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**SAAMI DICTIONARY-MAKING:
PRESERVING INDIGENOUS FINNO-UGRIC LANGUAGES
OF THE KOLA PENINSULA**

Abstract. The Kildin Saami language now belongs to the group of critically endangered languages. The functioning of the Kildin Saami language is limited to the personal sphere. Only an “external” approach can be used to preserve the Kildin Saami language. One of such “external” approaches is Kola Saami lexicography the main purpose of which is the preservation of the unique aspects of the culture and language of an indigenous people. The article presents the results of my research and lexicographical work — dictionaries of the Saami spiritual culture lexis and of the Saami traditional trades and husbandry lexis.

Keywords: Kola Saami dictionaries, lexicographical work, culture-bound lexemes, indigenous people.

Introduction

The Eastern Saami languages spoken in Russia can be divided into two groups: the mainland group (Skolt Saami, Akkala Saami) and the peninsula group (Kildin Saami, Ter Saami) (Sammallahti 1998 : 26). The Kildin Saami language has the greatest number of speakers and serves as the basis for the Kola Saami alphabet.

According to current research on the local sociolinguistic situation (Ivanishcheva 2014), the Kola Saami languages are critically endangered. The reasons for this are the loss of traditional Saami trades and ways of life, the dispersion of the Saami, the lack of education, there being no demand for Saamis to use the Kola Saami languages among themselves.

When compared to the situation of other indigenous minority languages in northern Russia, that of the Kola Saami languages is particular. On the one hand, it is quite common to hear the statement that the Kola Saami languages are dying. On the other hand, there is a real revival of ethnic consciousness and this gives the Kola Saamis confidence that a movement to revitalize the Kola Saami languages will lead to some notable results. According to the 2010 census (Всероссийская перепись населения 2010), 1,771 Saamis live in Russia (urban population 787, rural population 984), of which 1,599 live in the Murmansk region. Despite administrative measures, a serious legal base, and a system of cooperation between public organizations and the authorities that has been developed, the results of policies related to the Kola Saami languages have been quite insufficient. In my opinion, the main point that should be taken into account in a policy aimed at preserving and reviving the Kola Saami languages is the need to change the status of the language. This will increase the number of people studying the language, and will

raise their motivation to do so. The factors that create the status for a language are its function, how it is used in society, and so on. These become real measures in the eyes of the Saami public and the researchers dealing with the problems of the Kola Saami languages. It is necessary to expand the domestic use of the Kola Saami languages by means of creating real functional language groups, to create workplaces where the Kola Saami languages are used, and to increase the use of the Kola Saami languages in the mass media. These measures have, of course, to be carried out in parallel with a process of training people in the Kola Saami languages. Thus the state too has to accept additional obligations.

The paper consists of two sections. The first section introduces the contemporary Kola Saami bilingual lexicography. The second section presents the results of my own research and lexicographical work – the dictionaries of Saami spiritual culture and of Saami traditional trades and husbandry (Иванищева, Бакула 2013; Иванищева, Эрштадт 2014).

1.2. Research subject and approaches

In this article I will examine the contemporary situation that has evolved alongside the Kola Saami lexicography. I emphasize the importance of representing the culture of indigenous people in Kola Saami dictionaries. I have tried to show that, in connection with the languages of indigenous minorities (dying languages), an orientation towards the cumulative language function is a more useful perspective than a focus on the communicative function. The dictionaries discussed bring to the forefront the epistemological function of a dictionary due to the specificity of their users who are bearers of the Saami culture but have no command of the Saami language presented in the dictionary. I am convinced that modern Kola Saami lexicography should be studied from the following perspective: presence or absence of cultural elements in a dictionary. The conviction is based on the understanding that cultural information related to realia is an absolutely necessary part of the Kola Saami dictionary definition. When taking into account the cultural value of a feature, the description of a piece of realia in a dictionary should contain the following elements: a) attributes (appearance, components, traditions); b) estimation (positive or negative); c) historical importance (time of usage, actions); d) social status (functions); e) function (purpose, role); f) popularity or unpopularity of an element of realia; g) symbolic meaning.

