

0. Foreword

The present work provides a concise grammatical description of Even (otherwise known as Lamut), one of the Tungusic languages of Siberia. This grammatical sketch differs from the previous works on Even grammar in that 1) it is confined to synchronic description; 2) it foregrounds the functional aspects of grammar; 3) it focuses on those topics that are of interest from a typological viewpoint. The present grammatical sketch consists of three major parts. The first part "Essentials of Even grammar" includes the following chapters: "General data on Even", "Phonological introduction", "Morphology", "Syntax" (general information, partly to be elaborated in what follows).

The second part "Topics in Even syntax" is devoted to the study of four particular syntactic phenomena that appear to be most intriguing in a typological perspective. The fifth chapter contains the description of the adversative ("adversative passive") constructions, which share features with prototypical passives, on the one hand, and with (nonvolitional) permissive-causatives, on the other hand. The sixth chapter deals with basic (formal and diathesis) types of reciprocals, in particular, with the possessive reciprocal constructions where the subject is coreferential with the possessor in an object NP. The seventh chapter "The structure of the nominal phrase: agreement and Attribute Raising" examines the interrelation between syntactic, semantic and pragmatic structures of the attributive nominal phrase. It is shown that the pragmatic salience of an attribute can condition a "split" of head-like properties between NP-constituents. The eighth chapter deals with rules of relativization: constraints on the primary (gapping) relativization strategy, strategy for relativization of Possessor NPs, as well as rules of internal relative clause formation.

Finally, the third part contains a folklore text (in Okhotsk dialect) with translation, as well as the relevant bibliography.

PART 1: Essentials of Even grammar

1. General data on Even

1.1. General socio- and geolinguistic information

Even is the language of a minor ethnic group, known as Evens or Lamuts. The ethnonym Even currently accepted in the Russian specialist literature is also the most wide-spread Even name for themselves.

Genetically, Even is a Tungusic language and belongs (apart from Evenki, Negidal and Solon) to the Northern (Siberian) branch of the Manchu-Tungusic languages. Morphologically, Even (as well as the other Tungusic languages) is an agglutinating suffixing language, syntactically, an (nominative-) accusative head-final language.

According to the latest census of population in 1989 the total number of Evens is 17, 055. Despite their small numbers Evens are spread across a huge area in North-Eastern Siberia. The majority of Evens (9, 216) are currently resident in the Yakut (Saxa) Republic, 4, 070 in the Magadan region, 1, 683 in the Khabarovsk (Xabarovsk) region and 1, 642 in the Kamchatka region of Russian Federation. Still smaller groups of Evens are scattered across the Chukchi and Koryak Autonomous Areas.

According to the 1989 census statistics 43,8 % of ethnic Evens speak Even as their mother tongue. The language retention rates are higher among elderly Evens, among Evens engaged in traditional activities (e.g., reindeer-breeding) and in places of concentration of Even population.

At present, the majority of Evens are bilingual, that is speak Russian fluently, as well. Multilingual Evens are largely resident in Yakutia and also speak Yakut (a Turkic language of Siberia).

Even is used as means of communication in every-day life, in particular in family life and in monolingual groups (for example, in reindeer-breeder teams).

In communities with a concentration of Even population Even is used as a means of instruction in the preliminary grade of school and is taught as a subject in primary school. At a higher level of education Even is taught at some pedagogical colleges of northern nationalities, at the Faculty of Peoples of the Far North of Hertzen State Pedagogical University (St.Petersburg) and at the

department of Northern Philology of the State University in Yakutsk.

Even has a written form (see below), which is used quite extensively in publication (of textbooks for primary schooling, of fiction - both original and translated from Russian). There have been published methodic literature for teachers of Even, bilingual dictionaries, phrase-books, etc.

1.2. Writing system and written form

The first attempt to introduce a writing system for Even was made in the middle of the 19th century by the Russian missionary S. Popov. In 1858 he published 'The Tungus ABC with prayers', written in a simplified Church Slavonic script. This textbook, however, has, apparently, never been put into practical use.

The first writing system that gained some currency was introduced in the early 1930s. Originally, it was based on the Latin alphabet, from 1937 on on the Cyrillic alphabet. In 1958 several special letters (e.g., *•*, *ŋ*) were added to the Even alphabet. It should be noted, however, that in view of dialect disparity the adopted writing system is not equally suitable for speakers of all dialects. Therefore in the 1980s there was an attempt to change Even spelling system in order to make it more similar to the Yakut and, consequently, more comprehensible for speakers of Western dialects, resident in Yakutia. The proposed changes, however, have gained only a restricted currency.

Standard ("literary") Even is based on Eastern dialects, in particular, on the Ola dialect, spoken in the Magadan region. Standard Even has not yet achieved recognition as a means of communication among speakers of different dialects. It is less intelligible for speakers of Western dialects and is largely restricted to the written form of language.

1.3. Language contacts

The divergence of the Prototungusic language, conditioned by migration of the Tungusic tribes from the region of lake Baikal, dates back, apparently, to the beginning of the first millennium A.D. In the 12th-13th centuries this migration process was intensified by expansion of Yakut tribes to the basin of the Lena river. Expansion of Evens to the North involved assimilation of the Yukagir population, while migration to the East meant assimilation of the Koryak population. The Russian expansion into Eastern Siberia in the 17th century caused Evens move to new territories. The migration of nomadic (reindeer-breeding) Evens slowed down in the 19th century, but the majority of Evens settled down only in post-Revolution years.

