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Thompson, Chad.

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Grammar

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**A Grammatical Outline Of the Tanana (Minto-Nenana) Language
Full Outline**

I. Phonology

A. Vowels - six vowels

1. four full vowels - oo /u/, ee /i/, a /ʌ/, and o /ɔ/
2. two reduced vowels - e /ə/ and u /ʊ/

B. Consonants - 37 consonant phonemes, including 7 consonant series (t, tth, tl, ts, tr, ch, k) as well as /m/, /n/, ///, and /h/

1. Series consists of 3 stop consonants (plain, aspirated and glottalized) and, excluding the t-series, 2 continuants (voiced and voiceless)
2. Syllable final /n/ and /y/ are devoiced (except when /n/ is followed by //)
3. distribution of /m/ and /b/ is not complementary, but /m/ tends to occur when syllable final is /n/
4. no word final contrast between plain, aspirated, and glottalized stops

D. Possible syllable structures are (C)(C)V(C)(C) and N.

(examples: etl-tsee, tghetl-tseeł, neenł-tseetl, n-tghes-ka' tse-bees-jee)

II. Word Classes

A. Nouns

1. Vocatives only used with some kinship terms

soda'	(older sister)	(sode (my older sister))
setseeya'	(grandfather)	(setseyä (my grandfather))
sedats	(younger sister)	(sedadza' (my younger sister))
chela'	(younger brother)	(sechela (my younger brother))
setsoo'	(grandmother)	(setsee (my grandmother))
sedenee'	(child, son)	(sedena' (my child, son))
gena'	(friend)	(segena' (my friend))
eta'a	(father)	(seto' (my father))
en'a	(mother)	(son (my mother))

2. Possession

a. canonical form is: (Possessive Prefix) Noun + -a'

Examples: gesr	(cane)	begezra'	(his cane)
tth'ok	(plate)	setth'oga'	(my plate)
ak	(parka)	ne'aga'	(your parka)
khutl	(sled)	John ghudla'	(John's sled)

b. Kinship terms and body parts are inalienably possessed

c. possessed loanwords and alienated body parts take a ch'e- (sometimes phonetically ts'e-) prefix

Examples: sooljee	sock(s)
sets'esooljee'	my sock(s)
seka'	my (own) foot
sech'eka'	my (animal's) foot

3. Plurals - with humans only - ka, yee, eena

Examples:	tr'akha	woman
	tr'akha ka	(two or three) women
	tr'akha yee	women
	tr'akha eena	women

B. Verbs - Very complex morphology--See IV below

C. Postpositions - Like English prepositions, except postpositions follow their nominal complements. Can take pronominal prefixes. Examples:

bet'okh	under it
beyeet	in it
benoda	around it
se'eł	with me
bets'en'	to it
bets'en	from it
John K'edha	next to John
bet'oget	behind it
beghonthet	in front of it
sughu	to me, for me
bebagha	on the edge of it

D. Adjectives - Follow noun. Not as common as English adjectives. Translations corresponding to English adjectives normally use verbs or nominalized verbs instead of adjectives (see IV.D.2). Below are the only adjectives presently in the corpus.

dechen nadhe	a long stick
sooljee dzaga'	dirty socks
googa' tlaqa	a raggedy doll

E. Adverbs - Modify the action or state described by a verb.
Examples:

Khot tee gheyot.	He's walking slowly.
Khudejał neeyo.	He finally came.
Tth'eeqho nezroon.	It is very nice.
Tth'ek' u kheyay.	He's still talking.
Teeyaa eetl'edha.	He's not very strong.
Ch'edeeteeyaa Kheenay.	He talks too much.
Zreeya dodee.	He talks for nothing.
Sekhenee Khakhootrath.	It's hard for me.
Neełdhot khu K'okhethdeno.	They used to move a long way away.

F. Directionals (or Locationals) - a subclass of adverbs of place which refer to the location of something. The location is identified by four things: (1) the viewpoint, often where the speaker is, (2) the location of the river and the direction of the current, relative to the viewpoint and the place being identified, (3) the presence and direction of any movement, and (4) the relative distance of the object.

