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PREDICATIVE POSSESSION IN DOLGAN¹

The article deals with the expression of predicative possession in Dolgan, a Turkic language of Northern Siberia. Predicative possession is understood as the expression of possession within a verbal phrase, the analysis follows the typology of Heine (1997) (section 1). Dolgan exhibits various types of predicative possession constructions: a companion scheme, a location/goal scheme and a genitive scheme, whereby the companion scheme occurs by far most often (section 3). As Turkic languages are usually assumed to exhibit a genitive scheme (cf. Johanson, 1998), some contact linguistic considerations are made in order to relate the Dolgan constructions to areal circumstances (section 4).

Key words: *possession, predicative possession, language contact, Dolgan, Turkic languages, Siberian languages.*

1. Introduction and theoretical background

Leaving an exact semantic definition of the term ‘possession’ aside, it shall be conceived hereafter as a relation of two given entities that somehow form a relation within its linguistic expression in which prototypically but not necessarily one entity (the possessor) is in control of the other one (the possessee) and which prototypically is not reversible (cf. Heine, 1997: 33ff.; Stassen, 2009: 10ff.).

From a morphosyntactic perspective one can distinguish adnominal (or attributive) possession (cf. Koptjevskaja-Tamm, 2001) and predicative possession. The former one operates within a noun phrase and has both possessor and possessee somehow presupposed, the latter one operates within a verbal phrase as the main assertion of a clause (Heine, 1997: 183ff.; Stassen, 2009: 26f.). Predicative possession constructions can be both transitive and intransitive, the former ones showing a verb like English *have* as the predicate of the sentence, the latter ones showing some kind of locational or existential predicate (cf. Stassen, 2013). Heine (1997: 45ff.) classifies predicative possession constructions with the help of semantic schemes, including X as the possessor, Y as the possessee and a formulaic description of the relation of the two. The following table shows the types and notions of predicative possession worked out by Heine (1997: 47) and their correspondences in Stassen (2013) (table 1).

The analysis at hand aims to investigate predicative possession constructions in Dolgan (< North-Siberian Turkic < Northeastern Turkic < Turkic), leaving aside adnominal possession and focusing on the morphosyntactic properties of predicative possession. I will mostly follow Heine’s typology, as it is from my point of view both formally and functionally more accurate. The outline of the article is the following: In section 2 I will shortly describe the Dolgan language and the data used in this study. In section 3 I will describe the constructions expressing predicative possession in Dolgan according to the above-mentioned typological criteria, dealing with affirmative constructions in paragraph 3.1, and with negative constructions in paragraph 3.2. In section 4 I will make some inductive areal and historical considerations, especially covering other Turkic languages of the north-eastern branch and the areal closely connected Uralic language Nganasan. Section 5 sums up the study and gives an outlook on further research possibilities.

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Types of predicative possession

SEMANTIC SCHEME	HEINE, 1997	STASSEN, 2013
TRANSITIVE CLAUSE		
X TAKES Y	Action	have-possessive
INTRANSITIVE CLAUSE		
X IS WITH Y	Companion	conjunctive possessive ²
X'S Y EXISTS	Genitive	oblique (genitive) possessive ³
Y IS LOCATED AT X	Location	oblique (locational) possessive
Y EXISTS FOR/TO X	Goal	
Y EXISTS FROM X	Source	
AS FOR X, Y EXISTS	Topic	topic possessive
Y IS X'S (PROPERTY)	Equation	---

2. Dolgan and Dolgan data

According to the last Russian census Dolgan is spoken by approx. 1,000 people (VPN 2010) on the Taymyr Peninsula and in adjacent areas in the extreme north of the Russian Federation (e.g. Artem'ev, 2013a: 3). Whereas phonology and morphology are more or less documented and researched (cf. Artem'ev, 2013a & 2013b, Li, 2011, Ubryatova, 1985), this does not hold true for syntactic issues – for example, a description of possessive constructions is missing at all.

The data for the investigation is taken from the Dolgan corpus of the long-term research project “INEL”⁴, which by now consists of 59 texts with 5,359 sentences with 35,831 tokens. Containing both folklore and narrative texts as well as conversations, the corpus shows a wide range of material. Especially the narrative texts and conversations exhibit a very natural usage of the language, so that the study at hand can be regarded as based on natural language.

