

Associative-verbal network as a reflection of markers of the national identity of Sakha people

Rede associativo-verbal como reflexo de marcadores da identidade nacional do povo Sakha

Alina Petrovna Vasileva 

Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University – Sakha Republic - Russia

Abstract: The paper discusses the national culture Sakha language consciousness presented on the *Yakut Associative dictionary*, whose methodology was based on a mass associative experiment, resulted in an associative-verbal network, allowing not only a person's verbal memory fragment identification, but also a particular culture carriers of the world systemic image revelation. The author analyses the linguistically represented northern ethnos culture traditional values through the prism of socio-cultural and linguistic processes determined by the globalized context. An attempt was made to identify the meanings that an ethnic group representatives put into certain traditional worldview key elements, national identity daily markers of the Sakha consciousness to understand their significant role in certain nation's traditional national identity and culture formation and preservation.

Keywords: language consciousness; national identity and culture; associative-verbal network; worldview; lexicon.

Resumo: O artigo discute a consciência linguística da cultura nacional Sakha apresentada no dicionário Associativo Yakut, cuja metodologia foi baseada em um experimento associativo de massa, resultou em uma rede associativo-verbal, permitindo não apenas a identificação de fragmentos de memória verbal de uma pessoa, mas também portadores da cultura da revelação da imagem sistêmica mundial. O autor analisa os valores tradicionais da cultura etno-norte, representados linguisticamente pelo prisma dos processos socioculturais e linguísticos determinados pelo contexto globalizado. Procurou-se identificar os significados que os representantes de um grupo étnico colocam em certos elementos-chave da visão de mundo tradicional, marcadores diários da identidade nacional da consciência Sakha para entender seu papel significativo na formação e preservação da identidade nacional tradicional de determinada nação e da cultura.

Palavras-chave: consciência da linguagem; identidade e cultura nacional; rede associativo-verbal; visão de mundo; léxico.

Introduction

Today, in the globalization processes context, the problem of preserving people's national identity, its traditions, customs and language is becoming especially important: How are ethnic groups' national and traditional culture specificities being actualized? Which are the ways to preserve the national heritage, serving as a response to modern industrial development megatrends challenges that create threats to a separate ethnic group's existence?

Since language consciousness is determined and conditioned by an ethnos being way in the world, it is extremely useful national culture Sakha language consciousness studying, at the present stage of its society development.

We rely on the definition of language consciousness as "a set of perceptual, conceptual and procedural knowledge of a culture bearer about objects of the real world" (Tarasov, 1996, 7). The processes study occurring in the depths of the language will reveal the people's language consciousness of its national and cultural specificities.

Thus, the work aim is to study the linguistically represented northern ethnos culture, including traditional beliefs, customs, rituals, mythological and epic layers, through the prism of socio-cultural and linguistic processes determined by the globalized context. An important study task is an attempt to identify the meaning that an ethnic group representatives put into certain traditional culture elements in their daily consciousness, determining the people's traditional elements place.

1. Theoretical background: language consciousness, national and cultural features identification

The "Language Consciousness" (LC) concept study and its theoretical foundations in Russian psycholinguistics has been actively conducted since the 90s by leading scientists: A.A. Leontiev (2005), E.F. Tarasov (1996), N.V. Ufimtseva (1996, 2000, 2014, 2020), A.A. Zalevskaya (2007),

Yu.N. Karaulov (2002), I.A. Sternin (2017), V.P. Zinchenko & E.B. Morgunov (1994). Language consciousness finds its expression namely on the lexicon. This phenomenon is considered as a "human information dictionary", which involves the identification of semantic units, with their psychological characteristics, stored in the linguistic memory: their relationship forms the word semantics (Noskova, Akhidzhakova, 2016, 85).

The worldview system is based on a special world picture construction, which is caused by the "set of thought processes" activity, representing the mentality concept (Maslova, 2008, 41). These processes are followed by the lexicon concept, considered by Charles Osgood (1952) as "one of the most important mechanisms for the cognitive processing of information", which contains [...] "a very large set of connections between signs (percept) and codes of semantic features" (Zalevskaya, 2007, p. 241). This is a kind of "dictionary in the head" of an individual, according to N. O. Zolotova (2005, 3), which functions in accordance with the mental development laws of a language and culture native speaker.

