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ON THE FINNIC AND SAMOYEDIC  
GENITIVE AND ACCUSATIVE PLURAL\*

**Abstract.** Samoyedic languages have strong traces about contacts with Finnic languages up to the transition of Samoyeds to the Finnic language form. The supposed onetime accusative singular ending *\*-m* and accusative plural ending *\*-j* could not produce in Finnic any traces. Samoyedic languages clearly designate an object with the suffixes *(\*)-m* and *(\*)-j*. Plural markers of genitive are Finnic and Northern Samoyedic *\*-it(-)* and Finnic and Southern Samoyedic Selkup *\*-t-*. I for one, being convinced in the great age of the Finnic *\*kala-it-en* and *\*kala-t-en* types of genitive plural, see etymological equivalents of either in Samoyedic languages.

**Keywords:** Finnic and Samoyedic languages, genitive and accusative plural, plural suffixes.

Various opinions have been passed on the origin of the Uralic genitive and accusative. Recent novel views were expressed by Tapani Salminen who has written: "The current view is that there were three grammatical cases in the Proto-Uralic nominal declension. However, it is not universally held that the morphologically marked cases, accusative and genitive, were only used to denote a definite object and possessor, respectively. A striking parallelism between the Finnic and Samoyed, in particular Nenets object rules lends support to a view that the case of object was accusative except in structures without an overt subject like 2nd person imperative. The use of nominative as the case of an indefinite object in some Uralic languages may be attributed to the influence of neighbouring languages, for instance Turkic. Similarly, it's likely that genitive was invariably used in the possessor function, while the nominative could be used as an attribute expressing material, origing or another characteristic of the main word" (Salminen 1996 : 27). In the case of morphologically marked accusative and genitive T. Salminen obviously takes the suffixes *\*-m* and *\*-n*, respectively, into consideration.

But there is a language universal supposed by L. Palmaitis, and worded as follows: "In those systems where the special form of accusative is attested,

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the category of gender does exist.” So there can not be any accusative in Uralic languages in which the category of grammatical gender is lacking. And Uralic languages are indeed accusativeless because in those languages there is no individual case form for a direct object (thus in the case of an object the suffix *(\*)-m* expresses specially its unmarkedness/markedness or indefiniteness/definiteness). (See for more details Künnap 2006.) The genitive and accusative cases in some Uralic languages are represented by a single *n*-form. We may term it the “bifunctional connective *n*-case”, implying that it is a case whose function is to link an auxiliary nominal word (attribute or object) to a headword which can be a noun or a verb. The Uralists usually argue that the given *n*-connective emerged thanks to the coalescence of two originally different cases — *n*-genitive and *m*-accusative: in accusative they supposed in that instance the change *-m > -n*. But the *n*-connective in those Uralic languages in which it occurs today can be just an original bifunctional connective *n*-case without any necessity to suppose in these Uralic languages a onetime occurrence of an *m*-accusative, followed by the subsequent coalescence with the *n*-genitive (see for more details Künnap forthcoming). Summing up, the presupposings above, suggested by T. Salminen on an earlier use of *m*-accusative and *n*-genitive in Uralic languages are improbable.

László Honti (1995 : 66) supposes that the plural suffix *\*t* descends from Proto-Uralic, continuing: “In einer frühen Phase der Sprachgeschichte mögen die grammatischen Kasusformen der Substantiva [---] folgendermaßen ausgesehen haben:

	‘Fisch’	‘Fische’
Nominativ	<i>kala-∅</i>	<i>kala-t-∅</i> [---]
Akkusativ	<i>kala-m</i>	<i>kala-t-em</i> [---]
Genitiv	<i>kala-n</i>	<i>kala-t-en</i> [---]”

Such a method of reconstruction of three grammatical cases of Uralic languages is both exceptional and remarkable. It appears already in the comment by Salminen who, by the way, backs the supposition that the *\*t*-plural in Proto-Uralic was confined to nominative, “... it seems anachronistic and circular to reconstruct forms such as *\*kalatem* or *\*kalaten* with *\*t* in plural accusative and genitive, when it’s generally assumed that the *\*kalaten > \*kalaδen* type plural genitive only developed in Western Finnic to replace the old *\*kalaj* type, and the Eastern Finnic *\*kaloiden* type appears to be a contamination of the old type and the secondary Western Finnic type” (Salminen 1996 : 27). Temporal order for the descent of Finnic plural types as everything else presented by T. Salminen corresponds to generally spread points of view, of course (“it’s generally assumed”). There is no reason to assume that L. Honti does not know these views and so naturally, he has deliberately put forth his reconstruction (see also Honti 1997 : 26–32, 56–57; 2003 : 80–82).

Exactly the same evidence as seen in L. Honti’s reconstruction is found in northward dialects of Southern Samoyedic Selkup (s. Hajdú 1968 : 136), e.g.

