

## ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ

# Black and White in Reindeer Pelt Colors: A Linguistic Analysis of Color Terminology in Tungusic and Turkic Languages of Northern Siberia

## Ren Geyiği Postu Renklerinde Siyah ve Beyaz: Kuzey Sibirya'daki Tunguz ve Türk Dillerinde Renk Terminolojisinin Dilbilimsel Analizi

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### Öz

*Bu çalışma, Evenki, Even, Yakut ve Dolgan dillerinde ren geyiği derisi renklerinin dilsel kategorizasyonunu incelemektedir ve özellikle siyah ve beyaz deriler üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Ren geyiği yetiştiriciliği, Sibirya'nın göçebe kültürlerinde merkezi bir rol oynamakta olup, ren geyiğini deri renginden tanımlamak, sürü yönetiminde önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. 17 anahtar terimin fonetik, leksikal ve semantik analizini yaparak, bu renklerin nasıl kategorize edildiğini ve bu kategorilerin ren geyiği yetiştiriciliği toplumlarındaki ekolojik uyum ve kültürel gelenekleri nasıl yansıttığını incelemektedir. Çalışma, leksikal ve semantik varyasyonları vurgulayarak, renk terimlerinin yalnızca derileri tanımlamakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda kültürel inançları, ekolojik bilgileri ve sosyal uygulamaları da nasıl yansıttığını göstermektedir. Araştırma ayrıca, bu terimlerin Tunguz ve Türk lehçelerindeki fonetik farklılıklarını incelemek ve bu farklılıkların tarihsel dil teması ve uyumunu yansıtan fonetik karşılıkları ve değişimlerini ortaya koymaktadır. Mongol ve Samoyed dillerinin ren geyiği terimleri üzerindeki etkisi, bölgedeki dilsel etkileşimin daha geniş bir örüntüsünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bulgular, renk terimlerinin yalnızca sürü yönetimi için değil, aynı zamanda ren geyiği yetiştiren toplumların sosyal ve manevi yaşamında önemli bir yer tuttuğunu vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Sibirya'daki dilsel çeşitliliği, kültürel etkileşimleri ve dil, kültür ve çevre arasındaki ilişkiyi daha iyi anlamamıza katkı sağlamaktadır ve ren geyiği yetiştirme terminolojisini şekillendiren dilsel teması ortaya koymaktadır.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Ren geyiği yetiştiriciliği, Dilsel varyasyon, Tunguz ve Türk dilleri, Renk terminolojisi

### Abstract

*This study examines the linguistic categorization of reindeer hide colors in the Evenki, Even, Yakut, and Dolgan languages, focusing particularly on black and white hides. Reindeer husbandry plays a central role in the nomadic cultures of Siberia, and identifying reindeer by hide color is important for herd management. By conducting a phonetic, lexical, and semantic analysis of 17 key terms, it examines how these colors are categorized and how these categories reflect ecological adaptation and cultural traditions in reindeer herding societies. The study highlights lexical and semantic variations, demonstrating how color terms not only describe hides but also reflect cultural beliefs, ecological knowledge, and social practices. The research also examines the phonetic differences of these terms in Tungusic and Turkic dialects and reveals their phonetic counterparts and changes reflecting historical linguistic contact and adaptation. The influence of Mongolian and Samoyedic languages on reindeer terms reveals a broader pattern of linguistic interaction in the region. The findings emphasize that color terms hold an important place not only in herd management but also in the social and spiritual life of reindeer-herding societies. This study contributes to a better understanding of linguistic diversity, cultural interactions, and the relationship between language, culture, and environment in Siberia, revealing the linguistic theme that shapes reindeer herding terminology.*

**Keywords:** Reindeer husbandry, Linguistic variation, Tungusic and Turkic languages, Color terminology



## 1. Introduction

Reindeer herding is vital for Siberian indigenous communities' subsistence and cultural identity of Siberian indigenous communities, especially those speaking Tungusic and Turkic languages like the Evenki, Even, Yakut, and Dolgan. These languages share typological features, suggesting a common Altaic origin. The relationship with reindeer goes beyond economics, deeply influencing social structures, beliefs, and daily life, with specialized terminology, especially for fur color, reflecting both practical and cultural significance. This study analyzes 17 key terms related to the black and white fur colors, aiming to examine their phonetic, lexical, and semantic variations in these languages. Through this comparative analysis, the study seeks to identify linguistic patterns that help better understand the historical relationships and influences between Tungusic and Turkic languages. The research focuses on three main aspects: the phonetic variety of dialects in these languages, the lexical and semantic variety of the terms, and linguistic connections derived from historical contact between Tungusic and Turkic peoples.