3. Predicative possession in Dolgan

3.1. Affirmative constructions

Dolgan exhibits three affirmative constructions expressing predicative possession. As they differ morphosyntactically from each other, they will be dealt with separately. The first construction, shown in example (1), is by far the most often used construction (133 out of 142 sentences). The construction is an intransitive sentence that neither shows an existential predicate nor a copula. The possessor is the subject of the sentence, the possessee is marked with the proprietive suffix *-LA:k*⁵ and is the predicate of the sentence. It should be mentioned here that adjectives formed with the proprietive suffix *-LA:k* are also frequently used as proper attributes, cf. *küs-te:k kihi* ‘power-PROPR man = powerful man’.

² In Stassen (2009) this type is called ‘with-possessive’.

³ In Stassen (2013) the genitive possessive and the locational possessive are accounted for as subtypes of the oblique possessive, whereas in Stassen (2009) the genitive possessive is treated as a subtype of the locational possessive.

⁴ INEL = Grammatical Descriptions, Corpora and Language Technology for Indigenous Northern Eurasian Languages; carried out by the Academy of Sciences in Hamburg, https://inel.corpora.uni-hamburg.de/?page_id=920, [access: 15.03.2018].

⁵ Due to morphonological processes like vowel harmony and consonant assimilation, this suffix can have up to 16 allomorphs, in some dialects/idioclects even more.

1. [...] *bu kupiēs dajarka-la:k*, [...] [
 this merchant milkmaid-PROPR.3SG
 ‘[...] this merchant has a milkmaid, [...].’
 (KiMN_19900417_Milkmaid_flk.003)

The person and number of the possessor is expressed by means of predicative person-number suffixes (Ubryatova, 1985: 88)⁶, cf. examples (2) and (3):

2. *Bütün kopsok karči-la:k-pin*.
 whole storeroom money-PROPR-1SG
 ‘I have a storeroom full of money.’
 (ErSV_1964_WarBirdsAnimals_flk.175)

3. *Tuok ta:birin-na:k-kin-ij?*
 what riddle-PROPR-2SG-Q
 ‘What kind of riddle do you have?’
 (BeVP_1964_Laajku_flk.069)

If other tenses and/or moods than indicative present are expressed in the sentence, then a copula (*buōl-* or *e-*⁷) has to be used, cf. example (4) for tense inflection, example (5) for mood inflection. This is because nominal elements neither inflect for mood nor for tense in Dolgan (Ubryatova, 1985: 88). The choice of the copula depends on the tense and mood, the two cannot be used interchangeably.

4. *Bilir bi:r d’aktar-da:k e-ti-m*.
 long.ago one woman-PROPR be-PST1-1SG
 ‘Long ago, I had a wife.’
 (MiAI_1964_OldPeasantOldWoman_flk.080)

5. [...] *töhö da timir tiñir-da:k buōl-lun*, [...] [
 how.much INDEF iron sinew-PROPR be-IMP.3SG
 ‘[...] it shall have some iron sinews, [...].’
 (PoNA_19900322_PoorBoyDevil_flk.037)

The construction at hand is to be classified as a companion scheme “X IS WITH Y” according to Heine (1997: 53f.), as the possessor is the subject of the sentence and the possessee is the (nominal) predicate of the sentence – being or not linked to the subject with a copula. Moreover, the proprietive suffix *-LA:k* is in other contexts also used instead of a coordinative conjunction expressing accompaniment which is typical for this type of construction (cf. Heine, 1997: 55; Stassen, 2013), cf. example (6):

6. *Bilir ogonn’or-do:k eme:ksin olor-but-tar*.
 long.ago old.man-PROPR old.woman live-PST2-3PL
 ‘Long ago, there live an old man and an old woman.’
 (YaP_1930_GroomFromUpperWorld_flk.001)

Interestingly, one example (7) with person-number marking on both the possessee and the copula verb has been found, which nevertheless remains an exception with regard to the basic pattern:

7. *Huōč-hogotok uōl ogo-lo:k-pun e-ti-m*.
 EMPH-single boy child-PROPR-1SG be-PST1-1SG
 ‘I had one single son.’
 (KiMN_19900417_Milkmaid_flk.144)

The second affirmative construction expressing predicative possession in Dolgan is far less often used (6 out of 142 sentences) and shown in example (8). The construction is an existential sentence with the existential particle *ba:r* (cf. Turkish *var* (Csató & Johanson, 1998: 226)) and a form

⁶ Dolgan – as most Turkic languages – has got two series of person-number suffixes (possessive suffixes and predicative suffixes) which are complementarily distributed across paradigms (Artem’ev, 2013: 170f.).

