ON PHRASEOLOGICAL SYNONYMS IN SAKHA
О ФРАЗЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ СИНОНИМАХ ЯКУТСКОГО ЯЗЫКА
YAKUT DİLİ DEYİMLERİNİN EŞANLAMLARINA DAİR

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ABSTRACT
This article considers phraseological synonyms (synonymous idioms) in the Yakut language and the way they are rendered in lexicographic and phraseographic sources. An attempt is undertaken to establish criterial differences between synonyms and variants. Synonymous idioms are divided into lexico-grammatical classes and phraseosemantic groups.

Keywords: Yakut Language, Phraseology, Idiom, Lexico-Grammatical Classes, Synonym, Variant, Synonymic Rows.

АННОТАЦИЯ
В статье рассматриваются фразеологические синонимы якутского языка, отражение фразеологической синонимии в лексикографических и фразеографических источниках. Предпринимается попытка установить различие между синонимами и вариантами. Фразеологические синонимы распределяются по лексико-грамматическим разрядам и фразеосемантическим группам.


ÖZET

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yakut Dili, Deyimler, Dil,Gramer Sınıfları, Eşanlamalar, Varyant, Eşanlam Sirası.

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At the modern stage of development of phraseology, the problem of semantics – specificity of the meaning, structure of the meaning, paradigmatic and syntagmatic properties of meanings etc. remains in the focus of attention of linguists. One of these issues includes synonymy of phraseological units, or idioms.

A study of synonymous idioms has a half-century history and is mainly based on theoretical assumptions which relate to lexical synonyms as a result of the common nature of linguistic synonymy in general. Thus, synonyemic relations in the field of phraseology were studied by A. V. Kunin with respect to English, I. I. Chernysheva (German), A. G. Nazarian (French), V. P. Zhukov, N. M. Shansky, M. I. Sidorenko, V. T. Shklyarov (Russian) among others. The problem of phraseological synonymy also attracted attention scholars working on Turkic languages (Z. G. Uraksin, R. A. Ayupova and others).

Yakut is very rich in synonyms, including idioms. The first to pay attention to the issue of synonymy and variety of idioms were lexicographers and compilers of collections. A keen connoisseur and scholar of the Yakut language A. E. Kulakovskiy recorded idioms in addition to other types of data and included them in his collection “Yakut proverbs and sayings” (Kulakovskiy, 1979). Each entry in Kulakovskiy’s “Collection” includes additional information about idioms. Thus, listed after a note tejm. “cf.” (compare) are semantically close, comparable analogues:

(1) tah-ittan kiir-bit taas ytys, tuora-ttan kiir-bit tuos ulluŋax
outside-poss.3.abl enter-ppart stone palm, outside-poss.3.abl enter-ppart bark foot

‘a stranger, an outsider who wriggled himself into the trust of the owner of the house, from whom nothing good will come to the members of the household. Usually it's distant relatives, a housekeeper, a concubine-prisoner, unwed woman’

Cf. timir illi (iron hand), kîtäğas tîts (pincers palm) (YPY, 1979: 177).

Sometimes an idiom is followed by the remark analogous:

(2) muńxa-tim xarağ-a keńe-bit kihi
seine-poss.3.gen mesh-poss.3 widen-ppart person

‘a worldly-wise, experienced person, old hand at doing something’ (YPY, 1979: 151)

analogous kulgaaga-xarağa keńeebit kihi ‘a worldly-wise person who is no longer interested in trifles and small matters’; lit. a person with widened ears and eyes (YPY, 1979: 137).

In some cases a remark kör ‘see’ is used to show variants: taraax ien-nee-bit [comb lower.back-vblz-ppart] see kulugur kulgaaxtaabyt [elongated/hanging ear-vblz-ppart] ‘treat someone cruelly lit. he gave him a striped back and dog ears’ (YPY, 1979: 176).

