

The Chukotkan “inverse” from an Itelmen perspective

Jonathan David Bobaljik
University of Connecticut, Storrs

1. Introduction*

Comrie (1980) suggests that the Chukotkan agreement prefix inventory includes one prefix which is not a marker of person and number, but is instead an “inverse” marker, signaling that the object outranks the subject on a person/number hierarchy. This position has been adopted without challenge in much of the subsequent English-language literature (Fortescue 1997, Dunn 1999, Spencer 2000). Comrie suggests that Itelmen, in which the corresponding element marks all and only 3PL subjects in the transitive paradigm, constitutes a reduction in the scope of the inverse marker, thus taking inverse marking to represent the older system. In this short paper, I argue for an alternative account. I suggest that a significantly more straightforward characterization of the distribution of Chukotkan *ne-* is to be had by recognizing the Itelmen pattern as the more conservative: the Chukchi pattern represents in effect a case of generalized heteroclisis—a single paradigm whose forms are drawn from two paradigms. The distribution of *ne-* in Chukchi represents the grammaticalization of a distribution that has a direct parallel in Itelmen, but which is epiphenomenal in the latter. Arguably, the skewed distribution of transitive *ne-* may thus be part of the same process that yielded the ergative case pattern in Chukotkan, roughly along the lines suggested by Fortescue (1997).

2. Chukotko-Kamchatkan Agreement

The question of the genetic affinity of Itelmen to the Chukotkan languages remains a matter of debate. Yet whether one sees the many similarities as reflecting a genetic relationship (Fortescue 2005) or a Sprachbund (Georg & Volodin 1999:224-24), it is abundantly clear that the intricate system of verbal agreement morphology is largely shared. All Chukotko-Kamchatkan (CK) languages express agreement via a combination of mostly cognate prefixes and suffixes: prefixes generally mark subjects (whether transitive or intransitive) while suffixes mark features of the subject and direct or indirect object. Basic past tense transitive paradigms for Itelmen and Chukchi are given in (1) and (2). The focus of Comrie’s account, and thus of the alternative to be presented below, is the distribution of the *n(e)-* prefix, identified in these paradigms with a bold border. (The double border grouping other first person object forms in (2) will be clarified below.)¹

(1) Itelmen transitive

s ^o	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
1SG			t- -in	t- -sxen	t- -čen	t- -čeʔn
1PL			nt- -in	nt- -sxen	nt- -čen	nt- -čeʔn
2SG	-βum	-βuʔm			-n	-ʔn
2PL	-βum-sx	-βuʔm-sx			-sx	-sxiʔn
3SG	-βum	-βuʔm	-in	-sxen	-nen	-neʔn
3PL	n- -βum	n- -βuʔm	n- -in	n- -sxen	n- -nen	n- -neʔn

* Contemporary research on Itelmen owes an immense debt to the pioneering work of A. P. Volodin. It is a great pleasure to be able to make a modest contribution to a volume in honour of this scholar, who has set the benchmark for the study of this language. The ideas presented here have had a long gestation, and I am grateful to Irina Monich and to audiences at UConn, MIT, and the *Morphology of the Worlds’ Languages* conference in Leipzig for useful suggestions. For funding of my current research on Itelmen, I acknowledge the support of the National Science Foundation, via research grants BCS-1065038 and BCS-1263535. I owe a large debt of gratitude to the many speakers of Itelmen who have generously shared their language.

¹ Itelmen forms given here are drawn mostly from the Sedanka dialect (the Northern sub-group of Western Itelmen), and thus differ in some ways from those in the literature reflecting the Khairjuzovo dialect area (Southern sub group). Forms are from field notes unless otherwise indicated. For further detail, see Bobaljik and Wurmbrand (2002) and references therein.