⁷ Dolgan knows two copulae *buōl-* ‘be; become’ and *e-* ‘be’ which are respectively used in different tenses and moods (Ubryatova, 1985: 88), *e-* for example cannot be used in present tense and imperative mood.

of the copula *e-*. The possessor is expressed with the dative-locative case and the possessee is expressed with the unmarked nominative case being the subject of the sentence:

8. *Ba: kihie-ke higiri: ba:r e-bit.*
 this human.DAT/LOC dry.splints there.is be-PST2.3SG
 ‘This human had got dry splints.’
 (BaR_1930_HairyPeople_flk.020)

As the typology of Heine differentiates between a goal scheme, expressing the possessor with a directive local case (Heine, 1997: 59), and a location scheme, expressing the possessor with a stative local case (Heine 1997: 50), the Dolgan construction at hand fits into both, as the dative-locative case in Dolgan expresses both directional and stative location (Artem’ev, 2013b: 73, 78).

However, it is difficult to state whether or not the construction described is the “common” or “basic” construction of this type, as its morphosyntactic characteristics vary to a high degree, cf. examples (9) and (10):

9. [...], *birieme-m ba:r minie-ke, d-i:-bin.*
 time-1SG there.is 1SG-DAT/LOC think-PRS-1SG
 ‘[...], I have got time, I think.’
 (AkNN_KuNS_200212_LifeHandicraft_conv.112)

Here, a possessive suffix referring to the possessor is added to the possessed noun. Whether this is due to some grammatical (e.g. non-third person), semantic (e.g. animacy, kinship relation) or syntactic (e.g. inverted word order) reason, can hardly be answered on the basis of just six examples.

10. *ira:kta:gi-ga karči elbek.*
 czar-DAT/LOC money a.lot
 ‘The czar has got lots of money.’
 (PoNA_19900322_PoorBoyDevil_flk.207)

In example (10) both the existential particle and a copula are missing. This may be due to the quantifier *elbek* ‘a lot; many’ which can be used both in attributive and predicative position, cf. *elbek taba* ‘many reindeers’ vs. *taba elbek* ‘there are many reindeers’. Hence, *elbek* might be replacing the existential particle *ba:r* here. This, however, cannot be proven, as there are no more similar examples.

Finally, the third affirmative construction that can be detected in Dolgan is very seldom used (3 out of 142 sentences) and is shown in example (11). This construction is an existential sentence with the existential particle *ba:r* and/or the copula *e-*. The possessor is indexed with the respective possessive suffix at the possessed noun and shows genitive case marking, the possessee is the subject of the sentence:

11. *N'em'es arm'ija-ti-n tojo-nu-n sana:-ta*
 German army-3SG-GEN lord-3SG-GEN thought-3SG
ba:r e-bit.
 there.is be-PST2.3SG
 ‘The commander of the German army (apparently) had a thought.’
 (MiXS_1967_SoldierInSecondWorldWar_nar.009)

The genitive marking, however, does only occur in two- or morefold possessive constructions (i.e. “X’S Y HAS Z”), cf. the following example with covert possessor and, hence, no genitive marking (NB! the dative-locative case at *ogogo* is governed by the verb form *oloŋkolu:r* in the subordinate relative clause):

12. [...] *ogo-go oloŋko-lu:-r oloŋko-loro e-t-e, [...].*
 child-DAT/LOC tale-VBZ-PTCP.PRS tale-3PL be-PST1-3SG
 ‘[...] they (i.e. their fathers) had got a tale, which is told to children, [...].’
 (UkET_2002_FoxJayBuzzard_flk.003)

The described syntactic properties of the construction are nevertheless diagnostic for the genitive scheme (Heine, 1997: 58), even if there is no genitive marking anymore as in example (12).

