

## Studies in Yukaghir etymology I

This paper presents a number of additions and corrections to the corpus of etymologies published in Irina Nikolaeva's "A Historical Dictionary of Yukaghir" (De Gruyter, 2006). The focus of the paper is on internal Yukaghir etymology rather than on search for loanwords or long-range cognates.

*Keywords:* Yukaghir languages; etymology; historical linguistics; protolanguage reconstruction.

### 0. Introduction

The appearance of "A Historical Dictionary of Yukaghir" (HDY) by Irina Nikolaeva represented a significant breakthrough in the study of Yukaghir etymology and in the reconstruction of Proto-Yukaghir. However, despite the comprehensiveness of this dictionary, much remains to be done in the field of Yukaghir etymology.

First, the etymological analysis in HDY is not always as deep as one would want it to be. For example, the Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction \**eluč-* (HDY: 157) is based on the Tundra Yukaghir form *elut'ora-* 'to pass by', given under the label "TK" (Tundra Yukaghir form from Krejnovič 1958 or Krejnovič 1982). Unfortunately, HDY never provides the exact reference to the page (or sometimes even to the work) where the cited form is taken from. In this case, the word in question is attested in the phrase <НЭМЭН ИЛИЈЕНОЛЛЭЛК ЭЛУТ'ОРАҢАН ТИТҚАНЭ> (Krejnovič 1982: 278), translated as 'Какой бы то ни было ветер пусть минует вас' (Krejnovič 1982: 283), i.e. 'let any wind pass you by'. The form *elut'orayan* contains the negative prefix *el-* and the jussive ending *-yan*. The same form *el-ut'ora-*, now with the correctly segmented negative prefix, is given once again under the Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction \**u:čə-* (HDY: 440). The verb stem *ut'ora-* is identical<sup>1</sup> to Т *uučuoore-* 'drop in on somebody on one's way', documented by Kurilov (2001). This verb is derived from Т *uu-* 'to go somewhere; to float downstream', which is cited in HDY under the Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction \**uj-* (HDY: 441-442).

Second, the approach to Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction taken in HDY is not based on the Neogrammarian notion of *Ausnahmslosigkeit der Lautgesetze*. Frequent references to the influence of neighboring consonants on the development of vowels are made *ad hoc*, without assuming that the changes in question are in any way regular. As was already noted by Elena Maslova in her review of HDY, "it remains unclear in which phonetic contexts the hypothesized sound changes are supposed to have happened. At best, Nikolaeva observes some tendencies (like the presence of labials in the immediate context as a correlate of \*PY *o* > Т *a*), but they are not supposed to account for all relevant instances of changes and retentions" (Maslova 2008: 258).

Third, the philological treatment of the Old Yukaghir material is rather superficial (Knüppel 2013). Old Yukaghir forms are given without their original glosses after their modern cognates, with the implication that they have the same meaning. For example, MU <andschúb> is given after К *ažu:bə* 'conversation' (HDY: 103), which might mean that the MU form means 'conversation' as well. But on p. 73 the same unglossed MU form is compared to К *ažu:* 'word, language'. Finally, in the Swadesh list of Old Yukaghir varieties, MU <andschúb> is given un-

---

<sup>1</sup> Vowel length is rendered fairly inconsistently in Krejnovič's works.

der ‘tongue’ (Nikolaeva 2008: 326). Schiefner (1871: 375) gives E (= Ermitage-Manuscript, one of the copies of MU wordlist) <andschub> ‘Zunge’, with the note “wohl richtiger *Sprache*”, so apparently the gloss ‘tongue’ must be correct.

The recent years saw the appearance of a number of works on Yukaghir etymology (Aikio 2014; Blažek forthcoming; Fortescue & Vajda 2022: 45–142; Häkkinen 2012; Knüppel 2010, 2014; Napol’skikh 2020; Piispanen 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2022). However, almost all of these works are dedicated to external etymology, i.e. search for loanwords from other language families in Yukaghir languages or attempts to find evidence supporting long-range relationship between Yukaghir and other families, mainly Uralic. These are legitimate pursuits, but their success depends on the thoroughness of internal analysis of Yukaghir data. I am convinced that using underanalyzed data in external etymologizing is the main source of errors in both loanword research and long-range comparison. I hope to demonstrate in the present paper that the resources of Yukaghir-internal etymology are far from exhausted.

Proto-Yukaghir forms in this paper are reconstructed following my revised version of Nikolaeva’s Yukaghir reconstruction (Zhivlov 2022). Unless noted otherwise, Kolyma Yukaghir forms are cited after Prokop’eva & Prokop’eva (2021) and Tundra Yukaghir forms are cited after Kurilov (2001).

### 1. K *čadile* ~ *čad’ile* ‘path’

This word is a cognate of T *čarile* ‘path; summer path; line, notch’. The Proto-Yukaghir form can be reconstructed as \**čadilə*, with the regular shift \*-d- > -r- in Tundra Yukaghir. In view of the Tundra cognate, the Kolyma variant with -d’- must be secondary. In HDY (121) the Kolyma word is treated as isolated, while the Tundra word is conflated with T *čaril’e* ‘wrinkle’ (a related word with a different suffix) and apparently unrelated T *sorile* ‘wrinkle’ in the following way: “T *čaril’e*, *sorile*, *čarile* wrinkle; summer path; line, notch” (HDY: 414). The resulting mix is compared to K *šorile* ‘picture; pattern; color’ and K *šere-* ‘to embroider’ (tr.) with the remark that “[t]he correspondence K -ö-/e- ~ T -a- is irregular” (ibid.). The reconstructed Proto-Yukaghir \**sörö-/sere-* is then compared to Tungusic \**sere-* ‘to embroider’. The Kolyma verb *šere-* ‘to embroider’ (tr.) indeed must be a Tungusic loanword, but there is no reason to connect it with other words above, given the divergent semantics and unclear vowel correspondences.

