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Semantic Development of the Word "Taŋara" in Sakha (Yakut) Language

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the evolution of the lexical meaning of the word 'taŋara' in Sakha (Yakut) language. The study focuses on Humboldt's activity theory and observes a fusion of cultures as one of the ways of language development. The results of the study can be formulated as follows: etymology and functioning of the word in the epic reveal the following meanings: 'heaven', 'deity', 'spirits of aiyy' and 'ičči'. The word use context has changed under the influence of the Orthodox dogma. Though the external form remained unchanged, the word underwent significant morphological and semantic changes: the affixation method increased the word-formative and phrase-forming potential of the word, the basic meaning of 'god' was fixed, the semantic volume was expanded, some values reflecting the pagan world view became obsolete. There was a separation between its synonym 'ičči' being a designation for otherworldly entities, and 'aiyy' as the name of good spirits, which still remains a component of the name of the Christian Orthodox god, 'Aiyy Taŋara'.

Keywords: semantics, lexical meaning, the word tanara, seme, semantic feature, semantic modification, shift of meaning.

Research area: philology.

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Introduction

Humboldt's activity theory presents language as a dynamic process of thinking and communication. So, language is an important tool for expressing human thought, which manifests itself in communication: "Die Sprache wird durch Sprechen gebildet" (Humboldt, 2000: 163). As a social phenomenon, language is sensitive to different historical changes. According to Humboldt's conception, fusion of cultures is considered to be one of the ways of language development. The problem of linguistic contacts and their impact on the worldview of people was studied in our previous work (Afanas'eva, Ivanova, 2016).

Bloomfield lists the following basic ways of semantic change in a language: specialization and generalization of the word meaning (after H. Paul), obsolescence and loss of meaning, isolation, borrowing and metaphorization. Semantic change can be internally or externally motivated. Changes in the objective reality are determined by the real situation of communication. Alteration in the mental space influences the word context and its sphere of use (Bloomfield, 1968: 478-486). The phenomena of language change, linguistic models, grammaticalization, social context, contact-based explanations and typological perspective, namely: formal and functional motivation for language change (Newmeyer, 2004), metaphors, models and language change (Aitchison, 2004), grammaticalization (Lightfoot, 2004), in cognitive linguistics (Shitikov, 2012), in Russian literature studies (Azarenko, 2013) were discussed in the book "Motives for Language Change" (2004). In the present work, we observe the semantic change as a result of external changes of social and ideological nature.

Etymology and functioning of the word in olonkho epos

The Sakha noun 'taŋara' goes back to the ancient Turkic language: *täŋri* '1. sky, 2. god, deity, 3. divine, 4. master, lord' (DTS, 1969: 544). In the ancient Turkic language there were other designations of sky, with other meaning than 'god, deity': *qalïq* '1. sky, heavens; air-space, air, 2. heavenly; airy, 3. the upper chambers, the upper floor of the palace; chambers,

hall, room'; χalïq I 'sky' (DTS, 1969: 635); κöκ I 'sky' (DTS, 1969: 312), pair words κöκ galig 'sky, heavens' (DTS, 1969: 312, 412; Sravnitel'no-istoricheskaia grammatika..., 2001: 59). In Sakha language küöx xallaan 'blue sky' is a combination of the adjective küöx and the noun xallaan. In this case, we see traces of contamination of the meaning of the noun kök I and the adjective kök VI 'blue, bluish', kök täŋri 'blue sky' (DTS, 1969: 312). Ancient Turkic names of heavenly bodies kün 'sun' and aj 'moon' bear the meaning of 'god': kün täŋri lit. 'god the sun' (DTS, 1969: 326, 544); aj tänri rel. 'the deity of the moon' (DTS, 1969: 24, 544). In Sakha language there is no designation of *iv* tanara, but in some set phrases there are signs of the deification of the sun and the moon. The combination of kün tanara 'the sun-god' was later transformed into kün iraaxtaayy lit. 'the sun king' (king after the arrival of Russians, lit. *iraaxtaayy* 'staying in a remote place'). The seme of the sun and moon deification has been preserved in the imperative set combination kün-ïv buol! 'Save! Be the sun and the moon!' These examples show the stability of the semantic structure of words representing the significance of god. Semantic signs of the ancient Turkic word meanings can still be found in some set phrases. The sky and heavenly bodies were endowed with a divine nimbus; a man sought salvation from them.

