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# 34 Contact and Siberian languages<sup>1</sup>

BRIGITTE PAKENDORF

## 1 Introduction: The languages and peoples of Siberia

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. Due to its severe climatic and ecological conditions, Siberia is extremely sparsely populated. Such low population density may have precluded frequent contact among the indigenous ethnolinguistic groups, especially in the past (cf. Stern 2005a: 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 eight language families plus one isolate, Nivkh, are spoken in Siberia (Table 34.1, Figure 34.1). The language families found in Siberia are (following a rough west to east orientation): Uralic, Yeniseic (nowadays represented by only one highly endangered language, Ket), Turkic, Tungusic, Mongolic, Yukaghir, Chukotko-Kamchatkan, and Eskimo-Aleut. The Yukaghir family (of which nowadays only two moribund languages survive, Tundra Yukaghir and Kolyma Yukaghir) might possibly be distantly related to the Uralic languages (cf. references in Maslova 2003: 1), while Turkic, Tungusic and Mongolic are sometimes classified as belonging to the Altaic language family (cf. Georg et al. 1998). 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 1. The extant languages<sup>2</sup> of Siberia and their linguistic affiliation

Family	Languages
Uralic	Khanty, Mansi, Nenets, Enets, Nganasan, Selkup
Yeniseic	Ket
Turkic	Siberian Tatar, Chulym Turkic, Tuvan, Tofa, Khakas, Shor, Altai, Sakha (Yakut), Dolgan
Mongolic	Buryat

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<sup>2</sup> Note that borders between dialects and languages are notoriously fuzzy; thus, glottolog.org counts four different Khanty languages (accessed 25/09/2018). Furthermore, as pointed out below, several of these languages are on the verge of extinction.

Tungusic	Evenki, Even, Negidal, Udihe, Oroč, Nanai, Orok (Ul'ta), Ulča
Yukaghir	Kolyma Yukaghir, Tundra Yukaghir
Chukotko-Kamchatkan	Chukchi, Kerek, Alutor, Koryak, Itelmen <sup>3</sup>
Eskimo-Aleut	Central Siberian (Chaplino) Yupik, Naukan Yupik, Aleut
Isolate	Nivkh

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<sup>3</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 and Volodin 1999: 224–41).