## 2. Methodology

This analysis employs a comparative linguistic approach, focusing on the phonetic, lexical, and semantic examination of color terms related to reindeer pelts in four selected languages: Evenki, Even, Yakut, and Dolgan. The study examines terms for the color black across several languages: in Evenki, *kojnomo* and *sakar̄in*; in Even, *hakrin* and *kōnana*; in Dolgan, *kara* and *kojnomuoŋ*; and in Yakut, *xara*. For the color white, Evenki uses *n'ubet̄i*, *bagda*, *kime*, and *čolko*; Even has *n'ōbe* and *čelke*; Dolgan uses *čelke* and *ür̄iŋ*; and Yakut has *ür̄iŋ* and *maŋan*. This methodology allows for a detailed investigation of the linguistic variations across these languages, paying attention to the phonological differences, semantic nuances, and cultural implications of the terminology.

## 3. Lexical and semantic variations

Lexical and semantic variations in color terminology reflect how languages and dialects categorize colors in their environment, culture, and functional needs, often incorporating meanings shaped by local practices and traditions. These variations may provide evidence of previously undocumented language contact.

### 3.1 Lexical and Semantic Variations of the Term “Black” in Color Terminology

In Evenki, *kojnomo*<sup>1</sup> means “black” (черный) with variations like *komnomo*<sup>2</sup> and *hojnomo*<sup>3</sup>. *Kojnor̄in*<sup>4</sup> is also used for “black” (черный). *Kojnoȳon*<sup>5</sup> refers to “black” in young reindeer pelts (черная (о масти важенок)), *kojnodō*<sup>6</sup> means “black butterfly” (черная бабочка). *Kojnor̄ikta*<sup>7</sup> denotes “spotted” in reindeer pelts (пятнистый (о масти оленя)). The term likely derives from “black,” suggesting dark spots. *Kojnor̄ui*<sup>8</sup> describes “raven black” in a horse's coat (вороной (о масти коня)) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 413). The second term *sakar̄in*<sup>9</sup> means “black” (черный). *Saha*<sup>10</sup> primarily means “gray” (серый), but can refer to a black coat with white spots in some dialects like *Khingan* (черный с белыми пятнами – о масти животных). *Haharin*<sup>11</sup> denotes a “black-brown fox” (лиса (чернобурая)) showing how Evenki color terms apply to both reindeer and other animals (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, 56).

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<sup>1</sup> Southern Variety: Barguzin, Nepa, North Baikal and Stony Tunguska dialects; Eastern Variety: Chulman, Tungir and Uchur dialects.

<sup>2</sup> Southern Variety: Nepa and Stony Tunguska dialects; Northern Variety: Yerbogachen dialect; Eastern Variety: Nercha dialect.

<sup>3</sup> Southern Variety: Verholensk dialect; Northern Variety: Ilimpeya dialect.

<sup>4</sup> Southern Variety: Stony Tunguska, Sym, Uchami, and Verholensk dialects; Eastern Variety: Aldan, Ayan, Chumikan, Khingan, Olekma, Sakhalin, Tokko, Tungir, Uchur, Urmi, and Zeya dialects; Northern Variety: Ilimpeya dialect.

<sup>5</sup> Eastern Variety: Tungir dialect.

<sup>6</sup> Eastern Variety: Aldan dialect.

<sup>7</sup> Eastern Variety: Uchur and Tokko dialect.

<sup>8</sup> Eastern Variety: Aldan dialect.

<sup>9</sup> Eastern Variety: Sakhalin dialects.

<sup>10</sup> Southern Variety: North Baikal dialect; Eastern Variety: Khingan dialect.

<sup>11</sup> Eastern Variety: Ayan and Sakhalin dialects.

In Even, *haqrin*<sup>12</sup> (also *aqrin*<sup>13</sup>, *hakarın*<sup>14</sup>) means "dark, black, or brown" (темный, черный, бурый), but in the Okhota dialect, it means "dark reddish" (темно-рыжий) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 56). The term *kōnana*<sup>15</sup> means "black" or "dark" (темный, черный) highlighting the varied expressions of black and its shades across Even dialects, especially concerning reindeer pelts and animal fur. (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 413).

