

Using a sociolinguistic database for detecting historical changes in Siberian languages

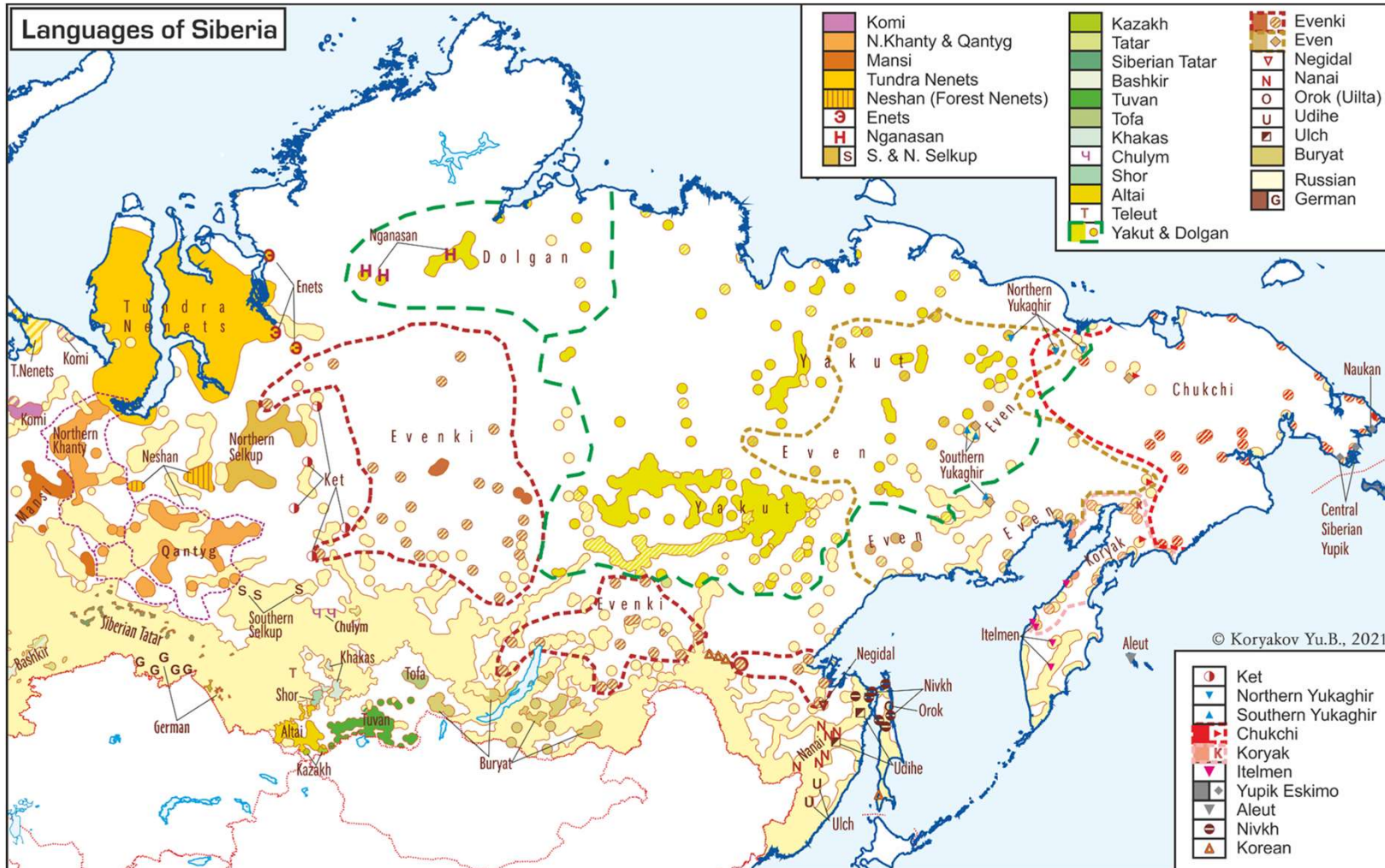


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Outline

- Sociolinguistics of Siberia
- Project description and project data
- Sociolinguistic database
- Case 1: Selkup of Farkovo
- Case 2: Evenki of Uchami
- Conclusion: future plans



Sociolinguistics of Siberia: peculiarities

- high dialect variation in most languages
- small-scale multilingualism (mostly in the past)
- domination of Russian growing since 1930s, more and more rapidly since 1950s
- ethno-local communities shifting to Russian (in the past also to other language)

⇒ How to learn about the past?