In the Sakha olonkho epos "Žuluruyar Nyurgun Bootur" ("Nyurgun Bootur the Swift") the lexeme *taŋara* is used in the meaning of 'sky':

Taŋara syrdyyta, / Tatyiyk yllyyta, / Kün taxsyyta, / Küöregey kötüüte ... (ŠNB, 2003: 178–179). 'At dawn [of the sky], when the tit sings at sunrise, when the lark flies off ...'

In Olonkho, the noun *xallaan* is found in the composition of the izafat combination *xallaan taŋarata*, 'heavenly god, the celestial' and the attributive combination *taŋaralaax xallaan*, 'the sky is the abode of gods'. According to Olonkho, the sky is the habitat of not only the divine, but also the demonic forces of *xallaan abaahita* 'heavenly demons, demons' (Afanas'eva, 2013: 78).

Taŋaralaax xallaanym / taxsan erer künün / tunalyanin kurduk ... (ŠNB, 2003: 13). '... it looks like the radiance of the rising sun of the divine sky'.

Taŋara is a deity name. The supreme celestial deity appears in the form of the gray-haired old man:

Urun Aiyy / Aar Toyon tanara ('the white holy God'), which is toyus hallaan toyono, ayys hallaan yraahtaayyta, sette hallaan kineehe (KKK, 1985: 1420) 'the lord of the nine heavens, the king of the eight heavens, the prince of the seven heavens'.

The epithets *aiyy* and *aar* in the meaning of the 'saint, kind, revered' have correspondences in the ancient Turkic language, cf. other Turkic. *ayïr* II 1. 'valuable, dear, 2. respected, honoured, respectable, honourable; the holy one' (DTS, 1969: 19); *arïy* III '1. clean, uncontaminated, 2. fig. morally impeccable, noble, decent, unblemished', 3. Rel. 'pure, true, uncomplicated, righteous, sacred, holy' (DTS, 1969: 51–52). *Aiyy* is a characteristic of the names of saints and good spirits.

The epos reflects the worship of the sky, the worship of the heavenly deities. The hero of the Olonkho "Er Sogotox" ("Lonely Warrior"), presenting the cup with koumiss, appeals to the supreme heavenly deity with the request:

Warrior Er Sogotox on his knees / He went down, stared at the sky, / began to create the spell with choron: / "O Great Heavenly Host, / Yuryun Aar, the great ruler / of the nine white tiers of the sky ..." (Er Sogotox, 1991).

Apparently, the set combination *taŋara ta-bata* 'divine deer' refers to the archaic cult of the deer sacrificed in honour of the gods. Often this combination is used as an epithet for the bride. The next quotation refers to a richly dressed young bride, whose hand and heart shall be fought for by the strongest warriors of the middle and lower worlds:

Taŋara tabatyn kurduk / Taŋinnaran naŋnalittygyt / Tahaara oxson kuluŋ! Kiaybyt ilya, / Kiaytarbyt matya (ǯNB, 2003: 315). 'Dress her as a divine deer, bring her out quickly! The winner takes her, and the loser gets nothing'.

Olonkho displays an animistic world full of spirits, where every phenomenon is endowed with a living soul, every object has the spirit of *ičči*, compare with ancient Turk. *iδi* 'lord' (about god) (DTS, 1969: 203), *igä* 'master, spirit, deity' (DTS, 1969: 204), *ijä* 'host, lord (about god)' (DTS, 1969: 205). In the following examples, the word *taŋara* is used as a synonym for the noun *ičči* 'spirit, master':

Uot Kudulu Bayyalym / Uluu kuday taŋarata, / Hallaan ǯalydy Bayyalym / Haraŋa taŋarata ... (ǯNB, 2003: 174). 'The great deity of the fiery ocean Kudulu, the dark deity of the heavenly ocean of Jalidi':

Etymological and contextual analysis reveals the following semantic features: 'the sky', 'the sky is a deity', 'the sky is the abode of celestial gods', 'deities are spirits'. The words taŋara 'heaven, deity', aiyy 'holy', ičči 'spirit' form a single synonymic row. The outer and inner forms of the lexeme taŋara indicate the presence of some animistic view and traits of the ancient religion of Tengrism. Human life is controlled by the inhabitants of heaven and spirits, so the man asks them for help and blessing, offers them sacrifices.

