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### **The phonetics of nominalization in Tłı̄chǫ**

This paper takes at its starting point study of the syntactic functions of nominalized clauses in Tłı̄chǫ (Marinakis et al 2010, Saxon 1998, 2000, 2003, 2011). The vowel quality of Proto-Athabaskan nominalizer suffix *\*-i* is neutralized in Tłı̄chǫ and appears as distinctive vowel length on the clause-final element (Marinakis 2004, Saxon 2000). This paper examines the phonetics of the nominalizer by addressing the following questions:

- i. what is the realization of distinctive vowel length in acoustic terms?
- ii. is vowel length in nominalization realized the same way as lexical vowel length?
- ii. what is the interaction (in acoustic terms) of tone and vowel length in Tłı̄chǫ nominalization?

This work builds on a pilot study by Martel and Saxon 2005, but goes beyond it in its focus on the nominalizing suffix.