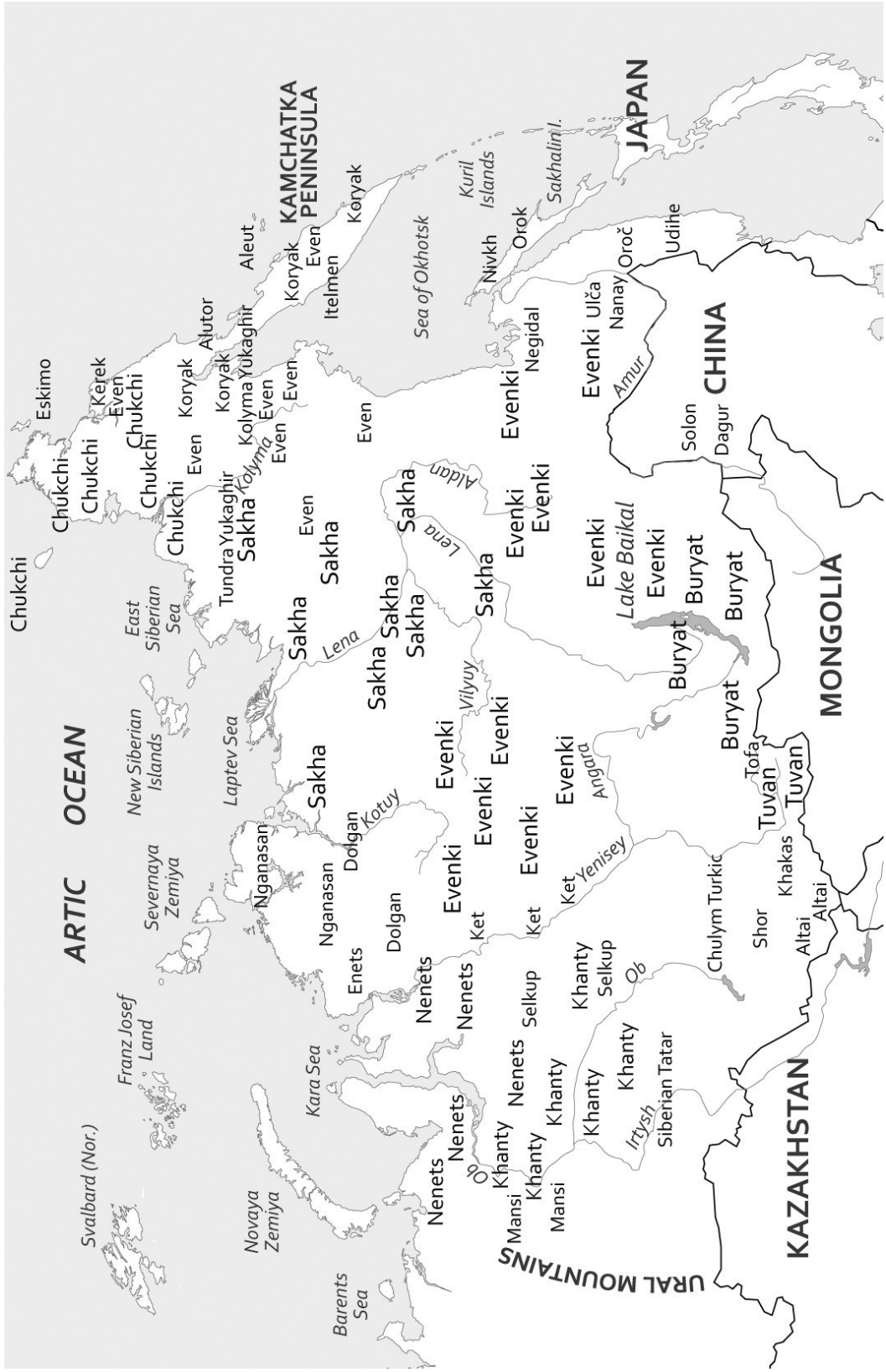


Figure 1 The approximate distribution of the languages of Siberia (map © MPI-EVA)

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).

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 2005a: 292). Therefore, a knowledge of Russian among the indigenous groups was not very widespread during the tsarist period of colonization (cf. Matić 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, in the 1950s and 1960s, small settlements all over Siberia were closed down and their inhabitants relocated to larger, and often ethnically and linguistically mixed settlements, leading to increased use of Russian in daily life (see for example Krupnik and Chlenov 2007 for a description of such relocations among the Yupik). In addition, 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). All of these factors led to a large-scale Russification of all spheres of life (Helimski 1997: 77; de Graaf 1992: 190, 191; Anderson 2005: 125–7; Pakendorf and Aralova 2018).

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; see Kazakevič and Parfěnova 2000: 283–5; Nikolaeva and Tolskaya 2001: 25–6; Maslova 2003: 2; Morgounova 2007: 193; Harrison and Anderson 2008: 245–6; Oskolskaya and Stoyanova 2013; Siegl 2013: 18–21; Gruzdeva 2015: 156–8; and Pakendorf and Aralova 2018 for individual linguistic groups). Only relatively isolated dialect communities, such as that of the Lamunkhin dialect of

Even spoken in central Yakutia (Pakendorf 2009), and a few of the larger ethnic groups, for instance the Turkic-speaking Sakha (Pakendorf 2007: 2) or the Samoyedic-speaking Nenets (Ljublinskaja 2000: 312; Vaxtin 2001: 163), have been able to maintain their heritage language in a viable state.

## **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; Pakendorf and Aralova 2018). 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 one, 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>4</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; Grenoble 2000: 106; Nevskaya 2000: 285; Malchukov 2003: 237; Matić 2008: 103–4; Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009: 510; Vajda 2009: 481, 484).

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>5</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). In

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<sup>4</sup> Given the diverse meanings of the word “borrowing” in the literature on language contact, I prefer to speak of “copying” (cf. Johanson 1992: 175).

<sup>5</sup> This development has also been attributed to Sakha influence (Malchukov 2006: 127).

