly restricted to lexical items relating to reindeer breeding and clothing. Ket loanwords in Selkup are rather scarce.

In general, the contact situation in Central Siberia can be characterized as a rather complex mosaic of interactions among the indigenous languages, where all the linguistic groups have borrowed from each other at some point in their history (cf. Anderson 2004: 21). Among them, the Yeniseian languages seem to be both the most resistant and the least pervasive with respect to lexical borrowing (cf. Vajda and Nefedov 2009).<sup>127</sup> This fact can be accounted for by the overall complexity of the

<sup>126</sup> These amicable relations between Ket and Selkup peoples are best illustrated by the fact that the ethnonym *la'k* 'Selkup' in Ket originates from the word *ляга-ляқа* 'friend' in Selkup.

<sup>127</sup> As Vajda (forthcoming) notes, a larger number of loanwords in the Southern Yeniseian languages may reflect the fact that these languages were recorded only during the final stages of obsolescence, when all of the remaining speakers had already switched either to one of the Siberian Turkic dialects or to Russian. A somewhat similar situation can be observed with the majority of modern Ket speakers.

Yeniseian languages, therefore the number of speakers of the surrounding languages conversant in a Yeniseian language was very small (cf. Vajda, forthcoming).<sup>128</sup> It was usually the Yeniseian who had to learn an outside language, which is another reason for a rather limited exposure of the Yeniseian lexical and structural phenomena to the neighboring languages.

## 8.2 Core typological features of Yeniseian

All major linguistic families in Central Siberia like Turkic, Tungusic, Samoyedic and Ob-Ugric conform to a common typological profile: they are non-tonal and have suffixing nominal and verbal inflectional morphology. By contrast, the typical grammatical and phonological characteristics of the Yeniseian family present a completely different picture. Unlike their neighbors, the Yeniseian languages have phonemic tones (tonemes), possessive prefixes, and prefixing polysynthetic verb morphology clearly distinguishing them from the rest of Central Siberia. All these characteristics in Modern Ket were already described in some detail in Chapter 2. For the sake of convenience, we will briefly outline them below with additional illustrations from the other Yeniseian languages.

Phonemic tones in the domain of monosyllabic words are a characteristic feature of Yeniseian phonology. There are four of them in Ket and Yugh: high, laryngealized, rising/falling, and falling. Example (8.1) provides an illustration of the tonemes with their Yugh counterparts respectively.

(8.1)	Ket	Yugh	
	<i>qām</i>	<i>χām</i>	‘arrow’
	<i>deʔ</i>	<i>deʔ</i>	‘lake’
	<i>hīl</i>	<i>fīl</i>	‘gut’
	<i>qəj</i>	<i>χəʰ:j</i>	‘bear’

Although it seems impossible to prove the existence of tonemic distinctions in the other Yeniseian languages in the absence of actual audio recordings, systematic

<sup>128</sup> In fact, some speakers bilingual in Ket and Selkup admit that Ket is much more difficult (Kazakevič, pc.).

peculiarities in the transcription of these languages show rather convincingly that they had at least the high and laryngealized tonemes, too (cf. Verner 1990).

Possessive prefixes on nominals is another distinctive feature of Yeniseian lacking in the surrounding languages. In Chapter 2, we describe these prefixes as ditropic clitics, which is what they have actually become in Modern Ket and Yugh over the course of time. Examples (8.2) and (8.3) illustrate their prefixal use in both languages.

## (8.2) Ket

*daqu<sup>2</sup>s<sup>1</sup>*  
 da-qu<sup>2</sup>s  
 3SG.M-tent  
 ‘His birch-bark tent’

## (8.3) Yugh

*dafi<sup>2</sup>p*  
 da-fi<sup>2</sup>b  
 3SG.M-son  
 ‘His son’

In the Southern Yeniseian languages possessive morphemes are recorded as prefixes as well, but the existing records give no indication whether they really had a ‘ditropic’ behavior or not. In (8.4), one can see a Kott possessive phrase reconstructed by Werner (1997: 66).