(2) Chukchi transitive (Скорик 1977:44-45)

s \ o	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
1SG			t- -γət	t- -tək	t- -γʔen	t- -net
1PL			mət- -γət	mət- -tək	mət- -γʔen	mət- -net
2SG	ine- -γʔi	tku-γʔi			-γʔen	-net
2PL	ine- -tək	tku-tək			-tkə	-tkə
3SG	ine- -γʔi	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tək	-nin	-nine-t
3PL	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tək	ne- -γʔen	ne- -net

From an Itelmen perspective, there is nothing untoward about the *n-* prefix: it marks all and only 3PL transitive subjects, and occupies the same morphological slot as other agreement prefixes. There is no synchronic motivation to consider it an “inverse” marker. The Chukchi cognate *ne-* has a more jagged distribution, occurring with all 3PL subjects, and in half the combinations with 3SG subjects. Comrie dubs this the ‘strong inverse’. It is thus worth exploring the case for this label.

3. Inverse Marking?

The notion of **inverse marking** originates in the study of the Algonquian languages, and is intimately tied up with the notion of a Person Hierarchy, as given in (3):

$$(3) \quad 1^{\text{st}} \text{ person} > 2^{\text{nd}} \text{ person} > 3^{\text{rd}} \text{ person}$$

A clause is INVERSE if the object outranks the subject on the person hierarchy, and is otherwise DIRECT: Thus, *I saw them* is direct, but *They saw me* is inverse. In canonical inverse-marking systems, such as Algonquian, agreement morphemes signal the person and number of the arguments, but an independent morpheme—the theme sign—indicates whether the clause is direct or inverse. Examples from Nishnaabemwin (Ojibwe) are given in (4), from Valentine (2001:287; see Oxford 2014 for a recent reassessment of the Algonquian inverse marking system).

- (4) a. *n- wa:bm -a: -g*
 1 see DIR 3PL
 ‘I see them’
- b. *n- wa:bm -igo: -g*
 1 see INV 3PL
 ‘They see me’

Returning to Chukotkan, we see that the *ne-* prefix occurs mainly in cells that represent inverse combinations. The fit is, however, not exact. There are inverse combinations not marked by *ne-* (outlined by a double line in (2)), and in addition, the distribution of *ne-* in cells representing the interaction of 3rd person acting on 3rd person is not predicted under any definition of inverse. Note moreover that the putative Chukotkan inverse differs from Algonquian in one striking way (as recognized by Comrie): in Algonquian, the theme sign is critical to understanding who did what to whom. The theme sign itself is not an agreement marker, and instead regulates the association of agreement with grammatical function. For example, in (4), the theme sign indicates whether the 1st person *n-* prefix represents the subject or object. In Chukotkan, by contrast, the *ne-* prefix occupies the position of other person and number markers (the subject prefixes). Moreover in terms of signaling an inverse association, it is entirely redundant: the suffixes unambiguously signal the person and number of the object and do not change function between direct and inverse. There is no functional motivation from disambiguation (the central role of inverse marking in Algonquian) for understanding this prefix as an inverse marker. For example, in the Chukchi transitive paradigm the suffix *-γət* indicates a 2SG object, regardless of the position of the subject relative to this object on the Person Hierarchy.

By means of a brief detour, it should be noted that the inverse cells not marked by *ne-* have a special morphosyntax. These are the cells framed by a double line in (2) (and (15), below), including, 3SG>1SG

4. Itelmen *n-*

As noted above, in the basic transitive indicative paradigm, Itelmen *n-* marks 3PL transitive subjects. There is, though, an addition paradigm in Itelmen, not presented above. This paradigm, presented in (8), is a species of impersonal or passive; the latter term is preferred by Volodin and will be used here.

(8) Itelmen passive

s \ o	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
PASS	n- -βum	n- -βuʔm	n- -in	n- -sxen	n- -čen	n- -čeʔn

In Itelmen, both subjects and objects of transitive clauses are unmarked for case (unlike its northern neighbours, Itelmen is not an ergative language). In the passive, the subject agreement morpheme is replaced by *n-* and the logical subject, if expressed, bears an oblique case: locative if human (or higher animate, incl. anthropomorphized entities), and instrumental otherwise. The subject may only be third person but may be singular or plural. Like impersonal constructions, and unlike canonical passives in other languages, there is no dedicated voice morphology in this construction, nor is the logical object promoted to subjecthood—the object continues to agree as an object, rather than as a subject. Active-passive pairs are given in (9) and (10).³

