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Encoding direct object in Enets

0. The data

Enets < Samoyedic < Uralic; North of Central Siberia

Two dialects: Forest Enets (FE) and Tundra Enets (TE); total number of speakers not more than 50.

A corpus of texts – transcribed FE 31 hours, transcribed TE 10 hours - prepared in terms of the project ‘Documentation of Enets: digitization and analysis of legacy materials and fieldwork with the last speakers’ supported by the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme in 2008-2011 at MPI-EVA and by MPI-EVA in 2011-2013:

- modern recordings done by the authors, Maria Ovsjannikova, Natalya Stojnova, and Sergey Trubetskoy in 2005-2010

- legacy recordings of the previous generation of Enets speakers, kindly provided by the Dudinka branch of GTRK ‘Noril’sk’, Tajmyr House of Folk Culture, Dar’ja S. Bolina, Oksana E. Dobzhanskaja, Irina P. Sorokina, and Anna Ju. Urmanchieva

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1. Preliminaries

1.1. 1st / 2nd vs. 3rd person direct objects

Encoding 1st / 2nd person direct object: pronoun in Accusative, no cross-reference on verb.

(1)	teza-xaa	jizna?	dʲurta-ʔ	FE
	now-TOP	we.ACC	forget(pfv)-3PL.S	
	‘But now they forgot us.’			

Encoding a 3rd person direct object suggests a choice from the following options:

- object cross-reference affix on the verb,
- Nominative or Oblique case on the overt direct object NP.

The options are not incompatible: both can be used.

1.2. 3rd person direct objects in verbal morphology

Object cross-reference is possible for a transitive verb:

- only 3rd person direct object can be cross-referenced,
- only the number of the object can be cross-referenced,
- object cross-reference it is not obligatory.

(2) a.	pɔnʲiŋa- r	b.	pɔnʲiŋ- i-z		c.	pɔnʲiŋa- xu-z	FE
	use(ipfv)-2SG.SOsg		use(ipfv)-SOpl-2SG.SOpl			use(ipfv)-SOdu-2SG.SOpl	
	‘you use it’		‘you use them (pl)’			‘you use them (du)’	
d.	pɔnʲiŋa- d	e.	dʲaza- d				
	use(ipfv)-2SG.S		go(ipfv)-2SG.S				
	‘you use’		‘you go’				

Question: when is direct object cross-referenced on a verb and when is it not? – Section 2

- (3) a. ϵ ke pɔ-xan ʃer-ʔ nʲe-zumʔ mense ɔtuz-noju FE
 this year-LOC.SG hide(pfv)-CONN NEG-3PL.SOsg.CONT old_woman autumn-ADV
 ‘People buried the old woman this year in autumn.’
- b. tɔʔ ɔnɛj entʃe-l tɔz tʃike rosa-da mense tɔz mɔdiʔe FE
 here Enets person-NOM.SG.2SG so this Russian-OBL.SG.3SG old_woman so see(pfv).3SG.S
 ‘And now the Enets saw this Russian’s wife.’

1.3. 3rd person direct objects in nominal morphology

Enets core case system consists of **three cases for pronouns**: Nominative, Accusative, and Genitive.

Enets core case system consists of **two cases for nouns**: Nominative and Oblique.

Nominative is always used to express a subject, Oblique is always used in adnominal contexts and with postpositions, both Nominative and Oblique can be used to express a direct object.

1.3.1. 3rd person personal pronouns as direct objects

Only Accusative is attested in the object position.

- (4) a. bu b. buduʔ c. budʲiʔ FE
 s/he.NOM they(pl).NOM they(du).NOM
- c. (bu) ʃita b. (buduʔ) ʃizzuʔ c. (budʲiʔ) ʃizziʔ
 s/he.ACC they(pl).ACC they(du).ACC

3rd person Accusative pronouns are extremely rare (5); usually verbal cross-reference is used for zero anaphora (6).

- (5) **ʃita** <...> peritʃu-ubi-zʔ FE
 s/he.ACC help_sometimes(ipfv)-HAB-1SG.S
 ‘I help him.’
- (6) **kasta-u** FE
 dry_out(pfv)-1SG.SOsg
 ‘I have dried it out.’