In Dolgan, the word *kara* means "black" in a general sense (Däbritz, 2022, p. 463), but *kojnomuoј*, especially in the Upper dialect, means "black." *Kojnomuoј* can also serve as a noun meaning "black reindeer" (Däbritz, 2022, p. 463).

In Yakut, *xara* (хара) means "black" or "dark" (чёрный; тёмный) but can also refer to a black object or blackness (чёрный предмет; чернота) and an indistinctly protruding object; unremarkable in appearance (неясно выступающий на вид предмет; неказистый на вид). *Xara* can describe something simple or ordinary (простой; обыкновенный) and has a metaphorical meaning, such as bad, evil, or unfortunate Pekarskiy, 1958, pp. 3329–3332; Cincius, Vol. 1, p. 379). The term *xara* can intensify expressions like *xara aanyttan* (хара ааныттан) or *xara maŋnaygıttan*<sup>16</sup> (хара маңнайгыттан), which mean "from the very beginning" (с самого начала), showing its role beyond color in Yakut grammar (Slepsov, 1972, p. 481).

In Old Turkic, *kara* means "black" and carries a metaphorical meaning like darkness, misfortune, or adversity. It describes dark objects, unpleasant qualities, and items of lower status. Historically, *kara* referred to the common people and appeared in the titles of Karakhanid rulers. It is found in many languages from the same language family (Nadeljaev, Nasilov, Teniřev, & řerbak, 1969, pp. 422-423; Clauson, 1972, pp. 673-674)

In Buryat, *xara* means "black" or "dark" (чёрный; темный) and can also describe something "lean" or "without milk/fat" (постный, без молока, без жира) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 379). In Khalkha Mongolian, *xar* (хар) also means "black" or "dark" (чёрный, темный) (Cincius, Vol. 1, p. 379). In Manchu, *kara* refers to a "pure black and glossy color, like that of a black horse" (чисто чёрный, лоснящийся, вороной (о масти лошади)) (Cincius, Vol. 1, p. 379).

### 3.2. Lexical and Semantic Variations of the Term 'White' in Color Terminology

In Evenki, *n'ubeti*<sup>17</sup> means "white", especially reindeer pelts (белый (о масти оленя)), but in the *Totti* dialect, it can also mean "light yellow" (Cincius, 1975, Vol 1, p. 644). The term *bagda*<sup>18</sup> refers to "white, frozen" (due to the cold) белый, побелевший (от мороза), обмороженный), while *bagdakar*<sup>19</sup> describes reindeer pelts with "white spots" or a "white side" (с белым пятном, белобокий (о масти оленя)). *Bagdalama*<sup>20</sup> means "whitened" or "white" (побелевший; белый), and *bagdama*<sup>21</sup> means "white" (белый). In some dialects, like the *Dudinka* dialect, it can also mean "light, gray" (светлый, серый) or "leukoma" (бельмо) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 62).

The term *kime*<sup>22</sup> describes "white," especially for reindeer pelts (белый (о масти оленя)), with variations like *kimeme*<sup>23</sup> and *kimes*<sup>24</sup>. *Kimerin*<sup>25</sup> refers to "bright white" (блестящий (о шерсти)), specifically describing fur (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 394). *Ćolko*<sup>26</sup> means "gray-haired, light-haired, or white," referring to reindeer pelts (седой, светловолосый, белый – о масти оленя), with dialectal variations like *Ćelke*<sup>27</sup> and *Ćelke*<sup>28</sup> (Cincius, 1975, Vol 2, 405).

<sup>12</sup> Eastern Variety: *Ola and Penzhina dialects*.

<sup>13</sup> Eastern Variety: *Bystraya dialect*.

<sup>14</sup> Middle variety: *Moma and Tompo dialects*; Eastern Variety: *Ohota dialect*; Western variety: *Sakkyryr dialect*.

<sup>15</sup> Eastern Variety: *Ohota dialect*.

<sup>16</sup> *Maŋnay* ← Mongolic *manglai* "forehead".

<sup>17</sup> Eastern Variety: *Totti and Uchur dialects*.

