

Verb inflection in Forest Lule Saami

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1. Introduction

Lule Saami is a Uralic language of the Saamic branch, likely spoken by fewer than one thousand people belonging to the indigenous Saami minority of Norrbotten County, Sweden, and Nordland County, Norway. The situation of the Lule Saami language is in many ways paradoxical. On the one hand, it is an officially recognized language in the heart of Northern Europe, with an established literary standard and a relatively strong legal status. On the other hand, it is severely endangered, and there has been little description of spoken Lule Saami published since the mid-1900s. Even recent descriptions of the language largely build on the endeavors of scholars such as K. B. Wiklund (1868–1934), Harald Grundström (1885–1960) and Björn Collinder (1894–1983). To name but one example, the pedagogical grammar of Spiik (1989, first edition 1977) relies heavily on the textbook of Wiklund (1915, first edition 1901), which in turn derives from linguistic documentation carried out in the late 1800s.

While acknowledging the accomplishments of previous scholars, it is also important to describe the Lule Saami language as it is spoken today. The goal of this paper is thus twofold: first, to give a descriptive account of contemporary Lule Saami verb inflection, and second, to present original data on the critically endangered Lule Saami Forest dialect. Although the phonetics of this variety are the best described of any Lule Saami dialect—on account of Collinder’s 1938 monograph on the topic—its morphology and syntax have gone virtually undescribed to this day. This study takes a first step towards filling this knowledge gap.

The paper has the following structure. In Section 2, the background and data of the study are presented. Section 3 outlines the research history of the Forest dialect and Section 4 provides dialectological notes on the variety. In Section 5, which constitutes the main body of the paper, the inflectional verb morphology of the Forest dialect is described. Particularly noteworthy in this

section are the merged forms of the negative auxiliary and the verb ‘be’ presented in 5.10, some of which have not been previously described. Section 6 features a discussion on inflectional forms that are known from previous descriptions of Lule Saami, but that are either absent or only poorly attested in the present corpus. Most notably, these forms include verbs in the dual number and the potential mood. Section 7 contains a brief summary and discussion of the main findings of the study.

2. Background and data

This section outlines the background and data of the study, starting with a delimitation of the research area (2.1). This delimitation is followed by a description of the corpus on which the paper is based (2.2) and the transcription conventions used (2.3).

2.1 Area and speakers

The Lule Saami Forest dialect is traditionally spoken in the reindeer herding district of Jiellevárre (Sw. *Gällivare skogssameby*) in Norrbotten County, Sweden. This district ranges from Jiellevárre municipality in the northwest to the Baltic Sea in the southeast (see Map 1). It is also customary to include the varieties traditionally spoken in the districts of Sláhkka (Sw. *Slakka*, previously *Sierre*, Sw. *Serri*) and Udtjá (Sw. *Udtja*) in Jáhkâmáhkke (Sw. *Jokkmokk*) municipality under the heading of the Forest dialect (see Sammallahti 1998: 21–22 for a brief classification of Lule Saami dialects).¹ Data from the latter districts are however scarce, and according to Lule Saami scholar Susanna Angéus Kuoljok (2002a: 10, 2003: 9), there were presumably no speakers of the Forest dialect left in Sláhkka or Udtjá already at the beginning of this century (cf. Hedström 2011: 153). Consequently, the present account of the Forest dialect focuses solely on the variety spoken in the Jiellevárre district.

Unlike more southern varieties of the language, this dialect has been in close contact with the Finnish variety now known as Meänkieli. It has also been in contact with local Swedish dialects, including the varieties of Råne and Överkalix, in addition to Standard Swedish (see, e.g., Pihl 1924: 3, Collinder 1926, Källskog 1989, Winsa 1991: 32–38). As a result of forced

¹ For older classifications, see Wiklund (1890: III; 1891: I–II; 1915: 4), Qvigstad (1925: 19) and Grundström (1937: III–VII); cf. Rydving (2013: 42–43). See also the discussion on dialect levelling in Angéus Kuoljok (2002a: 10; 2003: 8).

relocations of reindeer herders during the early 1900s, there are also a few speakers of North Saami in the area (see Labba 2020: 145–153).

In 1930, Collinder stated that the Forest dialect was spoken by “half a thousand settled individuals in some twenty villages” in southeastern Jiellevárre (1930: 7). A few years later (1938: 5), he was more cautious in his estimation of the speaker population, stating that only a fourth of the 800 inhabitants of the parish spoke Saami. Today, this number has diminished significantly—I am only aware of a handful of active speakers of the dialect, all of whom are above 80 years of age and belong to two related families from the same village.

2.2 Data of the study

This paper is based on data gathered by the author through the small-scale project *Documenting the Lule Saami Forest dialect*, conducted under the auspices of the Uppsala Language Documentation Group (UPPLADOC) at Uppsala University, Sweden. The primary goals of the project, lasting from 2019 to 2020, were to assess the current situation of the presumably moribund Lule Saami Forest dialect and, if possible, to record spontaneous speech with one or several speakers of the variety. Secondary goals included elicitation of dialectal features and place names. Both the primary and secondary goals were met beyond expectation: through the project, some nine hours of spontaneous and elicited speech were recorded with two speakers of the dialect.

Data from the documentation project have also been included in a study on the development of some kinship terms in North Saami, Lule Saami and South Saami (Kejonen 2020a). An additional outcome of the project is the publication of two popular scientific papers presenting older folklore materials from the area in Lule Saami and Swedish respectively (Kejonen 2021a, second edition 2024; 2021b), as well as a brief description of Collinder’s work with the Forest dialect, also aimed at a general audience (Kejonen 2022).² A Meänkieli borrowing from the Forest dialect is treated in Kejonen (2024a: 138–139).

The two speakers interviewed for the project are Sören Andersson (SA), born in 1930, and Lars Eriksson (LE), born in 1944.³ Both speakers are from Sádinvárre (lit. ‘trap mountain’, Swedish *Flakaberg*, *Råne Flakaberg* or

² Preliminary findings of the project were also presented at the *Workshop on language documentation: multilingual settings and technological advances* (Uppsala, 24–25 October 2019) and at the *4th Saami Linguistics Symposium, SAALS 4* (Uppsala, 14–15 November 2019).

³ Here it might be of interest to mention that the speakers interviewed for the present study are closely related to the two speakers who provided most of Collinder’s data (see 3.3), one of them being Andersson’s father and the other being his grandfather’s brother. Andersson, in turn, is the half-uncle (SA *tjiehtjebielle*) of Eriksson.

Flakabergsåsen), also known as Vårre (lit. ‘mountain’), a small settlement close to the Arctic Circle in Boden municipality, Norrbotten County, Sweden.⁴ The majority language Swedish dominates the day-to-day life of both speakers, although they both value their Lule Saami mother tongue and speak it when they have the opportunity, for instance with their respective siblings.⁵



Map 1. Location of Sádinvårre and the Jiellevårre reindeer herding district (shaded) in Norrbotten County, Sweden. Map: Olle Kejonen, based on data from Google and Sámedigge (the Saami Parliament of Sweden).

⁴ Collinder (1938: 48) has noted the name Sádinvårre both with a second syllable *ε* and *a*: *sātemvårre* ~ *sātamvårre*, cf. SA *sádam*, SG.ACC *sádamav* ‘trap (for birds)’ (Sw. *flake*). Also noted by Collinder is the variant *vårre* (ULMA 15925: 5, cf. Kejonen 2021b: 35). Note that this settlement should not be confused with the nearby locality Sádek (Sw. *Flakaberg*, *Gällivare Flakaberg* or *Lill-Flakaberg*), as is done by Rydving (2013: 42). The town of Boden is referred to in Lule Saami by both speakers as *Båvdda* (see Section 4.1 on the lack of labial vowel harmony in this name), by SA also as *Suddás* (originally the oblique stem of *Suttas*, by which name the town is also known).

⁵ It is my impression that today, the Forest dialect is highly regarded by speakers of closely related varieties: on several occasions, I have heard speakers of both North Saami and Lule Saami making favorable comments about the dialect. This stands in stark contrast to the situation of the early 1900s, when Collinder noted that most Forest Saami regarded the neighboring mountain varieties of Lule Saami as a kind of *Hochsprache* (1938: 7), which was “better” or “more correct” than the Forest dialect (1930: 12–13).



Figure 1. Official Swedish and unofficial Lule Saami road sign, Sádimvárre, August 1, 2019. Note that the Lule Saami sign does not adhere to the standard orthography. Photo: Olle Kejonen.



Figure 2. Lars Eriksson, August 1, 2019. Photo: Olle Kejonen.



Figure 3. Sören Andersson, January 4, 2020. Photo: Olle Kejonen.

The interview with Eriksson was done at his home in Sádinvárre on August 1, 2019 and consists of two hours and forty minutes of audio and video. A first interview with Andersson was carried out at his home in Boden on January 4, 2020 and amounts to four hours and seven minutes of audio and video. A second interview with Andersson, scheduled for early 2020, had to be postponed due to the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic the same spring. Finally, on August 12, 2021, this interview could be carried out, amounting to two hours and twenty minutes of audio and video; note that this second interview with Andersson was carried out after the formal conclusion of the documentation project.⁶

The bulk of these over nine hours of recordings consists of semi-structured interviews and conversations on everyday topics such as family, weather and reindeer herding. Other topics range from traditional Saami foods to celestial names, e.g., SA *Tjuollda* ‘Pole star’ (lit. ‘stake’) and *Stálo bädnaga* ‘Orion’s belt’ (lit. ‘dogs of the *stállo*’, a mythological ogre). The interviews with Andersson also include two different recordings of a folktale about the origin of the hazel grouse. In addition to spontaneous speech, a sizeable share of the recordings consists of elicitation, focusing primarily on dialectologically interesting features of the variety. The interview with Eriksson also contains

⁶ Although the corpus strictly speaking consists of two idiolects, I take the language of these speakers to be representative of the present-day Forest dialect—not least due to the fact that they represent both families in which there are active speakers of the variety.

some elicitation on local place names, whereas the second interview with Andersson includes elicitation on personal pronouns. Additionally, a number of verb paradigms were elicited during the first interview with Andersson, making up the backbone of the present paper.

With the exception of elicitation settings, all contact with the interviewed speakers was carried out in Saami, with myself speaking Čohkkiras (*Jukkasjärvi*) North Saami, a variety closely related to Lule Saami. In elicitation, Swedish was used as the primary meta language. The first two interviews were recorded using a HD video camera and a wireless set with a lapel microphone; audio recordings were also made using a separate audio recorder. The third interview was recorded with a HD video camera and a wired lapel microphone. All interviews were also recorded with a mobile phone for backup purposes. It should be pointed out that the entire corpus has not been fully transcribed, nor archived, at the time of writing.

In addition to data on the Forest dialect, the present paper also contains some notes on the Lule Saami variety of the neighboring Unna Tjerusj district (Sw. previously *Sörkaitum*). Unless stated otherwise, data from this dialect stem from a small corpus (two hours from two male speakers, born in 1929 and 1933), gathered by the author in 2016 through the Uppsala University project *Linguistic Continua: a View from the North*.⁷ Comparative data on Čohkkiras North Saami stem from an ongoing documentation and description project on this variety (see Kejonen 2020b).

2.3 Transcription conventions

The gathered data are presented in a slightly adapted version of the Lule Saami standard orthography. While a full description of the correspondences between the Lule Saami orthography and phonology is beyond the scope of this paper, the following writing conventions can be noted specifically. The vowels /a/, o, eæ/ are represented by ⟨á, â, ä⟩ and the consonants /ŋ, ɲ, ʃ, tʃ, ts/ are represented by ⟨ŋ, ɲ, sj, tj, ts⟩ (geminated ⟨ŋŋ, ɲɲ, ssj, ttj, tts⟩).⁸ The voiced affricates /dʒ, dz/ are represented by the trigraphs ⟨dtj, dts⟩. For a concise description of Lule Saami phonology, see Wickman (1975); cf. Angéus Kuoljok (1997: 40–54) and Ylikoski (2022: 132–135).

The following adaptations to the standard orthography are made in this paper: ⟨ä̃⟩ is used for the long counterpart of /o/ and ⟨ë̃⟩ is used for short /e/ [ɛ] (in the standard orthography not distinguished from short ⟨â⟩ and long ⟨e⟩

⁷ Through this project, a total of 14 speakers of Lule Saami and North Saami were interviewed in Sweden and Norway, resulting in more than twelve hours of audio recordings.

⁸ In Lule Saami materials produced in Norway the grapheme ⟨æ̃⟩ is used instead of ⟨ä̃⟩.

respectively).⁹ Following the tradition in Saami linguistics, as well as pedagogical materials on Lule Saami (e.g., Spiik 1989), long geminates are indicated by the sign <ː> between two identical consonants, e.g., LE *bies'se* /s:s/ ‘birch bark’ (cf. *biesse* /ss/ ‘nest’). Additionally, minor adaptations of the orthography have been made in order to better reflect the pronunciation of the Forest dialect (see Section 4).

In Lule Saami, stress is fixed: the first syllable carries main stress and each following non-final odd syllable carries secondary stress. There are however a few exceptions to this rule—mainly in compounds and loanwords—so for the sake of clarity, I occasionally use the IPA signs <ˈ> and <ˌ> to indicate primary and secondary stress respectively, e.g., LE *'Gårkkåbies, áhpe* (place name, lit. ‘ant hill bog’, cf. *gårkkåbiesse* ‘ant hill’, *áhpe* ‘large bog’).

Where necessary, a broad phonetic transcription using IPA is included within square brackets. The speaker who has provided a certain form is indicated with his respective initials (SA, LE) where relevant, and elicited clauses are indicated as such. Materials quoted by other scholars are given in their original form, most commonly the Uralic Phonetic Alphabet (UPA, also known as the Finno-Ugric transcription, FUT).¹⁰ Glosses and quotes in other languages have been translated into English. For better comparability, hyphens and equals signs (indicating morpheme and clitic boundaries respectively) have sometimes been added also when quoting other scholars.

3. Previous research

The present description of the Forest dialect is concerned with the contemporary spoken language. Nevertheless, it could also be described as “philologically informed”, in the sense that earlier materials on the variety—both published and unpublished—provide an important reference point throughout the study. In this section, these legacy materials are presented, starting with the work of linguist K. B. Wiklund in the late 1800s and early

⁹ While Wickman (1975) does not include short /e/ in his phonemic analysis of Lule Saami, this vowel can be argued to have phonemic status at least in the present-day Forest dialect on the basis of minimal pairs such as SA, LE *dě* ‘then’ vs. *da* DEM.PL.NOM and SA *guoktĕ* ‘two’ vs. *guokti* ‘twice’. Note however the variation of second and third syllable *ě* and *a* documented by Collinder (1938: 48) for different subdialects of the Forest variety, as well as the variation in vocalism described for some verb suffixes in Section 5.3.

¹⁰ Wiklund’s earliest works on Lule Saami (1888, 1890, 1891) utilize a version of the Swedish Dialect Alphabet (Sw. *landsmålsalfabetet*), many graphemes of which are not found in the Unicode standard. When quoting these materials, I use the most similar characters available in Unicode, e.g., *d* with a curl <ḑ> for Wiklund’s “mouilliertes *d*” (1890: IV; 1891: 9). The inclusion of characters from the Swedish Dialect Alphabet in Unicode would be highly desirable for Saami linguistics, seeing that not only Wiklund, but also other scholars have used it in transcribing Saamic languages (see, e.g., Siegl 2017: 284, Note 47).

1900s (3.1), followed by the folklore texts noted down by clergyman Otto Lindgren in the 1910s (3.2) and the extensive materials of linguist Björn Collinder, primarily gathered in the 1920s (3.3). Finally, some notes are made on other materials on the dialect (3.4).

3.1 K. B. Wiklund

The first materials on the Forest dialect were gathered by K. B. Wiklund (1868–1934) in 1895 and 1906. During these trips, Wiklund noted down a couple hundred words from a handful of speakers, using a detailed phonetic transcription (cf. Collinder 1938: 7). Wiklund also documented a number of place names in the area. While some of Wiklund’s materials on the Forest dialect have been included in the Lule Saami dictionary of Grundström (1946–54), his notebooks from the area (KBW 1895 I–II, 1906) also contain unpublished data, primarily from a speaker born in Bålggem (Sw. *Pålkem*, previously *Vitträsk*). When quoting Wiklund’s materials on the Forest dialect, all data stem from this speaker unless explicitly stated otherwise.¹¹

3.2 Otto Lindgren

Clergyman Otto Lindgren (1884–1952) noted down a number of folklore texts in Stuur Sávjva (Sw. *Storsaivis*) in 1912, amounting to more than 1,300 words (OL 1912; see also Kejonen 2021a). He also noted down a story in the Forest dialect in Suobbat (OL 1913), consisting of some 200 words. Lindgren knew Lule Saami well (Korhonen 2016: 777, Stoor 2016: 727), and although his texts use a practical orthography that does not take into account some phonological oppositions, his materials are of a high quality. Lindgren’s texts can be said to complement the materials of Wiklund and Collinder, as the latter two scholars almost exclusively documented single words, rather than connected speech.¹²

¹¹ It should however be noted that according to Collinder (1938: 7), the speech of this individual is not entirely representative of the Forest dialect; see also Note 22.

¹² Note that Lindgren’s materials from Stuur Sávjva include a total of nine texts—not eight, as erroneously stated in Kejonen (2021a: 24). Parts of Lindgren’s folklore texts from the Forest dialect area have also been published in Swedish (Lindgren 1928, 1930, Kejonen 2021b). On behalf of Wiklund, Lindgren also collected linguistic questionnaires from two speakers of Lule Saami from Svenskudden (*Junkär* in his Lule Saami transcription), south of the present research area (cf. Kejonen 2021b: 35). These speakers agree in some respects with the Forest dialect (such as the vocalism in *pesti* ‘spoon’, see Section 4.1), but they also show some peculiar traits, including cases of labial umlaut, e.g., *kånokit* ‘to stop’ (OL 1923), cf. SA *gēnugit*, Standard Lule Saami *ganugit*. In this respect, this variety seems to agree with that of Gåjkkul (Sw. *Kåikul*) as described by Wiklund (1891: 48; cf. Collinder 1938: 66–69 and Wickman 1965: 424–425, see also Note 20). Lindgren further acquired a number of cultural items in the Forest dialect area, which are deposited at the museum of Västernorrland (*Västernorrlands museum*).