1.3.2. Non-possessed nouns as direct objects

- FE has no case marker for Oblique case,
- TE has an optional -ʔ affix for Oblique case (rarely used).

Nouns of the non-alternating inflectional class

If a noun belongs to the non-alternating inflectional class, it does not distinguish between Nominative and Oblique, and so it is unmarked when used as a direct object (always so for FE, almost always so for TE with its optional -ʔ affix).

- (7) a. bɔgulʲa to-bi ɲobkutun FE
 bear come(pfv)-PRF.3SG.S once
 ‘A bear came once.’
- b. entʃeʔ bɔgulʲa piiʔɛ-za FE
 person bear be_afraid(ipfv)-3SG.SOsg
 ‘A human is afraid of a bear.’

Nouns of the alternating inflectional classes

If a noun belongs to one of the alternating inflectional classes, it does distinguish between Nominative and Oblique due to two distinct stems.

- (8) a. mɛʔ b. entʃeʔ c. siʔ FE
 tent.NOM person.NOM salt.NOM
- d. mɛz e. entʃeu f. sir
 tent.OBL person.OBL salt.OBL

- (9) diiri-da **entfeu** tidara-ʔ nʃi-zuʔ FE
 live(ipfv)-PTCP.SIM person.OBL sell(pfv)-CONN NEG-3PL.SOsg
 ‘They sold a living person, after all.’
- (10) ese **nʃi-ʔ** diaxara-bə TE
 father name-OBL not_know(ipfv)-1SG.SOsg
 ‘I do not know (his) father’s name.’

Question: when NOM form is used and when OBL form is used for direct object? – Section 3

- (11) tʃike **entfeʔ** modʃi gərɔdo-d kadta-a FE
 this person I town-DAT.SG take_away(pfv)-FUT-1SG.SOsg
 ‘I will take this man to the town.’

1.3.3. Possessed nouns as direct objects

When a noun has a possessive affix, Nominative vs. Oblique are distinguished via the form of the affix.

- (12) a. mɛ-m b. mɛ-nʃiʔ c. mɛ-l d. mɛ-t FE
 tent-NOM.SG.1SG tent-OBL.SG.1SG tent-NOM.SG.2SG tent-OBL.SG.2SG

	singular head noun		dual or plural head noun	
	NOM	OBL	NOM	OBL
1SG	-jʔ, -b / -m / -m	-nʃiʔ		-nʃiʔ
2SG	-r / -l / -l	-d / -d / -t	-z	-t
3SG	-za / -da / -ta	-da / -da / -ta	-za	-da, -ta
1DU	-jʔ, -biʔ / -miʔ / -miʔ	-nʃiʔ		-nʃiʔ
2DU	-riʔ / -liʔ / -liʔ	-dʃiʔ / -dʃiʔ / -tʃiʔ	-ziʔ	-dʃiʔ, -tʃiʔ
3DU	-ziʔ / -dʃiʔ / -tʃiʔ	-dʃiʔ / -dʃiʔ / -tʃiʔ	-ziʔ	-dʃiʔ, -tʃiʔ
1PL	-aʔ (-eʔ, -ɔʔ), -baʔ / -maʔ / -maʔ	-naʔ		-naʔ
2PL	-raʔ / -laʔ / -laʔ	-daʔ / -daʔ / -taʔ	-zaʔ	-daʔ, -taʔ
3PL	-zuʔ / -duʔ / -tuʔ	-duʔ / -duʔ / -tuʔ	-zuʔ	-duʔ, -tuʔ

Table 1. Forest Enets nominal possessive markers.

Question: when NOM form is used and when OBL form is used for direct object? – Section 4

2. Presence vs. absence of object cross-reference

Cross-referencing 3rd person direct object in the verb is almost obligatory when the object NP is absent from the clause, as in (13); omitting direct object is attested without cross-referencing, but such examples are rare (14).

