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Expressing equality, similarity, and pretense in Even (Northern Tungusic, Siberia)

Brigitte Pakendorf

1. Introduction

In recent decades, considerable work has been done on the cross-linguistic comparison of comparatives, superlatives, and to a lesser extent, equatives (e.g. Ultan 1972, Heine 1997: 109-130, Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998, Stassen 2005, Henkelmann 2006, Dixon 2008, Gorshenin 2012, Haspelmath 2017), while similatives remain largely understudied. As pointed out by Haspelmath (2017), this is largely due to the lack of descriptions of similative constructions in reference grammars. Providing first-hand data on similatives and related constructions in non-European languages can therefore still fill important gaps in our knowledge of this linguistic domain.

According to the definition of Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998: 278), "equatives express equal extent, and similatives express equal manner", with the major difference between the two constructions being the expression of quantity vs. quality, respectively. Furthermore, similatives are said to be "usually simple phrases, consisting of a similative marker ('like') and a standard, which function as manner adverbials" (ibid: 313). The definition of equative constructions is further refined by Haspelmath (2017: 9): "Equative constructions express situations in which two referents have a gradable property to the same degree" (cf. Henkelmann 2006: 371).

This distinction is relevant in the languages of Europe, which are the focus of Haspelmath & Buchholz's study. Here, the constructions differ on a formal level: equative constructions tend to mark both the standard and the parameter, whereas in similative constructions only the standard is marked (1). As seen in the German example and its English translation, the standard markers used in equative and similative constructions can be the same or different, with the "overwhelming majority" of Standard Average European languages having identical standard markers in these constructions (Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998: 313).

(1) German (Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998: 278, ex. 5)

¹ Abbreviations used in the examples are as follows: ABL = ablative, ACC = accusative, ADJR = adjectivizer, ADVRS = adversative, ALL = allative, ALN = alienable, AUG = augmentative, CAUS = causative, COM = comitative, CONC = concessive, COND = conditional, CVB = converb, DAT = dative, DEST = destinative, DIM = diminutive, DIST = distal demonstrative, DP = discourse particle, ELAT = clative, EMPH = emphatic, EQU = Equative, EX = exclusive, FUT = future, GNR = generic, HAB = habitual, HESIT = hesitative, IMPF = imperfect, IN = inclusive, INCH = inchoative, INDEF = indefinite, INS = instrumental, ITER =

| | COMPAREE | | PM | | | |
|-----|---|----------|----------|-----|--|--|
| | PARAMETER | STM | STANDA | RD | | |
| (a) | Zürich | ist | so | | | |
| | groβ | | | wie | | |
| | Wien. | | | | | |
| | Zurich | is | | so | | |
| | big | | | | | |
| | how | Vienna | | | | |
| | 'Zurich is as big as Vienna.' | | | | | |
| | COMPAREE | | | | | |
| | STN | M | STANDARD | | | |
| (b) | Robert | schwimmt | wie | | | |
| | eine | Ente. | | | | |
| | Robert | swims | | how | | |
| | a | | duck | | | |
| | 'Robert swims like a | | | | | |

However, as will be discussed in this article², the distinction between an equative construction that expresses equality of gradable, quantitative properties and a similative construction that expresses similarity of manner is not relevant for Even, a North Tungusic language spoken in northeastern Siberia. Instead, in this language, a large domain of equality of gradable properties, similarity of manner, and similarity of actions and states are expressed by a Similative³ suffix and/or relational noun. In addition, there is a dedicated marker that expresses equality of measurable properties.

In this paper, I adopt the terminology used by Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998): "comparee" will refer to the element being compared (Zürich/Zurich and Robert in (1a, b) above), with the "standard" being the item with which the comparee is compared (Wien/Vienna and Ente/duck in the above examples). The "parameter" – where it is overtly expressed – will refer to the property for which the comparee is being compared to the standard (groß/big in (1a)), and the "standard marker" will refer to the lexeme or suffix that marks the standard (wie/how and wie/like in (1a) and (1b), respectively). Since Even lacks a parameter marker (so/as in (1a)), this term is unnecessary in this paper.

2. THE DOMAIN OF EQUALITY AND SIMILARITY IN EVEN

iterative, LIM = limitative, LOC = locative, MED = mediopassive, MULT = multiplicative, NEC = necessitive, NEG = negative, NFUT = non-future, OBL = oblique, PF = perfect, PL = plural, PM = parameter marker, POSS = possessive, PRED = predicative, PRFL = reflexive possessive, PREO = progressive, PROG = progressive, PROG = progressive, PROG = proprietive, PROX = proximal demonstrative, PRV = privative, PST = past, PTCP = participle, PTL = particle, PURP = purposive, Q = question, QUAL = qualitative demonstrative, R = Russian copy, REC = reciprocal, REFL = reflexive, RES = resultative, SG = singular, SIM = simultaneous, SML = Similative, STM = standard marker, TRM = terminative, VR = verbalizer, Y = Sakha (Yakut) copy

² I thank Yvonne Treis and two anonymous reviewers for their comments, which helped me improve the paper.

³ Note that throughout the paper I was as it is a recommendation of the paper.

³ Note that throughout the paper I use capital letters for terms to refer to the Even Equative, Similative, and Pretense constructions, while lower-case letters refer to the functional concepts (cf. "Rule of Thumb 2" in Croft 2016: 388).

Even is a North Tungusic language spoken in small scattered communities spread over a vast expanse of northeastern Siberia, from the Lena-Yana watershed in the west to the coast of the Okhotsk Sea and Kamchatka in the east. This dispersed settlement pattern has led to a high degree of dialectal fragmentation. Thirteen dialects with up to 24 sub-dialects ("govory" in Russian terminology) are distinguished, with a major distinction between western and eastern dialects (Burykin 2004: 85); mutual intelligibility between peripheral dialects is severely restricted.

Even is an agglutinative language with rich, strictly suffixing morphology and large case complements comprising 12-14 cases (including the unmarked Nominative), depending on the dialect and the description. Subject agreement on verbs is obligatory, but objects are not cross-referenced on verbs. Nevertheless, in spontaneous narratives not only subjects but also objects that are retrievable from the context are frequently omitted. The language is generally head-final (cf. Malchukov 1995: 19), and modifiers precede nouns (2a); however, heavier modifier phrases can also follow the noun (2b). Nominal predicates are unmarked, with the auxiliary bi- carrying person and tense marking (3a). However, the auxiliary is omitted for 3SG nominal predicates in present tense (3b). Due to various morphonological processes, suffixes vary in form: the consonants can undergo assimilation to stem-final suffixes, and low unrounded vowels can vary between [a] and [e]. In this paper, phonemes that undergo changes are represented by capital letters when morphemes are shown in isolation; in examples, epenthetic vowels are not glossed separately.