<sup>18</sup> Eastern Variety: *Tungir dialect*.

<sup>19</sup> Southern Variety: *Nepa dialect*; Eastern Variety: *Tommot, Tokko and Uchur dialects*.

<sup>20</sup> Eastern Variety: *Uchur, Urmi and Zeya dialects*.

<sup>21</sup> Southern Variety: *Barguzin, Nepa, North Baikal and Sym dialects*; Northern Variety: *Dudinka, Ilimpeya and Yerbogachen dialects*.

<sup>22</sup> Southern Variety: *Sym, Stony Tunguska, and Verholensk dialects*.

<sup>23</sup> Southern Variety: *Nepa and Stony Tunguska dialects*.

<sup>24</sup> Southern Variety: *Baunt dialect*.

<sup>25</sup> Eastern Variety: *Sakhalin dialects*.

<sup>26</sup> Southern Variety: *Nepa, Stony Tunguska, Sym, Tokma, and Verholensk dialects*; Eastern Variety: *Tungir, Uchur, and Zeya dialects*. Northern Variety: *Dudinka and Yerbogachen dialects*.

<sup>27</sup> Eastern Variety: *Aldan and Zeya dialects*.

<sup>28</sup> Eastern Variety: *Aldan, Chulman, Chumikan, Maya, Tommot, Uchur and Zeya dialects*.

In Even, *n'öbe*<sup>29</sup> and its variations, (*n'öbeti*<sup>30</sup>, *n'öbati*<sup>31</sup>, and *n'obaty*<sup>32</sup>) refer to "white", particularly for animal fur (белый (о масти животных)). *N'öbas*<sup>33</sup> and *n'öbah*<sup>34</sup> describe "a bright white" or "in such a way that it turns white" (about a suddenly flashing white object) (добела; так, что забелело (о внезапно промелькнувшем белом предмете) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 642, 644). *Ĉelke* also means "white" in Even, specifically for reindeer, as noted in a song about a "white reindeer" (белый олень в песне) (Popova, 2012, p. 98).

In Dolgan, *ĉelke* refers to "white" in hair or fur (Däbritz, 2022, p. 464), while *ürüŋ*, is used in the Upper Dolgan dialect for "white," highlighting distinctions in Dolgan color terminology, particularly about fur and hair, though *ĉelke* is more common than *ürüŋ* (Stapert, 1981, p. 156; Däbritz, 2022, p. 464).

In Yakut, *ürüŋ*, (Old Turkic *yürüŋ*) primarily means "white", "light," and "pure" (Nadeljaev et al., 1969, p. 627). It retains its original meaning but also describes shades of white ("white," "whitish") (белый; белехонький) for horses, hair, clouds, and houses, though not cows (о лошади, волосах, облаках, доме и т. д., но не о корове). It can mean "grayish" (сивый) for horses. Additionally, *ürüŋ* appears in compounds related to people, qualities, and animals (Pekarskii, 1958, p. 3178) and has historical ties to whiteness (Slepcev, 1972, p. 481). Afanaseva (2020, p. 48) notes that *aq* (white) and *ürüŋ* help distinguish between the ancient Western and Eastern Turkic languages. While *aq* is linked to the Oghuz speech, *ürüŋ* appears in various Turkic texts<sup>35</sup>. Širobokova (2005, p. 34) notes that the Old Turkic *ürüŋ* (white) survives only in Khalaj and Yakut. Clauson (1972, p. 233) observed its decline after the 11th century, but it was later found in Upper Dolgan as well.

The term *maĵan* means "white" as in *maĵan bilaat* (white scarf), and can also mean "pure white" or "very white" (Slepcev, 1972, p. 235). It describes horses, hair, clouds, and houses, but not cows. For horses, *maĵan* can mean "gray" and appears in personal names. The term *maĵan* (маĵан) also means "white" (Pekarskii, 1958, p. 1523). In Literary Mongolian, *mangqan*/*mangqar* refers to a "white-headed" or "white-faced" horse or cattle (Khabtagaeva, 2019, p. 255).

Afanaseva (2020, p. 48) notes a third Yakut term for "white": *ĉaxaan* (чаĉаан), though not analyzed in this work. Less common in Yakut, it resembles Mongolian *cagaan* (цараан), meaning "white".