3.3 Björn Collinder

Most of the materials available on the Forest dialect were gathered by Wiklund's successor Björn Collinder (1894–1983), who carried out extensive linguistic documentation in the area in 1923, supplemented by shorter trips in 1925 and 1938 (Collinder 1938: 7). Collinder's work was focused on the sound system of the dialect, and resulted in the 1938 monograph *Lautlehre des Waldlappischen Dialektes von Gällivare*.¹³ This monograph is primarily based on data from two speakers (or “language masters”, Ger. *Sprachmeister*, Sw. *språkmästare*) from Sádinvárre: Erik Persson (1854–1949) and Paulus Andersson (1882–1958). In total, however, Collinder gathered materials from more than two dozen speakers from some fifteen villages in the area, all in detailed phonetic transcription. In this survey work, Collinder used a linguistic questionnaire originally constructed by Wiklund, consisting of more than sixty questions mostly concerning phonology.¹⁴

In addition to his 1938 monograph, parts of Collinder's data on the Forest dialect have also been published in the abovementioned dictionary of Grundström (1946–54). Sporadic notes on the variety are further found in other works by Collinder, including a few sociolinguistically oriented texts (1926, 1929, 1930) and an introduction to general linguistics (1959, with several later editions and a 1978 German translation).

Notebooks from Collinder's work on the Forest dialect are archived at the Swedish Institute for Language and Folklore (*Institutet för språk och folkminnen*) in Uppsala (ULMA 15924–36). These notebooks contain some unpublished data, including a small number of partial verb paradigms. Collinder also gathered place names in the Forest dialect area, which are available at the place name register of the Institute for Language and Folklore (*Ortnamnsregistret*). For a popular scientific description of Collinder's work with the Forest dialect, see Kejonen (2022).¹⁵

¹³ Collinder's monograph further contains a short text sample (1938: 170–172). This text, a folktale on the origin of the woodpecker, was however not originally composed in the Forest dialect, but is based on a recitation of a text from Wiklund's anonymously published Lule Saami text collection *Tálotj suptsasah ja áttá* ‘Old tales and new’ (1916: 3–4). While Collinder duly notes this fact, Wiklund, in turn, makes no mention of the original source of the text. It can however be noted that it corresponds almost word for word to a Pite Saami version of the same story, published by Ignác Halász (1893: 7–8) some twenty years earlier, as pointed out in Kejonen (2021a: 27, Note 4); cf. Kejonen (2024b).

¹⁴ While certainly suitable for its intended purpose, the historical-comparative focus of this questionnaire is apparent—for instance, there are no less than four questions concerning the second person dual of the imperative mood (investigating the *Überdehnung*, or “extra strong grade” of consonants, cf. Collinder 1938: 149), but not a single question concerning dual forms in the indicative.

¹⁵ See also Korhonen (2008: 11) for a recounting of an episode where Collinder lost his way skiing to Sádinvárre, only to be found by the speaker he was to interview.

3.4 Other materials

In addition to written materials, there are also audio tapes of the Forest dialect at the Institute for Language and Folklore, including recordings made by linguists Israel Ruong (1903–1986) and Olavi Korhonen (1938–).¹⁶ The Saami sections of the Swedish national broadcasting corporations (*Sameradion* and *SVT Sápmi*) have made a few interviews with speakers of the Forest dialect, including SA and LE, at least some of which are deposited at the archive of the Swedish national radio (*Sveriges Radio*).¹⁷ The abovementioned *Ortnamnsregistret* also contains data on local Saami place names, including materials gathered by scholar Edvin Brännström (1902–1979) and by Fahle Alrik Isberg (1909–1977).¹⁸

4. Dialectological notes

In terms of Saami dialectology, the Forest variety has been described as a “typical central dialect” of Lule Saami (Collinder 1938: 3), closely related to the dialects of the neighboring mountain Saami in southern Jiellevárre and northern Jåhkåmåhkke, while also agreeing in some respects with more southern varieties (Collinder 1926: 126, cf. 1953: 64).¹⁹ Considering the dearth of modern data available on the Forest dialect, this section describes some of the most salient features of the variety, focusing on traits that differ—or could be expected to differ—from the Lule Saami literary standard language as regards vocalism (4.1), consonantism (4.2), morphology (4.3), morphosyntax (4.4) and lexicon (4.5).

4.1 Vocalism

The most distinctive feature of the Forest dialect is undoubtedly its *ě*-inducing umlaut, a phonological process causing the counterpart of a Standard Lule

¹⁶ I have not yet had the opportunity to make any detailed studies of these recordings, but see notes 32 and 37.

¹⁷ In 2013, I was employed by the Swedish radio with the task of digitizing their Saami archive materials. While these recordings contain spontaneous speech in all Saamic languages spoken in Sweden, most of them are not publically available and have, to the best of my knowledge, not been utilized for the purpose of linguistic research (cf. Siegl 2017: 254, Note 3); see however Note 29.

¹⁸ Despite briefly doing work for the Swedish place name committee (*Ortnamnskommittén*), Isberg did not pursue a career in academia, but worked at the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* from the 1940s until his retirement. During the Second World War, he took an active role in supporting the Norwegian resistance movement (see the obituary in *Dagens Nyheter*, May 20, 1977).

¹⁹ Collinder’s use of the term “central” should not be confused with the Central dialect of Lule Saami, as later defined by Sammallahiti (1998: 21–22).

Saami *a* in a stressed syllable to be realized as *ě* if the following nucleus is either *i* or *u*. This process affects simplex lexemes, e.g., SA, LE *běssti* ‘spoon’, *běktu* ‘via’ (standard *bassti*, *baktu*), as well as derived words, e.g., *ěkti* ‘once’ (standard *akti*) < *akta* ‘one’. The raising is also present in the inflection, e.g., SA, LE *běssiv* fry.PST.1SG (standard *bassiv*), cf. *basset* ‘to fry’; *běrgguj* work.SG.ILL (standard *bargguj*), cf. *barggo* ‘work’.²⁰ For a further description of this umlaut in the Forest dialect, see Collinder (1938: 60–64); for a historical-comparative study of the phenomenon, based on the materials of Wiklund and Collinder, see Wickman (1965).²¹

It should be pointed out that on two accounts, Sammallahti’s (1998: 21–22) classification of the Forest dialect is at odds both with my own data and with Collinder’s description of the variety. First, Sammallahti states that a second syllable long *á* is not subject to labial vowel harmony, i.e., not being realized as long *ā* when the nucleus of the preceding syllable is a short *á*. This is not the case in my data (e.g., SA, LE *álmāj* ‘man’, LE *gādāj* corral.SG.ILL, SA *bāhtjām* milk.PST.PTCP), nor in Collinder’s materials (1938: 57–58).²²

Second, Sammallahti claims that the Forest dialect has retained the opposition between *ä* and *ie* before a second syllable *e*, unlike in more southern dialects of Lule Saami where the two vowels have collapsed into *ie* in this position. On the contrary, the Forest dialect is also subject to this development, e.g., SA, LE *giergge* ‘stone’, *tjiehtje* ‘father’s brother’ (cf. Collinder 1938: 58–59).²³

²⁰ Notably, I have heard this umlaut even in the foreign place name SA SG.ELA *Gárasěvvunis* (North Saami *Gárasavvon*, Sw. *Karesuando*). The only exception to this rule in my data is the form SA *šaljijuj* yard.SG.ILL, instead of expected **šěljijuj*. In the texts of Lindgren, there is a form *vatti* give.PST.3SG (OL 1912: 3) in addition to forms with expected umlaut (cf. SA, LE *věttij* id.); see also Kejonen (2021a: 27, Note 3). Wiklund’s notebooks contain a few forms without umlaut, e.g., *älūtš* ‘western’, *ävūctis* (KBW 1895 II), PL.NOM *avuotisā* ‘reindeer harness’ (KBW 1895 I, speaker from Hiergáhpe); see also the exceptions discussed by Collinder (1938: 61–64). Note additionally that at least three words that have a first syllable *a* in Standard Lule Saami have *á* in my data, thus being exempt of umlaut: SA, LE *áktu* ‘alone’, *bákkoj* : *bággu-* ‘hazel grouse’, SA *rábo* : *ráhpuga-* ‘glove’ (standard *aktu*, *bakkoj* : *baggu-*, *rabo* : *rahpuga-*), see further Collinder (1938: 66–69).

²¹ In addition to the comparisons with other Saamic varieties made by Wickman, it can be noted that a strikingly similar vowel alternation is attested in eastern North Saami as well (Sammallahti 1998: 188).

²² One exception to this rule is the loanword LE *sámá*, ATTR *sámás* ‘nice’ (cf. Meänkieli *soma* id.). For the sake of completeness, it should also be pointed out that for one of the speakers interviewed by Wiklund, an etymologically long *á* is not subject to labial vowel harmony, e.g., *kóhtšām* awaken.PST.PTCP, *kóčtšājiv* awaken.PST.1SG, *pórrā* eat.PRS.3SG. An etymologically short *a*, on the other hand, has the quality [o] regardless of whether it is short or long, e.g., *pórrót* eat.INF, *pōrō* eat.CNG (KBW 1895 II). One token of lacking labial vowel harmony is also attested in the texts of Lindgren (Kejonen 2021a: 27, Note 8).

²³ This development is additionally seen even in the place names LE ‘*Gårkkábies*, *áhpe* (lit. ‘ant hill bog’) and LE ‘*Hierg*, *áhpe*, SA SG.ELA ‘*Hierg*, *ábies* (lit. ‘draft reindeer bog’, Sw. *Härkmyran*) in which the first elements *gårkkábiesse* ‘ant hill’ and *hiergge* ‘draft reindeer’ have lost their final syllables (cf. Spiik 1989: 102). Note further that Collinder (1938: 59) states that

Traits that differentiate the Forest dialect from the written standard language include a lack of labial vowel harmony in words where the consonant center is a cluster beginning with *v*, e.g., SA *båvnnä* ‘tussock’, *åvtav* one.SG.ACC, *åvddal*, LE *åvddala* ‘before’, SA, LE *skåvlla* ‘school’ (standard *båvnnä*, *åvtåv*, *åvddål*, *åvddåla*, *skåvllå*).²⁴

Further unlike the standard language, the diphthong *oa* is subject to umlaut also when preceding a consonant center in Grade III, e.g., SA, LE *ådtjum* receive.PST.PTCP, SA *åhppiv* learn.PST.1SG (standard *oadtjum*, *oahppiv*). For the front vowel *ä*, I have noted the umlauted forms SA *eddnū* : *eddnū* ‘mother’s brother’, *bejsstum* get.ruined.PST.PTCP and LE *hehttu* must.PRS.2SG before a Grade III consonant (standard *änoj* : *äddnu*-, *bäjsstum*, *hähttu*), but also SA *gähttijiv* look.PST.1SG (standard *id.*), without expected umlaut.

The Forest dialect has retained *ä* in monosyllabic stems and before a second syllable *a*, unlike in the standard language where there is a long *e* instead (except before a consonant center in Grade III), e.g., SA, LE *lä* ‘be’, *bäna* ‘dog’, LE *gärmaj* ‘snake’ (standard *le*-, *bena*, *germaj*). As in the standard language, an older *oa* can be pronounced more or less as a monophthong *ä* in the corresponding environment, e.g., SA, LE *māj* ‘we (two)’ (cf. Collinder 1938: 71). On occasion, I have, however, also noted a slight diphthong *oa*, e.g., SA *soahpap* agree.PRS.1PL (standard *sāhpap*).

4.2 Consonantism

The Forest dialect has lost the affricates *ts* /ts/ and *dtš* /dz/ through merger with *tj* /tʃ/ and *dtj* /dʒ/ respectively, e.g., SA, LE *tjiellå* bark.PRS.3SG, LE *boatjoj* ‘reindeer’ (standard *tsiellå*, *boatsoj*), SA *vådtjet* ‘to walk’, LE *vådtjiv* walk.PST.1SG (standard *vådtset*, *vådtšiv*); note, however, the geographical variation documented by Collinder (1938: 49–50, cf. Kejonen 2021a: 25). These mergers have also taken place in some other varieties of Lule Saami (Angéus Kuoljok 1997: 25, Korhonen 1979: 544; cf. Halász 1892: 258).²⁵

forms with retained *ä* are only sporadically found in the neighboring Unna Tjerusj dialect. In my material on that dialect, I have noted forms with *ä* for both interviewed speakers, e.g., *äddne* ‘mother’, *bävde* ‘table’, *gässeskåvlla* ‘summer school’ (see also Angéus Kuoljok 1997: 45 and Sammallahti 1998: 21). In the word for ‘stone’, however, I have noted different forms for the two speakers: *gärgge* (with retained *ä*) and *giergge* (*ie* < *ä*).

²⁴ In Lindgren’s texts from Stuur Sávvva (OL 1912) there are forms such as *åutalatja* ‘a little bit before’ and *jåula* ‘Christmas’, but also *åuftåv* one.SG.ACC and *åuftå=k* one.SG.ACC=NPM. Collinder (1938: 57) has noted the place name *põuno-sīta* (Sw. *Böträsk*) as an exception to this rule. I have tentatively noted the name of this village as SA *Båvnnō*, LE SG.INE *Båvnon* (cf. Meänkieli *Pounu* id.) and the nearby river as SA, LE *Båvnoädnō*; cf. also Wiklund’s form *Põunō-jaure* ‘Böträsk’ (KBW 1895 I).

²⁵ I have for instance noted the same innovation in Unna Tjerusj (e.g., *båhtjám* remain.PST.PTCP, standard *båhtsám*). This trait is further found in Čohkkiras North Saami; see also the

A conservative trait of both interviewed speakers is the retention of word-final *-tj*, e.g., in the reflexive pronoun SA *ietj* ‘oneself’ and in the nouns *sānjátj* ‘grainy snow’, *gieratj* (bird species, Sw. *spillkråka* ‘black woodpecker’) and SA, LE *niejdagutj* ‘little girl’ (standard *iesj*, *sānjásj*, *gierasj*, *niejdagusj*). Especially in connected speech, forms with a final fricative are however also attested, e.g., SA, LE *iesj*, *niejdagusj*, *ulmusj* : *ulmmu-* ‘person’ (standard *ulmusj* : *ulmutja-*); see also Collinder (1938: 55).²⁶

Both speakers have retained the opposition between consonant centers of the kind *jgg* [j^hk] and *jkk* [j^hhk], e.g., SA, LE *lájgge* ‘yarn’ vs. *lájkke* ‘lazy’ (standard id.), unlike some other varieties of Lule Saami, and unlike one of the speakers interviewed by Collinder (1930: 7; 1938: 48–49, cf. Angéus Kuoljok 1997: 53, Lagercrantz 1941: 306, Qvigstad 1925: 19).²⁷

There is also a retained opposition between consonant centers such as *hpp* and *pp* in cases where some other varieties have neutralized this opposition (Sammallahti 1998: 22, Angéus Kuoljok 1997: 53), e.g., SA *oahppá* learn.PRS.3SG vs. *oappáv* sister.SG.ACC (standard id.). Similarly, the Forest dialect has retained the opposition between consonant centers of the kind *tt* and *ht* (cf. Sammallahti 1998: 22), e.g., LE *Vuottas* (place name) vs. *muohta* ‘snow’ (standard id.).

As in some other varieties (and, optionally, in the standard language), the clusters *ppt* and *pptj* (including older *ppts*) have developed into *bdd* [b^ht] and *btj* [b^htj] in words such as SA *såbddå* ‘foam’, *vuobdda* ‘hair’, *gábdde* (a traditional Saami garment), LE *sjubttjasijt* story.PL.ACC (standard *supptsasijt* ~ *subttsasijt*).²⁸ An exception to this rule is however the adverb SA *ruopptot* ‘back’ (see also the variation documented by Collinder 1938: 131–132).²⁹

Another noteworthy feature of the Forest dialect is the presence of an epenthetic vowel in the strong grade of the consonant center written *llj* in the

corresponding developments in varieties of Ume Saami (Larsson 2012: 118, Hansegård 1988: 318) and South Saami (e.g., Magga & Mattsson Magga 2012: 17).

²⁶ The latter word is also used as a generic pronoun ‘one’, likely influenced by Swedish *man* ‘man; one’ (Juutinen & Mettovaara 2021: 115–116), e.g., SA *ulmusj má vajálduhtá* [person.SG.NOM DPT forget.PRS.3SG] ‘one forgets’.

²⁷ In one word, I have noted the consonant center *jdd* instead of expected *jtt*: SA *skájdde* (bird species, Sw. *fjällabb* ‘long-tailed jaeger’), cf. Standard Lule Saami *skájtti* id. (in northern Jiellevárre also documented with a final *-e*, Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *skai’hti*). This pronunciation can be attributed to a folk etymological connection with the word *skájdde* ‘land where two rivers meet’—according to SA, the tail of the bird in question looks like two rivers meeting (cf. Ryd 2017: 29).

²⁸ Collinder has noted this word with an initial *s-*, just as in the standard language: *suptjas*, PL.NOM *subtjas* ‘story’ (1938: 114). Both of the interviewed speakers however have an initial *sj-* instead: SA, LE *sjubtjas*, likely due to distant assimilation to the postalveolar affricate *tj*.

²⁹ This word is not attested in the corpus, but occurs in a radio interview with SA concerning the sacrificial site of Unna Sájjva, Sw. *Lillsaivis* (Heikki 2021).

standard language, e.g., SA, LE *vielja* [vielʲja] ‘brother’ (standard *viellja*, without an epenthetic vowel).³⁰

A few sound changes documented by Collinder in part of the Forest dialect area are not attested in my data. These changes include the loss of *sj* /ʃ/ through merger with *s* /s/ (also documented by Wiklund) and the loss of *nj* /ɲ/ through merger with *n* /n/ (Collinder 1938: 50–51).³¹ Rather, both *sj* and *nj* are retained, e.g., LE *rássjodit* ‘to rain’, *njunnje* ‘nose’ (standard id.), SA *njuovtjam gæssjku* [tongue.SG.NOM stiffen.PRS.3SG] ‘the tongue stiffens (when one does not speak Saami regularly)’ (standard *njuovtjav gassjku*); see however 4.3 on the illative singular of personal pronouns.