(2) (a) Lamunkhin Even (RDA old remains traditions 006) akata-n sablja-mdas iak=kul bi-hi-n ... bow-Poss.3sg be-Pst-3sg sabre-SML be-PST-3SG what=INDEF 'there was a bow, there was something like a sabre...'

(b) Lamunkhin Even (RDA stuck in stado 044) börtölöt i:ge-mdeh-en

i-hn-e-n

what=INDEF helicopter[R] sound-SMLbe.audible-LIM-NFUT-3SG POSS.3SG

'something like the sound of a helicopter was heard'

Lamunkhin Even (AAK headmistress 026) (3)

direktor bi-he-m ... director be-NFUT-1SG 1s_G 'I am the director...'

Lamunkhin Even (AXK svatovstvo 087)

ahikka-ŋa-t (b) mut

ibga ahikkan ... girl-ALN-POSS.1PL very 1 pt. good girl 'Our daughter is a very good girl....

The data discussed here come from two geographically widely separated Even dialects: the Lamunkhin dialect spoken in Yakutia, at the westernmost periphery of the language's distribution (referenced in the examples by the abbreviation LAM), and the Bystraja dialect spoken in Central Kamchatka, at the easternmost periphery (indicated by the abbreviation BYS). Not surprisingly, given this geographical separation, the two dialects show considerable differences at all levels: phonology, morphology, lexicon, and syntax – including in the form of the markers to be discussed here. The Lamunkhin data come from a corpus of interlinearized spontaneous oral narratives numbering ~52,000 words and comprising mainly monologues recorded in the course of four field trips from 36 speakers (24 women, 12 men) between 11 and 78 years old. The Bystraja data, on the other hand, were taken not only from an interlinearized corpus of ~34,000 words recorded in the course of three field trips from 27 speakers (18 women and nine men) aged 40 to 77 years, but also from elicitation that targeted the domain of similarity, equality and pretense, which was undertaken with four female speakers (aged 64-77 years). This elicitation was performed both with translations from Russian as well as with picture stimuli. In what follows, I indicate whether an example is taken from a narrative (or one of the rare conversations included in the corpora) or from elicitation, and whether the elicitation stimulus was a picture or a Russian sentence. In addition, I compare the Lamunkhin and Bystraja data to descriptions of other Even dialects.

As mentioned above, in contrast to the Standard Average European languages the domain of equality and similarity in Even is not neatly partitioned between equality of gradable properties and similarity of manner. Rather, there is considerable overlap between the expression of equality of gradable and nongradable properties, similarity of manner, and similarity of actions and states (Table 1), especially when the elicited data from the Bystraja dialect are taken into account (not shown in the table, but see Section 4). This broad domain, which I will here term the "Similative", is marked by the suffixes $-G(A)\check{c}in$ and -mdAs and the relational noun $ure\check{c}(in)^5$. Both suffixes occur in the Lamunkhin dialect, where the relational noun is not found with a similative function, while only the suffix $-G(A)\check{c}in$ occurs in the Bystraja dialect together with $ure\check{c}(in)$. Furthermore, both dialects have a dedicated marker of equality of measurable extent (e.g. equality of size, age, or distance), the nominal di:(n)-, and an analytical construction for the expression of pretense. In the Lamunkhin dialect, this is expressed by the suffix -hmAn attached to the lexical verb and the auxiliary ϱ : 'become' carrying the TAM morphology; in the Bystraja dialect,

⁴ These field trips were funded by the Max Planck Society via the MPRG on Comparative Population Linguistics, the Volkswagen Foundation via the DoBeS grant "Documentation of the dialectal and cultural diversity among Évens in Siberia", and the CNRS via the research unit Dynamique du Langage. I am furthermore grateful to the LABEX ASLAN (ANR-10-LABX-0081) of Université de Lyon for its financial support within the program "Investissements d'Avenir" (ANR-11-IDEX-0007) of the French government operated by the National Research Agency (ANR).

⁵ Note that in some dictionaries (e.g. Robbek & Robbek 2005: 273) the relational noun is shown as having a long second vowel.

⁶ I here follow the definition of pretense of the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Pearsall 1999: 1133) as an act of "[making] it appear that something is the case when in fact it is not".

the suffix attached to the lexical verb is -ssAn and the TAM-marked auxiliary is bi- 'be'.

Table 1: Forms that express equality, similarity, and pretense in the Lamunkhin and Bystraja dialects of Even (based on the narrative corpora) with a comparison of how Even cuts up the domain in comparison to Standard Average European (SAE)

| SAE | Even | Expresses | LAM | BYS |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Equative ⁷ | Equative | Equ. measurable extent | di:- | di:(n)- |
| | | Equ. gradable properties | -mdAs | ureč(in) |
| | Similative | Equ. non-gradable properties | | |
| Similative | | Sim. manner | -G(A)čin | -G(A)čin |
| ? | | Sim. actions and states | -mdAs | |
| ? | Pretense | Pretense | -hmAn ọ:- | -ssAn bi- |

As can be seen from the table, in the narrative corpora there appears to be a functional distinction between the Similative markers in the two dialects: in the Lamunkhin corpus, $-G(A)\check{c}in$ expresses mainly similarity of manner, and -mdAs expresses expresses equality of gradable and non-gradable properties as well as similarity of actions and states, while in the Bystraja corpus equality of gradable and non-gradable properties is expressed by the relational noun $ure\check{c}(in)$, and similarity of manner and actions/states is expressed by $-G(A)\check{c}in$. However, this division is not clearcut, since a few examples of $-G(A)\check{c}in$ expressing equality of properties and two examples of -mdAs expressing similarity of manner are found in the Lamunkhin corpus. Furthermore, in the data elicited with the picture stimuli in the Bystraja dialect, the suffix $-G(A)\check{c}in$ expresses the equality of gradable and non-gradable properties interchangeably with $ure\check{c}(in)$ (Section 4).

In what follows, I first present the "Equative of measurable extent" di:(n)-(Section 3), then I discuss the various uses covered by the Similative suffixes and relational noun (Section 4), and finally I describe the "Pretense" constructions (Section 5). Section 6 provides a brief overview of Similative and Equative constructions in other Tungusic languages, and the paper ends with conclusions in Section 7.