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1 The following abbreviations were used: 1/2/3 – first/second/third person; abl – ablative case; acc – accusative case; ag,nmlz – agentive nominalizer; aor – aorist; caus – causative; cvb – converb; dat – dative case; exist.cop – existential copula baar; fpart – future participle –İAX; gen – genitive case; inf – infinitive; instrum – instrumental case; neg – negation; neg.cop – negative copula suox; pass – passive; past – paste tense marker –DI; pl – plural; poss – possessive; ppart – past participle –BİT; refl – reflexive; sg – singular; sim – similitative; v.aux – auxiliary verb; vblz – verbalizer.
In the «Dictionary of the Yakut language» E. K. Pekarsky made use of the equals sign: süreğ-im ayax-par tağışt-ta [heart-poss.1sg mouth-poss.1sg.dat rise-past.3] (=süreğ-im xayfn-na [heart-poss.1sg break-past.3]) ‘I was frightened’, ayağ-a sux kihi [mouth-poss.3 neg.cop person] (= calaa-ta sux kihi [appropriateness-poss.3 neg.cop person]) ‘a blabbering idle person’ (SYY, 1959: 56).

In the «Russian-Yakut dictionary» edited by P. S. Afanasjev Russian idioms are given along with a list of corresponding equivalents in the form of synonymical collocations such as e.g. собственной персоной upon. ‘in his own person, by himself’ (RYS, 1968: 419); битый час ‘long hour, in an hour’ (RYS, 1968: 38).

The compilers of dictionaries also quite often practice the method of distant reference in order to compare phraseological synonyms, idioms with close meaning and phraseological variants. For these purposes they use remarks teyn. / cf. and kör / see as in: buor ḥayax [soil mouth] ‘glutton, thief (cf. xara beles [black throat]’ (SYY, 1959: 56). Here we can see that Pekarsky, the author behind the Dictionary of the Yakut language (SYY), uses the remark teyn. / cf. in order to refer to a separate vocabulary entry xara beles [black throat] ‘miser, thief’ (SYY, 1959: 428) so that the reader can compare for himself or herself the two idioms. In other dictionaries we can also find similar references to separate vocabulary entries such as cf. and see. The dictionary entries cited below exemplify the entry which makes a reference to another entry either either with the help of the remark cf. or see (the a-examples) and the distant reference entry itself (the b-examples).

(3) a. ayağ-īn bul-un-ar / mouth-poss.3.acc find-refl-aor
   ‘he is capable of providing for his own food’; cf. ayağ-īn iitter / (PhSYY, 1974:15)
b. ayağ-īn iit-t-er / mouth-poss.3.acc nurture-refl-aor
   ‘provide for ones food’ (PhSYY, 1974:15)
(4) a. kūn nakaah-a / sun punishment-poss.3
   ‘suffering, pain, misery’; cf. taŋara nakaaha (PhSYY, 1974: 49)
b. taŋara nakaah-a / god punishment-poss.3
   ‘great pain, suffering’ (PhSYY, 1974: 83)
(5) a. omurd-un abyraxtan-ar / mouthful-poss.3.acc mend-refl-aor
dial. ‘about someone who likes to exaggerate, make up stories, tell lies’
cf. soluurçağa xamnīrr (KSYY, 1979: 203)
b. soluurçağa xamnīrr / kettle-poss.3 move-aor
   ‘he is lying, he is being evasive’ (KSYY, 1979: 207)
(6) a. uyulğa-ta īstan-ar / stamina-poss.3 jump-aor
   ‘said about someone who is greatly disturbed, agitated’
see uyulğata xamsīr (kötőr) (KTSYY, 1994: 213)
b. uyulğa-ta xamsīr (köt-ör) / stamina-poss.3 move-aor (fly-aor)
   ‘said about someone who is greatly disturbed, agitated’ (KTSYY, 1994: 213)
(7) xol-o ah-yll-ar / arm-poss.3 open-pass-aor
‘said about someone who starts slowly, without making much effort but later gains momentum and finishes victoriously’; see xonnoğ-o ah-yll-ar / underarm open-pass-aor (same meaning) (KTSYY, 1994: 232)