### 2. T *čald’e(ŋ)* ‘hand’

This word is attested in two Old Yukaghir wordlists<sup>2</sup>: MU <tolónscha>, MK <tolónscha, tolondschén-> (HDY: 434). The change \*o > a and the syncope in trisyllabic stems are recurrent

<sup>2</sup> The position of these two wordlists with respect to modern Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir languages is unclear. While most Old Yukaghir wordlists (except, of course, sources on Chuvan and Omok) reflect idioms close to modern Kolyma Yukaghir, both MU and MK combine a number of words otherwise attested only in Tundra Yukaghir with characteristically Kolyma lexemes. This situation can be explained in two ways: either these lists reflect special lects intermediate between modern Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir (Nikolaeva 2008), or a peculiar mix of Kolyma and Tundra words results from borrowing. The second option can be supported with the following observation: while Kolyma Yukaghir, Tundra Yukaghir, Omok, and Chuvan all have sufficiently distinct systems of numerals, reflecting their long independent history, the numeric systems of MU and MK are practically identical with the Kolyma numeral system. Anyway, these wordlists are a unique source of Old Tundra Yukaghir lexicon, even if Tundra-like forms in them are borrowings.

changes in Tundra Yukaghir as compared to 19<sup>th</sup> century wordlists (although their exact conditions are yet to be determined), cf. T *al'γa(η)* ‘fish’, MU <ólloga>, MK <oljogá> (HDY: 325). However, the correspondence of Old Yukaghir *t-* to modern Tundra Yukaghir *č-* is irregular. Nikolaeva reconstructs *\*tolon-/\*čolon-*, noting that “[e]ither the MU and MK records are erroneous and the root should be reconstructed with the initial affricate (*\*čolo-*), or in T the first consonant was assimilated to the third syllable affricate: *\*tolon-č'ə > \*tolod'ə > čal'd'ə*”. The second option can be definitely confirmed when we compare T *im-dald'al-* ‘to be five’. The first part of this compound is also found in Kolyma Yukaghir *in'γańboi*<sup>3</sup> <I'n-gan·boi> ‘five’ (Jochelson 1905: 113) and in Chuvan: ChM *emgagon* <ЕМГАНГОНЬ> ‘five’, *emganbagu* <ЕМГАНБАГУ> — the first part of numerals from six to nine, ChB *imo-qánbo-tudole* ‘six’ (HDY: 293). The second part of the Kolyma and Chuvan words for ‘five’ is K *qańbe* ‘palm’, ChM *qańba* <ХАНЬБА> ‘hand’ — the semantic equivalent of T *čald'e(η)* ‘hand’. Another compound preserving the dental stop in the root in question is T *čama-dald'e* ‘tsar’, literally “big hand”<sup>4</sup>. Cf. words with original initial *č*, which changes to *d'* in compounding: T *čajle* ‘day; light’, T *kind'e-d'ajle* ‘moonlight’ (T *kind'e* ‘moon’). Thus, we can reconstruct *\*tolońžə* as the original form of T *čald'e(η)*.

Now, *\*tolońžə* looks like a lexicalized active participle (Schmalz 2013: 145; Nikolaeva 2020: 83) from the verbal stem *\*tolo-* or *\*tolon-*. The only formally suitable candidate is the verbal root *\*tol-* (HDY: 433): T *tolie-* ‘to support, to prop up’ (tr.), T *tolej-* ‘to support oneself (by leaning on something)’ (tr.), T *tolii(η)* ‘khorei (a pole for driving reindeer); staff’. While I do not know any typological parallels for the derivation of the word for ‘hand’ from the verb ‘to support, to prop up’, such a semantic connection at least does not look impossible.

### 3. T *enuníe-* ‘to be of poor quality, thin (of deerskin)’ (intr.)

This verb, together with its derivative T *enuníije* ‘part of the skin, unsuitable (because of its thinness) for the manufacture of clothing and other household items’, is treated in HDY (162) as etymologically isolated. The etymology of these words is quite transparent: they are derived from T *nuníe-* ‘to be thick (of deerskin)’ (intr.), T *nuníije* ‘thick part of the skin’ with the negative prefix *e-*. The problem is that this prefix is non-productive and its very existence is ignored in HDY. The regular negative prefix (or proclitic) in Yukaghir is K *el-*, T *el-* (HDY: 155-156). Other examples of the negative prefix *e-* include K *ējuuke* ‘near’, T *ējuoke* ‘near’ (cf. K *juuke* ‘far’, T *jöke* ‘far’, T *juuke* ‘far, far away’), K *ejedulben* ‘invisible, unclean spirit, devil’ (cf. K *jed-/jen-* ‘to be seen’). One more case, which additionally involves a regressive assimilation of the prefix vowel, is T *araw* ‘naked’, T *araawje* ‘bald spot (e.g., on a deerskin)’, T *arawjaa* ‘bald’, T *arawre-* ‘to become cloudless; to become bald’, T *arawíe-* ‘to have a bare surface without vegetation (of the tundra); to have a plucked, shabby spot’, K *aruóie-* ‘to be naked; to be bald’, K *arouje ~ arojo* ‘lenok’ (cf. T *sawa(η)* ‘hide, skin’; the change of root-initial *s* to *r* is regular in compounding). According to Nikolaeva, “[i]n forms such as *a-ro:jə, a-raw* etc. the consonant *-l-* has fallen out: *\*əl-sawa(-) > al-sawa(-) > al-rawa(-) > araw, aro:-*” (HDY: 156). This scenario is quite unlikely: since the form without the expected *-l-* is found before different consonants, there is no way to explain the absence of *-l-* by a regular sound change. For example, the regular reflex

<sup>3</sup> In modern K *ńayanbuo-* ‘to be five’ *in-* was replaced by the reciprocal prefix *ńa-*.