It is possible to study these cultural and social systems in different cultures, thereby revealing the language consciousness specifics of a bearer's particular culture, "externalizing the images of consciousness" (Ufimtseva, 2003, 104), through an associative experiment, which consists in identifying stimulus words and registering the first subjects' responses-reactions, which allows

to reveal both the systematic content of the image of consciousness behind the word in a particular culture and the systemic character of the language consciousness of the speakers of one or another culture as a whole and show the uniqueness and originality of the worldview of each culture (Tarasov, 1996, 21).

According to A.A. Leontiev (1977), LC includes "images of consciousness, externalized by linguistic means: individual lexemes, phrases, phraseological units, texts, associative fields and associative thesauri as a set of these fields" (Tarasov, 2000, 3).

Within the framework of this study, we single out such language culture units as key elements of the Sakha traditional worldview: their place relevance belonging to the people's worldview is justified by their significant role for the formation and preservation of the Sakha people's traditional culture.

National identity is defined as "a sense of a special psychological belonging to a single whole - a nation, common for the inhabitants of a certain geographic and political space" (Hingston, 2005, 454). National culture "as a set of traditions, customs, rituals, beliefs, morals, norms and rules of behavior is recorded not only in the results of economic and everyday activities of an ethnos but mainly in its *language*" (Chumakov, 2005, 602). We will also refer to the national identity markers as concepts that form the nation image - *territory, traditions, culture and religion*.

The ethnopedagogy founder, G.N. Volkov, discussing in his work the ethnopedagogy role for forming and upbringing the individual, his national self-awareness, gives a very apt statement: "I have always imagined the three sacred places of the Sakha people in harmonious unity: 1) serge; choron, khomus; 2) olonkho, ysyakh, osuokhai; 3) horse, deer, Siberian crane [...] All of them give direct access to the richest spiritual life of the people - to language, history, traditions" (Volkov, 2004, 195).

These concepts selection, containing the Sakha people's material and spiritual culture origins, reflects on the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) implemented target program, "Revival of Traditional Culture", which presents four directions: "Khomus" (national instrument) - "Ysyakh" (national holiday) - "Olonkho" (heroic epic) - "Itegel" (faith). The sections presuppose the goals setting for the identified phenomena of national culture revival, the cultural events holding among areas. The program goals and objectives form viable vectors: from khomus to violin, from olonkho to olonkho theater, to new opera, from ysyakh to ysyakh olonkho and so on. Time has shown that the breakthrough cultural paradigm "Khomus" - "Ysyakh" - "Olonkho" - "Religion" was in demand and capable of consolidating society around the goals and

objectives implementation. The khomus instrument is one of the Yakut national culture symbols and has received worldwide recognition. The Yakut heroic epic Olonkho was proclaimed by UNESCO, in 2005, as the Oral Intangible Heritage of Humanity Masterpiece. The national holiday Ysyakh was founded honoring the deity of equestrian cattle Wardaakh Diesegei and through a bloodless sacrifice offering to heavenly deities, it is considered the Yakut New Year.

Research into the cultural and linguistic Sakha awareness has recently received numerous scientists's attention, such as Zamorshchikova et al. (2016, 2018), Pax et al. (2019), Sagiyeva et al. (2021), Ufimtseva & Balyasnikova (2019), Ufimtseva (2020) and Dmitryuk & Abramova (2021).

2. Methodological framework

Psycholinguistics concerns the peculiarities study of the "dictionary" functioning in the native language and culture speaker's head and what physiological and psychological development processes determine its work, which can be revealed, among other methods, with an associative experiment help.

The *corpus* to be analysed was taken from Zamorshchikova & Romanenko's *Yakut associative dictionary*, preceeded by the *Associative thesaurus of the Yakut language* (Zamorshchikova, 2014) and also revised by Zamorshchikova & Khokholova (2016) .

Through a mass associative experiment and building on the basis of its results an associative-verbal network, it is possible to identify not only a fragment of a person's verbal memory, but the carriers world systemic image of a particular culture and, thus, their cultural stereotypes system, which reflect the national character peculiarities (Ufimtseva, 2000, 207–219)).

Our analysis materials were obtained, as already mentioned, from the *Yakut associative dictionary* edited by L.S. Zamorshchikova and A. A. Romanenko (<http://adictsakha.nsu.ru/dict>), created on the basis of mass associative experiments, which, according to N.O. Zolotova (2005, 69), allow "to

understand how and what forms this or that culture imposes on the perception of the surrounding reality".