In A. G. Nelunov’s “Yakut-Russian phraseological dictionary” (YRFS) as well as in the multiple volume “Explanatory dictionary of the Yakut language” (TSYY) (in progress) the reference remark tegn. / cf. is used after an idiom is given a translation, in order to line up other idioms which are close semantically or which are synonyms. The following can be provided as an illustrative example: eğiри-иэкс ики ардигар [инхале-fpart two between] ‘very quickly, in the twinkling of an eye’; cf. көр-ӧн бар-ан çпчілиy-fax бетерее оòттүгө (ики ардигар) [see-cvb v.aux-cvb blink-fpart front before (two between)]; көр-уӧх бетерее оòттүгө [see-fpart front before]; көрөук ики ардигар; çпчілиyиаx бетерее оòттүгө (ики ардигар); çпчілиyиаx имине [blink-fpart before]; çпчілиyиаx түгене [blink-fpart in.the.moment]; et-иэкс бетерее оòттүне [say-fpart front before]; етiех түгене [say-fpart in.the.moment]; етiех түрёнинен (түгене) [say-fpart quick-instrum (quick-pass.3)]; <ет-ен бар-ан> eğiри-иэкс бетерее оòттүгө [say-cvb v.aux-cvb front before] (YRFS, 2002: 394). Another example is taken from the Explanatory dictionary of the Yakut language: баттаq-а майкяy-тӕр дере [hair-pass.3 turn.grey-fpart.dat until] ‘until one’s hair turns grey (usually said about someone who didn’t become mature even at old age)’ (TSYY, 2005: 270), cf. битү-ин биha уктуyд дере [beard-pass.3.acc right.on step-fpart-dat until] ‘until ripe old age (lit. until he steps right on his beard)’ (TSYY, 2005: 790).

In the Explanatory dictionary of the Yakut language equivalent synonyms are accompanied by the note dien kurduq ‘like, similar to, same as’. This is shown in (8). On the other hand, phraseological variants are accompanied by the note cм. / see as given in (9).

(8) uot aan-yttan – xara aanyttan dien kurduq
fire door-pass.3.abl – black door-pass.3.abl similar to
xara aanyttan ‘from the very beginning; at the first acquaintance; right away, immediately’

(TSYY, 2004: 163)

(9) бир мунняк-ка ик cм. муннякка ик
one corner-dat push see corner-dat push
‘corner someone, push firmly against the wall’ (YRFS, 2002: 21)
oл-ор доxор-uм cм. олор уатахин
die-aor friend-pass.1sg see die-aor friend-pass.1sg
‘best friend, bosom friend’ (YRFS, 2002: 394)
ayax-xa бер-дер-bit kurduq cм. ayax-xa as-tar-bit kurduq
mouth-dat give-caus-ppart like see mouth-dat push-caus-ppart like
‘lose speech’ (TSYY, 2004:323).

The analysis of lexicographic and phraseographic sources shows that the compilers collected and recorded fairly extensive material which will serve as a reliable basis for the systematic analysis of the phenomenon of phraseological synonymy in the Yakut language and its proper differentiation from a similar phenomenon, namely, phraseological variation.
Scholarly works devoted specifically to the study of synonymous idioms in Yakut are lacking. Some particular issues relating to the synonymy of phraseological units were touched upon by A. G. Nelunov and L. M. Gotovtseva. A. G. Nelunov, when analyzing verbal idioms in Yakut, considers their synonymy as well. He notes that phraseological synonymy in Yakut is highly developed and forms whole synonymic rows (Nelunov, 1980: 64). Thus, a synonymic row of verbal idioms denoting the notion “to die” includes 30 items. Having considered specific properties of Yakut synonymous idioms, he states that the uniqueness of phraseological synonymy lies in the fact that even those idioms whose lexical composition partially overlaps can be synonymous to each other, for example, kördööbütün bier ‘give what he asked for’, nuormätin bier ‘give his norm’, üüreten bier ‘give him some teaching’ with the meaning ‘teach a bitter lesson’.

Comparing Yakut somatic idioms with their German analogues, L. M. Gotovtseva notes that idioms which have an identical or close meaning but diverge in their lexical composition and which are characterized either by total difference or approximate similarity of their imagery are encountered more frequently in the languages under consideration. The structure and stylistic coloring of comparable items may be similar or different. The author refers to such idioms as interlingual (Gotovtseva, 1994: 86-87).

The goal of this article is to provide a description of synonymic relations among Yakut idioms. To reach this goal, the following tasks must be achieved:

1) identify a corpus consisting of groups of Yakut synonymous idioms;

2) consider the rendering of phraseological synonymy in lexicographic and phraseographic sources;

3) study the problem of differentiating phraseological variants from phraseological synonyms.