Collinder also reports a uvular pronunciation of *r* (UPA *ɣ*) for several speakers of the Forest dialect (1938: 13; 1930: 9). Both of the interviewed speakers have alveolar [r], but when asked about uvular rhotics, LE remembered that people from the nearby village Suobbat had this trait both when speaking Saami and Swedish (cf. Källskog 1992: 119).³²

4.3 Morphology

Questions of verb morphology will be treated in more detail below, but a few notes can be made here on the inflection and derivation of other word classes.

In the singular of personal pronouns, the Forest dialect has inessive forms such as the first person LE *muvn*, SA *muvn* ~ *muvně* [mu:n ~ mu:nɛ] and the

³⁰ The presence of an epenthetic vowel between *l* and *j* clearly shows that *lj* cannot be regarded a single segment in this variety. This is contrary to the analysis of Angéus Kuoljok (1997: 50), who posits a palatal lateral for (Standard) Lule Saami. It should further be noted that this feature is not restricted to the Forest dialect—I have recorded the pronunciation [vielʲja] ‘brother’ also in Unna Tjerusj (as well as in Eastern Čohkkiras North Saami); see also Wiklund (1891: 14), who noted a variation *pelje* ~ *pelʲje* ‘ear’, however without providing any provenance of the example. While the pronunciation with an epenthetic vowel between *l* and *j* was a fait accompli already when Wiklund first documented the Forest dialect in the late 1800s (e.g., *kälʲjē* ‘wide’, KBW 1895 II), the presence of this vowel in Unna Tjerusj is a fairly recent development—older records show forms without such a vowel, e.g., *vèllja* ‘brother’ (Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *vielʲja*). Potentially, the pronunciation with an epenthetic vowel could be due to influence from Meänkieli, where an epenthetic vowel can be found in the corresponding cluster (see, e.g., Airila 1912: 42). On the other hand, forms with an epenthetic vowel are also attested far south of the Meänkieli speaking area, e.g., Pite Saami *věäʲlʲja* ‘brother’ (Lagercrantz 1939, §8677:3). For a detailed study of the epenthetic vowel in Lule Saami, see Larsson (1991).

³¹ Both of these developments may be due to language contact—Meänkieli only distinguishes one sibilant, *s* /s/, in native vocabulary, and none of the co-territorial languages has a palatal nasal phoneme. The merger of *š* /ʃ/ with *s* /s/ in Duortnus (Torne) North Saami may also have been induced by contact with Meänkieli (cf. Lagercrantz 1941: 283; 1958: 167, Hansegård 1967: 96; 1988: 231, 321, Bergsland 1992: 13).

³² In a recording of a speaker of Lule Saami and Meänkieli from Suobbat, made in 1985 (DAUM BD 5070), I have noted uvular [ɣ] for both languages. See also Grundström (1946–54: 1696) on this trait in Lule Saami; cf. Halász (1886: 4; 1891: V), Hasselbrink (1981–85: 57; 1944: 119) and Kowalik (2023: 46) on South Saami and Nielsen (1926: 21) on North Saami, as well as Pohjanen (2022: 42) on Meänkieli.

second person SA *duvně* [tu:nɛ] (standard *mujna*, *dujna*), as well as elative forms such as the first person SA, LE *musstě* and the second person SA *dusstě* (standard *mujsta*, *dujsta*). In the illative, there is an *n* corresponding to the palatal *nj* of the standard language: first person SA, LE *muni*, second person SA *duni* (standard *munji*, *dunji*).³³

As in the standard language, the illative plural of parisyllabic nouns has the suffix *-jda*, e.g., SA *gâvi-jda* picture-PL.ILL (on the vocalism of this word, see Section 4.5), LE *sěri-jda* blueberry-PL.ILL (cf. Unna Tjerusj *máná-jdi* child-PL.ILL). Older materials on the Forest dialect show a vacillation between the suffixes *-jn* and *-jna* for the comitative singular of parisyllabic nouns (cf. Wiklund 1915: 27; 1891: 113). The present corpus only features forms in *-jn*, as in the modern standard language, e.g., SA, LE *běstijn* spoon.SG.COM.

In comparative and superlative forms derived from imparisyllabic adjectives, I have noted an *ä* in the penultimate nucleus (corresponding to the short *a* of the standard language), e.g., SA, LE *vuorrasäbbo* ‘older’, *vuorrasämos* : *vuorrasebmusa*- ‘oldest’ (standard *vuorrasabbo*, *vuorrasamos* : *vuorrasabmusa*-). Similarly, there is an *ie* (< *ä*) in the penultimate nucleus of actor nouns derived from imparisyllabic verbs (corresponding to the short *i* of the standard language), e.g., SA *lågäddieddjje*, SG.ILL *lågäddiddjáj* ‘teacher’ (standard *lågäddiddje*, *lågäddiddjáj*); see also Section 6.5. I have heard one token of the caritive derivational suffix *-diebme* ‘-less’ (standard *-dibme*), SA *tjalmediebme* ‘blind’ (lit. ‘eyeless’).

Noteworthy are also the numerals 11–19, which are formed by means of the element *-lâgeně* (lit. ‘on ten’, standard *-lâgenan*), e.g., SA, LE *aktalâgeně* ‘eleven’ < *akta* ‘one’, *guoktělâgeně* ‘twelve’ < *guoktě* ‘two’, cf. SA *něnně* ~ *nanně*, LE *nanně* ‘on’.

4.4 Morphosyntax

While attributive adjectives are generally indeclinable in Lule Saami, one of the interviewed speakers inflects the word *buorre* ‘good’ in agreement with the noun it modifies. For the other speaker, this word has an indeclinable attributive form instead (Table 1). The former speaker agrees in this respect with more northern varieties, whereas the other speaker agrees with more southern dialects, as well as with the standard language (Grundström 1946–54: 1843).

³³ To the best of my knowledge, forms like *muni* and *duni* are not attested in other dialects of Lule Saami; see however the variation *muññe* ~ *munne* 1SG.ILL noted by Lagercrantz (1939, §3688:2) in the North Saami Forest dialect of Juŋgá (Meänkieli *Parkalompolo*). For a discussion on the history of the palatal nasal in the illative singular of personal pronouns, see Wiklund (1896: 282–283), Korhonen (1981: 219–220) and Sammallahti (1998: 76).

Table 1. Partial paradigm of *buorre bāna* ‘good dog’.

	SA	LE
SG.NOM	buorre <i>bāna</i>	buorre <i>bāna</i>
SG.ACC	buorev <i>bādnagav</i>	buorre <i>bādnagav</i>
SG.ELA	buoret <i>bādnagis</i>	buorre <i>bādnagis</i>
ABE	buore <i>bādnagahtá</i>	N/A

This variation in agreement is not restricted to case, but applies to number as well: SA *buore gábmaga* [good.PL.NOM shoe.PL.NOM] ‘good shoes’ vs. LE *buorre bādnaga* [good.ATTR dog.PL.NOM] ‘good dogs’.³⁴

In the Lule Saami standard language, the verb *liĵku-* ‘like’ governs the illative case (Spiik 1989: 97, Wiklund 1915: 110). For both interviewed speakers, however, *liĵku-* generally takes an object in the accusative, as in (1). Interestingly, the corpus also contains one token of this verb governing the elative case (2), agreeing with Meänkieli, where the corresponding verb *tykätä* ‘to like’ similarly governs the elative (see further Kittilä & Ylikoski 2018 on the morphosyntax of verbs meaning ‘like’ in Saamic).

- (1) *bāhtju* *dě* *liĵkuji* **guobbarijt**
 reindeer.PL.NOM DPT like.PRS.3PL mushroom.PL.ACC
 ‘Reindeer like mushrooms.’ (LE)

- (2) *mān* *liĵkuv* **dat** **namás**
 1SG.NOM like.PRS.1SG DEM.SG.ELA name.SG.ELA
 ‘I like that name.’ (LE, elicited)

As seen in (3), the elative can also be used to encode the agent of passive verbs in *-dalla-* (such as *bārādalla-* ‘be bitten’), unlike in the standard language, where the illative is used in this function (Spiik 1989: 98, Wiklund 1915: 110; cf. however Spiik 1989: 99 and Wiklund 1915: 108 on other passives).

³⁴ In the texts of Lindgren, *buorre* ‘good’ is not inflected attributively: *puorre päddait* [good.ATTR bed.PL.ACC] (Stuor Sájvva, OL 1912: 4). Wiklund’s and Collinder’s materials contain no token of this word used attributively. Variation regarding the attributive inflection of *buorre* ‘good’ is also attested in North Saami (Nielsen 1926: 89) and Pite Saami (Lehtiranta 1992: 122); note additionally that there is some variation concerning the inflection of attributive adjectives documented in older descriptions of Lule Saami (Wiklund 1891: 203; 1915: 37–38). See further Rauhala (2013) regarding the history of the attributive inflection of this word (cf. also Stolz 2015: 294).

- (3) *mån* *bädnagis* *bårädëlliv*
 1SG.NOM dog.SG.ELA bite.PASS.PST.1SG
 ‘I was bitten by the dog.’ (SA, elicited)

4.5 Lexicon

The corpus includes a number of names for flora and fauna that appear to be unattested in other varieties of the language: SA *gådtjårásse* (plant species, lit. ‘piss grass’, Sw. *svinmålla* ‘white goosefoot’), *garssatjuojkka* (mosquito species, lit. ‘frozen ground mosquito’, Sw. *tjälmygga* id.), *dihátáj* (bird species, Sw. *sparvuggla* ‘pygmy owl’).³⁵ Noteworthy is also SA, LE *dåmmbå*, SA SG.ACC *dåmbåv* ‘horse’³⁶ and SA *båvna*, SG.ACC *båvnagav* ‘bear’ (derived from *båvnna* ‘tussock’ and used alongside SA *biernna* id.).³⁷ A verb that to my knowledge is not attested in other varieties of Lule Saami is LE *gien'niji* calve.PRS.3PL (cf. Collinder 1938: 59).

An unexpected final vowel is found in the word SA, LE *gávve*, SA PL.ACC *gávvi*, SG.ILL *gávvi* ‘picture’, which has a final *-å* (< *-a*) in most other Lule Saami dialects, but which is attested with *-e* also in Unna Tjerusj (Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *kåvvå*, cf. Aikio 2007: 36–37). Similarly unexpected is the final *-u* of SA *áddju*, SG.GEN *ádj* ‘grandfather (maternal or paternal)’, a parallel form of *áddjá* id.³⁸ A final *-u* is also found in SA *skiru*, SG.ACC *skiruv*, SG.ILL

³⁵ According to SA, the latter name is likely onomatopoeic (cf. also Standard Lule Saami *dihttá* ‘merlin’).

³⁶ Both speakers consider this word more correct than the loanword *hässta* id. (cf. Sw. *häst*). SA further states that he has seen this word in “an old book”, likely referring to the history textbook of Odhner in the so-called “South Lappish Book Language” (“sydlapska bokspråket”), where forms such as *tåmp* ‘horse’, SG.GEN *tåmpen* are found (1878: 97); cf. South Saami *dåâmhpē*, *dåâmpe* etc. and Ume Saami *tõm* ‘pə, PL.NOM *tõm* ‘p id. (ULMA 22480). Forms with a stem-final *-å* are attested in the dictionary of Lindahl & Öhrling (1780), e.g., SG.ACC *tåmpåb* (s.v. *swintet*); note also the form *dåmpå*, documented in the speech of the so-called “parish Lapps” in the 1770s (Larsson 2018: 99). In this context it may also be mentioned that the synonym given as *sioms* ‘horse’ by Larsson should read *siomb* instead (see Ihre 105, §1041), cf. e.g., *sjåmp* ‘horse’ (Lindahl & Öhrling 1780: 406); see also the derived word *siombäck* ‘shoe from leg skin of horse’ in the same word list (Larsson 2018: 82).

³⁷ In the dictionary of Grundström, the corresponding word is given as an adjective ‘tussocky’ (1946–54 s.v. *påunåk*). The meaning ‘bear’ is however also attested in older sources on Lule Saami (Wiklund 1890 s.v. *pounok*; Drake 1918: 327). In older records of the Forest dialect, the name of the mythological ogre *stållo* is also attested in the meaning ‘bear’: *stállō* ‘bear’ (Sádimvárre, ULMA 15927: 76, 79), *stållo* id. (Suobbat, DAUM BD 5070); cf. Drake (1918: 327) and Grundström (1946–54 s.v. *stállō*). Here a parallel can be noted between Lule Saami on the one hand, and the eastern Saamic languages Skolt Saami, Akkala Saami and Kildin Saami on the other: in the latter languages, a word corresponding to Lule Saami *stållo* is similarly attested in the meaning ‘bear’ (Itkonen 1958: 519–520, 1069 s.v. *stállō*). It should however be added that neither SA nor LE knows the word *stållo* in the meaning ‘bear’, but only in its mythological sense.

³⁸ Although SA says *áddju* himself, he also describes this form as “children’s language”, the regular form being *áddjá*. Here it can also be noted that Collinder translates the corresponding

skiruj ‘magpie’ (standard *skiri* ~ *skirri*). Further slightly different from the standard language is SA, LE *rávnne*, SA SG.ACC *rávnnev*, SG.ILL *rávnnejá* ‘rowan’ (standard *rávnno*) and SA, LE *Svieri*, LE SG.ILL *Svierij* ‘Sweden’ (standard *Svierik*, see also the synonym *Ruoha* below). An unetymological cluster *pps* is seen in the word SA *idedisguoppsun* dawn.SG.INE, standard *-guoksun* (cf. Wiklund 1891: 144, Qvigstad 1925: 15).

A couple of words explicitly noted by Collinder (ULMA 15927: 83–84) as missing in Sádinvárre are attested in my data, including *vinndek* ‘window’ (SA SG.ELA *vinndegis*) and *gárránis* ‘raven’ (SA SG.INE *gárránisán*).³⁹ For one word, I have noted a different meaning as compared to the standard language: SA *bierre* ‘cousin’ (standard ‘relative’).

The lexicon of the Forest dialect is further characterized by a number of loanwords from Finnish/Meänkieli that to my knowledge are not attested further south, including LE *gis’sē*, SG.ACC *gissev* ‘cat’; *bihe*, SG.INE *bihen*, SG.ILL *biháj* ‘yard (of a house)’; SA *buvrrō*, SG.ACC *buvrov* ‘oatmeal’; *gáhto*, SG.GEN *gádo* ‘roof’; *sádne*, PL.NOM *sáne* ‘word’ (but cf. Lagercrantz 1939, §1893:4) and *vielín*, SG.ACC *vielínáv* ‘apron’ (cf. Meänkieli *kissa*, *piha*, *puuro*, *katto*, *sana*, *vyölinä* id.). Noteworthy in this context is also LE *Ruoha*, SG.INE *Ruohan*, SG.ILL *Ruohaj* ‘Sweden’ (cf. dialectal Finnish *ruoŕŕi*, Korhonen 1981: 161), which judging from its consonantism may have been mediated via Čohkkiras North Saami *Ruoha* id. (see Collinder 1938: 136–137 on the development of **ŕ* [θ] in the Forest dialect; other words in the data reflecting this sound are SA, LE *rahte*, SA SG.ACC *rahtev* ‘road’ and SA, LE *muodá*, SG.ACC *muodáv* ‘mother’s sister’, cf. Kejonen 2020: 48).⁴⁰

Further, the Forest dialect shows several borrowings from local Swedish varieties, including SA, LE *fielistit*, PST.PTCP *fielistam* ‘travel’, cf. Överkalix

form *áđju* simply as ‘grandfather’ (1938: 65, 102–103), whereas Wiklund translates *áđ’d’u* as ‘grandfather (children’s language)’ in his Forest dialect materials (Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *adju*). The form in *-u* has probably had a wider geographical distribution in the past—while Grundström notes this form as unknown in northern and central Jämkämähkke, Wiklund (1890: 1) has documented it also in northern Jämkämähkke: *áđu* ‘grandfather (children’s language)’, cf. *adjo* ‘great grandfather’ (“farfars far”) (Drake 1918: 221). Note additionally that the form *áddjá* also has the meaning SA, LE ‘thunder’ (e.g., LE *áddjá manná* [thunder.SG.NOM go.PRS.3SG] ‘it thunders’), as well as SA ‘large person (man or woman)’.

³⁹ As told by SA this bird has a white lucky feather which, if obtained, can aid its owner in finding lost objects (cf. Bartens 2022: 36–37 and references therein, see also Grundström 1929: 72, Labba 1969: 90–91 and Ryd 2007: 246–248; 2017: 170). In other varieties of Lule Saami, this feather is known as *lievedälge* (Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *lievē-(lāvē)-tāl’kē*). From my father, born in Buornna (Meänkieli *Purnu*) in 1944, I have heard the Meänkieli term *noitakynä* in the same meaning (“if you have that feather, you do well in court”). Neither of these terms was however recognized by SA. Note, finally, that while some dictionaries translate *gárránis* as ‘crow’ (Korhonen 2005, Kintel 2012 s.v.), the latter bird is referred to by SA as *vuoratjīs*.

⁴⁰ Also worth mentioning is SA, LE *těľfoarnna* ‘telephone’, with an unexpected consonant cluster *rnn* : *rn* [r̥n : ɾ̥n] (cf. Standard Swedish *telefon*, Standard Lule Saami *těľfävnnä*). A corresponding form is however attested in Meänkieli (OMSM s.v. *telefoorni*).

variety *feiLes* id. (ÖKM s.v. *färdas*, Pihl 1948: 54–55) and *flihttjit*, PST.1SG *flihttijiv* ‘drive logs’, cf. Överkalix variety *fLiTi* : *fLittje* ‘move; drive logs’ (ÖKM s.v. *flytta*, Pihl 1948: 54–55).⁴¹ Also belonging to this category is the word SA *iru*, SG.INE *irun*, SG.ILL *iruj* ‘backwater’, cf. Överkalix variety *iro* id. (ÖKM s.v. *eda*, Pihl 1924: 90; see also Kejonen 2022: 121, 123).

