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Contact-induced change in Dolgan : an investigation into the role of linguistic data for the reconstruction of a people's (pre)history

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1. The current Dolgan community consists for a large part of Evenks who shifted to Dolgan/Sakha, as is shown by semantic changes in Dolgan kinship terms and the results of Y-chromosome analysis.
2. Reanalysis and regularisation in Dolgan reflect the presence of large groups of second language learners of Dolgan/Sakha in the Dolgan community in the past.
3. The widespread use of the habitual participle in Dolgan, as well as its predominantly verbal use probably developed on the model of Evenki.
4. The significantly more frequent SVO word order pattern in Dolgan when compared to Sakha is the result of intense contact with, and current shift to Russian.
5. On community level, the focus on dominance in Van Coetsem's model of contact-induced change may lead to an artificial dichotomy between the processes of borrowing and imposition to explain a linguistic change that really is a single development in the speech community.
6. The field of contact linguistics could be greatly advanced by the creation of a searchable database of documented case studies, coded for a carefully selected set of social variables and the observed linguistic outcomes.
7. Since correlations between social settings and their linguistic outcomes are tendencies and not laws, interdisciplinary research (including genetic analysis) is crucial to disambiguate conclusively between multiple possible reconstructions of contact settings on the basis of linguistic data.
8. The scientific returns of linguistic research can be optimised if more funding went into the processing, preparation and organisation of field data, and not only into the accumulation of ever more material.
9. Categories do not exist. They are a tool invented by man to enable us to talk about the continuum that is the world around us.
10. Waiting is an activity, not the lack of one.
11. Optimal freedom is to do what you want without imposing on others.