Project “Dynamics of the development of linguistic situation in local groups of indigenous minorities of Siberia and the Far East reflected in linguistic biographies” (RFBS 20-012-00520)

- research into the dynamics of linguistic situation in local groups of indigenous minorities over the last century
 - migration history
- reveal the factors influencing the situation development

<https://socio-siberian-lang.minlang.site>

Sources: archival and published data

census data

not always available

ethno- and geographical books

“hidden” sociolinguistics

linguistic and sociolinguistic publications

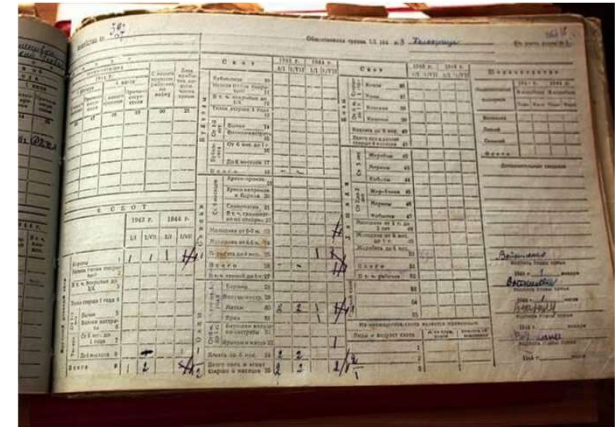
the Avrorin project (largely unavailable)



Sources: fieldwork data

- rural household registers
- sociolinguistic questionnaires
- interviews
- lifestories