## (8.4) Kott

*ŋo:p*  
 ŋ-o:p  
 1SG.POSS-father  
 ‘my father’

Finally, probably the most prominent typological feature of Yeniseian is prefixing, highly polysynthetic verbal morphology. As claimed in Vajda (2008), the Proto-Yeniseian verbal root was always in final position preceded by a string of morphemes conveying personal cross-reference, TAM properties, animacy, and so on. A tentative



position model of the Proto-Yeniseian verb is given below in Figure 8.1 (cf. the ten-slot model of the Modern Ket verb in Section 2.3).

morphemes outside the phonological verb		P4	P3	P2	P1	verb base (bare root or verb deriving prefix <i>d, l</i> + root)
Subject NP	verbal complement (adverb, object NP)	shape classifier ( <i>d, n, h<sup>w</sup></i> , etc.)	animacy classifier: <i>d</i> (AN), <i>b</i> (N)	tense, mood, aspect (originally auxiliary verb <i>s, ya, a, o</i> + suffix <i>l, n</i> )	undergoer subject agreement (1 or 2 p)	

Figure 8.1. Proto-Yeniseian finite verb (Vajda 2008)

The Modern Ket verb perfectly fits the generally accepted definition of a polysynthetic verb with obligatory pronominal marking of the arguments and incorporation, so that it can serve alone as ‘a free-standing utterance without reliance on context’ (Evans and Sasse 2002: 3). Example (8.5) contains a Ket verb form that cross-references two arguments, while in example (8.6) one can see a Yugh verb form with an incorporated object.

(8.5) *dbilbet*

d{i}{}<sup>8</sup>-b<sup>3</sup>-l<sup>2</sup>-bed<sup>0</sup>  
 1SG<sup>8</sup>-3N<sup>3</sup>-PST<sup>2</sup>-make<sup>0</sup>  
 ‘I made it.’

(8.6) *daχusi rgeŋt*<sup>129</sup>

da<sup>14</sup>-qus<sup>13</sup>-r<sup>3</sup>-ked<sup>0</sup>  
 3F<sup>14</sup>-tent<sup>13</sup>-PST<sup>3</sup>-make<sup>0</sup>  
 ‘She made a birch-bark tent.’

Similar features in the verbal system can be found in the rest of the Yeniseian languages as well. Example (8.7) illustrates a Kott finite verb form.

<sup>129</sup> The Yugh verb and the Kott verb below are analyzed according to the position model proposed by Werner (1997: 106-107) and (1998: 127-129) respectively.

(8.7) *bapajan*b<sup>5</sup>-a<sup>4</sup>-pa<sup>j</sup><sup>0</sup>-aŋ<sup>3</sup>3N<sup>5</sup>-NPST<sup>4</sup>-make<sup>0</sup>-1SG<sup>3</sup>

'I make it.' (Werner 1998: 132)

All these features are genuinely Yeniseian, i.e. can be traced back to the Proto-Yeniseian stage. This sets this family apart from the other languages of Central Siberia that are exclusively non-tonal, suffixing and agglutinating. A closer inspection, though, reveals that over the centuries these features, at least in Modern Ket, have undergone some peculiar modifications mimicking the dominant language type in the surrounding languages. This process attested on all levels of Modern Ket is called 'typological accommodation'. The uniqueness of Modern Ket grammar seems to be largely a result of this process.

## 8.3 Typological accommodation

Typological accommodation is a term coined by Vajda (2009) to describe the hybridization phenomena undergone by Modern Ket at the phonological and morphological levels. It is distinct from more traditional terms such as 'metatypy' or 'grammatical calquing', since accommodation does not represent a replacement of an original feature but rather its adaptation to a different morphological type creating a rather unique hybrid structure.

In this section, we show how the core Yeniseian morphological and phonological traits were affected by accommodation as well as propose that this can also be observed at the syntactic level.

## 8.3.1 Typological accommodation at the phonological level

As we already mentioned above, the phonemic tones representing a distinctive feature of the Ket phonology occur only in the domain of monosyllabic words. Upon suffixation they usually get eroded and replaced by a rise and fall of pitch on the first two syllables that resembles word-initial stress, e.g. *báŋkà* 'on the ground' [*<ba<sup>2</sup>ŋ* 'ground'+ *ka* (locative morpheme)]. A similar process can be observed in nominal compounds consisting of two monosyllabic words, e.g. *bóktis* 'flint' [*<bo<sup>2</sup>k* 'fire' + *tí<sup>2</sup>s* 'stone'] (cf. Georg 2007: 56ff). According to Vajda (forthcoming)

the restriction of such phonemic distinctions in Ket to monosyllables only is the result of typological accommodation under the influence of the root-initial agglutinating languages of the surrounding peoples. One of the fundamental phonological features of these languages is the difference between the vocalism of the initial syllable and that of the following syllables: only the initial syllable nucleus (i.e. one syllable) is capable of reflecting the full range of phonemic distinctions, whereas the quality of the other syllables becomes reduced (cf. Guzeev and Burykin 2007: 5). With the full range of tonal distinctions largely restricted to the domain of monosyllabic words, Ket seems to organize its phonological system in fashion analogous to the surrounding languages.