The experiment was carried out according to a free-associative experimental method among students, studying Yakutsk various specialties, from 2005 up to 2010. at the Yakutsk State University (now M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University), in Yakutsk, Neryungri and Mirny and also at the Institute of Physical Culture and Sports, Churapchinsky District.

As a result of the experiments, the *Yakut associative dictionary* includes 140 stimuli and responses from 1220 respondents. The compiled stimuli list was based on the one used for compiling the *Slavic Association Dictionary* (Ufimtseva et al., 2004) based on the material of the Russian, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian languages. In addition, the list was expanded with words of the "northern" theme, relevant to the culture of northern peoples, for example, snow, deer, horse, cow, milk, tundra, sea, alaa, raven, ysyakh (national holiday), names of ethnic groups living in the republic, words related to traditional beliefs, etc. " (Zamorshchikova, 2014).

The thesaurus structure, which is available in electronic form (<http://adictsakha.nsu.ru/dict>), includes Direct (stimuli-reactions) and Reverse (reactions-stimuli) dictionaries. After each dictionary entry (associative field), quantitative information is given in brackets in the following order: total number of respondents, or answers; different reactions number; failures and single reactions number. The Reverse and Direct Dictionary were considered separately.

What is the core of the Language Consciousness? As noted by N.O. Zolotova,

the psycholinguistic criterion for isolating the core is based on the psychological concept of the connections between the units of consciousness in the human psyche, access to which is possible through an associative experiment. The associations obtained in the experiment are designated by a word and reflect the degree of their relevance for a native speaker, which is the basis for distinguishing between the core and the periphery in the space of the mental lexicon (Zolotova, 2005, 87).

According to N.V. Ufimtseva, "the associative field of this or that stimulus word is a fragment of the

image of the world of a particular ethnic group, reflected in the consciousness of the "average" bearer of a particular culture" (Ufimtseva, 1996, 140). This worldview of the bearer of culture is made up of a set of concepts, "clots of culture", which is called the "conceptual sphere".

The concept structure is presented in a circle form, whose center contains the main concept, the concept core (one or another lexeme dictionary meanings), identifying its linguistic expression specificity. Behind the core are the near, distant and extreme peripheries, which include everything brought in by culture, traditions, folk, and personal experience. Periphery comprises subjective experience, various pragmatic components of lexemes, connotations and associations (Maslova, 2008, 42-45).

The language consciousness core structure analysis is based on the method proposed by O.N. Zolotova (2005): Studying native English speakers' lexicon core, she assumes five layers isolation, while organizing its structure, according to the incoming connections number, from 300, 200, 150 to 100, in each layer.

3. Results and discussion

As a result of analysing the reverse *Yakut associative dictionary* (Ufimtseva, 1996) materials, we have identified 263 words with the largest number of connections, which represent the associative network central part (Table 1).

Table 1. Reverse Yakut associative dictionary: associative network central part.

| Center and peripheral areas | Range of reactions | Number of words |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Layer 1 | From 3415 to 300 | 97 |
| Layer 2 | From 299 to 250 | 20 |
| Layer 3 | From 249 to 200 | 35 |
| Layer 4 | From 199 to 150 | 37 |
| Layer 5 | From 149 to 100 | 74 |
| Total number of words | | 263 |

As noted by A.A. Zalevskaya, “the maximum number of connections has words that are of particular importance for the subject as a person and reflects the most capacious concepts, the connection with which has the maximum probability of reproduction” (Zalevskaya, 2005, 112).

Thus, the first 50 words identified as modern Yakut speakers’ language consciousness core or center can be seen on Table 2.

Table 2. Yakut speakers’ language consciousness core.