told in an ethnic language or in Russian



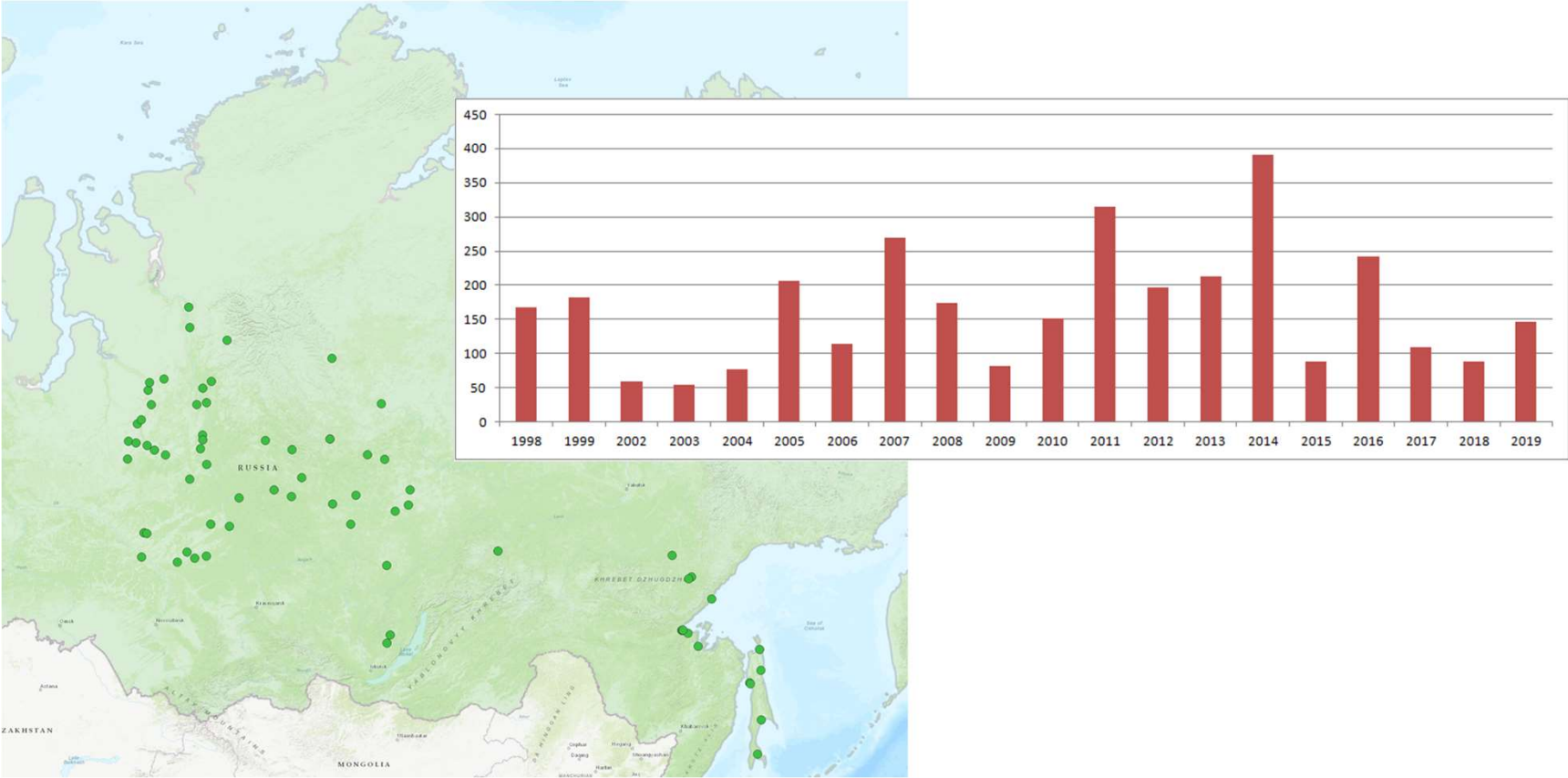
Sociolinguistic questionnaires

- where respondents and their relatives were born
- how the respondents and their relatives acquire and use the languages in various situations
- the languages and origins of their parents and grandparents

[A sample questionnaire](#)
[\(in Russian\)](#)



Distribution and quantity



Sociolinguistic database: requirements

- searchable across all the questionnaires
- available online
- anonymity
- visualization
- about 3300 questionnaires + linked data on relatives

Sociolinguistic database: challenges

data correction and normalization

- questionnaires not always uniform
- misspellings etc.

data linking and deduplication

- same ancestor for various people?

geocoding: many places have already disappeared

⇒ had to use old maps like <http://etomesto.ru>



Selkup

Selkup Language(s): Uralic, Samoyedic branch

Population Census 2010

Ethnic group strength 3612

Consider Selkup their mother tongue 1334 (36,6%)

Selkup speakers 945 (25,9%) / about **600**

Northern Selkup

Ethnic group strength 1811

Consider Northern Selkup their mother tongue 1271 (70%)

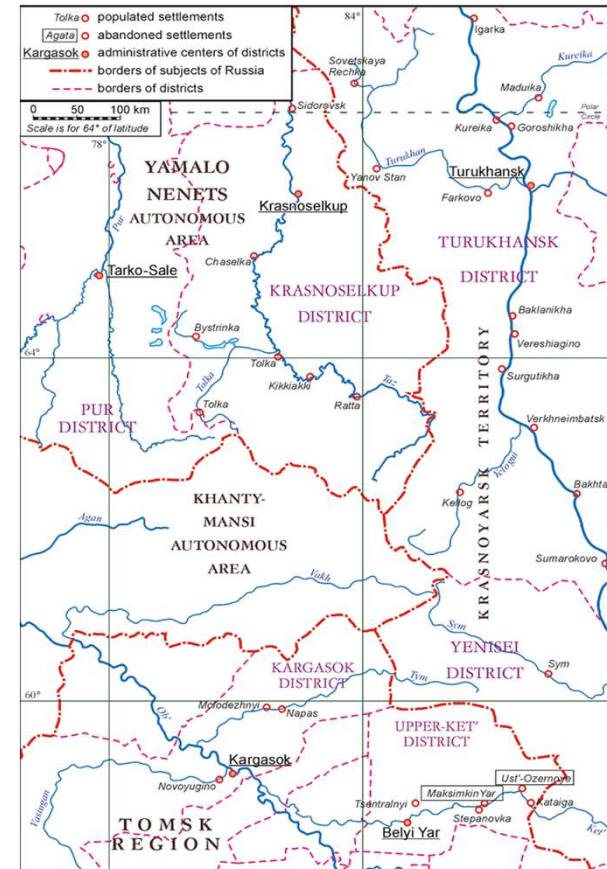
Northern Selkup speakers 866 (49%) / about 600