- (13) ɛse-jʔ tʃi peri baziʔ-ubi-**zaʃ** FE
 father-NOM.SG.1SG here always tell(pfv)-HAB-3SG.SOsg.PST
 ‘My father always told about him.’

- (14) nɛk uza-xan-ed ed nɔɔbera-da-**d** tɔʃe-z FE
 other arm-LOC.SG-OBL.SG.2SG so hold(ipfv)-FUT-2SG.S lower_part-ABL.SG
 ‘[It will already move <...> in the sieve. <...>] You will hold (it) with one hand at the lower part.’

Cross-reference cannot be used when the direct object has a destinative marker, as in (15).

- (15) ugalʃe-**zə**-d teza-da-**d** TE
 coal-DEST.SG-OBL.SG.2SG bring(pfv)-FUT-2SG.S
 ‘You will bring coal.’

What does influence the choice of presence vs. absence of object cross-referencing with a full non-destinative direct object NP?

- (16) a. *bese nie-ʔ teza-dɔʔ* TE
 money NEG-3PL.S bring(pfv)-FUT.CONN
 ‘They will not give money.’
- b. *kunɔ-xɔa tʃike bese naʔa-da-zutʃ* TE
 where-TOP this money send(pfv)-FUT-3PL.SOsg.PST
 ‘They’d better send this money somewhere.’

Previous research: attributing this choice to the information structure in terms of ‘logical stress’ (Tereščenko 1973: 188, Sorokina 2010: 310–311) or ‘information structure neutrality’ (Siegl 2013: 253–254).

- Referentiality and definiteness?
 The object in (16a) is non-specific, the object in (16b) is definite.
- Clause-level topicality? (cf. Nikolaeva 2001, Virtanen 2014 for Ob-Ugric languages)
 The object in (16a) is a part of focus [*bese nieʔ tezadɔʔ*]_F, the object in (16b) is a topic [*tʃike bese*]_T.
- Discourse-level topicality?
 The object in (16a) is not mentioned before in the discourse and is not the main topic of the further dialogue, the object in (16b) is indirectly related to the preceding dialogue and this clause summarizes it.

Definiteness does not explain all cases (17).

- (17) *anj tʃike nixuʔ menieɔ-dʲa seixɔŋa-zʔ* TE
 and this three old_woman-PEJ look_at(pfv)-1SG.S
 ‘I saw these three old women again.’

In search of correlates of topicality we use such parameters as:

1. being mentioned in the previous discourse: mentioned before (18), indirectly mentioned before (19), not mentioned before (20)

- (18) *no, kixu peri triapka-xan mu-ubi-za* FE
 well idol always cloth-LOC.SG PLC-HAB-3SG.SOsg
 ‘[My mother had an idol. <...>] Well, she always put **the idol** into a cloth.’
- (19) *man-ʔ, ŋolʲu-uf sira-saj dʲii kunʲ diese-da-r* FE
 say(pfv)-2SG.S.IMP one-RESTR-TRANSL snow-COM tent_cover how cover(pfv)-FUT-2SG.SOsg
 ‘[Dealing with this **tent** <...>] Say, how would you alone put a **tent cover** with snow?’
- (20) *pɛɛ pɔnʲiŋa-zʔ, malʲtʃa pɔnʲiŋa-zʔ* FE
 shoe do(ipfv)-1SG.S overcoat do(ipfv)-1SG.S
 ‘[Once I went fishing. <...>] I fell down into a whirlpool.] I wear **shoes**, I wear an **overcoat**.’

2. being mentioned in the subsequent discourse: mentioned after (21), indirectly mentioned after (22), not mentioned after (23).

NB: This parameter presumably speaks about whether the direct object is something that will be discussed afterwards and has to be remembered.

- (21) *texɛ bem-da ke-xoz kirba kada-za* FE
 there chief-OBL.SG.3SG side-ABL.SG bread take_away(pfv)-3SG.SOsg
 ‘[And the dog was near us. <...>] It took **bread** near its boss. [<...> It went under the hill. <...> And my daughter looks for her bread]’
- (22) *kiuznoju modʲ mer ner-e-jʔ, tʃajniʲk laxu-da-zʔ* FE
 morning-ADV I quickly get_up(pfv)-M-1SG.M kettle boil_up(pfv)-CAUS-1SG.S
 ‘I woke up early in the morning, I boiled **the kettle**. [I sat down to drink tea.]’

