

KALAALLISUT: ESKIMO-ALEUT
Selected from
Piaasup pania Ronja
(*Ronia, The Robber's Daughter*)

RONIA (children's literature):

Ronia, who lives with her mother Lovis, father Matt, and his band of robbers in a castle in the woods befriends the son of a rival robber chieftain. Selected passages from:

Lindgren, A. 1994, *Piaasup pania, Ronja*, Atuakkiorfik, Nuuk. [Kalaallisut translation of Lindgren, A. 1981. *Ronja Rövardotter*.]

Also consulted:

Lindgren, A. 1981. *Ronja Røverdatter*. Danish translation.

Lindgren, A. 1983. *Ronia, The Robber's Daughter*. Puffin Books. English translation.

TRANSCRIPTION, GLOSSES & BACK-TO-ENGLISH TRANSLATION by Maria Bittner (9/20/2005).

Transcription and glosses as in Bittner (2005) 'Future Discourse in a Tenseless Language' *Journal of Semantics* 22(4). Paragraphs (§) as in the original.

TOPOLOGY: *if* initial field, *ib* initial boundary, *mf* middle field, *fb* final boundary, *ff* final field.

Kalaallisut uses these fields roughly as follows:

if: anaphoric link to prior discourse and/or set up the primary topical referent (\top);

ib: elaborate \top and/or:

(i) set up a secondary topical referent (\top'), or (ii) set up a backgrounded referent (\perp);

mf: background information about main verbal comment;

fb: main verbal comment about current topic(s) (*if*- \top & *ib*- \top' if present; otherwise \top from last S)

ff: elaborate and/or set up a new backgrounded referent (\perp') to be picked up by the upcoming *if*.

Only *fb* must be instantiated (by the main verb or complex predicate NV); all other topological fields are optional and, if instantiated, may be multiply instantiated (unlike syntactic nodes).

Passage A. Ronia practices not being frightened.

"Now you know what gray dwarfs are," said Matt when they were sitting in front of the fire, warming Ronia's cold feet.

"Yes, now I know what grey dwarfs are," said Ronia.

"But what you don't know is how to deal with them," Matt said. "If you're frightened, they can feel it a long way off. That's when they get dangerous."

§1. ENGLISH TRANSLATION (p. 17)

(1) "Yes," said Lovis, "that's true of all sorts of things. (2) So the safest thing is not to be frightened in Matt's Forest."

(3) "I'll remember that," Ronia said.

(4) Matt sighed and hugged her tightly. (5) "But you do remember what I told you to watch out for?"

§1. KALAALLISUT TRANSLATION (p. 22)

- (1a) “Ilu-muur-pu-q.”¹ *ib*
interior-head.for-IND.IV-3s
 “That/he’s right.”
- (1b) Lovis ila-li-i-vu-q. *if, fb*
Lovis part-add.to-apass-IND.IV-3s
 ...added Lovis.
- (2) “Tassa=mi *if*
that.is=emph
 “That is,
- suna=luunniit mianirsu-u-ssa-ssaa-sariaqar-pu-q. *mf, fb*
what=or/even watch.out-for-x.want-stop.habit-have.to-IND.IV-3s
 ...with anything, one has to [practice until] one stops feeling the urge
 to watch out.
- (3) Taamaattumik *if*
therefore
 Therefore...
- Mattisi-p urpip-passui-ni=il-lu-ni *ib*
Matt-sg.ERG tree-big.lot-pl.LOC=be-ELA_T-3s_T
 ...when one is in Matt’s Forest
- pingaar-nirsaa-vu-q irsi-nngin-ni-ssa-q.” *fb, ff*
be.important-most-IND.IV-3s be.afraid-not-∖n-prospective-sg.
 ...it is most important not to be afraid.”
- (4a) “Tamanna iqqa-ama-ssa-va-ra.” *if, fb*
that recall-result-x.expect-IND.TV-1s.3s
 “I’ll remember that,”
- (4b) Ronja niriursu-i-vu-q *if, fb*
Ronia promise-apass-IND.IV-3s
 ...Ronia promised.

