Similarity, equality and the like in North Saami

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1 Introduction

This article discusses various linguistic expressions of similarity and related functions in North Saami, the most widely spoken language of the Saami branch of the Uralic language family. After a brief introduction to the relevant characteristics of North Saami (Section 2), Section 3 presents an overview of the expressions for similarity and related meanings such as equatives and functives (role phrases) in the language. In addition to the mainly synchronic observations based on a newspaper corpus, attention is paid to the current language situation where the preposition-like multi-purpose particles *dego* and *nugo* 'as, like; as if; such as' are – not unlike many other analytical devices characteristic of the neighboring Scandinavian languages – in the process of replacing and sometimes conflating with the originally suffixal and postpositional Uralic morphosyntax of the language. More detailed discussion focuses on two similative morphemes and the range of their use within and outside the concepts and categories that may be labeled as similatives: Section 4 discusses the purposive use of the postposition *láhkai* 'like; in the manner of' and its development to a marker of a multifaceted non-finite verb form in *-nláhkai* expressing not only similarity, but also purpose and future events. In Section 5, the concept of similatives is extended to "nominal similatives", i.e. the functions of the suffix *-lágan* (akin to *láhkai*) that is used to turn not only nouns but also adjectives into '-like' or '-ish' adjectives and ultimately into semantically analogous 'kind of' or '-oid' nouns. Finally, Section 6 summarizes the contributions of the Saami data to our general understanding of the semantic notion of similarity as well as the synchronic and diachronic network of the expressions of similarity and related concepts. (For a quick overview of the constructions and morphemes to be discussed, see Table 2 in Section 6.)

2 North Saami in its context

North Saami is the most widely spoken language of the Saami branch of the Uralic language family, with approximately 15,000–25,000 speakers traditionally living in the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland. North Saami has had an established status as a literary language since the mid-19th century and is nowadays widely used in all kinds of written media and various, yet understandably somewhat limited, domains of the society up to the highest education levels and scholarly discourse. According to the received view, the grammatical structures of the Saami languages belong to the most "Indo-Europeanized" among the Uralic languages; their morphology exhibits a comparatively high degree of fusionality and syntax is in many ways quite similar to that of their Scandinavian neighbors.

On the other hand, the Saami languages are in many ways quite ordinary Uralic languages of Europe. As regards the topic of this article, North Saami has six morphological cases: nominative, genitive-accusative, locative, illative, comitative and essive. The functions of the latter as a so-called functive case − with functional equivalents in Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian and other European Uralic languages − in role phrases has traditionally been kept apart from both equative and similative markers. As for the markers of similarity, adpositions such as *láhkai* 'like; in the manner of' are primarily postpositions, and the non-finite verb form in *-nláhkai* is only one of the dozen non-finite markers in the language. However, many prepositions, SVO order and analytical clause combining make both the Saami and the neighboring Finnic languages such as Finnish and Estonian often appear morphosyntactically quite close to the language type known as Standard Average European, and the Saami languages can indeed be regarded as belonging to the same northern periphery of the SAE area as the related Finnic languages (cf. Haspelmath 2001). This can also be seen both in the diversity of expressions for similarity and in the ways such expressions are interrelated and coincide with various other semantic functions.

From a more detailed perspective, the geographical position of the Saami languages and especially the current geopolitical position of North Saami has given the language a rather unique position on the typological map of Europe, as one part of the language community is heavily influenced by – and bilingual in – Finnish, whereas the major part lives under the constant influence of Norwegian and Swedish. The structural effect of the present position in between the two genetically and typologically distinct major language types is, quite predictably, that the use of postpositions and non-finite clauses is more prevalent among the Finnish Saami, and less so on the other side of the Finnish-Scandinavian language border (e.g. Ylikoski 2009, Antonsen et al. 2012). In the following sections, the impact of the Scandinavian languages on North Saami will be most evident in the growing use of the particles *dego* and *nugo* 'as, like; as if; such as' that are becoming increasingly isomorphic with the Scandinavian *som* in similatives and related functions.

3 Similarity, equality and related meanings in North Saami

The following subsections present a general description and discussion of the similarity and related functions (similative phrases and similative clauses, comparison of equality and inequality, functives or role phrases, and pretense clauses) in contemporary North Saami. If not otherwise specified, all authentic examples come from the corpus of more than ten million words from the North Saami newspapers *Min Áigi*, *Áššu* and *Ávvir* (1997–2011), provided by the Divvun Sámi proofing tools project at the University of Tromsø. All newspapers included in the corpus have been published in Norway, but were written for the North Saami community as a whole, by journalists in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The language of the newspapers can be considered as a relatively neutral genre that quite well represents a language system shared by the language community as a whole, although it must be noted that the literary use of the language does not have nearly as established a status as the neighboring majority languages and, for example, the word order of the newspaper corpus is shown to resemble the word order of the dialect areas under most Scandinavian influence (Antonsen et al. 2012). Although the data comes from a large corpus, this article is a mostly qualitative rather than quantitative description of phenomena whose actual manifestations often occur on various continua that create challenges for exact quantitative analysis. Occasional references to the frequency or rarity of a given phenomenon are thus usually to be understood as relatively vague characterizations.

As for the previous studies on the topics discussed in this article, many of the topics have received little or no attention in earlier grammars or other descriptions of the language. The major exceptions are comparative constructions of inequality that are traditionally covered by grammars of North Saami as well as of other languages. However, there exist no non-prescriptive grammars of present-day North Saami: Of the three most important works on the language, Nielsen's (1926) classical *Lærebok i lappisk* is a very comprehensive description of North Saami as spoken in the mostly monolingual core areas of the Norwegian Saami territory about a century ago. The newer descriptions by Sammallahti (2005) and Nickel and Sammallahti (2011) provide faithful accounts of the classical language virtually identical to that described by Nielsen (1926), but leave many of established innovations unmentioned or label them as foreign interference. The following sections are intended to fill such gaps and provide an account of the similatives and related functions in contemporary North Saami.

Before proceeding to the data, a note on terminology is needed. Most of the key concepts are to be understood the way they are presented in the introductory chapter of this volume. However, the use of the terms *comparison* and *comparative* is, if not otherwise specified, delimited to the sense of "comparison of inequality" and they are thus separated from other comparatives *sensu lato*. As a consequence, comparatives of equality can be simply referred to as *equatives*. On the other hand, whenever the terms *comparison* or *comparison of inequality* are (synonymously) used, they refer specifically to the subtype best characterized as "comparison of majority" or "superior comparatives" (*Paul is more popular than John*) as opposed to "comparison of minority" or "inferior comparatives" (*Paul is less popular than John*) that fall outside the scope of the present article (see e.g. Cuzzolin & Lehmann 2004).

3.1 Similative phrases

In North Saami, prototypical similative phrases can be formed in two ways: with the more or less synonymous multi-purpose prepositional particles *dego* and *nugo* 'as, like; as if; such as' (1) or with the postposition *láhkai* 'like; in the manner of' and its variants *láhkái* and *ládje* (2). Examples (1a) and (2a) exhibit such similatives in predicative positions with the copula *leat*, and (1b) and (2b) show that similar phrases also occur in other types of clauses such as those with ordinary content verbs *gahččat* 'fall, collapse' and *coggat* 'put (clothes) on':

(1) a. *Máret   lea   **dego magneahtta**!*
        Máret   be.3SG   like   magnet
        'Máret is like a magnet!'

     b. *Buorre   mokta   gahčai   **dego gusaseaibi**.*
        good   enthusiasm fall.PST.3SG   like   cow's.tail
        'Good enthusiasm went down like a cow's tail.'

(2) a. *Dál   don   leat   **spiinni   ládje**!*
        now   2SG   be.2SG   pig.GA   like
        'You're like a pig now!'

     b. *Olusat   ledje   **dán   nieiddaguoktá   láhkai** coggan   asehis*
        many.PL be.PST.3PL this.GA   girl.couple.GA   like   dress.PST.PTCP   thin
        biktasiid.
        clothes.PL.GA
        'Like these two girls, many had dressed in light clothes.'

Although the *dego* type (1) is more frequent than the *láhkai* type (2), the two types are more or less freely interchangeable: For example, the similative phrases in (1) could be replaced with postpositional phrases *magneahta/gusaseaibbi láhkai/ládje* [magnet.GA/cow's.tail.GA like] or, vice versa, the postpositionals in (2) could be substituted with the phrases *dego spiidni* or *dego dat nieiddaguovttos* with the nouns and pronouns in the nominative case.