Resources and techniques

The methodological basis of this research is the anthropocentric approach (Караулов 2002; Кубрякова 1995; Степанов 2001a) and the notion of anthropocentric lexicography (Морковкин 1990) with its orientation towards user interests (Берков 2004). One of the areas of interest for contemporary practical lexicography is orientation towards the user of the dictionary, which is theoretically based on addressing his cognitive base. The research methods used in the present work are analysis of definitions and the descriptive method.

The research also used some methods of sociolinguistics, such as field study, questionnaires, written surveys and interviews, an expert survey, and a biographical approach (a case study used to examine contemporary real life). In my research I also used the Saami archives and libraries of the Murmansk region.

1. Contemporary Kola Saami lexicography: Dictionaries of the language

Contemporary Kola Saami lexicography is represented by three bilingual dictionaries: two Saami-Russian dictionaries (СРС 1985; Антонова 2014), and a Saami-Russian and Russian-Saami dictionary (Керт 1986). There is also a dictionary developed by the

Saami Language Technology Centre, Giellatekno, at the University of Tromsø, Norway (gtweb.uit.no/webdict/) and the online Saami dictionary (<http://slovvari.saami.su/elektronnyj-saamskij-slovar-prilozhenie.html> which is based on the dictionaries CPC and Kept 1986).

All those dictionaries are based on the Kildin Saami language, which is the basis of written Kola Saami languages, but differ in their purpose, the volume and content of their glossary, and the presence or absence of cultural commentary, as well as in the content of cultural commentary, if available.

The dictionary CPC, which reflects the state of the Kildin Saami language in the mid-1980s, contains 8,000 entries and is intended for specialists in Finno-Ugric languages and ethnography as well as for others interested in Saami languages. It was created by a team of authors who were native speakers of the Kildin Saami language, and was published by the academic publishing house Russkij jazyk. This was the first dictionary and contains the most 'basic vocabulary' of the language. This vocabulary is considered by the authors to be the basis of a standard Kola Saami language. That is why this dictionary could be regarded as an academic effort.

The dictionary by G. Kert (Kept 1986) contains about 4,000 entries and is intended for primary school children. The author's aim is that students using this learner's translation dictionary should successfully master both the native (Kola Saami) and Russian languages. Kert's dictionary is pedagogical and represents the vocabulary used in textbooks for primary schools that existed in the mid-1980s.

The dictionary CPC has a certain number of words borrowed from or that have come via Russian, but Kert's dictionary, according to the author, only includes those which are political terms and some basic vocabulary for educational purposes.

Antonova's dictionary (Антонова 2014) contains about 7,500 entries and is intended for schoolteachers and specialists in Saami and other Finno-Ugric languages. It was created as a result of her translation of Astrid Lindgren's book "Pippi Longstocking" into the Kildin Saami language. According to the introduction to the dictionary, written by E. Scheller, it is an additional tool for reading "Търъенч Кукесъсххк" ("Pippi Longstocking" in Kildin Saami) and the initial plan was to create a simple list of words to support the reading of this book. But in the process of writing, the concept of the dictionary was changed and thus the author decided to compile a more extensive vocabulary (Антонова 2014 : 5). Therefore the dictionary contains not only the vocabulary necessary to read "Pippi Longstocking" but also a wider group of words — spoken language and words that reflect the traditional material and spiritual life of the Kola Saami in the mid-2010s.

Such dictionaries, in our opinion, should include not only linguistic, but also cultural information, in order to perform their function as required by science and in terms of modern communication. This position is not new.

The theory and practice of teaching a foreign language has long established the need to consider the cultural factors of a person speaking the foreign language. As early as 1964 Lado mentioned the need for a constant comparison of a foreign language and culture with those of the language learners, and gave examples of the results of such a comparison between the form and content of the relevant languages (in particular their lexical structures) and cultures, using the parameters of form, meaning, and distribution (Lado 1964 : 85, 87).

The issue of the appropriate amount of cultural connotation in a bilingual dictionary has been repeatedly brought up by linguists (see Svensén 1987; Берков 2004). Берков mentions that all the more-or-less serious dictionaries include some linguistic and cultural knowledge, but that representation of this knowledge is not systematic. Some aspects of culture should be commented on in full rather than only in regard to their differences in different cultures (Берков 2004 : 162—171).

Reflection of culture in a bilingual dictionary is vital. The cultural elements that should certainly be present in a bilingual dictionary include artifacts, social life,

history specific to a certain culture, the so-called culture-bound words requiring cultural commentary because of the denotatum (reference).

