

# 35 Contact and Siberian Languages

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This chapter provides a brief description of contact phenomena in the languages of Siberia, a geographic region which is of considerable significance for the field of contact linguistics. As this overview cannot hope to be exhaustive, the main goal is to sketch the different kinds of language contact situation known for this region. Within this larger scope of contact among the languages spoken in Siberia, a major focus will be on the influence exerted by Evenki, a Northern Tungusic language, on neighboring indigenous languages.

The chapter is organized as follows: after a brief introduction to the languages and peoples of Siberia (section 1), the influence exerted on the indigenous languages by Russian, the dominant language in the Russian Federation, is described in section 2. This is followed by a short description of the two pidgins and one mixed language known from Siberia (section 3). The mutual influences at play among the indigenous languages of Siberia are illustrated with three short case studies of Evenki influence on its neighbors (section 4), followed by some concluding remarks in section 5.

## 1 The Languages and Peoples of Siberia: Introduction

Siberia is the vast geographic area that dominates the Eurasian landmass, bordering on the Ural Mountains in the west, the Arctic Sea in the north, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean in the east, and northern China, Mongolia, and Kazakhstan in the south. In Russian usage, however, the regions bordering on the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean are generally excluded from Siberia proper, often being classified as the Far East instead (*Encyclopædia Britannica* 1998, vol. 10: 776; *Severnaja Ėnciklopedija* 2004: 226).

Siberia is characterized by a severely continental climate, with very cold winters (temperatures in January average between  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  in most areas, and can reach  $-60^{\circ}\text{C}$  and more in parts of the northeast) and hot summers (with

temperatures in July reaching +30°C and more; *Brockhaus* 2001, vol. 20: 160–1). The vegetation mainly consists of dense coniferous forest (taiga), with a forest-steppe and steppe zone along the southern border and a belt of tree- and shrubless tundra along the northern edge (*Encyclopædia Britannica* 1998, vol. 10: 776; *Brockhaus* 2001, vol. 20: 161). Due to the severe climatic and ecological conditions, Siberia is extremely sparsely populated, with population densities averaging less than two persons per km<sup>2</sup> (*Severnaja Ėnciklopedija* 2004: 616). Such low population density may have precluded frequent contact among the indigenous ethnolinguistic groups, especially in the past (cf. Stern 2005b: 290). Siberia is therefore not the first region of the world that comes to mind when studying language contact; nevertheless, the indigenous languages show several structural similarities, leading Anderson (2004; 2006) to speak of a “Siberian linguistic macro-area.”

Over 30 languages belonging to 8 language families are spoken in Siberia. Nowadays, two of these families (Yeniseic and Yukaghir) are represented by only one or two daughter languages, while in the Far East the isolate language Nivkh is spoken. The language families found in Siberia are (following a rough west to east orientation): Uralic, the nearly extinct Yeniseic family, Turkic, Tungusic and Mongolic (these three are sometimes classified as belonging to the Altaic language family, e.g. Georg et al. 1998), the very small and nearly extinct Yukaghir family, Chukotko-Kamchatkan, and Eskimo-Aleut. The Yukaghir family (of which nowadays only two highly endangered languages survive, Tundra Yukaghir and Kolyma Yukaghir) might possibly be distantly related to the Uralic languages (cf. references in Maslova 2003a: 1). In addition to the isolate Nivkh, a further isolate, Ainu, used to be spoken in southern Sakhalin, on the Kurile Islands, and on the southernmost tip of Kamchatka. However, following World War II all Ainu-speakers moved to Japan (de Graaf 1992: 186). Table 35.1 presents a list of the languages currently still spoken in Siberia; their geographic distribution is shown in Figure 35.1.

As mentioned above, Anderson (2004; 2006) speaks of a linguistic area with respect to the languages of Siberia. Typological features well known to be shared by a number of the languages are a system of vowel harmony, agglutinative morphology, relatively large case systems, predominantly SOV word order, and the widespread use of converbs or case-marked participles to mark subordination (Anderson 2004: 36–40, 65–9; 2006; Comrie 1981: 59, 71, 117, 244, 246, 258). Among other features described by Anderson as characterizing the Siberian linguistic area are a four-way distinction between labial, alveodental, palatal and velar nasals, a morphologically marked reciprocal voice, a distinction between a comitative and an instrumental case, and a distinction between a dative and an allative case (Anderson 2006: 268–73, 279–92). However, the distinction between an allative and a dative case proposed by Anderson appears to be characteristic of the Tungusic language family alone, not a widespread areal feature. Apart from the Tungusic languages, only a few languages at the margins of the geographic area show this distinction, such as one dialect of the Samoyedic language Selkup, the South Siberian Turkic languages Khakas and Tuvan, and the Chukotko-Kamchatkan language Koryak. In contrast, the majority of languages spoken in

**Table 35.1** The languages of Siberia, their linguistic affiliation and approximate number of speakers (based on 2002 census figures)<sup>a</sup>

<i>Family (and subfamily)</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Number of speakers</i>	
Uralic (Ob-Ugric)	Khanty	13,568	
	Mansi	2,746	
Uralic (Samoyedic)	Nenets	31,311	
	Enets	119	
	Nganasan	505	
	Selkup	1,641	
	Ket	485	
Yeniseic	Siberian Tatar	— <sup>b</sup>	
	Chulym Turkic	270	
Turkic	Tuvan	242,754	
	Tofa	378	
	Khakas	52,217	
	Shor	6,210	
	Altai	65,534	
	Sakha (Yakut)	456,288	
	Dolgan	4,865	
	Evenki	7,584	
	Èven	7,168	
	Negidal	147	
	Tungusic (Northern)	Udihe	227
		Oroč	257
		Nanay	3,886
Orok (Ul'ta)		64	
Ulča		732	
Tungusic (Southern)	Buryat	368,807	
	Kolyma Yukaghir	604 <sup>c</sup>	
	Tundra Yukaghir		
Chukotko-Kamchatkan	Chukchi	7,742	
	Koryak	3,019	
	Kerek	15	
	Alutor	40	
	Itelmen <sup>d</sup>	385	
Eskimo-Aleut	Eskimo languages	410 <sup>e</sup>	
	Aleut	175	
Isolate	Nivkh	688	

<sup>a</sup> These numbers are certainly largely overestimated, since individuals frequently name their heritage language as their “mother tongue” when asked, even when they do not actually speak the language any more (cf. Vaxtin 2001: 77–8). Thus, estimates of numbers of speakers based on sociolinguistic data are much lower for most of the languages of Siberia, the vast majority of which are on the verge of extinction (cf. Vaxtin 2001: 163–80; and Kazakevič & Parfěnova 2000: 283–5; Nikolaeva & Tolskaya 2001: 25–6 for individual linguistic groups).