	‘nielma-salmon’	‘nielma-salmons’
Nominative	<i>wɛntj-∅</i>	<i>wɛntj-t-∅</i>
Accusative	<i>wɛntj-m</i>	<i>wɛntj-t-ɣm</i>
Genitive	<i>wɛntj-n</i>	<i>wɛntj-t-ɣn</i>

It is not impossible, principally, that Selkup could have preserved the early system of plural grammatical cases supposed by L. Honti.

L. Honti (1995 : 66—67) writes about Finnic languages: "Die gegenwärtige Lage im (Ostsee-)Finnischen ist m. E. dem Umstand zu verdanken, daß das Genitivsuffix *\*n* und das Akkusativsuffix *\*m* im *n* zusammenfielen. Nach diesem Ereignis konnten die einzelnen Kasus so gestaltet sein [Nx = Numerussuffix — A. K.]:

	'Fisch'	'Fische'	'ich'	'wir'
Nominativ	<i>kala-∅</i>	<i>kala-t-∅</i>	<i>minä-∅</i>	<i>me-(k)-∅</i>
Akkusativ	<i>kala-n</i>	<i>kala-δ-en</i>	<i>minu-t</i>	<i>me(-Nx)-t</i>
Genitiv	<i>kala-n</i>	<i>kala-δ-en</i>	<i>minu-n</i>	<i>me(-Nx)-n</i>

Nach dem Zusammenfall der beiden Kasus bereicherte sich die Objektfunktion des Pluralsuffixes *t* der Substantiva unter dem Einfluß des Akkusativsuffixes *t* der Pronomina um der Funktion des bestimmten Objektes; zugleich ging die Akkusativfunktion von *\*kala-δ-en* verloren. Im Singular konnte die vollständige Verschmelzung des Nominativs und des Akkusativs deshalb nicht eintreten, da der Akkusativ in jenem Falle kein eigenes, phonologisch realisiertes Morphem gehabt hätte [---], vgl.:

	'Fisch'	'Fische'
Nominativ	<i>kala-∅</i>	} <i>kala-t-∅</i>
Akkusativ	} <i>kala-n</i>	
Genitiv		

One must admit that the last scheme presented by L. Honti offers a very ingenious explanation for the current singular and plural nominative, accusative and genitive of Finnic. The explanation is acceptable only in the case when Finnic indeed experienced a onetime *m*-accusative and the change *\*-m* > *(\*)-n* in the accusative ending. I have had my doubts for a simple reason that a onetime supposed accusative ending *\*-m* in Finnic could not produce any directly *m*-formed trace or at least some other labial trace. On the one hand, I have supposed the use of a onetime original bifunctional *n*-connective in Finnic that fulfilled the functions of both accusative and genitive (see more closely in Künnap forthcoming). On the other, I have supposed that Samoyedic languages have strong traces about contacts with Finnic languages up to the transition of Samoyeds to the Finnic language form (see e.g. Künnap 2002 : 30—32). (Since Samoyedic languages clearly designate an object with the suffix *(\*)-m*, then it is not excluded that the suffix came from Finnic languages. Considering the latter, it would support a supposition about a onetime evidence of the Finnic object suffix *\*-m* — I have indicated the possibility earlier, see Künnap 1998 : 69. Certainly, besides Samoyedic languages there are a number of other Siberian languages that also know the designation of an object with the *M*-suffix, see e.g. Künnap 2006 : 162.) Proceeding from all this, I would link the coinciding accusative and genitive forms in L. Honti's concluding scheme of Finnic languages into one bifunctional *n*-connective (more definitely in the case of singular). As a result, L. Honti's starting scheme would take the following form:

	'fish'		'fishes'
Nominative	<i>kala-∅</i>		<i>kala-t-∅</i>
Connective	<i>kala-n</i>	(Genitive?)	<i>kala-t-en</i>

It is probably that once the absolute declension of all Northern Samoyedic languages included three grammatical cases with the following suffixes:

	Singular (case endings)	Plural (numerical markers)
Nominative	-	*-t
Accusative	*-m	*-i
Genitive	*-n	*-i-t

At that the plural suffix \*-it may etymologically be related to the Finnic plural genitive marker \*-it-, e.g., Finnish *luiden* < \*lu-it-en (*luu* 'bone'). In the light of the latter fact it would be important to include into L. Honti's concluding scheme also the Finnic plural genitive form \*kalo-iδ-en (< \*kala-it-en). In sum, L. Honti's concluding scheme would take the following form:

	'fish'		'fishes'
Nominative	<i>kala-∅</i>		<i>kala-t-∅</i>
Connective	<i>kala-n</i>	(Genitive?)	<i>kala-δ-en ~ kalo-iδ-en</i>