Nivkh, Russian influence has led to the development of number agreement on nouns after numerals and on verbs after plural subjects, as well as to new imperative forms partly calqued on Russian (Gruzdeva 2015: 164-165, 168-173).

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 2015: 175–7), in Khakas (Anderson 2005: 222), and in Dolgan (Stapert 2013: 262-5). 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), in Evenki (Grenoble 2000: 115; 2009: 150-3), and in Dolgan (Stapert 2013: 292-3). 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 Turkic languages Shor (Nevskaya 2000: 286), Khakas (Anderson 2005: 196–221), Tofa (Harrison and Anderson 2008: 260-1), and Dolgan (Stapert 2013: 301-2, 305), in the Tungusic languages (Malchukov 2003: 241; Grenoble 2000: 116–18; Gladkova 1991: 68), in Yukaghir (Matić 2008: 117–19), and in Enets (Sorokina 1991: 66–7; Khanina and 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), for Khakas (Anderson 2005: 205–9) and for Tofa (Harrison and Anderson 2008: 261). Interestingly, Forest Enets appears to be developing finite relative clauses not with an interrogative pronoun, but with a demonstrative functioning as relativizer (Khanina and Shluinsky 2008: 70–1).

- (1) a. Yukaghir (Matić 2008: ex. 33; taken from Nikolaeva 2004: 29.49)  
*jesli Germanija kejdej-te-j [. . .] taŋnugi er-če*  
 if Germany *advance-FUT-INTR.3SG* then bad-ATTR  
*modol o:-te-j*  
 life COP-FUT-INTR.3SG  
 ‘If Germany wins [. . .] then life will be bad . . .’  
 cf: Russian  
*Jesli Germanija pobedit [. . .] žizn’ budet ploxo*  
 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-mečin-du-n gorot-tu ...*

boy go-FUT.PTCP-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 (cf. Anderson 2017: 645).

However, while Russian influence has changed the indigenous languages of Siberia, indigenous languages have also had an impact on Russian spoken in the region. For instance, several cases of shift of Russian settler communities to indigenous languages, especially Sakha, are known (Sunderland 1996: 815; Stern 2009: 392), and phonological influence of indigenous languages on individual Russian dialects has also been recorded (Sunderland 1996: 815-16; Krasovicky and Sappok 2000; Schweitzer et al. 2013: 424).

### 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, Kyakhta pidgin, or the Maimachin speech) spoken previously in the Chinese–Russian border town of Kyakhta as well as along the Lower Amur, and Taimyr Pidgin Russian (also known as Govorka) spoken on the Taimyr Peninsula (Stern 2005a; Perekhval'skaya 2013). In addition, in the nineteenth century a number of trade jargons may have existed in Chukotka involving Chukchi, Yupik, and English, which were used for communication between Chukchi and Yupik, as well as with sailors of whaling or expedition ships (de Reuse 1994: 319-329). 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 2005a: 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 Kyakhta and Maimachin from the late eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century (Stern 2005b: 178; Perekhval'skaya 2013: 69). A derivative of this pidgin was also spoken in Harbin, and it later spread to the Lower Amur region (Perekhval'skaya 2013: 70), where it played a role in the development

of the pidginized Russian spoken by local Tungusic peoples (Khasanova 2000: 182, 193; Perekhval'skaya to appear). Chinese Pidgin Russian is characterized by large-scale insertion of epenthetic vowels to maintain the CV syllable structure characteristic of Chinese, loss of case and gender-marking, loss of number agreement, and a complete lack of inflection on verbs, which instead are used in the Russian imperative form. There are three tense-aspect markers that follow the verb: *budu/budi* (future), *la* (perfective), and *esa/esi/ju* (perfective or evidential); habitual present and past imperfective are zero-marked. *Budu/budi* and *esa/esi* are inflected forms of the Russian copula 'to be', whereas *ju* is of Chinese origin (Perekhval'skaya 2013: 72). The lexicon is predominantly of Russian origin, with a significant number of Chinese words as well as some items from Mongolian and Tungusic languages. There is a significant amount of variation among the sources, however, depending on the speaker's first language, and only about 100 words appear to make up a common core of lexicon (Perekhval'skaya 2013: 74-5).

