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## DEVELOPMENT OF YAKUT FIGURATIVE VERBS DESCRIBING PERSON'S WALK (COMPARED TO MONGOLIAN PARALLELS)

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### Abstract

The paper deals with ways of semantic change in Yakut figurative verbs describing person's walk in comparison with their Mongolian parallels. A total of 11 stems describing walk of human and animals are analyzed. No fully identical stems have been found. It shows that each Yakut figurative verb describing person's walk in some degree demonstrates semantic change. The present paper continues a series of research papers elaborating on the category of figurativeness in Yakut in comparison with Mongolian. Figurative verbs are the most vivid and expressive part of Yakut vocabulary but, unfortunately, they gradually go out of use. As compared to other Turkic languages they make up a large layer of vocabulary which is characterized by specific semantics. They are present only in those Turkic languages that were significantly influenced by Mongolian. To clarify the historical development of the Yakut language it is necessary to study contacts between Yakut and Mongolian. The illustrative material was taken from the Great Explanatory Dictionary of the Yakut Language edited by P. A. Sleptsov, Learner's Dictionary of Yakut Figurative Verbs, and the fourvolume Great Academic Mongolian-Russian Dictionary edited by A. Luvsendendeva. The illustrative lexical material compared with Mongolian showed that Yakut figurative verbs describing person's walk were based on the following ways of semantic change: narrowing of the semantic content of the word, association based on similarity (similarity in appearance of the compared subjects), and semantic derivation.

## **Keywords**

Figurative verbs - Person's walk - Semantic development - Yakut language - Yakut-Mongolian parallels

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## Introduction

On the history of studying language contacts between Yakut and Mongolian.

The Yakut language belongs to the Uygur group of Turkic languages. It considerably differs from other related Turkic languages by the presence of a large number of Mongolian parallels, which was pointed out already in the first sources of the Yakut language<sup>1</sup>.

O. N. Böhtlingk in On the Language of the Yakut (1851) emphasized that "the Yakut took a countless number of words" from Mongolian. He compares Yakut and Mongolian words throughout his book. O. N. Böhtlingk concluded that Yakut is an early Turkic language that later borrowed a countless number of Mongolian words and some grammatical forms<sup>2</sup>.

Academician V.V. Radloff in The Yakut Language in its Relation to Turkic Languages (1908) stated that 452 (25.9 %) from 1,748 indivisible Yakut stems are of the Mongolian origin<sup>3</sup>. In conclusion, he characterized Yakut as an unknown in its origin, Mongolized, later on Turkicized language.

N. N. Poppe noted on Radloff's opinion: "One can hardly agree with V. V. Radloff's opinion. The point is that despite V. V. Radloff's opinion characteristic features of the Yakut language are extremely archaic the Yakut language is an utterly important dialect for Turkic linguistics"<sup>4</sup>.

E. I. Ubryatova with respect to Radloff's suggestion that Yakut was not originally a Turkic language points out that "non-Turkic elements are not systemic", being just separate elements in vocabulary, morphology, and syntax<sup>5</sup>. Thus, V. V. Radloff's conclusions on the origins of the Yakut language did not find the support by his colleagues. It must be emphasized that Radloff's opinion itself suggests a huge role that Mongolian (Mongolic languages) played in development of the modern Yakut language.

Well known E. K. Piekarski's Dictionary of the Yakut Language provides comparative material from Mongolic languages adequate for its time. Of great help for him were V. V. Radloff, V. V. Bartold, B. Ya. Vladimirtsov, V. L. Kotvich, N. F. Katanov, and N. N. Poppe. The Dictionary includes about 900 Yakut stems with Mongolian, Buryat, and Kalmyk comparisons<sup>6</sup>.