<sup>b</sup> This subgroup of Tatar speakers is not listed separately in the census.

<sup>c</sup> In the 2002 census the two Yukaghir languages were not distinguished. A sociolinguistic survey conducted in 1987 counted 29 speakers of Kolyma Yukaghir and approximately 90 speakers of Tundra Yukaghir (Maslova 2003a: 2).

<sup>d</sup> Although Itelmen is generally classified as belonging to the Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages (e.g. Comrie 1981: 240), this is not undisputed; an alternative hypothesis suggests that the similarities with Chukchi and Koryak are due to areal influences (cf. Georg & Volodin 1999: 224–41).

<sup>e</sup> The census gives a joint number for “Inuit, Sireniki, and Yuit.” Inuit belongs to the Inuit-Inupiaq subgroup of the Eskimo languages, while Sireniki and Yuit (also called Central Siberian Yupik) are languages belonging to the Yupik subgroup (de Reuse 1994: 1–2).

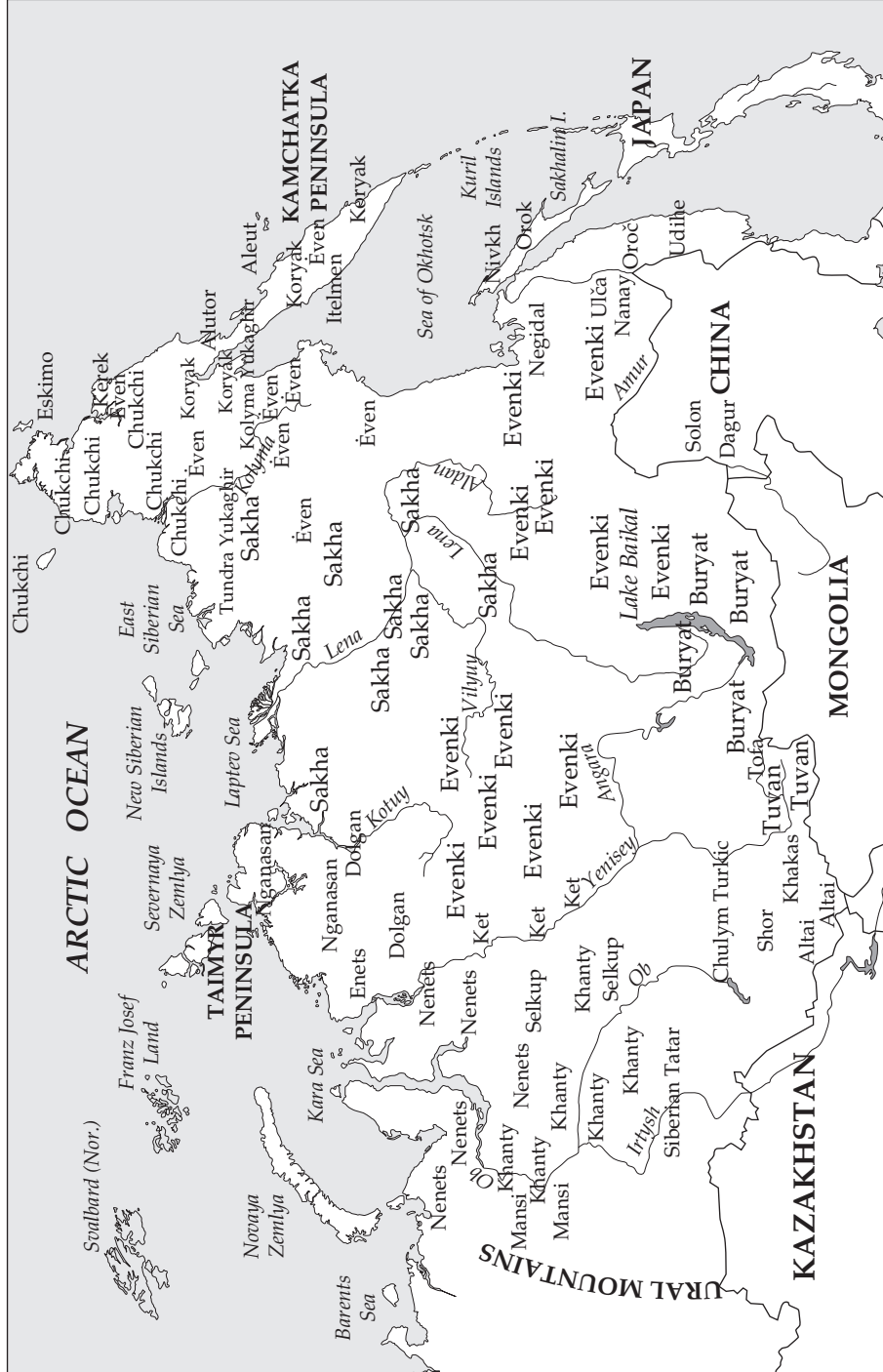


Figure 35.1 The approximate distribution of the peoples of Siberia

Siberia (i.e. the Samoyedic languages Nenets, Nganasan and most dialects of Selkup, the Ob-Ugric languages Mansi and Khanty, the Mongolic language Buryat, the Turkic languages Tofa, Sakha, and Dolgan, the Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages Chukchi and Itelmen, as well as Ket and Yukaghir) use only one case to mark both indirect objects, addressees of verbs of speech, and goals of motion. It might therefore be preferable to speak of the *lack* of a distinction between a dative and allative case as being typical of this area.

The indigenous groups of mainland Siberia were for the most part nomadic hunters and gatherers or semi-sedentary fishermen; along the Pacific coast and the Sea of Okhotsk, a number of groups were sedentary hunters of large sea mammals. In the southern steppe zone, on the other hand, cattle and horse pastoralism prevailed; this mode of subsistence was imported to northeastern Siberia in relatively recent times by the Turkic-speaking Sakha (Yakuts). Apart from the cattle and horses predominant in South Siberia, animals kept in this region are dogs and domesticated reindeer. Dogs are used mainly for help with reindeer herding in western Siberia, and as a means of transport and for hunting in eastern Siberia. In the tundra zone, domesticated reindeer furnished all the necessities of life, while in the forest zone reindeer are kept chiefly as a means of transport, with subsistence based on hunting, fishing, and gathering (*Severnaja Ėnciklopedija* 2004: 262–3, 686).