The introductions to the dictionaries note that the translation of some Kola Saami words could be augmented by explanations to clarify the meaning of the word, or restrict its use, especially if the equivalent is rare in Russian literary language (CPC 10; Кефт 1986 : 8).

Analysis of those three bilingual dictionaries of the Kildin Saami language shows that the most detailed cultural comments are presented in CPC. In the dictionaries by Kert and Antonova the number of cultural comments is much smaller and they are not as detailed. In Antonova's dictionary many of the realia have definitions in the form of descriptive translations, for example: *вѳсснэдрт* 'the lower part of the traditional Kola Saami travel bag' (АНТОНОВА 2014 : 48); *кӱллк* 'skiing, padded by kamys (koyba)' (АНТОНОВА 2014 : 87).

The comments presented in brackets in CPC deal with the following aspects of meaning: a) attributes (appearance, components, traditions); b) functions (purpose, role); c) symbols.

1. Attributes may give details of appearance, components, or traditions. In certain cases a dictionary article provides a detailed comment on the appearance of realia. E.g.: *роавв* 'a blanket of reindeer skin (sewn of woolly reindeer skins with hair inside; the bottom part is a pocket of about 50 cm where 2 or 3 persons can put their feet; the top is bell-shaped, body sides are tucked up in it)' (CPC 293); *тӱссэм* 'a belt (for men, made of yuft or cowhide, 10 cm wide, clasped by ornamented metal buckles. The celebratory belt is decorated by an ornament of metal or bone; on the left side a sheath is attached with chains to the belt, on the right it has a leather sack for papers, etc.)' (CPC 346); *тӱһһ* 'a sheath (a case for the hunting knife, usually hollowed out from a whole piece of birch and covered with yuft, can be made of two halves sewn together using reindeer tendons; fastened to a leather belt by means of chains)' (CPC 355).

More often the comments describe certain components of realia. E.g.: *бѳрка* 'felt boots with leather soles (knee-high, female or children's, made of koyba; decorated on seams with coloured cloth, the front part is decorated by ornamented koyba of a contrasting colour, e.g., ornamented with reindeer heads with antlers)' (CPC 31–32); *вӱгк* 'a pack-saddle, sabretache (a crossbeam with bottom ends fixed by belts under the reindeer's abdomen and with a load suspended from its top end)' (CPC 32); *вагкхӱсс* 'a bow-shaped scraper for the dressing of small skins (on two perpendicular boards; the horizontal board is used for seating)' (CPC 33); *воаллк* 'a long board used for fishing (a tool for ice fishing, a long narrow board with a pointed end and a hole at the other end for net ropes; the board with the net is extended from ice hole to ice hole)' (CPC 48).

In certain cases the information is very important for the life of northern people (*вѳбресъ* 'a three-year-old male deer (at this age they begin to be trained for team driving)' (CPC 52)) and in some cases a recipe is provided (*каниѳи* 'a dish prepared of black crowberries with reindeer fat; hot reindeer fat is poured over cold crowberries, each berry is covered by fat)' (CPC 99)).

Sometimes attributes express the dynamics of the culture: *ӱввъл* 'a crossbeam with hooks for suspension of teapots or pots over a fire; sometimes a stick with a movable knot joined to the crossbeam by means of a rope loop was used; now metal hooks on chains are used, up to three hooks are suspended over the fire' (CPC 19).

2. Function (purpose, role). In the overwhelming majority of cases the function of a piece of realia (its purpose, role) depends on the conditions of the people's life. In order to survive in severe conditions it is important to indicate the object's purpose. For example: *ӱллт* 'a doe (a female reindeer from 4 to 8–10 years; the strongest and wisest becomes the herd leader)' (CPC 23); *вѳгкшэ* 'with thick fur

(e.g., a reindeer) [---] (reindeers slaughtered in winter have thick fur, their pelt is used to make footwear, blankets, etc.; fells of reindeers slaughtered in autumn are used for making overcoats)' (CPC 53); *тāбнь* 'a pole, a pyramid (of about 1.5 m, installed at tops of tundra hills for orientation)' (CPC 340).

3. Symbols. When referring to symbols of realia in this article we mean certain facts known to every native speaker and connected to the role of the realia in the culture. Knowledge of such facts helps individuals to feel a part of the ethnos, enabling them to define their behaviour (in this case language behaviour) against the particular standards used within this ethnos, its verbal and behavioural clichés.