<sup>4</sup> This etymology of the Tundra word for ‘tsar’ was proposed by Jochelson (1926: 39). In HDY (138) this word is analyzed as *čamad-ald'e* ‘tsar’ [lit. ‘big chief’]. This analysis is worse than Jochelson’s because it is based on K *and'e ~ and'e ~ anid'e* ‘boss; leader’, KJ *alid'e, anid'e* ‘princeling, head, chieftain’ (HDY: 108), a word not attested in Tundra Yukaghir, which has different words for ‘chief, boss’: *lem'l'e* and *moojče*. I thank an anonymous reviewer for this observation.

of the combination *-l- + -j-* is *-ll'-*, cf. K *jaquj-* ‘to be sufficient’ (intr.), K *ell'aquj-* ‘to lack’ (intr.) (see also Maslova 2003: 43). Therefore, as was pointed out by Krejnovič (1982: 99–100), forms like T *ejuoke* must contain the negative prefix *e-*. All attested cases with this prefix look like archaic fossilized formations. Apparently, at an earlier stage the negative prefix had two allomorphs, *\*e-* before consonants and *\*el-* before vowels. Later the allomorph *\*el-* ousted *\*e-* in all cases save some fossilized forms. The consonant *-l-* in *\*el-* was possibly epenthetic, since epenthetic *-l-* is used in Yukaghir morphophonology in order to avoid vowel clusters (Maslova 2003: 56–57).

Finally, T *nunńe-* ‘to be thick (of deerskin)’ (intr.) is itself analyzable, as *-ńe-* is a productive suffix forming denominal verbs with the meaning ‘to have X’ (Krejnovič 1982: 55). The verb in question must have been derived from the nominal root *\*nun-* ‘thickness’, not attested elsewhere.

#### 4. K *mejnu-* ‘to take’

The new Kolyma Yukaghir dictionary (Prokop'eva & Prokop'eva 2021) points out that this verb is an imperfective form of K *mid'-/min-* ‘to take’. This relationship remained unnoticed in HDY, where K *mejnu-* is given under a separate root *\*mej-*<sup>5</sup> (HDY: 262), distinct from PY *\*menž-/minž-* > K *mid'-/min-* ‘to take’, T *med'-/meń-* ‘to take’ (HDY: 264). The verb *mejnu-* contains the imperfective suffix *-nu-* (Maslova 2003: 182–188). If we added this suffix to the stem of the verb ‘to take’, we could expect *\*\*minnu-* or *\*\*mennu-*<sup>6</sup>, but such a form is not attested in Kolyma Yukaghir. In fact, K *mejnu-* is one of a number of verbal stems where we find *-jn-* instead of expected *-nn-* as a result of a previously unnoticed Proto-Yukaghir morphophonological rule, whereby *\*-nn-* becomes *\*-jn-*.

One such case is K *tojnu·m* ‘drive (a herd)’ (Maslova 2003: 555), derived with the imperfective suffix *-nu-* from K *tono·m* ‘drive deer together’ (ibid.). The Kolyma Yukaghir dictionary (Prokop'eva & Prokop'eva 2021) lists only K *tono-* ‘to drive’.

Another case is K *ojnu-* ‘to take away, to steal (many times)’, derived with the same imperfective suffix *-nu-* from K *ono-* ‘to take away, to steal’ (both forms given after HDY: 333). In the Kolyma Yukaghir dictionary of Prokop'eva & Prokop'eva (2021) the forms from this root are given as *ono-* ~ *ojno-* ‘to take away’ (tr.).

Finally, K *pojne-* ‘to be white’ can be compared with K *pod'oγo-* ‘to shine, to glitter’ (intr.), T *pod'aya-* ‘to shine’ (intr.) from the Proto-Yukaghir root *\*pońž(ə)-* (HDY: 358; see Zhivlov 2022: 50 for this reconstruction). The combination of this root with the qualitative suffix *-ne-* (Maslova 2003: 560) must have given *\*ponne-*. Instead, we find K *pojne-*. Here an additional complication is the Tundra Yukaghir cognate *pojine-* ‘to be whitish, white; to be faded, whitened (from the spring sun, air)’ (intr.). This form reflects the generalization of the epenthetic vowel *-i-* before the qualitative suffix *-ne-*. This change must have happened when the relationship between root allomorphs *pod'-* and *poj-* ceased to be perceived as regular. As a result, other derivatives were formed from the allomorph *poj-*, e.g., T *pojičeń-* ‘to be faded, whitish (of skin brightened in the spring sun, air)’ (intr.). Thus, synchronically in Tundra Yukaghir *poj-* became a separate root, whereas historically it was an allomorph of *pod'-*.

The rule *\*-nn-* > *-jn-* is no longer productive in modern Yukaghir languages: cf. K *monnu-*, imperfective of K *mon-* ‘to speak’ and T *mennu-*, imperfective of T *med'-/meń-* ‘to take’.