4) systematize phraseological synonyms according to lexico-grammatical categories and according to a thematic principle;

Understood under idioms are “separately formed stable collocations of words belonging to different structural types, having unique compatibility of components, whose meaning emerges as a result of the semantic transformation of the combined components” (Chernysheva, 1970: 38). Thus, the main criterion of differentiating idioms from nonidiomatic combinations of words is the semantic transformation which took place in an idiom.

Synonyms, in our understanding, are idioms which express the same notion, belong to the same word category but differ from each other either by meaning connotations or by emotional stylistic coloring or by both of these simultaneously.

In the pioneering works on phraseological synonyms (Apresian 1956; Uraksin 1966) one of the main criteria for defining synonymous idioms was the principle of their interchangeability. This criterion was criticized as contradicting the basic functions of synonymous idioms which are built, as a rule, upon different images.

The differentiation of phraseological synonyms from phraseological variants was facilitated by research on the issue of image as directly linked to these notions (Chernysheva, 1970; Nazarian, 1976). The most common point of view on this question can be generalized as follows: phraseological synonyms can denote the same or close notions with the help of different images whereas the presence of the same or close images is a
peculiar feature of phraseological variants. The idiom ölör atahîm ‘best friend (lit. dying friend)’ has a lexical variant ölör doğorum ‘best friend (lit. dying friend)’, both idioms meaning ‘best friend, bosom friend, buddy’. Variants of idioms have the same collocability, occurrence and usage:

(10) Bu caxtar min ölör atahîm.
this woman I best friend-poss.1sg
‘This woman is my bosom friend’ (Pekarsky, 1959: 1934).

Vitya we.both age-sim-1pl and best friend-sim-1pl
‘Vitya and me are the same age and best friends’ (Xotugu Sulus, 1974: 57).

Since in the examples just cited the interchangeable components atas ‘friend, fellow, pal’ and doğor ‘friend’ are equivalent synonyms, the variants can substitute for each other in contexts given above without losing any meaning connotations. In terms of frequency the variant ölör atahîm surpasses the other variant ölör doğorum. These idioms have a close semantic relative uu testi-bet doğor-duu-lar [water leak-neg.aor friend-sim-pl] ‘friends as thick as thieves; lit. such friends that water cannot leak between them’.

Idiom-internal variation and semantic identity cannot be confused with each other when the idioms under consideration have different components but do have some degree of componential similarity (Yuzdova, 2009: 167). For instance, Yakut has two substantive idioms, in other words, idioms naming nouns (humans): ölör ih-eeççi [die-aor drink-ag.nmlz] ‘someone who drinks himself unconscious, inveterate drinker, alcoholic’ (Pekarsky, 1959: 1934); heavy drinker, sot, drunkard’ (TSYY, 2006: 780) and buor ih-eeççi [soil/earthen drinker] ‘heavy drinker, drunkard, regular/habitual drinker’ (TSYY, 2005: 541). N. S. Grigoriev’s Phraseological dictionary of the Yakut languages gives these idioms as variants but from our point of view they are synonyms and not variants. According to N. S. Grigoriev, ölör (buor) ih-eeççi denotes someone who has taken up the habit of heavy drinking, developed a dependency on alcohol and can eventually die from alcoholism’ (FSYY, 1974: 64-65). The meaning of ölör ih-eeççi is given in the Explanatory dictionary as ‘someone who drinks to the point of being unconscious, losing all consciousness, who can die from drinking’. The meaning of buor ih-eeççi in that same dictionary is explained as ‘a person who lost his human appearance while chasing alcohol’. Thus, we can say that different images underlie these idioms and therefore they should be considered synonyms.

(12) Onnooqor ölör ih-eeççini emt-iil-ler.

even dying drinker cure-aor-pl
‘They can cure even an alcoholic’ (TSYY, 2006: 780).

(13) By haas aaxpyttara böhüulekke 33 buor ih-eeççi baar suraxtaağa.

this.spring count-ppart-pl-3 village-dat 33 soil drinker exist.cop report-past.3
‘According to this spring’s counts 33 heavy drinkers were reported to live in the village’ (Yakovlev - Dalan, 1980: 187).