Word meaning development after the spread of Christianity

"Yakut Language Dictionary" by E.K. Pekarskiy reflects the lexical composition of the language of the 19th century and, besides linguistic information, offers some cultural information of encyclopaedic nature. It provides five lexical meanings of the word tanara; the semantic volume of the word is expanded by extrapolating the primary meaning to all concepts associated with god. In the dictionary article, the 3rd, 4th and 5th meanings are later formations that appeared after Christianization: tanara '1) the visible sky; sky as a deity' bylyttaax tanara 'cloudy sky, cloudy day, cloudy weather'; aiyy tanara (in the old days) 'the deity sky; 2) the general name of good creatures (= ajyy), a good spirit, a god, a goddess, a pagan deity; the chief deity who lives in the seventh heaven; spirit protector; idol, fetish; image of the protector spirit'; 3) 'God; deity, divine nature; icon, image', taŋarata suox 'godless, atheist'; Aiyy Taŋara; cress taŋara 'crucifixion'; üs mörsüönneeh taŋara 'The Holy Trinity'; ürdük taŋara 'the Supreme Being'; taŋara aha 'holy gifts'; 4) 'holy, sacred', taŋara uu 'holy water'; 5) 'holiday'; ulaxan taŋara 'a great holiday' (e.g. Christmas); taŋara kün (taŋara küne) 'a festive day, a feast; Sunday' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2552). The image of the ancient deity of the Sakha Aiyy toyon taŋara acquires some icon features, and Orthodox icons are called taŋara külüge lit. 'shadow of God'.

In the Christianization period, the Orthodox dogma influence changed the context of the word use, shifting the emphasis towards the meaning of "God". Along with this, the morphological processes of affixation began.

With the help of the affix -laax, which carries the meaning of possession, the lexeme tanaralaax was formed. In the function of the attribute it conveys the information that a baptized person is considered to be enlightened and advanced: tanaralaax 'divine' (about communion), *ünär tanaralaax*, ünsär suuttaax kihi 'a person who has a deity to whom he prays, and a court in which he is judged' (i.e. social and moral, not savage). Language retains traces of early beliefs; each Sakha clan, or ulus, had its totem deity: oyus tanaralaax (shaman) 'with the bull deity (protector)'; kuba tanaralaax uluus 'ulus with the swan deity', moyotoj taŋaralaax nähiliek 'the settlement with the chipmunk deity' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2552). Idolatry is illustrated by the phrase: *oloror oyo saya taas tanaralaayym* 'a stone idol of a sitting child [size] I had'. In shamanism, spirits retain their national identity: nuučča tanaralaax shaman 'to whom the Russian devil comes during the ritual', tonus tanaralaax 'shaman to whom the Tungus spirit comes' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2552). The patronage of the gods extends to all living beings: tanaralaax süöhü buolla 'this is a domestic animal that is not destined at this time to die or be stolen and eaten (about a cow that escaped from thieves)' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2553).

Examples with the affix -lyy carrying the meaning of similarity, in the function of the

adjective mainly designates church rituals: taŋaralyy kičäl 'divine endeavour'; taŋaralyy sibätiäydänär 'divine sanctification' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2553). With the help of affixes -msax, -hyt, nouns are formed, denoting the conviction and status of a person as a believer: taŋaramsax 'God-loving, worshiper'; taŋarahyt 1) 'having God's fear, God-fearing, pious, praying, carrying God within him; a hypocrite, a saint', taŋarahyttar 'church as a society'; 2) 'devoutness' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2553).