In contrast to Chinese Pidgin Russian, which developed as a trade language, Taimyr Pidgin Russian was predominantly developed and used for interethnic communication by Nganasans and the ethnically mixed communities that had developed along the Khatanga Trading Way. These latter comprised Russians, Sakha, and Evenks, and were the core of what later became the Dolgan ethnic group (Stapert 2013: 77-8). During winter extensive visits of nomadic groups such as the Nganasans in the settlements along the trading way would have favoured the development as an intergroup language (Stern 2009: 393).<sup>6</sup> 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 2005a: 301). In contrast to Chinese Pidgin Russian, 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 2005a: 309); third singular forms replace second person singular and third plural forms (Stern 2009: 384). Furthermore, in the past tense the gender distinction is lost, with 95% of verbs with a singular subject taking the masculine past tense form *-l* and the remaining 5% taking the plural form *-li* (Stern 2009: 382). Another difference between the two pidgins is that in Taimyr Pidgin Russian personal pronouns are based on the

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<sup>6</sup> Note that this contradicts an earlier account of the development of this pidgin, according to which Russians were probably not directly involved in its development, since "[u]p to the beginning of the 20th century only few Nganasans had direct contacts with Russians" (Stern 2005a: 291). In contrast, Stern (2009: 393) describes lengthy visits of Nganasans in the trading way settlements, and argues that "[t]he conditions for a convergence of TPR [Taimyr Pidgin Russian] and Peasants' Russian may have been especially favorable, where the Zatundra peasants formed the majority of the settlement's population and the Nganasans set up their winter camps right beside the settlers' huts."

Russian genitive-accusative forms, while in Chinese Pidgin Russian they derive from Russian possessive pronouns. Some of the salient differences between the two pidgins are illustrated in the following examples, with glosses adapted according to the Standard Russian form.

- (2) a. Chinese Pidgin Russian (Perekhval'skaya 2013: 74, ex. 19)  
*jevó dúmaj májá jevó céna*  
 3SG.POSS think[IMP] 1SG.POSS 3SG.POSS price  
*daváj*  
 give[IMP]  
 'He thinks that I give him the (real) price.'
- b. (Perekhval'skaya 2013: 75, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence of text)  
*kurica jajcy kupi-la butyka apuskaj-la*  
 chicken egg buy[IMP]-PFV bottle put.down[IMP]-PFV  
 '... he bought chicken eggs and put them into a bottle.'
- (3) a. Taimyr Pidgin Russian (Stern 2005a: ex. 56)  
*taperja menja budem šamanit'*  
 now 1SG[ACC] will[1PL] act.as.shaman[INF]  
 'Now I will act as shaman.'
- b. (Stern 2005a: 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>7</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 (absolutive 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: 70–1).

<sup>7</sup> Note that the term "creole" referred only to the peoples' mixed ancestry: Copper Island Aleut is not a creole, but a mixed language.

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 hi x̂ ta-it čto ona ego ila x̂ ta-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)  
*ila x̂ ta-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 hamayaa x̂ ta-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 ahmayaa x̂ ta-ku- x̂ t*  
 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 Pidgin Russian, 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**

Little is known about contact between different ethnolinguistic groups before Russian colonization, which started at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in western Siberia. 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, Evens and Sakha (Yakuts) in the west to the Yupik in the east (de Reuse 1994: 296, 307; Maslova and 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 Yupik, Evens, and Kereks (de Reuse 1994: 296; Burykin 1996: 990).