<sup>5</sup> HDY also lists Tundra Yukaghir *mei-* ‘to take’ under the label “TJ” (Tundra Yukaghir form from Jochelson 1900). I was unable to find this form in Jochelson (1900) and I suspect that it is a ghost-word.

<sup>6</sup> Given the irregular correspondence between K and T vowels, it is not clear which vowel to expect here.

The proposed etymology of K *mejnu*- ‘to take’ is incompatible with the hypothesis that Proto-Yukaghir \**mej*- ‘to take’ was borrowed from pre-Proto-Samoyed \**mɛ(x/j)*- or Proto-Samoyed \**mɛ*- ‘to take’ (Aikio 2014: 71).

### 5. T *ńall'e(ŋ)* ‘sin’

This word<sup>7</sup> is viewed as etymologically isolated in HDY (287), but a plausible etymology can in fact be proposed. The Proto-Yukaghir root \**ńań*- ‘to be sinful’ (HDY: 288) has a wide range of derivatives in Yukaghir languages: T *ńańi*- ‘to consider smth. sinful; to treat smth. with superstitious fear’ (tr.); T *ńańyii*- ‘to consider smth. sinful’ (tr.); T *ńańuu*- ‘to be sinful (of an act)’ (intr.); K *ńańiś*- ‘to be sinful’ (intr.); K *ńand'e* ‘sin’, T *ńand'e* ‘a person with whom one is in a relationship of "mutual avoidance" – sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, brothers, sisters; mistake, oversight’; K *ńančuon* ‘sin’; K *ńańulben* ‘sinner; devil’. T *ńall'e(ŋ)* ‘sin’ is derived from this root with the non-productive nominal suffix *-l'e* (Kurilov 1994: 91-93). The development \**ńań-l'ə* > T *ńall'e(ŋ)* is regular. In Kolyma Yukaghir, “nasals /n/, /n'/ alternate with the lateral /l/ when the next syllable starts with /l/ or /l'” (Maslova 2003: 42, see also HDY: 35). The same assimilation is attested in Tundra Yukaghir (Schmalz 2013: 57). Therefore, there is no need to reconstruct a separate root \**ńall'ə*.

### 6. K *ńuu* ‘name’

This word is attested in Kolyma Yukaghir and in Chuvan: K *ńuu* ‘name’, K <*ni'u*> ‘name’ (Jochelson 1926: 324); S <*njw*>, R <*niw*>, B <*neve*> ‘Name’ (Schiefner 1871: 383); ME <*niiv*> (HDY: 312); W <*nim*> (Witsen 1705: 687); ChM *nywa* <Ныва> ‘name’ (Matjuškin 1841: 117).

All Old Kolyma data, except Witsen’s <*nim*> and B <*neve*>, point to the form *niw*, which subsequently yielded modern Kolyma *ńuu*. The older form was still preserved in Jochelson’s times: Jochelson’s transcription <*ni'u*> must be read as *niw*, since Jochelson lists <*iu*> among the diphthongs (1926: 315), and the stress mark after *i* makes clear that it is a falling diphthong *iw*. As for B <*neve*>, both the quality of the first vowel and the presence of the second vowel are aberrant.

Chuvan *nywa* <Ныва> has a final vowel, which is not unexpected, given that many Chuvan words have a final vowel where their Kolyma and Tundra cognates have none. Consider the following cases<sup>8</sup>: K *anil* ‘fish’ ~ ChM *anyla* <Аныла> ‘fish’, K *čuul* ‘meat’, T *čuul* ‘meat’ ~ ChM *čulo* <Чуло> ‘meat’, K *ludul* ‘iron’ ~ ChM *lundylo* <Лундыло> ‘iron’, K *met* ‘I’, T *met* ‘I’ ~ ChM *mota* <Мота> ‘I’, K *tet* ‘thou’, T *tet* ‘thou’ ~ ChM *tota* <Тота> ‘thou’. It is not yet clear whether we deal here with the disappearance of a Proto-Yukaghir final vowel in Kolyma and Tundra languages, or rather with a process of epithesis in Chuvan.

The most problematic form is W <*nim*>, attested in the first recorded specimen of a Yukaghir language – the Yukaghir translation of the Lord’s prayer, published in Nicolaes Witsen’s book<sup>9</sup> “Noord en Oost Tartarye” (Witsen 1705: 687). According to Nikolaeva, the language of this text “was very close, if not identical, to Kolyma Yukaghir” (HDY: 12). Chrono-

<sup>7</sup> See Nemirovskij (2017) for a detailed discussion of its meaning.

<sup>8</sup> I list here modern Kolyma forms, but their Old Kolyma counterparts, when these are attested, also lack final vowel.

<sup>9</sup> The book was first published in 1692. I cite it after the second edition (1705).

logically, this form precedes all other attestations of the word in question, and the consonant <m> makes it especially close to Proto-Uralic \*nimi ‘name’ and its Proto-Samoyed reflex \*nim, with which the Yukaghir word is traditionally compared (UEW: 305; Aikio 2014: 72). It is usually assumed that /w/ in later forms is a secondary development from original /m/. Nikolaeva suggests two alternative scenarios: “The following phonetic developments can be reconstructed: \*nime > niwe > niw > *ńu*: or \*nime > nim > niw > *ńu*.” (HDY: 312). The first scenario assumes the development *m* > *w* in intervocalic position, while in the second scenario this development happens word-finally<sup>10</sup>. One obvious problem with these scenarios is that the development in question must have happened independently in Kolyma Yukaghir and Chuvan, since both Kolyma and Chuvan have /w/ in the word for ‘name’. The main problem, however, is the irregular nature of the postulated development, since Proto-Yukaghir \*m is regularly preserved in daughter languages, both word-medially and word-finally.