As for the morphemes to be discussed throughout the article, *dego* and *nugo* are compound particles consisting of semantically vague particles *de* 'then', *nu(vt)* 'so; thus' and *go* 'as; than; when' and they are still often written as separate words. The elements *láhkai* and *láhkái* go back to the illative form *láhkái* of the noun *láhki* 'mode; manner', and *láhkái* is thus fully identical with the still productive illative form. On the other hand, the use of *láhki* is quite marginal and mostly restricted to lexicalized compounds or multiword expressions such as *miellaláhki* [mind.mood] '(psychological) mood, state of mind' and *seksuálalaš láhki* 'sexual orientation'. The form *ládje* appears to be related to the noun *šládja* (~ *ládja*) 'sort, kind; species', but in spite of its different material origin, it is fully synonymous with *láhkai* and could thus in a sense be regarded as a variant of that morpheme. Incidentally, both *láhki* and *šládja* have ultimately the same Scandinavian origin (*slag* 'sort, kind').[1]

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[1] Occasional variation in the orthography of other morphemes to be discussed (*seammá ~ seamma* 'same', *-lágán ~ -lágan* '-like') is related to the rather complex morphophonemic alteration called "allegro shortening" in Saami

3.2 Similatives and functives

Many of the few typological studies that have paid attention to the relations between similatives and related concepts have remarked that it is quite common to see similative markers being used in role phrases as well. From their pan-European perspective, Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 324–325) underscore that the use of similative and equative markers as role markers (e.g. French *comme*, Mainland Scandinavian *som*) is "a striking SAE feature", and Creissels (2012: 12) goes on to state that the syncretism of similative and role markers is "extremely common cross-linguistically". However, the Saami languages have traditionally kept similatives, equatives and role phrases apart from each other, although the situation seems to be changing.

Although the six morphological cases of North Saami make its case inventory the smallest among the approximately thirty Uralic languages of Europe, one of them – the essive in *-n* – is a relatively specialized case whose functions cover more or less all of those discussed by Creissels (2012) under the label "functive". He defines the concept as follows: "a noun phrase N in functive role attributes the property of being an N to a participant represented by another noun phrase included in the construction of the same verb, implying that this characterization is linked in one way or another to the event represented by the verb". Put concretely, most North Saami essive NPs function as secondary predicates that refer to temporary states or activities of one of the main arguments. In copular clauses such as (3a) the use of the essive is thus opposed to permanent states expressed by the nominative.

(3) a. *Ole Einar lea ieš golbma jagi leamaš* **hárjeheaddjin**.
   Ole Einar be.3SG REFL three year.GA be.PST.PTCP trainer.ESS
   'Ole Einar himself has acted as a trainer for three years.'

   b. *Soai bargaba* **málesteaddjin** *báikkálaš restoráŋŋas*.
   3DU work.3DU cook.ESS local restaurant.LOC
   'They work as cooks in a local restaurant.'

However, Saami language purists have occasionally considered it necessary to step forward to explain and defend the traditional use of the essive case against the corrupting influence of the Scandinavian syntax that has extended the use of the similative markers *dego* and *nugo* at the expense of the original essive functives (cf. *Čállinrávagirji* 2003: 84):

(4) a. *Nils Johan Gaup* **dego sámepolitihkkár** *lea=ge ožžon áššis*
   Nils Johan Gaup as Saami.politician be.3SG=indeed get.PST.PTCP issue.LOC
   stuora fuomášumi,...
   big attention.GA
   'As a Saami politician, Nils Johan Gaup has gained much attention in the issue,...'

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studies. The variation seen in this article is only unsettled orthographic reflection of the phonological variation and has no relevance for the present discussion. In short, the orthographical <a> stands for the phoneme /ɑ/, whereas <á> stands for /ɑ:/ in the western dialects of North Saami, and for /ɑ:/, /æ/ and /æ:/ in the eastern dialects.

b. *Øystein Sørbye   lea   **nugo psykiáhter**   sakka   beroštan*
Øystein Sørbye   be.3SG   as   psychiatrist   very   care.PST.PTCP
internáhttamánáid   eallimis.
dormitory.child.PL.GA   life.LOC
'As a psychiatrist, Øystein Sørbye is very concerned for the lives of boarding school children.'

Analytical functives seen in (4) are absent both in earlier accounts of classical North Saami and later grammars (e.g. Nielsen 1926, Nickel & Sammallahti 2011), and they are still regarded as mostly ungrammatical by the Finnish Saami who regard the essive forms such as *sámepolitihkkárin* and *psykiáhterin* as the only truly acceptable way of expressing the intended meaning. However, the use of the more analytical constructions is quite widespread even in the newspaper corpus originally written by language-conscious journalists, and much more so in the contemporary spoken language of the Norwegian and Swedish Saami. On the other hand, *dego* and *nugo* are not only replacing but often, in a sense, reinforcing the use of the essive instead. Alternatively, the following construction with both the *dego* particle and the essive case markers can be characterized as pleonastic:

(5) *Dál 20 jagi   lea   ruovttoluotta **dego majoran   ja**   Banak   Girdistašuvnna*
now   20 year.GA be.3SG   back   as   major.ESS and   Banak   airport.GA
hoavdan.
commander.ESS
'Now, after 20 years, she is back as a major and as the commander of the Banak Air Station.'

Furthermore, (6) is a nice example of the fact that for many language users, the use of the two devices are by and large synonymous:

(6) *Muhtomin orru   leamen dego Navarsete muhtin dilálašvuođain   hupmá   **dego***
sometimes seem.3SG   be.PROG as   Navarsete some   occasion.PL.LOC speak.3SG as
Guovddášbellodaga   jođiheaddji   ja   eará diliin   fas
Center.Party.GA   leader   and   other occasion.PL.LOC in.turn
johtalusministtarin,   muitala Johansen.
transport.minister.ESS   tell.3SG Johansen
'Sometimes it appears as if Navarsete was speaking as the leader of the Center Party in some occasions, and in the other occasions as the Minister of Transport and Communications, Johansen says.'

To be sure, for the proponents of the classical language and for most of those outside the direct influence of Norwegian and Swedish – about one-tenth of the North Saami speakers – phrases such as *dego Guovddášbellodaga jođiheaddji* and the essive *Guovddášbellodaga jođiheaddjin* are by no means synonymous but two very different things: Example (6) refers to the Norwegian politician Liv Signe Navarsete in two temporary, distinct yet partially overlapping roles in a society familiar to most speakers of the language – as the Norwegian Minister of Transport and Communications in 2005–2009 and as the leader of the Norwegian Center Party since 2008. As shown by the examples seen thus far, the primary and original interpretation of *dego Guovddášbellodaga jođiheaddji* would be that of a similative, 'like a/the leader of the Center Party', but in the Norwegian and Swedish

variants of the language, it is also possible to use and understand these words as a role phrase, which is the only intended meaning in the newspaper article published on September 8, 2009. In practice, the sentence is disambiguated with world knowledge that filters out the possible interpretation that the person in question were speaking **like** the party leader, as she indeed does act **as** the party leader. However, the concern of language purists is definitely relevant as far as one of their objectives is to maintain uniformity in the public use of the language so that it will at least be understandable across the national borders. Namely, readers residing in Finland will find the intended functive reading of the *dego* phrase foreign or even completely ungrammatical and are unlikely to know who is the leader of the Norwegian Center Party. In such a context, the only logical interpretation of *dego Guovddášbellodaga jođiheaddji* would be similative, even though it would be wrong here.

When speaking of the use of *dego* in similative and functive phrases, this element has been vaguely labeled as a particle here, but *láhkai/ládje* of the similative phrases (2) was called a postposition. The grammatical and lexical descriptions of North Saami label *dego* both as a conjunction and as an adverb, but in non-clause phrases such as *dego magneahtta* 'like a magnet' (1a) or even *dego majoran* 'as a major' (5) it might be tempting to analyze *dego* as a preposition although the traditional North Saami grammar defines adpositions as function words that take genitive-accusative complements. However, *dego* does not actually govern any of the cases, but can be attached to all cases and even adpositional phrases, e.g. the illative *dego majorii* 'like to a major' or *dego majora birra* [like major.GA about] '(e.g. speak) as if about a major'. In fact, this feature makes *dego* more precise than *láhkai* phrases in certain contexts. The constructed sentence (7a) has two possible interpretations, but (7b) and (7c) only either one of them:

(7) a. *Máret   fákte   Jovsseha   **máná   láhkai**.*
   Máret   watch.3SG Jovsset.GA child.GA   like
   'Máret$_i$ watches Jovsset$_j$ as if she$_i$/he$_j$ was a child$_i$.'

   b. *Máret   fákte   Jovsseha   **dego mánná**.*
   Máret   watch.3SG Jovsset.GA like   child(NOM)
   'Máret$_i$ watches Jovsset$_j$ as if she$_i$ was a child$_i$.'

   c. *Máret   fákte   Jovsseha   **dego máná**.*
   Máret   watch.3SG Jovsset.GA like   child.GA
   'Máret$_i$ watches Jovsset$_j$ as if he$_j$ was a child$_j$.'

The postpositional phrase in (7a) may refer to the childlikeness of the subject or the object referents alike, but the *dego* phrases agree with either the subject NP (7b) or the object NP (7c). Therefore, although the use of *dego* in both similative and role functions is occasionally ambiguous (cf. Example 6), the behavior we are seeing here helps to avoid occasional ambiguities in the use of *láhkai*, on the other hand.