All in all, there are three affirmative constructions that display predicative possession in Dolgan: one representing a companion scheme, one representing a location/goal scheme, and one representing a genitive scheme, whereby the companion scheme is by far most often found in the corpus (133 out of 142 instances).

3.2. Negative constructions

There are two negative constructions that express predicative possession in Dolgan. The first and by far the most often used one (29 out of 35 sentences) is shown in examples (13) and (14). This construction is an existential sentence, containing the negative particle *huok* (cf. Turkish *yok* (Csató & Johanson. 1998: 226)). The possessor is the subject of the sentence and is indexed with predicative person-number suffixes at the negative particle. The possessee belongs to the predicate of the sentence and shows moreover the suffix *-tA* expressing possession (see below):

13. *Onton üle-te huok.*
 then work-POSS NEG.3SG
 ‘Besides that he has got no work.’
 (KiMN_19900417_Milkmaid_flk.012)
14. *Bu togo bihigi ogo-to huok-put-uj?*
 this why 1PL child-POSS NEG-1PL-Q
 ‘Why don’t we have children?’
 (ChPK_1970_ThreeBoys_flk.003)

If another tense and/or mood than indicative present is expressed, a copula is inserted which then carries the person-number marking of the possessor, cf. examples (15) and (16):

15. *Beje-m üöreg-e huok bagaj e-ti-m, [...].*
 self-1SG education-POSS NEG very be-PST1-1SG
 ‘I myself did not have much education, [...]’
 (AnMS_1972_GoodSovietTimes_nar.068)
16. *Ikki ili:-te huok buol-l-a.*
 two hand-POSS NEG be-PST1-3SG
 ‘She had no more hands.’
 (FeA_1931_OldWomanFoxFur_flk.042)

The suffix *-tA* at the lexeme expressing the possessee is homonymous to the possessive suffix of the third person singular and most probably is etymologically the same item (Ubryatova, 1985: 127f.). As it has lost its person-number reference, it is only glossed as POSS. Ubryatova (1985: 128) remarks further that Dolgan lacks the common Turkic caritive/privative suffix **-sIz*⁸ and uses a combination of the suffix *-tA* and the negative particle *huok* instead. The negative counterpart of the proprietive adjective *ogo-lo:k* ‘child-PROPR = with child/having a child’ therefore is *ogo-to huok* ‘child-POSS NEG = without child/having no child’ (ibid.). As a caritive or privative construction is semantically the opposite of a comitative or proprietive construction, it seems obvious to analyze the shown Dolgan construction expressing negative predicative possession as the negative counterpart of the affirmative construction of the companion type described above, cf. the following table 2.

One can thus hardly neglect that the construction in question is to be analyzed as a negative companion scheme. The subject of the sentence is then the possessor, the predicate consists of the possessee plus the negative particle *huok*, eventually supplemented by a copula (*e-* or *buol-*) in other tenses and/or moods than present indicative.

⁸ Ubryatova gives the cyrillic form **-сѣз*, the standard form citing this suffix is, however, the latin morphological deep form **-slz* (cf. e.g. Schönig, 1999: 78).

Proprietary and caritive constructions in Dolgan

	ATTRIBUTE	PREDICATIVE POSSESSION
AFFIRMATIVE	<i>ogo-lo:k kihi</i> child-PROPR man 'man with child'	<i>Min ogo-lo:k-pun.</i> 1SG child-PROPR-1SG 'I have a child.'
NEGATIVE	<i>ogo-to huok kihi</i> child-POSS NEG man 'man without child'	<i>Min ogo-to huok-pun.</i> 1SG child-POSS NEG-1SG 'I have no child.'

The second, only rarely attested (2 out of 35 sentences) construction shows the possessee as the subject of the sentence, the possessor is indexed with a possessive suffix at the lexeme expressing the possessee. The negative existential particle *huok* is the predicate of the sentence, eventually there occurs a copula, cf. example (17):

17. *D'e, ogonn'or, en buruj-u-n huok e-bit.*
well old.man 2SG guilt-EP-2SG NEG.EX be-PST2.3SG
'Well, old man, you apparently don't bear the blame.'
(SaSS_1964_NganasanBraveBoy_flk.144)

It is difficult to classify this construction as there are only two examples in the corpus. Having the affirmative construction of the genitive scheme in mind, one could analyze this construction as showing a negative genitive scheme. However, this remains in so far speculative, as there is no genitive marking visible and as there are no negative examples with two- or morefold possessive constructions (like example (11)) which could prove whether there is genitive marking or not. Hence, no final decision can be taken here.