In 1920s and 1930s the Paper Collection of the Society Sakha Käskilä published the paper by Bishop Guriy "The Yakut Language in its Relation to the Turkic and Mongolian languages". Based on V. V. Radloff's The Yakut Language in its Relation to Turkic Languages he carried out phonetic and morphological analysis of the Yakut language, using abundant comparisons from Turkic and Mongolic languages.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G. F. Miller, History of Siberia Vol: 1 (Moscow, Leningrad: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1937) y W. Schott, "Über die Jakutische Sprache", Archiv für wissenschaftliche Kunde von Russland (1843): 333–342.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> O. N. Böhtlingk, On the language of the Yakut (Novosibirsk: Science, 1990).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> V. I. Rassadin, Mongolian-Buryat borrowings in Siberian Turkic languages (Moscow: Science, 1980).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> N. N. Poppe, Learner's grammar of the Yakut language (Moscow: Central Publishing house, 1926). <sup>5</sup> E. I. Ubryatova, a comparative study of phonetic characteristics of the language spoken in some

areas of the Yakut ASSR (Moscow: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1960).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> E. I. Okoneshnikov, Perkarskiy as a lexicographer (Novosibirsk: Science, 1982).

He suggested that there was a time when Yakut was not quite Turkicized, it adopted Turkic stems the way that were not characteristic for Turkic speakers. Also, after studying amorphous, rigid morphological forms he assumed that both languages were closely interrelated in the earliest periods of the history of Yakut<sup>7</sup>.

Later, almost all scholars studying Yakut touched upon Mongolian borrowings in some way (E. I. Ubryatova, L. N. Kharitonov, S. Kałuziński, N. K. Antonov, N. D. Dyachkovskiy, G. V. Popov, P. A. Sleptsov, V. I. Rassadin, N. N. Shirobokova, etc.).

E. I. Ubryatova in Investigation of the Yakut Syntax (1950) was the first to recognize that Mongolian parallels came to Yakut from Old Mongolian in around 13th-14th century<sup>8</sup>.

St. Kałuziński in Mongolische Elemente in der jakutischen Sprache (1961) collected and described more than 2,500 words. He concludes that "the analyzed words may have been borrowed by the Yakut from the Mongol not earlier than in the 12th-13th centuries and not later that in the 15th or even the 16th century"<sup>9</sup>. Regarding borrowings from Mongolic languages into Turkic A. M. Shcherbak says: "It must be mainly about relatively late borrowings (after the 13th century) from Mongolic to Turkic languages. One of the first places here belongs to Yakut. The conditions of development of the Yakut language after migration of a number of Turkic tribes to the Northeast inhabited by the Evenki contributed to deep and intense interaction with Mongolic languages<sup>10</sup>.

N. K. Antonov and V. I. Rassadin provide a lexico-semantic description of Mongolian borrowings. N. K. Antonov draws new conclusions: Yakutia was first populated by Mongolic tribes and only after that by Turkic ones. Turkic speaking Yakut ancestors, moving from upper to the middle Lena, found places already inhabited by sparse Mongolic speaking tribes that since earliest times had come to the Lena and its eastern tributaries from the upper Amur originally inhabited by the Mongols, as suggested by many scholars<sup>11</sup>. V. I. Rassadin says that "the Mongolic tribes that borrowed these terms to the Yakut had inhabited the local nature long time ago, in any case, much earlier than Turkic ancestors of the Yakut who had moved to those areas.

The phonetic form of most Mongolian loanwords in Yakut preserved characteristics of the medieval Mongolian language. Also, earliest Mongolian loanwords are present<sup>12</sup>.

The question of the source of borrowings remains open as most Mongolian loanwords in Yakut are neutral to modern Mongolic languages. The parallels to these words are common Mongolic and are represented in all Mongolic languages.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> G. Stepanov, "Yakut language in its relation to Turkic and Mongolian languages", Collection of papers of the research society "Saqa keskile", num 5 (1928): 29-60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> E. I. Ubryatova, Investigation of syntax of the Yakut language. Vol: 1 (Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies USSR Academy of Sciences, 1950).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> St. Kałuziński, Some questions of Mongolian loanwords in the Yakut language (Preliminary notes on "Dictionary of the Yakut Language" by E. K. Piekarski), Papers of the Institute of Language, Literature and History YF SB USSR Academy of Sciences, Vol: 3 num 8 (1961): 5-21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> A. M. Shcherbak, Turkic-Mongolic linguistic contacts in the history of Mongolic languages (Saint-Petersburg: Science, 2005).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> N. K. Antonov, Material on the historical vocabulary of the Yakut language (Yakutsk: Book Publishing House, 1971).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> N.N. Shirobokova, Historical development of Yakut consonantism (Novosibirsk: Science, 2001).

