

## Comparative Analysis of Semantic and Morphosyntactic Peculiarities of the Demonstratives in the Eastern Khanty and the Southern-Central Selkup Languages

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### Abstract

*This research deals with semantic and morphosyntactic peculiarities of the demonstratives in two indigenous languages of Western Siberia: Khanty and Selkup. Comparative analysis of demonstratives is mainly based on the dialects of the Eastern Khanty and the Southern-Central Selkup languages. These dialects of Khanty and Selkup languages are less described and highly endangered. The speakers of the Eastern Khanty and Southern-Central Selkup, due to their mixed residence in area of the middle Ob river and some of its tributaries in Tomsk region, are supposed to have been being in the extended 'cultural and linguistic contact'. The aim of our paper is to research similarities and differences in the deictic systems of the demonstratives in the described languages.*

**Keywords:** *the dialects of Khanty language, the dialects of Selkup language, demonstratives.*

### 1. Introduction

Nowadays a majority of dialects of Khanty and Selkup languages are highly endangered. Comparative analysis of demonstratives is based on Eastern Khanty and Southern-Central Selkup dialects of Western Siberia. Despite Selkup and Khanty languages belong to different branch of Uralic language family (Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic), speakers of these languages are characterized by the extended cultural and linguistic contact in area of the middle Ob river and some of its tributaries in Tomsk region, mainly in Kargasokskiy and Parabelskiy districts. The object of this paper is semantic and morphosyntactic comparison of demonstratives in Eastern Khanty and Southern-Central Selkup dialects.

Theoretical and linguistic material is grounded on the following main sources: "Morphology of the Selkup language. Southern dialects", "Essays of the Selkup language. The Tazovskiy dialect" (1980), "Aspects of the Grammar of Eastern Khanty" (2010), "Essays of the dialects of Khanty. The Vakhovsky dialect", "Collection of annotated folklore and everyday texts of the Ob-Yenisey language area" (2012, 2013).

#### 1.1 Dialectal variations in Khanty and Selkup languages

Khanty and Selkup languages display considerable dialectal variations. Language varieties result from independent development of dialects, diverse language contact, history of population migration and settlement (Filchenko, 2012, p. 15). Khanty dialectal diversity divides into two main dialect clusters: Eastern (Vakhovskiy, Vasyuganskiy, Syrgutskiy, Aleksandrovskiy) dialects and Northern (Sherkaliskiy, Kazymskiy, Obdorskoy) dialects (Steinitz, 1950, p. 8-9, 1980, p. 8, Tereshkin, 1961). Eastern Khanty dialects are less described and highly endangered with no regular native language teaching, mother tongue language environment and traditional culture. According to the geographical criterion dialectal variations of Selkup language can be determined into Northern and Southern (Southern-Central) clusters. The Northern group includes Tazovskiy, Lariakskiy, Baishenskoy dialects. Southern-Central cluster divides into Southern (Sredneobskoy, Chaylinskoy, Chyulymskiy, Ketskiy) and Central (Tymskiy, Vasyuganskiy, Narymskiy). All of Selkup variants, the Northern dialect group has attracted most scholarly attention, whereas the Southern dialects remain the least studied variants (Bajdak, 2012, p. 16).

#### 1.2 Origin of demonstratives in Khanty and Selkup languages

Based on the chief function of demonstratives to establish joint attention, Dissel (2006) assumed that demonstratives may have emerged very early in the evolution of human language and independently of other linguistics terms.

Demonstratives of the described languages historically originated from protouralic deictic bases *\*t-*, *\*n-* (Vértes, 1967, 191-192; Décsy, 1990, p.5). Reflexes of the stem *\*t-* are observed as in Khanty demonstratives as in Selkup demonstratives. Compare: khanty vakh. *tim(i)* 'this' - *tom(i)* 'that' and selkup ket. *taw* 'this' - *to(na)* 'that'. Khanty demonstratives *tʃi(t)*, *tʃu(t)* are derived from protofinno-ugric stem *\*s-*, which was formed in results of alternation with protouralic stem *\*t-* (*\*t- > \*s-*). Deictic base *\*n-* was reconstructed by G. Décsy (1990, p 57), whose to Majtinskaja (1979) opinion was less used in Protouralic than *\*t-*. Reflexes of this base are traced in Selkup demonstrative pronoun *na(wga)* 'this'.