In the Lower Amur region a system of exogamic clans existed that encompassed Nivkh as well as Tungusic Nanai, Negidals, and Evenks; each group comprised clans of linguistically foreign origin. The factors that governed language choice in this area of continuous intermarriage are not known, although it appears to have been determined partly by the language spoken by the numerically preponderant group (Starcev 2014). For the Taimyr Peninsula, Khanina and Meyerhoff (2018) reconstruct Enets-Nganasan and Enets-Nenets bilingualism as well as a more restricted knowledge of Russian and Evenki by Enets for the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Multilingualism is also recorded for speakers of the Eskimo languages Naukan Yupik and Sireniki, who in addition to knowing Chukchi also spoke the Imaklik dialect of Inupiaq and Central Siberian (Chaplino) Yupik, respectively (de Reuse 1994: 306). Yukaghir–Even–Sakha–Chukchi quadrilingualism existed in northeastern Yakutia from the nineteenth century, and perhaps earlier, up to the 1940s (Maslova and Vaxtin 1996: 999). However, it is not known to what extent such multilingualism would have been characteristic of interethnic relations in precolonial times as well.

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; Čimitdoržieva 2004). Nowadays, speakers of Evenki and Even 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, Pakendorf 2009).

Lexical copying among different languages has been documented over the whole geographical area (cf. Anderson 2004: 21–4 for an overview and further references),

and especially among the Mongolic, Tungusic, and Turkic languages. Some of these copies can be traced back to the proto-languages of the respective families, while others are clearly the product of more recent contact between individual languages; occasionally, lexemes can be shown to have been copied into a language at different times in its history (cf. Anderson, to appear, for an extensive summary and references). Furthermore, Anderson (2004; 2006) speaks of a linguistic area with respect to the languages of Siberia (restricted to northeastern Siberia in Anderson 2017). 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, 65–69; 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: 268–273, 279–292). 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; in contrast, the majority of languages spoken in Siberia 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.

A well-described case of changes induced by contact with a neighbouring indigenous language is the influence of Chukchi on neighboring Yupik languages (de Reuse 1994: 295-455). Central Siberian Yupik (CSY) copied over 200 lexemes from Chukchi, more than half of which are particles. The influx of these particles has had an impact on the use of the inherited Yupik postbases, i.e. derivational morphemes with very specific meanings. On the one hand, CSY has been enriched by the Chukchi particles, which frequently add extra “expressivity” or emphasize particular nuances of the postbases. On the other hand, the influx of Chukchi particles has also led to a loss of postbases overall as well as to a loss of productivity of retained postbases (de Reuse 1994: 421-452). For example, the language has several particles of Chukchi origin that express that the time is ripe to act, such as *enta* ‘let’s go, time to go!’, *kergam* ‘ready to act’, *legan*, *weni* ‘go right ahead’, and *yeqay* ‘let’s do it!’, and it is notable that the CSY postbase *-yaghqaaghte-* ‘to be time to V’ is rarely used (de Reuse 1994: 448).

Although Ket, the last surviving language of the Yeniseic family, is still typologically radically different from the majority of Siberian languages, Vajda (2009: 484-91) suggests that it has undergone a typological shift in the direction of the surrounding Samoyedic<sup>8</sup> languages and Evenki through centuries-long contact. For instance, the initial tonal prosody has changed partially into a system of non-phonemic word accent, with only the monosyllabic root retaining the full range of

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<sup>8</sup> Samoyedic is a major branch of the Uralic family.

phonemic pitch distinctions. Similarly, Ket has developed postposed case suffixes and enclitics out of relational nouns, and the shift of the semantic head of the verb to one of the leftmost slots in the verb template led to the development of a more suffixing verb model: “The realignment of the phonological verb’s semantic head to the extreme left edge served to accommodate the original Yeniseian prefixing structure to the pattern of suffixal agglutination prevalent in all of the neighbouring languages” (Vajda 2009: 491). This restructuring took place in the absence of copied morphology, and Ket has also shown itself to be quite resistant to the copying of lexemes: less than 10% of over 1000 studied words could be shown to be copies, and among these, 90% were copied from Russian during the twentieth century (Vajda 2009: 481-483).

One of the most striking contact-induced changes to be found among Siberian languages is the copying of four verbal TAM plus subject agreement paradigms from the Turkic language Sakha (Yakut) into the Lamunkhin dialect of the Tungusic language Even, which is spoken in central Yakutia (Pakendorf 2009, 2015). The paradigms concerned are the necessitive (6a) and the assertive (6b), which are established copies, as well as the present indicative and the hypothetical, which are still in the process of being copied. It is highly probable that these paradigms were transferred in a process called “direct affix borrowing” by Seifart (2015), indicating that full bilinguals are able to identify suffixes in one language and productively use them with stems in the other (Pakendorf 2019).