## Results and discussion

In contrast to other Turkic languages, Yakut shows a large layer of vocabulary formed by figurative words and derived verbs, adjectives, and adverbs expressing "sensory images of motion, object's characteristics and internal state of an organism". Figurative verbs are characterized by specific semantics formed "through comparison, through substitution of various semantic elements based on their relation" <sup>13</sup>.

Figurative verbs are a characteristic feature of Mongolic languages in contrast to the Turkic. This group of verbs is found only in some Turkic languages that were significantly influenced by Mongolian.

L. A. Afanasiev found about 4,600 figurative words based on 1,340 stems in Piekarski's dictionary, which makes a tenth part of this remarkable body of work<sup>14</sup>. The present paper continues the study of the category of figurativeness in Yakut in comparison with Mongolian<sup>15</sup>. Researchers note that "the studies of the figurative layer of a language may further contribute to revealing common and specific characteristics of the languages under comparison"<sup>16</sup>.

The paper deals with development ways of semantics in Yakut figurative verbs describing person's walk in comparison with their Mongolian parallels. A total of 11 stems are analyzed. It should be noted that no fully identical ones were found. It means that each Yakut figurative verb describing person's walk in some degree demonstrates semantic changes considered in the present paper.

## Narrowing of the semantic content in Yakut figurative verbs

Narrowing of meaning (reduction of semantic capacity) is considered to be characteristic for loanwords. First of all, it stems from the historical background of the borrowing process. Such words are hard to record as they are not part of the general vocabulary of a language.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> L. N. Kharitonov, Type of verbal stems in the Yakut language (Yakutsk: Publishing House of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 1954).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> L. A. Afanasiev, "Phonosemantics of Yakut figurative words", Candidate of sciences thesis abstract. Yakut Institute of Language, Literature and History SB RAS, Yakutsk. 1993.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> V. D. Monastyrev & S. M. Prokopieva, Figurative verbs of visual perception in the modern Yakut language and their equivalents in the Mongolian language, Science and Society, (2017): 118-126; N. N. Efremov & V. D. Monastyrev, "Figurative usage of some Yakut motion verbs in comparison with certain Mongolian verbs", Altai Hakbo Vol: 29 (2019): 205–221; A. Shamaeva & S. Prokopieva, "Explication of Mongolian parallels in relevant Yakut concepts", International Conference on Man-Power-Law-Governance: Interdisciplinary Approaches (MPLG-IA 2019), num 374 (2019): 27–30. https://doi.org/10.2991/mplg-ia-19.2019.6; A. E. Shamaeva & S. M. Prokopieva, "Concept analysis of Yakut figurative verbs with Mongolian parallels". The Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art and Communication, Special Edition (2018): 1778–1785. DOI: 10.7456/1080SSE/236; A. E. Shamaeva & S. M. Prokopieva, "Mongolian loanwords in the figurative words of the Yakut language (illustrated by verbs of body parts)", Journal of History Culture and Art Research Vol: 7 num 4 (2018): 462–471. http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v7i4.1870 y V. D. Monastyrev, Structural-semantic characteristics of figurative verbs describing motion. In Comparative Investigation of Turkic and Mongolic Languages, International conference led by the Northeastern Federal University, Yakutsk. 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> S.Prokopieva; V. Monastyrev & P. Shestakova, "Representation of spatial references in Yakut and Kazakh phraseology", Amazonia Investiga, Vol: 8 num 19 (2019): 237-245. Retrieved from https://amazoniainvestiga.info/index.php/amazonia/article/view/225

Narrowing of semantic content of a word results when it loses its general, more universal meaning which is substituted by a narrower or borrowed meaning of a polysemantic word to form a special meaning, in this case, a more detailed description of people with various walks, e.g.