Prefixes: yo-	a great distance
do-	a short distance
no-	an intermediate distance
tth'ee-	straight

Stems:	-n'a	moving upstream away from viewpoint
	-ndats'e	moving upstream towards viewpoint
	-neet	at a place upstream
	-de'o	moving downstream away from viewpoint
	-neets'e	moving downstream towards viewpoint
	-dot	at a place downstream
	-nona'	across
	-tthena'	moving towards river from viewpoint
	-ttheet	at place towards river
	-nga'	moving inland, from river
	-ngu(t)	at a place inland, from river
	-nth'a'	moving ahead, towards center
	-nthet	at a place ahead, towards center
	-dega'	up
	-yega'	down

Examples: yon'a, yondats'e, noneet, yoneets'e, donthet, tth'edega', yoyega'

- G. Independent Pronouns - Pronouns which are free-standing
 see 'I' denaxun 'we'
 nen 'you (sg.)' yekhun/nukhun 'you (pl.)'
 oden 'he/she/it' akhden 'they'

- H. Enclitics - words which follow verbs, nouns or independent pronouns. Examples:

See chugoo eszroon.	I am fine too.
See zrok'uł esdo'a.	I never stay home either.
John yan' neeyo.	Only John came.
Ts'ekh zro ooneek'at.	But a hat at least.
Nen kho ts'ekh ooneek'at.	Buy a hat yourself.
Dretr zron ghesghon.	I only made mittens.
Ch'e'oł ts'ukhuyan'.	He eats all the time.

- I. Demonstratives - Words which refer to something by its proximity to the speaker and/or hearer.

Examples: jonee	this thing
jonen	this person
jon	here
jo	this
jo lo	this is, here is
eeey lo	that is, there is
yegedee	that thing
yege	that
eeyden	there
eyen	that person
eyen-na	those people

- J. Particles (Examples below are not exhaustive)

1. exclamations

Edlee!	It's cold.
Etlega'!	It's hot.
Eba!	Ouch! It hurts!
Neda'.	Give it to me.

Na'.	Here take it.
Ndea choo!	Don't!
Aha'	Yes
Nedan	No
see tajookhu	please
2. uninflected predicates	
Kula	(is) gone, missing
K'at	(I) want
neda'	give me
na'	take
3. conjunctions	
ts'e	and
ts'e k'u	so, and then
tee	while, when
deenot	while
da'	if

K. Interrogatives - Correspond to English WH-words.

deba	who
deya	what
nedats'en'	how
nedan	where
nedade'on	when
deya ghu	why
nedats'eneeka	how many
nedats'ukhuk'a	how much
dagheetchoghee	how much

III. Sentence Structure

A. Word Order -- normally Subject-Object-Verb

B. Negatives - made by suffixing -a, -'a, or -la to the verb and by prefixing th-/dh-, ee-, or nothing to the verb

Khoozroon	it is good
Kkoozrooa	it is not good
nelanee oł	he is eating meat
nelanee zrok'uł eth'ola	he doesn't even eat meat
nełdho khu ch'edhes'ola	I haven't eaten for a long time
neeyo	he came
eeyola	he didn't come

C. Subsidiary Verbs - Verbs indicating a general action or state (such as English 'do', 'use', 'be thus'). Take either do- (interrogative) or de- (declarative) as a prefix

Do'eent'a? How are you?

Gheyoł ts'ukhuk'a dest'a. I like to walk.

Khoozroon ts'e dent'a. It is in good condition.

Dokhoot'a? What is it like?

K'uda hał neenotr'egheelay khu k'uda denach'o

Khunheghatñeek k'a dekhoot'a. Now it seems as if
they are taking our traplines away from us.

Dot'an? What is he doing?
 Dats'en dekhot'an'. That is the what they used to do.

Doyel'an? What is he doing with it?
 Dzakh degheel'an'. He gathered pitch.

Dodeyok? What happened to him?
 Nedoth ts'e dedeyok. It got heavy.

Doyeelok? What did he do with it?
 Dedzuga ts'e deenlok. You made it too slow.
 Kuth deseelok. I have a cold. (Lit. 'A cold got me.')

Do'eenithin? Why don't you do it?
 Kuth deseelothin. I have a cold.

Dodee? What is he saying?
 Dotron' dedee. A raven called.

