On the mystery of the *g* in *engëm(et)* and *tégëd(et)*

The *g* element of the two Hungarian personal pronouns in the title is either a suffix originating from the Proto-Uralic word **kit/*ket* 'form' or an instance of the *k* grammatical particle expressing emphasis. Furthermore, both of the explanations may be applicable at the same time, mutually re-inforcing each other.

It is a curious feature of Hungarian syntax that next to a first or a second person pronominal object the verbal predicate is always inflected in the sub-jective conjugation (e.g. *lát engëm* 'he sees me', *néz titëket* 'he is watching you (pl.)' etc.), while a third person pronominal object always goes together with a predicate in objective conjugation (pl. *látja őt* 'he sees her', *nézik őket* 'they are watching them' etc). This may be explained as follows. The objective conjugation came to exist in the third person initially and it used to be of nominal nature. It was only later that it became verbal, because the nominal lexeme expressing the object was complemented with an objective suffix, then it was attached to the word expressing the predicate as a suffix, thus the predicate was placed into a changed syntactic environment as a con-sequence. If the object was present in the sentence to express emphasis, the congruence of object marking became justified in the third person: the noun acting as object received objective inflection, creating some kind of pleonasm consequently: (reconstructed in the present phonetic form: **lát-őt* 'sees-him' ≫) *látja* ≳ *látja őt* 'sees ≳ sees him', (**néz-őt* 'watches-him' > >) *nézi* ≳ *nézi azt* 'watches ≳ watches it'. For that matter, personal pronouns are also definite to start with, so the addition of an element expressing definiteness would have resulted in redundancy, which triggered the subjective conjugation of the verbal predicate. Initially, the third person pronoun did not express the quality of person explicitly, so the behaviour of it was different from that of the first and second person pronouns, which were "real" personal pronouns already. The other two Ugric languages are similar to Hungarian from this respect.

It is an even more interesting case when a first person singular verb has a second person pronominal object (e.g. *látlak (tégëd)* 'I see (you)', *nézlek (titëket)* 'I am watching (you pl.)'), which together with the first person pro-nominal subject can be considered as maximally definite. Verbal forms like

látlak and *nézlek* functionally appear as objective and structurally as subjective, but, in fact, the *-k* element of the *-lak*/*-lek* portmanteau morpheme is a distinctive feature of the subjective conjugation (c.f. *látok* 'I (can) see', *nézëk* 'I am watching'), and at the same time the *-l-* element has nothing to do with either the indefinite or the definite object (c.f. Honti 2020a). In effect, the special *-lak*/*-lek* ending makes us consider this type of conjugation as a hybrid solution that is neither really objective nor subjective.

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