Дьирэй 'run, move upright (of a slim person with long legs)' (GEDYL). Абылаабытын аһарынан иһиллээбитэ - өрүс үөһэ өттүгэр киһи саната суордуу кыланар. Уол ол диэки сүүрэн дьирэйдэ. 'Taking a breath, from up the river he heard someone's scream. The guy ran there moving upright.'

This figurative verb is considered a Mongolian loanword in Yakut, with its meaning being related to the meaning of the second homonym of the Mongolian verb жирийх with a more general and broad meaning 'rush, flit' (GAMRD). In the Yakut figurative verb the seme of movement remains but the meaning of swiftness is lost to some extent. The reference part that indicates who or what the meaning is referred to is put in the forefront. In this case, the differential seme of the Yakut figurative verb is 'an upright, vertical spatial position of a subject'. The word semantics specifies external features of the subject of movement, i.e. movement of a slim person with long legs is described. When interpreted, this part of semantics is usually parenthesized.

In some instances a Yakut verb differs from its Mongolian parallel by its structural model which being characterized as a verb aspect develops word forms with a lexicalized meaning. For example, the figurative verb дайбалдьый while having a marker of heterogeneous frequency -лдьый is used as a separate lexical unit with the meaning 'walk with a clumsy swaying motion (of a stout, corpulent person)'. Суон бађайы ођонньор суол устун нэhиилэ хааман дайбалдьыйда. 'A very stout old man waddled on the road, hardly walking'. The meaning of the verb in Mongolian agrees with the second lexico-semantic variant (further, LSV2) of the polysemantic verb дайвалзах 'sway from side to side; tilt'. Its main, more universal meaning (LSV1) is 'sway, swing, heave' and the third figurative meaning 'hesitate, be indecisive' (GAMRD, Vol. II, 656) is not found in Yakut.

Тhe word form нэлэлдьий (< нэлэй 'spread out widely' + heterogeneous frequency indicator -лдьый) is used as an independent lexical unit meaning 'walk fast, move around, dart (of a person with a broad chest in a wide open shirt)'. Сүөдэр Хомуоһап хоско араастаан нэлэлдьийэн хаама сылдьар. 'Fedor Kovshov is walking around the room with his shirt wide open' (LDFVYL). This Yakut figurative verb has a lexical parallel in Mongolian нэлэлзэх: 1. move (of something large); 2. stretch, spread (of a running horse) (GAMRD). The second meaning нэлэлзех is not present in Yakut. Convergent development of semantics is expressed in main meanings. In the Yakut verb it results in narrowing of subject's external characteristics. While in Mongolian it means movement of something large, in Yakut it describes person's walk in a wide open shirt.

## Semantic change based on similarity

Metaphoric interpretation of the Mongolian word is of more complex nature: the way of moving is compared to external characteristics of the subject of movement. Therewith, semantic elements in Yakut and Mongolian are built on associative relations between movements of human, animals, and plants.

Хайбай 'walk, move wiggling one's wide hips' has the following forms: хайбалдьый, хайбаналаа, хайбаннаа, хайбаннас, хайбаннат, хайбараннаа. The Mongolian parallel is хайвах 'move on water, float (of waterfowl)' (GAMRD). Mongolian shows the following derivatives describing one's walk: хайвганах 'move, walk, swinging; waddle'; хайвгар 'swinging, gliding (of one's walk)'. Both languages demonstrate metaphoric description of a swinging motion which is compared to that of waterfowl. In Yakut, semantics is specialized in expressing external characteristics of the subject of movement 'wiggling one's wide hips', e.g.: Эмээхсин ыађайатын кыбынан, сир астыы тыа диэки хайбайа турда. 'The old woman, having taken the birch bark bucket, started wiggling towards the woods to pick berries'.