3.3 Comparison of equality and inequality

It was mentioned above that the Saami languages have traditionally kept similatives, equatives and role phrases apart from each other. Despite the emerging similative-functive syncretism just discussed, the equative phrases are still marked quite differently. Instead, the North Saami expressions for equativity closely resemble the way the language codes comparison of inequality, but also both of these exhibit variation between case-marking and more analytical devices, the former technique being evidently more original (Uralic) and the latter one best regarded as a relatively recent outcome of contacts with languages of the SAE type. The following examples capture the essence of the structural similarity between the expressions for both comparison of inequality (8) and that of equality (9):

(8)   *Henning Berg lei   ollu **stuorát**   **go**   **mun**, muhto   go   čuoččastin*
     Henning Berg be.PST.3SG much big.CMPV   than 1SG but   when   stand.PST.1SG
     su   gurrii, fuobmájin   ahte   ii   son gal   leat
     3SG.GA side.ILL notice.PST.3SG   COMP   NEG.3SG   3SG DPT   be.CNG
     *go   moadde sentte   **mu**   **guhkit**.*
     (more.)than   couple centimeter.GA 1SG.GA tall.CMPV
     'Henning Berg was much bigger than I, but when I stood by his side, I noticed that actually he is not more than a couple of centimeters taller than I.'

(9)   *Busse   lea   18 mehtera   **guhku**   ja   lea   **seamma**   **guhkki** **go** dálá*
     bus   be.3SG 18 meter.GA   long.EQD   and   be.3SG same   long   as present
     busse,   muhto   siskkobealde lea   veahá   erohus,   muitala Dean.
     bus   but   inside   be.3SG little   difference tell.3SG Dean
     'The bus is 18 meters long, as long as the present bus, but there is a difference inside, Dean says.'

The dominant type of comparative constructions – here to be understood in the sense of comparison of inequality (majority/superiority; see the beginning of Section 3) – is the particle comparative, in other words the construction type where a specific comparative particle – *go* (8) – accompanies the standard noun phrase. As made evident by Stassen (1985, 2011), if viewed from a global perspective, particle comparatives can be regarded as a paradigm example of a typical SAE feature although its distribution covers nearly all the Indo-European languages of Europe, as well as Basque, Hungarian and the Finnic branch of Uralic. However, the rest of the Uralic languages make use of case-marked comparatives, and they are also in use, though not as common, in most of the Saami and Finnic languages as well as in Hungarian (Raun 1960). In North Saami we find the comparative construction of the type *mu guhkit* (8): this Uralic inheritance is reflected in the use of the genitive-accusative case to mark the standard NP. From a historical point of view, this may be related to typologically more common locational comparatives, as the genitive-accusative has in many ways submerged the earlier partitive (< Proto-Uralic ablative) case (see e.g. Sammallahti 1998: 68; Miestamo 2011: 134–135). Although the frequency of the particle comparative greatly exceeds the use of the genitival (i.e. genitive-accusative marked) comparative, these two types are largely interchangeable: *stuorát go mun* could be *mu stuorát*, and *mu guhkit* could be replaced by

guhkit go mun. A third, synonymous option is a locative comparative with the standard NP in the locative case (*mus stuorát*, *mus guhkit* 'id.').

Equative phrases (9) are formally very similar to comparative phrases in North Saami, as the standard marker is usually the same *go* in both functions. The parameter marker *seamma* is otherwise used as a pronominal adjective 'same', and one type of literal translation of *seamma guhkki go busse* 'as long as the bus' would thus be "same long than the bus". Similarity between equatives and comparatives is even more obvious in light of the fact that morphological comparatives are – again, under the influence of the Scandinavian languages – often replaced by periphrastic formations, especially with adjectives of foreign origin such as *eanet magnehtalaš go Máret* 'more magnetic than Máret' as opposed to the traditionally correct *magnehtalaččat go Máret* [magnetic.CMPV than Máret] "magneticer than Máret"; compare the corresponding equative phrase *seamma magnehtalaš go Máret* [same magnetic than Máret] 'as magnetic as Máret'. However, it is worth noting that the syncretism of equative and comparative standard markers makes North Saami very different from the neighboring Scandinavian (cf. Norwegian comparative **mer** *magnetisk* **enn** *Marit*, but equative **like** *magnetisk* **som** *Marit*), and a hypothetical Scandinavism à la **seamma magnehtalaš dego Máret* is virtually nonexistent, even though the use of *dego* is otherwise highly analogous to that of *som*.

To extend the comparison of comparatives and equatives to less productive yet typologically significant constructions, it can be noted that the genitival comparative *mu guhkit* [1SG.GA tall.CMPV] in (8) has a kind of counterpart in a set of special equative forms that refer to measurable physical properties and take genitive-accusative complements. They are most often used with noun phrases expressing exact quantities such as in *18 mehtera guhku* '18 meters long' in (9), but especially less precise expressions like *mu guhku* 'as long as I' or *fatnasa guhku* 'as long as a boat' in (10) can be seen as genitival equatives on a par with the genitival comparatives; the phrase in question could be replaced by the analytical equative *seamma guhkit go fanas* [same long.PL as boat] 'as long (pl.) as a boat' without changing the meaning of the sentence.

(10) *Ammal dat mat bohtet buot maŋimuččat dáidet leat **fatnasa***
      surely it.PL REL.PL come.3PL altogether last.ADV may.3PL be.INF boat.GA
      ***guhku**, árvala 90 jahkásaš Jovsset.*
      long.EQD consider.3SG 90 year.ADJ Jovsset
      'I suppose the ones [salmon] that come very last might be as long as a boat, the 90-year-old Jovsset thinks.'

In the same vein, the equative phrase *sullii Guovdageainnu Samvirkelága stuoru* 'about as big as the Guovdageaidnu cooperative store' of (11) could be replaced by the analytical construction *sullii* **seamma** *stuoris* **go** *Guovdageainnu Samvirkelága*:

(11) *Stuorát gávpi, Megastore, lea **sullii Guovdageainnu Samvirkelága***
      big.CMPV store Megastore be.3SG about Guovdageaidnu.GA cooperative.GA
      ***stuoru** ja vuovdá biktasiid, videofilmmaid, govaid, seaŋgagávnniid,...*
      big.EQD and sell.3SG clothes.PL.GA video.film.PL.GA picture.PL.GA bedding.PL.GA
      'The bigger store, [Manchester United] Megastore, is about as big as the Guovdageaidnu cooperative store and it sells clothes, videos, pictures, beddings,...'

The forms *guhku* (9–10) and *stuoru* (11) are here glossed as instances of the equative degree of adjectives, but this is a novel approach in Saami linguistics. To my knowledge, of the open class of thousands of adjectives, only eleven adjectives have equative counterparts that end in -*u* and are morphologically even more uniform than the corresponding comparatives and superlatives. Earlier scholars have labeled such formations as genitive-accusative forms of otherwise non-existent deadjectival nouns (e.g. *guhkku 'length' : *guhku* 'of length'; Nielsen 1926: 205) or as postpositions (Sammallahti 2005: 132, 152–153; Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 172–193). Support for the latter interpretation may be found in the fact that unlike the positive, comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, equative formations do not inflect for number or case but take preposed genitive-accusative complements expressing the standard of comparison of equality. However, even in the classical North Saami of earlier descriptions phrases of the type *fatnasa guhku* 'as long as a boat' are directly related to the undeniably adjectival phrases like *fatnasa guhkkosaš* 'id.' that are traditionally used as adnominal modifiers, e.g. *fatnasa guhkkosaš luossa* [boat.GA long.EQD salmon] 'a salmon as long as a boat' (cf. Must 1953–1954: 4). In light of the newspaper corpus, the functional opposition between the predicative (*guhku*) and attributive (*guhkkosaš*) formations is not as clear as it may have been earlier, but it is nevertheless still possible to describe the contemporary equative forms on a par with the three established degrees of comparison in North Saami (Table 1).

Table 1. The North Saami adjectives with equative forms.[2]

positive		comparative	superlative	equative	
predicative	attributive			predicative	attributive
allat 'high'	*alla*	*alit*	*alimus*	*alu*	*allosaš*
assái 'thick (of flat objects)'	*assás*	*assát*	*assámus*	*asu*	*assosaš*
čieŋal 'deep'	*čieŋalis*	*čiekŋalit*	*čiekŋaleamos*	*čieŋu*	*čikŋosaš*
gallji 'wide, roomy'	*galjes*	*galjit*	*galjimus*	*galju*	*galljosaš*
gassat 'thick (of round objects)'	*gassa*	*gasit*	*gasimus*	*gasu*	*gassosaš*
gievra 'strong'	*gievrras*	*gievrrat*	*gievrramus*	*gievrru*	*givrosaš*
govdat 'broad'	*govda*	*govddit*	*govddimus*	*govddu*	*govdosaš*
guhkki 'long, tall'	*guhkes*	*guhkit*	*guhkimus*	*guhku*	*guhkkosaš*
lossat 'heavy'	*lossa*	*losit*	*losimus*	*losu*	*lossosaš*
stuoris 'big'	*stuorra*	*stuorát*	*stuorámus*	*stuoru*	*sturrosaš*
viiddis 'wide'	*viiddis*	*viidát*	*viidámus*	*viiddu*	*viidosaš*

All North Saami equative forms are based on adjective stems that can be perceived as those members of antonymic adjective pairs that express a higher degree of a given property, e.g. 'big' instead of 'small' and 'long' instead of 'short'. Admittedly, the set of synthetic equatives seems closed, and at any rate small, but nevertheless quite remarkable on the linguistic map of Europe (see Section 6). More generally, the present-day variation between SAE-like analytical devices and more original (suffixal and postpositional) Uralic type of comparative and equative phrases is quite similar to that among similative and role phrases seen in Examples (1–6), although it is equally important to note that none of the grammatical elements to mark similatives and functives is identical with morphemes signaling comparison of equality or inequality.