¹ This is one of several idioms that reveal that Eskimos viewed *truth* as a goal of a quest, not an attainable end: (see also *text m'*, §1.(4) for an example of *paa-si-*):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paa-si-va-a
 <i>entrance-find-IND.TV-3s.3s</i>
 <i>(lit. ‘he found an entrance to it.’)</i>
 ‘he figured it out.’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ilu-muur-pu-q
 <i>interior-head.for-IND.IV-3s</i>
 <i>(lit. ‘this/he is heading for the interior.’)</i>
 ‘this/he is correct, right.’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nassu-iar-pa-a
 <i>fog-clear-IND.TV-3s.3s</i>
 <i>(lit. ‘he defogged it.’)</i>
 ‘he explained it.’ |
|---|---|--|

- (5) Taama=lu uqar-iar-m-at anguta-ata *if, ib*
thus=and say-stage-FCT₁-3s₁ father-3s₁.sg.ERG
And when she said that, her father...
- pakku-taar-luar-pa-a. *fb*
hug-give-well-IND.TV-3s.3s
...gave her a big hug.
- (6) “Mannakkum=mi iqqaa-sinnaa-lir-pi-git *if, fb*
now=emph remember-can-begin-QUE-2s.3p
“But will you now be able to remember
- suu-t mianirsur-vigi-ssa-llu-git?” *ff*
what-pl watch.out-loc.of-x.want-ELA_T-3p₁
...what [we] want [you] to watch out for?”

§2. ENGLISH TRANSLATION (p. 17), *corrected* based on the DANISH TRANSLATION (p. 23):

(1) Yes, she remembered that. (2) And in the days that followed, Ronia watched out for what was dangerous and practiced not being frightened. (3) She was to be careful not to fall into the river, Matt had said, so she hopped, skipped, and jumped warily over the slippery stones along the riverbank, where the river rushed most fiercely. (4) *She couldn't very well stay in the forest and practice watching out not to fall into the river.* (5) *If the practice were to be of any use, it had to be by the rushing river and nowhere else.* (6) To reach *the rushing waterfalls*, she had to climb down Matt's Mountain, which fell in a sheer drop to the river. (7) That way she could also practice not being frightened. (8) The first time it was difficult; she was so frightened that she had to shut her eyes. (9) But bit by bit she became more daring, and soon she knew where the crevices were, where she could place her feet, and where she had to cling with her toes in order to hang on and not pitch backward into the rushing water.

§2. KALAALLISUT TRANSLATION (p. 22–23)

- (1) Tassami, mannakkut Ronja-p *if, ib*
sure now Ronia-ERG
Sure, now Ronia
- suu-t mianirsur-vigi-ssa-llu-git iqqa-ama-sinnaa-lir-pa-i. *mf, fb*
what-pl watch.out-loc.of-x.want-ELA_T-3p₁ recall-result-can-begin-IND.TV-3s.3p
...was able to remember what she was supposed to watch out for.
- (2) Mattisi-p uqar-vigi-sima-va-a *if, fb*
Matt-sg.ERG say-to-prf-IND.TV-3s.3s
Matt had said to her
- kuum-mut nakkar-ni-ssa-q mianirsur-vigi-ssa-ga-a. *ff*
river-sg.DAT fall-v\ñ-prospective-sg watch.out-loc.of-x.want-ELA₁.TV-3s₁.3s
...that she was to watch out lest [she] fall into the river.

- (3) Taamaattumik *if*
therefore
 Therefore,
- kuu-p sina-a-ni *ib*
river-sg.ERG side-3s₁.sg-LOC
 ...on the banks of the river
- ujaqqa-t manil-luinnar-tu-t aamma=lu
stone-pl.ERG smooth-absolutely-iv\cn-pl.ERG also=and
- kuu-p qurlurtu-isa uluria-nar-tu-t
river-sg.ERG waterfall-3s₁.pl.ERG fear-inducing-iv\cn-pl.ERG
- iqqa-an-ni
vicinity-3p.pl-LOC
 ...in places with completely smooth stones and dangerous waterfalls
- uluria-nar-nir-siu-i-llu-ni *mf*
fear-inducing-most-scan.for-apass-ELA_T-3s_T
 ...she [would]_{next.line} look for the most dangerous of the lot and
- pissig-ar-suataar-tar-pu-q, *fb*
jump-keep-with.all.might-habit-IND.IV-3s
 ...keep jumping around with all her might
- nakka-nngin-ni-ssa-ni sungiu-sar-lu-gu. *ff*
fall-not-v\cn-prospective-3s_T.sg get.used.to-act.to.cause-ELA_T-3s₁
 ...practicing not falling in.
- (4) Urpip-pasuar-ni=il-lu-ni *if*
tree-big.lot-pl.LOC=be-ELA_T-3s_T
 While staying in the forest,
- kuum-mut nakka-nngin-ni-ssa-q *ib*
river-sg.DAT fall-not-v\cn-prospective-sg
- ilin-niar-sinnaa-nngi-la-a. *fb*
learn-try-can-not-IRR-3s.3s
 ...she couldn't practice to learn [how] not to fall into the river.
- (5) Ilin-nia-ga-ssa-q ili-kka-ssa-gu-ni-uk *if*
learn-try-tv\cn-prospective-sg learn-completely-x.want-HYP_T-3s₁-3s
 If one wanted to learn this skill fully,
- mianirsur-vi-ssa-q tikil-lu-gu *mb*
watch.out-loc.of-prospective-sg come.to-ELA-3s
- ilin-niar-tariaqar-pu-q, *fb*
learn-try-have.to-IND.IV-3s
 ...one had to go where one had to watch out to try to learn it