The status of a piece of realia in a given culture is influenced by several factors such as the role of the realia (e.g. in rituals, ceremonies, or in the country and life of the people) and its traditional understanding (in images in folklore and literature, clichés, images of everyday life, official and informal symbols of the country etc.). A symbol always brings a traditional image to the mind of a native speaker, a typical situation connected with religious, mythological, or traditional ideas. Therefore the indication of realia symbols in a bilingual dictionary should include the following: a) religious and mystical symbols; b) traditional and everyday life symbols; c) political symbols.

Such information will be country-specific as it represents associations typical of this culture and helps native speakers to understand it.

Different groups of objects can have specific symbols. As expected, the analysis of the dictionary showed that, first of all, it is natural phenomena that possess symbolic connotations (e.g. *иммель лоанньт* 'dipper (literally, a divine bird; according to Saami beliefs this bird brought to God a blade of grass that produced the Earth)' (CPC 91)). Some generalizations are a result of centuries-old life experience (e.g.: *кйлле* 'talkative, garrulous'; *кйлле парна кугкь ев ёль* 'children who think like adults don't live a long life (according to the Saami beliefs that children who grow up intellectually don't live a long life)' (CPC 109)). Another class of references worthy of inclusion are those to the religious and mythological ideas of the Saami people (e.g. *сāнньт* 'spell, word'; *соанэтьт вуэссьтэ* 'to buy a spell (according to the Saami beliefs a spell will not be valid unless you pay for it)' (CPC 315)).

In general we consider the dictionary CPC to be a very successful representation of the realia of Saami life (both words and concepts). It describes peculiarities of the local material culture, for example: fur clothes for protection from bitter frosts, loads of meat as a result of hunting; movable houses suitable for a nomadic life; fishery; and reindeer breeding (see Черняков 1998 : 14).

The comments in brackets sometimes include fundamentally important cultural information. In our opinion, this information is not supplementary but essential: *лоаййт* 'a place in a tent of skin and bark for sleeping (lateral side)' (CPC 162); *лўппс* 'a place in a tent of skin and bark for food and dishes (in the part opposite the door)' (CPC 168).

Spatial characteristics (width, depth, floor to ceiling height, length) as well as size are important for the Saami people. For example: *нуррк* 'the bottom part of a branched reindeer antler' (CPC 272); *тўлльй* 'a skin (of a large animal)' (CPC 362); *куэшишь* 'a skin of a small animal' (CPC 138); *нāхкь* 'a skin with short sleek fur' (CPC 205); *няввь* 'long fur on the reindeer neck' (CPC 224); *пижь* 'a short tail (of a deer, hare, sheep, etc.)' (CPC 255); *рēјјм* 'the top part of a net (a thick rope with loops and the net to it)' (CPC 292); *рēсс* 'cell width of the top net row' (CPC 292); *мāјјк* 'a large whitefish' (CPC 180).

However, from the lexicographic point of view, some comments are not very clear. In this respect, it is necessary to keep in mind that the explanations (comments) are provided for a non-native speaker and should therefore be focused on the needs of the people of another culture (material and spiritual). Therefore it is not clear, for example, why the comment 'untrained reindeer are sent to slaughter' has been

added to the word *ēppryk* 'a male reindeer, a stag (from 5 to 12–15 years; untrained reindeer are sent to slaughter)' (CPC 81). According to ethnographic researchers of the Saami people trained stags were used for any kind of activity and work. The tame or island reindeer used for riding with a load pack or in a team (Прибалтийско-финское языкознание 2003 : 69) were the most trained stags.

A person not aware of the peculiarities of cloudberry ripening (inhabitants of the northern regions of Russia who are native speakers of Russian are aware of it all right) face difficulties in understanding the comment added to *чоарэх* ('an unripe berry, usually about cloudberry of red colour') (CPC 398). A cloudberry is a berry that is red when unripe, orange and yellow when ripe.

However, the comment in brackets to the word *вāльм* ('a shoulder (of a reindeer)') seems to be important (CPC 35).

2. A new view of Kola Saami lexicography: cultural dictionaries

2.1. Why do we need a new type of Kola Saami dictionary?

To answer this question we need to consider what kind of a dictionary is required by the user and this is sometimes connected with the types of query they make (see also Zgusta 1971 : 304).