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[2] Allomorphic variation of certain (positive) attributive, comparative and superlative forms has been omitted by selecting the most common variant in the corpus. There is no formal predicative vs. attributive distinction in the comparative or superlative. Note that the element -*saš* of the attributive form (-*osaš*) of the proposed equative degree is etymologically identical with denominal adjectives such as *(90-)jahkásaš* '(90-)year-old' ← *jahki* 'year' seen in (10).

3.4 Similative clauses

The next topics to be discussed take us beyond phrase-level phenomena. The concept of similative is relevant on the clause level as well, and it may not be too surprising to see that the similative clause markers are largely the same as those seen in non-clausal similative phrases (1–2) earlier:

(12) *Mo son dasto gulahallá guovžžaiguin? Ii son gal háleš*
how 3SG then communicate.3SG bear.PL.COM NEG.3SG 3SG DPT discuss.CNG
*daiguin **dego** olbmot háleštit gaskaneaset.*
it.PL.COM like human.PL discuss.3PL with.each.other.3PL
'How, then, does he communicate with bears? No, he does not discuss with them like people discuss with each other.'

(13) *Diehttelas boazu liiko varas, ruon[á] šattuide juste **seamma ládje go** mii*
of.course reindeer like.3SG fresh green plant.PL.ILL just same like as 1PL
olbmot liikojit varas láibái.
human.PL like.3PL fresh bread.ILL
'Of course the reindeer like fresh, green plants just like we people like fresh bread.'

To begin with, in light of the 10-million-word corpus, I must agree with Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 320) who remark that the actual use of similative clauses in general is quite infrequent, apparently due to the relative unimportance of expressing a manner of an action by referring to similar manners in other kinds of actions, and therefore it may sometimes be even more relevant to explicitly negate the similarity of two states-of-affairs, as seen in (12). Similative clauses may be sometimes needed, however, and again, North Saami makes use of two more or less synonymous comparative markers: *dego* of (12) could also replace the words *seammá ládje go* in (13), or, vice versa, those could be used instead of *dego* in (12). The word *dego* – and the synonymous use of *nugo* – can here be analyzed as a conjunction that subordinates the following clause to the preceding one. However, the similative clause marker *seammá ládje go* (13) is less straightforward: It consists of the particle *go* seen in equative and comparative phrases, preceded by the lexicalized, PP-like expression *seammá ládje* 'in the same manner' and has thus a composed meaning fully analogous to that of *in the same manner as* in English. Not unlike the English expression, *seammá ládje/láhkai go* has a flavor of more explicit meaning, and in fact, it is also sometimes used to mark non-clausal similative phrases (14), and especially in similes to be discussed further below. In spite of the transparent origin of this expression it has grammaticalized to the extent that some writers tend to write it as a single coalesced word:

(14) *Go dát dutkan lea gárvvis, de sáhttá bulvarvara vuovdigoahtit*
when this study be.3SG ready then can.3SG powder.blood.GA sell.INCH.INF
*dábálaš gávppis **seammaláhkaigo** eará bulvarmállásiid.*
ordinary store.LOC "same.like.as" other powder.meal.PL.GA
'After this study has been completed, it will be possible to start selling powdered (dehydrated) blood in ordinary grocery stores like any other powdered meals.'

The main difference between the structure of similative phrases and similative clauses is that the postposition *láhkai* alone does not occur in finite similative clauses. However, the most original means for combining clauses in Uralic is via non-finite clauses, and many of the non-finite verb forms have their origins in action nominal constructions. Most of them stem from case-marked verbal nouns, but some of them go back to postpositional phrases where the verbal noun functions as the complement to a postposition, and in North Saami one of such verb forms is a multi-faceted non-finite in *-nláhkai*. Consider (15) that exhibits the still-present original verbal noun construction that has given rise to the new non-finite (16) whose marker (*-nláhkai*) can no longer be considered as anything else but an amalgamated non-finite suffix of its own:

(15) *3–4 mánnosažžan   mánná šlupparda **hállama   láhkai**.* (Aikio 2000: 174)
      3–4 month.ADJ.ESS child   babble.3SG speak.VN.GA like
      'At the age of 3–4 months, the child babbles in a manner of speaking.'

(16) *Go   das   hávllat eambbo bieđganit ja   danne   oažžu   dainna eambbo dušše*
      as   it.LOC   shot.PL more   scatter.3PL and   therefore   get.3SG it.COM more   only
      ***cuigenláhkai** siktestit ja   dasto roaškalit.*
      point.CVB   aim.INF and   then fire.off.INF
      '[He told that when using a shotgun, there is no need to aim as carefully as with a rifle. This is...] ...because with this [= a shotgun], the shots tend to scatter and therefore one can aim rapidly, more like only pointing (at the target) and then fire off.'

As a whole, the non-finite in *-nláhkai* is a quite unusual verb form having a large array of syntactic and semantic features that make it impossible to briefly characterize this formation with traditional grammatical labels. More comprehensive descriptions of the morphological, syntactic and semantic development and the many functions of *-nláhkai* have been presented elsewhere (Ylikoski 2006; 2009: 47–54, 88–95), and although most contemporary occurrences of this verb form are in fact found in certain periphrastic predicates that have little to do with the similative origin of *-nláhkai*, the same form is still used in functions that may well be characterized as non-finite similative clauses (16). On the other hand, the use of the indisputably original construction – the genitive-accusative form of the verbal noun (*-ma/-eami*) as the complement of the postposition *láhkai* – is quite rare, presumably due to the above-mentioned unimportance of similative clauses and most of all because of the existence of a specialized non-finite – or similative converb – for the same purpose. However, the *-nláhkai* clauses (16) are hardly interchangeable with the finite similative clauses (12–13) that tend to have subjects different from those of the main clauses, whereas the subject of a similative *-nláhkai* clause (16) is always left implicit and is best described as a generic subject ('one'). This makes *-nláhkai* quite different from the other similative converbs I am aware of: Khalilova (2009: 411) and Creissels (2010: 134) provide examples of similative converbs from Khwarshi and Avar (both Northeast Caucasian), respectively, but only with explicit and otherwise specific subjects. Also the Komi (Uralic) converb in *-igmoz*, when used as a similative, may have a subject of its own (ÖKK 2000: 370).[3]

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[3] Not unlike *-nláhkai*, the Komi converb *-igmoz* contains an element that is historically a similative postposition, *moz* 'like'. Although the authoritative Komi grammar describes *-igmoz* mostly as a converb of manner, concomitance and simultaneity, Example (i) reflects the original meaning of this verb form (ÖKK 2000: 370):

3.5 Similes and accord clauses

When discussing similative clauses, Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 319–321) present brief remarks about the fact that similative clauses very seldom differ from the way European languages express two other conceptually related types of clause combination, namely similes and what the authors call accord clauses. In North Saami, it is especially the similes such as those seen in (17–18) that are identical to similative clauses, most often those with the periphrastic kind of conjunction *seammá láhkai go* rather than *dego/nugo*.

(17) *...ja muhtimin fas olmmoš vásiha losit áiggi* **seammá láhkai go**
     and sometimes again human experience.3SG tough.CMPV time.GA same like as
     čakčaseavdnjat čáhpodahttá birrasa.
     autumn.darkness darken.3SG environment.GA
     '...and sometimes one experiences tough times like when the darkness of the autumn darkens the environment.'

(18) **Justa seammaládje go** *loddi biebmá čivggaidis,* **de** *dat addá*
     just same.like as bird feed.3SG offspring.PL.GA.3SG so it give.3SG
     dasa guhte eanemusat caggá njálmmi.
     it.ILL which most.ADV stretch.3SG mouth.GA
     'Just like a bird feeds its young, it [the Saami Parliament] gives to the ones who stretch their mouths most.'

As simile is a rhetorical device used to highlight the message by arousing emotions, it is understandable that the language makes use of the most expressive marker of ordinary similative clauses. Neither is it uncommon that further emphasis is added with the word *justa* 'just' seen in (18).

    As for the so-called accord clauses that function as illocutionary adverbials, Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 321) remark that in the languages of Europe, they are seldom formally distinct from similatives, despite the "striking semantic difference" between the two concepts. On the other hand, the authors state that languages like e.g. Norwegian and Finnish are exceptional in having special markers (conjunctions *slik* and *kuten*, respectively) for accord clauses. In spite of the fact that when looking in more detail, it is evident that both *slik* and *kuten* can also be used in ordinary similative clauses, North Saami has a similar tendency to have a special marker for accord clauses. Consider the following example:

(19) **Nugo** *dávjá lea go muhtin dutki čállá,*
     as often be.3SG when some researcher write.3SG
     de *son álgá hui jorbasit.*
     so 3SG begin.3SG very vague.ADV
     'As often is the case when a researcher is writing, he begins very vaguely.'