Ethnocultural contacts of Evens with aboriginal and nonaboriginal population of Siberia have given rise to borrowings from the neighbouring languages: Mongolian (cf. Ev. *bool* 'slave' and Mo. *bool* ~ *bogul*), Paleosiberian (cf. Ev. *maaja* 'supply of food' and Chukchi *majmaj*; Ev. *nalima* 'slade' and Yukagir *nalime*) and, in particular, Yakut (Ev. *muŋka* 'net' and Yak. *munka*, Ev. *hootoru* 'soon' and Yak. *sootoru*).

Although the first loanwords from Russian date back to the 17th century, such borrowings (esp. of Russian technical and political vocabulary) became especially extensive in post-Revolution years. Russian adjectives are borrowed with the stem-final *-ajl-ej* (cf. Ev. *rajonnaj* 'regional' and Rus. *rajonnyj*), Russian verbs are borrowed in the 2nd person singular imperative form (cf. Ev. *zvonj* 'phone' and Rus. *zvoni* 'Phone!').

Middle and especially Western Even dialects, the speakers of which are resident in Yakutia, are strongly influenced by Yakut. Thus, Western dialects have developed diphthongs, similar to Yakut, corresponding to monophthongs of Eastern dialects (cf. East. *d'öör* and West. *d'üör* 'two'). Morphologically, the Yakut influence reveals itself, specifically, in the borrowing of certain suffixes (e.g., the ordinal numeral marker *-s*: cf. East. *ili-tan* and Mid.-West. *ili-s* 'third'), in the loss of possessive forms of personal pronouns (see 3.5.): the corresponding base forms of personal pronouns are used in their function like in Yakut. Under influence of Yakut agreement of attributive modifiers is less regular in Middle-Western dialects. Russian influence on Even is found both in vocabulary and in syntax. The Russian interference in Even syntax results, primarily, in the loss of those features that are not compatible with its overall accusative typology; cf. restricted use of the Designative case in standard Even, use of adversative constructions as calques of Russian passive constructions and the like.

Finally, the Okhotsk [Oxotsk] dialect, belonging to the Eastern dialect group, has undergone certain influence from the genetically closely related Evenki (see 9.1.).

1.4. Dialects

Presently, about a dozen distinct dialects are distinguished in Even. Largely on phonetic grounds, these dialects are traditionally distributed onto three dialect groups: Eastern (including Ola, Okhotsk, Kamchatka, Omolon and Berjozovka dialects), Middle (including Allaikha, Tompo and Moma dialects, among others) and Western (including Lamunkhin and Tjugiasir dialects, among others).

Eastern dialects are characterized by the use of the fricative [s], corresponding to pharyngal [h] in other dialects; cf. East. *asi* 'woman'. Secondly, Eastern dialects show a marked reduction of short front vowels /a/, /e/ in non-initial syllables, which are pronounced rather as central [ə], [ɐ]; cf. East. *amən* 'father'.

Western dialects, by contrast, display pharyngal [h] in all phonetic positions (cf. West. *ahi* 'woman'), whereas the short front vowels are pronounced as rounded (cf. West. *amon* 'father'). Geographically central, Middle dialects combine features of both peripheral dialect groups. In the distribution of [h] they are similar to Western dialects, while in the articulation of reduced vowels they resemble Eastern dialects.

Apart from those three dialect groups there is a now extinct Arman dialect, which had retained a number of archaic features also found in Evenki.

1.5. Previous research

The study of Even was initiated in the middle of the 19th century, largely due to A. Schiefner, who in 1859 published materials from the Okhotsk dialect. The first grammar of Even was written by V.G. Bogoraz in the late 1890s, but appeared much later as (Bogoraz 1931). In 1947 there appeared a classic work by V.I. Cincius (Cincius 1947), giving a comprehensive account of the phonetics and morphology of Even. Another fundamental work on Even, which has a marked diachronic bias, is Josef Benzing's "Lamutische Grammatik" (see: Benzing 1955). A number of issues in phonetics and morphology have been specified in the dissertation by K.A. Novikova (published as (Novikova 1960; Novikova 1980)), devoted to the Ola dialect.

In the subsequent years there appeared a number of works, dealing with Even grammar, phonetics and lexis, as well as dialectal studies (see bibliography in 10.3.). In Russia the research on Even is currently conducted in St.Petersburg (at the Institute of Linguistic Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and at Herzen State Pedagogical University), as well as in Yakutsk (at the Yakutsk State University and at the recently founded Institute for General Research of Peoples of the Far North). Apart from Russian scholars, Even is presently studied by German scholars, who, incidentally, published the most comprehensive dictionary of Even (Doerfer, Hesche & Scheinhardt 1980).

2. Phonetic introduction

2.1. Vowels

There are 18 vowel phonemes in Even, which fall into groups of "hard" and "soft" vowels, distributed in accordance with the vowel harmony rules. The hard vowels are: /i/, /i:/, /a/, /aa/, /u/, /uu/, /o/, /oo/, /^ha/. The soft vowels are: /i:/, /i:/, /e/, /ee/, /u/, /uu/, /ö/, /öö/, /^he/. Hard vowels differ from the corresponding soft in that the former are somewhat lower, have a more back and "strained" articulation and (in Eastern dialects) are pharyngalized.

The vowel system of Even is represented in Table 1 (allophonic variants of phonemes are given in parenthesis),

Even

Andrei L. Malchukov

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All correspondence concerning *LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD/Materials* should be addressed to:

LINCOM EUROPA, P.O. Box 1316, D-85703 Unterschleissheim/München, Germany.

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