3. EQUATIVE

Although the marker of measurable extent di:(n)- has a narrower range of meanings than those subsumed under the term "equative" by Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998) and Haspelmath (2017), I will here for simplicity's sake call it

⁷ Note that Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998: 298-301) discuss the presence of specialized "quantitative equative markers" in some languages of Europe. These basically express equal amounts of something ("as much/many as"), but can in some languages also be used to express equality of degree with quantifiable adjectives. In this function, they resemble the Even Equative.

the "Equative" (glossed EQU). This standard marker is a noun⁸ originally meaning 'size' (Cincius 1975: 202), which functions as the head of the Equative construction, with the dependent standard agreeing in person and number⁹ (4):

(4) BYS, elicited di:-wu min 1sg.obl EOU-POSS.1SG 'as big as I' (b) di:-š in 2sg.obl EOU-POSS.2SG 'as big as you' (c) me:n di:-ji REFL EQU-PRFL.SG 'as big as oneself

While the basic form is di:-, in the Bystraja dialect the 3SG possessed form di:-n (where -n is the 3SG possessive suffix) seems to be in the process of lexicalizing as the Equative marker. This can be seen from the fact that in constructions with a 3SG standard the agreement is generally marked by an additional 3SG possessive suffix (5a), and also by the fact that there is variation in the form obtained when the Equative modifies a direct object (5b, c). The accusative-marked possessive 3SG form di:-we-n (5b) is expected for the vowel-final form di:-, while dimen (5c) results out of the assimilation of the accusative suffix -we to the stem-final -n of di:n-.

```
(5a) BYS, elicited (RME_picture_church_tree)
                                            ašukut
   cerkov
                                                               mọ:
               išu-ri
               di:n-ni
   church[R]
                        almost
                                                               grow-IMPF.PTCP
                                            tree
               EQU-POSS.3SG
   'The church is almost [as high as] the growing tree.'
(5b) BYS, elicited (RME translation from Russian)
                                                               ŋin-u
   bi
               it-ti-wu
                         muran
                                  di-we-n
   1sg
               see-PST-1SG
                                            dog-ACC
                                                               horse
               EQU-ACC-POSS.3SG
   'I saw a dog as big as a horse.'
```

⁽⁵c) BYS, elicited (VIA_picture stimulus_bragging_fish)

⁸ Like other nouns, it can take possessive marking (e.g. (4)) and case marking (e.g. (5b)). Whether it is still used as a noun to simply mean 'size' would require further research; no such examples occur in the corpora.

9 Note that I have no examples with a plant of the last of th

⁹ Note that I have no examples with a plural standard. This is probably due to the semantics of equative constructions: the comparee is compared to a prototypical standard, which is thus unlikely to be plural.

```
beje-mker
                     olla-w
                                         oka:t-taki
                                                             ollo:t-če-ji
                                                             te:leŋe-d-de-n,
man-AUG
                               fish-ACC river-ALL
                                                                      go-
   PF.PTCP-PRFL.SG tell-PROG-NFUT-3SG
                      dimen
                                                                       epken-i-
                               olla-mkar-u
                     inin-niken
    wu"
           EQU.ACC.POSS.3SG
                                                                       catch-PST-
PROX
                                         fish-AUG-ACC
                     laugh-SIM.CVB
   1s<sub>G</sub>
gu:n-ni
say-3sg
```

'A man is telling how he went to the river (to catch) fish, "I caught a fish as big as this," he says laughing.'

In the Lamunkhin dialect, the marker of measurable extent and the proximal demonstrative er(ek) have fused to form the dimensional demonstrative erdin. That the separate noun di:- has suffixed to the proximal demonstrative is clear from the phonological reduction of the Equative marker: it is considerably shorter in the construction with the demonstrative standard than in the construction with the nominal standard (6a), and it is also shorter than the demonstrative root (0.8 times the length of the demonstrative root).

```
(5d) LAM, narrative (AXK_svatovstvo_034)
    mut-tule
                          er-din
                                                         že
                kuŋa,
                          omolgo
                                               kuŋa
                                                         bi-h-ni,
                          go:-ŋne-če
                                                                   boy
   1PL-LOC
                                              PTL[R]
                                                         child
                          PROX\textbf{-}E\mathbf{Q}U
                                    be-NFUT-3SG
                          child
                                                         say-HAB-PF.PTCP
   "We have just such a child [a child as old as this], a boy", she said."
```

In the corpora of spontaneous narratives, the Equative construction with a demonstrative standard occurs far more frequently than the Equative with a nominal standard: in the Lamunkhin dialect, two nominal standards occur with the Equative noun di:- ((6a) and (6c) below) as compared to nine examples of the Equative demonstrative (e.g. (5d, 6b)). In the Bystraja dialect, only the construction with the demonstrative standard occurs in the narrative corpus (e.g. (6d)), but elicitation with picture stimuli obtained some examples of constructions with a nominal standard and the Equative noun di:-(e.g. (5a, b)). Although originally the noun di:- meant 'size', in its function as an Equative marker it expresses equality of any measurable dimension: not only size (4, 5a-c, 6a), but also age (5d), time (6b), distance (6c), or amount (6d).

```
(6a) LAM, narrative (AEK_ childhood_072)

tarit erek bu:del-u,
erek, erek čanńik
mere:či-n

then PROX leg(s)-POSS.1SG PROX PROX teapot[R]
circle-POSS.3SG
```

PL-POSS.2SG

so many hooves from?"

```
di:-n
               o:-kan,
                         begi-dne-nteken
                                   become-TRM.CVB
                                                                 freeze-ITER-
   EOU-POSS.3SG
       MULT.CVB
   'Then this leg of mine became as big as the diameter of this kettle, freezing and
       freezing.
(6b) LAM, narrative (stado#9 kochevka 039)
   er-di-du-n
                                   bi-фi-р, ...
   [...]
PROX-EQU-DAT-POSS.3SG
                                            PROX-LOC
                         be\text{-}\text{FUT-}1\text{PL}^{10}
   'We will be here at this time of year (i.e. in spring, the time of the recording), ...'
(6c) LAM, narrative (RDA shatun 007)
                                                                          e-duk
                                             œu:
                                                                 oskola
                         di:-n,
   but[R]
               DIST
                                   house
                                                       PROX-ABL
                                                                          DIST
               school[R]
                                   EOU-POSS.3SG
   kolle-kkene-t
                                   čugas
   small-DIM-INS
                                   near
    'but that house is [as far as] the school from here, a bit closer (i.e. about 40-
       50m).
(6d) BYS, narrative (VIA tabun47)
   pastux-al
                                             okaŋči-wa:t-ta,
                                             etike:m-u
                                   go:-we:t-te-n
                         be.happy-GNR-NFUT.3PL
   herder[R]-PL
                                                       old.man-POSS.1SG
               say-GNR-NFUT-3SG
   "Aw-gič
                                                                          dim-ni
                                                                 kokči-ŋ-al-si?"
                                                                          hoof-ALN-
   where-ELAT
                                   PROX
                                            EQU-POSS.3SG
```