Southern Selkup

Ethnic group strength 1181

Consider Southern Selkup their mother tongue 22 (1,9%)

Southern Selkup speakers 50 (4%) / under **10 (3)**



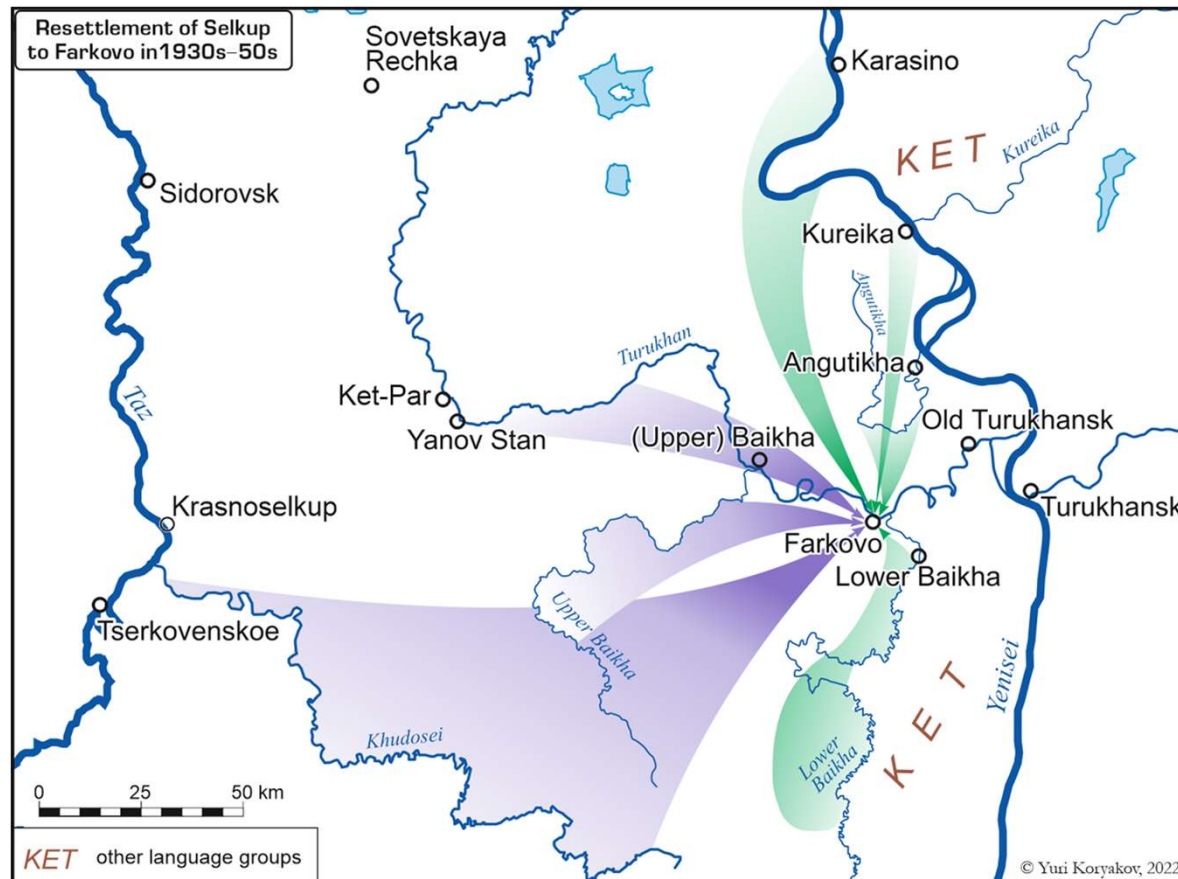
Farkovo: a puzzle

Population 289, Selkups 228, Selkup speakers ab. 40 (all over 50).
236 questionnaires filled (1999-2015).