As in other Saamic varieties spoken in Sweden, there are also recent Standard Swedish loanwords in the Forest dialect, e.g., SA *sjyllta* ‘(road) sign’, *te,vea* ‘television’ (cf. Swedish *skylt*, *tv* id.). It should however be noted that both interviewed speakers express negative attitudes towards loanwords and appear to make a conscious effort to avoid obvious loans. For instance, SA explicitly shunned the loanwords *kujnna* ‘woman’ and *’fun,dierit* ‘to ponder’ (cf. Swedish *kvinna*, *fundera* id.), favoring the synonyms *nissun* and *ájádallat* instead.⁴²

5. Inflectional verb morphology

In this section, the inflectional verb morphology of the Lule Saami Forest dialect is described, starting with the identification of inflectional stems (5.1) and inflectional classes (5.2). Then, the inflectional categories of finite verbs (person, number, tense, mood) and the suffixes of these forms are presented (5.3). Section 5.4 describes the non-finite forms attested in the corpus, as well as their respective suffixes. The next three sections (5.5–5.7) describe the inflection of lexical verbs: parisyllabic verbs, imparisyllabic verbs and contracted verbs (on these terms, see 5.2). Sections 5.8 and 5.9 describe the inflection of non-lexical verbs: *lä-* ‘be’ and the negative auxiliary. Finally, in Section 5.10, the highly irregular negation of *lä-* ‘be’ is presented. Before proceeding to the finer details of the verb inflection in this variety, it might however be useful to give examples of the morphological and morphophonological processes relevant for the remainder of the paper.

In Lule Saami, inflectional forms can be encoded both by means of suffixes and by stem-internal processes. These processes are exemplified below, where

⁴¹ Considering its vocalism, the former word may be a borrowing separate from southern Lule Saami and Pite Saami *fielastit* id. (Korhonen 2005, Wilbur 2016 s.v., Ruong 1943: 191), Ume Saami *fielastidh* id. (Bergsland & Hasselbrink 1957: 72) etc.

⁴² Ironically, *ájádallat* ‘to think, ponder’ is also a loanword (cf. Meänkieli *ajatella* id.). On several occasions, I was told off by SA for using loanwords when speaking Saami. For instance, he did not approve of me using the (North Saami) words *hoahppu* ‘hurry’ and *ipmirdit* ‘to understand’ (cf. Meänkieli *hoppu*, *ymmärtää* id.). I was also rebuked for using the word *čielgi* ‘back’, which he perceived as a loan from Meänkieli *selkä* id. (for the record, it should however be pointed out that *čielgi* is not a borrowing, but a cognate of *selkä*). Instead of these—actual or presumed—loanwords, he preferred the words *ráhito* ‘hurry’, *dádjadit* ‘to understand’ and *tjavelk* ‘back’, which he regarded as more correct.

the verb *boahte-* ‘come’ is inflected by the use of a suffix (4a), consonant gradation (4b) and stem-final vowel alternation (4c) respectively; the latter process may also induce umlaut in the penultimate nucleus of the stem, as shown in (4d). Several of these processes may further be applied simultaneously, as in (4e).

- | | |
|---|---|
| (4a) <i>boahte-p</i>
come-PRS.1PL
‘we come’ | (4b) <i>boade</i>
come.IMP.2SG
‘come!’ |
| (4c) <i>boah^{tá}</i>
come.PRS.3SG
‘s/he comes’ | (4d) <i>b^ähti</i>
come.PRS.3PL
‘they come’ |
| (4e) <i>b^ädi-jma</i>
come-PST.1PL
‘we came’ | |

While the resulting system yields a significant number of stem allomorphs, it should be pointed out that all lexical verbs in Lule Saami have regular inflection—there are, for instance, no cases of suppletion for lexical verbs.

5.1 Inflectional stem

Lexical verbs in Lule Saami are divided into three inflectional classes: parisyllabic verbs, imparisyllabic verbs and contracted verbs (see further 5.2). The inflectional stem of parisyllabic and imparisyllabic verbs is retrieved by removing the suffix *-t* from the infinitive (which also functions as the citation form of verbs), e.g., *goarro-t* sew-INF ‘to sew’, *vuojadi-t* swim-INF ‘to swim’. Contracted verbs have two inflectional stems. The shorter of these two stems is the one preceding the infinitive marker, e.g., *li^jkk^u-t* like-INF ‘to like’. The longer stem is characterized by an element *ji-*, which appears in certain inflectional forms, e.g., *li^jkk^uji-n* like-PST.3PL ‘they liked’. The longer stem is identical to the third person plural present, as well as to the second person singular past, e.g., *li^jkk^uji* like.PRS.3PL ‘they like’ (= like.PST.2SG ‘you liked’). The copula verb, which also functions as an auxiliary, has several inflectional stems (see 5.8); in this paper, I refer to this verb by its present indicative stem *lä-* ‘be’ (cf. Wiklund 1891: 268, Grundström 1946–54: 1887). The negative auxiliary verb similarly has several stem allomorphs (see 5.9), but lacks a convenient citation form.

A number of alternative analyses regarding the segmentation of Lule Saami verbs could potentially be put forward. For instance, it would from a synchronic perspective be possible to regard the *ji*-element of *lijkkujin* ‘they liked’ as belonging to the inflectional suffixes rather than to the stem (i.e., segmenting *lijkkuji-n* like-PST.3PL as *lijkku-jin* instead); this approach is favored in some pedagogical materials on Lule Saami (see, e.g., Spiik 1989: 66). In the present study, however, I have opted for that analysis which renders the system of suffixes as economical as possible—while the abovementioned analysis would reduce the stem allomorphy slightly, it would greatly increase the number of allomorphs for inflectional suffixes instead.

5.2 Inflectional classes

The vast majority of Lule Saami verbs belong to the large and open group of lexical verbs, all of which have a regular inflection. In addition to these verbs, there are also two non-lexical verbs, both of which have irregular inflection (including suppletion): *lä-* ‘be’ and the negative auxiliary. These two non-lexical verbs differ morphologically from lexical verbs in several respects, in addition to their irregular inflection. Whereas all lexical verbs are polysyllabic, the non-lexical verbs have a monosyllabic stem in several inflectional forms. The verb *lä-* ‘be’ is further unique in being inflected for the conditional mood (but see 6.3), and the negative auxiliary is unique in lacking non-finite forms altogether. The morphological criteria used to distinguish lexical and non-lexical verbs are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Features of lexical and non-lexical verbs.

	Lexical verbs	<i>lä-</i> ‘be’	NEG
Monosyllabic stem	–	+	+
Irregular inflection	–	+	+
Conditional forms	–	+	–
Non-finite forms	+	+	–

Turning then to the lexical verbs, three main inflectional classes can be discerned using morphological criteria. In the following, I use the traditional labels for these classes, that is, “parisyllabic verbs” (with an even number of syllables), “imparisyllabic verbs” (with an odd number of syllables) and “contracted verbs” (with an alternating number of syllables); see, e.g., Spiik (1989: 65) and the verb paradigms in Grundström (1946–54: 1847–1918). Note that the terms “parisyllabic” and “imparisyllabic” refer to the final stress group of the inflectional stem, and not necessarily to the total number of

syllables of a verb (on the stress group in Saami, see Sammallahti 1998: 39).⁴³ The term “contracted verb” refers to the fact that the longer stem of these verbs (see 5.1, 5.7) is the original from a historical point of view, whereas the shorter (or “contracted”) stem is a later development.⁴⁴ In the following, a brief characterization of the three inflectional classes is given.

- **Parisyllabic verbs** are both the most common and the morphologically most complex, employing not only suffixes, but also consonant gradation and stem-final vowel alternations—often with ensuing umlaut in the penultimate nucleus—as a means of encoding different inflectional forms. Most parisyllabic verbs in the corpus are disyllabic (e.g., *goarro-* ‘sew’), but there are also some tetrasyllabic verbs belonging to this class (e.g., the derived *bārādalla-* ‘be bitten; be eaten’ < *bārrå-* ‘eat’ and *biebbmagoahte-* ‘begin to feed’ < *biebbma-* ‘feed’). Note that only the final two syllables of a tetrasyllabic verb, i.e., the final stress group, is relevant for inflection. For instance, *bārādalla-* inflects identically to the disyllabic verb *balla-* ‘be afraid’ as regards consonant gradation, stem-final vowel alternations, umlaut and suffixes. Similarly, *biebbmagoahte-* inflects identically to disyllabic *boahte-* ‘come’.⁴⁵ Parisyllabic verbs are further divided into three subclasses on the basis of their respective final nucleus: *a*-stem verbs (including *å*-stem verbs, see below), *e*-stem verbs and *o*-stem verbs. The subclasses are subject to different stem-final vowel alternations.
- **Imparisyllabic verbs** lack consonant gradation, but have a small degree of stem-final vowel alternations. Unlike parisyllabic verbs, however, the vowel alternations of this class do not cause umlaut. All imparisyllabic verbs in the corpus have a trisyllabic stem. Many imparisyllabic verbs are derived, e.g., *sámásti-* ‘speak Saami’ < *sábme* ‘Saami’.
- **Contracted verbs** lack consonant gradation, but have stem-final vowel alternations in the third person singular present in this

⁴³ For instance, despite having five syllables, the verb *‘rássjodasj.goahte-* ‘begin to rain’ (Korhonen 2005 s.v.) inflects as a parisyllabic verb, as its final stress group is disyllabic.

⁴⁴ For the parisyllabic verbs *goarro-* ‘sew’ and *oadtjo-* ‘receive’, Wiklund (1891: 235, 260, 263) lists forms identical to those of contracted verbs alongside the expected disyllabic forms, e.g., *kōrun ~ kōruyn* sew.PST.3PL, *ožuuv ~ ožuyiv* receive.PST.1SG. Notably, however, such forms are absent in later descriptions of the language, including the textbook of Wiklund himself (1901, 1915).

⁴⁵ In fact, Kuokkala (2019) convincingly argues that the inchoative suffix *-goahte-* stems from (the predecessor of) the verb *boahte-* ‘come’ (cf. Ylikoski 2009: 127).

variety. Verbs of this class are characterized by having two inflectional stems: one disyllabic and one trisyllabic, e.g., *lieggi-* : *lieggiji-* ‘heat’. The final nucleus of a contracted verb is *á*, *i* or *u* (on contracted verbs in *ǣ-*, see below). Contracted verbs are not as common as parisyllabic or imparisyllabic verbs, and many verbs belonging to this class are derived, e.g., *dål’li-* ‘make fire’ < *dállå* ‘fire’, *gávnnu-* ‘exist’ < *gávnnu-* ‘find’.

The criteria used to distinguish the different inflectional classes of lexical verbs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Features of lexical verb classes.

	Pari-syllabic	Impari-syllabic	Contracted
Syllables in final stress group	two	three	two : three
Stem-final vowel	<i>a</i> (<i>ǣ</i>), <i>e</i> , <i>o</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>á</i> , <i>i</i> , <i>u</i>
Consonant gradation	+	–	–
Examples	<i>manna-</i> ‘go’ <i>áddidalla-</i> ‘imitate’ <i>bárrå-</i> ‘eat’ <i>boahte-</i> ‘come’ <i>vuodjgoahte-</i> ‘begin to drive’ <i>goarro-</i> ‘sew’	<i>gěnnugi-</i> ‘stop’ <i>ságasti-</i> ‘talk’	<i>ǣl’lá-</i> : <i>ǣl’láji-</i> ‘regain vigor’ <i>lieggi-</i> : <i>lieggiji-</i> ‘heat’ <i>gávnnu-</i> : <i>gávnnuji-</i> ‘exist’

Note that in Lule Saami, there is limited labial vowel harmony. If the vowel of a stressed syllable is a short *ǣ*, then an older *a* in the following syllable is also realized as *ǣ*, e.g., *lǣhkǣ-* ‘read’ (cf. North Saami *lohka-* id.). This phonological process is completely predictable, and verbs with a stem ending in *ǣ-* are consequently treated here as belonging to the subclass of *a*-stem verbs. Similarly, an older *á* is realized as *ǣ* if the nucleus of the preceding syllable is *ǣ* (cf. Section 4.1). While this phonological rule implies the existence of contracted verbs in *ǣ-*, reflecting an older *á-*, no clear instance of such a verb is attested in the corpus. Further, when presented with inflected forms of *ǣ*-stem verbs (*jǣh̥ttǣjin* begin.to.migrate.PST.3PL, *gǣh̥ttǣjiv* awaken.PST.1SG), SA did not seem to recognize them.⁴⁶ Consequently, more

⁴⁶ For the meaning ‘awaken’, SA preferred either of the verbs *mǣredi-* or *ábbudi-*. I have not been able to find any instance of an *ǣ*-stem verb in the Forest materials of Wiklund, Lindgren or Collinder; see also the forms without labial vowel harmony documented by Wiklund, given

data are needed in order to confirm the existence of $\tilde{a}$ -stem verbs in this variety.

5.3 Finite forms and their suffixes

Finite forms of lexical verbs agree in person (first, second, third) and number (singular, plural) with the subject of a clause, and they are further inflected for tense (present, past) and mood (indicative, imperative); the verb *lä*- ‘be’ is also inflected for the conditional mood (see 5.8).⁴⁷ Not all inflectional categories are mutually compatible: tense is only distinguished in the indicative mood. Further, only second person imperative forms are attested in the corpus. A number of inflectional forms known from previous descriptions of Lule Saami are not attested in the data, including verbs in the dual number, the potential mood and the so-called “imperative II” mood. For a further discussion on these forms, see Section 6.

Table 4. Inflectional suffixes of finite verbs.

		SG	PL
PRS	1	-v	-p
	2	—	-bit, -hpit
	3	—	—
PST	1	-v	-jma, -jmě, -jme
	2	—	-jda, -jdě, -jde
	3	-j	-n
IMP	2	—	-t ⁴⁸

in Note 22. It should be pointed out that $\tilde{a}$ -stem verbs—all which are inchoative derivations—are uncommon even in the varieties of Lule Saami where they do occur. In addition to the above-mentioned *jáhttä*- and *gáhttjä*- (standard *gáhttsä*-), I am aware of only three such forms: *bår'rä*- ‘begin to eat’ (Spiik 1989: 86), *däbdddä*- ‘begin to know’ etc. (Grundström 1946–54 s.v. *täb’tät*) and *lähkkä*- ‘begin to read’ (Kintel 2012 s.v. *lähkkät*).

⁴⁷ Tense and mood can additionally be expressed with periphrastic constructions consisting of a finite form of *lä*- ‘be’ coupled with a non-finite verb. Such constructions include the present perfect (*läv gärrum* [be.PRS.1SG sew.PST.PTCP] ‘I have sewn’), the past perfect (*lědjiv dav vuojnnám* [be.PST.1SG DEM.SG.ACC see.PST.PTCP] ‘I had seen it’), the present progressive (*läv goarromin* [be.PRS.1SG sew.PROG] ‘I am sewing’), the past progressive (*lěj sjivnnjedime* [be.PST.3SG create.PROG] ‘was creating’) and the conditional (*lulun vuojnnet* [be.COND.3PL see.INF] ‘they would see’), all examples from SA. Also attested is a future construction consisting of *lä*- ‘be’ and the supine: SA *lä=k dân manátjit?* [be.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM go.SUP] ‘Are you going?’ (Sw. “Ska du till att fara?”); on this construction, see Ylikoski (2016: 221–226); cf. also Lehtiranta (1992: 103).

⁴⁸ In the Forest dialect, the ending of the second person plural imperative is -t for all inflectional classes. In the modern standard language, however, there is also a longer second person plural ending -htit in the (first) imperative of imparisyllabic and contracted verbs, e.g., *málesti-htit* cook-IMP.2PL, *lieggiji-htit* heat-IMP.2PL. While the latter suffix is used e.g. in the textbook of Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok (2013: 141) and in the New Testament (*Ädä Testamentta*, 2003), it is noteworthy that this ending appears to be lacking in the earlier descriptions of the language

Finite verbs are formed both by adding suffixes and by stem-internal processes (consonant gradation and stem-final vowel alternations). As the non-linear morphology of finite verbs is largely dependent on the respective inflectional class of a verb, these processes are described in sections 5.5–5.9. The suffixes of finite verbs are portmanteau morphemes, which can simultaneously encode person, number, tense and mood. Several forms lack overt suffixes; these forms are indicated by a minus sign (–) in Table 4.⁴⁹

The first person singular suffix *-v* is identical in the present and past tenses; all other person and number suffixes differ in the present and past tenses, as well as in the imperative mood. There is no specific feature in common for the present tense forms, nor for the attested imperative forms. In several forms of the past tense there is an element *-j-*, which corresponds to the Proto-Saamic past tense marker **-j-* (Korhonen 1967: 194–197; 1981: 265–266); this element is however not a productive tense marker.

Most suffixes are identical for all three lexical verb classes. One exception is the suffix of the second person plural present, which has the allomorph *-bit* for parasyllabic and contracted verbs, but *-hpit* for imparisyllabic verbs, e.g., *manna-bit* go-PRS.2PL vs. *gǽnugi-hpit* stop-PRS.2PL. The ending *-bit* goes back to an older disyllabic suffix (Korhonen 1967: 317), cf. Standard Lule Saami *gulla-bihtit* hear-PRS.2PL. Such a disyllabic suffix is documented in the Forest dialect by Wiklund (*kulla-pēčtit* id., KBW 1895 II), as well as by Lindgren (*pivva-pettit* keep.warm-PRS.2PL, OL 1912: 4). In Collinder’s materials, however, I am only aware of forms with the shorter suffix, e.g., *vaddē-pit* give-PRS.2PL (Unna Sájvva, ULMA 15926: 106).