In our view, for the Saami ethnic group, two types of dictionaries are of most relevance: bilingual and linguo-culturological.

Bilingual dictionaries are needed by the Kola Saamis because few Saamis speak their own language; they need training in the language and that is why they need bilingual dictionaries, including a pedagogical one. As Mosel (2011 : 9) observes, 'the traditional division of dictionaries into monolingual and bilingual dictionaries does not need to be strictly observed in dictionaries of endangered languages because they are not primarily used for translation. According to Berkov (Берков 2004 : 4), bilingual dictionaries are also textbooks of a foreign language. We refer to them as dictionaries of language.

Besides that, language reflects the culture of a speech community and preserves components of the traditional culture that carry the essence of the life of the Saami ethnos. That is why it is very important to preserve a unique vocabulary together with its unique cultural information. A bilingual dictionary is not sufficient for this; a linguo-culturological one is needed. We refer to them as dictionaries of culture.

The importance of preserving the language and culture of indigenous peoples thus produces the need for two types of dictionaries: bilingual and linguo-culturological (i.e. dictionaries of the Kola Saami language and dictionaries of the Kola Saami culture), but the linguo-culturological one is more important in my view. Another reason to have linguo-culturological dictionaries for Kola Saami lexicography is that such dictionaries serve as a resource for research and as a repository for language, supporting revitalisation and teaching in the speech community (see Mosel 2011 : 2).

2.2. What is a linguo-culturological dictionary?

There is no single understanding of the term linguo-culturological dictionary in lexicography.

There is a dictionary type called a cultural dictionary. This is a general term for reference works which are both the result of cultural practice and agents of its promotion (Hartmann, James 1998 : 50). Hartmann and James, the authors of the "Dictionary of Lexicography", have a wide understanding of the term *culturological dictionary*. In their opinion, culturological dictionaries include the "Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture" which is intended to help students

of English to understand the words and phrases that make up the complex fabric of English-speaking life and culture (Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture 1992 : F 7). To this effect the body of each entry includes cultural notes, which give detailed information about the associations that words have for native speakers of English (Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture 1992 : F 27). This is, consequently, a culturological dictionary of the country-specific type intended for non-native speakers (language learners).

At the same time, "Cultural Literacy. What Every American Needs to Know" (Hirsch, Kett, Trefil 1988) is also classified as culturological. It is based on the principle of being usable by an American with limited cultural literacy and provides information about realia of different countries. It is a culturological dictionary of the encyclopaedic type, intended for speakers of the language and records all the information required of a person to be considered conversant with the culture of America.

The term *linguo-culturological dictionary*, which has appeared lately in Russian lexicography, differs slightly in content from the term *culturological dictionary*. While culturological dictionaries mean dictionaries and reference books dealing with specific phenomena of material and spiritual culture as well as corresponding realia and concepts seen in development and change (Шимчук 2003 : 198), then *linguo-culturological dictionaries* are defined as a result of integration of knowledge from various fields of humanities, presenting content related to cultural phenomena in a lexicographical form. The importance of encyclopaedic information is emphasized in these dictionaries, along with the identification of the semantic potential of a word, how it accumulates cultural weight. Culturological dictionaries vary in form and include both reference books prepared by the historians and ethnographers of the nineteenth century and dictionaries of everyday life and culture compiled today. In Russian linguistics, *linguo-culturological dictionaries* are limited to the publications of contemporary authors (e.g. Склярёвская 2000; Степанов 2001б; Руднев 2003).

2.3. The Kola Saami *linguo-culturological dictionaries*: theory and practice of dictionary-making

2.3.1 Selection of material for definition

The gathering of material for the dictionaries of the Kola Saami language is complicated by several linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

The extralinguistic factors include the ageing of the native speakers of the Kola Saami language and the limited quantity of ethnographic materials and written sources available. The latter is connected with the history of the Kola Saami people and the Kola Saami alphabet.

The extralinguistic factors include the existence of a large number of dialects and sub-dialects of the Kola Saami language, which can be considered Kola Saami languages, and thus a large number of spelling and graphical options. In our fieldwork we met indigenous interviewees who felt very embarrassed when they were asked about a word they had forgotten or could not write down.