The Equative of measurable extent appears to be fairly widespread among Even dialects: Cincius (1975: 202) lists the noun di:- 'size' as occurring in nine different dialects spread over the entire dialectal distribution of the language. In her description of Even phonology and morphology (Cincius 1947: 236) she describes this form as a postposition that expresses comparison of size and provides examples with pronominal and nominal standards. Grammar sketches of individual dialects do not describe Equative constructions with nominal

'The herders are happy, and my old man (i.e. husband) says: "Where did you get

¹⁰ Note that the Lamunkhin dialect has lost the distinction between 1PL inclusive and exclusive. Therefore, I gloss 1PL forms for this dialect simply as 1PL, without further specification.

standards; however, Lebedev (1982: 65) says that personal pronouns "can take a number of other forms **characteristic of nouns**, among others [...] the form of comparison formed by the combination of the personal pronoun and the nominal base di:- 'size, stature' with possessive marking (hin di:s 'as big as you, like you', nonan di:n 'as big as he, like he', etc.)" (my translation and emphasis). The Equative is mentioned in the sections on pronouns in sketches of the Moma, Okhotsk, and Berëzovka dialects, with examples of the demonstratives er(ek) and tar(ak) occurring with the suffix as well as personal pronouns co-occurring with the possessive-marked noun (cf. Lebedev 1978: 77; 1982: 65, 71; Robbek 2007: 579). Lebedev (1982: 71) explicitly states that the forms er-din and tar-din express a comparison of "size, height, width, volume, etc".

The Even Equative differs from the equative discussed by Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998) for Standard Average European languages in that the parameter is generally left unexpressed, since this is implicit in the meaning of the marker. However, elicitation with the picture stimuli did obtain one example of an Equative construction with expressed parameter (7).

```
(7) BYS, elicited (RME_picture_stimulus_spiders, with prompt)

ataki:-mkar egægen æu:

spider-AUG big house EQU-
POSS.3SG

'The spider is as big as a house.'
```

The Equative noun appears to function as the nominal predicate¹² (cf. (5a, 6c)), but it can also function as a modifier (5b-d). As with other modifiers in the Bystraja dialect, the Equative agrees with the head noun ('dog' in (5b), 'fish' in (5c)) in case and number.

The comparee is attested in subject (e.g. (5a, 5d, 6a, 6c)), direct object (5b, 5c), and temporal adjunct function (6b); whether other functions, such as indirect object, are possible remains to be tested. When the Equative construction functions as the nominal predicate, the constituent order is comparee – standard – standard marker; when the Equative construction functions as modifier, the order is standard – standard marker – comparee in spontaneous utterances. The divergent order in examples such as (5b) might be due to the Russian word order in the translation stimulus, or to the relatively heavy modifier.

Finally, from the current data it appears that the Equative construction with di:(n)- is not amenable to negation: all examples occur in affirmative sentences, and attempts at eliciting negative Equatives ('not as X as') produced either a Comparative construction (8a) or a Similative construction (8b). The picture stimulus that prompted utterances (8a) and (8b) showed two men, one approximately 55-60 years old labelled 'Ruslan', the other at least 70-75 years old and labelled 'Mikhail', with an arrow pointing to 'Ruslan' to indicate that he

¹¹ Of these, the Moma and Okhotsk dialects belong to the western dialect group, while the Berëzovka dialect is an eastern dialect.

 $^{^{12}}$ This needs to be confirmed with $1^{\rm st}$ or $2^{\rm nd}$ person comparees as well as in past tense constructions, since, as mentioned in Section 2, in the present tense 3sG nominal predicates are unmarked.

was to be the topic of the sentence. Three speakers spontaneously described the picture with the Comparative construction shown in (8a); the fourth described it as 'Mikhail is older than Ruslan', i.e. with a Comparative construction, but with Mikhail as the topic. The utterance in (8b) was obtained after prompting the speaker to say that Ruslan was not as old as Mikhail. The structurally similar example (8c) was obtained in 2008 during elicitation that targeted a domain entirely distinct from that of comparison.

```
(8a) BYS, elicited (RME_picture_stimulus_Ruslan_Mikhail)
   Ruslan
                        noseyčen
                                            Mikhail-duk
   Ruslan
                        young
                                                               Michael-ABL
   'Ruslan is younger than Michael.'
(8b) BYS, elicited (RME picture stimulus Ruslan Mikhail, with prompt)
               etike:n
                                  Mikhail-gečin
                        NEG-NFUT-3SG
                                                               be-NEG.CVB
   Ruslan
                                           old.man
               Michael-SML
   'Ruslan is not as old as Michael.'
(8c) LAM, elicited (EISh ClusivityB1a, translation from Russian)
                        hi:
                                                     goroda-mdas
   nonan
     egdzen
                        e-h-ni
     bi-hikle-j,
   3s<sub>G</sub>
                                            2sg
                                                               town[R]-SML
```

good 'Even though it [our village] isn't as big as your town, it's very good, isn't it?'

NEG-NFUT-3SG

truth=Q

be-CONC-PRFL.SG

adzit=gu

4. Similative

big

họ:

verv

4.1. Comparison of gradable and non-gradable properties

aj,

In the narrative corpora, comparison of both gradable and non-gradable properties are generally expressed by the suffix -mdAs in the Lamunkhin dialect and by the relational noun *ureč(in)* in the Bystraja dialect (Table 1). However, as mentioned in Section 2, this is not a hard and fast rule: in the Lamunkhin corpus there are a few examples where the suffix $-G(A)\check{c}in^{13}$ marks a comparison of gradable property, e.g. (10b). In the data elicited with the picture stimuli in the Bystraja dialect, $-G(A)\ddot{c}in$ occurs interchangeably with $ure\ddot{c}(in)$ in the expression

¹³ This is pronounced -gičin in this dialect when following upon consonant-final stems, and not -gačin or -gečin as in the Bystraja dialect and elsewhere, cf. Malchukov (1995: 9, 11).

of comparisons of gradable and non-gradable properties, e.g. (9c). Although a cognate of the relational noun occurs in the Lamunkhin dialect, it is not attested with the same range of meanings (see Section 4.3 and (18) below).