Besides that, there are four sentences which show a composition of two constructions, cf. example (18):

18. *Giniler-ge tuok da ebienn'e-teril-te huok, [...].*
3PL-DAT/LOC what NEG thing-belonging-POSS NEG.EX
'They had no property, [...]'
(PoKK_1964_TwoOrphanBoys_flk.002)

Whereas the possessor is marked with the dative-locative case (as in a location or goal scheme), the possessee carries the possession-marking suffix (as in the negative companion scheme). Therefore, the construction is syntactically difficult to analyze, as either a subject is missing (when considering *tuok da ebienn'e-terilte huok* as the predicate) or the person-number reference is false (when considering *tuok da ebienn'e-terilte* as the subject of the sentence). Whether or not this construction is to be regarded as a standard type of expressing negative predicative possession in Dolgan, can hardly be stated as based on only four examples, therefore, this question remains as a question calling for further research.

Hence, all in all there are two negative constructions that express predicative possession in Dolgan, one exhibiting a negative companion scheme (29 out of 35 sentences), and one, much less often used construction (2 out of 35 sentences) which maybe exhibits the genitive scheme. Besides that, there are instances of a mixed type whose status in the grammatical system, however, remains unclear.

3.3. Intermediate conclusion

Having examined the predicative possession constructions in Dolgan on the basis of a corpus, one comes to the conclusion that the companion scheme is both affirmatively and negatively by far the most often used construction. The following table3 sums up the results of the analysis.

Predicative possession constructions in Dolgan

	AFFIRMATIVE		NEGATIVE		TOTAL	
COMPANION	133	75,1%	29	16,4%	162	91,5%
LOCATION/GOAL	6	3,4%	0	0%	6	3,4%
GENITIVE	3	1,7%	0	0%	3	1,7%
LOCATION/GOAL ~ COMPANION	0	0%	4	2,3%	4	2,3%
UNCLEAR	0	0%	2	1,1%	2	1,1%
TOTAL	142	80,2%	35	19,8%	177	100%

4. Areal and historical remarks

Having in mind that the Turkic languages are often claimed to show a possessive construction of the genitive scheme type (cf. e.g. Johanson, 1998: 56), this corpus-based study of Dolgan may be surprising regarding its outcomes. Actually, Dolgan is not the only Turkic language showing companion possessive schemes, as these are also attested for its closest relative Yakut (Ebata, 2014: 30) as well as for South Siberian Turkic languages, e.g. Chulym Turkic (Lemskaya, 2016: 38f.), cf. example (19):

- 19 *aal-īm* *kajdīy* *at-tīy* *vä?*
village-1SG what.kind name-PROPR.3SG Q
‘What’s the name of my village?’ (lit. ‘What name does my village have?’)
(Chulym Turkic; Lemskaya, 2016: 38)

As exactly those Turkic languages (those forming the north-eastern branch), which show such companion scheme constructions, also lack the privative suffix *-sIz* (Schönig, 1999: 78) and use the construction third person singular possessive suffix plus negative particle (< CT **yoq*) instead (ibid.), this distribution can hardly be coincidental. However, it does not become clear from the existing literature, whether the privative/caritive construction is systematically used for expressing negative predicative possession in those languages, too.

Besides that, also the Tungusic language Evenki (Nedjalkov, 1997: 124) and Mongolic languages (Brosig, 2015: 99f.) exhibit, apart from the location/goal schemes, a companion scheme. Whether the companion or the location/goal scheme is the original one in Evenki, can probably not be finally answered, as there are hardly any reliable older sources on which one could rely (Grenoble, 2007: 146f.). That also other Tungusic languages as e.g. Udihe exhibit both genitive, location and partly companion constructions (Nikolaeva & Tolskaya, 2001: 620), does not help to answer this question either.