There is a good reason to return to the Selkup language. A common way of the formation of plural accusative of absolute declension in Selkup is by adherence of accusative ending \*-m to the plural marker -dV-, -tV- in northward dialects (as was shown in the above Selkup example) and to the plural marker -la-, -la- in southward dialects; e.g., AccPl *logadem* ~ *logalam* 'foxes' (Castrén 1854 : 144—145; Katz 1979 : 174). Against this background, the Selkup relatively rare plural accusative suffix of absolute declension -j ~ -l, -l' attracts interest. Hartmut Katz has convincingly pointed out the transition of -j > -l, -l' in Selkup. He conclusively wrote in connection with the observed accusative suffix that in Samoyedic languages the plural definitive object was primarily designated by the suffix \*t, the plural indefinite object by the suffix \*j. According to H. Katz, in Northern Samoyedic languages \*j became a general suffix of plural accusative, in Selkup, on the contrary, it preserved the function of indicating the indefiniteness of the object. Examples of evidence of the suffix \*-j in plural accusative in Selkup: M. A. Castrén has in Taz *l o k a l j tjakkoštempág* 'they (both) trap f o x e s', G. N. Prokof'ev has in Taz *č a n k j l' uča* 'he makes t r a p s', E. G. Bekker has in Ket *pongo kvenžel'e p o j' persj čekebi* 'going to fetch firewood she was looking for t r e e s — well-dried'. The suffix under observation can coalesce also with the plural marker -la-, -la-, e.g., Kai Donner has in Novosondrovo *man s j r l a j pasežžau* 'I was herding c o w s', E. G. Bekker has in Starosondrovo *βera potarəgu as qigan p o: q q u l a j* 'Vera does not want to cast n e t s'.

Sometimes the Selkup object provided with the suffix \*-j carries a singular meaning, e.g., G. N. Prokof'ev has in Taz *a n t j l uča* 'he makes a b o a t', J. V. Gruškina has in Taz *m 5 t y l' uč5tyt* 'they are building a h o u s e'. I believe the forms *s j r l a j*, *po:qqula j*, *ant j l'*, *m 5 t y l* point to the fact that in Selkup the suffix \*-j is used not as a designator of number but

as a case ending of (plural) accusative. (Katz 1979 : 172—174; see also Беккер 1978 : 41—42; Кузнецова, Хелимский, Грушкина 1980 : 385; Беккер, Алиткина, Быконя, Ильяшенко 1995 : 157—158; cf. also Lehtisalo 1936 : 178—180; Wickman 1955 : 126—128.) In absolute declension, the etymological equivalent for the Selkup plural accusative suffix *(\*)-j* is the Northern Samoyedic plural accusative suffix *(\*)-j* (probably also a primary plural marker), e.g., Tundra Nenets AccPl *ɲudi* 'hands' (*ɲuda* 'hand' + *\*-j*) (Castrén 1854 : 125; Hajdú 1968 : 38), besides the Kamass plural accusative marker *(\*)-j-*, e.g., *siräjem* 'snows' (*sirä* 'snow' + *\*-j-* + shwa *-e-* + accusative suffix *-m*) (Castrén 1854 : 181—182; Katz 1979 : 174). Thus the most interesting fact here in the case of Selkup is that in absolute declension a rudimentarily preserved and common with Northern Samoyedic languages plural accusative suffix *\*-j* does not coalesce with any regular case ending either in Selkup or Northern Samoyedic languages. In the Selkup possessive declension a common way of formation of plural accusative includes the coalescence of the case ending *\*-m-* with plural markers *-la-*, *-ла-* and *-i-*, *-ie-*, *-ī-*, *-jV-* (< *\*-j-*), by M. A. Castrén it is added also to the plural marker *-ni-*, *-nie-*; e.g., *logalau* ~ *logaim* ~ *logajim* ~ *loganim* 'my foxes' (*-u* ~ *-m* < Acc. *\*-m-* + Px1PSg *\*-m*) (Castrén 1854 : 312; see also Künnap 1971 : 41—43). In the case of plural genitive the suffix *\*-j* does not occur in Selkup but may do so in the composition of the compound suffix *\*-it* in Northern Samoyedic (see for it above) and probably also in Kamass.

J. V. Gruškina supposed that the suffix *-l* at the end of the accusative of the Selkup Taz absolute declension is an adjective suffix, used with some verbs with meanings, e.g., 'do', 'carve, model', 'make, prepare, work', 'take', 'seek', e.g., *wəɾqy t̪im̪naty n a r a p o l' miršuta* 'elder brother is carving a pole for driving reindeer'. Yet in the case of the verbs under discussion one may come across an accusative ending *(\*)-m*, e.g., Taz *mäkkä q o p y m miyyty* 'she gave me a p e l t'. (Кузнецова, Хелимский, Грушкина 1980 : 385—386; see also Беккер, Алиткина, Быконя, Ильяшенко 1995 : 157—158.) H. Katz's explanation is more credible, though, because the verb government — adjective — supposed by J. V. Gruškina is weird. Besides, J. V. Gruškina does not take into consideration the equivalent *-j* of the Taz object suffix *-l'* that occurs in other Selkup dialects (or then thinks that there it may simply indicate a transition of the adjective suffix *-l'* to the form *-j*).