### 8.3.2 Typological accommodation at the morphological level

The system of relational morphemes in Ket described in Section 2.2.6 rather closely resembles the system of nominal inflectional suffixes found in the surrounding languages. But as Vajda (forthcoming) notes they cannot be easily subsumed under the notion of ‘suffix’. Their status fluctuates between that of suffix, clitic and independent word depending on various discourse factors. In addition, these ‘suffixes’ do not form a discrete inflectional paradigm, and therefore it is rather problematic to regard them as true inflections (cf. Vall and Kanakin 1985).

Possessive prefixes have likewise been accommodated to mimic the neighboring languages with their possessive or genitive suffixes, which has led to a rather rare phenomenon called a ditropic clitic. In Modern Ket, possessive markers are capable of encliticizing to the preceding word, even if it is outside the possessive phrase itself. The original proclitic nature of these morphemes reveals itself only in sentence-initial position or when there is a significant pause before them (cf. Section 2.2.1 for more detail).

Finally, typological accommodation can be observed in the verbal morphology of Modern Ket as well. We have already mentioned in Section 2.2.8 that Modern Ket verbs can be conventionally divided into right-headed and left-headed, depending on the position of the semantic root (head). In right-headed verbs the semantic head always occupies the rightmost position (slot P0), with a string of affixes preceding

it. Verbs of this type constitute the oldest layer of verbs in the language and belong to currently unproductive patterns. An example of a right-headed verb is provided in (8.8).

(8.8) *dáŋGèj*

d{i}<sup>8</sup>-aŋ<sup>4</sup>-q<sup>2</sup>-e<sup>j0</sup>  
 1<sup>8</sup>-3AN.PL<sup>4</sup>-PST<sup>2</sup>-kill<sup>0</sup>  
 ‘I killed them’

All the productive verb patterns in Modern Ket are exclusively left-headed, i.e. with the semantic head (usually in the form of an action nominal) being placed at the leftmost margin (slot P7), so that the positions that follow it might be regarded as a string of suffixes. The original root position in the left-headed verbs contains a marker of transitivity or aspect, originating from a semantically eroded verb root, as in example (8.9) below.

(8.9) *da/dáɔŋgòl/bet*

d{u}<sup>8</sup>-aldo<sup>7</sup>-aŋ<sup>6</sup>-k<sup>5</sup>-o<sup>4</sup>-l<sup>2</sup>-bed<sup>0</sup>  
 3<sup>8</sup>-fell.ANOM<sup>7</sup>-3AN.PL<sup>6</sup>-TH<sup>5</sup>-PST<sup>4</sup>-PST<sup>2</sup>-ITER<sup>0</sup>  
 ‘He was felling them (trees).’

Verbs of this type clearly tend to imitate the suffixing structures dominant in the surrounding languages. Nonetheless, as Vajda (forthcoming) notes, despite this rearrangement of the semantic head from final to initial position, the presence of the original root position is obligatorily required in every left-headed verb. Such behavior is not usually associated with prototypical suffixes, and therefore it is not appropriate to analyze these verbs as suffixing.

## 8.3.3 Typological accommodation at the syntactic level

In addition to phonology and morphology, typological accommodation in Modern Ket can be observed at the syntactic level, with regard to formation of subordinate constructions. There is a very well known cross-linguistic generalization about polysynthetic languages claiming that they are largely devoid of overtly marked

subordination (Heath 1975, Mithun 1984).<sup>130</sup> Baker (1996: 491) in his study of polysynthetic languages makes an even stronger claim that polysynthesis is not compatible with the existence of nonfinite clauses at all. Therefore, from the point of view of a prototypical polysynthetic language one would expect Ket to have subordinated structures in the form of formally independent strings of clauses, and indeed there are such constructions in the language, as we have seen in the previous chapters. For example, they are frequent with various types of complement taking predicates (cf. Chapter 5). At the same time, in addition to such paratactical constructions, Ket exhibits a rather wide range of formally distinct subordinating structures, especially in the realm of adverbial clauses (cf. Chapter 6). Not surprisingly, these structures clearly resemble subordinate constructions in the other languages of Central Siberia. Still, the important difference is that in these constructions Ket tends to use fully finite verbs, while the surrounding languages favor non-finite constructions (Čeremisina et al. 1984, 1986).

### 8.3.3.1 Adverbial clauses

One of the distinctive features of the indigenous languages in Siberia is the use of case morphology to mark various functional types of adverbial relations. Such case-marked subordinate constructions are reported in almost all languages surrounding Ket, but to varying degrees (Anderson 2004: 65). In these constructions, cases usually attach to various kinds of non-finite verb forms. In Tungusic and Turkic languages, for example, these are participles, as can be seen in examples (8.10)-(8.11) below.