(23) beše mirza-d i pogur-? iron pay(ipfv)-2SG.S and fish(ipfv)-2SG.S.IMP
 ‘[They took a paper. <...> People pay for it with money <...>] Once you have paid **the money**, then fish. [So, so we live.]’

FE

Below are numbers for non-destinative NPs headed by nouns (excluding pronouns, placeholders, nominalized uses of ‘this’, ‘such’, etc.)

NPs with possessive affixes as direct objects

Tundra Enets:

- a strong correlation between the presence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of being mentioned in the previous discourse
- a strong correlation between the absence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of NOT being mentioned in the previous discourse

	mentioned before (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned before	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (all examples)	114 89%	14 11%	128 100%
no verbal cross-reference (all examples)	8 9%	81 91%	89 100%

Table 2. TE NPs with possessive affixes

Forest Enets:

- a somewhat weaker correlation between the presence of verbal cross-reference and the fact being mentioned in the previous discourse,
- BUT no correlation between the absence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of NOT being mentioned in the previous discourse.

	mentioned before (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned before	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	97 80%	23 20%	120 100%
no verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	59 49%	61 51%	120 100%

Table 3. FE NPs with possessive affixes

What about the subsequent discourse?

- the same correlation between the presence of verbal cross-reference and the fact being mentioned in the subsequent discourse, as in the case of the previous discourse,
- AGAIN no correlation between the absence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of NOT being mentioned in the subsequent discourse.

	mentioned after (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned after	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	73 61%	47 39%	120 100%
no verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	57 47,5%	63 52,5%	120 100%

Table 4. FE NPs with possessive affixes in subsequent discourse

The combination of the two parameters works better:

- if an object has not been referred to both in the previous and in the subsequent discourse, it has lower chances of being encoded by verbal cross-reference.

	mentioned before & after (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned before & after	other	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	63 52,5%	13 11%	44 36,5%	120 100%
no verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	27 22,5%	31 25,5%	62 52%	120 100%

Table 5. FE NPs with possessive affixes in preceding and subsequent discourse

NPs without possessive affixes as direct objects

Tundra Enets & Forest Enets:

- a correlation between the presence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of being mentioned in the previous discourse;
- a correlation between the absence of verbal cross-reference and the fact of NOT being mentioned in the previous discourse.

	mentioned before (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned before	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (all examples)	41 67%	20 33%	61 100%
no verbal cross-reference (a sample of 90 examples)	32 36%	58 64%	90 100%

Table 6. TE NPs without possessive affixes

	mentioned before (directly or indirectly)	not mentioned before	TOTAL
verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	97 81%	23 19%	120 100%
no verbal cross-reference (a sample of 120 examples)	44 37%	76 63%	120 100%

Table 7. FE NPs without possessive affixes

If possessed and non-possessed direct objects are compared,

- Tundra Enets shows a weaker correlation between the presence/absence in the previous discourse and the presence vs. absence of object verbal cross-reference in the case of non-possessed nouns,
- while Forest Enets shows a stronger correlation in the same case.

Such difference in the closely related dialects is noteworthy.

Preliminary result: discourse-level topicality is the best option for explaining the distribution of presence vs. absence of object cross-reference.

By the discourse-level topicality we understand mainly the presence in the previous discourse with the additional support of the presence in the subsequent discourse.

Perspectives: a search for more fine-grained tools for estimating the degree of the discourse-level topicality.

3. Nominative vs. Oblique of alternating nouns

Previous research: Tereščenko (1973: 179) claims that Nominative is used for a definite object, and Oblique is used for an indefinite direct object.

Our data show that two factors may influence the choice of the case for alternating nouns:

- referential status, i.e. genericity and specificity: generic and non-specific NPs tend to be marked with Oblique (24)-(25), though the correlation is weak; specific NPs may be marked both with Nominative (26) and Oblique (27).