- (9) a. *sillatumx-eʔn kamma n-anʔčp-miŋ*
 brother-PL 1SG 3PL-teach-1SG.OBJ
 ‘The brothers taught me.’
 b. *sillatumx-eʔn-k kamma n-anʔčp-miŋ*
 brother-PL-LOC 1SG PASS-teach-1SG.OBJ
 ‘I was taught by the brothers.’
- (10) a. *χiŋ-eʔn minʔt n-ənk-γ^we-nen*
 wolf-PL hare 3PL-catch-II-3>3SG
 ‘The wolves caught the hare.’
 b. *χiŋ-eʔn-k minʔt n-ənk-ki-čen*
 wolf-PL-LOC hare PASS-catch-II-3SG.OBJ
 ‘The hare was caught by the wolves.’ [Володин 1976:270]

Fortescue (1997) suggests that the Itelmen passive provides a plausible source for the ergative construction in Chukotkan. For the majority of subject-object combinations, the passive and 3PL subject forms are identical (as already noted by Volodin). The only morphological distinction in (9) is the case marking on the agent. Pairs such as (9) thus provide a plausible source for reanalysis of the passive/impersonal construction in (9) as an ergative construction, following a well-trodden route to ergativity (cf. Garrett 1990). In support of this, the distribution of ergative case in Chukotkan neatly tracks the distribution of agent-marking in the Itelmen passive. For nominals other than pronouns, there is no distinct ergative case in Chukotkan; instead, just as in the Itelmen passive, an ergative subject in Chukotkan bears locative case if it is a human (proper name and some kinship terms), and instrumental otherwise.

Now, if such a reanalysis is the source of ergativity in Chukotkan, the loss of the passive-active contrast must then give rise to an instance of heteroclisis: the resulting transitive paradigm in Chukotkan is the amalgam of forms from the active and passive paradigms, preserved as distinct paradigms in Itelmen. Speaking somewhat loosely, we may conceive of this problem from the perspective of a language learner who is attempting to construct a single transitive paradigm by reanalyzing ambient linguistic data that in fact

³ I have altered the word order to stress the morphological parallels. Volodin gives SOV in the active and OVL_{oc} in the passive, but word order is not rigid. Nominals are freely omitted if recoverable from context and in addition, the logical subject is freely omitted in the passive construction, receives an indefinite or unspecified interpretation. Volodin’s examples are from the Khairjuzovo dialect area which differs in some ways from other forms cited in this paper, notably in the use of first person object suffix is *-miŋ* or *-məŋ*, corresponding to Sedanka *-βum*. The verb in (11) is from the class II conjugation – on which see Bobaljik and Wurmbrand (2002).

contains both active and passive paradigms. The learner must, for each ‘cell’ in the transitive paradigm, settle on one form where there input contains two.

With this in mind, consider the relevant forms in more detail. The table in (11) represents the verb forms in the archaic system, associated with 3PL subjects. That is, in the hypothetical source system, just as in contemporary Itelmen, there are two ways to express an action with a 3PL subject—the verb form may be drawn from the active or passive paradigm. By hypothesis, the learner hears these as the forms associated with 3PL subjects and will construct a single row of the transitive paradigm by merging these. I have offered the relevant forms as reconstructions in a hypothetical proto-Chukotko-Kamchatkan, to represent the source language. If one sees instead a Sprachbund here, rather than genetic affinity, this represents the pre-Chukotkan source, prior to the merger of the two paradigms. As our interests here are morphological, I have glossed over some matters of phonological detail in the reconstructions, for example, leaving consonantal clusters that were likely broken up by epenthesis.⁴

(11) Heteroclisis: 3 PLURAL subjects

s \ o	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
*ACT	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tk-n	ne- -nin	ne- -nin-t
*PASS	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tk-n	ne- -Kʔe-n	ne- -Kʔe-n-t
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
3PL	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tək	ne- -γʔen	ne- -net

For first and second person objects, there is no difference between active and passive, and these transparently provide the forms for the corresponding 3PL. For third person objects, the Itelmen active and passive paradigms have distinct suffixes; *-če(?)n* is the regular third person object suffix, and *-ne(?)n* is a portmanteau marker for third person acting on third person. By hypothesis, this distinction is conservative, representing the reconstructed distinction. This is the only choice point in merging these (parts of the) paradigms, and the Chukchi forms correspond to the non-portmanteau suffixes of Itelmen. Unsurprisingly, all 3PL subject forms in Chukotkan have the *ne-* prefix.