These Similative markers express equality of gradable properties – both with an expressed parameter (9a-d) as well as with the parameter left unexpressed (10a-d). In spontaneous speech the parameter is left unexpressed far more frequently than otherwise – (9a) and (9b) are the only examples of the Similative with expressed parameter occurring in my narrative corpora.

```
(9a) LAM, narrative (EAK reindeer herd 337, multiple hesitatives edited out)
                         no:če-mdes
                                            čulbańa kofta-lkan
   ...ńan
                                   bi-wre-n ...
                                            grue
                         flower-SML
      and
               jersey[R]-PROP
                                             be-HAB.NFUT-3SG
   "...and she had a jersey as green as a plant..."
(9b) LAM, narrative (ZAS_jubki_Aniwrin_091)
   čurita-ŋa-l-bu
                                                                ne:-ri-w
                         e-le,
                                                                          egdzo:-
       meje
                                             busa-mdas ...
                                   put-PST-1SG
                                                                PROX-LOC
   beads-ALN-PL-ACC
                                            big.bead[R]-SML
               big[EMPH]-AUG
   'I put my beads here, one as big as a pearl (lit. as big as a big bead)...'
(9c) BYS, elicited (RME picture stimulus mother daughter)
                                                      eken-gečim-i = titte
   aliŋọ
                         nord
   girl pretty 'The daughter is as pretty as her mother.'
                                                      mother-SML-PRFL.SG=PTL
(9d) BYS, elicited (EPA picture stimulus mother daughter)
   кипа-па-п
               ek-mi
               urečin-ni
               nọːd
   child-ALN-POSS.3SG
                                   mother-PRFL.SG
                                                                similar-POSS.3SG
               pretty
   'The child is as pretty as her mother.'
(10a) LAM, narrative (TVK family 050)
                                                      honte
                                                                          poroda-
   inŋat-an
       mdas, ...
   fur-Poss.3sg
                                                      breed[R]-SML
                                   other
   'Its fur is like [as short as] a different breed...' (sentence continues: '...but our
       kitten, that one also had short fur, this one of ours also has short fur.')
(10b) LAM, narrative (TVK_pear_story_004)
   beje-n
               noste
                                                                naha:
                                             hawdi-la,
               at
```

```
self[Y]-POSS.3SG
                                                                           very[Y]
                                   young
                                             man-DIM
                                   old-PRV
               NEG
   mut-kečin, mut
                                   hemeke-t
                                                       age.mate-POSS.1PL
   1PL-SML
                                   1<sub>PL</sub>
   'He himself is a young man, not very old, like us [as old as us], our age.'
(10c) BYS, narrative (EIA_leaving_Twajan_096)
   elekes
                         it-ti-wun
                                                                 iak-awu
                                   tarroːčin,
                         turki erek
   at.first
                         see-PST-POSS.1PL.EX
                                                                 DIST.QUAL
               what-EMPH
                                             sled PROX
                                   urečin-ni
   фu:
                         similar-POSS.3SG
   house
    'We saw that for the first time, what on earth is this, a sled like [as big as] a
       house!' (talking about big busses)
(10d) BYS, narrative (RME_father_farrier_046)
   iak = ut
               urečin-ni,
               go:-we:t-te
kọ:šaŋa
   what=INDEFsword[R] similar-POSS.3SG
                                                       say-GNR-NFUT[3PL] big.knife
    'Something like [as big/long as] a sword, it was called koshanga.' (talking about
       a special type of knife similar to a machete)
```

Apart from their use in comparisons of gradable properties, these markers also express similarity of non-gradable properties (11a-d). They thus cover the function of both the "equative" and the "similative" found in Standard Average European languages.

```
(11a) LAM, narrative (AXK_Sebjan_history_1_117)
   ti:k-erep
                                   maladjoha-mdah-al
                                                                 e-s-te
                                                       bi-he
               youth [R] \textbf{-SML-PL} \\ be \textbf{-NEG.CVB}
                                                                 NEG-NFUT-3PL
   now-ADJR
   '(They) weren't like today's young people.'
(11b) LAM, narrative (RDA TPK names origins 057)
   dila-mdas
                                                       bi-h-ni,
                         іηа
                         ol_ihin
                                                                           Dil-čan
                         go:-p-če
                                                       therefore[Y]
   head-SML
                         stone
                                   be-NFUT-3SG
                                                                           head-DIM
               say-MED-PF.PTCP
   'There is a stone like a head, that is why it is called Dilchan ("little head").'
(11c) BYS, conversation (JIP_RME_razgovor_202)
   iašal-an
                                                                 biena-ri
```

bey

urečin-ni

bi-si-n

eyes-POSS.3SG become.drunk-IMPF.PTCP similar-POSS.3SG

be-PST-3SG

'His eyes were like (those of a) drunk.'

(11d) BYS, narrative (NIG_legend_Alngej_085-086)

иŋ-и

ora:t-tuk

ureččon

[...]

herbs-ABL HESIT-ACC make-PST-3SG

medicine similar.POSS.3SG.ACC

'he made something from herbs ... like medicine ...'

4.2. Similarity of manner

In both dialects similarity of manner, with both specific (12b, c) and generic (12a, d) standards, is expressed by the suffix $-G(A)\check{c}in$, although in the Lamunkhin corpus there are a couple of examples with the suffix -mdAs in this function (e.g. (12b)).

(12a) LAM, narrative (TVK_family_032)

te:mi mut ńu:k-**kičin**, ńoka-l-**gičin** koška-w

ńọka-l-gičin irget-te-p 1PL

therefore 1PL Russian-SML Sakha-PL-SML

cat[R]-ACC raise-NFUT-1PL

'Therefore we keep cats like Russians, like Sakha.'

(12b) LAM, conversation (beseda 0611 NPZ)

Nogavitsyn Edik-čen ama-**mdah**-ij

orobuna he:&en-gere-n Nogovitsyn Edik-DIM father-SML-PRFL.SG

exactly[R] dance-HAB[NFUT]-3SG

'Little Edik Nogovitsyn dances exactly like his father.'