- (24) a **biz** an^j bi-koə pii-pi-za FE
 and water and water-TOP be_afraid(ipfv)-PRF-3SG.SOsg
 ‘But she’s afraid of the water.’
- (25) **biz** tɔzara-b bi-ti-n^j? tɔɔ-da-ubi FE
 water bring(pfv)-CAUS-CVB.COND water-DEST.PL-PL.1SG reach(pfv)-CAUS-HAB.3SG.S
 ‘When they bring the water, she carries my water.’
- (26) texɛ salze-da, salze-da **bi?** mɔdee-r FE
 there glitter(ipfv)-PTCP.SIM glitter(ipfv)-PTCP.SIM water see(ipfv)-2SG.SOsg
 ‘Do you see the shining water there?’
- (27) pɔgi?ɛ-xon **biz** sɔxora-xi? FE
 dipper-LOC.SG water scoop(pfv)-3DU.S
 ‘They scooped the water with the dipper.’

- prominence in discourse: key participants of discourse strongly tend to be marked with Nominative. By key participants we understand participants crucial for the whole text – cf. the object the tale is about in (28) and objects crucial for the purification ritual that are introduced in (30), from a text devoted to the description of this ritual.

- (29) inji-zi? ko-? **ɔdi?** FE
 certainly-3DU.SOsg find(pfv)-CONN verdure.NOM
 ‘Of course, they found the plant.’ (the aforementioned plant, important for the story)
- (30) **d^juu?** tɔ? mua TE
 fat.NOM there do(pfv).3SG.S
 ‘She put some fat there (into the basin).’
- <...> sen mii-gɔa **tabu?** ... **tabu?** sɔ?ɔ,
 how_much what-TOP hair.NOM hair.NOM take_out(pfv).3SG.S
 ... tʃɪnad^j satʃeza-za
 now light(pfv)-3SG.SOsg
 ‘She took out some wool, and then she lighted it all up.’

The prominence factor is stronger than the referential factor: cf. example from a story where the water is crucial (31).

- (31) **bi?** ʃee-xuru ɛɛ-xo-da ni mis FE
 water who-EVEN mother-DAT.SG-OBL.SG.3SG NEG.3SG.S give(pfv)-CONN
 ‘No one gave water to mom.’

		NOM			OBL			TOTAL		
		FE	TE	total	FE	TE	total	FE	TE	total
generic / non-specific	prominent	16 10%	0	16 10%	0	0	0	16 10%	0	16 10%
	non-prominent	14 8%	4 2%	18 10%	53 31%	16 10%	69 41%	67 39%	20 12%	87 51%
total generic / non-specific		30 18%	4 2%	34 20%	53 31%	16 10%	69 41%	83 49%	20 12%	103 61%
specific	prominent	8 5%	2 1%	10 6%	2 1%	0	2 1%	10 6%	2 1%	12 7%
	non-prominent	15 9%	2 1%	17 10%	31	7 4%	38 22%	46 27%	9 5%	55 32%
total specific		23 14%	4 2%	27 16%	33 19%	7 4%	40 23%	56 33%	11 6%	67 39%
total prominent		24 15%	2 1%	26 15%	2 1%	0	2 1%	26 15%	2 1%	28 16%
total non-prominent		29 17%	6 4%	35 19%	84 49%	23 14%	107 63%	113 66%	29 18%	142 84%
TOTAL		53 32%	8 4%	61 36%	86 50%	23 14%	109 64%	139 82%	31 18%	170 100%

Table 8. Distribution of Nominative and Oblique of alternating nouns.

Noteworthy, this distribution between Nominative and Oblique direct objects **goes against** the general cross-linguistic tendency of the differential object marking to use the nominative form for less prominent (Aissen 2003) or less affected (Næss 2004) objects. Cross-linguistically, if there is a choice between nominative and non-nominative direct objects, the non-nominative is more often used for a less typical direct object. Still, in Enets we have an opposite distribution, even if bare numbers of Nominative vs. Oblique instances are compared to each other: 109 instances of Oblique vs. 61 instances of Nominative.

