The **Dolgan language** is a Turkic language with around 1,000 speakers, spoken in the Taymyr Peninsula in Russia.[3] The speakers are known as the Dolgans. The word "Dolgan" means 'tribe living on the middle reaches of the river'. This is most likely signifying the geographical location of the Dolgan tribe.[4]

The language is very local and restricted to a certain area and has declined in usage over the years. As of 2010 there are only about 1,050 speakers of the language.[5] The language has expressed a few changes since the beginning of its formation, such as alphabet and phrasing terms. The issue as of recently has become the weak integration of this local language within families with mixed marriages. Instead of speaking either of the parents' local languages, the family incorporates Russian as the more dominant language to ease interfamilial and external communication.[6] This results in children learning the local language, Dolgan, only a little bit or as a second language and over generations it continues to fade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dolgan</th>
<th>Дүлөн, Дүлгөн, haka, Haka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native to</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Krasnoyarsk Krai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Dolgans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers</td>
<td>1,100 (2010 census)[1]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language family</th>
<th>Turkic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Turkic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siberian Turkic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolgan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language codes</th>
<th>ISO 639-3</th>
<th>dlg</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glottolog</td>
<td>dolg1241 (<a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dolg1241)%5B2">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dolg1241)[2</a>]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yakut (blue) and Dolgan (green)
Dolgan is a member of the Northern Turkic family of languages along with its closest relative, Sakha (Yakut). Like Finnish, Hungarian and Turkish, Dolgan has vowel harmony, is agglutinative and has no grammatical gender. Word order is usually subject–object–verb.

**Sample comparison with Yakut**

**Dolgan:**

Uskuolaga üörenebin
Dulğanlī kepsetebin
Kār
Tuogunan hir barıta habıllınna?

**Yakut:**

Oskuolaga üörenebin
Saxalī kepsetebin
Xār
Tügunan sir bar(i)ta sabılınna?

**Literal English translation:**

(I am) studying at school
(I) speak Yakut (Dolgan) Snow
What covered the ground?

**Geographical distribution**

**Official status**

Dolgan is established as a dominant language in the Taimyr Peninsula.

**Dialects/Varieties**

Three Dolgan subgroups:

- Western – Yenisei, Norilsk
- Central – Avam
- Eastern – Khatanga

All dialects are understood among each other, despite subtle differences. Yakut is also understood among all since it is so similar.

**History**

The Dolgan language started out having a Latin alphabet in the early 20th century. Over time, the Cyrillic alphabet was implemented instead since it is the same alphabet used by the related language, Yakut. Evenki's influence on Dolgan can explain, in part, why it is considered a separate language from Yakut. Dolgan has made appearances in newspapers, such as Taymyr, as well as schools starting around the time of the 60s. However, now there are only around 1,050 speakers of the language.

Certain words in the language were developed from geographical implications that have been present since the start of the Dolgan language. For instance, the directional terms *ta*-s (1. south 2. east) and *muora* (1. north 2. west) are representative of the corresponding landscapes. *Ta*-s is related to the word stone, and the southeast topography of the native region, Taimyr, is covered by the Putorana Mountains. Similarly, *muora* denotes "sea" where the western zone of Taimyr has access to the sea shore.
However, this is not true for all directional terms, nor all words of the Dolgan language. Southwest, uха, and northeast, alлаra, have no significance in geographical terms relative to Taymyr.

**Grammar**

**Morphology**

The composition of morphological categories in the noun is: case, number, possession, and in the verb is: voice, aspect, mode, time, person and number. In contrast in the Yakut language, the partitive is used in the possessive declension to address the accusative case, and joint case serves to structure two similar parts of a sentence. In conjugation of a verb in the common form of -аачы, the paradigms of Dolgan inclination were preserved with the word баар.

**Phonology**

**Vowels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>ii:</td>
<td>yy:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>w w:</td>
<td>u u:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e e:</td>
<td>ø ø:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oo:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>a a:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Consonants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>voiceless</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td></td>
<td>s</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>voiceless</td>
<td>tʃ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>dʒ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n̥</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[10]

Dolgan has the following phonetic characteristics:

- diphthongisation of the Turkish medium vowels [o, e, ø] in the root syllable
- labial and palatal vowel harmony in the native words
- transition of the initial Turkish c- into h-, loss of the uvular x, ʃ: Yakut; саха ~ Dolgan нака (self)
Much of the old Yakut language was lost
- lack of modern political and scientific terminology
- change in the meaning of words under the influence of the Turkish semantic system
- extensive borrowing from the Russian language

Over time, the language itself has changed and adapted. Even during the time period when it had a Cyrillic alphabet, it changed over the years. The first version of alphabet of the language had the following appearance: А а, Б б, В в, Г г, Д д, Дь дь, Е е, Ё ё, Ж ж, З з, И и, Иэ из, Й й, К к, Л л, М м, Н н, Нӈ нӈ, Нь нь, О о, Оё оё, П п, Р р, С с, Т т, У у, Уд уд, Уо уо, Уэ уэ, Ф ф, Х х, Һ Һ, Ц ц, Ч ч, Ш ш, Щ щ, Ъ ъ, Ы ы, Ыа ыа, Ь ь, Э э, Ю ю, Я я.

The current Dolgan alphabet is still Cyrillic and looks as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>А а</th>
<th>Б б</th>
<th>В в</th>
<th>Г г</th>
<th>Д д</th>
<th>Е е</th>
<th>Ё ё</th>
<th>Ж ж</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>З з</td>
<td>И и</td>
<td>Й й</td>
<td>К к</td>
<td>Л л</td>
<td>М м</td>
<td>Н н</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Нӈ нӈ</td>
<td>О о</td>
<td>Оё оё</td>
<td>П п</td>
<td>Р р</td>
<td>С с</td>
<td>Т т</td>
<td>У у</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Уд уд</td>
<td>Ф ф</td>
<td>Х х</td>
<td>Ц ц</td>
<td>Ч ч</td>
<td>Ш ш</td>
<td>Щ щ</td>
<td>Ъ ъ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ы ы</td>
<td>Ыа ыа</td>
<td>Ь ь</td>
<td>Э э</td>
<td>Ю ю</td>
<td>Я я</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current Dolgan alphabet is still Cyrillic and looks as follows:

hello : дорообо
mountain : кайа
mother : иньэ
I love you : мин энигин таптыыбын
birthday : төрөөбүт күн
day after tomorrow : Өйүүн

dog : ыт

See also
- Dolgans

References


10. Androsova, 1997, p.236


Bibliography


**Further reading**


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