#### (8.10) Evenki

*minduk pekture:vunme ganadukin bega ittenen*

min-duk	pekture:vun-me	ga-na-duk-in	bega	itten-e-n
I-ABL	gun-ACC	take-PTCP-ABL-3	month	pass-NFUT-3

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

<sup>130</sup> The number of polysynthetic languages mentioned in the literature as having overtly marked subordination is quite small. These include Chukotian languages, Eskimo, Dalabon, Rembarnga (Evans 2006: 57), Tlingit (Mithun 1984: 507).

(8.11) Tuvan

*men kelgenimde ažildaarmen*

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

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

In the Selkup subordinate structures, case marking appears on various verbal nouns as in (8.12).

(8.12) Selkup

*qumitit kit qanti tüptääqin č'asiq esikka*

qum-itit kit qan-ti tü-ptää-qin č'asiq es-ikka  
person-PL river bank-ILL come-VN-LOC cold become-HAB.3.PAST

‘When the people were approaching the river, it was getting cold.’

(Anderson 2004: 67)

In Enets, case markers can be attached to a bare verb stem:

(8.13) Enets

*sIra? niñ kodiahaðoñ ŋo:ñ desuma?*

sIra? niñ kodia-hað-oñ ŋo:-ñ desuma?  
snow.GEN on sleep-ABL-PROX.1SG leg-1SG get.sick-AOR.3SG

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

Finally, in Eastern Khanty, there are examples, although they seem to be quite rare, in which the locative case marker attaches to a converb to form a subordinate construction as in (8.14).

(8.14) Eastern Khanty

*tʃimlali amisminnə, ni mənäyən juyatə*

tʃiml-ali amis-min-nə ni mənä-yən juyə-tə  
a.little-DIM sit-CVB-LOC woman go-PST0.3SG gather.woods-PST0.3SG

‘After sitting awhile, the woman went off to gather firewood’

(Filchenko 2010: 470)

As demonstrated in Chapter 6, adverbial clauses in Ket make use of postposed relational morphemes in much the same fashion as in the above examples. However,

while these languages attach relational morphemes to non-finite forms, in Ket these morphemes are attached to fully finite verbs, as is illustrated in the example below.

(8.15) *búliay hita bān tkóldo-diŋten, lámga t-tól'araq*

bul-aj hita bān d{u}⁸-Ø⁶-k⁵-o⁴-l²-do⁰-diŋten lámka d{u}⁸)-t⁵-o⁴-l²-a¹-daq⁰  
 leg-PL down NEG 3⁸-3N⁶-TH⁵-PST⁴-PST²-watch⁰-ADESS on.a.side 3⁸-TH⁵-PST⁴-PST²-3SS¹-fall⁰  
 ‘He fell down, because he didn’t mind his step (lit. he didn’t watched below  
 (his) legs).’

(Kotorova and Nefedov, forthcoming)

The use of an action nominal, i.e. the only non-finite verb form in Ket, is possible in such constructions as well, but it is less frequent and much more limited with respect to the range of relational morphemes that can be attached (cf. Chapter 6 for more details). Example (8.16) illustrates an action nominal with the locative marker in Ket.

(8.16) *āb isqo-ya qonijəbən*

āb isqo-ka qonij⁷-o⁴-b³-{}q}on⁰  
 1SG.POSS fish.ANOM-LOC dark⁷-PST⁴-3N³-become⁰  
 ‘When I was fishing, it became dark.’

## 8.3.3.2 Relative clauses

Such functional-structural parallelism between non-finite forms in the surrounding languages and finite verbs in Ket is likewise attested in relative clauses. As shown in Pakendorf (2012), Turkic, Tungusic and Uralic languages share a common relativization pattern involving preposed participial relative clauses with a ‘gapped’ relativized noun phrase. The examples below illustrate this strategy in some of the neighboring languages.