Synonymical relations can be entered by idioms which are etymologically derived from combinations of words, collocations as in (14) where (14a) and (14b) are synonyms.
(14)a. aan alcarxay
grand calamity
‘a terrible disaster, misfortune’
b. aan-a suox alcarxay, ii-te suox ilcirkey
grand-poss.3 neg.cop calamity, belt-poss.3 neg.cop tatters
(folk.) ‘a grand calamity’
Also it is quite often the case that phraseologisms derived from structures akin to full sentences as illustrated by the synonymous (a) and (b) examples in (15) and (16).

(15)a. Ih-iger bylas muostaax kiibit
inside-poss.3.dat long horned entered
‘become angered, come into a rage’
b. ih-e buh-ar
inside-poss.3 boil-aor
‘experience anger, rage’

(16)a. sı̄f-sı̄mar taxaaray ‘maybe I will benefit from it (lit. smell-odor may come out of it)’
b. sı̄a siihbin ‘probably I will benefit from it (lit. it looks like I will eat some fat)’

A synonymic row is built on the basis of common semantic character of two or more idioms. In Yakut a typical synonymic row consists of two members. Some synonymic rows include three or more members. The meanings of most members are complicated by additional emotional and stylistic shades, nuances. Therefore it is quite difficult to single out the dominant of any synonymic row. V. T. Shklyarov proposes to use as a dominant separate words and free phrases which he calls capital, for instance, обманывать [cheat.infl]: зубы заговаривать [cast spell on teeth] – втирать очки [rub eyeglasses] – водить за нос [lead by the nose] (Shklyarov 1964: 229-230).

Synonymy occurs in all lexical-grammatical classes of phraseologisms. Thus, we have synonymic rows formed by substantive idioms with a concrete meaning.

(17) A synonymic row of substantive idioms with the dominant meaning ‘human(ity), mankind’

ikki ataxtaax folk. ‘having two legs’
ikki kulgaaxtaax folk. ‘having two ears’
ikki xaraxtaax folk. ‘having two eyes’
ininen sireydeex folk. ‘having a face in the front’
inçeğey etteex folk. ‘having humid flesh’
ieğeyer ikki ataxtaax ‘having two flexible legs’

(18) A synonymic row of substantive idioms – zoonyms:
ürün süürüük ‘white horses; lit. white racer’
ürün tüüleex ‘white horses; lit. having white fur’
bütey tuyaxtaax ‘horses; lit. having a whole hoof’
sîspay sielleex ‘horses; lit. having a long thick mane’

(19) A synonyemic row of substantive idioms with an abstract meaning:
  alban aat ‘great fame, wide popularity; lit. famous name’
  suon surax ‘great fame; lit. thick rumor’

Omolloon oloģo, Cergestey îhîğa ‘unexpected gain and good luck, a banquet, merry and extravagant life; lit. Omolloon’s life, Cergestey’s yhyakh’

olonxo oloģo ‘rich prosperous life; lit. life as in the epos of olonkho’

Among adjectival idioms, in terms of their semantic content, one of the most frequently encountered groups is formed by idioms which denote human intellectual abilities, mostly negative ones. Shown in (20) is a row of synonyemic idioms with the meaning ‘dunce, stupid person’.

(20) mas aakaary / wood fool
  masha bappat aakaary / an utter fool who cannot fit into wood
  aar aakaary / sacred fool
  aar dalay aargî / sacred deep dunce
  xoy meyîi / sheep brain
  kileæir xarax / pop-eyed köoppögor
  mûrun / swollen nose kömûrüü
  meyîi / porous bone brain kumax
  meyîi / sand brain
  ular meyîi / capercaillie brain
  xonxô bas / hollow head