| | Associate / translation (incoming connections and causing stimuli numbers) | | Associate / translation (incoming connections and causing stimuli numbers) |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | kihi / person (3415, 110) | 26 | as / food (1107, 46) |
| 2 | djol / happiness (1889, 86) | 27 | tyl / tongue (785, 44) |
| 3 | kuus / girl (1015, 86) | 28 | kharchy / money (696, 43) |
| 4 | olokh / life (848, 84) | 29 | kyra / small (616, 43) |
| 5 | uchugei / good (844, 80) | 30 | sylaas / warm (536, 42) |
| 6 | kuhagan / bad (1487, 67) | 31 | sayin / summer (536, 42) |
| 7 | yule / work (530, 65) | 32 | doidu / homeland (610, 41) |
| 8 | syrdyk / light (1214, 61) | 33 | uerekh / study (610, 41) |
| 9 | ulakhan / big (825, 61) | 34 | kuustekh / strong (491, 41) |
| 10 | sanaa / thought (1075, 60) | 35 | kharana / dark (1097, 40) |
| 11 | ueryy / joy (878, 60) | 36 | kharakh / eyes (571, 40) |
| 12 | djon / people (402, 60) | 37 | Sakha / Yakut (553, 40) |
| 13 | ogo / child (1280, 59) | 38 | aimakh / relatives (617, 38) |
| 14 | taptal / love (574, 59) | 39 | mas / wood (423, 38) |
| 15 | djie / house (1179, 58) | 40 | tymnyy / cold (860, 37) |
| 16 | yraas / clean (1023, 58) | 41 | manan / white (850, 37) |
| 17 | kyn / sun (764, 58) | 42 | khallaan / sky (659, 37) |

homeland (611, 41), *kuustekh/strong* (491, 41),

| | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 8 | elbekh / lot (340, 58) | 43 | uot / fire (525, 37) |
| 1 9 | kuus / strength (439, 55) | 44 | akaary / fool, stupid (672, 33) |
| 2 0 | iye / mother (930, 54) | 45 | noruot / people (477, 32) |
| 2 1 | sir / land (702, 53) | 46 | uu / water (1099, 31) |
| 2 2 | kere / beautiful, beauty (702, 53) | 47 | khaar / snow (666, 31) |
| 2 3 | sana / new; speech (592, 53) | 48 | uhun / long (488, 31) |
| 2 4 | uol / boy (530, 49) | 49 | baai / wealth (423, 31) |
| 2 5 | khara / black (1098, 48) | 50 | tabaarys / friend (354, 31) |

Language consciousness most important units are *kihi/person*, *djoll/happiness*, *olokh/life*, *uchugei/good*, *yule/work*, *syrdyk/light*. For example, the associate *djoll/happiness*, reflecting a person's inner state, acted as a reaction for the stimuli *ueryy/joy* 282; *taptall/love* 206; *yule/work* 191; *ogo/child* 170; *olokh/life* 154; *uerekh/study* 150; *djie kergen/family* 120, etc.

In the direct dictionary, the word-stimulus *djoll* caused the following reactions among the respondents: *ueryy/joy* 311; *sorgu/happiness* 92; *taptall/love* 72; *olokh/life* 64; *ogo/child* 49; *sor/misfortune* 42; *kharchy/money* 24 etc.

One with a negative assessment, *kuhagan/bad* (1487, 67), is also in a high position. In the center of the "dictionary in the head", we find reactions *tymnyy/cold* (860, 37), *manan/white* (850, 37), *khaar/snow* (666, 31), the first associations about North Russia, in particular, about foreigners, people of a different national culture, since Yakutia is, indeed, a unique Russia subject regarding its natural and territorial conditions.

Also significant units are *djie/house* (1179,58), *kuus/strength* (439, 55), *tyl/language* (785, 44), *doidu/*

sakha/Yakut, *aimakh/relatives*, indicating Yakut national culture. Historical experience formed the initially Sakha people's steppe culture into a self-sufficient cultural phenomenon - the northern culture. This is an important factor for the ethnic identity preservation, national self-awareness and ethnocultural uniqueness in the globalization modern changing determinants.

Harsh conditions have long endowed Sakha people with resilience, courage, fortitude, love for nature: Unity with nature contributed to ethnos traditional value models and life priorities development preservation. Interaction experience with other ethnic groups presupposed friendliness and openness manifestations, which made it possible mastering foreign lands, acclimatizing and adapting to new northern conditions for the formation of a separate Yakut community and traditional ethnic culture.