Consider now the analogous forms with a 3SG subject. Again, we are looking from the perspective of a choice in the archaic system that must be resolved to a single form for each object in Chukotkan.

(12) Heteroclisis: 3 SINGULAR subjects

s \ o	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL	3SG	3PL
*ACT	-γəm	-mək	-γət	-tk-n	-nin	-nin-t
*PASS	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tk-n	ne- -Kʔe-n	ne- -Kʔe-n-t
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
3SG	ANTIPASS	ne- -mək	ne- -γət	ne- -tək	-nin	-nine-t

⁴ The Itelmen forms directly preserve the morphological structure reconstructed here, with the exception of the 1PL object forms. I have reconstructed the prefix with a vowel, assuming it has been lost in Itelmen. Phonologically, I have assumed (in line with prior work in this area), that the Chukotkan 1st and 2nd person object suffixes are more conservative, since they are transparently related to the pronouns: 1SG: *γəm*, 2SG *γət*, 1PL *muri*, 2PL *turi*. The changes that derive the Itelmen forms in (1) from the reconstructions in (11) are perhaps non-obvious but are (mostly) well motivated. In brief, running left to right in (11): Itelmen 1SG.OBJ *βum* < *-γəm is regular; in the Sedanka dialect the 1PL.OBJ form combines this with the regular plural marker. As noted above, the Khairjuzovo dialect area has corresponding 1.OBJ suffixes which are built on *-miŋ* or *-məŋ*, evidently the reflex of *-mək. The loss of initial *-γ-* in the 2SG.OBJ forms represents a widespread process in Sedanka, and the reflex of *-γ-* is (or was) preserved in the corresponding Khairjuzovo forms (Володин 1976); *-n* surfaces in place of *-t* in the 2SG oblique pronouns as well as in the object suffixes. Itelmen has *sx* for **tk* throughout the inflectional morphology. The element I have written “Kʔe” in the reconstructed forms surfaces in Chukotkan as *-γʔe-* and alternates with zero in somewhat unpredictable fashion. Скорик (1977:19) suggests that it is an aspectual suffix in Chukchi. Fortescue (1997) reconstructs this as **-γəRə-*. In Itelmen, reflexes seem to be *-č(e)-* in the object (and 1st person intransitive) suffixes, although the connection here is more tenuous. I leave aside more detailed investigation of this element. The Itelmen infixal plural *-ʔ-* corresponds systematically to Chukotkan *-(e)t*.

As previously noted, the 1SG object forms fall outside of the system, requiring the (spurious) antipassive morphology (this could easily be a later development, unrelated to the merger of the paradigms). Taking the remaining first and second person objects, we see that the two reconstructed paradigms (active and passive) differ only in the presence or absence of the prefix *n-*. From the perspective of our hypothetical learner reanalyzing two paradigms as one, it appears for 3SG subjects as if the *ne-* prefix is optional. For the third person object forms, the presence or absence of the prefix is correlated with whether the suffix is just the third person object suffix (modern Itelmen: *-če(?)n*) or is the portmanteau suffix *-ne?n*. I contend that this is the key observation that explains the extension of the *ne-* prefix into some, but not all, cells of the 3SG subject row in Chukotkan. That is, from the perspective of a language learner who is attempting to construct a single paradigm where the source language has two, the following statement is true:

- (13) i. The prefix *ne-* may be used with all third person subjects,
 ii. except for 3SG subjects also expressed by the portmanteau suffix *-ne(?)n*.

The generalization in (13) is an accurate description of the union of the transitive active and passive paradigms. The generalization is not merely a hypothesis about reconstructed forms, but is an accurate description of the distribution of notionally transitive forms with third person subjects in contemporary Itelmen usage. This can be seen in part by comparing (9) and (10) with (14), which has a 3SG logical subject. The *n-*prefix is absent in (14a), which has the portmanteau affix, but present in (14b), which has the simple 3SG object suffix.

- (14) a. *χiŋe* *minʔt* *ənk-čij-nen*
 wolf hare catch-II-3>3SG
 ‘The wolf caught the hare.’
 b. *χij-enk* *minʔt* *n-ənk-ki-čen*
 wolf-LOC hare PASS-catch-II-3SG.OBJ
 ‘The hare was caught by the wolf.’