Consider the following examples with intervocalic PY \*-m-, preserved both in Kolyma and Chuvan: K *ayime* ‘friend’ ~ ChM *agamo* <Агамо> ‘friend’, K *amun* ‘bone’ ~ ChM *amun* <АМУНЬ> ‘bone’, K *emej* ‘mother’ ~ ChM *eme* <Еме> ‘mother’, K *emil* ‘night; darkness’ ~ ChM *emilo* <ЕМИЛО> ‘night’, K *nume* ‘house’ ~ ChM *naumagi* <Наумаги> ‘jurt’, K *omós-* ‘to be good’ ~ ChM *omóč* <ОМОЧЬ> ‘well’, K *unume* ‘ears’ ~ ChM *inama* <Инама> ‘ears’. These examples show that intervocalic \*-m- is regularly preserved both in Kolyma Yukaghir and in Chuvan, so the first scenario above is impossible.

Word-final \*-m is reconstructed in two morphemes: PY \*-m > K -m, T -m 3<sup>rd</sup> singular ending of the transitive neutral paradigm, and PY \*-m > K -m, T -m 1<sup>st</sup> singular interrogative ending (HDY: 81; Nikolaeva 2020: 64, 71). Nikolaeva (2020: 66) postulates \*-mə as an internal reconstruction of the former ending, based on the comparison with other endings of the transitive paradigm, which contain the original transitive marker \*-mə. 3<sup>rd</sup> singular ending of the transitive paradigm would then consist of the transitive marker \*-mə and zero 3<sup>rd</sup> singular ending. While this internal reconstruction is reasonable, there is no evidence that the word-final vowel was still present in this ending in the last common ancestor of Kolyma and Tundra Yukaghir. Thus, the second scenario above cannot be correct: there was no regular change of word-final \*-m to -w in Kolyma Yukaghir. The only remaining possibility is that the form <nim> in Witsen’s text results from some kind of error, which is not surprising given the history of the text. “Witsen himself did not visit the Yukaghir land. He received the Yukaghir materials by post sometime after his visit to Moscow in 1664-1665, probably through his cousin Andrea Vinius, who later headed the Siberian Chancellery in Moscow... It is essentially a word-to-word translation and in some respects preserves the Russian syntax, for example, by postposing a possessive pronoun, which is not typical of Yukaghir. The text is written in Dutch orthography” (HDY: 11). Thus, the text of the Yukaghir Lord’s prayer was probably originally written in Cyrillic and later retranscribed to Dutch orthography. Errors in transcription could have crept in at any stage. If <m> in Witsen’s text results from such an error, the original form of the word in question can be reconstructed as \*niw or (less likely) \*niwe<sup>11</sup>.

This form has a previously unnoticed internal Yukaghir etymology: it can be derived from the Proto-Yukaghir verbal root \*ńee- ~ \*ńi- ~ \*ńii- ~ \*ni- ‘to call, to name’ (HDY: 292). This root is attested in the following forms: K *ńie-* ‘to call; to invite’ (tr.) (Prokop’eva & Prokop’eva 2021), ‘to call (by name)’ (Nikolaeva & Shalugin 2002), T *ńie-* ‘to call, to invite; to send for; to ask; to ask for a girl’s hand in marriage’ (tr.); K *ńite-* ‘to give a name; to call by name’ (tr.); K *ńiide-* ‘to say;

<sup>10</sup> The Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction \*ńu:, given as a headword in HDY, apparently results from an oversight, as it blatantly contradicts both Old Yukaghir data and the scenarios cited above.

<sup>11</sup> Or even \*nib, given that word-internally, \*w and \*b were not opposed in Proto-Yukaghir (Zhivlov 2022: 44).

to call by name; to announce; to discuss; to utter’ (tr.); T *nide-* ‘to deliver a speech, to pronounce a word; to say someone’s name’ (tr.), T *nide-* ‘to call by name; to pronounce a word’ (tr.). The relationship between the four attested allomorphs \**ńee-*, \**ńii-*, \**ńi-*, and \**ni-* is not yet clear.

Semantically, the connection is unproblematic. Formally, the word \**niw* ‘name’ contains the allomorph \**ni-*. The suffix can be identified with the suffix \*-Vw > K *-u-*, T *-u-* (Nikolaeva 2020: 88), which forms deverbal nouns denoting the result of action (Kurilov 1994: 56-61).

The reconstruction \**niw* and the proposed internal Yukaghir etymology make the comparison with Proto-Uralic rather unlikely. Proto-Uralic \**nimi* ‘name’ can be compared with the verbal Proto-Yukaghir root \**ńee-* ~ \**ni-* ‘to call, to name’ only if Proto-Uralic \*-m- corresponds to Proto-Yukaghir zero. The hypothesis of borrowing from Proto-Samoyed can be definitely rejected.

### 7. K *šašqul* ~ *šarqul* ‘claws; fingers; paw; hand’, T *sisqa* ‘finger; paw’

Nikolaeva reconstructs PY \**syrq-* and compares this protoform with Proto-Tungusic \**siro* ‘span between the big finger and index finger’, noting that “[i]n Yukaghir *-q-* can be a derivational suffix” (HDY: 422–423). Given that the Tundra form and one of the Kolyma forms point to \**c* (\**s* in Nikolaeva’s reconstruction) as a second consonant, the Proto-Yukaghir form must rather be reconstructed as \**cickə*. The Kolyma form has added a suffix *-(u)l*, and the *-r-* in one of the Kolyma variants apparently results from dissimilation. The PY noun \**cickə* can be derived from the root \**cica-* with the suffix \*-*rkə*.