(12c) BYS, narrative (RME_Yakutia038)

... ew-gide-tki bi-si-l

tore-r orot-tị-č

PROX-SIDE-ALL be-IMPF.PTCP-PL speak[NFUT]-3PL Oroch-ADJR-INS

mun-**gečin**

1PL.EX.OBL-SML

[&]quot;... those who live towards this side speak Even like us."

```
(12d) BYS, narrative (RMS_nimkan_013)

nan iami dolda-n

turaki bej-gečin tore-l-le-n

and PTL hear[NFUT]-3SG crow

man-SML speak-INCH-NFUT-3SG

'And suddenly he hears, the crow starts to speak like a human.'
```

The Similative is not included in the case system in Russian descriptions of Even (both general descriptions and sketches of individual dialects); however, $-G(A)\check{c}in$ is mentioned among the forms that pronouns can take (Lebedev 1978: 71; 1982: 65; Robbek 2007: 579) or among the particles (Novikova 1980: 130). Cincius (1947: 235-236) lists both $-G(A)\check{c}in$ and -mdAs among the "logical-grammatical forms" that express comparison; all her examples with -mdAs show participles as the standard and express a comparison of action or state (see Section 4.3). In his sketch grammar, Malchukov (1995) lists $-G(A)\check{c}in$ as the "EQU" case that "marks a manner adjunct to indicate 'object of equation'" (Malchukov 1995: 11). Since $-G(A)\check{c}in$ patterns morphologically with other case suffixes, following the plural and preceding possessive suffixes, I would count it among the case suffixes. The suffix -mdAs, in contrast, patterns like derivational suffixes: it precedes both the plural and possessive suffixes.

In all of the Similative constructions discussed thus far, the comparee is the subject of the clause, as shown by the verbal person agreement. However, in narratives the comparee is frequently left unexpressed. The standard of comparisons of non-gradable properties and of manner can have the semantic role of patient/theme (11d, 13a), (reciprocal) addressee (13b), possessor (11c, 13c), and location (13d).

```
(13a) LAM, narrative (IVK memories 039)
   ... ire-w
                                                                       ačča-w
                                           tara-w
                        acʒita-mdas
                                                    ukčen-niken.
                                           NEG-ACC
       which-ACC
                        DIST-ACC
                                                              truth-SML
              tell-SIM.CVB
   hebæe-l-uke-nne-ri-n
   be.interested-INCH-CAUS-HAB-PST-3SG
    ..., he entertained [us all] by telling this and that which didn't exist as if it were
       the truth.
(13b) LAM, narrative (IDB traditions 007)
                                 okart.
                                                    urekčen muhman
   ... moi,
                                                              ia-nikan
                                           nọŋńunni
       water
                        river
               spirit.ACC.POSS.3SGHESIT-SIM.CVB
                                                              3sg.com
                        bej-giči-ke:n
   omettu
                                                    ukčem-met-niken.
               umkem-met-niken,
```

¹⁴ These are suffixes which Cincius (1947: 234) ranks in between inflection and derivation because they "serve the logical and grammatical juxtaposition of one word with other words in a sentence" (translation mine).

```
together
              man-SML-DIM
                                           tell-REC-SIM.CVB
                                                                        whisper-
       REC-SIM.CVB
     ...talking, whispering with the spirit of water, river, hills as with a person,...'
(13c) BYS, conversation (AEI ASA muzej2 016)
   nonana = ši ečin
                                                                        či:kul-at-
       ti-n
                                                                        Timofej-
       gečin
               hi-če
                                                     protrude-RES-PST-3SG
   3SG=PTL
                                  PROX.QUAL
                                           be-PF.PTCP
               Timothy-SML
   'it (the doll's finger) used to stick out like late Timofej's'
(13d) LAM, conversation (beseda_1653_RDA)
   Jeralaš-kičin
                                  ia-ʤi-nni
   Yeralash-SML
                                  HESIT-FUT-2SG
   'you'll do something like in "Yeralash" (a humorous TV show)
```

Judging from elicited data from the Bystraja dialect, the standard cannot be a clause either in comparisons of gradable properties (14a) or in comparisons of manner (14b). The alternative construction that is used for such clausal comparison appears to be calqued from Russian, where such comparisons are expressed with the interrogative pronoun kak 'how'. This is not only the result of elicitation, however, since a few similar constructions also occur in spontaneous utterances in the corpus, as shown for example by (14c). No examples of such constructions are found in the Lamunkhin corpus.

```
(14a) BYS, elicited (RME, translation from Russian)
                                           om = ka
   nọŋan
                        mergeč
                                                                        mut
                        ereger
                                           e:jet-ti-t
   3sg
                                 clever
                                                              how=PTL
               1PL.IN
                                 always
                                                    hope-PST-1PL.IN
   'He is as clever as we had always hoped.'
(14b) BYS, elicited (RME, translation from Russian)
               ekn-il-ten
   ew
               ereš-šo:t-te
                        me:-r
               mother-PL-POSS.3PL
                                                    chase-GNR-NFUT[3PL]
   PTL
               self-PL
   kuŋa-ŋ-al-bur
               om=ka
                                           bej-el
                                                                        ereš-šo:t-
   child-ALN-PL-PRFL.PL
                                 how=PTI
                                                    man-PL
                                                                       chase-
       GNR-NFUT[3PL]
                                 atika-r-bur?
   self-PL
                        old.woman-PL-PRFL.PL
   'Do mothers chase away their children like men chase away their wives?'
(14c) BYS, narrative (GIK life Anavgaj 086)
```

o:n=ka senokos-tu orat tik-ko:t-te-n, tarakam = tehow=PTL $hay making [R] \hbox{-} DAT$ fall-GNR-NFUT-3SG grass in.those.days=PTL tačin derevja tik-ri-ten eidu DIST.OUAL trees[R] fall-PST-3PL all 'And like grass falls during haymaking, the trees were falling everywhere.'

4.3. Comparison of action or state

When attached to verbal participles, the Similative expresses a similarity of the action or state to a hypothetical action or state (15a-d). This extension of the similative is cross-linguistically common: "Finally, [in the sense of] 'as if (of action or state)', most languages have expressions related to those they use as similative markers (plus some hypothetical marker)..." (Fortescue 2010: 134). It should be noted, however, that this function is fulfilled in Even by the Similative alone, without any hypothetical marker, as can be seen in the examples.

```
(15a) LAM, narrative (RDA_TPK_death_128)
   koke-če
                                                     æebe-d-di-mdes
                                                     dzebe-jekte:k-kin
   die-PF.PTCP man
                                 eat-PROG-IMPF.PTCP-SML
       NEC[Y]-PRED.2SG[Y]
   '(You) have to eat (that) as if the deceased is eating.'
(15b) LAM, conversation (beseda 0401 0404 RDA)
   dulakan-dula-n
                                                                       bi-d-de-p
   middle-LOC-POSS.3SG
                                 be-PROG-NFUT-1PL
   iak = kol
                                  kovš
                                                                       doː-la-n
                        dessi-d-di-mdes
   HESIT=INDEF
                                 dipper[R]inside-LOC-POSS.3SG
              lie-PROG-IMPF.PTCP-SML
   'we are in the middle (of the mountains) as if (we) are lying inside a dipper'
(15c) BYS, narrative (RME_Yakutia041)
   ... min
                                           ek-mu
                                           go:-we:t-ti-n,
              olute-w-ri-yčin
       1sg.obl
                                 mother-POSS.1SG
                                                              say-GNR-PST-3SG
              chase-ADVRS-IMPF.PTCP-SML
   tore-r,
                                 a:mnik
   speak[NFUT]-3PL
                                 quickly
                                                    quickly
    .... my mother used to say, they speak as if someone is chasing them, fast, fast.'
```

```
(15d) BYS, conversation (JIP_RME_razgovor_113)

Natalja-w

o:šej-ri-yčin

ona-d-dzo:t-ta-n,

tarak

bej-jeken

Natalia-ACC

NFUT-3SG

DIST

wan-DIM

'He's writing as if to tease Natalja, that (despicable) man.'
```