(i) *Sijö žergödis tabakyś vižödöm pińjassö da*
     3SG gape.PST.3SG tobacco.ELA yellow.PST.PTCP tooth.PL.ACC.3SG and
     vöv gögörtigmoz śeröktis.
     horse neigh.CVB burst.into.laughter.PST.3SG
     'He bared his tobacco-yellowed teeth and burst out laughing like a horse neighs.'

In itself, the above sentence is not different from simile clauses, but my corpus shows that an overwhelming majority of accord clauses begins with the conjunction *nugo* (or *nu go*) instead of *dego* which is clearly the most common marker of similatives. Furthermore, the semantic main clause of such sentences is most often marked with a consecutive conjunction *de* 'so, then'. Although it is possible to replace *nugo* with *dego*, and omit *de*, it is remarkable that, for example, in a sample of the sentences beginning with the accord clause "As we (all) know,...", 78 of the total of 94 sentences begin with words ***Nugo** mii (buohkat) diehtit, **de**...*, 14 with *Nugo...* but without *de*, and only two begin with *Dego...* .

3.6 Pretense clauses

Of the phrase and clause types quite closely related to similatives, the last to be discussed here are the clauses that may be called pretense clauses in accord with Chapters XXX, XXX and XXX in this volume. Again, there are two structural types for clauses with more or less the same functions:

(20) *Eanaš   son   geahččá   vulos   **dego** oainná**šii**   doppe   juoga.*
mostly   3SG   look.3SG   down   as.if   see.COND.3SG   there   something.GA
'For the most part, she is looking down as if she were seeing something there.'

(21) *Oainnát dat   ruoht[t]á   **dego čeallunládje**, dan   lea   álki   dovdat,*
see.2SG   it   run.3SG   as.if   bound.CVB   it.GA   be.3SG   easy   recognize.INF
muitala   Jovsset.
tell.3SG   Jovsset
'You see, it [a wolverine] runs as if it were bounding, it is easy to recognize, Jovsset says.'

Once again, we see both a finite clause marked with *dego* and the non-finite in *-nláhkai* (*-nládje*), but in a rather different form than earlier. In the finite alternative (20), the verb is not in the indicative but in the conditional mood. True, the conditional mood is rightfully labeled according to its main function – where *oainnášii* is best translated as '(s/he) would see' – but here as in certain other functions of the mood it can be characterized as a subjunctive in a more general sense of being an irrealis mood in contrast to the indicative. The interplay between conditional, subjunctive and pretense clauses appears, in fact, quite similar in the English translations of (20) and (21), where the make-believe sense is expressed with the compound conjunction made of *as* (cf. *dego*) and the conditional *if* followed by the past subjunctive *were (looking/bounding)*.

The non-finite pretense clause in (21) is conceptually different from (20): Although the subject "she" may be pretending to see something, (21) does not present wolverines as pretending to bound, but as running in a manner as if they were bounding. However, it might be possible to extend the notion of *pretense clause* from the everyday understanding of "pretending" to cover not only the instances of intentional attempts to give a false appearance, but also the instances of unintentional activities that give a false appearance of another type of action. Put concretely, when using a pretense clause the focus does not need to be in the intentions of a person "looking down as if seeing" or the innocence of a wolverine "running as if bounding", but in the false impressions that both kind of actions may give a human observer. Alternatively, both types could be tagged with a more neutral label *simulative*, the term used in Ylikoski (2009: 50–51, 88–91) that presents more

examples of the simulative *-nláhkai* also in spoken language samples published since the 19th century.

It is also worth noting that in (21), the particle *dego* occurs with the non-finite form as well, but this can be regarded somewhat pleonastic; cf. *dego* and the essive case in (5), and examples without *dego* in Ylikoski (2009: 88–90). As for the interchangeability of the two types, the non-finite clause in (21) could be replaced by the conditional (*dego čelošii* [as.if bound.COND.3SG]) without problem, but *oainnášii* in (20) can hardly be replaced by the corresponding *oaidninládje* – the main reason for this limitation may be the fact that many of the *-nláhkai* forms of transitive verbs have a passive interpretation and furthermore the formation *oaidninláhkai/oaidninládje* is very often used in the petrified meaning 'on display'.

The simulative functions of the non-finite in *-nláhkai* are further related to even more uses of this verb form. These will be discussed in the following section focusing on the use of the postposition *láhkai* and the verb form *-nláhkai* in constructions with purposive and future meanings.

4 Purposive and future functions of *láhkai* and the non-finite in *-nláhkai*

In this section, the discussion of the similative markers *láhkai* and especially *-nláhkai* is extended to semantic fields that may be less expectable neighbors of similarity than are the equatives and comparatives discussed above: expressions of purpose and future events. As it turns out, the most important common denominator for similative, pretense, purposive and future clauses seems to lie in the irrealis feature inherent in all these functions. First consider the following examples:

(22) *Rasmussen rávve* *olbmuid* *davvin* *árabut* *molsut* *juvllaid*
Rasmussen advise.3SG human.PL.GA in.the.north early.CMPV.ADV change.INF tire.PL.GA
dálvvi ***láhkai****, ii=ge* *vuordit dassážiigo šaddá* *dálvesiivu.*
winter.GA for NEG.3SG=and wait.INF until become.3SG winter.conditions
'Rasmussen advises people in the north to change tires for the winter earlier, instead of waiting until winter conditions arrive.'

(23) *Norgalaččat eai* *leat* *vel* *oahppan* *vuodjit ovála, eai=ge* *leat*
Norwegian.PL NEG.3PL be.CNG yet learn.PST.PTCP ride.INF oval.GA NEG.3PL=and be.CNG
ráhkadan *skohteriid* ***oválaláhkai****.*
prepare.PST.PTCP scooter.PL.GA oval.*láhkai*
'Norwegians have not learned to race oval track yet, and have not tuned their water scooters for an oval track.'

(24) *Almmái ii* *lean* *ráhkkanan,* *ii=ge* *gárvodan*
man NEG.3SG be.PST.CNG prepare.PST.PTCP NEG.3SG=and dress.PST.PTCP
meahcceláhkai*.*
wilderness.*láhkai*
'The man had neither prepared for nor dressed for the wilderness.'

It is not easy to characterize the semantic functions of the phrases *dálvvi láhkai*, *oválaláhkai* and *meahcceláhkai* as anything else but purposive, and they all could indeed be replaced with phrases headed by the default purposive postposition *várás* 'for (the purpose of)'. On the other hand, it may

be difficult to see obvious connections between these examples and the use of *láhkai* as a similative postposition in the first examples in this article. In fact, it appears that not all of the above examples are directly related to the similative postposition but, rather, they share the same origins in the illative case form of *láhki* 'mood, manner' (see Section 3.1). True, the words *dálvvi láhkai* are formally nothing but a postpositional phrase in which *láhkai* takes its complement in the genitive-accusative, and even though *ovála* in (23) could be either the genitive-accusative or nominative and the original composer of the sentence has written *oválaláhkai* as one word, there are hardly reasons to think that the formation should be understood as a lexicalized adverb. The orthographical choice may be related to the fact that most of the *láhkai* sequences in North Saami occur in lexicalized expressions based on a number of indefinite pronouns (i.e. postpositional phrases with pronoun complements) such as *earaláhkai* 'in a different way', *iešguđetláhkai* 'in various ways', *máŋggaláhkai* 'in many ways', *seammaláhkai* 'in the same way' and *nuppeláhkai* 'in another way'. Formations like these are most often written as single-word forms.

On the other hand, *meahcceláhkai* in (24) is written like a compound noun composed of the nominative *meahcci* that takes the form *meahcce-* if attached to nouns such as *láhki* 'mood, manner', the ultimate origin of all *láhkai* formations. Therefore, at least *meahcceláhkai* could be interpreted as originating from having a meaning such as '(dressed) in a wilderness-manner; in a manner compatible with wilderness'. The element *láhkai* in (22–24) is not the illative *láhkái*, however, and as always, the use of *láhkai* is not different from that of *ládje* that is etymologically an opaque form:

(25)   *Liikká*   *biegga*   *bággii*   *olbmuid*   *gárvodit*   **čakčaládje.**
      nevertheless   wind   force.PST.3SG   human.PL.GA   dress.INF   fall.*ládje*
      'Nevertheless, the wind forced people to dress as if for the fall.'