- (6) a. Lamunkhin Even (RDA\_TPK\_spirits\_005)  
*tar em-nidzur tar tor-du*  
 DIST come-ANT.CVB.PL DIST earth-DAT  
*e-jekte:k-kin ku:nin-na*  
 NEG-NEC.Y-PRED.2SG.Y scream-NEG.CVB  
 ‘Having arrived, in that place you mustn’t shout.’
- b. Lamunkhin Even (IVK\_memories\_154)  
*amm-u otton karabi-ńdza-j*  
 father-POSS.1SG DP.Y carbine.R-AUG-PRFL.SG  
*ia-j-dag-a nugaha-j-dag-a=di*  
 HESIT-CONN-ASS.Y-3SG.Ytake.out-CONN-ASS.Y-3SG.Y=EMPH.Y  
 ‘Of course my father took out his gun.’

Interestingly, the assertive paradigm was also copied from Sakha into the (now probably extinct) Učur dialect of Evenki (Myreeva 1964: 51; Malchukov 2006: 126 (7)). Here, the mood has both the assertive as well as the presumptive meaning which it carries in Sakha (Pakendorf 2014: 289-290), in contrast to the purely assertive meaning found in Lamunkhin Even. Furthermore, in Učur Evenki the Sakha suffixes appear to be attached to truncated Evenki non-future forms, as shown by the *-r* that precedes them (Myreeva 1964: 51).

- (7) Učur Evenki (Pakendorf 2014: ex. 1b, taken from Myreeva 1964: 51)

*su: goro-li-r.dakkit*  
2PL far-VR-ASS.2PL.Y  
'You probably went far.'

Other examples of changes in Evenki and Even dialects that were probably induced by contact with Sakha are the optional replacement of the bilabial fricative [β] with [b], patterns of consonant assimilation, the use of personal pronouns as possessive pronouns, the lack of agreement between modifiers and their head nouns, and patterns of argument marking of some verbs, such as the use of the dative instead of allative case for addressees of verbs of speech (Malchukov 2006) – a change that has also been attributed to Russian contact (section 2). Likewise, the use of the stem *beje* instead of the reflexive pronoun *me:n* in logophoric function can be attributed to Sakha contact influence, since Sakha uses the possessive-marked pronoun *beje* 'self' in this function. It is unclear whether this usage in Even is a calque from the Sakha construction using the Even noun *bej* 'man, human', as suggested by Malchukov (2006), or whether *beje* in these constructions is perhaps an actual copy from Sakha. Further substance copies from Sakha are the ordinal suffix *-(i)s*, e.g. *il-is* 'the third' instead of eastern Even *il-i*, as well as numerous modal adverbs and particles, such as *araj* 'suddenly', *badaga* 'probably', and the very frequent discourse particle *buolla* (Malchukov 2006; Pakendorf 2009: 89; 2015: 70-71).

Although Sakha is nowadays the dominant indigenous language in Yakutia and is exerting pressure on the neighbouring Tungusic languages, it has itself undergone some contact-induced changes under the influence of Evenki during its history. These are mainly of a structural kind: only 1% of over 1400 lexemes in Sakha can be shown to have a probable Evenki origin (Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009: 504-9), and these refer mainly to natural phenomena, such as *χočo* 'valley' or *tura:χ* 'crow'. This lack of lexical copying from Evenki contrasts with the large numbers of copies of Mongolic origin in Sakha: 11-13% of lexemes (Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009: 509) as well as 18 derivational and one inflectional suffix have a Mongolic origin (Pakendorf 2015). Among the structural changes in Sakha probably induced by Evenki contact are the loss of the Turkic genitive case, the development of an indefinite accusative meaning of the partitive case, the retention of a distinction between the comitative and instrumental, extensive pragmatic uses of possessive suffixes, the development of a suffix that marks terms for kin and friends who are not in a relationship to the speaker, and the development of a distinction between an immediate future and remote future imperative. In all of these cases, the Evenki influence was purely structural, with no actual forms being copied (Pakendorf 2007: 95-270). Interestingly, language shift of entire groups of Evenks to Sakha is highly improbable in light of genetic evidence (Pugach et al. 2016). 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 in Evenki among Sakha-speakers, which might explain the contact-induced changes in Sakha in the absence of shift to Sakha by Evenki speakers (Pakendorf 2007: 317–323).