Juha Janhunen writes that "There was [---] a nominal case that may be identified as a connective in the Proto-Uralic plural declension. This well-known case is assumed to have functioned as a plural accusative in Proto-Samoyedic, while in Proto-Saamic (and apparently Pre-Proto-Finnic) it was a plural genitive. [---] the plural connective case was marked by a single segmentally indivisible ending (*-y*) of the portemanteau type [---] which may originally well have been a derivative suffix used in adnominal constructions with no specific reference to number. How this suffix came to be used also in the function of an accusative remains unclear, but the development must have been connected with an inherent tendency to use a single case form for both attributive and objective functions" (Janhunen 1996 : 142—143; cf. also Korhonen 1981 : 210). Derivative origin of the suffix is entirely conceivable, yet more probable is its descent from a

common with Finnic languages plural marker. In the latter case it is easier to understand how the plural accusative ending *\*-j* (by J. Janhunen *-y*) developed. And only as an accusative ending because the suffix *\*-j* in Uralic languages lacks a genitive function, so that in the case of plural it cannot be a bifunctional connective suffix. The only exception is the Saamic GenPl *\*-j* (not AccPl!) which is still of unclear origin (see Künnap forthcoming). Finnic cannot show any interpretable traces about the plural accusative suffix *\*-j*, although on the Saamic example a onetime AccPl *\*-j* was supposed in Proto-Finnic (*\*kala-j*). Actually, plural markers of genitive in absolute declension are Finnic and Northern Samoyedic *\*-it(-)* (e.g. Finnish *lu-id-en*, Tundra Nenets *ɲudi' < \*uta-it*) and Finnic and Selkup *\*-t-* (e.g. Estonian *kala-d-e*, Selkup *wentj-t-ijn*; Selkup has also other plural markers, see above). Probably L. Honti with his reconstructions is closer to the truth than any other Uralist. A few gaps in his reconstructions were caused by ignoring the Finnic *\*kalo-id-en* type plural genitive, the possibility of evidence of bifunctional *n*-connective and Samoyedic data. I for one, being convinced in the great age of the Finnic *\*kalo-id-en* and *\*kala-δ-en* types of plural genitives, see etymological equivalents of either in Samoyedic languages.

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АГО КЮННАП (Тарту)

### О РОДИТЕЛЬНОМ И ВИНИТЕЛЬНОМ ПАДЕЖАХ МНОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ЧИСЛА В ПРИБАЛТИЙСКО-ФИНСКИХ И САМОДИЙСКИХ ЯЗЫКАХ

Тапани Салминен предполагает, что в уральских языках падежом прямого дополнения был винительный на *\*-m*, за исключением конструкций без нескрытого подлежащего, как в случае формы 2-го лица повелительного наклонения. А родительный на *\*-n* использовался всегда в функции обладателя. Но в свете данных языковой типологии его предположения не подтверждаются. Ласло Хонти допускает на более древней стадии развития уральских языков следующую систему грамматических падежей:

	'рыба'	'рыбы' (мн. ч.)
Именительный	<i>kala-∅</i>	<i>kala-t-∅</i>
Винительный	<i>kala-m</i>	<i>kala-t-em</i>
Родительный	<i>kala-n</i>	<i>kala-t-en</i>

Эта его реконструкция исключительна и вызывает интерес. На основании данных прибалтийско-финских и самодийских языков, а также с учетом возможного наличия двуфункционального соединительного падежа на *\*-n* (винительный ~ родительный) я бы поправил его реконструкцию следующим образом:

	'рыба'	'рыбы' (мн. ч.)
Именительный	<i>kala-∅</i>	<i>kala-t-∅</i>
Соединительный	<i>kala-n</i>	(Родительный?) <i>kala-t-en ~ kala-it-en</i>

Прибалтийско-финские и самодийские языки насыщены следами такой системы. Кроме того, в северносамодийских языках и в южносамодийском селькупском языке окончанием винительного падежа множественного числа стал показатель этого числа *\*-j* (в селькупском иногда и окончанием винительного падежа единственного числа), за которым не следует действительное падежное окончание. Этот суффикс *\*-j* не используется в уральских языках в качестве показателя родительного падежа множественного числа (единственным исключением, причем неизвестного происхождения, является форма родительного падежа множественного числа на *\*-j* в саамских языках). Следовательно, нет оснований считать рассматриваемый суффикс *\*-j* окончанием двуфункционального соединительного падежа, как это делают Микко Корхонен и Юха Янхунен.