In (25), too, the initial part *čakča* is nominative and clearly different from the genitive-accusative *čavčča*, although the postpositional phrase *čavčča ládje* 'for the fall' would correspond to *dálvvi láhkai* 'for the winter' (22). The exact analysis of the possibilities of morphological variation seen here falls beyond the scope of this article, but especially the semantic function of *čakčaládje* in (25) is rather revealing when it comes to similatives. The sentence refers to a summer festival held in July in weather conditions that forced people to dress in a way similar to the way one is supposed to dress in the fall. In other words, they did not dress for the fall yet, but as if for the fall, and *čakčaládje* is therefore better labeled as a kind of similative phrase rather than a true purposive. On the other hand, (24) refers to a man who got lost without having prepared himself properly for the environment as it truly existed. The borderline between purposive and similative interpretations thus depends on our contextual knowledge and general world knowledge in the same way as world knowledge helps us to differentiate between similative and functive readings of *dego* phrases (6).

Apart from the examples describing purposeful ways of dressing, the postpositional phrases in (22–23) must be considered as examples of true purposive phrases that refer to the very purposes of changing tires (to manage the winter) and tuning water scooters (to manage oval tracks). Not unlike with similatives, the clausal counterpart of the purposive *láhkai* phrases is the non-finite in *-nláhkai*:

(26) *Vaikko   lei   oalle   buolaš,   de goitge   eai   orron   olbmot*
     although be.PST.3SG rather   frost   so nevertheless NEG.3PL seem.PST.PTCP human.PL
     das   berošteame   duođi eambbo,   muhto gal sii   ledje=ge
     it.LOC   care.PROG   more.than.that   but   DPT 3PL be.PST.3PL=also
     bivvanládje   *gárvodan!*
     withstand.cold.CVB   dress.PST.PTCP
     'Although it was rather freezing, people did not seem to care about that, but they sure had
     dressed to keep warm!'

(27) *Dán   rádjái   eai   leat   fáll[a]n   earágo   boraspiriid   mat*
     this.GA until   NEG.3PL be.CNG offer.PST.PTCP   other.than beast.of.prey.PL.GA REL.PL
     loaktin láhkai   *gottašit   buot lágan bohccuid   mehciide,*
     make.time.pass.CVB   kill.FREQ.3PL all.kind.of reindeer.PL.GA   wilderness.PL.ILL
     beaš[k]ala   suhttan Berit Kirsten Gaup.
     thunder.3SG   angered Berit Kirsten Gaup
     'Up to now they have not offered anything but beasts of prey that keep killing all kinds of
     reindeer in the wilderness just to pass the time, thunders angry Berit Kirsten Gaup.'

Even though North Saami possesses two other types of non-finite purposive clause markers – the converb in *-ndihte* and the infinitive in *-t* expressing especially motion-cum-purpose (Ylikoski 2009) – and Examples (26–27) represent only a fraction of all the functions and occurrences of *-nláhkai*, they deserve our attention due to the specific kind of relation they, too, have to similatives. The functional similarity of the postpositional phrases and the non-finite clauses is highlighted by Example (26) where the purposive *bivvanládje* 'to keep warm' functions as an adverbial modifier of the verb *gárvodit* 'to dress' just seen in Examples (24–25). Here, too, the interpretation may have a similative flavor "(dressed) in a manner of keeping warm", but such far-fetched wording rather demonstrates the distance between (26) and true similative clauses seen in Section 3.4.

   Example (27) is similar to an interesting phenomenon discussed among the pretense clauses. Just as we saw that when speaking of wolverines that "run as if they were bounding" (21) it is understandable that natural languages extend the use of what are prototypically pretense clauses to instances where someone or something is only unintentionally giving false appearances that can hardly be separated from intentionally misleading impressions without world knowledge that tells, for example, that animals behave less intentionally than humans. Example (27) tells about beasts of prey that are depicted from a human perspective as if they were intentionally behaving agents that keep killing reindeer just for the fun of it, to make the time pass. Although the translation of (27) could include the pretentious conjunction *as if (to make the time pass)*, the non-finite verb forms in (26–27) are definitely purposive and not simulative in meaning, and they could easily be replaced by the default purposive clauses, non-finite and finite alike, but not with finite pretense clauses with *dego* 'as if' as seen in (20).

   The relatively infrequent purposive functions of the converb in *-nláhkai* may not be a paradigm example of the similative-purposive syncretism described by Treis (this volume), but the above examples are nevertheless rather illustrative of the conceptual continuum between similatives and purposives and an addition to the wide range of possible origins of purposive markers presented by Schmidtke-Bode (2009: 197–198) in his comprehensive monograph on the typology of purpose

clauses. For more examples of the North Saami -nláhkai on this continuum, see Ylikoski (2006, 2009: 90–92).

In Ylikoski (2006, 2009), many of the functions of -nláhkai are discussed from a perspective that takes into account the fact that the verb form often refers to states of readiness or suitability for actions that one of the main clause participants has or is planned to have. This perspective takes us even further from the original similative functions of the form in question:

(28) *Várrepresideanta*   *lea*   *ovdalis*   *fitnan*   *Divttasvuonas,*   *Snoas[a]s*   *ja*
      vice.president   be.3SG   earlier   visit.PST.PTCP Divtasvuodna.LOC   Snåase.LOC   and
      Guovdageainnus   *ja*   *lea*   *vel*   **fitnanláhkai**   *dán*   *mánus*   *Porsáŋggus,*
      Guovdageaidnu.LOC   and   be.3SG   yet   visit.CVB   this.GA   month.LOC   Porsáŋu.LOC
      Kárášjoga[s]   *ja*   *Gáivuonas.*
      Kárášjohka.LOC   and   Gáivuotna.LOC
      'The Vice President has visited Divtasvuodna, Snåase and Guovdageaidnu earlier, and she is yet to visit Porsáŋgu, Kárášjohka and Gáivuotna during this month.'

(29) *Nuba*   *oalle*   *olu*   *lea*   *vel*   **suddanláhkai**.
      therefore   rather   much   be.3SG   yet   melt.CVB
      'Therefore, there is still quite a lot (of snow) to melt.'

In (28–29), the non-finite in -nláhkai occurs with the copula *leat* with which it seems to form a periphrastic predicate with a future meaning. At first sight, the situation may seem similar to the development of the *going to* future in English and analogous future constructions in other languages; the most important shared feature between purposives and futures is that purpose clauses have an inherent future time reference with respect to the action described by the main clause. However, the purposive functions of -nláhkai are rather marginal both from the perspective of the whole array of the functions of this form as well as from the perspective of other, more frequent default purposives of North Saami. Furthermore, Schmidtke-Bode (2009: 178–185) describes future constructions originating in purposives as developing from expressions of motion-cum-purpose (such as *going + to V*) in particular, but the latter function is mostly reserved for the infinitive in -*t*, and indeed, also in North Saami the most common way to optionally distinguish between the present (non-past) tense and a future meaning is to use future constructions where the verbs *boahtit* 'come', *galgat* 'shall' and *šaddat* 'become' act as auxiliaries to the lexical verb in the infinitive.

Instead, both the structure and the meaning of the future -nláhkai is quite similar to the English *be + to* construction in that both can be characterized as devices "expressing futurity, with varied connotations of 'compulsion', 'plan', 'destiny', etc, according to context" (Quirk et al. 1985: 143), and the future meaning of the construction "is particularly emphasized when it is accompanied by *still* or *yet*" (ibid., p. 218) – compare the use of *vel* 'still, yet' in both (28) and (29).[4] Indeed, the sentences would appear less natural without the adverb that in a sense temporalizes the otherwise vague meaning of the verb form, implying that the ultimate state of affairs has not yet been realized. On the other hand, it must be mentioned that of the all phenomena discussed in the present article,

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[4] As for the general structure of the copula + -nláhkai future, this fits perfectly into the age-old pan-Saami pattern of the periphrastic perfect (copula + past participle, also seen in Example 28) and progressive (copula + progressive non-finite) that has obviously served as the analogical basis for a new TAM category, although the copula + -nláhkai is also used as a passive (patient-oriented) construction (see Ylikoski 2006, 2009: 47–54, 138–140, 153–154).

especially Examples (27–28) are considered quite odd and even ungrammatical by some native speakers.

5 Similative adjectives and nouns

The above discussion on the similatives and related phenomena in North Saami has had its focus on noun phrases and corresponding clauses. Before pulling the threads together, it is instructive to take a somewhat different perspective on the similarity and look at the use of an element that could be described as the adjectival counterpart of the adverbial *láhkai*. Just like *láhkai* goes back to the illative form of *láhki* 'mood, manner', the same noun has also given rise to the adjectival derivatives *-lágan* (~ *-lágán*) and *-lágaš* (~ *-lágáš*), of which the latter alternative is more transparent in having a relatively productive denominal adjective suffix *-š* accompanied by ordinary stem alteration, but the former and much more common variant, *-lágan*, is an opaque derivation whose etymology need not concern us here. It also suffices to say that the slight semantic and areal differences between *-lágan* and *-lágaš* portrayed at the beginning of the 20th century (Nielsen 1926: 227; 1934: 480–481) cannot be found in my contemporary language data. Prescriptive grammars and dictionaries have always considered *-lágan* and *-lágaš* as suffixes only, but some writers occasionally treat them as orthographically independent words without obvious change of meaning.