- alla-mi pi-nna-ni. ff
other-sg.LOC do.that-NON_T-3s_T
 ...not [try to learn it] anywhere else.
- (6) Kuu-p qurlurtu-a tiki-ssa-gu-ni-uk if
river-sg.ERG waterfall-3s_L.sg come.to-x.want-HYP_T-3s_T-3s
 If she wanted to reach the waterfall,
- Mattisi-p Qaqa-ati-gut innaa-qqis-su-kkut ib
Matt-sg.ERG Mountain-3s_L.sg-VIA cliff-have.good-iv\cn-sg.VIA
- tikit-tariaqar-pa-a. fb
come.to-have.to-IND.TV-3s.3s
 ...she had to reach it via Matt's Mountain, which was very steep.
- (7) Taama-tut sungiu-sar-nir-mi-gut if
thus-EQU get.used.to-act.to.cause-v\cn-3s_T.sg-VIA
 By practicing in this way
- irsi-nngin-ni-ssa-q aamma ib
be.afraid-not-v\cn-prospective-sg also
- sungiu-sar-pa-a. fb
get.used.to-act.to.cause-IND.TV-3s.3s
 ...she also practiced not being afraid.
- (8) Siullir-mik am-mu=kaq-qaar-a-mi if
first-sg.MOD bottom-sg.DAT=go-first-FCT_T-3s_T
 The first time she climbed down
- nangia-ngaar-a-mi ib
be.dizzy.with.fear-very.much-FCT_T-3s_T
 ...she was so dizzy with fear that
- siqunngir-lu-ni am-mu=kar-sima-vu-q. mf, fb
shut.eyes-ELA-3s bottom-sg.DAT=go-prf-IND.IV-3s
 ...she climbed down with her eyes shut.
- (9) Kisianni if
but
 But [then]
- sapiil-li-saar-tuar-lu-ni ib
daring-get.more-keep.acting.to-always-ELA_T-3s_T
- am-mu=kar-tar-nir-mi-gut
bottom-sg.DAT=go-habit-v\cn-3s_T.sg-VIA
 ...in the course of her ever more daring climbs to the bottom

paasi-lir-sima-va-a fb
understand-begin-prf-IND.TV-3s.3s
 ...she figured out

salliarna-t miki-su-nnguu-galui-l=luunniit su-mi=in-nir-i, ff
crevice-pl be.small-iv\cn-little-...but-pl=even what-sg.LOC-be-v\3p1.pl
 ...where all the crevices where, even tiny little ones,

taama=lu isikka-mi-nut
thus=and foot-3s_T.pl-DAT

akimmi-vvi-ssa-tut atur-sinaa-sa-ni,
push.against-loc.of-prospective-EQU use-can-tv\3s_T.pl
 ...and so could use them as footholds,

imaluunniit putukku-ni
or big.toe-3s_T.sg

salliarna-aqqa-mut surlir-mut najumma-tsir-tis-sinnaa-llu-gu
crevice-tiny-sg.DAT which-sg.DAT cling.tight-bit.by.bit-cause-can-ELAT-3s₁
 ...or to which crevices she could cling with her big toe while climbing,

qurlurtu-mut qaput-tu-innar-mut
waterfall-sg.DAT foaming-iv\cn-V-sg.DAT

nivir-lu-ni nakka-rusu-nngik-ku-ni.
fall.backwards-ELAT-3s_T fall-want-not-HYP-3s_T

...if she didn't want to pitch backwards into the waterfall all [white] with foam.

§3. ENGLISH TRANSLATION (p. 17)

- (1) What luck, she thought, to find a place where she could both watch out that she didn't fall in *and* practice not being frightened!