Whereas in the Bystraja dialect this function is covered by the suffix $-G(A)\check{cin}$ (Table 1), in the Lamunkhin dialect it is fulfilled by the suffix -mdAs, with $-G(A)\check{cin}$ occurring only with the verb go:(n)- 'say' (16). This latter construction can be considered a type of "accord clause", that is, an illocutionary sentence adverbial. Since accord clauses are rarely formally distinct from similative clauses in European languages (Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998: 320-321), it is interesting to note the formal distinction made by Lamunkhin Even between -mdAs to mark similative clauses and $-G(A)\check{cin}$ to mark accord clauses. As mentioned above, in her description of the phonology and morphology of Even Cincius (1947: 235-236) exemplifies the suffix -mdAs with such comparisons of actions or states (cf. (17c)).

```
(16) LAM, narrative (EAK_reindeer_herd_441)
                                                                          ečin
                                                       bi:
                                                                          owon
               toremen
               hupku-či-m,
   but[R]
               simply[R]
                                   PROX.QUAL
                                                       1s<sub>G</sub>
                                                                Even
               speech.POSS.3SG
                                             learn-FUT-1SG
   aby_liš_by
                                                                go:-ni-wčin-ni
               ńuči-di-č ...
   superficially[R]
                                   say-IMPF.PTCP-SML-POSS.3SG Russian-ADJR-INS
    'And I will simply learn the Even language, as they say in Russian "aby liš by"
       (superficially)....
```

In the Lamunkhin dialect, this construction has further extended to an epistemic marker with a meaning of 'it appears, it seems' (17a, b) – an extension that is also found in this dialect for the lexeme *uručun* (18), the cognate of the Similative relational noun *ureč(in)* found in the Bystraja dialect. Similarly, Cincius (1947: 236) describes *-mdAs* as expressing "a comparison with a nuance of assumption" (my translation; cf. 17c). Such extensions of the similative domain into evidentiality are cross-linguistically well attested (Fortescue 2010: 132-134; see also Rose, this volume).

```
(17a) LAM, narrative (RDA_lost_tapes_znatoki_073; N. Aralova's field data) ta-duk em-če-mdes,

tara

DIST-ABL come-PF.PTCP-SML PTL

'He seems to have come from there.'
```

```
(17b) LAM, narrative (EAK reindeer herd 490)
                                                       hi:
   ta-duk
                                   honte-1
                czomkat-tak-u
                                   ačča-mdah-al
   DIST-ABL
                                                       think-COND.CVB-POSS.1SG
                         other-PL 1SG
               NEG-SML-PL
   'Apart from that, if I think (about it), there are no others, it seems.'
(17c) Moma or Upper Kolyma dialect<sup>15</sup> (Cincius 1947: 236; my glossing and English
   olra-l
                                   ho-č
                                                                           urenči-ri-
       mdes-el...
   fish-PL
                         very-INS be.happy-IMPF.PTCP-SML-PL
    'It seems as if the fish are very happy....
(18) LAM, narrative (IVK memories 173)
                                                       tar-it
               od-di-n
                                                                           uručun
                         story[R]
                                                                 stop-PST-3SG
   DIST
                                             DIST-INS
               it.seems
   'That story stopped like that, it seems.'
```

The similative reading is particularly salient when the standard is clearly unrealistic, as in (15a-c), while the epistemic reading may have developed from cases where the standard is realistic, as in (17a, b). However, (17c) shows that constructions with unrealistic standards can also be interpreted with an epistemic reading (assuming that Cincius' description is correct), while (19) shows that realistic standards can also be used in purely comparative constructions. This was said by a participant of a staged conversation – to make the situation more naturalistic the women were sitting around a table drinking tea, and this could indeed have taken place in a similar manner "at their usual table".

```
(19) LAM, conversation (beseda_0225_RDA)

ečin obyčnaj ostal-la
tege-če-d-di-mdes...

PROX.QUAL DP[Y] usual[R] table[R]-LOC sit.down-
RES-PROG-IMPF.PTCP-SML

'As if [we] are sitting at the usual table...'
```

¹⁵ Cincius (1947) does not specify the dialectal provenance of her examples. However, in her introduction, she states that among other sources of data she used a published autobigraphical story (Tarabukin 1938); she explains in a footnote further on that the examples taken from this story are referenced with "T" plus the page number (Cincius 1947: 56, footnote 1). This is the case for both (17c) and (21). Tarabukin came from the Moma district (https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Тарабукин Николай Саввич, аccessed 19/12/2016) and can thus be assumed to have spoken the Moma or Upper Kolyma dialect. Both of these belong to the western dialect group (Burykin 2004: 85), like the Lamunkhin dialect, although they are situated further to the east.