5.1   Similative adjectives

Most occurrences of formations ending in *-lágan* (or *-lágaš*) are analogous to those with *láhkai* in that they are fully lexicalized expressions such as *seammalágan* 'same kind of', *earalágan* 'different kind of', *iešguđetlágan* 'various kinds of', *máŋggalágan* 'many kinds of' and *nuppelágan* 'another kind of', and *buotlágan* 'all kinds of' seen in (27). However, the suffix is fully productive and as such mainly used to create denominal adjectives such as *countrylágan* 'country-like (of music)', *hoavdalágan* 'boss-like', *vulkánalágan* 'volcano-like' that are used just like ordinary adjectives: as adnominal modifiers and adjectival predicates. Even the personal pronouns can be turned to adjectives such as *moai* 'we (two)' : *munno* (genitive-accusative) → *munnolágan vádjoleaddjit* [1DU.GA.like wanderer.PL] 'our kind of wanderers'.

Adjectives like this usually refer to similarity of two entities on the same conceptual level (e.g. music X is country-like music, person X is a boss-like person), but occasional deviations such as the metonymic expressions *eŋgellágan modji* 'angel-like smile' and *minlágan musihkka* [1PL.GA.like music] 'our kind of music' are part of natural language whose users scarcely notice a deviation (cf. *eŋgellágan nieida* 'angel-like girl', *countrylágan musihkka* 'country-like music').

As for the formation of *-lágan* adjectives, the suffix is most often attached to the genitive-accusative forms of nouns, but nominative-based forms also occur (*hoavdalágan*), and in many word groups it is not possible to distinguish between the two (*countrylágan*, *vulkánalágan*, *eŋgellágan*). The adjectives based on personal pronouns are always based on the genitive-accusative. From a syntactic perspective, *-lágan* adjectives have some resemblance to similative phrases (Section 3.1) when used as adjectival predicatives following the copula verb:

(30) *Siskkil   lea   visti   galmmihanlanjalágan.*
     inside   be.3SG   building   freezer.room.GA.like
     'From the inside, the building is like a freezer room ("freezer-room-like").'

(31) *Duiskkagiella   lea   eanet   **dárogiela**   **lágan**.*
    German.language   be.3SG   more   Norwegian.language.GA   like
    'German language is more like Norwegian ("Norwegian-like").'

Even though some occurrences such as those above could be replaced with the expressions seen in Section 3.1 without significant changes in meaning, they are nevertheless adjectives whose limits do not coincide with *láhkai* and *dego*; they cannot be used in adverbial functions seen in Examples (1b) and (2b), for example.

    When comparing the similative morphemes *-lágan* and *láhkai*, it can be noted that both of them can also be used in functions that do not change the word-class of the stem or the syntactic functions of the word but only modify its meaning. However, as it would be logically impossible to turn adjectives (instead of nouns) to similative adjectives, *-lágan* turns simple adjectives to moderative ones, e.g. *álkeslágan* 'quite easy', *divraslágan* 'quite expensive', *rukseslágan* 'reddish', *vilgeslágan* 'whitish'. This is quite similar to the use of *-ish* in English, where the denominal derivations express similarity (*boyish*), but deadjectival ones have moderative meanings (*reddish*, *whitish*, and colloquially also e.g. *easyish*, *expensivish*). In the same vein, some adverbs such as *aiddo* 'just (now, recently)', *dávjá* 'often' and *unnán* 'little, slightly' may be compounded with *láhkai*, or, as is more usual with this feature, the variant *ládje* that likewise softens the simple adverb: *aiddoládje* 'quite recently', *dávjáládje* 'quite often' and *unnánládje* 'rather little'. This feature can be seen as one more part in the similarity *senso lato* characteristic of various expressions with *(-n)láhkai*, from similarity proper to expressions of pretense and further up to purposive and future clauses seen in Section 4.

5.2   Similative nouns

After similative adjectives it is time to take a look at the noun phrases headed by formations with the suffix *-lágan*, in which the same element is used to derive words that can be characterized as similative nouns. Most of such formations are denominal, but also adjectives and pronouns may be turned into similative nouns. Consider first the following examples:

(32) *Ollugat   goittot   fárrejit   gávpogiidda, main   sáhttá   oaidnit*
    many.people   however   move.3PL   city.PL.ILL   REL.PL.LOC   can.3SG   see.INF
    ***surgadis   vistelágážiid**, main   eai   leat   báljo   makkárge   bálvalusat.*
    miserable   house.like.PL.GA   REL.PL.LOC   NEG.3PL   be.CNG   barely   any.kind   facility.PL
    'However, many are moving to cities where one can see miserable house kind of things in which there are barely any facilities.'

(33) *Juanitas   ja   mánáin   lea   **unna ommanláganaš** mainna   vuššet,*
    Juanita.LOC   and   child.PL.LOC   be.3SG   small stove.like.DIM   REL.COM   cook.3PL
    muhto   juste dál   lea   gása nohkan.
    but   just   now   be.3SG   gas   come.to.an.end.PST.PTCP
    'Juanita and the children have a small stove kind of thing to cook with, but it is out of gas at the moment.'

(34) *Juova   siste,   sullii   čuohte mehtera   Anárjávregáttis,   áicen*
     blockfield.GA inside   about   100   meter.GA   Aanaar.lake.shore.LOC notice.PST.1SG
     gearbmašlágana.
     snake.like.GA
     'In the blockfield (rock-covered terrain), about 100 meters from the shore of lake Aanaar, I
     noticed a snake kind of thing.'

(35) *Naˊvi   álbmot leat   **olmmošláganat** geat   orrot   mánus.*
     Na'vi   people be.3PL human.like.PL   who.PL   live.3PL moon.LOC
     'The Na'vi are human kind of things living on a moon.'

In fact, there is or at least seems to have been a formal difference between the adjectives in *-lágan*
and the *-lágan* nouns. In his classical description of North Saami, Nielsen (1926: 227) does not pay
attention to the word classes when describing the formations ending with *-lágaš*, but he makes a
distinction between the forms *beatnatlágaš* [dog.GA.like] 'dog-like' and *beanalágaš* [dog.NOM.like]
'good-for-nothing dog', i.e. something close to 'dog kind of thing'.[5] Indeed, this observation
correlates with the genitive-accusative-based adjectives of (30–31) and nominative-based nouns of
(32–35), but nominative-based adjectives such as *hoavdalágan* 'boss-like' as opposed to genitival
hoavddalágan also appear in my corpus. Nevertheless, even though the formations seen in (32–35)
could also possibly be used as similative adjectives (*vistelágáš* 'house-like', *ommanlágan* 'stove-
like', *gearbmašlágan* 'snake-like' and *olmmošlágan* 'human-like'), here they function just like any
nouns, with no features characteristic of adjectives. Instead, they refer to concrete objects and have
all morphosyntactic properties typical of nouns: They are inflected for both number (32, 35) and
case (32, 34), take adnominal adjectival modifiers of their own (33–34), and in (33), the noun
ommanlágan is further derived to a diminutive form usually accompanying the modifier *unna*
'small'. True, in principle all North Saami adjectives can be inflected as nouns and head NPs, but in
the case of *-lágan* it would hardly be economical to analyze *-lágan* nouns as (first denominalized
and then renominalized) adjectives in disguise.

    From a semantic point of view, *-lágan* nouns can be labeled as similative nouns on a par with the
other similatives – verbal expressions for likeness – discussed in the preceding sections. On the
other hand, the semantic functions of *-lágan* are not uniform, and the concept of similarity must be
here understood in the wide sense that also covers phenomena such as those discussed under the
label "pretense clauses" (Section 3.6). The referents of the similative nouns *vistelágáš* (32) and
ommanlágan (33) are nearly the same as those of their base nouns: Many of the occurrences
of *-lágan* nouns can be interpreted as having pejorative connotations, which, indeed, can scarcely be
avoided given the overall states of affairs described in (32–33). Such cases are reminiscent of not
only similative phrases and clauses but also pretense clauses that refer to counterfactual situations:
The houses of (32) and the stove of (33) are depicted as something that do not appear as true
representatives of a house or stove but are rather only incomplete reflections of what they ought to
be.

    Despite the imperfection of their referents, the *-lágan* nouns in (32–33) do refer to a certain kind
of houses and to something fulfilling the role of a stove. However, this is not the case in (34–35)
where the nouns *gearbmašlágan* [snake.*lágan*] and *olmmošlágan* [human.*lágan*] do not refer to any
kinds of snakes or humans but only to something similar to those. Neither are these nouns

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[5] Nielsen's translation to Norwegian: adjectives *hundsk*, *hundaktig* vs. NPs *ussel hund*, *hund som ikke duer til noget*.

pejorative either: In Example (34), a newspaper is quoting a person who is telling about the way the "snake kind of thing" he noticed in the middle of a rock-covered area turned out to be a moss-covered silver neck ring from the Middle Ages.