The verbal root \**cica-*<sup>12</sup> is attested in derivatives such as K *šašayaj-* ‘to be torn’ (intr.), T *sisayaj-* ‘to be torn; to be split up’ (intr.); K *šašand’i-* ‘to tear’ (intr.); T *sisad’i-* ‘to split, to crack, to tear’ (intr.). The suffix \*-*rkə* derives from qualitative verbs names of objects or concepts possessing the quality in question (Kurilov 1994: 43-49; Schmalz 2013: 106), e.g., T *jatarqa* ‘a straight part of something (e.g., of a road)’, T *jatayaj-* ‘to become straight’. This suffix may cause an optional syncope of the root-final vowel, such that we have parallel derivatives from the same root with and without syncope, e.g., K *pońqo* ‘light; candle’ and K *pod’orqo* ‘day’, T *pod’arqa* ‘whiteness, brilliance’ from the root of K *pod’oyo-* ‘to shine, to glitter’, T *pod’aya-* ‘to shine’. When syncope takes place, the resulting cluster is simplified so that in clusters of three or more consonants, only the first and the last consonants are preserved, thus accounting for the lack of *-r-* in derivatives like K *pońqo* or T *sisqa* (see Zhivlov 2022: 49-51). Indeed, side by side with T *sisqa* ‘finger; paw’ a parallel derivative without syncope is attested: T *sisarqa* ‘crack’. It is possible that in this and similar cases, the derivative with syncope is diachronically older.

Finally, the semantic side of this etymology has a partial parallel in such cases as Tundra Nenets *tarka* ‘shoot, branch, offshoot, fork’, *ńudah tarka* ‘finger’ (Tereščenko 1965: 634) or Yakut *tarbax* ‘finger’ from Proto-Turkic \**darmaq* ‘branch, fork’ (Tenišev 2001: 255-256).

### 8. K *ugurče* ‘kamus ski (ski lined with fur)’, T *ugurče(η)* ‘foot; paw; sledge stanchion; footwear’

These words look like participles in \*-čə (Nikolaeva 2020: 83) from a verbal stem. The deriving stem can be identified as \**egur-* ‘to walk’, cf. K *egurte-* ~ *eyurte-* ‘to wander, to walk’ and T *egurie-* ‘to start walking, regain the ability to walk; to start visiting someone’. The same stem with syncopated internal vowel is found in K *ejre-* ‘to walk’, T *ewre-* ‘to go somewhere and return; to

<sup>12</sup> Reconstructed in HDY (423) as \**sya-*.

walk, wander; to drop in, to visit; to live, to exist', both from PY \*egr̥-. The vowel assimilation \*e-u > u-u is regular in Kolyma Yukaghir, cf. K *unmut* 'horn, antler' ~ T *enmur* 'horn, antler', K *unuŋ* 'river' ~ T *enu(ŋ)* 'river'. The absence of this assimilation in K *egurte-* may be due to the analogical influence of related forms like K *ejre-*. The vowel *u* instead of expected *e* in the first syllable of T *ugurče(ŋ)* is unexpected (but see below). However, the Proto-Yukaghir reconstruction \*egurčə is supported by the Old Yukaghir forms R <ägurtera> 'Espe' and B <agurtshira> 'id.' (Schiefner 1871: 376), which correspond to modern Kolyma *ugurče-raa* 'poplar', literally "ski tree". Another interesting Old Yukaghir form is MU <egirtscha> (HDY: 320), whose exact gloss is unfortunately unclear because of the way Old Yukaghir data are presented in HDY.

HDY places K *ugurče* 'kamus ski' and T *ugurče(ŋ)* 'foot; paw; sledge stanchion; footwear' in the same entry with K *ugurčie* 'grayling (Thymallus)', T *ugurčie* 'id.'. This comparison does not look plausible from the semantic point of view. Another etymology can be proposed for the name of grayling: it can be derived from K *ugur* 'fish backbone; roughness, knob'. The semantic motivation here is provided by the characteristic feature of the grayling — its large and conspicuous dorsal fin. The denominal suffix *-čie* is unproductive, but cf. T *jengurčie* 'mottled reindeer' from T *jengur* 'something multicolored, variegated'.

K *ugur* 'fish backbone; roughness, knob' itself is listed as an isolated word in HDY (320), but a Tundra Yukaghir cognate can be proposed: T *egur* 'withers' (also listed as an isolated word in HDY: 151). The vowel correspondence is regular (see above) and the Proto-Yukaghir form can be reconstructed as \*e(ŋ)gur<sup>13</sup>. The vowel *u* in the first syllable of Tundra Yukaghir words *ugurčie* and *ugurče(ŋ)* may be taken as evidence that Tundra Yukaghir also had an assimilation \*e-u > u-u, but with a more limited scope than in Kolyma Yukaghir. Perhaps this assimilation applied only to trisyllabic forms.

Finally, Proto-Yukaghir \*e(ŋ)gur seems to be related to the following words: T *egil* 'back side of something', T *egiil* '1) back of the head; 2) back part of a hat; 3) butt of an axe', T *egii* 'a fairly wide space extending immediately behind the hills that stretch from south to north not far from the river, on its eastern side; the east side (from the point of view of someone who is located west of the river); backwards'. These words are given in HDY under the reconstruction \*eŋk- (HDY: 161). The original meaning of the Proto-Yukaghir root \*e(ŋ)g- was apparently 'back side'.