Сырбай 'run, move fast, quickly, wriggle, spin (usually of slim people with slender build' (GEDYL) has the following forms: сырбалдьый <сырбай + the indicator of heterogeneous frequency –лдьый, сырбаннаа <сырбай + the indicator of homogenous frequency –ннаа, сырбаналаа <сырбай + higher frequency – diminutive indicator –налаа. The Mongolian parallel шарвах, ширвэх 'wave, wag' has the following word forms: шарваганах, шарвадах, шарвалзах, шарвалзуулах (GAMRD). It describes a movement with reference to an animal's tail (wave from side to side). In Yakut, the verb describes person's movement, characterizing external characteristics of the subject in detail (of slim people with slender build), e.g.: Оболор Дыгыйа кэнниттэн сырсан сырбайдылар. 'The kids wriggled after Dïgïja'. The major meaning of the verb ходьой is 'move by jumping, with a hopping walk, being tall and slim'; LSV2 is 'move, run by jumping, stretching (usually of the hoofed)' (GEDYL). Compare with Mongolian годойх 'stick out, take a vertical position, move up (e.g. of a short tail)' (GAMRD). While vertical development of spatial movement is common, semantics develops divergently when expressing the subject of movement. At айаннаан ходьойор. 'A horse is galloping, stretching forward'. Грузин омук кыыha мађаћыын диэки хааман ходьойо турда. 'A Georgian girl went towards the shop with a jaunty, springy gait'.

Нуођалдьый (< нуођай + homogeneous frequency indicator –лдьый) 'walk, move smoothly, gently, slowly swaying from side to side (of a woman). Compare Mongolian найгалзах: 1. sway, swing, wave (e.g. of trees); 2. lean to a side, wave; reel' (GAMRD). The Mongol parallel describing a swaying motion of phytonyms (e.g. trees) develops into a figurative description of woman's walk in Yakut, e.g.: Эдэр дьахтар тыаha суохтук дугунан, нуођалдьыйан тахсан тиийэн кэллэ. 'A young woman came in quietly, swaying gently'. Надя устан эрэрдии оргууй нуођалдьыйан макеты тула эргийэ хаамта. 'Nadia walked around the model, swaying gently as if floating'.

## Semantic change as a result of semantic derivation in Yakut

Further, we deal with polysemantic figurative verbs the meanings of which are related through semantic derivation that as a semantic way of word formation develops an integral semantic structure of a polysemantic word. Дьγκκγй demonstrates three ways of semantic change: LSV1 'lean one's body forwards, stretching one's neck, stooping (usually when pulling something heavy)'; LSV2 'keep moving forwards persistently'; LSV3 'stretching one's neck forward, swallow some food (usually hard) with effort (without chewing)' (GEDYL). The Mongolian parallel verb зγтгэх has two LSV: LSV1 'pull, draw, drag with force'; LSV2 'try hard, put effort, work' (GAMRD). The common seme 'pull with force' is expressed in the major meaning of the compared verbs. In modern Yakut in contrast to Mongolian, the verb дьγккүй has an additional seme describing person's walk. Further, this meaning forms a semantic derivative describing determination in one's motions. Therewith, one's emotional

state is characterized through the figurative meaning 'decidedly, persistently', e.g. Бытаарбакка, тохтообокко биир дэхситик дьүккүйэн иниэххэ. 'Without lingering, without stopping, let us persistently move forward'. The illustrative material shows that the semantic widening of the word in Yakut forms the base of its semantic structure.