D. Questions

1. Yes/No questions formed by suffixing -(h)ee' to the verb
 Examples: Deentseen. You are hungry.
 Deentseenee'? Are you hungry?
 K'uda now
 K'udahee'? Is that all?, Are we done?, Now?
2. WH-questions formed with interrogative (see IIK above)
 Examples: Deba neeyo? Who came?
 Deya k'at? What do you want?
 Eeek nedats'eneeka? How many dogs are there?
3. WH-questions using a subsidiary verb with do- prefix
 (see IIIC above)

E. Complex Sentences

1. Sentences with coordinating conjunction, ts'e.
 Example: Se'at dheedo ts'e se'at ch'ee'oł.
 Come sit with me and eat with me.
2. Sentences with subordinating conjunction (ts'e k'u, tee, deenot...)
 Examples: YedatIK'a ts'e k'u khedejegok.
 As soon as she shouted, I took off running.
 Ełchon deenot ghesta'.
 I slept while it rained.
3. Sentences with sentential argument represented by khu-
 Examples: Khoozroon ts'e khunetl'-an.
 I see well.
 Gheyol ts'ukhuk'a dent'a.
 I like to walk.
4. Relative clauses (nominalizations)
 Examples: Ch'eldzezen netl'-an.
 I am watching a dancer.
 Cheela nedodhen netl'-an.
 I see the heavy boy.

- F. Noun phrase conjunction - Nouns conjoined with *eł*
Example: John eł Pete eł Judy eł needatl.
John, Pete, and Judy came.

IV. Verbs

- A. Themes and thematic prefixes
 - 1. classifiers
 - 2. transitivity
 - 3. thematic prefixes
- B. Derivational strings and aspect
- C. Classifier changes
 - 1. passive
 - 2. reflexive
 - 3. reciprocal
 - 4. iterative
 - 5. causative
- D. Theme categories
 - 1. Positional themes - singular/plural contrast
 - 2. Dimensional themes
 - a. transitionals
 - b. comparatives
 - c. colors
 - 3. Motion themes
 - a. singular, dual, plural contrast of 'go on foot'
 - b. other themes (go by boat, swim, run, crawl)
 - b. aspects
 - i. momentaneous
 - ii. progressive
 - iii. perambulative
 - iv. continuative
 - 4. Successive themes (chop, hit, cut, poke, stab)
 - 5. Classificatory themes
 - a. stative (be in position)
 - b. active (carry, put, handle, give)
 - c. stems
 - i. -'o (compact or unmarked object)
 - ii. -dlo (plural objects)
 - iii. -ton (stick-like object)
 - iv. -itlon (sacked object, sack)
 - v. -kon (object in shallow container, liquid)
 - vi. -lchoot (food)
 - vii. -tlak (mushy, amorphous object)
 - viii. -nok (granular object)
 - ix. -t'on' (light, flame)
 - 6. Other themes
- E. Verb Prefixes
 - 1. Tense and mode
 - a. progressive - ghe-

- b. conjugation markers - ne-, dhe-, ghe-, 0
 - c. N-perfective - ne-, ee-
 - d. optative - ghu
 - e. future - tetghe
 - f. inceptive - tetdhe
 - 2. Pronominal prefixes
 - a. subject
 - b. secondary subject ("deictic") - ts'e-, khe-, ch'e-, khu-, ye-
 - c. direct object
 - 3. Negative prefixes
 - 4. Gender prefixes - de-, ne-, khu-
 - 5. Thematic conjunct prefixes - de-, ne-, Khe-, dhe-
 - 6. Disjunct prefixes
 - a. incorporates
 - b. iterative (no- do something again, back)
 - c. "essential" (distributive, multiple, perambulative, continuative)
 - d. adverbial
 - e. incorporated postpositions
- F. Verb suffixes
- 1. Nominalizers
 - 2. Negative
 - 3. Interrogative
- G. Morphophonology
- 1. Rules involving classifiers
 - a. t-classifier
 - i. s + t --> t1
 - ii. dhe + t --> t1
 - iii. ukh + t --> u \ddot{t}
 - b. le-classifier
 - i. s + le --> sje
 - ii. dhe + le --> dle
 - iii. ukh + le --> ul
 - c. de-classifier
 - i. de + ' --> t'
 - ii. de + hV --> dV
 - 2. Rules involving conjugations markers
 - a. ne-absorption
 - b. ghe-absorption
 - c. ghu-absorption
 - d. dhe + de --> thde
 - e. # ne (classifier --> # ee (classifier
 - f. aa-insertion
 - g. ee-insertion
 - 3. Other rules