As part of our research, we analyzed associative-verbal networks, united by general concepts of a national identity indicator. These are stimulus words related to the *territory, tradition, culture and religion* concepts. Based on these markers, we selected the corresponding stimulus words included in

these markers semantic field, from the direct *Yakut associative dictionary* (Table 3).

in ancient times, mowed hay for livestock, and gathered crops. The stimulus word *alaas* has the following reactions in the Direct Dictionary and stimuli in the Reverse one:

Table 3: Direct *yakut associative dictionary*: stimulus words numbers

| Stimulus / translation | Response /translation (number of the same responses) |
|--|--|
| <i>Sir</i> (earth) | <i>doidu</i> - homeland 262; <i>iye, uot</i> - mother, fire 34; <i>alaas</i> – alas 21; <i>bai</i> - rich 14 |
| <i>Balagan</i> (balagan) | <i>djie, yja</i> - house, month 66; <i>khoton</i> - stable 59; <i>kyemylyok</i> - kamelek 51; <i>bylyrgy</i> - old 48; <i>etekh</i> - 38; <i>alaas</i> 28; <i>bylyr, byleryg dji e</i> – past, old house 27; <i>ynakh</i> - cow 16 |
| <i>Alaas</i> (round hollows with a lake in the middle of the forest) | <i>ot</i> - grass 92; <i>khonuu</i> - field 73; <i>kyen</i> - spacious 65; <i>syhyy</i> - pasture 53; <i>tegyryk</i> - round 47; <i>kyel</i> - lake 46; <i>doidu, sir</i> – homeland, land 39; <i>kyekh</i> - green 38; <i>balagan</i> - balagan 34; <i>ayilga, ulakhan</i> - nature, big 32 |
| <i>Tuundara</i> (tundara) | <i>tymnyy</i> - cold 175; <i>taba</i> – deer 144; <i>khotu</i> - north 67; <i>khaar</i> - snow 61; <i>oyuur</i> – little forest 27; <i>tya</i> - forest 26; <i>Chukchi</i> 24; <i>yraakh</i> - far 20; <i>buurga</i> - storm 19; <i>taiga</i> - taiga 17 |
| <i>Tereebut doidu</i> (homeland) | <i>Sakha sire</i> - Yakutia 111; <i>alaas</i> - alaas 82; <i>Suntaar</i> 57; <i>djie</i> - house 54; <i>sir</i> - land 52; <i>akhtylgan</i> - nostalgia 42; <i>iye sir</i> - native land 36; <i>iye</i> - mother 34; <i>ayilga, Nyurba</i> - nature, Nyurba 22; <i>djiem</i> - my home 19 |
| <i>Tymnyy</i> (cold) | <i>kyhyn</i> - winter 574; <i>khaar</i> - snow 65; <i>sylaas</i> - warm 47; <i>tuman, chyskhaan</i> - fog, storm 15; <i>muus</i> - ice 14 |
| Tradition | <i>ysyakh</i> – national holiday 214; <i>yuges</i> - tradition 73; custom 62; <i>itegel</i> - belief 49; <i>byraahynnyk</i> - holiday 43; culture 35; <i>noruot, sier-tuom</i> - people, rite 27; <i>djie kergen</i> - family 16; <i>tutuhuu</i> - follow 13; <i>ebyuge</i> - ancestor 12 |
| <i>Ysyakh</i> (holiday Ysyakh) | <i>byraahynnyk</i> - holiday 251; <i>sayin</i> - summer 218; <i>koumys</i> - drink koumiss 93; <i>ohuohkai</i> - dance osuokhai 45; <i>salama, yueruu</i> - a cord of horsehair with bundles of horse's mane tied to it and with gifts strung on to spirits, joy 28; <i>Sanga Djyl</i> - New Year 26; <i>serge</i> - hitching post 24; <i>tyusyulge</i> - place for holding Ysyakh 18; <i>tyumsuu</i> - union 16 |
| <i>Sylgy</i> (horse) | <i>at</i> - horse 82; <i>syuehu</i> – livestock 81; <i>ynakh</i> - cow 75; <i>et</i> - meat 63 <i>kyyl</i> - animal 52; <i>siel</i> - mane 39 <i>kulunchuk</i> - foal 25; <i>djehegey</i> - deity Djesegey 23; <i>ubaha</i> - colt 21; <i>bie</i> - mare 19 |
| <i>Ynakh</i> (cow) | <i>syuehu</i> – cattle 385; <i>yuut</i> - milk 237; <i>khoton</i> - stable 127; <i>kyyl, et</i> - animal, meat 32; <i>ogus</i> - bull 21; <i>deryebine</i> - village 20; <i>muos</i> - horns 19; <i>ot</i> - grass 16; <i>as, sylgy</i> - food, horse 15; |
| <i>Aiyy</i> (deity) | <i>tangara</i> - god 106; <i>itegel</i> - belief 66; <i>kuhagan</i> - bad 51; <i>yuchyugei</i> - good 40; <i>syrdyk</i> - light 25; <i>kihite</i> - aiyy people 22; <i>toyon</i> - god 19; <i>kihi, kuo</i> - man, female deity 15; <i>khallaan</i> - sky 13; <i>anjyy, hara</i> - sin, black 12 |
| <i>Kut-syur</i> (soul) | <i>duuha</i> - soul 257; <i>itegel</i> - belief 82; <i>kihi</i> - man 48; <i>aiyy</i> - deity 31; 24; <i>sanaa</i> - thought 20; <i>abaahy, icchi</i> - an evil spirit 14; <i>iye</i> - mother 13; <i>iye kut</i> - mother-soul 11; <i>buor, kuttal</i> - earth-soul, fear 9; <i>maigy, olokh, sakha, tangara, yraas</i> - behavior, life, god, pure 8 |