The past plural suffixes of the first and second person have several different allomorphs, ending either in *-ě*, *-e* or *-a*. One of the interviewed speakers consistently uses the allomorphs with a final *-a* (e.g., LE *maná-jma* go-PST.1PL, *sámásti-jma* speak.Saami-PST.1PL, *lě-jma* be-PST.1PL). The other speaker shows considerable variation: for imparisyllabic verbs and *lä-* ‘be’, he gives forms ending in *-e* (e.g., SA *gǽnugi-jme* stop-PST.1PL, *gǽnugi-jde* stop-PST.2PL, *lě-jme* be-PST.1PL, *lě-jde* be-PST.2PL), but for parasyllabic and contracted verbs, both forms with a final *-a* and with a final *-ě* are attested, see Table 5. It should however be noted that the forms with a final *-ě* in my data

made by Spiik (1989), Grundström (1946–54) and Wiklund (1915, 1891), as well as in the previous translation of the New Testament (*Åtå Testamenta*, 1903). Corresponding forms are however found in other Saamic languages, e.g., Pite Saami *málesti-htit* cook-IMP.2PL (Sjaggo 2015: 30, cf. Lehtiranta 1992: 153); see also Korhonen (1967: 324).

⁴⁹ In accordance with the Lule Saami orthography of the time, Lindgren’s texts have a final *-h* in the second person singular and in the third person plural present, as well as in the connegative, see, e.g., example (39) in 6.3.

are only attested in elicitation, and not in spontaneous speech. The conditional has a final *-a*: *lulu-jma* be.COND-1PL, *lulu-jda* be.COND-2PL (cf. Section 5.8).

Table 5. Intraspeaker variation in past tense suffixes (SA).

	<i>manna-</i> 'go'	<i>boahte-</i> 'come'	<i>goarro-</i> 'sew'	<i>dål'li-</i> 'make fire'	<i>lieggi-</i> 'heat'	<i>lijkku-</i> 'like'
PST.1PL	<i>maná-</i> <i>jma</i>	<i>bãdi-</i> <i>jma</i>	<i>goaro-</i> <i>jma</i>	<i>dål'li-</i> <i>jmě</i>	<i>lieggi-</i> <i>jma</i>	<i>lijkku-</i> <i>jma</i>
PST.2PL	<i>maná-</i> <i>jda</i>	<i>bãdi-</i> <i>jdě</i>	<i>goaro-</i> <i>jda</i>	<i>dål'li-</i> <i>jdě</i>	<i>lieggi-</i> <i>jda</i>	<i>lijkku-</i> <i>jda</i>

It is possible that this vacillation reflects a former dialectal variation: in Collinder's materials from Sádinvárre, for instance, imparisyllabic verbs have suffixes ending in *-e* and parisyllabic verbs have suffixes in *-a*, e.g., *a'tnalè-ìmè* hold-PST.1PL, *lokō-ìma* read-PST.1PL (1938: 37, 48). In Oajgek (Sw. *Rikti-Dockas*), on the other hand, Collinder has documented long *-e* for imparisyllabic verbs, but short *-ě* for parisyllabic and contracted verbs: *tār'pahè-ìmě* need-PST.1PL, *lokō-ime* read-PST.1PL, *àr^epi-jme* inherit-PST.1PL (ULMA 15926: 78–80).⁵⁰

5.4 Non-finite forms and their suffixes

In addition to finite forms, Lule Saami verbs are inflected for a number of non-finite forms. As non-finites, these forms are distinguished morphologically from their finite counterparts by their lack of inflection for person, number and tense. The following non-finite forms are attested for lexical verbs: the infinitive, the progressive, the past participle, the supine and the connegative.⁵¹ As regards the function of these forms, it can be noted that

⁵⁰ The system with *-e* for imparisyllabic verbs and *-a* for parisyllabic and contracted verbs is also found in Grundström's verb paradigms from Jåhkâmáhkke, whereas the system with *-e* for imparisyllabic verbs and *-ě* for parisyllabic and contracted verbs is found in the mountain dialects of Jiellevárre (Grundström 1946–54: 1847–1918). The latter system is also found, e.g., in the textbook of Wiklund (1915). In the modern standard language, all verb classes have final *-a*, e.g., *sámásti-jma* speak.Saami-PST.1PL, *maná-jma* go-PST.1PL, *lieggi-jma* heat-PST.1PL. Note additionally that for the imparisyllabic verbs quoted above, Collinder has noted a penultimate vowel *è* or *ě* where I have noted *i*, e.g., SA *rádedi-jme* discuss-PST.1PL. In the same position, Wiklund has noted short *ě*: *mälēstě-imē* cook-PST.1PL (KBW 1895 II).

⁵¹ In the research history of Lule Saami, the progressive has varyingly been referred to as the “state form” (Sw. *tillståndsformen*, Spiik 1989: 109), the “second gerund” (Sw. *gerundium II*, Wiklund 1915: 115) or the “bound gerund” (Ger. *Verbundenes Gerundium*, Grundström 1946–54: 1847–1918). Note also that confusingly enough, Lagercrantz (1939: 1207 et passim) refers to this form as the “first gerund” (Ger. *Gerund I*); see also Note 91.

unlike in the standard language, the connegative is the form of a negated verb only in the present tense and in the imperative. In the past tense, the past participle functions as a connegative instead (see Section 5.9). Noteworthy from a comparative perspective is the supine, perhaps most aptly described as a purposive converb (cf. Ylikoski 2016; 2022: 140). While frequent in Lule Saami, this form is largely unproductive in other Saamic languages.⁵²

Apart from being invariant as regards person, number and tense, non-finite forms are generally not inflected for mood. One exception to this rule is however the verb *lä-* ‘be’, which has dedicated connegative forms in the conditional and in the imperative (see Section 5.8).⁵³ The negative auxiliary verb lacks non-finite forms altogether.

Table 6. Suffixes of non-finite verbs.

	Suffix
infinitive (INF)	<i>-t</i>
progressive (PROG)	<i>-min, -me</i>
past participle (PST.PTCP)	<i>-m</i>
supine (SUP)	<i>-tjit, -ttjat, -ttjit</i>
connegative (CNG)	—
passive past participle (PASS.PST.PTCP)	<i>-dum, -um</i>

Non-finites are formed both by means of adding suffixes and by stem-internal processes; the non-linear morphology of these forms is described separately for each inflectional class (5.5–5.8). The suffixes of the infinitive (*-t*) and the past participle (*-m*) are identical for all three inflectional classes; the connegative lacks a suffix.⁵⁴ The progressive has the ending *-min* for parasyllabic and contracted verbs, and the ending *-me* for imparisyllabic verbs. Similarly, the supine has different allomorphs for different inflectional classes—for parasyllabic and contracted verbs, the ending is *-tjit*; for imparisyllabic verbs, the two interviewed speakers use different suffixes: SA

⁵² The supine also has other uses, e.g., functioning as the complement of an adjective in clauses such as SA *mánná=l buorak lágáttjit* [child.SG.NOM=be.PRS.3SG good.SG.NOM read.SUP] ‘the child is good at reading’ (cf. Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 147); see also the future construction mentioned in Note 47. In addition to Lule Saami, the supine is also productive in Western Čohkkiras North Saami, e.g., *viečča-žit ~ viečča-žik ~ viečča-sit* fetch-SUP. Although rare, it is also attested for parasyllabic verbs in modern Pite Saami, e.g. *stågá-tjit* play-SUP, *tjálá-tjit* write-SUP, *uru-tjit* live-SUP (Joshua Wilbur, p.c.); see also Lehtiranta (1992: 103) and Sjaggo (2015). The supine is very poorly attested in traditional Ume Saami (see Korhonen 1974: 198), but remarkably, it is found in the modern literary language (e.g. *njåmmielub váldá-tjit* [hare.SG.ACC take-SUP] ‘in order to take the hare’, Álgguogáhtie 2022).

⁵³ See also the “imperative II” connegative forms in examples (40) and (41), Section 6.4, documented by Wiklund.

⁵⁴ In Lindgren’s texts, the connegative has a final *-h*, see Note 49.

-*ttjat*, LE -*ttjit* (see further Korhonen 1974: 202 on this variation).⁵⁵ The suffixes of non-finite verbs are given in Table 6.

In addition to the abovementioned non-finite forms, it is also possible to posit a passive past participle, characterized by the suffix *-dum* for parisyllabic and contracted verbs, and *-um* for imparisyllabic verbs (e.g., LE *tjåle-dum* write-PASS.PST.PTCP ‘written’, SA *bidtji-dum* build-PASS.PST.PTCP ‘built’, *gatjost-um* hang-PASS.PST.PTCP ‘hung up’). This form can be used together with the verb *lä-* ‘be’ (5), as well as attributively (6).

- (5) *da* *lědjin* *gåttedum*
 DEM.PL.NOM be.PST.3PL kill.PASS.PST.PTCP
 ‘They (the bears) were killed.’ (SA)
- (6) *dat* *lä* *njålguk,* *basedum*
 DEM.SG.NOM be.PRS.3SG tasty.SG.NOM fry.PASS.PST.PTCP
 bierggo
 meat.SG.NOM
 ‘That’s tasty, fried meat.’ (SA, elicited)

In the Lule Saami standard language, the forms in *-(d)um* co-exist with longer forms, analyzable as past participles of passive verbs in *-(d)uvva-*, e.g., *tjåle-duvva-m* write-PASS-PST.PTCP ‘written’. In my data on the Forest dialect, however, only the synchronically unsegmentable forms in *-(d)um* are attested. These forms are further productive, as evidenced by their occurrence with recent loanwords, e.g., SA *jippsi-dum* put.in.cast-PASS.PST.PTCP ‘put in a cast (about a leg)’, cf. Sw. *gipsad* id.

Finally, a number of non-finites known from previous descriptions of Lule Saami are only poorly attested in my data. On these forms, see Section 6.5.

5.5 Inflection of parisyllabic verbs

Parisyllabic verbs are characterized by a large degree of non-linear morphology. Most notably, these verbs are subject to consonant gradation, a morphophonological process affecting the quantity and/or quality of word-internal consonants and consonant clusters.⁵⁶ This process affects the

⁵⁵ Lindgren has noted a form *låskala-dtjat* hit-SUP in Suobbat (OL 1913), implying a Grade III consonant in the supine suffix (cf. central Jåhkåmåhkke *målēsta-dt’šat* cook-SUP, Grundström 1946–54: 1886).

⁵⁶ Note that in the Forest dialect, the regular reflex of the Proto-Saamic consonant center **ḡ* [ḡ] is a *d* /*t* that is exempt of consonant gradation (cf. Collinder 1938: 135). Consequently, there is a small number of verbs that lack consonant gradation in this variety, e.g., SA, LE *guode-* ‘leave’, *oade-* ‘sleep’, LE *gåde-* ‘knit’. This rule is however not confined to verbs, and it is

consonants between the two final nuclei of the verb stem—compare the forms *boahtá* come.PRS.3SG ‘comes’ and *boadá* come.PRS.2SG ‘you come’ or *ájádělliv* think.PST.1SG ‘I thought’ and *ájádaláv* think.PRS.1SG ‘I think’. Lule Saami consonants and consonant clusters alternate in three absolute grades, labeled Grade I–III (see, e.g., Spiik 1989: 22–29), but for the purposes of this paper, it is sufficient to distinguish between two relative grades: the strong grade and the weak grade.⁵⁷ In the examples above, the cluster *ht* in *boahtá* ‘comes’ is in the strong grade and the single consonant *d* in *boadá* ‘you come’ is in the weak grade; the geminate *ll* in *ájádělliv* ‘I thought’ is in the strong grade and the singleton *l* in *ájádaláv* ‘I think’ is in the weak grade. Table 7 shows the gradation patterns of parisyllabic verbs, indicating the weak grade (WK) and the strong grade (STR).

Table 7. Consonant gradation of parisyllabic verbs.

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	WK	STR	INF	STR
	2	WK	STR	PROG	STR
	3	STR	STR	PST.PTCP	STR
PST	1	STR	WK	SUP	WK
	2	STR	WK	CNG	WK
	3	WK	STR	PASS.PST.PTCP	WK
IMP	2	WK	STR		

Another characteristic feature of parisyllabic verbs is that in a number of forms, the final vowel of the verb stem changes. These stem-final vowel alternations can be quantitative (e.g., short *a* to long *á*), qualitative (e.g., short *a* to short *i*) or both (e.g., long *o* to short *u*). As mentioned above, parisyllabic verbs can be divided into three different subclasses, based on the final nucleus of the inflectional stem: *a*-stem verbs (including *á*-stem verbs), *e*-stem verbs and *o*-stem verbs. These stem-final nuclei are subject to different stem-final vowel alternations.

In many cases, the change of a stem-final vowel causes an umlaut in the preceding nucleus, e.g., SA *děbmuv* glue.PST.1SG ‘I glued’, cf. *damov* glue.PRS.1SG ‘I glue’, *dabmo-* ‘glue’ (for an overview of umlaut in Standard

therefore treated here as a regular part of morphophonology, rather than as an exception in the verb inflection.

⁵⁷ A third relative grade, called the “extra strong” or “overlong” grade, is not relevant for the inflectional forms treated here (see however Collinder 1938: 149). Note further that in Swedish- and Norwegian-language descriptions of Saami, there is a clearer terminological distinction between the absolute and relative grades, with the former being referred to as *grad* ‘grade’ and the latter referred to as *stadium* ‘stage’.

Lule Saami, see Angéus Kuoljok 1997: 45–47; for details concerning the Forest dialect, see Collinder 1938: 57–71). The stem-final vowel alternations of parisyllabic verbs are given in Table 8. Note that the vowel alternations $\bar{a} > \bar{a}$ and $e > \bar{a}$, given in parentheses, are only applicable to verbs in which the penultimate nucleus is $\bar{a}$ (see Section 5.2).

Table 8. Stem-final vowel alternations of parisyllabic verbs.

Stem-final vowel	Form(s)	Example(s)
$a > \acute{a}$ ($\bar{a} > \bar{a}$)	PRS.3SG	<i>manná</i> PRS.3SG < <i>manna</i> - ‘go’ <i>bárrá</i> PRS.3SG < <i>bárrá</i> - ‘eat’
$a > i$	PRS.3PL, PST.1SG, PST.2SG, PST.3PL, IMP.2PL	<i>měnni</i> PRS.3PL < <i>manna</i> - ‘go’
$e > \acute{a}$ ($e > \bar{a}$)	PRS.1SG, PRS.2SG, PRS.3SG, PST.PTCP, SUP	<i>boahtá</i> PRS.3SG < <i>boahte</i> - ‘come’ <i>gáddá</i> PRS.3SG < <i>gádde</i> - ‘kill’
$e > i$	PRS.3PL, all PST forms, IMP.2PL	<i>báhti</i> PRS.3PL < <i>boahte</i> - ‘come’
$o > u$	PRS.3SG, PRS.3PL, PST.1SG, PST.2SG, PST.3PL, IMP.2PL, PST.PTCP, SUP	<i>gárru</i> PRS.3SG < <i>goarro</i> - ‘sew’

In addition to these vowel alternations, there is also a phonological process that is characteristic of Lule Saami, namely the lengthening of a short a to long $\acute{a}$ when the preceding nucleus is stressed and when both the preceding consonant and nucleus are short, e.g., *maná* go.IMP.2SG ‘go!’ < *manna*- ‘go’ (cf. North Saami *mana* id., with a short second syllable a). In stems which are subject to labial vowel harmony (see Section 5.2), short $\bar{a}$ is lengthened to $\bar{a}$, e.g., *bárrá* eat.IMP.2SG ‘eat!’ < *bárrá*- ‘eat’.

In the following tables (9–11), sample paradigms are given for the a -stem verb *manna*- ‘go’, the e -stem verb *boahte*- ‘come’ and the o -stem verb *goarro*- ‘sew’. In those cases where a particular inflectional form is unattested for these three verbs, the corresponding form is given for another verb of the same inflectional subclass.

Table 9. Inflection of the parisyllabic a -stem verb *manna*- ‘go’ (SA).

	SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>maná-v</i> <i>manna-p</i>	INF	<i>manna-t</i>
	2	<i>maná</i> <i>manna-bit</i>	PROG	<i>manna-min</i>
	3	<i>manná</i> <i>měnni</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>manna-m</i>
PST	1	<i>měnni-v</i> <i>maná-jma</i>	SUP	<i>maná-tjit</i>
	2	<i>měnni</i> <i>maná-jda</i>	CNG	<i>maná</i>

	3	<i>maná-j</i>	<i>měnni-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	<i>dagá-dum</i> ⁵⁸
IMP	2	<i>maná</i>	<i>měnni-t</i>		

Table 10. Inflection of the parisyllabic *e*-stem verb *boahte-* ‘come’ (SA).

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>boadá-v</i>	<i>boahte-p</i>	INF	<i>boahte-t</i>
	2	<i>boadá</i>	<i>boahte-bit</i>	PROG	<i>boahte-min</i>
	3	<i>boahtá</i>	<i>bāhti</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>boahtá-m</i>
PST	1	<i>bāhti-v</i>	<i>bādi-jma</i>	SUP	<i>tjálá-tjit</i> ⁵⁹
	2	<i>bāhti</i>	<i>bādi-jdē</i>	CNG	<i>boade</i>
	3	<i>bādi-j</i>	<i>bāhti-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	<i>vuotje-dum</i> ⁶⁰
IMP	2	<i>boade</i> ⁶¹	<i>bāhti-t</i>		

Table 11. Inflection of the parisyllabic *o*-stem verb *goarro-* ‘sew’ (SA).

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>goaro-v</i>	<i>goarro-p</i>	INF	<i>goarro-t</i>
	2	<i>goaro</i>	<i>goarro-bit</i>	PROG	<i>goarro-min</i>
	3	<i>gārru</i>	<i>gārru</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>gārru-m</i>
PST	1	<i>gārru-v</i>	<i>goaro-jma</i>	SUP	<i>gāru-tjit</i>
	2	<i>gārru</i>	<i>goaro-jda</i>	CNG	<i>goaro</i>
	3	<i>goaro-j</i>	<i>gārru-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	<i>goaro-dum</i>
IMP	2	<i>goaro</i>	<i>gārru-t</i>		

5.6 Inflection of imparisyllabic verbs

Compared to parisyllabic verbs, the morphology of imparisyllabic verbs is to a large degree concatenative, and involves only two morphophonological processes. First, in some inflectional forms (PRS.1SG, PRS.2SG, IMP.2SG, PST.PTCP, CNG, SUP) the final *i* of the inflectional stem changes into *a*, e.g., *gēnugav* stop.PRS.1SG < *gēnugi-* ‘stop’. Note that the supine suffix *-ttjit* of one speaker causes the *a* of the penultimate nucleus to be realized as *ě* instead: LE *vuojaděttjit* swim.SUP (cf. SA *vuojadattjat* id.).