In the village two Selkup varieties (dialects) are spoken:

- **dialect 1** is connected with the Upper Baikha and the Middle Taz local varieties of Selkup
- **dialect 2** is connected with the Lower Baikha and the Yenisei local varieties of Selkup. During the last century this dialect has undergone a restructuring of the categories of number and conjugation type.

Farkovo: sociolinguistical history



1930s (collectivization):
Farkovo starts growing

1950s–1980s: people moving to Farkovo from Kureika and Angutikha

1950s–1980s: trading posts on the Turukhan river and its tributaries closed, people moving to Farkovo

Farkovo: tracing back the process of the restructuring of grammar categories with archival data

(1) tintəna ʃitti ima-qı pakt-ɔ:tit
[pakt-ɔ:qı]
this two woman-DU run-3PL
[run-3DU.SBJ]
'These two women ran' (LV Archive 1941)

(2) kutar il-al kət-æt
[il-anti]
how live-2SG.OBJ say-IMP.2SG.OBJ
[live-2SG.SBJ]
'Tell (me) how you live' (Mal'cev 1903)

(3) tənir-p-a kussa mat ʃer-læ-p [ʃer-

Farkovo: at least two Selkup dialects are spoken

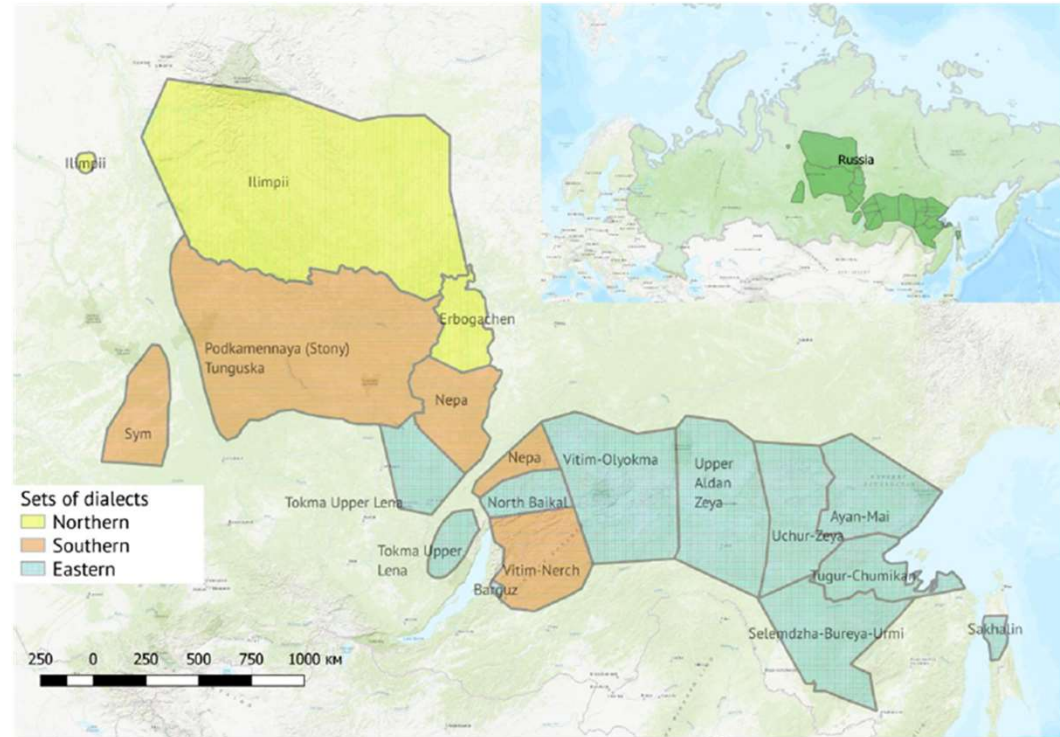
- **the Upper Baikha dialect**
- **the Lower Baikha dialect**
 - the lost of the dual forms
 - the lost of the opposition of subjective and objective declension in 1sg and 2sg forms

It might be a result of the long and intense contact with the Ket language having neither dual, nor binary opposition of subjective and objective declension types, but even if it is not the case, the restructuring was definitely supported by this contact.