Earlier, death was perceived as a with-drawal from the middle world: *orto doydut-tan bar* – 'leave the middle world' (Pekarskiy, 1959: 2552). After the adoption of Christianity, in the interpretation of death another motive appeared; after that, dying meant 'going to God'. The idea of going to God was one of the significant moments in changing the image of God; dying, a person does not disappear into the dark world of demons, but reaches the saving God. The meaning is expressed with the help of the verbal affix – *laa: taŋaralaa* 'to rest, to die; to give up the spirit', *taŋaralaabyt* 'the dead' [Pekarskiy 1959: 2552].

Ököyö kärgänä ämiä tyŋatynan ïaljan byhaas taŋaralaabyt suraxtaaya. Sofron Danilov. 'They say that Okoj's wife died of lung disease this spring' (BTS, 2013: 210).

The dictionary of E.K. Pekarsky reflects both pre-Christian and Christian concepts of God. The pagan god meant heaven, spirit, deity, idol, fetish and totem. Christianity, which began to spread in Yakutia in the 17th century, brought new meanings to the semantics of the word *tanara*. The appearance of words describing church life testifies to the role of the church in the process of transforming the pagan concept of God. In the context of Orthodoxy, the word tanara takes on some new meanings: 'god', 'holy', 'icon', 'day of church holidays'. Affixation expands the word-formation capacity; the word performs the functions of an adjective, a verb, forms derivative nouns. The word *ičči* falls out of the synonymic row, retaining its reference to the otherworldly forces in general, while aivy remains an epithet of the god name Aiyy Tanara. The activities of the Orthodox Church contributed to the transformation of the value component of spiritual life. God *taŋara* materializes in the form of an iconic image; all Orthodox saints are categorized as gods.

The modern "Great Explanatory Dictionary of Yakut Language" (2013) provides five meanings of *tanara* as a noun.

1. According to religious beliefs: 'the supreme being who created the world and controls it, God'. *Taŋarattan kördös 'ask from God' (BTS, 2013: 203)*.

Taŋara kinileri [aanñallary] olus taptyyr buolan, ürdä suox üörüünü, muŋura suox jolu bäläxtääbit. N. Luginov. 'God gave them [the angels] boundless joy and endless happiness, because he loves them';

2. The icon.

Utary munnukka oso kötöyüülääx jaxtar taŋara oloror. Amma Aččygyia. 'In the opposite corner, the goddess sits with a child in her arms' (BTS, 2013: 204);

3. The day celebrated by the church as a religious holiday.

Mäxääläyäp taŋara tiiyen kelbite. Kunnuk Uur-astyyrap. 'Soon, St. Michael's day came';

- 4. Archaism. 'protector spirit, totem';
- 5. Archaism. 'sky'.

Bylyttaax taŋaraya byktarbakka – ayalaax iyätä ataaxtatan üöskäppitter. P.Oyuunuskay. 'Father and mother brought her up in tenderness, not showing her the cloudy sky' (BTS, 2013: 204).

The lexeme *taŋara* is a component of the terminological combination, which generally refers to God in general: *taŋara itäyälä* 'religion', 'a religion based on the belief in the existence of god (in the form of the God-man) who created the world and rules it' (BTS, 2013: 207), lit. 'God's faith'.

The dictionary entry *taŋara* and the examples from fiction texts show the shift of the main meaning as a result of the shift the actualization of the meaning of the god. The meanings of 'heaven', 'protector spirit', 'totem' have passed into the category of archaisms, and the meanings formed under the influence of Orthodoxy, have established: 'icon', 'saints' day', 'church feast'.

The meanings of phraseological units with 'tanara' component

Semantic analysis of the phraseological units with *taŋara* component helps to identify some additional semantic features. Christianity was perceived by the Sakha through the pagan cult experience; by analogy with deification of the sun and the moon, the Sakha later compared Christ to the sun: *taŋara (kun) kurduk körör* 'to deeply respect smb., to bow before someone; idolize' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 179).