## 9. T *waruluu* 'root'

This word is compared in HDY with K *ožuu* 'thin root, used for sewing'. The comparison looks impeccable: both T *war-* and K *ož-* regularly go back to PY \*wonč-, and the meaning of the compared words is nearly identical (the basic Kolyma word for 'root' is *larqul*). Morphologically, however, this comparison is far from perfect. There is no suffix *-luu* or *-uluu* in Tundra Yukaghir. The only suitable suffix is *-uu*, but this is a deverbal suffix forming nouns denoting the result of action (Kurilov 1994: 56-61). The deriving stem then should be a verbal stem \*warul-. Although such a stem does not exist in pure form, it forms a base of further verbal derivatives T *warulmu-* 'to become strong (e.g., of rope, thread)' (intr.) and T *warulwe-* 'to become strong (e.g., of rope, thread); to get better' (intr.). The derivation of T *waruluu* from \*warul- was already suggested by Kurilov (1994: 57), but this etymology was not mentioned in HDY.

The stem \*warul- is itself derived from T *war-* 'to be firm, strong' (intr.), related to K *adi* 'firm, strong' < Proto-Yukaghir \*wad- (HDY: 449-450). Thus, the comparison of T *waruluu*

<sup>13</sup> Without Old Yukaghir evidence we cannot know whether to reconstruct \*g or \*ŋg.

‘root’ with K *ožu* ‘thin root, used for sewing’ is erroneous. The latter word so far looks etymologically isolated, but the presence of a deverbal suffix *-uu* suggests that here, too the deriving root must be verbal. The traditional comparison of these Yukaghir words with Proto-Uralic \**wanča(w)* ‘root’ (whether as Uralo-Yukaghir cognates or as Samoyed loans in Yukaghir) is definitely wrong with respect to T *waruluu* and rather unlikely with respect to K *ožu*.

### Language Abbreviations

B	Old Kolyma Yukaghir materials of Billings (Schiefner 1871)
ChB	Chuvan materials of Boensing (HDY)
ChM	Chuvan materials of Matjuškin (Matjuškin 1841)
K	Kolyma Yukaghir (Prokop'eva & Prokop'eva 2021)
ME	Old Kolyma Yukaghir materials of Merk (HDY)
MK	Old Kolyma Yukaghir materials of Mueller/Lindenau (HDY)
MU	Old Ust'-Jansk Yukaghir materials of Mueller/Lindenau (HDY)
PY	Proto-Yukaghir
R	Old Kolyma Yukaghir materials of Rajskej (Schiefner 1871)
S	Old Kolyma Yukaghir materials of Suvorov (Schiefner 1871)
T	Tundra Yukaghir (Kurilov 2001)
W	Old Kolyma Yukaghir translation of Lord's prayer (Witsen 1705)