## (8.17) Evenki

*bi Turudu alaguvdžarildu asatkardu meŋurve bu:m*

bi Turu-du alaguv-džari-l-du asatka-r-du meŋur-ve bu:-m  
 1SG T.-DAT study-SIM.PTCP-PL-DAT girl-PL-DAT money-ACC give.NFUT-1SG  
 ‘I gave money to the girls who study in Tura.’ (Pakendorf 2012: 258)

## (8.18) Tuvan

*bistiŋ dū:n čora:n čerivis čaraš boldu*

bistiŋ dū:n čor-a:n čer-ivis čaraš bol-du  
 1PL.GEN yesterday go-PPT place-POSS.1PL beautiful be-PSTII.3SG

‘The place we went yesterday was beautiful.’ (Anderson and Harrison 1999: 20)

## (8.19) Enets

*otīdar enčir ni tu?*

otī-da-r enči-r ni tu?  
 wait-SIM.PTCP-POSS.2SG.NOM person-POSS.2SG.NOM NEG.S:3SG come.CONNEG

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

## (8.20) Nganasan

*xindža kēmaduodejnē kolī bikē kađzanu ičuo*

xindža kēma-duode-j-nē kolī bikē kađzanu ičuo  
 at.night catch-PPT-ACC.PL-GEN.POSS.1SG fish river.GEN close.to be.PRS.3SG

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

## (8.21) Selkup

*qorqit qətpiá ɔ:tæ*

qorqi-t qət-piá ɔ:tæ  
 bear-GEN kill-PST.PTCP reindeer-NOM

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

## (8.22) Eastern Khanty

*mā wermäl rit*

mā wer-m-äl rit  
 1SG do-PP-3SG canoe

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

This closely resembles the major relativization pattern in Modern Ket (cf. Chapter 7), the only difference being that Ket usually makes use of finite verbs in the same way as the languages above use participles, see for example (8.23).

(8.23) *āt āp dútawət bisep tsítejqàjit*

ād āb du<sup>8</sup>-t<sup>5</sup>-a<sup>4</sup>-qut<sup>0</sup> biseb d{i}<sup>8</sup>-sitej<sup>7</sup>-q<sup>5</sup>-a<sup>4</sup>-it<sup>0</sup>  
 1SG 1SG.POSS 3M<sup>8</sup>-TH<sup>5</sup>-NPST<sup>4</sup>-lie<sup>0</sup> sibling 1<sup>8</sup>-wake<sup>7</sup>-TH<sup>5</sup>-3M<sup>4</sup>-MOM.TR<sup>0</sup>

‘I wake up my sleeping brother.’



Action nominals can also be found in relative clauses as illustrated in (8.24), but they are not that frequent and tend to be more lexicalized (cf. Chapter 7 for more details).

(8.24) *nī bʌʔn*

<i>nī</i>	<i>bəʔn</i>
dive.ANOM	duck

‘a diving duck / a duck which is diving’

#### 8.4 Summary of Chapter 8

In this chapter, we considered the Ket language in the areal environment of Central Siberia. Surrounded by languages of a radically different typological profile, Ket has undergone a number of very interesting changes. First of all, on the one hand, over the centuries Ket has remained rather resistant to lexical borrowings from the surrounding languages, with a very small number of loanwords in the basic vocabulary.<sup>131</sup> On the other hand, this centuries-long contact has exerted significant influence on the core typological traits of the Ket grammar that have no analog in the area, yielding a rather unique structural hybrid. Vajda (forthcoming) calls this process ‘typological accommodation’, since the affected traits were not replaced but rather accommodated to mimic the typological type of the surrounding languages. In addition to the phonological and morphological levels, the result of structural mimicry can be observed at the syntactic level, namely, in the domain of subordinate constructions. As we have seen, formation of adverbial and relative clauses in Ket clearly imitates that of the surrounding languages and does not conform to the expected ‘polysynthetic’ pattern.<sup>132</sup> At the same time, Ket adverbial and relative clauses resist accommodating a participle-like morphology and remain fully finite, which reflects the general tendency among polysynthetic languages not to have truly non-finite forms (cf. Nichols 1992, Baker 1996).

<sup>131</sup> Indeed, Ket is one of the languages with the lowest borrowing rate in the basic vocabulary according to the data of The World Loanword Database [available online at <http://wold.clld.org/vocabulary/18>, accessed on 2015-02-16].

<sup>132</sup> Interestingly, a somewhat similar situation is observed by Evans (2006) in Dalabon and Rembarnga, Gunwinyguan languages spoken in Australia. Despite being polysynthetic languages, they exhibit a number of formally distinct subordinate constructions (including case-marked verb forms). As Evans (2006: 56) notes, this seems to be the result of regular contact with the Yolngu languages which are not polysynthetic and have case morphology and nonfinite constructions of various kinds.

This tendency to retain a fully finite verb in subordinate constructions structurally similar to those with non-finite verbs in the other languages of the area is a further evidence in support of Vajda's (forthcoming) claim about the hybrid nature of Ket grammatical structure where alongside an overlay of areal features the core features have remained intact.