God is the supreme almighty being, and the man is powerless before him: *taŋaraya mastammykka dyly (mastan)* 'brave in front of an enemy too strong' (Kulakovsky) (about impotent threat), lit. 'it's like a stick to threaten the sky':

Käbis-käbis, jüögäm, taŋaraya mastammykka dyly, jylyabitigar baaysan da xayïaxpytyi? Oŋohuubut onnuk buollaya äbäät. N. Luginov. 'No, no, dear, it's just like threatening the sky with a stick, you cannot change anything, complaining about fate? So, we have such a fate' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 178).

God knows and sees everything: *taŋara biler* 'God knows' (BTS, 2013: 205).

Xanna siljaryn taŋara biler. 'God knows where he goes' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 178).

A person tries to be honest with God:

Taŋara baaryna, kyrjyk. A. Aččygyia. 'God knows, it's true' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 177).

God disposes of the destinies of people and man obeys him: *taŋara xanna gynarynan syljabyt 'whereever God sends'*.

Taŋara xanna gynarynan syljabyt. 'Wherever God sends, we'll go there' (BTS, 2013: 207).

The church is the abode of God: taŋara jiete 'building for worship, the church, the temple of God', taŋara üöreye 'theology', taŋara dolbuura (xoloruga) 'a shelf for icons'. The communion rites serve as a motivator for phraseological units: taŋaraya tikser kurduk (keriete) 'seldom, occasionally' from taŋaraya tigis 'religion, confession, communion' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 180; BTS, 2013: 206); taŋara ahyn

kurduk tut – 'to cherish smth. very much, to cherish smth., lit. treat smth. as a prosphora!' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 177).

God's grace is perceived as a carefree life, devoid of suffering: *taŋara taalata* inform. 'a joyful, free life', *taŋara talbyt* 'to be on top of bliss'.

Tuox da kihalyata, äräye suox, bäyäte talbytynan jahanar, könülünen tuttar olus üčügei oloyun tuhunan "kööcöön körö", "tanara taalata" dien noruokka bylyr etillen xaalbyt (Nelunov, II, 2002: 180). 'Since immemorial times, people have referred to a carefree, devoid of suffering, independent and free life as the "merriment under the sun", "God's grace".'

God is the saviour and man can always rely on God's help: *taŋara buol* – 'protect, save, protect from encroachments' (lit. 'be a god'), *taŋara byyhaatyn* 'God save', *taŋara kömölöhüex* 'God will help', *taŋara ahan bierder* 'if God helps, lit. if God opens the way' (BTS, 2013: 206).

Taŋara kömölöhöö ini, – dien oyonnor kiriestenen kebiste. P. Oyuunuskay. 'I think God will help, "the old man said and crossed himself" (Nelunov, II, 2002: 179).

God is merciful, the man hopes for the pity of God: *tanara ahymmyt* 'God was merciful'.

Seriitten xasta da ulaxannyk baahyran kelbite. Xayaan tyynnaax orputa buolla, čaxčy taŋara ahymmyt kihite. 'He returned from the war with multiple heavy wounds. How could he survive? The truth is, God took pity on him' (Nelunov, II, 2002: 177).

Everything that a person has in this world is given by God: *taŋara bierie* loan phrase: 'god will give', *taŋara tugu bierbitinen* loan word: 'what god sent', *taŋara uon oččonu bierie* 'god will render a hundredfold, lit. God will give ten times more', *taŋara bäläye* 'a gift of fate (god)' (BTS, 2013: 205–208; Nelunov, II, 2002: 178–180).

Taŋara äyiexe uon očcony bierie, onon, xata, malyymanna yllat. S. Omolloon. 'God will reward you with a hundredfold, therefore, come on, serve a prayer'. God can punish a person: *taŋara nakaaha* 'punishment of God', *taŋara atayastaabyt* loan phrase: 'god offended someone by smth'.

Ardayy, xaary bilimmeke mas kärdärbit. Onno baara – taŋara nakaaha dien. 'We felled the trees, despite the rain and snow. It was God's punishment' (BTS, 2013: 207).

The language reflects a reverential attitude towards God, he should be thanked: *taŋaraya maxtal* 'thank God' (BTS, 2013: 206). A person feels a mental connection with him: *taŋara sanaa bierdeyine* 'something good will come to mind suddenly (lit. if God sends a thought)' (BTS, 2013: 207), *taŋara imnännäye* 'god ordered (lit. probably god winked)' (BTS, 2013: 206).