⁵⁸ *dahka-* ‘make’

⁵⁹ *tjálle-* ‘write’

⁶⁰ *vuohije-* ‘shoot’

⁶¹ In addition to the expected forms with word-initial stress, Collinder has also noted the second person singular imperative of this word with main stress on the second syllable: *poⁿtě-* ‘come!’ (1938: 43). The imperative forms in my data have word-initial stress, just like other inflectional forms, e.i., SA, LE ‘*boade* id.

Second, in the third person singular present, the inflectional stem loses its final vowel, e.g., SA *hállán* fly.away.PRS.3SG < *hálláni*- ‘fly away’. As a result of phonotactical constraints, the final consonant or consonants of the inflectional stem may also undergo change in this form (see Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 50–51, Wiklund 1915: 74, Note 1), e.g., SA *tjuormas* hail.PRS.3SG < **tjuormast* < *tjuormasti*- ‘hail’,⁶² *dárbaj* need.PRS.3SG < **dárbah* < *dárbahi*- ‘need’.⁶³ For LE, I have however also noted a form in *-a*: *ráhkesta* love.PRS.3SG.

The final vowel of the stem is also lost in the passive past participle, in which the suffix *-um* is added to the final consonant of the inflectional stem, e.g., *gatjostum* hang.PASS.PST.PTCP < *gatjosti*- ‘hang (trans.)’. A sample paradigm of the imparisyllabic verb *gěnugi*- ‘stop’ is given in Table 12.

Table 12. Inflection of the imparisyllabic verb *gěnugi*- ‘stop’ (SA).

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>gěnuga-v</i>	<i>gěnugi-p</i>	INF	<i>gěnugi-t</i>
	2	<i>gěnuga</i>	<i>gěnugi-hpit</i>	PROG	<i>gěnugi-me</i>
	3	<i>gěnuk</i> ⁶⁴	<i>gěnugi</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>gěnuga-m</i>
PST	1	<i>gěnugi-v</i>	<i>gěnugi-jme</i>	SUP	<i>gěnuga-ttjat</i>
	2	<i>gěnugi</i>	<i>gěnugi-jde</i>	CNG	<i>gěnuga</i>
	3	<i>gěnugi-j</i>	<i>gěnugi-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	<i>gatjost-um</i> ⁶⁵
IMP	2	<i>gěnuga</i>	<i>gěnugi-t</i>		

5.7 Inflection of contracted verbs

Contracted verbs are characterized by having two stem allomorphs: one shorter stem, ending in either of the vowels *á*-, *i*- or *u*- (on contracted verbs in *ā̃*-, see 5.2), and one longer stem, ending in either of these vowels followed by an element *ji*-. From a historical point of view, the stem ending in *ji*- is the older one, from which the shorter (or contracted) stem has been derived. In

⁶² For LE, I have noted an initial *s*- in this word: *suormastij* hail.PST.3SG, *suormastam* hail.PST.PTCP. Note further that Collinder (1938: 54) has also documented a third person singular form *mālēst* ‘cooks’, with a retained word-final cluster.

⁶³ In some cases, the third person singular *-j* appears to have spread to other forms through analogy: SA *vállajav* lie.down.PRS.1SG, *vállajiv* lie.down.PST.1SG, *huomajiv* realize.PST.1SG, LE *huomaja* realize.CNG (standard *vellahav*, *vellahiv*, *huomahiv*, *huomaha*). For SA, I have noted the forms *dárbaja* need.CNG, *dárbajam* need.PST.PTCP (standard *dárbaha*, *dárbaham*) in spontaneous speech and *dárbaha* need.CNG, *dárbahav* need.1SG.PRS (standard id.) in elicitation.

⁶⁴ The difference between word-final *-k* and word-internal *-g*- is orthographical: both graphemes represent /k/. Similarly, both word-final *-t* and word-internal *-d*- represent /t/ in forms such as SA *vuosjvet* crave.PRS.3SG and *vuosjvedav* crave.PRS.1SG (standard *vuosvet*, *vuosvedav*).

⁶⁵ *gatjosti*- ‘hang (trans.)’.

the contemporary verb inflection, the distribution of the two stems is tied to specific cells in the inflectional paradigm (PRS.3PL, PST.1SG, PST.2SG, PST.3PL, IMP.2PL).

In previous descriptions of the Lule Saami Forest dialect, the third person singular present of *i*-stem verbs has been documented with a final long *-e*, e.g., *reštē* cross.PRS.3SG, cf. *reštit* cross.INF (Collinder 1938: 61), *tāddnē* tin.PRS.3SG, cf. *tēddnit* tin.INF (KBW 1895 II).⁶⁶ Similarly, *u*-stem verbs have been documented with a final long *-o* (UPA *o*) in the same form, e.g., *hāχtō* must.PRS.3SG (cf. *heχtūji* must.PRS.3PL, Collinder 1938: 62, 59).⁶⁷

Table 13. Inflection of the contracted verb *lieggi*- ‘heat’ (SA).

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>lieggi-v</i>	<i>lieggi-p</i>	INF	<i>lieggi-t</i>
	2	<i>lieggi</i>	<i>lieggi-bit</i>	PROG	<i>lieggi-min</i>
	3	<i>liegge</i>	<i>lieggiji</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>lieggi-m</i>
PST	1	<i>lieggiji-v</i>	<i>lieggi-jma</i>	SUP	<i>lieggi-tjit</i>
	2	<i>lieggiji</i>	<i>lieggi-jda</i>	CNG	<i>lieggi</i>
	3	<i>lieggi-j</i>	<i>lieggiji-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	<i>lieggi-dum</i>
IMP	2	<i>lieggi</i>	<i>lieggiji-t</i>		

In my data, the analysis of these forms is complicated by the fact that both speakers tend to pronounce second syllable *e* and *o* as fairly close monophthongs, making them difficult to distinguish qualitatively from their short counterparts *i* and *u* respectively.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, there is a clear opposition between forms such as LE *hāhtto* must.PRS.3SG and *hehttu* must.PRS.2SG, reflected in the quality of the word’s first vowel (cf. also SA *bājssto* get.ruined.PRS.3SG and *bejsstum* get.ruined.PST.PTCP). Tentatively, I have also noted an opposition between forms such as SA *rēsste* cross.PRS.3SG and *rēssti* cross.CNG, although this contrast is admittedly not as clear-cut as that of *u*-stem verbs.⁶⁹ A sample paradigm of the contracted verb *lieggi*- ‘heat’ is given in Table 13.

⁶⁶ Note that while the alternation of a second syllable *i* and *e* triggers different first syllable vowels for the speaker interviewed by Wiklund, Collinder’s data show variation in this respect (for examples, see Collinder 1938: 61).

⁶⁷ The form *hāχtō* (Collinder 1938: 59), with a long vowel in the first syllable, appears to be a misprint, cf. *hāχtō* (1938: 62), *hāxtō* id. (ULMA 15932: 104).

⁶⁸ See also the native-speaker spelling of Sádinvárre as <Satimvarri> in Figure 1. It should additionally be pointed out that the vowel denoted with the quality *e* in Collinder’s monograph on the dialect (e.g., *passēt* ‘to fry’, *vaddēt* ‘to give’, 1938: 170) is regularly corresponded by the more close *é* in his notebooks (e.g., *passēt*, *vaddēt*, ULMA 15935: 24).

⁶⁹ While third person singular present forms in *-e*, *-o* are also found in more northern varieties of the language (Grundström 1946–54: 1905, 1911), Standard Lule Saami has *-i*, *-u* in the corresponding forms, e.g., *hāhttu* must.PRS.3SG, *rassti* cross.PRS.3SG. In Collinder’s notes from

5.8 Inflection of *lä-* ‘be’

The verb *lä-* ‘be’, which functions both as a copula and as an auxiliary, is the most common verb in the corpus. While having suffixes identical to those of imparisyllabic verbs, this verb has a partially irregular inflection. Most notably, the infinitive, past participle and imperative forms are suppletive, using forms identical to those of the lexical verb *ârro-* ‘live, reside’.⁷⁰ The inflectional paradigm of *lä-* ‘be’ is given in Table 14; for the highly irregular negation of this verb, see Section 5.10.

Table 14. Inflection of *lä-* ‘be’ (SA).

		SG	PL	Non-finite	
PRS	1	<i>lä-v</i>	<i>lä-p</i>	INF	<i>ârro-t</i>
	2	<i>lä</i>	<i>le-hpit</i>	PROG	N/A
	3	<i>lä, =l</i>	<i>lä, =l</i>	PST.PTCP	<i>ârru-m</i>
PST	1	<i>lēdjī-v</i>	<i>lē-jme</i>	SUP	N/A
	2	<i>lēdjī</i>	<i>lē-jde</i>	CNG	N/A
	3	<i>lē-j</i>	<i>lēdjī-n</i>	PASS.PST.PTCP	N/A
COND	1	<i>lulu-v</i>	<i>lulu-jma</i>	COND.CNG	<i>lulu</i>
	2	<i>lulu</i>	<i>lulu-jda</i>		
	3	<i>lulu-j</i>	<i>lulu-n</i>		
IMP	2	<i>âro</i>	<i>ârru-t</i>		

The element *-dj-* in the past tense of the first and second person singular, as well as the third person plural, goes back to a geminated form of the Proto-Saamic past tense marker **-j-* (Korhonen 1967: 195–196; 1981: 265). In addition to the forms given in Table 14, I have also noted a few parallel forms in *li-*: SA, LE *lip* be.PRS.1PL, SA *li* be.PRS.3PL, *lij* be.PST.3SG.⁷¹

Risuk (Sw. *Risappi*) there is a final *-j* in the third person singular present of contracted verbs, such as *tällit* ‘to pack shoes with hay’ and *småxkkut* ‘to taste’, making these forms identical to the corresponding past tense forms: *tällij*, *småxkkuj* PRS.3SG = PST.3SG (cf. *tälli*, *småxkku* PRS.2SG, ULMA 15924). This trait is also attested in Pite Saami (Lehtiranta 1992: 93).

⁷⁰ Wiklund’s materials on the Forest dialect include an infinitive form *lēčk’ēt* be.INF alongside the suppletive form *ôrrot*, as well as imperative forms of the same stem: *lēčk’is* be.IMP.3SG, *lēčkūs* be.IMPII.3SG (KBW 1895 II). Collinder, on the other hand, has noted that Wiklund’s form *lēčk’ēt* “ought to be altogether missing in the Forest Lapp area” (“torde alldeles saknas i skogs-lappsområdet”, ULMA 15927: 30). In the Lule Saami standard language, both forms in *ârro-* and in *liehke-* are used, e.g., *ârrot* ~ *liehket* be.INF; forms in *liehke-* however appear to be more common in Norway than in Sweden (cf. Spiik 1989: 69).

⁷¹ In the Lule Saami standard language, the verb ‘be’ has two parallel sets that differ in their respective vocalism. One of these sets (e.g., *lev* ‘I am’, *ledjiv* ‘I was’) is typically described as occurring clause-initially, whereas the other set (e.g., *lav* ‘I am’, *lidjiv* ‘I was’) occurs in other positions (Spiik 1989: 68–71); note however that in some texts, such as the New Testament (*Adâ Testamentta*, 2003), forms in *le-* are used rather than forms in *la-* (cf. Angéus Kuoljok 2002b: 16). In the Forest dialect, I have not been able to confirm two separate sets of the verb

A characteristic feature of the verb *lä*- ‘be’ is that the third person singular present *lä* is often shortened to the non-syllabic clitic *=l* if the preceding word ends in a vowel (7). This shortening is however not obligatory, as shown in (8).

- (7) *muv vuorrasāmos vieljja=l lågev*
 1 SG.GEN old.SPRL.ATTR brother.SG.NOM=be.PRS.3SG ten.SG.NOM
jage musstē vuorrasäbbo
 year.SG.GEN 1 SG.ELA old.CMPR.SG.NOM
 ‘My oldest brother is ten years older than me.’ (LE)

- (8) *muvva vieljja lä årudagån*
 1 SG.GEN brother.SG.NOM be.PRS.3SG dwelling.SG.INE
 ‘My brother is at home.’ (SA, elicited)

The homophonous third person plural present *lä* can also be cliticized as *=l*, an example of which is given in (9). As in the singular, however, this shortening is not obligatory, as shown in (10).⁷²

- (9) *gusá=l val årrum*
 cow.PL.NOM=be.PRS.3PL just be.PST.PTCP
 ‘(We) have had cows (but not poultry).’ (SA)

- (10) *da lä vuorrasäppo gå mån*
 DEM.PL.NOM be.PRS.3PL old.CMPR.PL.NOM than 1 SG.NOM
 ‘They are older than me.’ (LE)

While the second person singular present *lä* is homophonous with the full forms of the third person singular and plural, this form is not attested as cliticized, but only in its full form (11). For an overview of the cliticization of the verb ‘be’ in the western Saamic languages, see Siegl (2019).

- (11) *gån bárnne lä dån?*
 who.SG.GEN son.SG.NOM be.PRS.2SG 2SG.NOM
 ‘Whose son are you?’ (LE)

lä- ‘be’ as used depending on position in the clause. See also Wiklund (1915: 77–78), who describes different realizations of this verb as governed by prosodic factors rather than by word order proper.

⁷² It is perhaps no coincidence that in example (10), the uncliticized form *lä* follows a monosyllabic word, whereas in (9), the cliticized *=l* attaches to a disyllabic form.

Historically, the conditional was a productive mood for all verb classes in Lule Saami but the negative auxiliary (see Section 6.3). In the present corpus, however, conditional forms are only attested for *lä-* ‘be’. In these forms, person and number suffixes identical to those of the past tense are added to a stem *lulu-*, e.g., *lulu-n* be.COND-3PL ‘they would’. Forms in *lulu-* can be coupled with a verb in the infinitive, such as *oasstet* ‘to buy’ in (12).

- (12) *mån* *luluv* *ådä* *vuojánáv*
 1SG.NOM be.COND.1SG new.ATTR vehicle.SG.ACC
oasstet *jus* *lulun* *rudá*
 buy.INF if be.COND.3PL money.PL.NOM
 ‘I would buy a new car (lit. vehicle) if I had money.’ (SA, elicited)

The conditional in *lulu-* does not need to precede the infinitive, but may occur after it instead, e.g., SA *gávnnat lulun* [find.INF be.COND.3PL] ‘they would find’. The only non-finite conditional form is the conditional connegative, which consists of the bare stem *lulu*.⁷³

Finally, a note on *lä-* ‘be’ and interrogatives is in order. In Lule Saami, polar questions are most commonly encoded by the second-position clitic =*gu* ~ =*gus*.⁷⁴ This interrogative clitic can be shortened to =*k* when attaching to a verb ending in a vowel, e.g., LE *jugá=k* drink.PRS.2SG=Q. In the standard language, however, =*k* does generally not attach to the verb ‘be’ (Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 20), nor to the negative auxiliary.⁷⁵ In the Forest dialect, on the other hand, there is no such restriction, as shown in examples (13) and (14). This trait is also found in the notebooks of Collinder, see example (15) from a speaker born in Suobbat.

⁷³ From a strictly synchronic perspective, it would also be possible to regard *lulu-* as a defective verb with the meaning ‘would’, rather than as an inflectional form of *lä-* ‘be’ (cf. Ylikoski 2022: 139). Note also that while finite forms of *lulu-* have suffixes identical to those of the past indicative, the conditional connegative lacks a suffix, agreeing in this respect with the present connegative of other verbs (i.e., *lulu* and not **lulum*). Here it can also be mentioned that in written Lule Saami, one may occasionally see *lulu-* inflected as a contracted verb, e.g., *lulujin* be.COND.3PL (Olsen & Utsi Vars 2012: 63).

⁷⁴ The host of this clitic is most often a verb, but it may also belong to another word class, e.g., SA *ieddne=gu lij?* [mother.SG.NOM=Q be.PST.3SG] ‘Mother, was it?’, *vidás=gu?* five.people.SG.NOM=Q ‘Are there five (of us, speakers of the Forest dialect)?’.

⁷⁵ I am aware of only two instances in the written standard language where the shortened clitic =*k* attaches to the verb ‘be’: *lettji=k* be.POT.3PL=Q (Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 152) and *lähppe=k* be.PRS.2DU=Q (Tuolja 1987: 38, 43). In both of these examples, the form to which =*k* attaches is disyllabic, suggesting that stress may be a decisive factor in the shortening of this clitic.

- (13) *lǎ=k* *dǎn* *vuojnnám* *riek* *stuor*
 be.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM see.PST.PTCP really large.ATTR
tjuormmasijt?
 hail.PL.ACC
 ‘Have you seen really large hail?’ (SA)

- (14) *lǎ=k* *suomagiellaj?*
 be.PRS.3SG=Q Finnish.SG.ILL
 ‘Is it in Finnish?’ (LE, about a road sign)

- (15) *lǎ=k* *ton* *kullam*
 be.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM hear.PST.PTCP
 ‘Have you heard?’ (Suobbat, ULMA 15926: 42)

The shortened interrogative clitic =*k* may also attach to *lǎ-* ‘be’ in indirect questions, as shown in (16).

- (16) *jus* *lǎ* *dě* *tjuosek* *jěli*
 if be.PRS.3SG DPT reindeer.with.a.blaze.SG.NOM or
lǎ=k *dě* *rijhmek*
 be.PRS.3SG=Q DPT dark.reindeer.SG.NOM
 ‘...if it’s a reindeer with a blaze, or if it’s a dark reindeer...’ (LE)

As with other verbs, the interrogative clitic may however remain unshortened also when attaching to *lǎ-* ‘be’, as seen in (17) and (18); see also Section 5.9 on the interrogative clitic =*k* and the negative auxiliary.