It is worth stressing that for Itelmen (and by hypothesis for the reconstructed source system), the generalization in (13) is true, but epiphenomenal. It is a contingent fact about the nature of two distinct paradigms—a product of the fact that the *n(e)-* prefix marks 3PL active subjects and also marks the passive/impersonal construction (by no means a surprising confluence cross-linguistically), and more idiosyncratically, that Itelmen has a special portmanteau suffix for third person subjects acting on third person objects, in the active paradigm.

Now, while (13) is a true characterization of the distribution of the prefix across paradigms in Itelmen, it is also exactly the distribution of the *ne-* prefix within the unique transitive paradigm of Chukotkan, for which Comrie invoked the notion of an inverse. The statement in (13) is as much an accurate characterization of (2) in Chukchi as it is of Itelmen. The central thesis here is therefore the following: because Chukotkan resolved the choice of suffixes in (12) in favour of the portmanteau suffixes, nothing beyond (13) needs to be said to characterize the distribution of the *ne-* prefix. The distribution follows entirely as the grammaticalization of a true, but epiphenomenal, generalization, namely (13).⁵ There is no appeal to an inverse, and thus no special stipulations needed for a language-specific markedness hierarchy or for distinct resolutions of 3SG>3SG or 3PL>3PL.

4. Koryak

If the only paradigms to consider were Chukchi and Itelmen, then the preceding pages would have provided a historical account of the distribution of *ne-* that explains its distribution with no appeal to inverse

⁵ In an approach to morphology in which overt morphemes are exponents that realize, sometimes imperfectly, an underlying morphosyntactic representation, it is trivial to formalize (13ii) as a deletion rule, deleting the features of the 3SG subject in the presence of the portmanteau suffix. Such a rule was proposed for these facts in Bobaljik (2000) within the framework of Distributed Morphology, though no consideration of its diachronic source was given in that work.

marking. Parsimony favours this account, since the inverse account requires additional ad hoc postulates to explain the distribution of 3>3 forms which falls out from (13) with no further synchronic assumptions.

However, Koryak (and the Khatyrka dialect of Chukchi) provide an additional layer of complexity, but one that does not, I contend, undermine the account just given. The relevant transitive paradigm in these varieties is exactly like Chukchi (2), except that in place of the spurious antipassive forms with *-tku-* marking 1PL objects, we find verb forms that are syncretic with third person subject forms, as in (15):

(15) Koryak transitive (Жукова 1972:307-308)⁶

s \ o	1SG	1DU	2SG	2DU	3SG	3DU
1SG			t- -γi	t- -tək	t- -n	t- -net
1PL			mət- -γi	mət- -tək	mət- -n	mət- -net
2SG	ine- -j	ne- -mək			-n	-net
2PL	ine- -tək	ne- -mək			-la-tkə	la-tkə
3SG	ine- -j	ne- -mək	ne- -γi	ne- -tək	-nin	-nin
3PL	ne- -γəm	ne- -mək	ne- -γi	ne- -tək	ne- -n	ne- -net

At first blush, these forms seem to indicate that (13i) may be insufficient, as the *ne-* prefixed forms have spread to encompass certain forms that have a second person subject. These are inverse contexts, and are taken by Comrie as support for viewing *ne-* as an inverse marker. In fact, on Comrie's account, the Koryak form is basic, and Chukchi and Itelmen represent a reduction of the full-blown inverse system. Yet there is an equally plausible diachronic source even for the Koryak paradigm, if we start from (13).

In Chukchi, the two cells in question (2nd person subject acting on 1PL object) are expressed by the spurious antipassive. Now, Chukchi has two antipassive morphemes: the prefix *ine-* represents the general antipassive and is used for 1SG objects in the spurious antipassive construction. The second antipassive is *-tku-*. As Nedjalkov (1979:255) notes, it is unsurprising that this second antipassive is used with plural objects, since this suffix is also used to mark iterativity in verbs and in some instances plurality in nouns. Interestingly, Koryak (and the Khatyrka dialect of Chukchi) have lost the *-tku-* antipassive quite generally.⁷ The loss of the antipassive morpheme leaves, as it were, a vacuum in the corresponding cells of the Koryak transitive paradigm. One might imagine various ways in which that gap may have been filled. One such way would be via analogical leveling, exploiting an independent property of the intransitive paradigm, namely, systematic syncretism of 2 and 3 (SG) subject forms.