Dolgan, a daughter of Sakha that developed along the Khatanga Trading Way out of the intermarriage and assimilation of Evenks, Russians, and Sakha (Stapert 2013: 77-78), has undergone further changes under Evenki contact influence. For instance, Dolgan appears to have calqued its frequent use of the ablative-marked distal demonstrative *onton* to express coordination from Evenki, which uses the ablative-marked distal demonstrative *taduk* in precisely the same manner (Stapert 2013: 282-286). Evenki influence is also likely to have played a role in the increased use of the habitual aspect in Dolgan as compared to Sakha. The habitual participle *-A:ččI* occurs nearly exclusively as a verbal suffix in Dolgan (ex. 8a), whereas in Sakha it has a nominalizing function in nearly 25% of its uses (ex. 8b). Since the western dialects of Evenki, which would have played a role in the formation of Dolgan, make frequent use of the habitual aspect, Evenki influence may have increased the verbal use of this aspect in Dolgan (Stapert 2013: 209-238) .

- (8) a. Dolgan (Stapert 2013 : 216, ex. 6.10)
- |                  |             |                      |            |
|------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------|
| <i>on-tu-gun</i> | <i>biex</i> | <i>kül-e:čči-bin</i> | <i>ile</i> |
| that-DER-ACC.2SG | always      | laugh-HAB-PRED.1SG   | really     |
- ‘I always really laugh at that.’
- b. Sakha (Stapert 2013 : 216, ex. 6.8)
- |                |                     |               |                      |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| <i>dze</i>     | <i>mama-bar</i>     | <i>ha:maj</i> | <i>tirex</i>         |
| well           | mother-DAT.1SG      | the.most      | support              |
| <i>buol-an</i> | <i>xa:l-l-im</i>    |               | <i>kömölöh-ö:ččü</i> |
| AUX-SQ.CVB     | remain-PST-POSS.1SG | help-HAB      |                      |
| <i>buol-an</i> | <i>xa:l-l-im</i>    |               |                      |
| AUX-SQ.CVB     | remain-PST-POSS.1SG |               |                      |
- ‘Well I remained my mother’s biggest support, I remained her helper.’

A striking instance of Evenki influence in Dolgan is the restructuring of the system of kinship terminology. Traditional Sakha has a very extensive system of terms for brothers and sisters (which is now falling out of use), with seven different terms distinguishing the sex of ego and the sex as well as relative age of the sibling; only for the younger sister of a male and female ego is there no distinction in terms. Dolgan, in contrast, has only three terms: one for older brother, one for older sister, and one for younger siblings irrespective of their sex; the sex of ego is irrelevant. Whereas Dolgan uses inherited Sakha terms, the partitioning of the semantic space perfectly matches that of Evenki (9). Similar restructuring of Dolgan kinship terminology under Evenki influence can be shown to have taken place in the terms for uncles and aunts, parents-in-law, and spouses (Stapert 2013: 136-44).

(9) Sibling terms in Dolgan compared to Sakha and Evenki (from Stapert 2013: 136)

	Sakha	Dolgan	Evenki
older brother of M	<i>bi:</i>	<i>ubaj</i>	<i>aki:n</i>

older brother of F	<i>ubaj</i>	<i>ubaj</i>	<i>aki:n</i>
older sister of M	<i>edzij</i>	<i>edzij</i>	<i>eki:n</i>
older sister of F	<i>ayas</i>	<i>edzij</i>	<i>eki:n</i>
younger brother of M	<i>ini</i>	<i>balis</i>	<i>neku:n</i>
younger brother of F	<i>surus</i>	<i>balis</i>	<i>neku:n</i>
younger sister of M	<i>balis</i>	<i>balis</i>	<i>neku:n</i>
younger sister of F	<i>balis</i>	<i>balis</i>	<i>neku:n</i>