## 2. Semantic and Morphosyntactic Peculiarities of the Demonstratives in Eastern Khanty and Southern-Central Selkup

### 2.1 Forms of the demonstratives

The deictic system of demonstratives in Eastern Khanty organized in paradigms of two contrastive pairs: vakh. *tim(i)* 'this' - *tom(i)* 'that', vas. *tem(i)* 'this' - *tom(i)* 'that' and vakh.-vas., surg. *tʃi(t)* 'this' - vakh.-vas., surg. *tʃu(t)* 'that' (Tereshkin, 1961, p. 67-68; Gulya, 1966, 74-77, Filchenko, 2010, p. 33).

**Table № 1.** Demonstratives of Eastern Khanty

Dialects		Proximal	Distal
Vakhovskiy	Visible	<i>tim(i)</i>	<i>tom(i)</i>
Vasyuganskiy	Visible	<i>tem(i)</i>	<i>tom(i)</i>
Vakh-Vasyuganskiy	Invisible	<i>tʃi(t)</i>	<i>tʃu(t)</i>

Vasyuygan Khanty usage of demonstratives: *tem t'əyəjnə iy ju'nāŋkə jə'lil'wəl* (Filchenko, 2013, p. 150). – 'In **this** place a bear is constantly walking'. *tom pel'kə min `untʃəwta* (Filchenko, 2013, p. 150) – 'To **that** side two of us take'. *ə`kuntʃi jo`yomamən tʃu tə`yəja...* (Filchenko, 2013, p. 142) – 'When got to **that** place...'. *tʃi köl` jol`oytalnə...* (Filchenko, 2013, p.148) - '**This** word say...!'.

**Table № 2.** Northern Khanty employs three demonstratives (Rédei, 1968, p. 22; Steinitz, 1988 p. 1491-1492).

Demonstrative of Northern Khanty

Dialects	Proximal	Distal	Neutral
Kazymskiy	<i>tām(i)</i>	<i>tōm(i)</i>	<i>śi(t)</i>
Sherkalskiy	<i>tām(ə)</i>	<i>tōm(ə)</i>	<i>śi(t)</i>

The example from the Sherkalskiy dialect: *śi tūŋ ma kätʃöšjaŋ wūnš wetsəm* (Radomski, 1989, p. 174). – '**This** summer I fished twelve white salmon'.

In Southern Selkup the deictic system of demonstratives is presented by stems *ta-* 'this' – *to-*, *a-* 'that' and a stem *n-* 'this' (Bekker, 1995, p. 101-102).

**Table № 3.** Demonstratives of Southern-Central Selkup

Dialects	Proximal	Medial	Distal
Ketskiy	<i>taw, na(ti)-(w)</i>	<i>aw</i>	<i>to(na)-(j)</i>
Sredneobskoy	<i>taw, na</i>	<i>aw(na)</i>	<i>to(na)</i>
Tymskiy	<i>taw, tap~tam, na</i>	<i>aw</i>	<i>to(na)-(l')</i>
Vasyuganskiy	<i>taw(ga), na(wga)</i>	-	<i>to</i>

The next examples review the use of demonstratives in Southern Selkup. *na tebelqum naşşakit tabin nadirildə* (Filchenko, 2013, 192). – '**This** man will love her then'. *taw kanak `kuʒan-naj `ā muda* (Filchenko, 2011, p. 136) – '**This** dog never barks'.