Little is known about contact between different ethnolinguistic groups before Russian colonization, which started at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sporadic warfare and territorial conflicts, exacerbated by the upheavals following Russian colonization, are known to have taken place between different peoples of Siberia (Forsyth 1992: 11, 58, 80; de Reuse 1994: 296; Slezkine 1994: 27–8); these often resulted in the capture of women from the defeated enemy (Forsyth 1992: 67; Slezkine 1994: 6, 44). Some trade relations existed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries between the nomadic reindeer-herding Chukchi and their neighbors, from the Yukaghirs, Ėvens and Sakha (Yakuts) in the west to the Eskimos in the east (de Reuse 1994: 296, 307; Maslova & Vaxtin 1996: 999), as well as between the coastal Chukchi and Koryaks and their reindeer-breeding compatriots from the interior (Forsyth 1992: 72). In the nineteenth century, the Turkic language Sakha played an important role as a vehicular language in large areas of northeastern Siberia (Wurm 1996: 976), while in Chukotka and Kamchatka Chukchi was in use for interethnic communication by Eskimos, Ėvens, and Kereks (Wurm 1992: 250; de Reuse 1994: 296; Burykin 1996: 990). Some cases of language shift have been documented, such as the shift of Samoyedic and Yeniseic speakers to Turkic languages in South Siberia, and the shift of Evenks to Buryat (Forsyth 1992: 23; Anderson 2004: 6; Slezkine 1994: 28; Cydendambaev 1981; Ćimitdoržieva 2004). Nowadays, speakers of Evenki and Ėven dialects in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) are under strong influence from the locally dominant language Sakha, leading to numerous contact-induced changes in the Tungusic languages and language shift to Sakha (Malchukov 2006). Multilingualism is recorded for speakers of the Eskimo languages Naukan and Sireniki, who were fluent in Chukchi and other Eskimo languages (de Reuse 1994: 306), while Yukaghir–Ėven–Sakha–

Chukchi quadrilingualism existed in northeastern Yakutia from the nineteenth century, and perhaps earlier, up to the 1940s (Maslova & Vaxtin 1996: 999). However, it is not known whether such multilingualism would have been characteristic of interethnic relations in precolonial times as well.

Russians first entered Siberia in the late sixteenth century, with garrisoned forts established on the Irtysh river in 1586 and 1587, on the Yenisey river in 1604, on the middle Lena in 1632, and on the Anadyr river in 1649 (Forsyth 1992: 34, 36, 79). Further small outposts were scattered in between to aid in the collection of fur tax. During the first centuries of colonization, Russian interference in the life of the indigenous peoples consisted predominantly in the collection of fur tax, the conscription of indigenous peoples into providing transportation for Russian officials, as well as superficial Christianization (Gernet 2007: 69–72; Slezkine 1994: 23–4, 32, 43–4, 48–53). Although by the end of the seventeenth century there may have been as many Russian settlers as indigenous peoples in Siberia, these immigrants were concentrated in the more fertile southern districts of Western Siberia (Forsyth 1992: 100). In the northern and eastern regions Russians were scarce and often outnumbered by the local people (Forsyth 1992: 101; Stern 2005b: 292). Therefore, a knowledge of Russian among the indigenous groups was not very widespread during the tsarist period of colonization (cf. Matic 2008: 100; Burykin 1996: 994).

That situation changed, however, after the establishment of Soviet rule in the 1920s. In the initial years the Soviet state encouraged the maintenance of the indigenous languages, and a number of orthographies were created for the unwritten languages of Siberia. However, at a later period, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, language policies changed drastically, and children of indigenous minority peoples were forcibly taken to boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their native languages. Furthermore, after World War II large numbers of settlers from the European parts of the Soviet Union (especially Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians) came to Siberia to exploit the natural resources, so that the indigenous peoples were greatly outnumbered by the settlers (Forsyth 1992: 360, 361, 405). This led to a large-scale Russification of all spheres of life (Helimski 1997: 77; cf. de Graaf 1992: 190, 191 specifically for the Nivkh; Anderson 2005: 125–7 for the Khakas).

Nowadays, the majority of Siberian indigenous languages are moribund, with only a few elderly speakers remaining, and no more acquisition by children (Vaxtin 2001: 163–80). Only a few of the larger ethnic groups have been able to maintain their heritage language in a viable state, for instance the Turkic-speaking Sakha (Pakendorf, field observation), or the Samoyedic-speaking Nenets (Ljublinskaja 2000: 312; Vaxtin 2001: 163).

## 2 Russian Influence on the Indigenous Languages of Siberia

As mentioned in section 1, several factors have led to the widespread use of Russian among speakers of indigenous Siberian languages: Firstly, since Russian was the

predominant language in the Soviet Union, and is the language used in practically all spheres of public life in the Russian Federation, a good knowledge of Russian was and is expected to lead to upward social mobility and better job chances (Comrie 1989: 146; Kazakevič and Parfěnova 2000: 288). Secondly, Russian functions as a lingua franca between individuals from diverse ethnolinguistic groups, and is used as the medium of communication in mixed marriages, even when it is not the first language of either spouse (Comrie 1989: 146). Furthermore, since the late 1930s schooling has mainly been in Russian, which has in many cases led to a complete break in transmission of the native language. Last but not least, speakers of minority languages were frequently encouraged, more or less officially, to give up their language for a bigger language, often Russian (Comrie 1989: 148; Kibrik 1991: 10).

It therefore comes as no surprise that the indigenous languages of Siberia show marked Russian influence. All of them exhibit a large number of lexical copies<sup>1</sup> from Russian, with phonological differences depending on the time of copying. In the early, pre-revolutionary period of contact, relatively few items were copied into the indigenous languages; these were predominantly designations of novel cultural items such as “bread” or “tea” and were adapted to the phonological system of the recipient language. During the Soviet era, on the other hand, a large number of Russian copies entered the indigenous languages, mostly without any phonological adaptation (Comrie 1996: 36; Kaksin 1999: 221–2; Nevskaya 2000: 285; Malchukov 2003: 237; Matic 2008: 103–4; Grenoble 2000: 106).

In addition to importing a large number of lexical items from Russian, the indigenous languages of Siberia have also undergone structural changes that can be traced to Russian influence. Thus, a shift can be observed in the use of some cases, for example the use of the instrumental instead of the dative case to mark the overt agent of passive constructions in Evenki and Khakas (Gladkova 1991: 68; Grenoble 2000: 109; Anderson 2005: 172), the use of the dative instead of the allative to mark the addressee of verbs of speech in Evenki<sup>2</sup> (Gladkova 1991: 68; Grenoble 2000: 109), as well as the development of dative case-marked experiencer subjects, and the extension of the dative case to mark direct objects in Ket (which lacks the accusative case used for this purpose in Russian; Minayeva 2003: 48, 50–1).

