

# LING GU4120 Language Documentation and Field Methods

## Final Project: Analyzing Two Sakha Texts

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### 1 Introduction

In this paper, I analyze two Sakha texts. The first text consists of the lyrics to the Sakha song “Let’s Love Mom” (§2). The second text is the beginning of the Sakha story “The Clumsy Glutton” (§3).

Sakha is a Turkic language spoken by approximately 378,000 people in the Republic of Sakha, Irkutsk and Magadan provinces, Khabarovsk Krai, and Krasnoyarsk Krai in Russia. The exonym for the language is Yakut (Sakha 2023).

The consultant for this paper is Platon Shamaev, who is a native speaker of Sakha in his forties. Platon was born in and grew up in the Republic of Sakha. He moved to the United States last year and currently works as a lawyer in New York, where he is affiliated with Columbia University’s Human Rights Advocates Program. Platon also speaks English. All data referenced in this paper come from Columbia’s Spring 2023 Field Methods class’s elicitation sessions with Platon.

Please see my previous reports on Sakha phonology, nominal morphology, and verbal morphology/clausal syntax for an overview of Sakha grammar.

### 2 Let’s Love Mom

In addition to singing and reading the lines of this song in Sakha, Platon also gave us line-by-line translations into English. The following analysis relies on Platon’s translations, data collected during a follow-up elicitation session, and the analyses in my previous progress reports. In the rare case that I lack even a tentative analysis of the meaning of a morpheme, I gloss the morpheme with “?”.

- (1) *kyn kær-yæ ot yn-yæ*  
sun see-FUT grass grow-FUT  
‘The sun will come out, the grass will grow.’
- (2) *sibeki tæter-ië*  
flower bloom-FUT  
‘flowers will bloom.’
- (3) *kyn-y suwχ tuwχ yn-yæ*  
sun-ACC NEG what.NOM grow-FUT  
‘Without the sun, what will grow?’
- (4) *kuwχ sizrem ky:kær-ië*  
green planet wither-FUT  
‘The green planet will wither.’
- (5) *ol tæŋe kyn tæŋe*  
that equally sun equally  
‘She is equal to that, she is equal to the sun.’

- (6) *en iε-n min iε-m*  
 2SG mother-2SG.NOM.POSS 1SG mother-1SG.NOM.POSS  
 ‘your mother, my mother.’
- (7) *iε-te suɔχ i:nε-n*  
 mother-PTV NEG die-INF  
 ‘Without a mother, dying,’
- (8) *ih-iε sir iε*  
 be\_empty-FUT earth mother  
 ‘Mother Earth will be empty.’
- (9) *ky:ndy-t:en ky:ndy-ny kεrε-t:en kεrε-ni*  
 precious-ABL precious-ACC beautiful-ABL beautiful-ACC  
 ‘The most precious of the precious, the most beautiful of the beautiful,’
- (10) *kuαχ sizem sir kyn-y tapt-uαβ-in iε-ni*  
 green planet earth sun-ACC love-FUT-2SG mother-ACC  
 ‘green planet earth, sun, let’s love Mom.’
- (11) *iε-t:en tæry-lær giεni-dær giεruj-dar*  
 mother-ABL be\_born-3PL genius-PL hero-PL  
 ‘Geniuses and heroes are born from mother,’
- (12) *dɔlgun-u yksy-lær yænε-lær nɔruɔt-tar*  
 wave-ACC multiply-3PL grow-3PL nation-PL  
 ‘they multiply in waves, nations are growing.’
- (13) *en kini uɔna min iε-t:en kεl-bit-pit*  
 2SG.NOM 3:SG:NOM and 1SG.NOM mother-ABL come-PST-1pl  
 ‘You, him, and me came from mother,’
- (14) *iε-bit εmij-in εlge-tin is-bit-pit*  
 mother-1PL.NOM.POSS breast-3SG.ACC.POSS grace-3SG.ACC.POSS drink-PST-1PL  
 ‘we drank our mother’s breast’s grace.’
- (15) *yrdyk kyn sɔβɔtɔχ an dujduj emie bir*  
 high sun alone great homeland also one  
 ‘There is one high sun alone, there is also only one world.’
- (16) *iε sir ɔβɔ-tɔ en iε-n emie bir*  
 mother earth child-3SG.NOM.POSS 2SG.NOM mother-2SG.NOM.POSS also one  
 ‘Child of Mother Earth, your mother is also alone.’
- (17) *iε-k:en syreβ-ε en tyæs-kεr teβiεtir*  
 mother-DIM heart-3SG.NOM.POSS 2SG.NOM chest-2SG.DAT.POSS beat  
 ‘Mama’s heart is beating in your chest.’
- (18) *kyn kyβej en iε-βεr suhuanas isti:η-nik*  
 sun ? 2SG.NOM mother-2SG.DAT.POSS treat sincere-ADV  
 ‘Behave sincerely toward your honorable mother.’
- (19) *ky:ndy-t:en ky:ndy-ny kεrε-t:en kεrε-ni*  
 precious-ABL precious-ACC beautiful-ABL beautiful-ACC  
 ‘The most precious of the precious, the most beautiful of the beautiful,’
- (20) *kuαχ sizem sir kyn-y tapt-uαβ-in iε-ni*  
 green planet earth sun-ACC love-FUT-2SG mother-ACC  
 ‘green planet earth, sun, let’s love Mom.’

### 3 The Clumsy Glutton

The following text comes from an animated version of the Sakha story “The Clumsy Glutton,” available on YouTube in Sakha and English (see the References section for the links to versions in both languages). My analysis is based on the text of the English version, line-by-line translations provided by Platon, a follow-up elicitation session, and the analyses and elicitations summarized in my previous progress reports.

- (1) *ʃuɟʃaχ tɔɔ bu kær-dyk kɯtar-du-n*  
bird why this similar-ADV blush-CAUS-2SG  
‘Bird, why did you blush like that?’
- (2) *kɯjas-tan kɯjas-tan kɯtar-du-m*  
heat-ABL heat-ABL blush-CAUS-1SG  
‘I blushed from the heat, from the heat.’
- (3) *ɔt:ɔn sytyæɛ-bek-kin duɔ*  
then swim-NEG.PRS-2SG Q  
‘Why don’t you go swimming then?’
- (4) *u-ga tyhɛ-n χalɯ-m suɔɔa duɔ*  
water-DAT fall-INF would-1SG NEG Q  
‘Wouldn’t I drown?’
- (5) *sulɕa:ru-t:an tutus-pak-kun duɔ*  
sedge-ABL hold\_on\_to-NEG.PRS-2SG Q  
‘Don’t you want to hold on to some sedge?’
- (6) *ili-bin buha kixɛ-n χalɯ suɔɔa duɔ*  
hand-1SG.ACC.POSS straight go\_inside-INF would NEG Q  
‘Wouldn’t it poke my hands?’

### References

- Ала Мо5ус (Английский). 2021. *YouTube*. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CXqXLShI08>) (Accessed 2023-05-08.)
- Чыычаах Моҕус икки. 2015. *YouTube*. (<https://youtu.be/ML43tefPu1Q>) (Accessed 2023-05-07.)