#### 4. Phonetic Variations

The analysis of language families through comparative phonetic processes is key in linguistic research. Due to its extensive geographical distribution, the Evenki language shows significant dialectal variation (Däbritz, 2024: 175). Certain dialects show a phonological correspondence where "s" in the southern dialects corresponds to "h" in the northern dialects, both at the beginning of words and in intervocalic positions. This variation is a key difference between Evenki dialects (Nedjalkov, 1997, xx), evident in the transformation of *sakarĭn* (black) in Southern dialects into *haharin* in Northern dialects (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 56). Other examples include *saman* (shaman) becoming *haman*<sup>36</sup> and even *šaman*<sup>37</sup> (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 59), and *silukta*<sup>38</sup> (intestine), transforming into *hilukta*<sup>39</sup> and *šilukta*<sup>40</sup> (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 85).

In some Even dialects, the initial "h" sound weakens or disappears, as seen in *hakrin*, becoming *akrin* (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 56), and *hatar*<sup>41</sup> becoming *atar*<sup>42</sup>, meaning "dark, gloomy, dusky; darkness, twilight, gloom; darkly, gloomily" (темный, мрачный, сумрачный; тьма, потемки, сумрак; темно, сумрачно, мрачно) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 310). Another example is *hāyĉin*, which becomes *āyĉin*, meaning "laughter" or "giggle" (смех, хохот) (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 2, p. 310). These examples highlight the internal variability in Even dialects.

<sup>29</sup> Eastern Variety: Ola dialect.

<sup>30</sup> Eastern Variety: Bystraya, Ola and Penzhina dialects; Middle Variety: Allaikha and Moma dialects; Western Variety: Sakkyryr dialect.

<sup>31</sup> Eastern Variety: Bystraya, Ola, Okhota and Penzhina dialects; Middle Variety: Allaikha, Moma and Tompo dialects; Western Variety: Sakkyryr dialect.

<sup>32</sup> Eastern Variety: Kolyma-Omolon dialect.

<sup>33</sup> Eastern Variety: Ola and Penzhina dialects; Middle Variety: Moma dialect; Western Variety: Sakkyryr dialect.

<sup>34</sup> Middle Variety: Allaikha, Moma and Tompo dialects; Western Variety: Sakkyryr dialect.

<sup>35</sup> According to (Tenišev, 2001, p. 601), the term *ürüŋ* appears in the Uyghur text *Kutadgu Bilig*, as well as in Orkhon and Yenisei inscriptions. It is found in Old Uyghur, Karakhanid-Uyghur, Middle Uyghur, Chagatai, and in Kyrgyz, where it only appears in the phrase *ürüŋ-baran*.

<sup>36</sup> Northern Variety: Dudinka, Ilimpeya and Yerbogachen dialects.

<sup>37</sup> Southern Variety: North Baikal, Stony Tunguska, and Sym dialects.

<sup>38</sup> Southern Variety: Barguzin, Nepa, Stony Tunguska, Tommot and Totti dialects; Eastern Variety: Aldan, Ayan, Chumikan, Olekma, Sakhalin, Uchur, Urmi and Zeya dialects.

<sup>39</sup> Eastern Variety: Ayan dialect; Northern Variety: Agata and Bolshoy Porog, Dudinka, Ilimpeya, Olekma, and Yerbogachen dialects.

<sup>40</sup> Southern Variety: Baunt, North Baikal, Stony Tunguska, and Sym dialects.

<sup>41</sup> Eastern Variety: Okhota dialect.

<sup>42</sup> Arman dialect.

In Dolgan and Yakut, *kara*, likely of Turkic origin, denotes black and carries metaphorical meanings. In Dolgan, *kara* retains "k," while in Yakut, it corresponds to "x," resulting in *xara*. This phonetic correspondence is seen in *kār* (Dolgan) and *xār* (Yakut), both meaning "snow" (Slepcev, 1972, p. 468; Däbritz, 2022, p. 42).

## 5. Language Contact

Language contact shapes vocabulary in regions with frequent interaction, like Siberia. While not the original home of cattle-breeding Turkic peoples, their migrations influenced local languages, leading to borrowing from Yeniseian and Samoyedic populations (Novgorodov et al., 2015, p. 115). The processes of code-copying, adaptation, and the development of dialectal varieties across Tungusic and Turkic languages show how languages influence each other over time. A clear example of this is seen in color terms, particularly those describing black and white.