The most salient structural changes undergone by Siberian languages in contact with Russian are in the domain of syntax. Thus, a shift toward a less strict verb-final word order has been noted in some Tungusic languages (Malchukov 2003: 241; Grenoble 2000: 107–8; Gladkova 1991: 68), in Nivkh (Gruzdeva 2000: 125–6), and in Khakas (Anderson 2005: 222). Instead of the previously widespread use of parataxis, coordinate sentences joined with conjunctions copied from Russian have been documented in Samoyedic languages (Bátori 1980: 144) and in Evenki (Grenoble 2000: 115). Finite subordinate clause constructions copied from Russian are increasingly replacing the indigenous use of case-marked participles or converbs (cf. Anderson 2004: 69–72), for example in the Tungusic languages (Malchukov 2003: 241; Grenoble 2000: 116–18; Gladkova 1991: 68), in Yukaghir (Matic 2008: 117–19), in Shor (Nevskaya 2000: 286), in Khakas (Anderson 2005:

196–221), and in Enets (Sorokina 1991: 66–7; Khanina & Shluinsky 2008: 71–3). These copied constructions make use of indigenous adverbials as complementizers or conjunctions, but use of conjunctions and complementizers copied from Russian has been documented as well (1a). The formation of relative clauses with the use of interrogative pronouns as relativizers (1b) has been described for Evenki (Malchukov 2003: 241) and for Khakas (Anderson 2005: 205–9). Interestingly, Forest Enets appears to be developing finite relative clauses not with an interrogative pronoun, but with a demonstrative functioning as relativizer (Khanina & Shluinsky 2008: 70–1).<sup>3</sup>

- (1) a. Yukaghir (Matić 2008: ex. 33; taken from Nikolaeva 2004: 29.49)

*jesli Germanija kejdej-te-j [. . .] tajnugi er-če*  
 if Germany advance-FUT-INTR.3SG then bad-ATTR  
*modol or-te-j*  
 life COP-FUT-INTR.3SG  
 ‘If Germany wins [. . .] then life will be bad . . .’

cf: Russian

*Jesli Germanija pobedit [. . .] žizn’ budet ploxoј*  
 if Germany win.FUT.3SG life be.FUT.3SG bad.INS.F  
 ‘If Germany wins, life will be bad.’

cf: uninfluenced Yukaghir (Matić 2008: ex. 31; taken from Nikolaeva 2004: 37.4–5)

*touke čugø l’e-de-jne [. . .] odul-ŋin qon-te-jek*  
 dog trace COP-3-DS.COND.CVB Yukaghir-DAT go-FUT-2SG.INTR  
 ‘If there are dog traces there [. . .] you will marry a Yukaghir.’

- b. Evenki (Malchukov 2003: ex. 6b)

*i-le hurkeken suru-re-n gorot-tu . . .*  
 where-ALL boy go-NFUT-3SG town-DAT  
 ‘In the town where the boy is going . . .’

cf: Russian

*v gorode, kuda idët mal’čik . . .*  
 in town.PREP where.ALL go.PRS.3SG boy  
 ‘In the town where the boy is going . . .’

cf: uninfluenced Evenki (Malchukov 2003: ex. 6a)

*hurkeken suru-mečïn-du-n gorot-tu . . .*  
 boy go-FUTPT-DAT-POSS.3SG town-DAT  
 ‘In the town where the boy is going . . .’

Note that not only the use of conjunctions and relative pronouns has been copied from Russian, but so has the use of finite verbs in subordinate clauses. Thus, the impact of Russian on the languages of Siberia is leading to a gradual typological shift.



### 3 Pidgins and Mixed Languages in Siberia

Only two Russian-based pidgins have been recorded in Siberia: Chinese Pidgin Russian (also known as Siberian pidgin, Kjakhta pidgin, or the Majmachin speech) spoken previously in the Chinese–Russian border town of Kjakhta as well as along the Lower Amur, and Taimyr Pidgin Russian (also known as Govorka) spoken on the Taimyr Peninsula (Wurm 1992: 252, 259; Perexval'skaja 2006: 13). In addition, in the nineteenth century a number of trade jargons may have existed in Chukotka involving Chukchi, Eskimo, and English, which were used for communication between Chukchi and Eskimos, as well as with sailors of whaling or expedition ships (de Reuse 1996: 58). The scarcity of pidgins in Siberia as compared to other colonies can be explained by the fact that the Russians did not relocate individuals from different ethnolinguistic groups for purposes of forced labor, so that there was no occasion for a system of interethnic communication to arise spontaneously (Stern 2005b: 289). And by the time people were resettled in linguistically mixed villages in the mid twentieth century, access to standard Russian as a lingua franca was ensured through obligatory schooling in Russian.

Chinese Pidgin Russian was initially the language used by Chinese and Russian traders in the trading towns of Kjakhta and Majmachin from the early eighteenth to the early twentieth century<sup>4</sup> (Šprincin 1968: 87; Wurm 1992: 259). A derivative of this pidgin was also spoken in Harbin (Šprincin 1968: 98–9; Wurm 1992: 263), and it later spread to the Lower Amur region, where it played a role in the development of the pidginized Russian spoken by local Tungusic peoples (Nichols 1980: 397; Khasanova 2000: 182, 193). Chinese–Russian pidgin is characterized by large-scale insertion of epenthetic vowels to maintain the CV syllable structure characteristic of Chinese, loss of case-marking, loss of agreement, and a complete lack of inflection on verbs, which instead are used in the Russian imperative form. Optional tense-marking is achieved through the postposition of tense forms of the Russian verb 'to be', i.e. *esi/esa* (for present tense, but occurring with future and past meanings as well), *bylo* (for past tense) and *budu* (for future tense) (Šprincin 1968: 92, 96–7; Nichols 1980: 401; Wurm 1992: 260–2). The lexicon is mainly of Russian origin, although the Harbin variant of this pidgin contains rather more words of Chinese origin (Šprincin 1968: 98–9).