(16) Chukchi intransitive (Скорик 1977:20) (17) Itelmen intransitive (e.g., Napanskij dial.)⁸

	SG	PL
1	t- - (γʔe)k	mət- -mək
2	- -γʔi	- -tək
3	- -γʔi	- -γʔe-t

	SG	PL
1	t- -k(ičən)	nt- -k(ičeʔn)
2	- -č	- -sx
3	- -č	- -iʔn

⁶ Koryak marks a SG-PL distinction for prefixes, and a SG-DU-PL distinction for suffixes. Only forms for dual objects are indicated in table (15) as these are parallel with the plurals in the other tables. Forms for plural objects are built from the dual object forms by means of an additional plural suffix *-la* after the verb stem, before the suffixes in (15).

⁷ That the *-tku-* suffix is lost in Koryak as opposed to being a Chukchi innovation is supported by the existence of an apparently cognate iterative morpheme *-sxn-* in Itelmen (Володин 1976:206); note the phonetic correspondence of Chukchi *tk* and Itelmen *sx* replicating the correspondence also seen with 2PL agreement morphemes.

⁸ Cf. also Bogoras (1922). Most extant varieties of Itelmen do not show 2SG=3SG syncretism and have a distinct 3SG suffix here, *-(w)in*. Georg and Volodin (1999) suggest that the syncretism here is an innovation under Koryak influence.

(18) Koryak intransitive (Жукова 1972:233)

	SG	DU	PL
1	tə- -k	mət- -mək	mət- -la-mək
2	-i	-tək	-la-tək
3	-i	-γəki	-la-j

While other outcomes would have been equally plausible, the fact that 2 and 3 person subject forms in the intransitive paradigm are independently syncretic, coupled with the observation that the lost antipassive forms are formally intransitive, suggests a plausible route to the extension of *ne-* in this paradigm, with no appeal to an inverse construction, even here. From a functional perspective, moreover, an appeal to marking of inverse forms is in this instance implausible. The *-mək* suffix alone unambiguously indicates a 1PL object, and since first person is at the top of the hierarchy, all forms with 1st person objects are by definition inverse. Additional marking is not only redundant, but in fact serves to create an ambiguity as to the person of the subject, an ambiguity that could have been avoided by failing to extend 2=3 subject syncretism to these forms.

5. Conclusion

In sum, in this short paper, I have reconsidered one aspect of Chukotko-Kamchatkan transitive verbal inflection. With Nedjalkov, Fortescue, and others, I have suggested that the Chukotkan *ne-* prefix corresponds to both the Itelmen 3PL active *n-* and the passive/indefinite subject *n-*; and that the merger of the two independent paradigms leads to the odd distribution of this prefix in Chukotkan. Central in this account is the observation that the distribution of this prefix in Chukchi is, when formulated as in (13), precisely parallel to its distribution across the two paradigms in Itelmen. The historical merger of the two paradigms—a merger independently proposed as a plausible source of ergativity in Chukotkan (Fortescue 1997)—in this way provides a nearly complete diachronic account of the distribution of this prefix. Nowhere in the account does the postulation of *ne-* as an inverse marker play a role, contra Comrie (1980), Fortescue (1997), Dunn (1999) and Spencer (2000). Indeed, as suggested above, labeling it as such raises at least as many questions as it solves.

