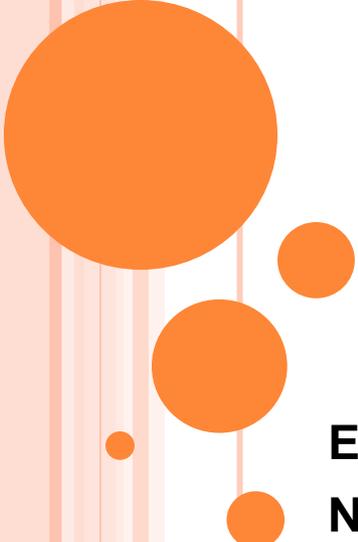


SLE 2016, NAPOLI, 31.08-3.09.2016



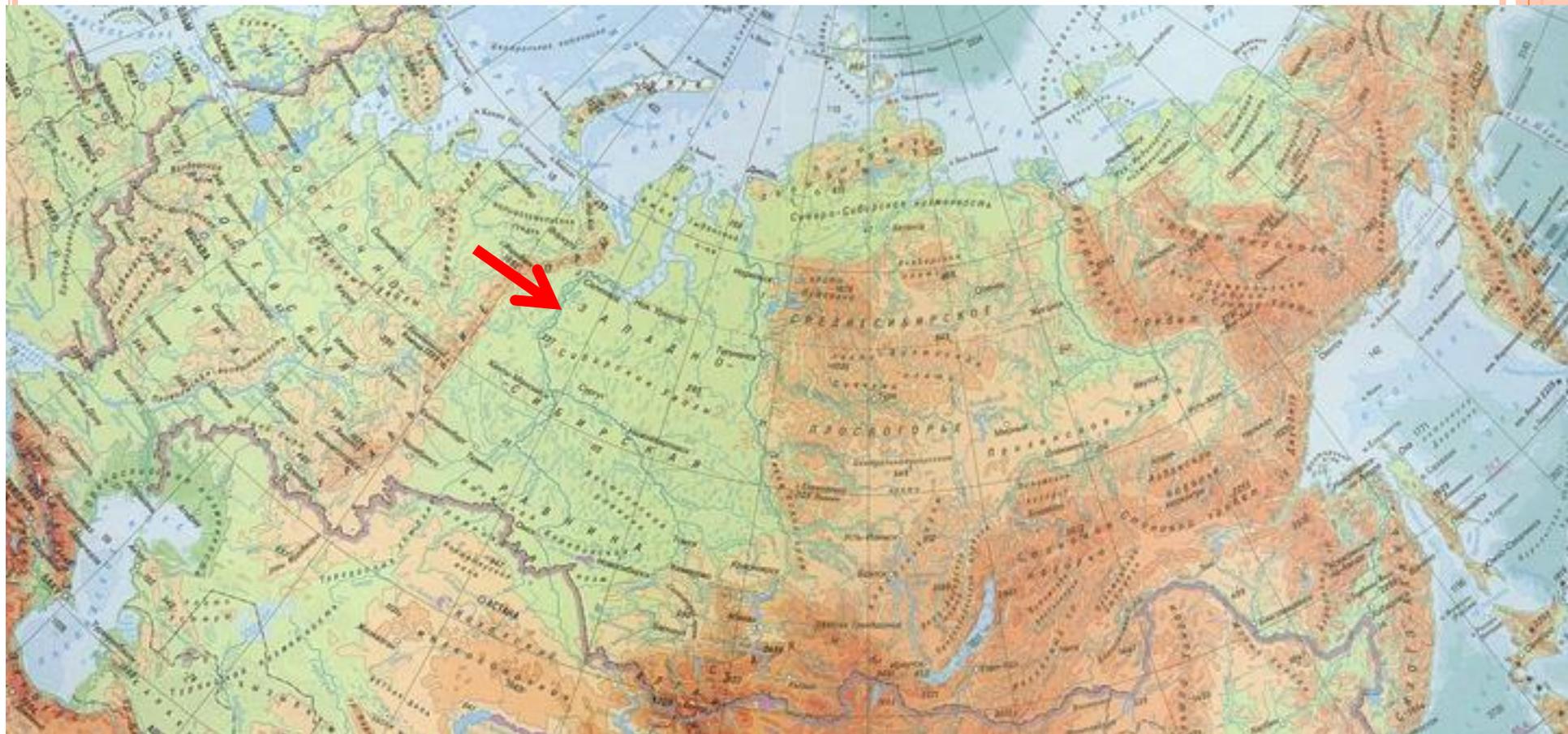
**IZHMA KOMI IN WESTERN SIBERIA:
AT THE CROSSROADS OF LANGUAGE
CONTACT**

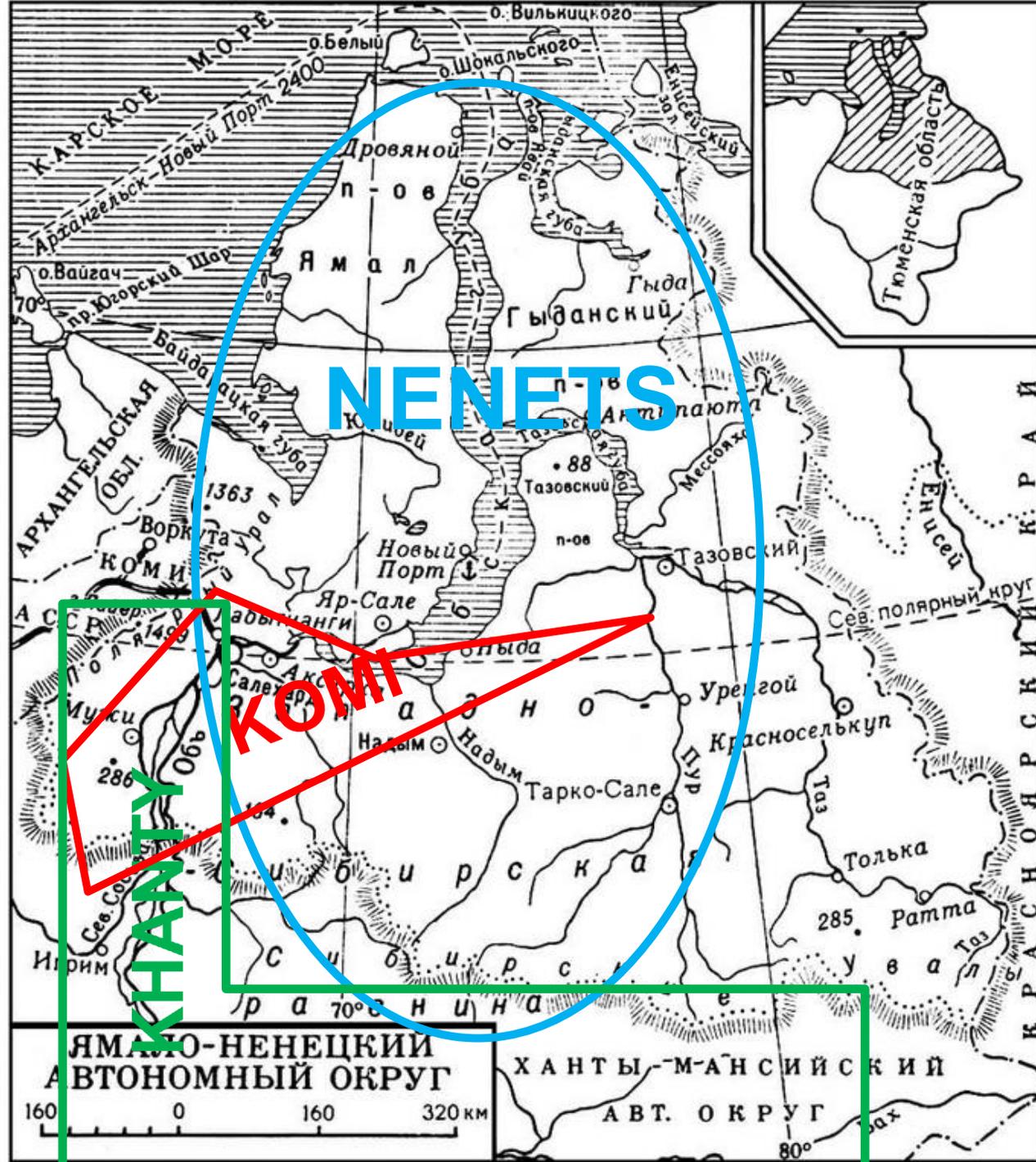
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KOMI IN WESTERN SIBERIA

- A Permic (< Uralic) language, most of the speakers are in the European part of Russia.
- Migration to the Western Siberia from the early XIX century [Zherebtsov 1982, Povod 2006]. Now less than 5000 speakers in the Western Siberia, more than 150000 in total.
- Izhma dialect, sharp differences from the literary language.
- A centuries-long interaction with Russian.
- Contact with Siberian Uralic languages (Khanty, Nenets).





