

Skolt Saami reflexive verbs in *-õõttâd*

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Reflexes of the Proto Saami (PS) reflexive suffix **-te-* are found across the Saami languages, e.g. South Saami *luajhtadidh*, North Saami *luoitádit* ‘descend, go down’ from *luejhtedh*, *luoitit* ‘put down’. However, only in Eastern Saami languages (Inari to Ter Saami) is the suffix found attached to imparisyllabic verb stems (E. Itkonen 1980: 36–37), for example, Skolt Saami *čuä'jtõõttâd* ‘show up’ from *čuä'jted* ‘show, point at’. Moreover, when attached to parisyllabic stems, the suffix is reduplicated in Eastern Saami Languages (E. Itkonen 1980: 37–38). Compare Inari Saami *luáštdâttâd*, Skolt Saami *luášttõõttâd*, Kildin Saami *луәшттвдтв*^δ ‘descend, go down’ (< PS **luoštā-te-te-*) with the South and North Saami examples mentioned above (< PS **luoštā-te-*). The Skolt Saami verb also has a double suffix **-dõõtt-*, but *d* has been regularly deleted in syllable-initial position.

The reflexive verbs in Eastern Saami languages have not been thoroughly studied before, except for the late Auli Oksanen’s unfinished doctoral thesis manuscript, which I sadly have not been able to get access to. Feist (2015: 118–119) in his grammar of Skolt Saami mentions the *õõttâd*-verbs as reflexive/reciprocal and gives some examples and notes on the formation of the derivatives.

In this presentation, I will present an overview of the formation and meaning of the Skolt Saami (deverbal) verbs in *-õõttâd*. The research is based on T. I. Itkonen’s dictionary *Koltan- ja kuolanlapin sanakirja* (1958) and the folklore collection *Koltan- ja kuolanlappalaisia satuja* (1931) by the same author.

The formation of the *õõttâd*-verbs is generally as follows:

Parisyllabic stems: overstrong (sometimes strong) grade + *-õõttâd*; in *ed*-verbs vowel change from palatalized to low.

Examples:

cõggâd ‘push, support; stop, hold back’ → *cõggõõttâd* ‘push back, resist’

kie'ssed ‘drag’ → *ķeässõõttâd* ‘retreat’

Imparisyllabic stems: inflectional stem + *õõttâd*.

Examples:

tuõ'll'jed ‘hold on’ → *tuõ'll'jõõttâd* ‘stay on, stick to’

lă'gğsted ‘throw’ → *lă'gğstõõttâd* ‘turn a somersault’

Moreover, the reflexive verbs are often derived from parisyllabic stems via an intermediate derivation (as also E. Itkonen (1980:36) notes (my translation from German): “The

suffix is often attached to a trisyllabic verb root, which is, in turn, derived from a disyllabic primary root.”). Most often this is a continuative-frequentative derivation in *-d-*, *-č-* or *-l-*, e.g. *puåldčõõttâd* ‘burn oneself’ from *puåldčed* ‘burn (tr., cont.)’ from *puä’loded* ‘burn (tr.)’.

The meanings of the *õõttâd*-verbs can be divided into six classes, here shown ranging from the most prototypically reflexive to the least prototypical.

1. Direct reflexive

The agent is also the patient of the action. Example: *kaggõõttâd* ‘rise, ascend, stand up’ ← *kaggâd* ‘raise’

2. Reciprocal

Two or more agents symmetrically carry out the action on each other. Example: *tiõrvtõõttâd* ‘greet each other’ ← *tiõrvted* ‘greet’

3. Adversative passive

The agent inadvertently causes another participant to carry out the action on the agent itself. Example: *kåå’ddiõõttâd* ‘get killed’ ← *kåå’ddted* ‘make (someone) kill’ ← *kå’dded* ‘kill’

4. Indirect reflexive

The agent is not directly the patient of the action, but the result of the action is in the agent’s personal sphere (e.g. it concerns the patient’s belongings or is done for its own benefit). Example: *juåkkõõttâd* ‘divide one’s inheritance or properties’ ← *jue’kķed* ‘divide, distribute’

5. Zero meaning

The meaning of the derivative is essentially the same as that of the base verb. Example: *kårrõõttâd* ‘curse’ ← *kårreed* ‘id.’

6. Continuative-frequentative

In this case, the suffix *-õõtt-* is synonymous with the continuative-frequentative suffixes *-d-*, *-č-* and *-l-*. Example: *salkkõõttâd* ‘empty many containers or little by little’ ← *salkkâd* ‘empty’

References

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