Some reactions and stimuli interpretations reflected on the Sakha people's worldview deserve comments.

Territory: Yakutia territory is represented by different landscapes: there is taiga, tundra, steppes, mountains, rivers, lakes. Each landscape dictates a specific cultural context. The territory where the Sakha ethnos lives, as a marker of national identity, includes *alaas* - a round basin with a lake where the Sakha lived

Table 4: alaas: Reactions in the Direct Dictionary and stimuli in the Reverse one.

| Direct Dictionary Reactions / translation (same reactions numbers) | Reverse Dictionary Stimuli / translation (same reactions numbers) |
|---|---|
| <i>Ot</i> (grass) 92; <i>Khonuu</i> (field) 73; <i>Kien</i> (spacious) 65; <i>Syhyy</i> (pasture) 53; <i>Tegyuryuk</i> (round) 47; <i>Kyuel</i> (lake) 46; <i>Doidu, sir</i> (homeland, land) 39; <i>Kyuekh</i> (green) 38; <i>Balagan</i> (house) 34; <i>Ayilga, ulakhan</i> (nature, big) 32 | <i>Tereebut doidu</i> (homeland) 82; <i>Balagan</i> (house) 28; <i>Ot kyuege</i> (green) 25; <i>Sir</i> (land) 21; <i>Oyuur</i> (little forest) 18; <i>Teryut, tuundara</i> (ancestor, tundra) 7; <i>Kenyul, sylgy, khaya</i> (freedom, horse, hill) 6; <i>Yraas</i> (pure) 5; <i>Alaas, deryebine, kut-syr, ulakhan, ynakh</i> (alas, village, soul, big, cow) 3 |

Alaas is the sacred landscape center, since the natural alaas landscape is decisive for cattle breeding conducting, especially because Sakha people live in the Central Yakut plain (Prokofyeva, 2014, 39). The *tegyuryuk*/round reaction in traditional culture symbolizes unity, which is reflected in the national dance *osuokhai*, danced in a circle, holding hands (unity idea with nature and with space). Also the Sakha people's Yakut sandaly traditional table is round, which was made from boards or birch bark.

Most of the republic territory is located on permafrost, which allows us to speak about a unique cultural, not only a geographical phenomenon in an extremely cold climate, for peoples self-identification, living in Yakutia, exemplified by the most frequent reactions and stimuli to the word *tymnyy* (cold):

Table 5. Most frequent reactions and stimuli to the word *tymnyy* (cold).

| Direct Dictionary Reactions / translation (same reactions numbers) | Reverse Dictionary Stimuli / translation (same stimuli numbers) |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Kyhyn</i> (winter) 574; <i>Khaar</i> (snow) 65; <i>Sylaas</i> (warm) 47; <i>Tuman, Chyskhaan</i> (fog, storm) 15; <i>Muus</i> (ice) 14</p> | <p><i>Tyal</i> (wind) 259; <i>Muus, tuundara</i> (ice, tundra) 182; <i>Khaar</i> (snow) 75; <i>Sarsyarda</i> (morning) 25; <i>Tuun</i> (night) 16; <i>Uu</i> (water) 13; <i>Muora</i> (sea) 10; <i>Kiehe</i> (evening) 9; <i>Khaya, chukcha</i> (hill, chukchi) 8; <i>Erys, taba</i> (river, deer) 6; <i>Sylgy</i> (horse) 5;</p> |

Cold in itself is the first association about Russia, in particular about the North among foreigners, people of a different national culture. Yakutia is a constituent entity of Russia, which, in terms of its natural and territorial conditions, has no analogues on the planet, primarily due to the long harsh winter continental climate and short sultry summer periods. People were able to adapt, support each other and accumulate a unique experience while farming under extreme climatic North conditions of the, applying the first technologies for housing construction on permafrost.