4. Nominative vs. Oblique of possessed nouns

4.1. Number of the noun and person of the possessor

The choice of Nominative vs. Oblique form of possessive forms is mainly based on the number of the noun and on the person of the possessor. Traditionally, this distribution is analyzed via a case system including Nominative, Accusative and Genitive where Accusative is homonymous either with Nominative, or with Genitive. In (Khanina & Shluinsky 2013, 2014) we proposed the description with two cases only, that we adhere to in this paper.

Singular direct objects

- with the 1st person possessor take Nominative affixes, as in (32a),
- with the 2nd and the 3rd persons possessors take Oblique affixes, as in (32b-c).

- (32) a. kuni poga-jʔ berta-da-u FE
how fishing_net-NOM.SG.1SG throw(pfv)-FUT-1SG.SOsg
‘How will I leave my net?’
- b. poga-d tetti-r FE
fishing_net-OBL.SG.2SG measure(pfv)-2SG.SOsg
‘You have measured your net.’
- c. bu poga-da tʃi-ʔ nʲe-zauʔ FE
s/he fishing_net-OBL.SG.3SG install(pfv)-CONN NEG-3SG.SOsg.CONT
‘He installed the net, after all.’

Plural and dual direct objects

- with the 1st person possessor do not distinguish morphologically Nominative vs. Oblique,
- with the 3rd person possessor take Nominative affixes (33).

(33)	koba-saj	tʃuktʃi	pɛdi- zuʔ	tʃuktʃi	mu-dkod-e-zuʔ	FE
	skin-COM	all	kamus- NOM.PL.3PL	all	take(pfv)-HYPOT-SOpl-3PL.SOnsg	
	‘They will take away all the skins with the kamuses.’					

Still, this distribution is a trend, and exceptions are found for direct objects with the 2nd and 3rd person possessors (but not for direct objects with the 1st person possessors):

- cf. a Nominative singular direct object with the 2nd person possessor, instead of Oblique in (34),

- cf. an Oblique plural direct object with the 3rd person possessor instead of Nominative in (35).

(34)	tɔz	nete-u	ani	tʃike	banka-ku- r	modi	FE
	so	open(pfv)-1SG.SOsg	and	this	jar-DIM-NOM.SG.2SG	I	
	‘So I opened this little jar.’						

(35)	uzu- tuʔ	koin				FE
	footstep-OBL.PL.3PL	find(pfv)-SOpl-1SG.SOnsg				
	‘We found their footprints.’					

Such examples cannot be considered absolutely occasional, but still are rather few: e.g. for singular direct objects

- our TE corpus has 19 irregular examples vs. 116 regular examples,
- our FE corpus has 37 irregular examples vs. more than 450 regular examples.

4.2. 2SG Imperative

In 2nd person singular imperative clauses direct objects are usually encoded by Nominative, even when it is not expected from the number and person factor, as in (36)-(37).

This is in line with the general Samoyedic and Uralic trend of Nominative object with 2SG Imperative, cf. (Wickman 1955: 93–95), (Tereščenko 1973: 177–178) inter alia.

(36)	tu- r	sare- ʔ				TE
	fire-NOM.SG.2SG	light_up(pfv)-2SG.S.IMP				
	‘Light the fire up!’					

(37)	ɛba- za	mu- z				FE
	head-NOM.SG.3SG	take(pfv)-2SG.SOsg.IMP				
	‘Take the head.’					

In the TE corpus, there are no exceptions; in the FE corpus non-destinative Oblique object is also attested in 10 2SG imperative clauses of 47, cf. (38). Destinative 2nd person Oblique objects are significantly more widespread, cf. (39).

(38)	lata- da	pɔna	mujza-z			FE
	board-OBL.SG.3SG	then	wipe(pfv)-2SG.SOsg.IMP			
	‘Wipe then the floor!’					

(39)	tʃaj-zo- d	tidis,	kirba-zo-d	tidis		FE
	tea-DEST.SG-OBL.SG.2SG	buy(pfv).2SG.S.IMP	bread-DEST.SG-OBL.SG.2SG	buy(pfv).2SG.S.IMP		
	‘Buy tea, buy bread.’					