## 2.2 Spatial and temporal meaning of the demonstratives

Demonstratives belong to deictic expressions of the language. Firstly, the deictic features of demonstratives are characterized in spatial terms based on their relationship to the deictic centre. The deictic centre is defined by the speaker's location at the time of utterance. In Khanty and Selkup languages deictic words are egocentric. Eastern Khanty has two deictic pairs of demonstratives, contrasting proximal and distal referents, but in Southern-Central Selkup demonstratives indicate three different locations on a distance scale: proximal, medial, and distal. The sense of proximity or remoteness is explicit when terms are used contrastively. In Eastern Khanty language the first contrastive pair (vakh. *tim(i)* 'this' - *tom(i)* 'that', vas. *tem(i)* 'this' - *tom(i)* 'that') is used for remarkable distance sense. For example, Khanty Vakh. **tim iki la'wəl**, **tom iki aməswəl** (Gulay, 1966, p.138). – "This old man is sitting, that old man is standing". In Southern-Central Selkup two terms with different spatial meaning *aw(na)* 'that nearer' and *to(na)~l* 'that farther' are used in contrast to term *taw(ga)* 'this'. Look at the examples, Southern Selkup. **taw qula tūmbatti**, **aw qula kalatti** (Bekker, 1995, p. 102). – "These people came, those people stayed". **taw mat šand**, **to mat t'ebi** (Bekker, 1995, p.104). – "This house is new, that house is rotten". However, in non-contrastive situation all demonstratives mentioned above save their inherent distance feature. In Eastern Khanty the second pair of demonstrative (*tʃi(t)* 'this' - *tʃu(t)* 'that') also indicates the location of the referent relative to the deictic centre. But there are situations where demonstratives *tʃi(t)* is changeable by *tʃu(t)*. The example from Vasjugan Khanty: **tʃu mēy jata ālīntəs** (Gulya, 1989, p. 568). – 'In this pit she lay down'. As can be seen in the example, *tʃu* is rather interpreted as a proximal term than as a distal one. The Selkup demonstrative *na* and its derivative forms *naw*, *nagwa* has not got a comparative pair and carries neutral feature (Bekker, 1995, p. 105). Though, demonstrative *na* is closer to some sense of proximity than to remoteness. Selkup Vasyugan **na aya qut na kubil kudit elledit ellelimbadit nat ierit** (Bajdak, 2013, p.187). – "This is not people, this is souls of died people (which) live there".

Northern Khanty employs three deictic terms: *tām(i)~(ə)*, *tōm(i)~(ə)* and *śi(t)*. Two of them are organized in contrastive forms indicating proximal and distal referents (*tām(i)~(ə)* 'near speaker' - *tōm(i)~(ə)* 'away from speaker'). In non-contrastive situations they also carry an inherent location meaning. Khanty Sherkalskiy **nān uten**, **tām xūtət jaŋ xālī tītŋa uttət** (Radomski, 1989, p. 157). – 'You know, these fish ten days live'. The demonstrative *śi(t)* is reserved for entities as near the speaker as away from speaker (Zivotikov, 1942, p.7; Steinitz, 1937, p. 212; Rédei, 1968, p. 22). In Northern Khanty texts the demonstrative *śi(t)* is primarily met expressing proximal location of the referent to the speaker. Khanty Kazymskiy **śi pōrməsət ĩntam wolłtət mūšejətən** (Rédei, 1968, p.32). – "These things keep in the museum". In the next example from Khanty Kazymskiy text the term *śi* indicates distal referent to egocentric. **śi śūl-xoten wos ĩšiki, tūt ālī tākī an' pa tājəs** (Rédei, 1968, p. 33-34). – 'In that yurt was cold, there was no place for fire'. Maybe earlier demonstrative *śi(t)* had the contrastive pair, because some scientists W. Steinitz (1950), L. Honti (1984) mark term *śut* 'away from speaker' in Sherkalskiy Khanty, which is used only independently. Unfortunately, I didn't succeed in meeting it in the available Northern Khanty texts. Thus, it is difficult to affirm existence of this form in nowadays Northern Khanty. To sum I believe that distance sense of the second comparative pair of Eastern Khanty demonstratives *tī(t)* - *tū(t)* 'that', Northern Khanty demonstrative *śi(t)* and Southern-Central Selkup *na(wga)* is sometimes vague.

The demonstratives of the described languages can be imported not only into spatial domain, but also into the temporal one. Time is more elusive concept than space. In general, time is commonly conceptualized as motion in space. Spatial deictics are able to function to place an event on the time line relative to the moment of the speech event or moment of the utterance. Thus, demonstrative can function as spatial as temporal deictics. Although, demonstratives usually lose some of their deictic force when they express temporal sense (Yakovleva, 2012, p. 152). There are examples of temporal deixis from Vakh Khanty: **mā tim al kōla joyra ěntə mənłəm** (Gulya, 1966, p. 81). – "This year I don't go home". **tʃu al čėkə ləyər wəlyal** (Tereshkin, 1961, p. 103). – "That year was very difficult"