Sakha is not the only language of Siberia to have developed a distinction between an immediate future and a remote future imperative under probable Evenki and Even influence (Pakendorf 2013: 216-218). A similar distinction is made in the Samoyedic language Nganasan, in Dolgan, in Yukaghir, 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. In contrast, the Southern Tungusic languages Nanai, Orok, and Ulča also have a remote future imperative, making an origin in the Tungusic family quite probable. 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 (cf. Tsumagari 2003: 144), since the second person remote future imperative marker in Evenki is identical to the purposive converb suffix, and agreement is achieved by the reflexive possessive suffixes. However, in contrast to Evenki, in Dagur the future imperative uses the purposive converb plus possessive suffixes for all person-number combinations.

Evenki influence can also be shown to have played a role in other features of the verbal domain in Buryat and Dagur, namely in the development of verbal subject agreement and of person-marking on converbs. While most modern-day Mongolic languages lack verbal subject agreement, some show varying degrees of person marking. Notably, person-number agreement is obligatory and marked by suffixes derived from personal pronouns in Buryat and Dagur. These languages have been in close contact with Evenki and its close sister Solon, respectively. In Evenki, verbs obligatorily agree in person and number with their subject, and it is probable that the optional subject agreement marking attested in historical Mongolic documents from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century became fixed in Buryat and Dagur under Evenki/Solon contact (Pakendorf 2013: 212-216).

Similarly, Evenki influence is likely to have led to the development of person-marked converbs in Buryat. Like other Tungusic languages, Evenki has an elaborate

system of converbs that function in coordination and subordination and also participate in reference-tracking. Same-subject (SS) converbs occur only in subordinate clauses with a subject coreferential with that of the main clause, different-subject (DS) converbs occur only in subordinate clauses whose subject is non-coreferential with that of the main clause, and 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* (10a). 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 (10b), and by the use of reflexive possessive suffixes when they are coreferential (i.e. with VS converbs; 10c).

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

In Buryat 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; 11a). The remaining converbs take possessive subject-agreement markers when they occur in subordinate clauses with a non-coreferential subject (11b), or reflexive possessive person markers when the subjects are coreferential (Poppe 1960: 70; Skribnik 1988: 149; 11c).

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

The similarity of the Buryat converbal system to that of Evenki is striking. The same type of subject agreement suffixes fulfil the same syntactic role in both languages. In contrast to Evenki, Buryat did not inherit this system from its Mongolic ancestor, making Evenki contact influence in its development highly likely. 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).

## 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, 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.

It is notable that several of the known cases of contact involve Evenki. Evenks were traditionally highly mobile nomadic hunters who used domesticated reindeer for transport, and they were and are in contact with speakers of very many different languages. This explains why they may have played the role of “vectors of diffusion” of at least some of the features that characterize the Siberian macro-area (Anderson 2006: 294), 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).

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	accusative	M	masculine
ALL	allative	NEC	necessitive
ANT	anterior	NEG	negative
ASS	assertive	NFUT	non-future
ATTR	attributive	NOM	nominative
AUG	augmentative	OBJ	object

AUX	auxiliary	OBL	oblique
COND	conditional	PFV	perfective
CONN	connective	PL	plural
COP	copula	POSS	possessive
CVB	converb	PRED	predicative
DAT	dative	PREP	prepositional case
DEF	definite	PRFL	reflexive possessive
DER	derivation	PRS	present
DIST	distal (demonstrative)	PST	past
DP	discourse particle	PTCP	participle
DS	different subject	PURP	purposive
EMPH	emphatic	R	Russian copy
F	feminine	REAL	realis
FIN	final	RES	resultative
FUT	future	SBJ	subject
HAB	habitual	SG	singular
HESIT	hesitative	SIM	simultaneous
IMP	imperative	SQ	sequential
INF	infinitive	SUCC	successive
INS	instrumental	TEMP	temporal
INTR	intransitive	TERM	terminative
INTS	intensive	VR	verbalizer
IPF	imperfective	Y	Sakha (Yakut) copy
LOC	locative		

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