2nd person plural and dual Aorist forms used in imperative function (40), as well as 3rd person Imperative form (41) behave in the same way as all other non-Imperative forms, i.e. they have not been attested with the unexpected Nominative object, though only few occurrences of these forms have been attested.

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--|---|---|
| (40) | lata-ku
board-DIM | nieɔn
along | diɔxa-ku- di?
river-DIM-OBL.SG.2DU | mɔta- ri?
cut(pfv)-2DU.S/SOsg | FE |
| ‘Cross the river by the board!’ | | | | | |
| (41) | entʃe?
person | bɔz
only | ɛz-nuk
up-DIR | ɛba- da
head-OBL.SG.3SG | pɔnʃiŋa- da
do(ipfv)-3SG.SOsg.IMP |
| ‘Let a person have his head up!’ | | | | | |

4.3. Additional factors for destinative NPs

For possessive destinative forms two other factors come into play (see Khanina & Shluinsky 2014 for more details):

- in FE unexpected Oblique can optionally be used in other-benefactive contexts, as in (42)

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|----|
| (42) | kɔru- zo-n?
knife- DEST.SG-OBL.SG.1SG | ta-?
give(pfv)-2SG.S.IMP | FE |
| ‘Give me a knife!’ | | | |

- in TE unexpected Oblique can optionally be used with specific direct objects, as in (43)

- | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|----|
| (43) | tɔzɔ
so | tʃikɔ-xɔzɔ
this-ABL.SG | kasa- zo-n?
man- DEST.SG-OBL.SG.1SG | mua-zɔ?
take(pfv)-1SG.S | TE |
| ‘Then I got married (lit. took a husband for myself).’ | | | | | |

5. Conclusion

Enets has a complicated system of encoding the direct object combining nominal inflection and verbal cross-reference. Different parameters are involved in each subpart of this system.

The verbal cross-reference of 3rd person objects is possible when they are topical at the discourse level; a destinative object is not cross-referenced, since the destinative construction introduces a new referent (see Khanina & Shluinsky 2014).

The choice of Nominative vs. Oblique of alternating-stems nouns is related, on the one hand, to genericity and specificity of the object, and on the other hand, to its prominence in the discourse; in both cases we deal with marking that is unexpected in the cross-linguistic perspective.

The choice of Nominative vs. Oblique of possessed nouns is related, first, to the number of the noun and on the person of the possessor; second, to the 2sg imperative vs. other clause; third, to the additional factors for destinative NPs, such as the specificity or a self-beneficiary context.

Most of our statements reflect statistical trends, and not clear-cut distributions.

Thus, this research would have been impossible without extensive naturalistic data we had collected and annotated while working at MPI-EVA! Thank you.

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Abbreviations

1, 2, 3 – 1st, 2nd, 3rd person, ABL – ablative, ACC – accusative, ADV – adverbializer, CAUS – causative, COM – comitative, COND – conditional converb, CONN – connegative, CONT – 'contrastive' TAM-series, CVB – converb, DAT – dative, DEST – destinative, DIM – diminutive, DIR – directive, DU – dual, EVEN – 'even' derivation, F – focus, FE – Forest Enets, FUT – future, HAB – habitual, HYPOT – hypothetical mood, IMP – imperative TAM-series, INCH – inchoative, ipfv – imperfective, LOC – locative, M – middle indexation series, NEG – negative verb, NOM – nominative, OBL – oblique, PASS – passive, pfv – perfective, PEJ – pejorative, PL – plural, PLC – placeholder, PRF – perfect, PST – past TAM-series, PTCL – particle, PTCP.SIM – simultaneous participle, RESTR – restrictive, S – subject indexation series, SG – singular, SOdu – subject-object indexation series for dual object, SONsg – subject-object indexation series for non-singular object, SOpl – subject-object indexation series for plural object, SOSg – subject-object indexation series for singular object, SUP – supine, T – topic, TE – Tundra Enets, TOP – topic marker, TRANSL – translative.