## 2.3 The meaning of visibility of the demonstratives

In addition to distance, in Eastern Khanty the demonstratives indicate whether the referent is visible or invisible. In spite of the fact that visibility is not inherently deictic feature, in Eastern Khanty it is expressed by the same demonstrative terms. The first comparative pair is used for visible referent (vakh., vas. *tim(i)*, *tem(i)* 'near speaker visible' - *tom(i)*, *tom(i)* 'away from speaker visible') and the second comparative pair indicates the referent out-of-sight (vakh.-vas. *tī(t)* 'near the speaker invisible' - *tū(t)* 'far away from speaker invisible'). I believe that due to the fact that the Vakh-Vasuygansky dialect is one of the most archaic (Collinder, 1960, p. 30; Décsy, 1965 p. 30; Bouda, 1972 p. 273), that's why its system is richer. This dialect preserves relict phenomena (such as an ergative structure, a higher number of cases and times, visibility feature of demonstratives) distinguishing it from the other Khanty dialects and languages of the same branch of Uralic

family. K. Majtinskaya (1967) supposes that demonstratives referring to visible/invisible objects in Eastern Khanty and some dialects of Saam language developed under influence of Nenets language, where pronoun *takə* characterizes visibility of referent (p. 147). In the work "Essays of the Selkup language" (1980) authors made timid supposition that demonstrative *tōnna* in tazovskiy dialect can indicate referent located very far from speaker and even invisible (p. 294). Thus, it may be supposed that earlier Southern-Central Selkup demonstrative *to(na)* 'more remote' might have similar semantic feature, as for a long time Southern Selkups and Eastern Khanties have been having lingual and cultural contact.

#### 2.4 Syntactic forms of the demonstratives

In the Southern-Central Selkup and the Eastern Khanty languages the demonstratives function as pronouns, that is independently or as nominal modifiers, that is in syntactic dependence from head nouns. Thus we can say about the demonstratives pronouns and demonstratives determiners. But in both cases of use the demonstratives are united by reference, needed to be relative to the referent.

In Khanty more typically the demonstratives robustly collocate with nouns (Filchenko, 2010, p. 134), taking in these cases 'short' forms (vakh. *tīm* 'this' - *tom* 'that', vas. *tēm* 'this' - *tom* 'that' and vakh.-vas., surg. *tī* 'this' - vakh.-vas., surg. *tū* 'that', kaz., sherk. *tām* 'this' - *tōm* 'that', *šī* 'this'). The demonstratives determiners are not marked for number and case, whereas the head noun carries the case agreement inflection. For instance, Eastern Khanty. **tom pələk-nə** - 'on that side', **tfu puyl-a** - 'in that country', **tīm iki** - **this old man**', Northern Khanty **šī aj** - **this boy**'. Vasyugan Khanty **tf'i wer manna** *ippə* *nomlim* (Filchenko, 2013, p. 151). - **This story** I still remember'. The Eastern Khanty demonstratives pronouns have a 'full' form being added the morphemes *-i-i* (*tom* - *tomī*) or *-t* (*tfu* - *tfut*) and the Northern Khanty demonstratives being added the morpheme *-i-ə* (*tām* - *tāmī*) or *-t* (*šī* - *šīt*). The example of independent usage from Vakh Khanty: **tīmī tomī** *mēta kölp ěntə tiyətəs* (Steinitz, 1988, p. 1392). - 'Not **this** not **that** said words'. The example from the Kazymkiy Northern Khanty dialect: **šīt ǝpəm ǎntl** (Solovar, 2009, p. 35) - **This** is not my sister'. Being used independently the demonstratives can be inflected for cases and numbers. Though, inflected forms of demonstratives are rarely occurred. The next example from Vakh Khanty shows a rare use of the demonstrative in the comitative case: **tf'it-na mənā!** (Gulya, 1966, p. 78). - 'Go with **this**!'