Abbreviations

1,2,3 — 1,2,3 person; SG, DU, PL — singular, dual, plural; SUB — subject; OBJ — object; 3>3SG — 3 person subject acting on 3 singular object (portmanteau); II — conjugation class II; ABS — absolutive; AP — antipassive; DIR — direct; ERG — ergative; FUT — future; INV — inverse; LOC — locative; PASS — passive; PROG — progressive;

Bibliography

- Володин 1976 – А. П. Володин. Ительменский язык. Leningrad: Nauka, 1976.
 Жукова 1972 – А. Н. Жукова. Грамматика чукотского языка. Leningrad: Nauka, 1972.
 Скорик 1977 – П. Я. Скорик. Грамматика чукотского языка, часть II: глагол, наречие, служебные слова. Leningrad: Nauka, 1977.
 Bobaljik 2000. – J. D. Bobaljik. The ins and outs of contextual allomorphy // K. K. Grohmann and C. Struijke (eds.). Proceedings of the 1999 Maryland Mayfest on Morphology. University of Maryland Working Papers in Linguistics 10. College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 2000. P. 35-71.
 Bobaljik & Branigan 2006 – J. D. Bobaljik, P. Branigan. Eccentric Agreement and Multiple Case Checking // A. Johns, D. Massam and J. Ndayiragije (eds.). Ergativity: Emerging Issues. Dordrecht: Springer, 2006. P. 47-77.
 Bobaljik & Wurmbrand 2002 – J. D. Bobaljik, S. Wurmbrand. Notes on Itelmen Agreement // Linguistic Discovery, 1,1, 2002. <http://linguistic-discovery.dartmouth.edu/WebObjects/Linguistics>
 Bogoras 1922 – W. Bogoras. Chukchi // F. Boas (ed.). Handbook of American Indian languages. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922. P. 631-903.
 Comrie 1980 – B. Comrie. Inverse verb forms in Siberia: Evidence from Chukchee, Koryak, and Kamchadal // Folia Linguistica Historica, 1, 1980. P. 61-74.
 Corbett 2000 – G. G. Corbett. Number. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
 Dunn 1999 – Dunn, Michael. 1999. A grammar of Chukchi. PhD Thesis, Australian National University, Canberra, 1999.

- Fortescue 1997 – M. Fortescue. Eskimo influence on the formation of the Chukotkan ergative clause // *Studies in Language* 21, 2: 1997. P. 369-409.
- Fortescue 2005 – M. Fortescue. *Comparative Chukotko-Kamchatkan Dictionary*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2005.
- Garrett 1990 – A. Garrett. The origin of NP split ergativity // *Language* 66, 2, 1990. P. 261-296.
- Georg & Volodin 1999 – S. Georg & A. P. Volodin. *Die itelmenische Sprache: Grammatik und Texte. Tunguso Sibirica 5*. Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1999.
- Halle & Hale 1997 – M. Halle & K. Hale. Chukchi transitive and antipassive constructions. Ms, MIT, Cambridge, Mass, 1997.
- Nedjalkov 1979 – V. P. Nedjalkov. Degrees of ergativity in Chukchee // F. Plank (ed.). *Ergativity: Towards a theory of grammatical relations*. London/New York: Academic Press, 1979. P. 241-262.
- Oxford 2014 – W. R. Oxford. *Microparameters of agreement: a diachronic perspective on Algonquian verb inflection*. PhD Thesis, University of Toronto.
- Spencer 2000 – A. Spencer. Agreement morphology in Chukotkan // W. U. Dressler, O. E. Pfeiffer, M. A. Pochtrager (eds.). *Morphological analysis in comparison*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000. P. 191-222.
- Randolph 2001 – V. J. Randolph. *Nishnaabemwin Reference Grammar*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Information about authors, Summaries and Keywords

Bobaljik, Jonathan David (John) — Ph.D. Professor and Department Head, University of Connecticut, jonathan.bobaljik@uconn.edu.

J. D. Bobaljik. The Chukotkan “inverse” from an Itelmen perspective.

This paper presents a reanalysis of the Chukotkan prefix *ne-*, analyzed by Comrie (1980) as an inverse prefix. The distribution which Comrie took to constitute an inverse patterning (in which the object outranks the subject on a person hierarchy) is present in Itelmen as well, but only epiphenomenally, when both passive and active transitive paradigms are considered together. This observation suggests an alternative, diachronic source for the Chukotkan prefix’s distribution, resulting from heteroclisis—neutralization of an original active/passive distinction (maintained in Itelmen) to create a single, combined paradigm. This neutralization also provides a plausible historical source for the Chukotkan ergative construction, as argued by Fortescue (1997).

Keywords: Chukotkan, Itelmen, inverse, agreement, heteroclisis.