Explication of Mongolian parallels in relevant Yakut concepts

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Abstract—The Yakut language belongs to the Uyghur group of Turkic languages. It has a special place among the Turkic languages due to its archaic nature and unique characteristics of vocabulary and grammar. It is distinct from related Turkic languages by abundance of Mongolian parallels also. Yakut-Mongolian relations are diachronically divided into earliest Yakut-Mongolian and later Yakut-Middle-Mongolian contacts (not before 12th-13th centuries and not later than 15th or even 16th century). Phonetically, most Mongolian parallels in Yakut retain features of the medieval Mongolian language. This body of Yakut vocabulary is generally believed to be Mongolian loanwords. The issue of the origin of borrowing is still open as most Mongolian loanwords in Yakut are neutral towards modern Mongolian languages. Their parallels are found and shared by all Mongolian languages. However, some scholars note a number of Yakut-Buryat parallels.

The purpose of the study is to find relevant concepts in dialect vocabulary of the Yakut language with Mongolian parallels. The analysis of explication of parallels from Mongolic languages in relevant Yakut concepts has not been studied before. The explanatory principle finds its specific meaning when comparing dialects of the modern Yakut language with parallels in Mongolic languages since interrelation of Turkic and Mongolic studies allows finding various explanations and providing each of them rational content. In the present paper, we have restricted ourselves to nouns functioning in Yakut dialect vocabulary. First of all, these are proper dialect words not present in the literary Yakut language. Preliminary observations show that it is dialect vocabulary that incorporates interesting original Mongolian parallels. Yakut dialect nouns with Mongolian parallels were classified according to semantic features into three groups: 1) Nature; 2) Living things; 3) Abstract notions. Each lexeme is provided by parallels from written Mongolian and modern Mongolian languages. In terms of lexico-semantic characteristics of Mongolian parallels, nouns in Yakut dialect vocabulary fall into three large terminological groups: names of various local landforms, names of instruments and terms of fishing. A great number of names of landforms and instruments are found in the North-Eastern groups of dialects, with the Kolyma patois standing out in bot categories. Terms for fishing are most abundant in the Vilui group of patois. The least number of Mongolian parallels is observed in the Central group of dialects; the reason is that the Yakut literary language is based on the Central dialect zone.

Keywords—Yakut language, Mongolian Parallels, Concept, Yakut dialect vocabulary, Yakut-Mongolian relations

I. INTRODUCTION

The Yakut language belongs to the Uyghur group of Turkic languages. It has a special place among the Turkic languages due to its archaic nature and unique characteristics of vocabulary and grammar. It is distinct from related Turkic languages by abundance of Mongolian parallels also. At present, problems of Yakut-Mongolian contacts are extensively studied (Shamaeva A.E., Prokopieva S.M., Borisov Y.P., Gogolev A.I., Semenova E.V., Nelunov A.G., Malysheva N.V., Bozhedonova A., Starostina Y., Pestereva K., Samsonova M., Ikonnikova A., Gadal S., Jochelson W. [1-11]).

Yakut-Mongolian relations are diachronically divided into earliest Yakut-Mongolian and later Yakut-Middle-Mongolian contacts (not before 12th-13th centuries and not later than 15th or even 16th century). Phonetically, most Mongolian parallels in Yakut retain features of the medieval Mongolian language. This body of Yakut vocabulary is generally believed to be Mongolian loanwords. The issue of the origin of borrowing is still open as most Mongolian loanwords in Yakut are neutral towards modern Mongolian languages. Their parallels are found and shared by all Mongolian languages. However, some scholars note a number of Yakut-Buryat parallels.

The purpose of the study is to reveal relevant concepts in dialect vocabulary of the Yakut language reflecting Mongolian parallels.

In the context of intensive development of cognitive linguistics, linguists are deeply involved in elaboration of concepts in the modern Yakut language (Prokopieva S.M., Monastyr V.D., Dmitrieva E.N., Kunzendorf M.H., Afanasyeva E. N., Savvinova G., Nikolaeva T.N., Prokopeva A.K., Gotovtseva L.M., Nikolaeva A.M., Ivanova R.P. [4, 5, 12-15]).

The study is based on general research principles: analysis, synthesis, induction, analogy, and comparison, the principle of system and comparative analysis.
In the present paper, we have restricted ourselves to nouns functioning in Yakut dialect vocabulary. Preliminary observations show that it is dialect vocabulary that incorporates interesting original Mongolian parallels. For example, northern Yakut call migratory birds өөрөөн, where өөрөө is a Mongolian words meaning ‘China’. Many migratory birds actually winter in China. According to historical data, Yakut ancestors (probably, Kurykans) had regular relations with China. This expression is supported by historical facts.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mongolian parallel lexical units in Yakut are classified according to semantic features.

A. Nature

Terms related to mountainous landscape. Нарық (Abiy, Sakkyryr) ‘gentle mountain slope’ [16], compare Written Mongolian нүүрэ ‘back, ridge’ [17], Buryat нүүрэ ‘back, backbone; ridge, upper part of something; surface extending above a surface’ [18], Buryat (Nizhne-Udinsk) нүүрэ ‘back’, Mongolian нүүрэн ‘back, backbone; spine, dorsal column; geographic term, ridge’ [19], Kalmyk нүүрэ ‘back, backbone; ridge; upper part of something; surface, elevation’ [20].

Terms describing landscape features: Боруу, барыма (Abiy, Zhitghans, Kobyi, Nam, Khamgalass) ‘elevation, upland seen from far away’ [21], compare: Mongolian бори ‘slope, descent; downward slope of a mountain’ [22]. Yakut боруу, барыма is semantically close to Buryat бору ‘upland, elevation, foot of a mountain’ [18] which does not rule out borrowing through Buryat. This lexeme with its derivatives is a known toponym in many districts of Yakutia [22].