One of the main problems when compiling dictionaries for the Kola Saami languages is the lack of a standardized orthography. As the standardization of the orthography is still under discussion, it can be difficult to choose a spelling. In the case of the Kola Saami languages it is the subject of an endless debate among linguists and the Saami community. The Kildin Saami language on which the Kola Saami alphabet is based has two orthographies. One of them was created by Kert and is used in his dictionary (Керт 1986), while the other — a group initiative — was used in CPC 1985. Alternative spellings cannot be avoided and this can make it difficult to find a word in the Kola Saami bilingual dictionaries (see also Керт 2009 : 14–19).

The selection of cultural information for Kola Saami linguo-culturological dictionaries should be guided by a cognitive principle: orientation towards the knowledge of a native speaker.

Definitions in the dictionaries of languages of small-numbered indigenous peoples reflect an ordinary level of cognition, based on direct personal experience. This kind of cognition is therefore more individualized than scientific cognition. But such an approach has advantages in terms of the variety of solutions and breadth of search. The building of a dictionary of the Kola Saami language indeed reflects such an experience: in the absence of a live speaking environment, with restraints on the use of the language in private and public life, the senior age of active speakers, and the speakers being separated from the language habitat — their material and spiritual culture — it is natural to turn to the cognitive, not to the communicative essence of the background knowledge, and typical ways of finding out the background knowledge of a language speaker (interviews, analysis of definitions in various types of dictionaries and the study of texts of fiction and journalism) cannot be used in full. In such a situation, a researcher should record all the knowledge of a language speaker, making no distinction between personal and social. The language speaker relating his personal experience will present the typical and usual, because this is the only record of the social environment in which the informant grew up.

2.3.2. The structure of the dictionary

The Saami Language Lab of the Murmansk State Humanities University (Murmansk, Russia) has published the dictionaries of the Saami spiritual culture lexis (Иванищева, Бакула 2013) and the Saami traditional trades and husbandry lexis (Иванищева, Эрштадт 2014).

Our experience has shown that dictionaries of a dying language have their own specificity which is due to their users, word lists and definitions.

These dictionaries of spiritual and material culture fulfil the primary task of our research — recording the present state of the Saami language in the speech community. As such, the dictionaries exercise a very important function — preservation of traditional worldview components that carry the essence of the life of a northern ethnos. The way in which small-numbered indigenous peoples live is determined mainly by three factors: natural conditions, type of displacement, and type of economy, the latter two of which define the type of culture. Their knowledge reflects a more archaic, fundamental attitude of humanity to the world, an attitude from the viewpoint of the sense and utilitarian values of folk culture.

Our dictionaries look like bilingual dictionaries; that is, for each original word in the Saami language they contain a dictionary entry with a translated equivalent, which is most often a description. But the main attention in the dictionaries is paid not to the grammatical characteristics of a word but to culturological commentary, which reflects the background knowledge of a speaker. For example: "*вуэннич куск кьппта* 'a piece of boiled meat'. Just like ancient Lappish women, in the 19th century the Saami habituated babies to reindeer meat by placing a piece of meat onto the lips of a baby so that the baby could suck the meat juice out. Sometimes such training started half a year after a baby's birth, sometimes later (Харузин 1890 : 311). Children were also fed the best pieces of adult meals: reindeer bone marrow, fish viscera etc. (Волков 1939 : 56). A breastfed child was given a piece of reindeer meat to suck. Thus, babies were habituated to meat from the cradle (Лукьянченко 2003 : 63); "*нюввт* 'national meal made of boiled fish and cloudberry' (Керт 1986 : 65). Freshly boiled whitefish are salted a little, filleted, mixed with ripe cloudberrries and dressed with fish oil — and the salad is ready (Большакова 2005 : 156). Mixture of fish with cloudberrries (*луэм неут*) (Волков 1939 : 47)".

As can be seen from the examples, the definitions in our dictionaries are typical for a bilingual dictionary where culturological commentary is added to the translated equivalent. As I see it, the main purpose of our dictionaries is the preservation of unique aspects of culture and language in the relevant area of the culture of a small-numbered indigenous people. This is why the starting point for us is a notion or concept, not a word.

2.3.3. Advantages of the thematic approach

Our dictionaries of the Kola Saami language follow the thematic approach which is an alternative to the alphabetic approach. The choice of themes is determined by certain subject areas; in our dictionaries, objects of the spiritual and material culture of the indigenous people.