- (17) *lǎ=gus* *dǎn* *skibás?*
 be.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM sick.SG.NOM
 ‘Are you sick?’ (SA, elicited)

- (18) *lǎ=gu* *duv* *áhhttje* *gullam*
 be.PRS.3SG=Q 2SG.GEN father.SG.NOM hear.PST.PTCP
dav?
 DEM.SG.ACC
 ‘Has your father heard that?’ (SA)

5.9 Inflection of the negative auxiliary

In Lule Saami, standard negation is expressed by means of a negative auxiliary verb, the inflection of which is irregular (for a survey of negation in Lule

Saami, see Ylikoski & Kejonen, forthcoming). In the Forest dialect, this verb has the inflectional stem *i-* in the indicative singular, and *ä-* in the indicative plural. The third person singular *ij* has an irregular final *-j* (for a discussion on the origin of this form, see Korhonen 1967: 230–234; 1981: 272–273).

The forms of the imperative mood are consistent with a suppletive parisyllabic stem **alle-*, which is subject to both consonant gradation and stem-final vowel alternation (the latter in turn inducing an umlaut *a > ě* in the first syllable). It should however be noted that forms with an initial *ě-* are also found in dialects of Lule Saami which lack the characteristic *ě*-inducing umlaut of the Forest dialect, e.g., Unna Tjerusj *alē ~ elē* NEG.IMP.2SG, *allit ~ elliit* NEG.IMP.2PL (Grundström 1946–54: 1918).

Table 15. Inflection of the negative auxiliary (SA).

		SG	PL
PRS	1	<i>i-v</i>	<i>ä-p</i>
	2	<i>i</i>	<i>e-hpit</i>
	3	<i>ij</i>	<i>ä</i>
IMP	2	<i>ale</i>	<i>ělli-t</i>

In addition to the forms in Table 15, the corpus also contains a longer variant of the first personal singular form, SA *ivva*, in which the final consonant has been lengthened and a paragogic *-a* has been added (cf. the forms SA, LE *muṽ ~ muṽva* 1SG.GEN, SA *dav ~ davva* DEM.SG.ACC; see also Wiklund 1891: 117).⁷⁶

In the Lule Saami standard language, the negative auxiliary verb is inflected not only in person, number and mood, but also in tense. That is, in addition to the present tense forms, there is also a full set of past tense forms. Such forms are also attested for the Forest dialect: *iṽiw* NEG.PST.1SG, *iṽi* NEG.PST.2SG, *ēimē* NEG.PST.1PL, *ēitē* NEG.PST.2PL (Collinder 1938: 37, 104), *ēimē* NEG.PST.1PL, *ēitē* NEG.PST.2PL, *ājkā* NEG.PST.3DU (KBW 1895 II). In the present corpus, however, no such forms are produced spontaneously by the two interviewed speakers—not in free speech, nor in elicitation. Instead, present tense forms of the negative auxiliary are combined with the past

⁷⁶ I have noted corresponding disyllabic forms of the negative auxiliary verb in a conversation with a speaker of Pite Saami: *ivva* NEG.PRS.1SG, *ijja* NEG.PRS.3SG. In Bålggem, Collinder (1938: 19) has noted an emphatic third person singular of the negative auxiliary, *i:hi-j*, with an epenthetic *h*. Such an epenthetic *h* is also found elsewhere in the language; for instance, I have noted the accusative singular forms *āhav* ‘the letter *a*’ and *behav* ‘the letter *b*’ in Unna Tjerusj (see also Wiklund 1891: 8, 117–118, 185).

participle to form a past tense reading.⁷⁷ Compare the present tense clause in (19) with the past tense clause in (20).

- (19) *mån* *iv* *máhte* *vuodjat*
 1SG.NOM NEG.PRS.1SG can.CNG swim.INF
 ‘I can’t swim.’ (SA)

- (20) *mån* *iv* *máhttám* *mav=gě*
 1SG.NOM NEG.PRS.1SG can.PST.PTCP REL.SG.ACC=NPM
dárogielav
 Swedish.SG.ACC
 ‘I didn’t know any Swedish (when starting school).’ (SA)

However, when presented with the Standard Lule Saami third person singular past tense form *ittijj*, SA readily accepted it and produced the clause (21), in which this form is coupled with the past participle. This construction is also attested in Collinder’s materials from a speaker born in Unna Sájvva (22).

- (21) *muvva* *ieddne* *ittijj* *gǽrrum*
 1SG.GEN mother.SG.NOM NEG.PST.3SG sew.PST.PTCP
 ‘My mother didn’t sew.’ (SA, elicited)

- (22) *it’šiv* *p’öi’xkām*
 NEG.PST.1SG understand.PST.PTCP
 ‘I didn’t understand.’ (Unna Sájvva, ULMA 15936)

Note that this construction differs from the one prescribed in the written standard language, where past tense forms of the negative auxiliary are coupled with the indicative connegative instead, e.g., *ittijj goaro* [NEG.PST.3SG sew.CNG] ‘didn’t sew’. In Lindgren’s texts from the area, both this latter type of negation (23) and the type with present tense forms of the negative auxiliary (24) are attested.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ In my data from Unna Tjerusj, I have similarly only noted past negatives of this kind, e.g., *ij boahátám* [NEG.PRS.3SG come.PST.PTCP] ‘he did not come’ (cf. however Grundström 1946–54: 1917). In more northern and eastern Saamic varieties, this is the only way of forming a past negative; the loss of tense inflection for the negative auxiliary in these varieties may be due to influence of Finnic (cf. Bergsland 1946: 170, Korhonen 1967: 214; 1981: 310, Sammallahti 1998: 76–77; 224–225). It should however be noted that this “northern” type of negation is also found further south within Lule Saami. The same construction is also attested in Pite Saami, e.g., *i neita mannám* [NEG.PRS.3SG girl.SG.NOM go.PST.PTCP] ‘the girl did not go’ (ULMA 22200: 4).

⁷⁸ Collinder’s materials also feature the standard type of negation, albeit in a recited text (cf. Note 13), e.g., *i’i sitā* [NEG.PST.3SG want.CNG] ‘didn’t want’ (1938: 170). Although Wiklund’s

- (23) *itji* *tålåv* *åttjoh*
 NEG.PST.3SG fire.SG.ACC receive.CNG
 ‘...(she) didn’t get fire...’ (Stuor Sávvva, OL 1912: 3)

- (24) *I* *tat* *maksam.*
 NEG.PRS.3SG DEM.SG.NOM pay.off.PST.PTCP
 ‘It didn’t pay off.’ (Stuor Sávvva, OL 1912: 3)

Here it can also be mentioned that as in the case of *lä-* ‘be’, there is no restriction in this dialect against the combination of the negative auxiliary and the shortened interrogative clitic =*k* (cf. 5.8); an example is given in (25). The shortening of the question clitic is however not obligatory, as shown in (26).

- (25) *i=k* *dån* *jugá* *tjáhpav?*
 NEG.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM drink.CNG coffee.SG.ACC
 ‘Don’t you drink coffee (lit. black)?’ (LE, elicited)

- (26) *i=gus* *dån* *jugá* *tjáhpav?*
 NEG.PRS.2SG=Q 2SG.NOM drink.CNG coffee.SG.ACC
 ‘Don’t you drink coffee (lit. black)?’ (SA, elicited)

5.10 Negation of *lä-* ‘be’

The negation of *lä-* ‘be’ is highly irregular in the Lule Saami Forest dialect, and the following description should be seen as tentative. The obtained negated forms of *lä-* ‘be’ are given in Table 16.

Table 16. Negation of *lä-* ‘be’ (SA).

		SG	PL
PRS	1	<i>i-v lě</i>	<i>ällě-p</i>
	2	<i>illě</i>	<i>ällě-bit</i>
	3	<i>ile</i>	<i>ällě</i>
PST	1	<i>i-v li, illi-v</i>	<i>ělli-jma</i>
	2	<i>illi</i>	<i>ělli-jda</i>
	3	<i>illim</i>	<i>ělli-n</i>
IMP	2	<i>ale åro</i>	<i>ělli-t åro</i>

materials feature tokens of the negative auxiliary inflected for the past tense, these forms are only noted in isolation, and not together with a negated verb.

In most cells of the paradigm, the negative auxiliary and *lä-* ‘be’ have been amalgamated, e.g., *illě* ‘you are not’.⁷⁹ The third person singular present *ile* has an unexpected long *e* in the second syllable. Similar (albeit not identical) forms have also been documented in the Forest dialect by Collinder (*ilē*, ULMA 15936) and Wiklund (*ilēεε*, KBW 1895 II). The corresponding past tense form *illim* stems from an amalgamation of the negative auxiliary and a past connegative form of *lä-* ‘be’ (cf. Standard Lule Saami *ij lim*). Again, a similar (but not identical) form has been documented by Wiklund (*ilim*, KBW 1895 II). A form with a geminate consonant is attested in Lindgren’s materials from Suobbat (*illim*, OL 1913). In the first person singular of the past tense, I have noted both an amalgamated form *illiv* and a bipartite *iv li* ‘I was not’. The amalgamated form is also attested by Collinder (*illiw*, 1938: 45).

The plural forms are strikingly regular. In these forms, there is a stem *ällě-*, which takes the regular subject suffixes of parisyllabic verbs, e.g., *ällě-p* ‘we are not’, *ällě-bit* ‘you are not’. This stem reflects the plural *ä-* of the negative auxiliary having been amalgamated with *lä-* ‘be’. In the past tense forms, where the vowel of the second syllable is *i*, the first vowel is more close than in the corresponding present tense forms, e.g., *ěllin* ‘they were not’. To the best of my knowledge, forms like these have not been previously described for Lule Saami (cf. Standard Lule Saami *ep la* [NEG.PRS.1PL be.CNG] ‘we are not’, with the verb ‘be’ in the connegative and with subject marking on the negative auxiliary). Forms in *ällě-* can be used as an auxiliary, coupled with a verb in the past participle (27). They can also be used as a verb ‘be not’, as shown in (28) through (30).

- (27) *mij* *ällěp* *goas'sěk* *bårråm* *dáppe*
 1PL.NOM be.NEG.PRS.1PL ever eat.PST.PTCP here
 ‘We have never eaten (that) here.’
 (LE, answering the question “Do you eat mushrooms?”)

- (28) *dij* *ällěbit* *skihpasa*
 2PL.NOM be.NEG.PRS.2PL sick.PL.NOM
 ‘You aren’t sick.’ (SA, elicited)

⁷⁹ In the Lule Saami standard language, which features fewer amalgamated forms of the negative auxiliary and the verb ‘be’ than the Forest dialect, such forms have a consonant center in Grade III, e.g., PRS.2SG *il’la*, PRS.3PL *äl’la*. Based on the available data, I have not been able to ascertain whether the corresponding forms in Table 16 represent consonants of Grade II or Grade III—consequently, I have opted for the less marked notation of Grade II.

- (29) *da* *ěllin* *boatjojhoajdon*
 DEM.PL.NOM be.NEG.PST.3PL reindeer.herding.SG.INE
 ‘They weren’t in reindeer herding.’ (LE)
- (30) *ja* *dě* *ěllin* *tjuojka* *jěli*
 and then be.NEG.PST.3PL mosquito.PL.NOM or
muojva *jěli* *väppsá*
 blackfly.PL.NOM or wasp.PL.NOM
 ‘...and then there weren’t any mosquitos or blackflies or wasps...’ (LE)

In the imperative mood, the regular imperative forms of the negative auxiliary are coupled with the suppletive imperative connegative form *áro*, e.g., *ěllit áro* [NEG.IMP.2PL be.IMP.CNG]. In the conditional, the connegative form *lulu* occurs together with an indicative form of the negative auxiliary (31); cf. the corresponding positive clause (12) in Section 5.8.

- (31) *mån* *iv* *lulu* *oasstet* *ådđ*
 1SG.NOM NEG.PRS.1SG be.COND.CNG buy.INF new.ATTR
vuojánav *vájku* *lulun* *rudá*
 vehicle.SG.ACC despite be.COND.3PL money.PL.NOM
 ‘I wouldn’t buy a new car (lit. vehicle) even if I had money.’
 (SA, elicited)

Finally, it should be mentioned that a peculiar feature regarding the negation of *lä-* ‘be’ is found in older records of the Forest dialect. In the materials of Wiklund, there are first person singular forms of the negative auxiliary with a plosive *-b*, rather than *-v*, when coupled with the verb *lä-* ‘be’. Such forms are attested from two different speakers: *ib lä* ~ *ib^e lä* ‘I am not’, *ib^e lim* ‘I was not’ (KBW 1895 II), *ib^e lä* ‘I am not’ (KBW 1895 II, speaker from Muorkke, Sw. *Muorkafors*). When coupled with other verbs, however, only forms in *-v* are attested, e.g., *iv mālēstē_a* [NEG.PRS.1SG cook.CNG] ‘I don’t cook’.⁸⁰ Here it should be added that in the first interview with SA, I tentatively noted the form *ib lē* on one occasion—notably, this was before I was aware of the corresponding forms in Wiklund’s materials. However, when presented with this form during the second interview, SA did not accept it.

⁸⁰ Concerning the origin of the forms in *-b*, one is tempted to consider them an archaism, reflecting an older first person singular marker elsewhere corresponded by *-v* (both ultimately going back to Proto-Saamic **-m*). Here, a comparison could potentially be made with those varieties of Ume Saami that have *-b* for monosyllabic stems, but *-v* for polysyllabic stems (see, e.g., Siegl 2017: 270–271).

6. Other inflectional forms

This section discusses inflectional forms that are known from previous descriptions of Lule Saami, but that are either absent or only poorly attested in the present corpus. These forms include verbs inflected for the dual number (6.1), the potential mood (6.2), synthetic conditional forms (6.3), the “imperative II” mood and imperative forms in the first and third person (6.4), as well as a number of non-finite forms (6.5).

6.1 The dual number

In the Lule Saami standard language, finite verbs are as a rule inflected for dual number when the subject of a clause is two humans (see however Wiklund 1915: 102–103 and Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 42 on variation regarding the use of the dual number). Dual number is further obligatorily encoded for personal pronouns and possessive suffixes.⁸¹ In the present corpus, however, no dual forms of finite verbs are found. Instead, plural forms are used even when the subject of a clause is two individuals, as shown in (32) through (33). These plural verb forms can be accompanied by a personal pronoun in the plural, as in (34).

- (32) *běru* *mån* *ja* *muv* *áhkásj*
just 1SG.NOM and 1SG.GEN wife.SG.NOM
dánně *árrop*
DEM.PROX.SG.INE live.PRS.1PL
‘Just me and my wife live here.’ (LE)

- (32) *Anna* *ja* *Lisa* *lä* *oappátja*
Anna and Lisa be.PRS.3PL sister.CORR.PL.NOM
‘Anna and Lisa are sisters.’ (SA, elicited)

- (33) *iektu* *muvva* *vieljja* *ja* *ieddne*
yesterday 1SG.GEN brother.SG.NOM and mother.SG.NOM
vuolggin *Váhtjerij*⁸²

⁸¹ In addition to a third person singular *-s* in the reflexive pronoun SA *ietjas* REFL.GEN.3SG ‘his own’ and a third person plural *-sa* in the reciprocal adverb SA *gaskasa* RECP.3PL ‘with each other’, the present corpus contains only one token of a possessive suffix, the first person singular *-m* in the elicited kinship term SA *ednum* mother’s.brother.SG.ACC.POSS.1SG ‘my mother’s brother’.

⁸² The Swedish place name *Gällivare* was first translated as *Jiellevárre* (illative *Jiellevárráj*) by SA, but he then corrected himself to *Váhtjer* (illative *Váhtjerij*); both names refer to the same town. Both SA and LE further state that the name *Jiellevárre* is a misinterpretation of a form “*Jiellovárre*”, lit. ‘crack mountain’ (cf. Collinder 1964 s.v. *jielle*, Johansson 1989: 67).

go.PST.3PL Váhtjer.SG.ILL

‘Yesterday my brother and mother went to Váhtjer.’ (SA, elicited)

- (34) *dat* *lä* *danně* *věhi*
 DEM.SG.NOM be.PRS.3SG DEM.SG.INE little
nuortap *giella* *mě̃n* *gal=ham*
 north.CMPR.ATTR language.SG.NOM but surely=indeed
mij *dě* *sā̃badip*
 1PL.NOM DPT agree.PRS.1PL
 ‘He’s got a little more northern language, but we (he and I) get along
 for sure.’
 (LE, about a speaker of North Saami in a nearby village)

Although not producing any dual verb forms himself, SA readily accepted the clause *mā̃j mē̃nnin* [1DU.NOM go.PRS.1DU] when presented with it, and correctly translated it as Sw. *vi far* ‘we go’. Both speakers further produced clauses in which the first and second person dual pronouns *mā̃j* and *dā̃j* are coupled with a finite verb in the plural, as shown in the elicited examples (35) through (37).⁸³

- (35) *mā̃j* *áhkájn* *läp* *Suddásin*
 1DU.NOM wife.SG.COM be.PRS.1PL Boden.SG.INE
 ‘My wife and I are in Boden.’ (SA, elicited)

- (36) *mā̃j* *dā̃bddāp* *nuppijt*⁸⁴
 1DU.NOM know.PRS.1PL RECP.PL.ACC
 ‘We (two) know each other.’ (SA, elicited)

- (37) *dā̃j* *mannabit*
 2DU.NOM go.PRS.2PL
 ‘You (two) go.’ (LE, elicited)

⁸³ The corpus contains no token of a personal pronoun in the third person dual (standard *sā̃j*). In general, however, both speakers use the demonstrative *dat* ‘that, it’ rather than personal pronouns in the third person—even the singular and plural forms *sā̃n* ‘s/he’ and *sij* ‘they’ are only represented by a few tokens in the corpus.

⁸⁴ While bipartite reciprocals such as the plural accusative *nuppe nuppijt* have been described for Lule Saami before (Grundström 1946–54: 1823–32), I am not aware of any previous mention of single plural forms of *nubbe* ‘second; other’ being used as a reciprocal pronoun, such as *nuppijt* in (36). I have however noted the same construction also in Unna Tjerusj: *mij dādjadip nuppijt* [1PL.NOM understand.PRS.1PL RECP.PL.ACC] ‘we understand each other’. Corresponding forms are further found in Duortnus North Saami (Kejonen 2017: 41, 49–50); see also Rasmus (2021: 139).