Evenki

most wide-spread
Tungusic language

≈ 50 dialects
divided into 3 groups
(based on
phonological features)



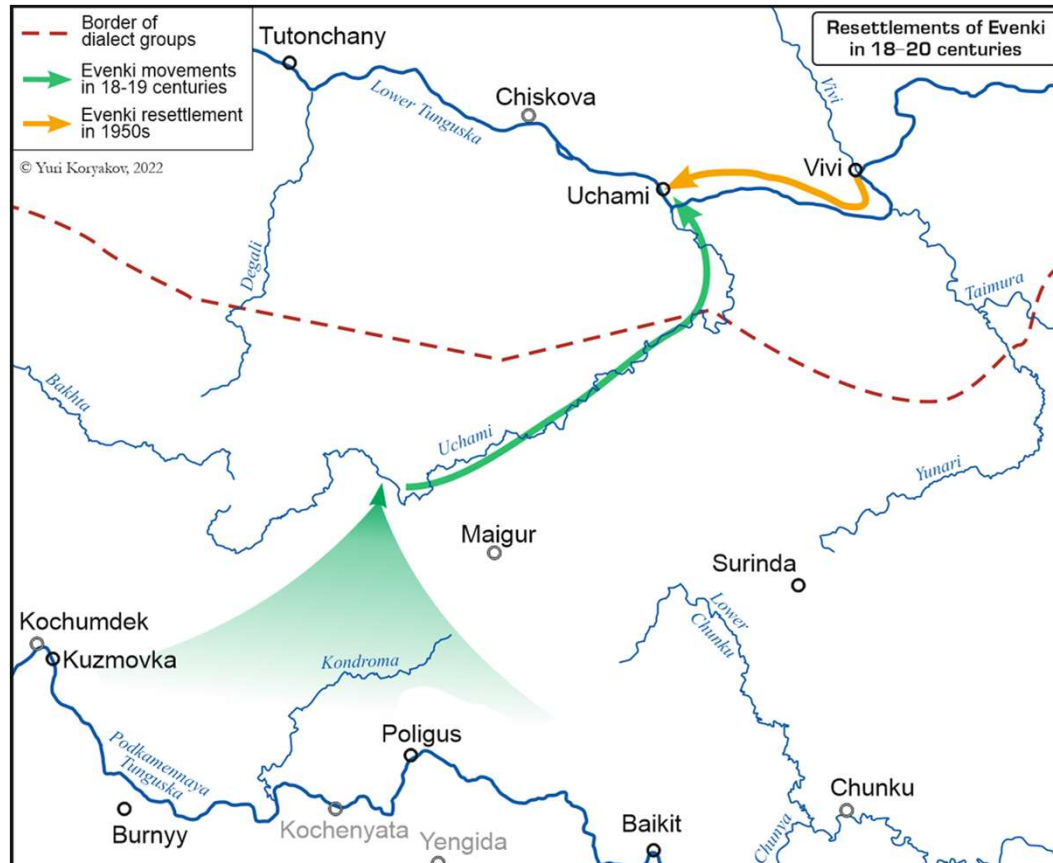
Northern and Southern groups
quite close to each other

Evenki dialects of Russia based on Vasilevich
(1948), redrawn by Nadezhda Mamontova

Uchami: a puzzle

- 1948: classified as **southern**
- 1952: Elena Lebedeva's archive: **southern**
- 2008: accidentally met a speaker Lebedeva worked with: **southern** and **northern** features
- 2014: fieldwork: **northern** features

Uchami: sociolinguistic history



18th–19th centuries:
people moving to
Uchami from the south

1952: the trading post
of Vivi closed, people
moving to Uchami

Uchami: 50 questionnaires (2014)

1952: the northern Vivi village was closed

⇒ some speakers' families moving to Uchami

⇒ “old” and “new” inhabitants of Uchami

=> the new dialect became more prominent,
influencing even “old” inhabitants

Future plans

- process all the available questionnaire data
- incorporate household registers, old books and census data

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