The Yakut verb тэлбиннээ shows three ways of semantic change. The major LSV1 is 'fly, slowly flapping the wide spread wings (of a bird)'. The next two LSV figuratively describe person's movements and actions: LSV2 'walk around, hang around, idle', 'do something slowly, but without stopping during a whole day, walk around for a long time'; LSV3 'hardly go, walk (of a sick or old person, animal). The Mongolian parallel verb дэлбэгиэх 'move, stir, heave (of some flat object sticking up)' (GAMRD) rather agrees with the major meaning in Yakut 'fly, slowly flapping the wide spread wings (of a bird)'. In Yakut, semantics is specialized in regard to the subject of motion. Further, the bird's movement (a slow flap of the wide spread wings when flying) is figuratively transferred to the description of a slow, long walk of a person or animal with additional connotation 'doing nothing', 'without stopping', 'with great difficulty'. Тугу да гынарын суох буолан, эн манна тэлбинниигин дуо? 'Do you have nothing to do that you are idling here?' Мин эрдэ утуйуом, күнү быha дьиэ инигэр тэлбиннииртэн сылайдым. 'I'll go to bed early; I'm tired of walking around the house for the whole day'.

Хаадьай has two ways of semantic development in Yakut. The major LSV 'incline, slope, sink to one side' (LDFVYL) agrees with Mongolian хазайх 'incline, sink to one side' (GAMRD). The Mongolian verb has the following derivatives: хазайгалх 'bend, tilt to one side; curve'; хазайлт 'bending, moving aside'; хазайчихах 'sink to one side, lean over to one side'. In Yakut, as a result of semantic derivation based on metaphoric transfer this verb acquired a figurative use describing the manner walking of people and animals: LSV2 хаадьай 'walk with great difficulty, limping, hobble (of person, animal) (LDFVYL). Чанхаайап дьиэтин диэки нэћиилэ алтахтаан хаадьайа турда. 'Chankhaev hobbled towards his house, hardly moving his legs'. Нусхай LSV1 'bend, incline slowly and smoothly (of trees); LSV2 'bend over, fall, sink, lay down slowly, smoothly (of someone or something); LSV3 'hold oneself, move slowly, softly, without haste (of someone or something). Compare to Mongolian нусгай 'sore nose; running nose' (GEDYL). Divergent semantic development is observed. While the Mongolian word describes body's state, the Yakut word figuratively describes a floronym. The image of a slowly bending tree was transferred to description of a person falling asleep or moving smoothly. In addition, there is a potential gender-related seme as the verb usually describes woman's appearance or walk. Иза унаарыччы көрбөхтөөн кэбиһэ-кэбиһэ, сыыйа аллара түһэн нусхайан барда. 'Iza, slowly feeling drowsy, started sinking gently'. Өлөксөөс ыллык устун холку-холкутук хааман нусхайар. 'Aleksandra is walking on path calm and slowly'.

## Conclusions

Thus, the paper deals with some ways of semantic change in Yakut figurative verbs describing person's walk with their Mongolian parallels. Undoubtedly, the presented material cannot reveal all ways of development of figurative use in Yakut verbs.

The comparative lexical material suggests that Yakut figurative verbs describing person's walk are based on the following ways of semantic change: narrowing of semantic content, similarity association (similarity in appearance of compared objects), and semantic derivation. These ways of development of figurative use are a result of a long cognitive activity of man in the surrounding world. Narrowing of meaning (reduction of semantic

content) is believed to be characteristic for loanwords, first of all, as a result of historical circumstances of the borrowing process. These words are hard to record as they are not part of the general vocabulary. Figurative words represent the most interesting, expressive part of Yakut vocabulary. However, they unfortunately go out of use over time.

# **Sources and Abbreviations**

GAMRD – Great academic Mongolian-Russian dictionary. Ed. by A. Luvsandendeva, Ts. Tsedendamba. Vol. 1-4. Moscow: ACADEMIA, 2001-2002.

GEDYL – Great explanatory dictionary of the Yakut language. Ed. by V. I. Likhanov, N. E. Nesterov, P. A. Sleptsov. Vol. 1-15. Novosibirsk: Science, 2004-2017.

LDFVYL – Learner's dictionary of figurative verbs of the Yakut language. Ed. by V. D. Monastyrev, S. M. Prokopieva, A. E. Shamaeva. Yakutsk: Alaas, 2019.

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