The Evenki and Dolgan share vocabulary from centuries of interaction, especially in reindeer herding. The Dolgan, once Evenki speakers, later adopted a Turkic variety influenced by Yakut. Some Norilsk communities still speak Evenki (Anderson, 2004, p. 10). Early theories suggest Dolgans were "Yakutized Evenks" (Anderson, 2000, p. 86). In Dolgan, the Evenki loanword *ēlke* is more common for "white" than the archaic Turkic term *ürüy*, despite Evenki influence in Upper Dolgan. Lower Dolgan speakers also prefer *ēlke*, confirming its widespread use (Däbritz, 2022, p. 464).

The Evenki word *koyномо* (black) becomes *koyнoмoй* in Dolgan, showing phonological differences but preserving the same meaning (Däbritz, 2022, p. 463). Similarly, *čolko* (white) in Evenki corresponds to *ēlke* in Dolgan, with minor phonetic differences but the same concept (Däbritz, 2022, p. 64). These examples show linguistic code copying between Tungusic and Turkic speakers involved mutual vocabulary borrowing in both directions. This influence is evident in reindeer herding, hunting, and trade, where the mobile Evenki, through bilingual interactions with Turkic and Mongolic groups, spread pan-Siberian linguistic features (Anderson, 2004, p. 16).

Evenki dialectal variation shows internal phonological correspondence within the same language family, beyond direct correspondences. For example, Even word *n'öbeti* (white) parallels Evenki *n'ubeti* (Cincius, 1975, Vol. 1, p. 644). This phenomenon reflects a gradual linguistic variation in Evenki-Even contact, likely tracing back to the Proto-Tungusic form.

The extent of Mongolic influence on Turkic languages, particularly in the color lexicon, was unexpected. A notable example is the Yakut word *mañan* (white), derived from the Mongolic *mangkan*, which refers to a white marking on an animal's forehead and is also used for natural phenomena and the sky (Khabtagaeva, 2019, p. 255). Afanaseva (2020, pp. 48, 52) notes that in both Mongolic and Yakut, *mañan* is often used as an epithet for *xallān* (sky).

Lexical parallels to Yakut *mañan/mağan* appear in Mongolic, Khakas, and Tuvan. In Khakas, *mağan* refers to: 1) a horse with a white coat, 2) a horse with light-colored eyes, and 3) a light-colored spot on the forehead of a horse or a cow (1) лошадь белой масти; 2) лошадь, имеющая светлые глаза; 3) светлое пятно на лбу у лошади и коровы) (Baskakov & Inkižekova-Grekul, 1953, p. 100). In Tuvan, *mangan* means "pure white, completely white" (белый-пребелый, совершенно белый), while *mañan ak* refers to "bright white" (белым-бело) (Mongush, 1988, p. 288). Sakha and Buryat have influenced southern and eastern Evenki varieties (Bulatova & Grenoble, 1993, p. 3), highlighting Mongolic influence on the Yakut lexicon and the broader impact of cross-linguistic interaction beyond Tungusic and Turkic groups.

## 6. Conclusion

This study has explored how language, culture, and environment shape the lexicon of indigenous Siberian communities. By comparing terms for black and white reindeer pelts in Evenki, Even, Yakut, and Dolgan it highlights both linguistic diversity and the cultural significance of these terms. The variation in terminology reflects not just phonetic differences but also the complex processes of linguistic contact and knowledge transmission within nomadic reindeer herding societies.

Phonetic correspondence, like the shift from "s" to "h" in Evenki and the loss of initial "h" in some Even variants, shows adaptation and language contact patterns. Mongolic terms like *mañqa* (white) in Yakut reflect linguistic influence linked to equestrian terminology and cultural exchanges in Siberia, involving not only Tungusic and Turkic but also Mongolic elements.

The 17 reindeer-related terms (12 Tungusic, 4 Turkic, 1 Mongolic) highlight Siberia's linguistic richness and vocabulary exchange through community contact. Tungusic terms dominate reindeer herding, while Turkic and Mongolic terms reflect interaction with other ethnic groups. Future research could explore the influence of Mongolic and Samoyedic languages on reindeer terminology in Siberia, deepening our understanding of linguistic contact and the relationship between indigenous peoples and their environment.

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