Example (35) refers to the movie Avatar that tells the story of the Na'vi, a science fiction species similar to, but definitely different from, the human species. Therefore, in a word, *olmmošláganat* here are *humanoids*. This may be the only instance where the *-lágan* nouns authentically coincide with the international neologisms formed with the suffix *-oid* that goes back to Greek *εἶδος* 'form; type' (OED s.v. *-oid*). The use of *-oid* is mostly limited to scientific vocabulary such as *mineraloid*, *planetoid* and *virusoid* based on Greco-Latinate stems (and, paradoxically, often with very carefully defined meanings), but its semantic essence is in principle quite similar to that of *-lágan* nouns. Nevertheless, unlike *-oid*, the North Saami *-lágan* is such a productive suffix that the word *olmmošlágan* for humanoids does not require significant creativity from its user, and its novelty most likely goes unnoticed by the recipient, too, as the true meaning of *olmmošlágan* is plainly 'human kind of thing' as a noun or 'human-like' as an adjective. To my knowledge, there are no lexicalized *-lágan* nouns with special meanings in the language, but due to the productivity of the suffix formations such as the unattested *affiksalágan* for the meaning 'affixoid' or *fáktálágan* for 'factoid'[6] would be understood much less consciously than the corresponding *-oid* internationalisms are at first sight.

Finally, Example (36) shows that even personal pronouns may be turned to similative NPs (cf. *munnolágan vádjoleaddjit* 'our kind of wanderers' mentioned at the beginning of Section 5.1):

(36) *Sii   álge   gohčodit   **mu   láganiid**   asfáltasápmelažžan.*
    3PL   begin.PST.3PL call.INF   1SG.GA like.PL.GA asphalt.Saami.ESS
    'They began calling my kind of people "asphalt Saami".'

Even though the expression *mu láganiid* is based on the genitive-accusative form followed by an orthographically separate similative morpheme, the more expected appearance would be *muláganiid*, and it would be impossible to form "similative pronouns" – used like a noun and not an adjective here – based on nominatives (such as **munláganiid*).

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[6] The depreciative tone of *factoid* is quite similar to the pejorative meanings of *-lágan* nouns.

6 Discussion and conclusion

The most common types of North Saami expressions for similarity and related meanings were discussed in Sections 3 and 5, and a summary can be presented in Table 2 in which the more original Uralic types of expressions are contrasted with those more similar to the languages of the SAE type.

Table 2. Expressions of similarity and related functions in contemporary North Saami.

	Suffixes and postpositions	Preposed particles
Functives (role phrases)	N-*n* (ESS)	*dego* N ~ N-*n* (ESS) (*nugo* N ~ N-*n*)
Similative phrases	N(GA) *láhkai*	*dego* N (*nugo* N)
Similative clauses	V-*nláhkai* (CVB)	*dego* VP/S (*nugo*, *seamma láhkai go* VP/S)
Pretense clauses	V-*nláhkai* (CVB)	*dego* VP/S (COND)
Similes	–	*seamma láhkai go* S (*dego/nugo* S)
Accord clauses	–	*nugo* S (*dego* S)
Comparatives (of inequality)	N(GA)/N-*s* (LOC) A-*t* (CMPR)	A-*t* (CMPR) *go* N (*eanet* A *go* N)
Equatives (comparatives of equality)	(N(GA) A-*u* (EQD))	*seamma* A *go* N
Similative adjectives and nouns	N-*lágan*	–

The right-hand column of Table 2 includes a number of particles that correspond to words such as English *like*, *as*, *than* and *more*, and corresponding analytical devices in most Western European languages. In North Saami, the most important words in this respect are *dego* and the less frequent but more or less synonymous *nugo*. Both are traditionally used as markers of similative phrases and as conjunctions introducing similative, pretense, simile and accord clauses. The only remarkable difference between the use of *dego* and *nugo* is that the latter is the most common marker of accord clauses that function as illocutionary adverbials and as such conceptually differ from other *dego/nugo* clauses that can be generally considered as answers to the question "How?". On the other hand, the most important difference between the standard descriptions of the classical North Saami and contemporary usage is that *dego* and *nugo* are also often used instead of – or in addition to – the essive case as a marker of role phrases, here labeled as functives. This is clearly a result of interference from Scandinavian with the functive-similative particle *som*. However, there are no signs of *dego/nugo* ever being used in the equative constructions: North Saami continues to keep equatives clearly separate from similatives, contrary to the pan-European tendency seen in the data presented by Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 327–329). Instead, North Saami uses rather similar devices to mark both comparison of equality and that of inequality.

The middle column of Table 2 presents the suffixal and postpositional equivalents of the preposed particles and conjunctions seen on the right. Interestingly, even though the latter type of constructions outnumber the former type in nearly all of the functions under discussion, the suffixal and postpositional constructions on the left have always received a bit more attention in the descriptions of the language. This may be explained by the fact that they have been considered more original and more like the ones found in other Uralic languages, whereas the preposed analytical particles can be lightly dismissed as less interesting default expressions of the SAE type. However, as the partial cognates of the Saami synthetic equatives in Finnic have not been systematically integrated into their grammatical descriptions (see Must 1953–1954), it is quite understandable that formations like *guhku* 'as long as' (9–10) and *stuoru* 'as big as' (11) have been given a typologically unexpected label "postposition" although they clearly fill the slot of predicative equatives in Table 1 (Section 3.3). Therefore, expressions such as (constructed) *váriid gievrru* [mountain.PL.GA strong.EQD] 'as strong as mountains' appear comparable to the Old Irish equative degree of *sonairt* 'strong' in *sonartaidir slebe* [strong.EQD mountain.PL.ACC] 'id.' (O'Connell 1912: 45). Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998: 283–284) state that among the languages of Europe, synthetic equatives can be found only at the margins of the continent: in Celtic, Uralic and Kartvelian.

In addition to the equative-comparative syncretism, another notable pair are similative and pretense clauses that pattern quite uniformly. As seen by comparing the examples in Sections 3.4 and 3.6, their main semantic difference seems to lie in the contrast between realis and irrealis modalities. A third, if only emerging, pair consists of non-clausal functives and similative phrases. As for the influence of neighboring languages and more widespread SAE features in North Saami, and the typology of similatives in general, perhaps the most interesting markers of similatives are the postposition *láhkai* and especially the non-finite in *-nláhkai* that does not have parallels in any of the neighboring non-Saami languages.

A typologically less common development of similative morphemes was discussed in Section 4 that described the use of the non-finite in *-nláhkai* as a marker of purposives and future events. The relative rarity and semantic explanations of the similative-purposive syncretism are discussed in more detail by Treis (this volume). As regards the future constructions, it seems possible to observe a somewhat direct relation between the similative functions and future meanings carried by the same form. Even in the absence of known parallels for a diachronic pathway from similative to future meanings, with or without a purposive intermediate stage, it is obvious that the future constructions seen in (28–29) ultimately stem from the most original similative meaning of *-nláhkai* and the postposition *láhkai*. Not only do the occurrences of *-nláhkai* future have connotations of deontic and dynamic modalities, but they specifically refer to states of affairs that are already in the process of taking place or accomplished in the immediate future. In other words, the expected states of affairs (e.g. melting of snow in 29) are near, about to come true, and the subject referent of such a sentence is in a state close to V-ing, much like Máret of (1a) is in a state close to being a magnet.

The last row of Table 2 presents the so-called similative adjectives and nouns that lack analytical counterparts of the type *a snake kind of thing* that quite well captures the essence of the similative noun *gearbmašlágan* in (34). Although the same form could be used as an adjective ('snake-like') as well, the similative nouns are perhaps typologically and conceptually more interesting in that e.g. *gearbmašlágan* of (34) does not refer to any kind of snakes in itself, but the noun plainly refers to an entity (here a neck ring) that has once been perceived as something similar to snakes. I am not aware of this kind of "pro-nouns" – that may also be formed from demonstrative and personal

pronouns (36) – having been discussed in theoretical linguistics, but analogous formations can also be found in at least other Uralic languages such as Tundra Nenets (e.g. *ńíb'a* 'needle' → *ńíb'arəxa* 'needle kind of thing; needle-like', *weńeko* 'dog' → *weńekorxa* 'dog kind of thing; dog-like'; Tereščenko 1956: 158).

Like with most of the topics discussed throughout this article, the most valuable perspectives to our general understanding of the synchronic and diachronic network of the various expressions of similarity and equativity are provided by phenomena that distinguish North Saami from the neighboring majority languages that are, in a sense, rivals in the process of leading the language closer to Standard Average European and as well as in splitting the traditional language community with a diminishing number of monolingual speakers.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	DU	dual	LOC	locative
ADJ	adjective	ELA	elative	NEG	negative verb
ADV	adverb	EQD	equative degree	NOM	nominative
CMPV	comparative	ESS	essive	PL	plural
CNG	connegative	FREQ	frequentative	PROG	progressive
COM	comitative	GA	genitive-accusative	PST	past
COMP	complement	GEN	genitive	PTCP	participle
COND	conditional	ILL	illative	REFL	reflexive
CVB	converb	IMP	imperative	REL	relative
DIM	diminutive	INCH	inchoative	SG	singular
DPT	discourse particle	INF	infinitive	VN	verbal noun

Corpus

The newspaper corpus of more than ten million words from North Saami newspapers *Min Áigi*, *Áššu* and *Ávvir* (1997–2011), provided by the Divvun Sámi proofing tools project at the University of Tromsø.

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