In contrast to Chinese Pidgin Russian, which developed as a trade language, Taimyr Pidgin Russian was predominantly developed and used for interethnic communication by Dolgans and Nganasans. Russians were probably not directly involved in the development of this pidgin, since they were not in direct contact with the Nganasans (Stern 2005b: 290–1). Nowadays the lexicon of Taimyr Pidgin Russian consists mainly of Russian words; however, previously there may have been a large number of lexical items from Dolgan (Ubrjatova 1985: 68). This pidgin is characterized by a lack of case-marking, with one predominant postposition *mesto* 'place' marking non-core arguments. A sociative marker *meste* (derived from Russian *vmeste* 'with') also exists; often *mesto* and *meste* are used interchangeably. A further postposition *toroba* (derived from Russian *storona*

'side') marks location (Stern 2005b: 301). In contrast to Kjakhta Chinese–Russian pidgin, in which verbs are uninflected, Taimyr Pidgin Russian shows some verbal inflection. Even in the "basilectal" system, which has been less influenced by standard Russian, verbs take person-marking; however, there is no strict agreement with the subject. Rather, the third person singular and first person plural forms predominate, while second person singular forms are rarely used (Stern 2005b: 309). Another difference between the two pidgins is that in Taimyr Pidgin Russian personal pronouns are based on the Russian genitive-accusative forms, while in Chinese–Russian pidgin they derive from Russian possessive pronouns. Some of the salient differences between the two pidgins are illustrated in the following examples.

- (2) a. Chinese–Russian pidgin (Wurm 1992: 263)  
*za moja Nikita skazyvaj budu kako Dalaj pogovori esa*  
 for 1SG[POSS] N. tell[IMP] will[1SG] how D. talk[IMP] is  
 'I will tell Nikita how Dalaj (i.e. addressee) is speaking.'
- b. (Šprincin 1968: 94)  
*sobuka nizu živi*  
 hill under live[IMP]  
 'I live at the foot of the hill.' (*sobuka* < Russian *sopka*)
- (3) a. Taimyr Pidgin Russian (Stern 2005b: ex. 56)  
*taperja menja budem šamanit'*  
 now 1SG[ACC] will[1PL] act.as.shaman[INF]  
 'Now I will act as shaman.'
- b. (Stern 2005b: ex. 10)  
*utrom nganasan tut baba mesto govorit*  
 in.the.morning Nganasan here woman place say[PRS.3SG]  
 'On the following morning that Nganasan says to his wife.'

Only one contact language in Siberia emerged as the result of relocation of peoples for labor purposes: Copper Island Aleut (CIA). This mixed language with a predominantly Aleut lexicon is characterized by Aleut noun inflection, derivational morphology, and nonfinite verb inflection, but by Russian finite verb morphology and pronouns (Thomason 1997: 457, 460). It arose on Copper Island, one of the Commander Islands off the coast of Kamchatka, which was uninhabited when discovered in 1741. In 1826 the Russian-American Company settled Aleuts on the Commander Islands to work in the seal-slaughtering trade along with Russian employees. A population called "creoles"<sup>5</sup> arose at an early stage of the island's settlement out of the union of Aleut women and Russian men (Thomason 1997: 451). These creoles were a socially and economically distinct group – they had a different legal status from and were better off economically than the Aleuts, but were looked down upon socially by both the Russians and the Aleuts since they were of illegitimate birth, at least in the early period (Thomason 1997: 453–4).

Like other Aleut dialects, CIA has only two cases (absolute and relative), possessive suffixes, singular, dual and plural number on nouns, and no gender distinctions. It has two sets of pronouns, derived from Aleut and Russian, which are used in distinct constructions: The Aleut pronouns are restricted to reflexive verbs, while Russian pronouns occur as subject markers, and in their accusative form have replaced the original Aleut objective conjugation of the verb (Golovko 1996: 70–71). The most notable difference between CIA and other Aleut dialects is the system of finite verbal inflection, which in CIA derives entirely from Russian. In the present tense, verbs take Russian portmanteau suffixes for each person–number combination; in contrast to the nominal system, a dual number is lacking for verbs. In the past tense, the Russian past tense marker *-l* is used (Thomason 1997: 458–9). The following examples demonstrate the use of Russian pronouns and finite verb markers in CIA (4a, 5a) in comparison with Bering Island Aleut (4b, 5b).

- (4) a. Copper Island Aleut (Golovko 1996: ex. 18)  
*ona hiŋta-it čto ona ego ilaŋta-it*  
 3SG.NOM.F say-PRS.3SG that 3SG.NOM.F 3SG.ACC.M love-PRS.3SG  
 Russian: *ona govor-it čto ona ego ljub-it*  
 3SG.NOM.F say-PRS.3SG that 3SG.NOM.F 3SG.ACC.M love-PRS.3SG  
 ‘she says that she loves him.’
- b. Bering Island Aleut (Golovko 1996: ex. 19)  
*ilaŋta-ku-u*  
 love-REAL-3SG.OBJ.3SG.SBJ  
 ‘s/he loves him/her/it.’
- (5) a. Copper Island Aleut (Golovko 1996: ex. 20)  
*ty menja hamayaaŋta-iš*  
 2SG.NOM 1SG.ACC ask-PRS.2SG  
 Russian: *ty menja sprašiva-eš*  
 2SG.NOM 1SG.ACC ask-PRS.2SG  
 ‘You ask me.’
- b. Bering Island Aleut (Golovko 1996: ex. 20)  
*ting ahmayaaŋta-ku-ŋt*  
 1SG.OBJ ask-REAL-PRS.2SG  
 ‘You are asking me.’

CIA must have arisen between the period of initial settlement of Copper Island in 1826 and approximately 1900. It most probably arose before the demise of the Russian-American company in 1867, which led to the departure of most of the Russians from the Commander Islands and to the end of the special social and legal status of the creoles (Thomason 1997: 461, 465). This mixed language must therefore have arisen in a very short time, in at most two generations. It probably did not arise as a pidgin, because neither the Aleut nor the Russian component is simplified. Not much is known about the use of Aleut and Russian on Copper Island in the early years of its settlement; however, the creole population

was probably fluent in both languages, and it may well be that the long-term Russian settlers knew Aleut (Thomason 1997: 462–3). The most likely explanation for the development of CIA is that it arose in a setting of bilingual code-switching, with some “creative decisions” by the speakers themselves as to what form the final product would take (Thomason 1997: 464–5; Golovko 2003: 190–8). In this, CIA differs from Taimyr Pidgin Russian and Chinese–Russian pidgin, which arose as a means of communication in the absence of a common language between the groups in contact.

#### 4 Language Contact among the Indigenous Languages: The Influence Exerted by Evenki

Notwithstanding the vast geographic expanses and low levels of settlement, the indigenous peoples of Siberia have been in contact with each other over the course of centuries, as demonstrated by contact-induced changes in their languages. A well-described case is the influence of Chukchi on neighboring Eskimo languages (de Reuse 1994), while lexical copying among different languages has been documented over the whole geographical area (cf. Anderson 2004: 21–4 for a brief overview and further references). The role played by language contact in shaping linguistic diversity in Siberia will be further exemplified by three brief case studies involving the Northern Tungusic language Evenki as the model.