### References

- Aikio, Ante [Luobbal Sámmol Sámmol Ánte]. 2014. The Uralic-Yukaghir lexical correspondences: genetic inheritance, language contact or chance resemblance? *Finnisch-Ugrische Forschungen* 62: 7–76.
- Blažek, Václav. Forthcoming. Yukaghir-Uralic comparison: Kinship and social terminology. In: Aleksandr Anikin, Valentin Gusev, Anna Urmanchieva (eds.). *Siberica et Uralica: In memoriam Eugen Helimski*.
- Fortescue, Michael, Edward Vajda. 2022. *Mid-Holocene Language Connections between Asia and North America*. (Brill's *Studies in the Indigenous Languages of the Americas* 17.) Leiden / Boston: Brill.
- Häkkinen, Jaakko. 2012. Early contacts between Uralic and Yukaghir. In: Tiina Hyytiäinen, Lotta Jalava, Janne Saarikivi, and Erika Sandman (eds.). *Per Urales ad Orientem: Iter polyphonicum multilingue. Festschrift tillägnad Juha Janhunen på hans sextioårsdag den 12 februari 2012 (Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne 264)*: 227–250. Helsinki: Société Finno-Ougrienne.
- HDY = Nikolaeva, Irina. 2006. *A Historical Dictionary of Yukaghir*. (Trends in Linguistics, Documentation 25.) Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Jochelson, Waldemar. 1900. *Materialy po izučeníju jukagirskago jazyka i fol'klora*. I. (Trudy jakutskoj èkspedicii, snarjažennoj na sredstva I. M. Sibirjakova. Otděl III. Tom IX. Čast' III.) Sankt-Peterburg: Imperatorskaja Akademija nauk.
- Jochelson, Waldemar. 1905. Essay on the Grammar of the Yukaghir Language. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* XVI/5, II: 97–152.
- Jochelson, Waldemar. 1926. *The Yukaghir and the Yukaghirized Tungus*. (Mémorial of the American Museum of Natural History IX.) New York: G. E. Stechert.
- Knüppel, Michael. 2010. Zu jukagirisch *tokit* ~ *tokkił* „Pfeil”. *Acta Orientalia* 71: 115–124.
- Knüppel, Michael. 2013. Noch einmal zum historischen Wörterbuch des Jukagirischen. *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* LXVI (2): 109–116.
- Knüppel, Michael. 2014. Jukagirisch-tungusische Lehnbeziehungen. *Studia Etymologica Cracoviensia* 19: 83–93.
- Krejnovič, Eruxim A. 1958. *Jukagirskij jazyk*. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR.
- Krejnovič, Eruxim A. 1982. *Issledovanija i materialy po jukagirskom jazyku*. Leningrad: Nauka.
- Kurilov, Gavril N. 1994. *Obrazovanie imennyx slov v jukagirskom jazyke*. Yakutsk: Yakutskij naučnyj centr SO RAN.
- Kurilov, Gavril N. 2001. *Jukagirsko-russkij slovar'*. Novosibirsk: Nauka.
- Maslova, Elena. 2003. *A Grammar of Kolyma Yukaghir*. (Mouton Grammar Library 27.) Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Maslova, Elena. 2008. [Review of] Irina Nikolaeva. A historical dictionary of Yukaghir. *Studies in Language* 32(1): 254–264.
- Matjuškin, Fedor F. 1841. Sobranie slov Čuvanskago i Omokskago jazykov, sostavlennoe Mičmanom Matjuškinym. In: *Priboavlenija k Putešestviju po severnym beregam Sibiri i po Ledovitomu morju, soveršennomu v 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823 i 1824 g. ekspedicieju, sostojavšeju pod načal'stvom flota lejtenanta Ferdinandona fon-Vrangelja*: 115–125. Sankt-Peterburg: Imperatorskaja Akademija nauk.
- Napol'skikh, Vladimir. 2020. Jukagirisch und Uralisch: Was bleibt übrig? In: Hans-Hermann Bartens, Lars-Gunnar Larsson, Katja Mattsson, Judit Molnár, Tiina Savolainen (eds.). *Kiel joug om šild. Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Eberhard Winkler (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica 94)*: 269–289. Wiesbaden.
- Nemirovskij, Aleksandr A. 2017. Konceptija n'all'è i voinskij ètos jukagirov (po severojukagirskomu èposu ob Èdilvèe). In: A. N. Alekseev (ed.). *Fol'klor paleoaziatskix narodov: materialy II Meždunarodnoj naučnoj konferencii, g. Jakutsk, 21-25 nojabrja 2016 g.*: 320–328. Jakutsk: RIO media-xoldinga.
- Nikolaeva, Irina. 2008. Chuvan and Omok languages? In: Alexander Lubotsky, Jos Schaecken, Jeroen Wiedenhof (eds.). *Evidence and Counter-Evidence. Essays in Honor of Frederik Kortlandt. Volume 2: General Linguistics (Studies in Slavic and General Linguistics)*: 313–336. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Nikolaeva, Irina. 2020. *Yukaghir Morphology in a Historical and Comparative Perspective. (LINCOM Studies in Asian Linguistics 92.)* München: LINCOM GmbH.
- Nikolaeva, Irina A., Vasilij G. Šalugin. *Slovar' jukagirsko-russkij i russko-jukagirskij (Verxnekolymskij dialekt)*. Sankt-Peterburg: Drofa.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2018. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir. *Turkic Languages* 22: 108–138.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2019a. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir II. *Journal of Old Turkic Studies* 3/1: 54–82.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2019b. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir III. *Journal of Old Turkic Studies* 3/2: 321–371.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2020a. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir IV. *Journal of Old Turkic Studies* 4/1: 152–187.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2020b. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir V. *Journal of Old Turkic Studies* 4/2: 469–498.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2020c. Some new Late Proto-Yukaghir reconstructions with added thoughts and considerations on various etymologies. *Ural-Altaic Studies / Урал-алтайские исследования* 38: 81–91.
- Piispanen, Peter Sauli. 2022. Additional Turkic and Tungusic borrowings into Yukaghir VI. *Journal of Old Turkic Studies* 6/1: 85–110.
- Prokop'eva, Praskov'ja E., Aleksandra E. Prokop'eva. 2021. *Jukagirsko-russkij slovar' (jazyk lesnyx jukagirov)*. Novosibirsk: Nauka.
- Schiefner, Anton. 1871. Beiträge zur Kenntniss der jukagirischen Sprache. *Bulletin de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Petersbourg* XVI: 373–399.
- Schmalz, Mark. 2013. *Aspects of the Grammar of Tundra Yukaghir*. PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam.
- Tenišev, Èdxjam R. (ed.). 2001. *Sravnitel'no-istoričeskaja grammatika tjurkskix jazykov. Leksika*. Moskva: Nauka.
- Tereščenko Natalija M. 1965. *Nenecko-russkij slovar'*. Moskva: Sovetskaja ènciklopedija.
- UEW = Rédei, Károly. 1988–1991. *Uralisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Witsen, Nicolaes. 1705. *Noord en Oost Tartarye; Tweede Deel: Behelzende de Landschappen Georgia, Mengrelia, Cirkassia, Crim, Astakkia, Altin, Tingoesia, Siberia, en Samojedia*. Amsterdam: François Halma.
- Zhivlov, Mikhail. 2022. Pre-Proto-Yukaghir Consonant Clusters. *International Journal of Eurasian Linguistics* 4: 41–59.

М. А. Живлов. Исследования в области юкагирской этимологии I

В настоящей статье предлагается ряд дополнений и уточнений к корпусу этимологий, опубликованному И. А. Николаевой в «A Historical Dictionary of Yukaghir» (De Gruyter, 2006). Основной упор сделан не столько на поиске заимствований или когнатов в рамках дальнего сравнения, сколько на собственно внутриякагирских этимологиях.

Ключевые слова: юкагирские языки; этимология; сравнительно-историческое языкознание; праязыковая реконструкция.