Thus the dictionary of the Kola Saami spiritual culture lexis (Иванищева, Бакула, 2013) includes vocabulary on the following topics: Religious Faiths, Life Cycle Ordinances, Folklife Arts, and Festivities. In the dictionary of the Kola Saami traditional trades and husbandry lexis (Иванищева, Эрштадт 2014) the vocabulary is arranged in six topics: Reindeer Husbandry, Fishing, Hunting, Foraging, Sheep Husbandry, and Zootomy and Zoophysics. These topics include subtopics, sections and subsections. For instance, Reindeer Husbandry contains the following subtopics: Domestic Reindeer, Reindeer Herders and Unions of Reindeer Herders, Reindeer Herders' Gear, Reindeer Distinguishing Marks, Reindeer-Herding Dogs, Places and Structures for Herding, Keeping, Counting and Culling of Reindeer, Reindeer Harness and Sledge, Reindeer Pack Load, Reindeer Slaughter and Reindeer Skin Treatment. The subtopic Domestic Reindeer includes such sections as Reindeer Buck, Reindeer Doe, Reindeer Fawn, Reindeer by Household Use, Reindeer by Position in a Team, Reindeer by Having/Not Having Antlers, and so on. The Reindeer Fawn section includes the subsections Reindeer Fawn from Birth to Three Months, Reindeer Fawn from Three to Six Months, Reindeer Fawn from Six to Eighteen Months.

In my view, the use of such a structure for the dictionaries for the Kola Saami languages preserves the interpretation of the meaning intended by the native speakers and thus also the unique culture of some small-numbered indigenous peoples in the Far North.

Conclusions

Research on the current sociolinguistic situation of the Kola Saami languages shows that the creation of a comprehensive dictionary is extremely important for endangered language communities.

Such a dictionary is the only future for Kola Saami lexicography. The first step in compiling such a dictionary is, in my view, to create dictionaries that contain not only linguistic but also cultural information. Like most linguists who compile dictionaries of minority or endangered languages I have applied the thematic approach, in which lexicographers work on particular semantic domains selected by the speech community because of their cultural significance.

In our opinion, it is essentially important to preserve the information on realia. The contents of a definition for a realia in such a dictionary represent the background knowledge of a cast of Saami language speakers and culture bearers.

Acknowledgements

The research was carried out as part of a national project of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation in 2014–2016 (Project 545).

I would like to thank my colleagues, students, and the Kildin Saami native speakers, as well as the representatives of Kola Saami peoples who helped me with my collection of Kildin Saami language material, gave interviews, and answered questionnaires and polls.

I am grateful to Professor Georgij Kert and especially grateful to the teacher of the Kildin Saami language, the Saami activist Aleksandra Antonova, who agreed to take part in all our projects.

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Abbreviations

СРС — Н. Е. Афанасьева, Р. Д. Куруч, Е. И. Мечкина, А. А. Антонова, Л. Д. Яковлев, Б. А. Глухов, Саамско-русский словарь, Москва 1985.

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**СОСТАВЛЕНИЕ СААМСКИХ СЛОВАРЕЙ
СОХРАНЕНИЕ ИСКОННЫХ ФИННО-УГОРСКИХ ЯЗЫКОВ
НА КОЛЬСКОМ ПОЛУОСТРОВЕ**

Статья знакомит с современной двуязычной лексикографией саамов Кольского полуострова и с двумя новыми словарями кольских саамов: словарем лексики духовной культуры и словарем лексики традиционных профессий и производства. Эти словари в основном призваны выполнять эпистемологическую функцию, что обусловлено своеобразием их пользователей: носители саамской культуры в большинстве своем не владеют кильдинским саамским языком — одним из тех языков, которым особенно угрожает опасность исчезновения. Автор считает, что современную лексикографию кольских саамов необходимо рассматривать, учитывая наличие или отсутствие в ней элементов культуры. В статье показано, что основная цель таких словарей — сохранение уникальных аспектов культур и языков коренных народов. Важно также, чтобы в подобных словарях приводились типичные для двуязычных словарей соответствия-переводы дефиниций, снабженные культурологическими комментариями. Подбор культурологической информации должен исходить из тех знаний, которыми обладают саамы Кольского полуострова, владеющие родным языком.