As in the indicative mood, only singular and plural verb forms are attested in the imperative. For instance, both speakers stated that the form *bāhtit* come.IMP.2PL can be used when addressing two—as well as several—addressees.

Dual verb forms are found in Wiklund’s materials on the Forest dialect (e.g., *ēsstin* have.time.PRS.1DU, *lāpā* be.PRS.3DU, KBW 1895 II). For one speaker from Mörtberg,⁸⁵ however, Wiklund noted that “moreover, he was sometimes a bit uncertain of the dual forms and wanted to use plurals instead” (“han var för öfrigt ibland litet osäker på dualformerna och ville sätta pluraler i stället”, KBW 1906). Even so, Wiklund was still able to elicit dual forms from this speaker, e.g., *rāppē* open.IMP.2DU, *pōtika* come.PST.3DU. Lindgren’s texts from the area contain no dual forms.

Like Wiklund, Collinder was also able to obtain dual forms in the Forest dialect area, but he nevertheless noted an absence of dual forms for several speakers (1938: 149).⁸⁶ When noting down the nominative of the personal pronoun *mō̃j* 1DU.NOM, he further remarked that the oblique case forms *munnu* 1DU.GEN, *munnuw* 1DU.ACC and *munnuš* 1DU.ELA were hardly used (“föga brukliga”, ULMA 15925: 7). As in the present-day data, Collinder also noted a clause where a personal pronoun in the dual is coupled with a verb in the plural (38).

- (38) *lōxkit* *tōd'ja*
 read.IMP.2PL 2DU.NOM
 ‘Read you (two)!’ (Unna Sájvva, ULMA 15926: 61)

It can be pointed out that the use of dual personal pronouns with plural verb forms is a trait also attested in other Saamic languages, including Skolt Saami (see, e.g., Feist 2015: 200) and South Saami (Nilsson-Mankok 1970: 8, Ejerhed 1979: 188, Kowalik 2023: 211); see also Kejonen (2017: 32–33) for examples from North Saami.⁸⁷ This trait is further in line with a general

⁸⁵ For this speaker, Wiklund has noted the Lule Saami form *Sir^εkūl* (corrected from *Sēr^εkūl*) as corresponding to the Swedish place name *Mörtberg* (lit. ‘Roach mountain’); cf. *sir^εkā* ‘roach’ noted for the same speaker (Standard Lule Saami *siergga*). For a speaker from Unna Sájvva, Wiklund has noted a form *Sēr^εkūn* ‘Mörtberg’ (KBW 1906), and from a speaker born in Hiergáhppe, he has noted the form *Sēr^εkūn* id. (KBW 1895 I).

⁸⁶ Notably, one of the speakers interviewed by Collinder in Suobbat provided dual forms in the imperative mood, but not in the indicative, e.g., *qapā^x* open.IMP.2SG vs. *qax^εpē* open.IMP.2DU vs. *qēxpit* open.IMP.2PL, but *jau^εlap* say.PRS.1PL = say.PRS.1DU (ULMA 15926: 32–38). The number of documented verb forms from this speaker is however very small; see also Note 14 on the disproportionate number of imperative dual forms in Collinder’s materials.

⁸⁷ Note that the variety described by Ejerhed could potentially be classified as belonging to Ume Saami rather than to South Saami proper (cf. Kejonen 2017: 21). Most notably, Ejerhed (1979: 187) points out that a speaker interviewed by her had consonant gradation, a trait

tendency in the Saamic languages, according to which the dual number is retained longer for personal pronouns than for verbs, and longer for verbs than for possessive suffixes, i.e., an implicational hierarchy: personal pronouns > finite verbs > possessive suffixes (Kejonen 2017: 15–24, see also Rasmus 2021).

6.2 The potential mood

In the Lule Saami standard language there is a potential mood, which conveys a meaning of an action being possible or presumed (cf. Wiklund 1891: 278; 1915: 112, Spiik 1989: 105). The potential can also be used for future time reference (Ylikoski 2016; 2022: 139). A few potential forms have been documented in the Forest dialect by Wiklund (e.g., *ěñtšău* have.POT.1SG, KBW 1895 II) and by Collinder (*mālēstijav* cook.POT.1SG, *mālēstijap* cook.POT.1PL, 1938: 164).⁸⁸ Lindgren’s texts from the area do not contain any potential forms. Today, the potential does not seem to be productive in the Forest dialect—the present corpus contains no token of the potential mood in spontaneous speech, and when presented with the Standard Lule Saami forms *littjav* be.POT.1SG, *manátjav* go.POT.1SG and *manátjip* go.POT.1PL, SA did not seem to recognize them.

6.3 Synthetic conditional forms

Older descriptions of Lule Saami include the conditional as a productive mood. In these descriptions, synthetic conditionals can be formed by using a suffix *-lulu-* or the like, e.g., *kulā-lulu-v* hear-COND-1SG ‘I would hear’ (see the paradigms in Wiklund 1915: 65–82; 1891: 261–273 and Grundström 1946–54: 1847–1918; see also Wiklund 1891: 278–279; 1915: 113 on the use of the conditional). However, even these early descriptions note that it is possible to use a periphrastic construction instead, where only the auxiliary ‘be’ is inflected for the conditional, e.g., *lulu-v kulla-t* [be.COND-1SG hear-INF] ‘I would hear’ (Wiklund 1915: 81; 1891: 236). The latter system is the one prevailing in the Lule Saami standard language; later descriptions of the language only mention synthetic conditionals as “older forms” (see, for instance, Spiik 1989: 105).⁸⁹

traditionally seen as a defining feature of Ume Saami (interestingly, however, Ejerhed reports consonant gradation only for nouns, and not for verbs).

⁸⁸ In Collinder’s manuscript, the latter form is given as *mālēstid’šap* (ULMA 15934: 96), implying a Grade III consonant in the potential suffix (cf. Unna Tjerusj *mālēstid’t’šap* id., Grundström 1946–54: 1882).

⁸⁹ Occasionally, one may nevertheless come across synthetic conditional forms such as *galga-lulu* will-COND.CNG (Mark 13:14) also in written Lule Saami. Noteworthy in this context is also

As regards the Forest dialect, Wiklund has noted one token of a synthetic conditional: *küllŭ-lŭlŭ-i* hear.PASS-COND-3SG ‘it would be heard’ (“det skulle höras”, KBW 1895 II). In 1923, the nephew of the speaker who provided this form was interviewed by Collinder. When presented with the form, the nephew accepted it, but “could not pronounce it” himself (“Formen *kullulului* knäsatte Sandberg, men han kunde ej uttala den!”). Collinder further noted that “Moreover, there ought to be no other conditionals than of the kind *lului kullut* in the entire Forest Lapp area” (“Det torde f.ö. i hela skogslappsområdet ej finnas andra konditionaler än av typen *lului kullut*”, ULMA 15927: 29).

This appears to be the case also today; when presented with the synthetic conditional *oastá-lulu-v* buy-COND-1SG ‘I would buy’, neither SA nor LE accepted it. Both interviewed speakers however readily produced conditional clauses of the type *luluv oasstet* ‘I would buy’, an example of which is given in (12) in Section 5.8. It can also be added that Lindgren’s folklore texts from the area contain no synthetic conditionals, but only constructions of the same kind as in the present-day language (39).

- (39) *Jus mi tu tietet luluime,*
 if 1PL.NOM 2SG.ACC know.INF be.COND.1PL
ih tån luluh viessot.
 NEG.PRS.2SG 2SG.NOM be.COND.CNG live.INF
 ‘If we would have known about you, you wouldn’t be alive.’
 (Stuor Sávjva, OL 1912: 5)

6.4 Imperative forms

In the Lule Saami standard language, imperative forms are not restricted to the second person, but are also found in the third person (singular, dual, plural) and in the first person (dual, plural).⁹⁰ In the Forest dialect, both Wiklund and Collinder have documented third person singular imperative forms: *lēōk’is* be.IMP.3SG (KBW 1895 II), *mennis* go.IMP.3SG, *pāxtjis* stay.IMP.3SG (Collinder 1938: 160). In the present corpus, however, only second person imperatives are attested.

The Lule Saami standard language further features a second imperative mood, the “imperative II”, which is commonly described as conveying a more

the peculiar form *sidadlulut*, found in the dictionary of Spiik (1994 s.v. *skola*), which taken at face value appears to be an infinitive of a conditional form of *sihta-* ‘want’ (i.e., *sida-lulu-t* want-COND-INF).

⁹⁰ Wiklund has described Lule Saami imperative forms also in the first person singular, albeit only in the “imperative II” mood, e.g., *lāhkuv* read.IMP.I.1SG, *alluv* NEG.IMP.I.1SG (1915: 65–82; cf. 1891: 241, 256–257, 264, 267, Grundström 1946–54: 1865, 1883).

polite or modest request than the imperative proper (Wiklund 1891: 279; 1915: 114, Grundström 1946–54: 1851, Spiik 1989: 103). Such forms have been documented in the Forest dialect by Wiklund: see examples (40) and (41), as well as the form *lēkūs* be.IMPII.3SG (KBW 1895 II). The present corpus however contains no such forms, and as far as I have been able to tell, neither Collinder’s nor Lindgren’s materials on the Forest dialect feature forms of this kind either.

- (40) *ēlluo* *tō* *nōu* *jēulūw!*
 NEG.IMPII.2SG DPT so say.IMPII.CNG
 ‘Don’t say that!’ (KBW 1895 II)

- (41) *ēllūw* *tēwkuw!*
 NEG.IMPII.2SG do.IMPII.CNG
 ‘Don’t do!’ (Mörtberg, KBW 1906)

It should be added that the elicitation of imperative forms was not exhaustive, and that the topic therefore would merit further investigation.

6.5 Non-finites

A number of forms traditionally described as part of the non-finite verb inflection of Lule Saami are only poorly attested in my data. Such forms include the “verb genitive” (or “converb of manner and concomitance”, Ylikoski 2022: 140), e.g., SA, LE *váttje* ‘by foot’ < *vádtje* ‘walk’, SA *tjuojga* ‘by means of skiing’ < *tjuojgga* ‘ski’ (only tokens). Also poorly attested is the “gerund” (or “converb of simultaneity”, Ylikoski 2022: 140), e.g., SA (*muwva*) *viesodijn* ‘during (my) life’ < *viesso* ‘live’ (only token).⁹¹

The form traditionally referred to as the “present participle” is only attested in the function of an actor noun, e.g., SA, LE *bargge* ‘worker’ < *bargga* ‘work’. As noted in Section 4.3, such actor nouns derived from imparisyllabic verbs have a vocalism that deviates from the Lule Saami standard language,

⁹¹ These two forms are relatively rare also in other varieties of spoken Lule Saami, but are found, e.g., in the New Testament (*Adā Testamennta*, 2003), cf. Angéus Kuoljok (2004: 35). The “verb genitive” is also known as the “verbal adverb” (Ger. *Verbaladverbium*, Wiklund 1928) or the “adverbial form of the verb” (Ger. *Adverbialform des Verbs*, Grundström 1946–54: 1847–1918). The “gerund” is also known as the “simultaneity form” (Sw. *samtidighetsformen*, Spiik 1989: 108), the “first gerund” (Sw. *gerundium I*, Wiklund 1915: 115) or the “absolute gerund” (Ger. *Absolutes Gerundium*, Grundström 1946–54: 1847–1918). Adding to the terminological confusion, Lagercrantz (1939: 1207 et passim) refers to this form as the “second gerund” or “gerundive” (Ger. *Gerund II*, *Gerundiv*); see also Note 51.

The “verbal noun” (or “action nominalization”, Ylikoski 2022: 140) is only attested as the first component of compound nouns, e.g., *SA vuohtjem-ruhta* ‘bounty’ lit. ‘shooting-money’ (< *vuohtje-* ‘shoot’, *ruhta* ‘money’), *tjåhkkåhim-sadje* ‘seat’ lit. ‘sitting-place’ (< *tjåhkkåhi-* ‘sit’, *sadje* ‘place’).⁹² It is possible that some—or all—of these forms are better treated as derivations than as non-finite verb forms in the Forest dialect; more data are however needed for a definitive analysis.

Earlier materials on the Forest dialect—as well as the standard language—include a form in *-mis*, *-mes* known as the “action elative” (or “infinitive II”, Ylikoski 2022: 140, cf. Spiik 1989: 108), which is governed by the verb *hiejtte* ‘stop, quit’ (for a list of other verbs known to govern this form, see Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 140). In the present corpus, no such forms are attested. Instead, the infinitive is used in this context (42).

- (42) *bäna=l* *häjttám* *hállat*
dog.SG.NOM=be.PRS.3SG stop.PST.PTCP bark.INF
'The dog has stopped barking.' (SA, elicited)

When presented with the clause in (43), noted by Collinder in Sádek, SA accepted it, but said that he himself would rather produce the clause given in (44), i.e., using the infinitive instead.

- (43) *heixtē* *kačātimēs*⁹³
stop.IMP.2SG ask.ACTELA
'Stop asking!' (Sádek, ULMA 15926: 20)

- (44) *hiejte gatjádít!*
 stop.IMP.2SG ask.INF
 ‘Stop asking!’ (SA, elicited)

The “verb abessive” (or “negative converb”, Ylikoski 2022: 140), found in Standard Lule Saami (e.g., *tjáledak* ~ *tjálek* ‘without writing’) is not attested

⁹² Note that the form *tjahkkähim-* differs from the verbal noun proper (standard *tjahkkähibme* ‘the act of sitting’); forms of this kind have been referred to as “short” or “shortened” verbal nouns (Wiklund 1915: 82–83, Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 104). The so-called “agentive passive participle” is not attested in the Forest dialect (cf. *vuõïⁿnēm* ‘seen’ in the clause *munnu vuõïⁿnēm al̥tō* [1DU.GEN see.AG.PASS.PTCP reindeer.doe.SG.NOM] ‘the reindeer doe seen by us (two)’; Wiklund 1915: 116; see also Ylikoski 2009: 130–135 on the corresponding North Saami form).

⁹³ For a speaker from Allevárre (Sw. *Västerberget*), Collinder has noted the corresponding form with an additional final vowel *-ε*: *kačātimēse* (ULMA 15926: 6).

in my data, although admittedly, this form was not specifically sought after in elicitation. I am not aware any verb abessives in the Forest dialect materials of Wiklund, Lindgren or Collinder either.⁹⁴

7. Conclusions and discussion

In this paper, I have described the inflectional verb morphology of Lule Saami, using ample original data from the critically endangered Forest dialect. Here, lexical verbs belong to one of three inflectional classes, and finite forms are inflected for person (first, second, third), number (singular, plural), tense (present, past) and mood (indicative, imperative). There are also a number of non-finite verb forms, including the infinitive, progressive, past participle, supine, connegative and passive past participle. Two non-lexical verbs (the negative auxiliary and *lä-* ‘be’) have irregular inflection. Both finite and non-finite verbs are formed by means of adding suffixes, as well as by the stem-internal processes of consonant gradation and stem-final vowel alternations.

The negation of *lä-* ‘be’ is highly irregular in this variety and would merit further investigation. Particularly noteworthy are the plural forms, in which there is a stem *ällě-* ‘be not’ that takes regular subject suffixes (e.g., *ällěp* ‘we are not’, *ěllijma* ‘we were not’). These forms, which have not been previously described, stem from an amalgamation of the negative auxiliary and the verb ‘be’. Also in the singular there are amalgamated forms, such as *illiv* ‘I was not’. With the exception of the negation of *lä-* ‘be’, however, the verb forms attested in the corpus largely agree with the Lule Saami standard language. In this respect, the Forest dialect could indeed be seen as a “typical central dialect” of Lule Saami, as it has been described by Collinder (1938: 3).

Nevertheless, the description of the verb inflection presented here differs in several respects from the picture painted in pedagogical materials on Lule Saami, such as Spiik (1989) and Kejonen (2013). Most importantly, a number of inflectional forms found in previous descriptions of the language are not attested in the data. These forms include verbs in the dual number and the potential mood, as well as synthetic conditional forms. Imperative forms in the first and third person are also unattested in the corpus, as are forms of the “imperative II” mood. For the negative auxiliary verb, no past tense forms were produced spontaneously by the interviewed speakers.

Taken together, the verb inflection of the Lule Saami Forest dialect appears to be less complex than that of the Lule Saami standard language: while a

⁹⁴ See also Wiklund (1915: 115), who notes that verb abessives are “rather uncommon and are preferably replaced by circumlocutions” (“Dessa former äro emellertid tämligen ovanliga och ersättas helst med omskrifningar”).

lexical verb can be inflected in 43 finite forms in the standard language, the present corpus features no lexical verb inflected in more than 14 finite forms. Further, some non-finite forms known from previous descriptions of the language are also unattested in the—admittedly small—corpus. While a more comprehensive study, drawing from a larger corpus of elicited and non-elicited speech, would perhaps show some of these forms to be productive in the Forest dialect, the overall tendency in this variety seems to be that of reduction in the verb morphology.

In many cases, the loss of inflectional verb morphology can likely be attributed to language contact and obsolescence. This is perhaps most evident in the loss of the dual number and the potential mood, in which the Forest dialect both reduces its morphological complexity and adapts to the co-territorial languages Swedish and Meänkieli, which lack corresponding forms.⁹⁵

In sum, the present study highlights a potential discrepancy between existing descriptions of Lule Saami and varieties of the contemporary spoken language. As such, this paper should be seen as a call for further documentation and description of Lule Saami as it is spoken today.

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⁹⁵ While there is a potential mood in Standard Finnish, the potential is not productive in Meänkieli (Pohjanen 2022: 106, Hansegård 1967: 96; 1988: 224, Airila 1912: 17, 167, Note 1).

Abbreviations

Grammatical abbreviations follow those listed in the Leipzig Glossing Rules with the following additions: ABE—abessive; ACTELA—action elative; AG—agentive; ATTR—attributive; CMPR—comparative; CNG—connegative; CORR—correlative; DPT—discourse particle; ELA—elative; ILL—illative; INE—inessive; IMPII—imperative II; NPM—negative polarity marker; POT—potential; SPRL—superlative; STR—strong grade; SUP—supine; WK—weak grade. Other abbreviations: Ger.—German; LE—Lars Eriksson; N/A—not attested; SA—Sören Andersson; Sw.—Swedish.

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