Evenki consists of a large number of dialects that are spoken over a vast area of Eurasia, from the Ob–Yenisey watershed in the west to the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk in the east, and from the fringes of the Taimyr Peninsula in the north to the Baikal region and the sources of the Amur in the south (Atkine 1997: 110; cf. Figure 35.1). Evenks were traditionally highly mobile nomadic hunters who used domesticated reindeer for transport, who were and are in contact with speakers of very many different languages. Therefore, Anderson (2006: 294) suggests that they may have played the role of “vectors of diffusion” of at least some of the features that characterize the Siberian macro-area, although the spread of the Northern Tungusic languages over the vast area they occupy today may have taken place quite recently, not more than 600 or 700 years ago (Janhunen 1996: 171).

##### 4.1 *Evenki influence on the Buryat converbal system*

As with other Tungusic languages, Evenki has an elaborate system of converbs with diverse semantic and syntactic properties that function in syntactic reference tracking. The converbs differ with respect to their syntactic distribution: Some converbs, called same-subject (SS) converbs, can occur only in subordinate clauses with a subject coreferential with that of the main clause. Some converbs, called different-subject (DS) converbs, can occur only in subordinate clauses whose subject is non-coreferential with that of the main clause; and a third group of converbs, called variable-subject (VS) converbs, can occur both in subordinate clauses with a coreferential and in clauses with a non-coreferential subject

(Nedjalkov 1995: 445). SS converbs do not take any person agreement markers, with the exception of the plural suffix *-l* (6a). The DS and VS converbs, on the other hand, obligatorily agree in person and number with the subject of the subordinate clause. This is accomplished by the use of possessive suffixes when the subordinate subject is non-coreferential with the main clause subject (6b), and by the use of reflexive possessive suffixes when they are coreferential (i.e. with VS converbs; 6c). The following examples illustrate the use of the SS temporal converb (6a) and the difference in person-marking between the coreferential and non-coreferential use of the VS simultaneous converb (6b, c):

- (6) a. Evenki (Nedjalkov 1995: ex. 7, 8a, 8b)  
*ɕu-la-ver eme-mi-l ɕep-čo-tin*  
 house-LOC-PREFL.PL come-TEMP.CVB-PL eat-PST-3PL  
 'Having come home they ate.'
- b. *Turu-du bi-ɲesi-n tara-ve sa-ča-v*  
 Tura-DAT be-SIM.CVB-POSS.3SG that-DEF.ACC know-PST-POSS.1SG  
 'I knew that when s/he was/lived in Tura.'
- c. *Turu-du bi-ɲesi-vi tara-ve sa-ča-v*  
 Tura-DAT be-SIM.CVB-PREFL that-DEF.ACC know-PST-POSS.1SG  
 'I knew that when I was/lived in Tura.'

In most Mongolic languages, not even finite verbs take subject agreement markers (Sanžeev 1964: 82, 83–4), let alone converbs. An exception, however, is Buryat, in which the converbal system functions in a manner very similar to that in Evenki. Thus, the converbs occurring only or predominantly in SS constructions do not take person marking (Skribnik 1988: 143; 2003: 117; 7a), with the exception of the modal converb, which can take reflexive possessive suffixes (Skribnik 2003: 116, table 5.8). The remaining converbs take possessive subject-agreement markers when they occur in subordinate clauses with a non-coreferential subject (7b), or reflexive possessive person markers when the subjects are coreferential (Poppe 1960: 70; Skribnik 1988: 149; 7c). The conditional and atemporal converbs, however, remain unmarked in SS constructions even though they can also occur in non-coreferential clauses, where they take possessive suffixes (Skribnik 1988: 152).

- (7) a. Buryat (Skribnik 2003: pp. 116–17)  
*tedener-te öxibü:d-in' tuhal-xaja: jere-ɲxei*  
 those-DAT children-POSS.3PL help-FIN.CVB come-RES.PTCP  
 'Their children have come to them in order to help.'
- b. *tende xiire-že ošo-tor-nai dain baldarn*  
 there reach-IPF.CVB go-TERM.CVB-POSS.1PL enemy.OBL ?  
*du:ha-xa johotoi*  
 end-FUTPT probably  
 'By the time we get there, the war will surely be over.'
- c. *Butedma: teren-ixji tani-xalar-a: bajarla-ša-ba*  
 B. that.OBL-ACC recognize-SUCC.CVB-PREFL be.glad-INTS-TERM  
 'Recognizing him, Butedmaa was glad.'

It is thus clear that the Buryat system is not quite as regular as that found in Evenki. In Evenki there is a strict correlation between syntactic function and the type of agreement marking, with SS converbs taking no agreement suffixes, DS converbs always taking possessive suffixes, and VS converbs taking either possessive suffixes in non-coreferential clauses, or reflexive possessive suffixes in coreferential clauses. In contrast, in Buryat the modal verb can take reflexive possessive suffixes, even though it occurs predominantly in clauses with coreferential subjects and can thus be counted among the SS converbs. In addition, the conditional and atemporal converbs remain unmarked in coreferential clauses, even though they can be classified as VS converbs. However, notwithstanding the slight irregularities found in the Buryat converbal system, the similarity to Evenki is striking. The same type of subject agreement suffixes fulfil the same syntactic role in both languages.

Buryat did not inherit this system from its Mongolic ancestor, indicating that it was either innovated independently, or that it developed under contact influence. The arguments in favor of contact influence are quite solid: Firstly, the converbal system of Buryat and its function in syntactic reference tracking parallels the Evenki system and its functions. Secondly, the Evenki system was clearly inherited from its Tungusic ancestor, since syntactic reference tracking with the help of person-marked converbs is found in other Tungusic languages (albeit with different converbal suffixes). Lastly, speakers of Buryat have been and still are in close contact with speakers of Evenki. Thus, the conclusion that in this instance Evenki influenced Buryat is quite straightforward. This is most probably due to language shift from Evenks to Buryat, as documented by the presence of a number of Buryat clan names that are of Evenk origin, as well as by phonological changes in Buryat that can be traced to Evenki influence (Cydendambaev 1981; Čimitdoržieva 2004).