Sakha people culture, originally a steppe, in the course of its historical experience in these harsh lands, crystallized into a special, unlike anything, self-sufficient cultural phenomenon - the northern culture. This is the first circumstance that guarantees the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)

cultural identity preservation albeit all powerful invasions of globalization processes. Over the centuries, northern culture has been building up its identity receiving the cultural influences from both European and Asian civilizations, without losing its northern essence.

One of the original elements of Sakha people's culture is the ritual event Ysyakh. The reactions and stimuli to the word *ysyakh* are as follows:

Table 6: Reactions and stimuli to the word *ysyakh*.

| Direct Dictionary Reactions / translation (same reactions numbers) | Reverse Dictionary Stimuli / translation (same stimuli numbers) |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Byraahynnyk</i> (holiday) 251;</p> <p><i>Sayin</i> (summer) 218;</p> <p><i>Koumys</i> (drink koumis) 93;</p> <p><i>Ohuohkai</i> (dance osuokhai) 45;</p> <p><i>Salama, yueruu</i> (a cord of horsehair with bundles of horse's mane tied to it and with gifts strung on to spirits, joy) 28;</p> <p><i>Sanga Djyl</i> (New Year) 26;</p> <p><i>Serge</i> (horse standing) 24;</p> | <p><i>Traditsia</i> (tradition) 225;</p> <p><i>Sakha 11</i>;</p> <p><i>Ulakhan</i> (big) 5;</p> <p><i>Alaas, Omuk, Noruot</i> (alas, nation, people) 4;</p> <p><i>Ot kyuege</i> (green) 2;</p> <p><i>Aiyy, balagan, kelyuene, kengyul, kersyuhyu, kutsyr, sylgy, yueryu, yyt, yhyakh</i> (deity, house, generation, freedom, meeting, soul, horse, joy, milk, ysyakh) 1;</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><i>Tyusyulge</i> (place for holding Ysyakh) 18;</p> <p><i>Tyumsuu</i> (union) 16;</p> | |
|--|--|

This holiday was founded to honor the equestrian cattle deity and it is considered the Yakut New Year. *Ysyakh* acquired a national holiday state status. This entailed unprecedented creative energy for the thorough all the national holiday components: blessing rituals revival: national dress, cuisine, dishes, ritual complexes, etc. The cultural revival instantly engulfed the entire republic. According to E.N. Romanova, the traditional holiday of the Sakha *Ysyakh* people is

a reflection of the mentality of the people developed by generations, requiring the most careful attitude towards itself", the circle of ideas about the holiday includes customs and rituals, according to which today we can make a picture of the religious system our ancestors, which is a kind of formula "I - Soul - World (Romanova, 1994, 4).

A careful attitude towards traditions, achieving harmony with nature, contributes to the knowledge and preservation of culture.

The modern Sakha people's main management traditional form is cattle breeding. Its basic cultural element is the stimulus word *sylgy* (horse) and its reactions.

Table 7: Stimulus words sygy (horse) and its reactions

| Direct Dictionary Reactions / translation (same reactions numbers) | Reverse Dictionary Stimuli / translation (same stimuli numbers) |
|---|--|
| <i>At</i> (horse) 82; <i>Syuehu</i> (livestock) 81; <i>Ynakh</i> (cow) 75; <i>Et</i> (meat) 63; <i>Kyyl</i> (animal) 52; <i>Siel</i> (mane) 39 <i>Kulunchuk</i> (foal) 25; <i>Djehegey</i> (deity Djesegey) 23; <i>Ubaha</i> (colt) 21; <i>Bie</i> (mare) 19 | <i>Ynakh</i> (cow) 15; <i>Taba</i> (deer) 5; <i>Sylgy</i> (horse) 3; <i>Mangan</i> (white) 2; <i>Alaas, aiyy, sytuer, uot, khara, yhyakh</i> (alaas, deity, lose, fire, black, holiday Ysyakh) 1 |

All associations have a positive connotation and they reflect the stable connections of concepts in everyday consciousness. The "sygy/horse" concept representation in the the Sakha language speakers' language consciousness is a rich material for the deep meaning and characteristics study of the horse breeding tradition belonging to the people's material and spiritual culture. The horse cult reflection on the Sakha worldview, since ancient times, is connected, firstly, with the fact that horses were quite important not only for their economy, culture and everyday life, but also they played a great role inside Sakha people's spiritual life. It is a sacred animal for Sakha people

(Vasileva, 2013). One of the main gods in the pre-Christian religion of the Sakha was called "*Uordaakh Djesegey*", horses patron saint, to whom sacrifices were made during the *Ysyakh* celebration (Ksenofontov, 1977).