In some Southern Selkup dialects the use of the monosyllabic demonstratives *aw*, *to*, *tol'* only in modifying function with noun phrase is also fixed: **taw qula tūmbatti**, **aw qula kalatti** (Bekker, 1995, p. 102). - **These** people came, but **that** people stayed'. The next Southern Selkup mono-syllabic and two-syllabic demonstratives can be used as pronouns and determiners: *taw*, *na*, *awna*, *tona*. The following two examples show the demonstratives *taw*, *tona* and *na* in independent function in Southern Selkup: **taw man**, **tona tebim** (Bekker, 1995, p. 103). - **This** - mine, **that** - yours.' Sredneobskoy Selkup **na qaj ī na pēge** (Selection, 1980, p. 010). - **This** is what son **this** is a hazel-grouse. The example of using demonstrative *na* as a determiner in the Narymskiy Central Selkup dialect: **na ǎdǎget kan`ala`netuk** (Filchenko, 2011, p. 084). - 'In **this village** there are no dogs'. The Southern Selkup demonstrative *to-na-na*, formed by reduplication of the second stem, and demonstratives *tawga*, *naw/nagwa* and *nati*, derived from *taw* and *na*, met only independently. Southern Selkup **tep tunut tawgam** (Bekker, 1995, p. 103). - 'He doesn't know **this**'.

According to the regularity of the Tazovskiy Northern Selkup dialect, adding the morpheme *-my* to the demonstratives in the independent function is obliged: *tam* - *tam-my*, *tōnna* - *tōnna-my* (Kuznezova, 1980, p. 295).

As in the Khanty language, the Selkup demonstratives in independent usage can be inflected for cases and numbers. Southern Selkup **man tonanaRin aBjrgu mel'eb'e** (Bekker, 1995, p. 107). - 'I **those (two people)** food gave'.

Thus using independently the Khanty and Northern Selkup demonstratives are regularly marked by special fixed suffixes. Inflection of the demonstratives rarely takes place in Khanty and Selkup. In Selkup there are no special suffixes for building independent forms of the demonstratives but those which used only independently have longer forms.

#### 2.5 Cases of anaphoric use of the demonstratives

It is worth noting that the demonstratives pronouns in the described languages using independently can be met in anaphoric usage. Demonstratives occur in anaphoric and deictic uses. Surely, anaphoric uses are based on deictic ones (Paducheva, 2001, 133-136). In the deictic use demonstratives focus on a concrete referent, for instance, Vakh Khanty **söyəs wālyal. mā tf'i söyəsne kā klaskənnə onəltəyəlyaləm** (Gulya, 1966, p. 136). - 'It was autumn. In **this autumn** I studied in my first year'. Anaphoric demonstratives function to shift the interlocutors' attention on a referent in previous context. Kazymkiy Northern Khanty **tuxal māt'na tājt, šīt wön xir xurasup** (Kaksin, 2014, p. 183). The example shows that the demonstrative *šīt* is referential with the previous context **tuxal māt'na tājt**. **A sweep-net has a purse; this is**

something like a big sack'. In the following examples from the Vasyugan Khanty dialect the demonstrative *temi* is not referential with a concrete antecedent, but it draws hears to the background of knowledge received from the previous context. *nomiysələm: "mētāli temi os āl pitwəl"* (Honti, 1984, p. 141). – 'I think: nothing of **this** would happen'. *a temi ni mōytək, ni pə' tʃi, ni 'ayərənəŋ, ni sart' ənt' əm wəl' qal* (Filchenko, 2008). – 'But **here**, there was no dace, no rudd, no ide, no pike. Thus, using independently demonstratives can receive additional shadow of meaning.

### 3. Concluding Remarks

The deictic system of demonstratives in Khanty and Selkup dialects includes a different number of terms. It may range from three terms (Northern Khanty dialects) to six ones (Southern Selkup dialects). Demonstratives in described languages express temporal and spatial correlations relative to the deictic center or to the moment of speech. In Southern-Central Selkup the demonstratives indicate three different positions on a distal scale (proximal, medial and distal). In addition to distance and time, contrastive pairs of demonstratives in Eastern Khanty are imported into the additional meaning of visibility. Although, visibility is not inherently deictic feature, it is expressed by the demonstratives. We suppose there are demonstratives with a neutral sense as in Southern-Central Selkup as in Khanty dialects, which express more sense of proximity, but it is not always explicit. The demonstratives in Khanty have dependent or independent forms. The demonstratives that are used independently are morphologically distinguishable. In Southern Selkup there no special morphemes for constructing independent forms, but as a rule the demonstratives consisting of two or more syllables are used independently. More typically the demonstrative are used dependently in modifying function with noun phrase. In this case they carry deictic reference, focusing on a concrete entity. Being used independently the demonstratives are loose from syntactic dependence of head nouns and occur in anaphoric usage.

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