In turn, for Mongolic one can assume that the companion scheme construction is the original one, as Middle Mongol (spoken in the 13th and 14th century), which is considered to be quite close to Proto-Mongolic (Brosig, 2015: 68), apparently exhibits this construction in both affirmative and negative sentences (Brosig, 2015: 99). As at least Yakut (Pakendorf, 2007: 23) and South Siberian Turkic (Schönig, 1998: 404) are known to have undergone heavy contact with Mongolic varieties, it seems logical to consider the predicative possession constructions of the companion type in north-eastern Turkic languages as a Mongolic influence. However, this needs much further research – on the one hand on predicative possession in both Mongolic and north-eastern Turkic languages itself, and on the other hand on the present-day and historic linguistic contact scenarios in Middle and South Siberia.

Finally, the Uralic language Nganasan exhibits a negative predicative possession construction (Wagner-Nagy, 2014: 80), which immediately reminds of the most frequent Dolgan construction discussed above, cf. the following examples (20) and (21):

20. [...] *miŋ* *ŋəmsu-gali* *i-s'üə-mu?* [...]
 1PL food-CAR be-PST-1PL.S/O
 '[...] we had no food, [...]'
 (Brykina et al., 2016; ChNS_080302_Bear_nar.110)
21. *mənə* *d'angu-m* *ñuə-gali*.
 1SG NEG.EX-1SG child-CAR
 'I have no child.'
 (Wagner-Nagy, 2014: 80)

It can be noticed that there can occur either an affirmative copula (20) or a negative existential particle (21) carrying the person-number marking of the possessor. Regardless of this variation, the possessee is in both cases marked with a caritive suffix, hence, structural similarly to Dolgan. Having in mind that Nganasans and Dolgans live in close contact with each other on the Taymyr peninsula and regarding the fact, that Uralic languages are usually not known to show any type of companion scheme constructions (Stassen, 2009: 296), the construction at hand seems to be a contact phenomenon. This, however, needs once more much further research.

5. Conclusion

The study at hand did examine the expression of predicative possession in Dolgan. The by far most common way to express predicative possession hereby is a construction which is to be classified as a companion scheme according to Heine's typology (1997: 53f.) and as a conjunctive possessive according to Stassen's typology (Stassen, 2013), i.e. exhibiting the semantic scheme "X IS WITH(OUT) Y". There are also other concurring constructions whose occurrences in the corpus are, however, statistically probably negligible. Apparently, the existence of a companion scheme in order to express predicative possession is a feature that Dolgan shares with other Turkic languages of the north-eastern branch, whether or not this being the result of Mongolian influence, and as for the negative construction, also with the Uralic language Nganasan. Finally, this corpus-based study could hopefully show that corpus-based research leads to statistically sound results which are valuable for both language-specific and cross-linguistic research. Hence, it would be desirable to come up with methodologically similar studies – not only and necessarily on possession, but on other morphosyntactic topics of Siberian languages, as well.

Abbreviations

1 – first person; 2 – second person; 3 – third person; CAR – caritive; CT – Common Turkic; DAT/LOC – dative-locative; EMPH – emphasis; EP – epenthetic vowel; GEN – genitive; IMP – imperative; INDEF – indefinite; NEG – negation; NEG.EX – existential negation; PL – plural; POSS – possession; PROPR – proprietive; PRS – present tense; PST – past tense; PTCP – participle; Q – interrogative particle; SG – singular; S/O – subjective-objective conjugation; VBZ – verbalizer.

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ПРЕДИКАТИВНАЯ ПОСЕССИВНОСТЬ В ДОЛГАНСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

В статье анализируются способы выражения предикативной посессивности в долганском языке – тюркском языке Северной Сибири. Вслед за типологией Б. Хайне (1997), мы понимаем предикативную посессивность как выражение посессивных отношений с помощью глагольной фразы (разд. 1). В долганском языке обнаруживаются различные типы предикативных посессивных конструкций: конструкции со значением совместности, локативные/целевые конструкции и генитивные конструкции. Наиболее частотными конструкциями являются совместные (разд. 3). Известно, что тюркские языки имеют тенденцию к использованию генитивных моделей (Johanson, 1998). Следовательно, можно выдвинуть предположение о влиянии языковых контактов на выбор определенного способа выражения предикативной посессивности и объяснить модели долганских конструкций ареальными факторами (разд. 4)

Ключевые слова: *посессивность, предикативная посессивность, языковые контакты, долганский язык, тюркские языки, сибирские языки.*

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