Other semantic groups of adjectival idioms denote human state, condition (ölör itîrik ‘dead drunk’, saax kurduk itîrik ‘drunk like manure’); corporal defects of humans (taas cûley ‘stone deaf’, kulgaâgar kuba saaxtaabî ‘tight of hearing; lit. a swan defecated in his ear’); negative characteristics of humans (saatar siyeye suox ‘shameless, impudent; lit. without an ashamed face’, siyeye suox ‘sassy, brazen; lit. without a face’; taas sûrex ‘a callous, heartless, cruel person; lit. stone heart’, muus sûrex ‘a callous, heartless, cruel person; lit. ice heart’; mas kînô ‘naïve, artless; lit. wood straight’, akaarî kînô ‘extremely naïve; lit. fool straight’; ìal aayî baar ‘common, ordinary, mediocre; lit. present in every family’, balaçan aayî baar ‘common, ordinary, mediocre; lit. present in every hut’; xara xaannaax ‘young and inexperienced, wet behind the ears; lit. having black blood’, uohâ uohaxtaax ‘young and inexperienced, wet behind the ears; lit. his lips still have colostrum on them’); human character traits (kiey köögîsteex ‘calm, unflappable, patient person; lit. having a broad back’, uhun sanaalaax ‘calm, poised person; lit. having long thoughts’; balîktaaģar keleæey, ñîmîttuğaagî bütey ‘very modest, quiet, humble person; lit. more stammering than fish, more closed than an egg’, ařînax mähî âtillaâbat ‘dialect. meek as a lamb; lit. someone who will not step over a rooted up and sloping tree’, sîtar înağî turuorbat kîhi ‘someone who will not hurt a flea; lit. a person who will not lift a lying cow’,

sitar dülüję atillaabat kihi ‘meek as a lamb; lit/ a person who would not step over a lying log’).

As a rule, idioms which become members of synonymic rows correlate with the same part of speech. Therefore we were able to identify above substantive and adjectival idioms. Also, one can single out adverbial and verbal idioms. Adverbial idioms can be divided into the following classes based on their general lexical meaning: 1) manner of action; 2) time; 3) quantity and measure; 4) degree. (21) shows a synonymic row adverbial idioms of manner of action with the general meaning ‘very quickly’.

(21) mas tost-or-unan / wood break-aor-instrum
bya bīst-ar-īnan / rope tear-aor-instrum
uŋuox tost-or-unan / bone break-aor-instrum
xarax test-er-inen / eye burst-aor-instrum

Verbal idioms can be divided into the following classes based on their general lexical meaning: 1) denoting feelings of fear and terror (uŋuğa xalır boxxo barda ‘he is shaking in his boots; lit. his bones came loose and are rattling’, uŋuğa xamsaataa ‘he got afraid; lit. his bones moved’, eyere ilikiriir ‘he is shaking from fear; lit. his garments’ flap is trembling’, ete salasta ‘he has creeps on his back’, etin saaha ahıllar ‘he gets the creeps; lit. the fibers of his flesh are opening’, ete atıyar ‘he gets the willies’, kuyaxata küürde ‘his hair stood on end; lit his head’s skin became tense’); 2) verbal idioms denoting feelings of anger, strong irritation (kiye-naara xolunna ‘become angry; lit. his anger-habit deteriorated’, kiye alcàmmeyt ‘become angry; lit. his anger broke’, kiye kiirbit ‘become angry; lit. his anger entered’); 3) verbal idioms denoting hypocrisy (ilin-kelin sirey buol ‘be a hypocrite, dissemble, dissimulate, double-deal; lit. be a front-back face’, antax-bettex sirey buol ‘act hypocritically, dissemble, dissimulate, double-deal; lit. be a there-here face’, iki sirye buolar ‘act hypocritically, dissemble, dissimulate, double-deal; lit. be two faces’); 4) verbal idioms denoting concrete physical action with the general meaning ‘to beat someone, to batter someone’ (ienin xastaa/art/sarala ‘flay someone’s back’, kulugur kulgaaxtaa, taraax iennee ‘give someone hanging dog ears and a striped back’, sühnnün künnör ‘straighten someone’s neck’, saarîlın as ‘prick someone’s thick skin’); 5) verbal idioms related to speech acts, intellectual activity and others.

Thus, we can see that the distribution of idioms across the four lexical-grammatical classes, namely, substantive, adjectival, adverbial and verbal, is uneven. The most common type of idioms is the verbal type. For now we leave other remaining issues for future research which will include classification of phraseological synonyms taking into account the integral and differential semantic components of the idiomatic meaning and functional, stylistic, evaluative, emotive and expressive components of the connotation.

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