#### 4.2 *Evenki influence on the development of the Sakha and Dolgan partitive case*

Evenki is characterized by having two case suffixes to mark direct objects: the definite accusative suffix *-vA/-mA* is used in the majority of instances (8a), while the indefinite accusative case suffix *-(y)A* is only used to mark clearly indefinite direct objects (8b), objects that have not yet been made, or partially affected mass nouns (8c; Nedjalkov 1997: 147, 192–3). Furthermore, the indefinite accusative case is restricted to the future indicative and the imperative mood, and to use with habitual verbs, while the definite accusative case occurs with all past tenses (Nedjalkov 1997: 194)

- (8) a. Evenki (Nedjalkov 1997: ex. 782a, b, 786)  
*oron-mo                      đava-kal*  
 reindeer-DEF.ACC take-PRXIMP.2SG  
 'Catch that (definite) reindeer.'

- b. *oron-o*                      *ǰava-kal*  
 reindeer-INDF.ACC take-PRXIMP.2SG  
 'Catch yourself a/any reindeer.'
- c. *min-du*   *ulle-je*                      *kolobo-jo*                      *bu:-kel*  
 1SG-DAT meat-INDF.ACC bread-INDF.ACC give-PRXIMP.2SG  
 'Give me (some) meat and (some) bread.'

In the languages of Siberia, direct object marking varies widely from language to language. However, there are two Siberian languages that make a similar distinction in the case marking of direct objects to that found in Evenki: these are the closely related Turkic languages Sakha (Yakut) and Dolgan. Sakha is spoken by a group of cattle- and horse pastoralists who immigrated to the Lena river from an area to the south roughly during the thirteenth/fourteenth centuries. Dolgan is spoken on the Taimyr Peninsula by a group of reindeer herders. The origins of this group are not yet well established, but a language shift to Sakha by Evenks is assumed to have been involved.

In Sakha and Dolgan, in the indicative and conditional mood definite and specific indefinite direct objects are marked by the accusative case, while generic indefinite direct objects remain in the unmarked nominative case. In the affirmative imperative mood, however, whereas definite direct objects take accusative case marking (9a), indefinite direct objects as well as partially affected mass nouns take the so-called partitive case (9b, c; Artem'ev 1999: 107; Pakendorf 2007: 142–6).

- (9) a. Sakha (Pakendorf, 2002 field data)  
*mieɣe bu ɣara at-i tut-an bier*  
 1SG.DAT this black horse-ACC hold-PF.CVB BEN[PRXIMP.2SG]  
 'Catch this black horse for me.'
- b. (Pakendorf 2007: ex. 30b)  
*mieɣe at-ta tut-an bier*  
 1SG.DAT horse-PART hold-PF.CVB BEN[PRXIMP.2SG]  
 'Catch me a horse.'
- c. (Pakendorf 2007: ex. 29b)  
*halamat-ta huorat-ta amsay-ij*  
 salamat-PART yoghurt-PART taste[PRXIMP]-2PL  
 'Try some salamat (Yakut dish), some yoghurt.'

Neither Evenki nor Sakha inherited this indefinite accusative/partitive case from its respective ancestor, and therefore the direction of contact influence can at first glance not be easily determined. However, since the Evenki indefinite accusative occurs in more environments than the Sakha partitive, and has further functions, it is more probable that Evenki influence led to the development of the indefinite accusative meaning in Sakha than the other way round (cf. Pakendorf 2007: 167–73).

Evenki influence on the development of the Dolgan partitive case is more easily established, since the Dolgan partitive has developed a further function in parallel with the Evenki indefinite accusative case. This is additionally used as a designative case, in which benefactive and direct object functions are collapsed.

Thus, the indefinite accusative case in Evenki marks direct objects that are intended for somebody's benefit, the beneficiary being marked by obligatory possessive suffixes on the case-marked object (10a). This designative function has been copied by Dolgan speakers onto their partitive case (10b; Artem'ev 1999: 106).

- (10) a. Evenki (Nedjalkov 1997: ex. 562a)  
*ɕav-ja-v*                      *o:-kal*  
 boat-INDF.ACC-POSS.1SG make-PRXIMP.2SG  
 'Make a boat for me.'
- b. Dolgan (Ubrjatova 1985: 118)  
*h-ani-ka:n*                      *miñieke*    *bolop-puna*                      *oŋor*  
 EMPH-now-EMPH 1SG.DAT sword-PART.1SG make[PRXIMP.2SG]  
 'Make a sword for me right now!'

The development of the Sakha and Dolgan partitive case is not the only instance of Evenki influence on the structure of these Turkic languages. Similar influence can be shown for the loss of the genitive case, the retention of the distinction between the comitative and instrumental case, the functions of the possessive markers, as well as for the development of the future imperative, as described in section 4.3. Interestingly, language shift of entire groups of Evenks to Sakha appears improbable in light of genetic evidence, although some intermarriage of Sakha with Evenk women cannot be excluded. On the other hand, Y-chromosomal analyses indicate that only a small group of Sakha paternal ancestors settled on the Lena river 500–1,300 years ago (Pakendorf et al. 2006). It is thus possible that the small group of immigrating Sakha pastoralists were dependent on the indigenous Evenks, at least until they had adapted to the new environment. This might have led to a degree of bilingualism of Sakha-speakers in Evenki, which might explain the contact-induced changes in the absence of shift (Pakendorf 2007: 317–23).

### 4.3 *The distinction between present and future imperative*

Evenki makes a morphological distinction between a present imperative and a future imperative. The latter form expresses commands that may be fulfilled at a later point in time, e.g.:

- (11) a. Evenki (Nedjalkov 1997: 19)  
*ɕu-la-vi*                      *himat eme-ke*  
 house-LOC-PREFL fast come-PRXIMP.2SG  
 'Come quickly to my place.'
- b. *ɕu-la-vi*                      (*goč'in*)    *eme-de:-vi*  
 house-LOC-PREFL (next.year) come-DSTIMP-PREFL.SG  
 'Come to my place (next year).'

Both the present and the future imperative are found for all person–number combinations in Evenki. The marker for the present imperative is restricted to this



function, with portmanteau suffixes expressing both mood and person/number. The future imperative paradigm, on the other hand, is split, with the first and third persons taking different markers from the second person for both mood and agreement. In the second person, the future imperative marker is identical to the purposive converb suffix, and agreement is achieved by the reflexive possessive suffixes.

A distinction between commands that are to be fulfilled immediately and commands that may be fulfilled at a later point in time is quite rare among the Siberian languages, as it is worldwide (cf. Pakendorf 2007: 226–32; Gusev 2005: 62). In addition to Evenki, it is found in the closely related Northern Tungusic languages Even and Negidal, which also use the purposive converb suffix plus reflexive possessive suffixes for the second person future imperative. A future imperative is furthermore found in one branch of the Southern Tungusic languages (in Nanay, Orok, and Ulča), where it is restricted to the second person. However, the future imperative marker in these languages differs from that found in the Northern Tungusic languages, being dedicated to this function. Furthermore, a distinction between present and future imperative is made in Nganasan, in Dolgan and Sakha (12a, 12b), in Yukaghir (13a, 13b), and in the Mongolic languages Buryat and Dagur. All of these languages are currently or were historically in contact with Evenki or Even, and they are all the sole members of their respective language families to make such a distinction.