Hydrographic terms: Күнө, күңө (Kolymskiy) ‘interconnected deep lakes’, compare Written Mongolian ҕүн ‘depth’ [23], Mongolian, Buryat ҕүн ‘depth, deep’ [24], Kalmyk ҕүн ‘depth, deep’ [20].

Atmospheric and natural phenomena: Сайым ‘spring snow’, Buryat (Alarskiy) ҕайы ‘spring water (only melt water)’ [25].

Names of metals, minerals, and substances. Чөр ‘slime, viscous slime, sticky wet substance’ [26], compare Written Mongolian ҕөр ‘slime, phlegm’.

Soil, vegetation: Дөөдөл (Zhitghans) ‘willow, white willow’ [16]. From Yakut ҕөөдөл ‘be tall and lean, lanky, stretch up’ < Mongolian; Buryat ҕөөдөл-, ҕөөдөл- ‘protrude; jut out’, ҕөөдөлэээ нархан ‘single (lit. jutting out) pine’, Khalkha ҕөөдөл- ‘protrude, stick out’ [27], Written Mongolian ҕөөдөлэээ, Mongolian ҕөөдөл ‘stick out; become lanky’ [23].

Seasons: Соойо мыйа (Olekminskiy) ‘April’ [16], compare Buryat соой ‘spring melting of snow’ [24].

B. Living things

Human and their life activity:

Human. Адоо (Verkhoyansk) ‘fool, chatterer whose words one cannot rely on’ [16], compare Written Mongolian ada ‘evel spirit, extravagant’, адату ‘raging, crazy’ [16], Written Mongolian ada, Mongolian ад ‘tempter, evil spirit (he flies, threatening people, spreading illness and evoking wilderness; devilish, satanic; extravagant, mad; wild, uncontrollable)’ [23], Buryat ada ‘house spirit, demon, evil spirit, devilry’ [18], Kalmyk ад ‘madness, insanity’ [20].

Illnesses: Адлаан (Vilui, Nyurba, Verkhne-Vilui, Zhiganskiy), адлаас (Ust-Aldan), адлаах (Pek.) ‘epidemic, epidemic disease’ [16], compare Buryat (West) адъан ‘smallpox’ [18], адъах ‘epidemic, infection’; compare Buryat (West) алб ‘smallpox’ [27].

Relations and properties: Ағаа (Pek.) ‘used by the lady of the house as a way of addressing her husband or a strange respectful man’, compare Written Mongolian абаа ‘respectful way of addressing an elder person’ [16], Written Mongolian абаа ‘a married woman; an elderly woman’ [19], абаа ‘a respectful way of addressing a married woman’ [19], Buryat абаа ‘elder brother; brother-in-law, husband’s elder brother; respectful way of addressing elder brother; obsolete, master’ [18], Kalmyk абаа ‘respectful way of addressing elders: honored, respected’ [20].

Instruments, various accessories: Чөдэр ‘wooden scraper to dress fell’ [26], compare Written Mongolian көдэр ‘instrument for dressing fell’ [20].

Tableware: Бэлхэгэр (Suntar) ‘a large wicker’ [16], бэлхэгэр (Pek.) ‘the smallest goblet for kumis’ [16], compare Khalkha Mongolian бэлхэ ‘ball-shaped’ [18].

Haymaking: Абарҕана (Suntar) ‘land not suitable for haymaking’ [26], compare Written Mongolian сабар ‘flat rake used for drawing together bricks of dry dung; pitchfork for hay’ Written Mongolian сабардаа, Mongolian сабард ‘draw together with a rake, rake’ [23].

Stock breeding: Амъра (Verkhne-Kolymskiy) ‘infertile dry’ compare Written Mongolian амъра ‘take a rest (after exhaustion)’ [1], Middle Mongolian амъра ‘rest’ [29], Mongolian амъра ‘life, breath’ [19], Buryat амъра ‘rest, calm down’ [18], Kalmyk амор ‘rest’ [20].

Hunting vocabulary: Маарда (Pek.) ‘curved heavily, of a crossbow’ [16], compare Mongolian көрт ‘a generous man’ [29], Buryat мардан ‘maradan хутага (West) ‘a large blunt knife’ [18], Kalmyk маран (маран) ‘blunt, dullled; маран ээ ‘blunt axe’ [20]. Turkic languages tend to place stress on the first syllable in borrowed words.

Fishing terms: Лааха (Vilui) ‘broach’; (Ust-Yanskiy) ‘sculpin’ [16]; лагаа (Bulun, Lensk) ‘broach’ [16]; лагаас (Oymyakon) ‘a type of fish’ [16]; лахачы
fall into three large terminological groups: names of various local landforms, names of instruments and terms of fishing.

A great number of names of landforms and instruments are found in the North-Eastern groups of dialects, with the Kolyma patois standing out in bout categories.

Terms for fishing are most abundant in the Vilui group of patois.

The least number of Mongolian parallels is observed in the Central group of dialects; the reason is that the Yakut literary language is based on the Central dialect zone.

The analyzed material is of great interest because Yakut and Mongolian are both genetically and typologically close. Yet, they also have national specific characteristics in the conceptual picture of the world.

Further research into Mongolian parallels in dialect nouns of the Yakut language is of interest as language is considered a cultural code of a nation, not just an instrument for communication and cognition. It will allow approaching the laws of origin of language, mind and culture from a new perspective as well as new aspects of interaction between cognitive linguistics and culturology, linguoculturology, philosophy and psychology.

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