§3 KALAALLISUT TRANSLATION (p. 23)

- (1a) Ila manna nassari-sima-ga-kku if
isn't.it? here discover-prf-FCT-1s.3s

iluatsitsi-sima-njaar-a-ma,
get.lucky-prf-very.much-FCT-3s_T
 Wasn't I lucky to find this place here so

imaallat kuum-mut nakkar-naviirsaar-ni-ssa-ra ib
what.luck! river-sg.DAT fall-try.not.to-v\3n-prospective-1s.sg

aamma=lu irsi-naviirsaar-ni-ssa-ra
also=and be.afraid-try.not.to-v\3n-prospective-1s.sg

ta-maa-ni ilin-niar-pa-ra, mf, fb
ana-here-LOC learn-try-IND.TV-1s.3s
 ...lucky me is now practicing *both* not falling into the river *and* not being afraid.

- (1b) unin-nga-til-lu-ni *if*
stop-result-DUR-ELA_T-3s_T
taama-tut iqqarsar-pu-q. *mf, fb*
thus-EQU think-IND.IV-3s
...she thought during a pause.

§4 ENGLISH TRANSLATION (p. 17)

(1) So her days passed. (2) Ronia watched out and practiced more than Matt and Lovis knew, and in the end she was like a healthy little animal, strong and agile and afraid of nothing. (3) Not of grey dwarfs, not of wild harpies, not of getting lost in the forest, and not of falling into the river. (4) So far she had not begun to watch out for Hell's Gap, but she planned to start soon.

§4 KALAALLISUT TRANSLATION (p. 23)

- (1) Tassa Ronja-p ullu-i *if, ib*
so Ronia-sg.ERG day-3s₁.pl
taama-tut ingirla-sar-pu-t. *mf, fb*
thus-EQU go.on-habit-IND.IV-3p
So Ronia's days passed in such pursuits.

- (2) Angajuqqav-isa nalu-a-at *if, fb*
parent-3s.pl.ERG not.know-IND.TV-3p.3s
Her parents didn't know

pani-tsik qanuq *ff*
daughter-3p_T.sg how

mianirsur-ni-ssa-mut
watch.out-v\N-prospective-sg.DAT

sungiu-sar-luar-tigi-nir-su-q.
get.used.to-act.to.cause-well-that.much-x.wonder-ELA₁-3s₁
...how well their daughter had been practicing watching out.

- (3) Maannakkum=mi *if*
now=for
For by now

assigi-lir-pa-a *fb*
resemble-begin-IND.IV-3s.3s
...she had become like

uumasu-nngua-q nukit-tuu-q, iqa-at-su-q *ff*
animal-little-sg strength-with.much-sg stiff-contrary-iv\cn-sg
...a little animal, strong, agile

su-nil=luunniit irsigi-sa-qa-nngit-su-q.
what-pl.MOD=or/even fear-tv\N-have-not-iv\cn-sg
...and without fear of anything whatsoever.

- (4) Inu-arullikka-t qasir-tu-t, *if*
person-unusually.small-pl grey-iv\cn-pl,
 Grey dwarfs,
 urpip-passui-t arnaq-qua-ssaav-i,
tree-big.lot-pl.ERG woman-ugly.old-big-3p₁.pl
 ...forest harpies,
 urpip-passuar-ni tammar-ni-ssa-q
tree-big.lot-pl.LOC get.lost-v\N-prospective-sg
 ...the prospect of getting lost in the forest
 kuum-mul=luunniit nakkar-ni-ssa-q
river-sg.DAT=or/even fall-v\N-prospective-sg
 ...or (even) the prospect of falling into the river,
 irsigi-unnaar-luinnar-sima-va-i. *fb*
fear-cess-totally-prf-IND.TV-3s.3p
 ...she had totally ceased to fear them.
- (5) Nakkar-naviirsaar-nir-mi *if*
fall-try.not.to-v\N-sg.LOC
 When practicing not falling,
 sungiu-sa-nngi-sa-tua-a *ib*
get.used.to-act.to.cause-not-tv\N-only-3s₁.sg
 the only exercise she had not (yet) practiced
 tassa-a-vu-q *fb*
that-be-IND.IV-3s
 ...was
 Asirur-sima-vvi-up Quuru-a-nut nakkar-naviirsaar-ni-ssa-q. *ff*
break-prf-loc.of-sg.ERG gap-3s₁.sg-DAT fall-try.not.to-v\N-prospective-sg
 ...to try not to fall into Hell's Gap. (*lit.* Breakup Gap)
- (6) Iqqarsaatig-a-a=lu *fb*
think.about-IND.TV-3s.3s=and
 And she was thinking about it,
 irniinnaq taak-un=nar-umaar-lu-ni *ff*
soon there-DAT=go-x.hope-ELA_T-3s_T
 ...hoping to go there soon
 mianirsur-ni-ssa-q ilin-niar-iartur-lu-gu.
watch.out-v\N-prospective-sg learn-try-go.to-ELA_T-3s₁
 ...to practice watching out [for danger].