- (12) a. Sakha (Pakendorf 2002 field data)  
*süöhü-gün* *kepse:*  
 livestock-ACC.2SG tell[PRXIMP.2SG]  
 'Tell about your livestock!'
- b. (Pakendorf 2007: ex. 67c)  
*bu tülüppüön-ünen kepse-t-err* *die-n*  
 this telephone-INS tell-CAUS-DSTIMP[2SG] say-PF.CVB  
 'Tell me (later) by telephone', he said.'
- (13) a. Kolyma Yukaghir (Maslova 2003b: ex. 338a)  
*tet jaqte-k* *kejien*  
 2SG sing[PRXIMP]-2 at.the.beginning  
 'sing first!'
- b. (Maslova 2003b: ex. 339a)  
*tet čolhoro kudedže lek-telle jaqte-ge-k*  
 2SG hare liver eat-SS.PF.CVB sing-DSTIMP-2  
 'Eat some hare liver and then sing!'

The distribution of the present/future imperative distinction among the languages of Siberia is strongly indicative of contact influence, with the Northern Tungusic languages as the source. There are three arguments in favor of this conclusion: First, none of the languages not belonging to the Tungusic language family could have inherited the distinction between a present and a future imperative from their linguistic ancestors. This implies that either all of these different languages innovated the future imperative independently of each other,

or that all developed it under contact influence – a rather more plausible assumption. Second, a distinction between a present and future imperative is found in two different branches of the Tungusic family, indicating that it may well be an inherited feature in the Northern Tungusic languages Evenki and Èven. Third, Evenki and Èven are in contact with all of the non-Tungusic languages making a distinction between a present and future imperative. This indicates that the direction of influence was probably from Evenki and/or Èven to the other languages.

However, none of the languages that has developed a future imperative copied the marker directly from Evenki. In Sakha (and Dolgan), the future imperative grammaticalized out of a previous analytical imperative construction (Pakendorf 2007: 237–41), while in Kolyma Yukaghir, the present imperative is unmarked in the second person, and the future imperative (which is restricted to the second person) is marked by the same suffix *-ge* that expresses the present imperative in the first and third person (Maslova 2003b: 140). The Buryat future imperative has developed through an extension of meaning of an imperative form that in other Mongolic languages expresses a polite imperative (Poppe 1960: 60; Skribnik 2003: 113).

The most direct evidence for Northern Tungusic contact comes from the Mongolic language Dagur, which has long been spoken in contact with Solon Evenki in Inner Mongolia. Dagur developed a so-called “indirect imperative” with a meaning of delayed action and politeness, e.g. *yau-ga:m-miny* [go-PURP-POSS.1SG] ‘I will go later; let me go later!’. The suffix used for this future imperative is the purposive converb, and, as in purposive constructions, it can take reflexive possessive suffixes as agreement markers for the second person (Tsumagari 2003: 143–4, 146). The use of the purposive converb with the reflexive possessive suffix as a future imperative marker is clearly a copy of the future imperative construction found in Evenki, as described above, making the conclusion of its contact-induced origin quite straightforward (cf. Tsumagari 2003: 144). However, in contrast to Evenki, in Dagur the future imperative uses the purposive converb plus possessive suffixes for all person–number combinations.

## 5 Conclusions

This brief sketch of language contact influences in the vast area of Siberia has illustrated that contact situations can be multi-layered. Currently ongoing changes in the languages of Siberia are due to the influence of Russian and, in certain areas, of Sakha, both of which are politically dominant; unfortunately, this dominance is leading to a large-scale shift to Russian, and occasionally to Sakha. In addition to the influence exerted by politically dominant languages, over the centuries the indigenous languages have been undergoing changes brought about by contact with their neighbors. Unfortunately, not much is known about the prehistoric contact between the indigenous peoples of Siberia, making it difficult to draw conclusions from these changes. In some cases, they are probably due to substrate influence resulting from language shift, as in the case of Evenki influence in Buryat. Whether in other cases contact influence may be due to long-term multilingualism is hard to establish for certain. However, in the example of Sakha–Evenki contact,

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previous bilingualism of Sakha speakers in Evenki is a possibility. More studies involving both fine-scaled molecular anthropological and linguistic analyses of contact in Siberia are therefore necessary to elucidate how these languages changed under different kinds of contact. Finally, it has become clear that the copies made by the recipient languages are not always identical to the model: the Buryat converbal system shows some deviations from the strictly functional person-marking found in Evenki, while Dagur extended the use of the purposive converb as a future imperative marker to all persons, whereas in Evenki this is restricted to the second person. This demonstrates that copied elements can undergo language-specific changes after their incorporation into the recipient language, resulting in a lack of identity between the model and the copy (cf. Johanson 1992: 175).

## NOTES

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- 1 Given the diverse meanings the word “borrowing” has in the literature on language contact, I prefer to speak of “copying” (cf. Johanson 1992: 175).
- 2 This development has also been attributed to Sakha influence (Malchukov 2006: 127).
- 3 Abbreviations used in this chapter are as follows:

ACC	accusative	M	masculine
ALL	allative	NFUT	non-future
ATTR	attributive	NOM	nominative
BEN	benefactive	OBJ	object
CAUS	causative	OBL	oblique
COND	conditional	PART	partitive
COP	copula	PF	perfective
CVB	converb	PL	plural
DAT	dative	POSS	possessive
DEF	definite	PREFL	reflexive possessive
DS	different subject	PREP	prepositional case
DSTIMP	future imperative	PRS	present
EMPH	emphatic	PRXIMP	present imperative
F	feminine	PST	past
FIN	final	PTCP	participle
FUT	future	REAL	realis
FUTPT	future participle	RES	resultative
IMP	imperative	SBJ	subject
INDF	indefinite	SG	singular
INF	infinitive	SIM	simultaneous
INS	instrumental	SS	same subject
INTR	intransitive	SUCC	successive
INTS	intensive	TEMP	temporal
IPF	imperfective	TERM	terminative
LOC	locative		

- 4 Stern (2005a: 178), however, suggests that this pidgin may have arisen as late as the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- 5 Note that the term "creole" referred only to the peoples' mixed ancestry; Copper Island Aleut is not a creole, but a mixed language.

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