5. EXPRESSION OF PRETENSE

Both the Lamunkhin and the Bystraja dialect have dedicated constructions to express "Pretense": these are the suffix -hmAn on the lexical verb plus the auxiliary o:- 'become' in the Lamunkhin dialect (20a, b) and the suffix -ssAn on the lexical verb plus the auxiliary bi- 'be' in the Bystraja dialect (20c, d).

```
(20a) LAM, said by local interlocutor to speaker (AEK childhood 016)
   go:-niken
                                 ukčene-hmen
                                                                       min-teki
                                           o:-ʤi-nni
                                                              1sg.obl-all
   say-SIM.CVB
                                 tell-PRETENSE
              become-FUT-2SG
   'You'll pretend that you're telling me.'
(20b) LAM, narrative (ZAS_Bochilikan_etiken_023)
   omen
                       ₫or
                                                              dzo:r
               taŋa-hman
              o:-nikan
   one
                                 two
                                                             one
                                                    count-PRETENSE
              two
              become-SIM.CVB
   huličan
                        okart-u
                                                              daw-ra-n, ...
   fox
                                           river-ACC
                                                              cross.river-NFUT-
   'Pretending to count "one two, one two" the fox crossed the river, ...'
(20c) BYS, narrative (EPA cannibals 003)
              tarak
                                 atika-ŋa-wur
   nan
              ga-wart-ta
   and
              DIST
                                           old.woman-ALN.DEST-PRFL.PL
              take-GNR-NFUT[3PL]
   onte-l-dule,
                                  atika-ŋa-ssan
                                                    bi-de-wur
   other-PL-LOC
                                 old.woman-VR-PRETENSE
                                                            be-PURP.CVB-
       PRFL.PL
   'They take a woman from another (clan, tribe) pretending to marry her.'
(20d) BYS, elicited (VIA picture stimulus child doctor)
   ... tarak
                        kuŋa
                                 tara-w
                                                             ŋin-u
                        bey-de-či-ssen
                                                                       medicine-
                                                    dog-ACC
                        child
                                 DIST-ACC
       VR-RES-PRETENSE
   bi-de-ji,
                        ulgimi-d-de-n
              ia-s
              en-se-n ...
```

```
be-PURP.CVB-PRFL.SG
                            ask-PROG-NFUT-3SG
                                                                what-
                   hurt-NFUT-3sg
   POSS.2SG
```

.. That child is **pretending** to heal that dog, he is asking "what hurts" ...'

Note that this construction is also mentioned by Cincius (1947: 188-189), who calls it the "aspect of imitation" and says it expresses the copying or imitation of an action. In the two examples she provides, which are sourced to Tarabukin (1938) and thus come from the Moma or Upper Kolyma dialect (cf. footnote 15), the auxiliary is bi- and the pretense suffix is -s $\tilde{A}n$. The construction thus resembles that found in the Bystraja dialect, even though the Moma or Upper Kolyma dialect belongs to the western dialect group, like the Lamunkhin dialect. The suffix -sAn is also mentioned among the "logical-grammatical forms". Interestingly, here Cincius states that -sAn "expresses that the **object** or action is merely being imitated, depicted, copied" (Cincius 1947: 236; translation and emphasis mine), and she gives an example of the suffix attaching not only to a verb, but also to a noun phrase (21). No such examples are found in the Lamunkhin or Bystraja corpora.

(21) Moma or Upper Kolyma dialect (Cincius 1947: 236; my glossing and English translation)

dzọl-ač ieke-sen, časka-san bi-wet-tep,

onin-ač pot-PRETENSE stone-INS cup-PRETENSE be-GNR-NFUT-1PL.EX sand-INS

bi-wet-te-p čaji-ŋa-san tea-ALN-PRETENSE be-GNR-NFUT-1PL.EX

'Our make-believe pots and cups were [made] of stone, our make-believe tea was [made] of sand.

6. EQUATIVES, SIMILATIVES AND PRETENSE IN OTHER TUNGUSIC LANGUAGES

As mentioned repeatedly above, the forms and constructions to express equality of measurable dimensions, similarity, and pretense appear to be quite widespread in Even as a whole, since they are mentioned in several descriptions. Unfortunately, given the scanty examples, it is impossible to judge to what extent there are dialectal differences in form or function. Nevertheless, it is probably safe to say that the Equative marker di:(n)-, the Similative suffixes $-G(A)\check{c}in$ and -mdAs, and the Pretense construction with -hmAn/-ssAn/-sAn plus auxiliary are found in Even in general.

Two of the forms found in Even, namely $-G(A)\check{c}in$ and the Equative marker di- are also found in Even's close sister languages, Evenki and Negidal (Nedjalkov 1997: 122, 149, 161, 285 and Cincius 1982: 21, respectively). In

¹⁶ Note the 1PL subject agreement marking on the verb, which does not come through in the translation.

Evenki, -*G*(*A*)čin expresses both equality of gradable properties and similarity of manner (Nedjalkov 1997: 285, 161).

Interestingly, both Even and Evenki have grammaticalized constructions to express pretense that do not derive from any of the Similative constructions and that are not cognate, either. Instead of an auxiliary construction such as that found in Even, in Evenki Pretense is expressed with the suffix -lAkAn, e.g. dzev-leken- 'pretend to have eaten' < dzev- 'eat' or a:s-leken- 'pretend to have fallen asleep' < a:sin- 'fall asleep' (Nedjalkov 1997: 267). Unfortunately, Nedjalkov does not give any full examples that would show what other suffixes attach to verbs derived with -lAkAn and how they behave syntactically.

Among the Southern branch of Tungusic, a cognate of the Even Equative noun is found in Udihe, where it has the form *di:ŋki-* (Nikolaeva & Tolskaya 2001: 498). Furthermore, the suffix *-lAŋki* derives adjectives that express a comparison of gradable properties (ibid: 186-187):

| (22a) Udihe (Nikola | neva & Tolskaya | a 2001: 187, ex. 2 | 89a, glosses ad | apted) |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| ei | | mo: | xaisi | gugda- |
| l aŋki -ni | tauxi | moː-dig | gi | |
| PROX | tree | also | | high-EQU- |
| 3sg | DIST | | tree-ABL | |
| 'This tree is as l | high as that one | .' | | |

The Even Similative suffixes and relational noun do not occur in Udihe; rather, two postpositions express similarity: *bede* 'like' and *bubu* 'similar to' (Nikolaeva & Tolskaya 2001: 498). Of these, *bede* appears to express comparisons of (non-)gradable properties:

7. CONCLUSION

As this paper has shown, the domain of equality and similarity in Even differs from that found in Standard Average European languages. First of all, the Even Similative covers both equality of gradable properties as well as comparison of non-gradable properties and manner – functions which in European languages are largely fulfilled by two distinct constructions, the equative and the similative. Secondly, the Even Equative (as expressed by di.n-) covers only a small slice of the meanings expressed by European equative constructions, since it is restricted to the expression of equality of measurable dimensions. Thirdly, the parameter is mostly left unexpressed, both in Equative and in Similative constructions. In the Equative, the parameter 'size' is inherent in the marker, although the precise

meaning (size, distance, age, etc.) can only be deduced from the context. This lack of overtly expressed parameter found in Even is cross-linguistically not rare: as discussed by Haspelmath (2017: 24), "[i]n quite a few descriptions, the examples of degree identity predications do not contain a specific property expression, and it seems that the precise parameter will have to be inferred from the context". It is thus worth considering whether the definitions of equative constructions posited by Haspelmath & Buchholz (1998) and Haspelmath (2017) are not too heavily influenced by constructions found in European languages.

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