The next examined element is *kut-syur* reactions and stimuli.

Table 8: Religion: kut-syur reactions and stimuli

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Duuha</i> (soul) 257; <i>Itegel</i> (belief) 82; <i>Kihi</i> (man) 48; <i>Aiyy</i> (deity) 31; <i>Sanaa</i> (thought) 20; <i>Abaahy, icchi</i> (evil spirit) 14; <i>Iye</i> (mother) 13; <i>Iye kut</i> (mother-soul) 11; <i>Buor, kuttal</i> (earth-soul, fear) 9; <i>Maigy, olokh, sakha, tangara, yraas</i> (behavior, life, god, pure) 8 | <i>Buor</i> (ground) 113; <i>Duuha</i> (soul) 96; <i>Iye</i> (mother) 21; <i>Aiyy, kut-syur, sir</i> (deity, soul, ground) 5; <i>Kihi, kuhagan</i> (man, bad) 2 |
|--|---|

The *kut* concept is defined as "the soul, the essence of a thing; vitality" (Pekarsky, 1959, Vol. II). In Sakha mythology, each person contains three souls: *iyekut* (mother-soul), developed inside the mother's womb, *buorkut* (earth-soul) and *salgynkut* (air-soul), penetrated into the child at birth (Kulakovsky, 1979). After death, deities take away the mother-soul from the person, the earth-soul turns into earth, the air-soul, into air. The ratio of the three concepts *kut* means full value, human existence integrity. Man's belief in his divine origin, his *kut-soul* trinity awareness is associated with the man and nature unity concept (Utkin, 1998, 28). *Syur*

was also considered a divine gift to man from *Uluu Toion*, the upper *abaasy* demons' patron saint. Spirits could not eat *syur*, since he was considered immortal (Troshchansky, 2012, 221). According to Sakha mythological ideas, all the *kut* three elements constituted a person's inner state and *sura* is his psyche indicator, expressed through his vitality (Utkin, 1998, 30).

Conclusions

The basic elements preservation, in the Sakha language consciousness core, reflects that the northern culture, for many centuries, has been building up its national identity with the cultural trends of both European and Asian civilizations, without losing its northern essence.

The person's ideas about the world form a world picture, i.e., a special way of perceiving the world, which develops depending upon the characteristics of the individual consciousness (Ufimtseva and Tarasov, 2009) picture functioning and upon the individual's worldview system. The reverse dictionary analysis, which reflects the reactions to various stimulus words, "makes it possible to observe the systemic nature of the image of the world of the average bearer of culture through the analysis of the core of the associative-verbal network" (Ufimtseva, 2011, 100).

The region natural conditions and the people's historical traditions determine the ethnocultural specificity, which is in constant motion, but, at the same time, retains the fundamental elements. Language consciousness studies with associative dictionaries help make it possible to reveal the national-cultural specifics consciousness and the ethnos uniqueness, through fixations on a dictionary, which will preserve these ethnic mentality indicators, transmitting them to future generations (Zamorshchikova, 2010, 438).

"A developed culture with stable progressive traditions not only adequately represents the mentality of existence, but also organically merges into the space of universal human culture" (Utkin, 1998, 19). To date, Yakutia peoples have not lost their culture uniqueness: an active state policy is being

implemented to preserve the language, the upbringing and education systems and the national culture revival. The republic cultural policy is aimed at man and culture identity preservation, strengthening the nation cultural code.

Thus, from our research, you can deprehend that the national identity category structure is built with the following components: national self-identification, historical memory and the people's traditions revival. Acknowledgments: The research was funded by the grant No. 075-15-2021-616 from the Russia Government for the project «Сохранение языкового и культурного разнообразия и устойчивое развитие Арктики и Субарктики Российской Федерации» ["Preservation of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development of the Arctic and Subarctic of the Russian Federation"].

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