A disobedient person, who does not recognize God, is despised: taŋarany umnubut bayayi 'a person who does not obey and violates God's laws'. Some phraseological units have stylistic shades, expressing irony, reverence and humour. The ironic attitude towards those who create themselves an idol is transmitted by the phraseological unit taŋara gynan üŋk (üŋer taŋara oŋohun) 'to worship someone' (BTS, 2013: 206). Some comparative units express respect and reverence: taŋara kurduk körör 'deeply respect smb., bow to smb., idolize (lit. as to look at God)'.

Saŋa oskuolany tuttarbyt. Onon oloxtooxtor Nikolai Vasilievihy taŋara kurduk köröllör äbit. N. Bosikov. 'He built a new school. Therefore, local residents look at Nikolai Vasilyevich as a god' (BTS, 2013: 206–207).

Most phraseological units are borrowed from Russian language, which motivates the following semes: the 'higher being', 'disposes of the destinies of living beings', 'saviour and helper', 'brings grace', 'all-knowing', 'giving', 'gracious', 'punishing'.

Conclusion

The material and spiritual culture of the Sakha people takes its origin from the era of the ancient Turks, as evidenced by the historical connection of the words of Ancient Turkic *täŋri* and Sakha *taŋara*. Analysis of the linguistic material indicates that the ideology of Orthodox Christianity, which spread among the people of Sakha more than three hundred years ago, caused some significant transformations in the language system. As a result, the following changes occurred in the development of the lexeme *taŋara* in Sakha language:

- 1) due to the metonymic shift, it lost its primary meaning of 'heaven';
 - 2) the meaning of 'God' was updated;
- 3) the semantic volume expanded by extending the meaning to the designation of Christian saints, shrines and relics;
- 4) affixation discovered new functional and semantic possibilities; the word has acquired the functions of an adjective, a verb, and some new nouns have been derived;

- 5) adoptions from Russian language increased the phrase-forming potential of the word:
- 6) with the differentiation of meanings between the words *taŋara* "god" and *ičči* "spirit", the latter acquired a meaning close to the designation of otherworldly forces, e.g. *iččileex sir* 'a place inhabited by dark forces'.

Most of the set units are borrowed from Russian language through adoption. This process was influenced by the following circumstances:
1) translation of religious books and texts by Orthodox missionaries, 2) religious service in Sakha language, and 3) development of bilingualism among the local population. Analysis shows that changes have affected all levels of the language. Linguistic facts prove that the transition from the pre-Christian pagan time to the Christian era led to some transformations in the concept of God.

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Развитие семантики слова 'тан ара' в якутском языке

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена изучению эволюции лексического значения слова 'тангара' в якутском языке. Рассматривается этимология, функционирование слова в эпическом тексте, проводится анализ данных толковых и фразеологических словарей, выпущенных в разное время. Слово 'танара' восходит к древнетюркскому tänri и до XX века сохраняет значение 'небо, божество'. Внешняя и внутренняя формы лексемы свидетельствуют о наличии следов древних языческих верований (тэнгрианства, шаманизма). Поздние словари фиксируют значения, отображающие реалии православного христианства и замену первичного значения на 'бог', значение 'небо' отходит на второй план. Значения, обозначающие ранние верования, перешли в ранг устаревших. Бог больше не тождественный духу в языческом понимании, а персонифицированный иконический образ. Изменение контекстуального окружения слова привело к активизации аффиксов, что способствовало образованию глагола, имени прилагательного и других имен существительных. Заимствования из русского языка увеличили фразообразовательный потенциал слова; большинство фразеологических единиц с компонентом 'танара' образованы способом калькирования. Анализ показал, что изменения семантики слова 'танара' коснулись всех уровней языка. Семантические преобразования обусловлены внешними факторами, влиянием русской культуры через распространение среди якутов православного религиозного учения.

Ключевые слова: семантика, лексическое значение, слово 'танара', сема, семантический признак, семантическая модификация, изменение значения.

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