OUR RESEARCH

- Dialect atlas of the Uralic languages spoken in the Yamalo-Nenets district (in prep., lead by N. Koshkareva).
- Team fieldwork (2008 – present) + published sources, archives.
- In this talk: sociolinguistic and structural aspects of contact-induced change in Siberian Komi.

SIBERIAN KOMI AND RUSSIAN

- Extensive bilingualism.
- The use of Komi is limited to everyday conversation.
- Very few Komi speakers younger than 50.
- No Komi classes at school.
- Few mass media in Komi.

SIBERIAN KOMI AND RUSSIAN

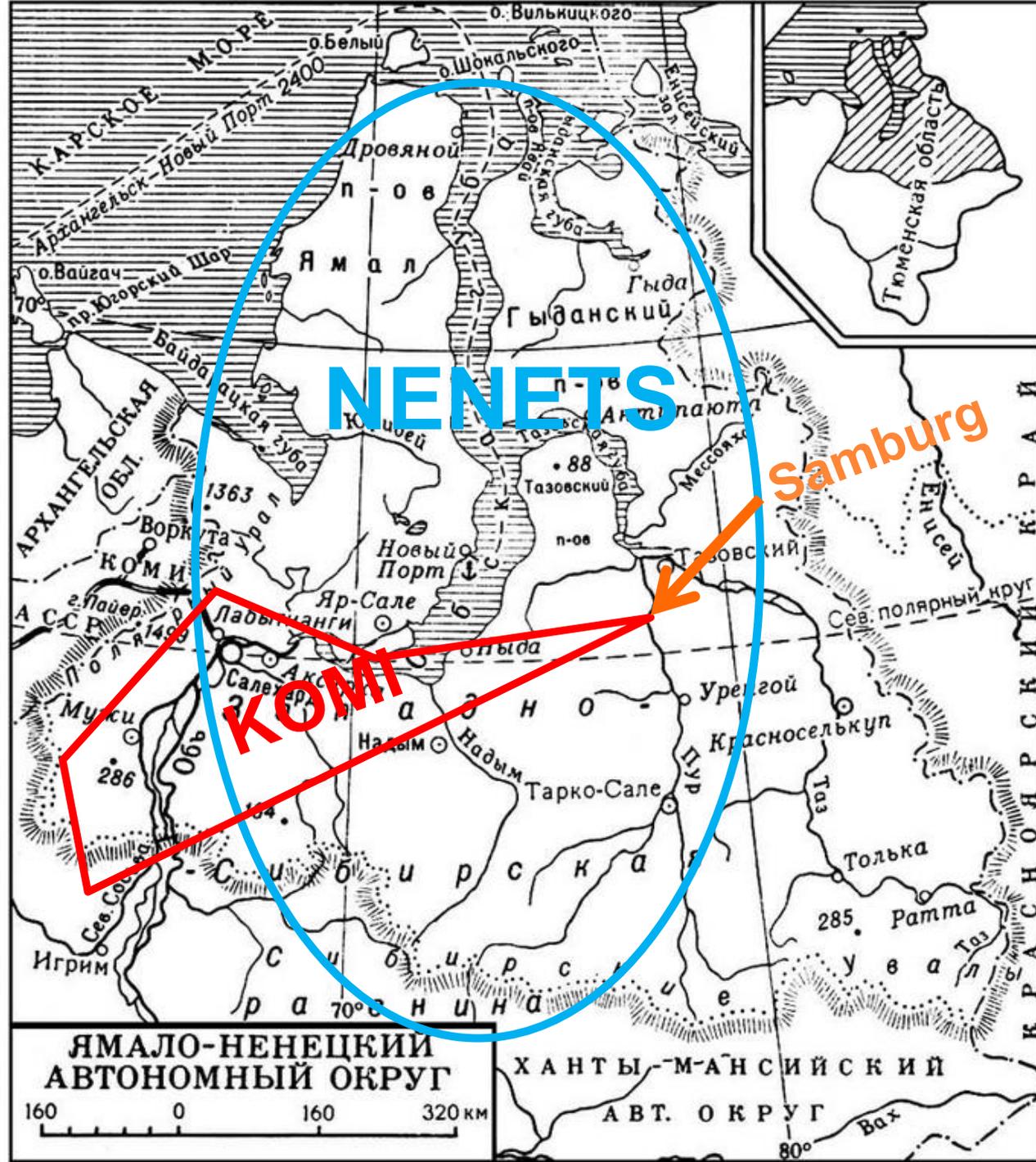
- Vast lexical borrowing.
- + words of close classes: *il'i* 'or', *što* 'that', *potomu što* 'because', *štoby* 'in order to'.
- Calques:

Pomas mēdi by šuny ydžyd at't'ə tav kərdorsaysly, kod kare setšem ydžyd kolana rəbita 'To conclude, I would like to (**=Russ. conditional construction**) say "Thanks a lot!" (lit.: big thanks = **Russ. *bol'shoje spasibo***) to all the reindeer herders doing such necessary work' [Archive of Yamal-Region broadcast company, 2006]

- Phonetic changes: no final devoicing is expected in Komi, but it does occur like in Russian: *čol'ep* 'prompt' (cf. *čol'eba* 'promptly'), *rəmyt* 'twilight' (cf. *rəmdyny* 'to get dark'), *posn'it* 'small, fine' (cf. *posn'ida* 'finely').

SIBERIAN KOMI AND NENETS

- Long-term contact in reindeer herding (cf. the list of borrowed herding terms in [Sakharova, Sel'kov 1976: 122-123]), sporadic borrowings in other domains.
- Growing Russian influence => usually Russian as an intermediary language.
- Bilingualism in mixed reindeer-herding communities, and sometimes in mixed families.
- The most intense contact attested so far: Samburg village (a Nenets area remote from the main cluster of Komi villages; since 1930-s – Komi migrants).



SEMANTIC CALQUING

- Local idioms of Izhma Komi outside the Nenets area: *č'up* 'woman's breast' vs. *vəra* 'udder (of an animal)'.
- Samburg: *č'up* 'woman's breast & udder'; *vəra* is used as well.
- Nenets: *ngamyä* 'woman's breast & udder'.



SEMANTIC CALQUING

- Izhma Komi *suloony* ‘to stand’ (people and big animals; columns; cups, bottles, boats etc. in their functional position). vs. *pukoony* ‘to sit’ (people and big animals).
- Samburg: many examples like *č’aškays pukale pyzan vylyn* ‘The cup is (lit.: is sitting) on the table’ (impossible in Russian and in other Izhma Komi local idioms).
- The same polysemy of *ngamtyosy*^o ‘to sit’ in Nenets.



SEMANTIC CALQUING & CULTURAL TABOOS

- ‘Wolf’: *kəjin* in literary Komi.
- Nenets, Khanty: many euphemisms for dangerous animals.
- This strategy is borrowed by Siberian Komi, especially in the Nenets area (the villages of Beloyarsk, Samburg).

| Samburg Komi | Nenets |
|---|---|
| <i>kuz' bəž</i> (lit.: a long tail) | <i>tæwa yamp°</i> (=) |
| <i>buka / joma</i> (lit.: a witch) | <i>ngilyeka</i> (lit.: a preternatural monster causing illness) |
| <i>yllayn vetlalys'</i> (lit.: walking in the street) | <i>pyiwnya yaderta</i> (=) |



SEMANTIC CALQUING: MULTILINGUALISM

- Local idioms of Izhma Komi outside the Nenets area: *karol'itny* 'to herd reindeers' (< Russ. *karaul'it'*)
- Samburg: *karol'itny* also gets the meaning 'to keep' (*vid'ny* in other local idioms):
menam č'oje karol'ite jemjasse tuč'uyn 'My sister keeps her needles in a special bag'
- Nenets *let°mpøsy°*: both meanings.



NENETS INFLUENCE IN WORD-FORMATION

- Few examples so far.
- ‘Hare’: Komi *kəč*, Nenets *tævasyi* (lit.: tail-CAR). Samburg Komi: *kəč* + *bəžtem* (lit.: tail-CAR).
- Occasional borrowings of the Nenets diminutive suffix: *malas’ys’ko* ‘dawdler; a sluggish person’ (lit.: dawdling-DIM), *lyko čer’i* ‘ide’ (fish of the carp family; lit.: bone-DIM fish)

BORROWED PHONETIC PATTERNS

“Standard” Izhma Komi

pu-e ‘is cooking’

vo-is ‘came’

lya-en ‘sand’

mušku-ys ‘his back’

Samburg Komi

pu-v-e ‘is cooking’

vo-v-is ‘came’

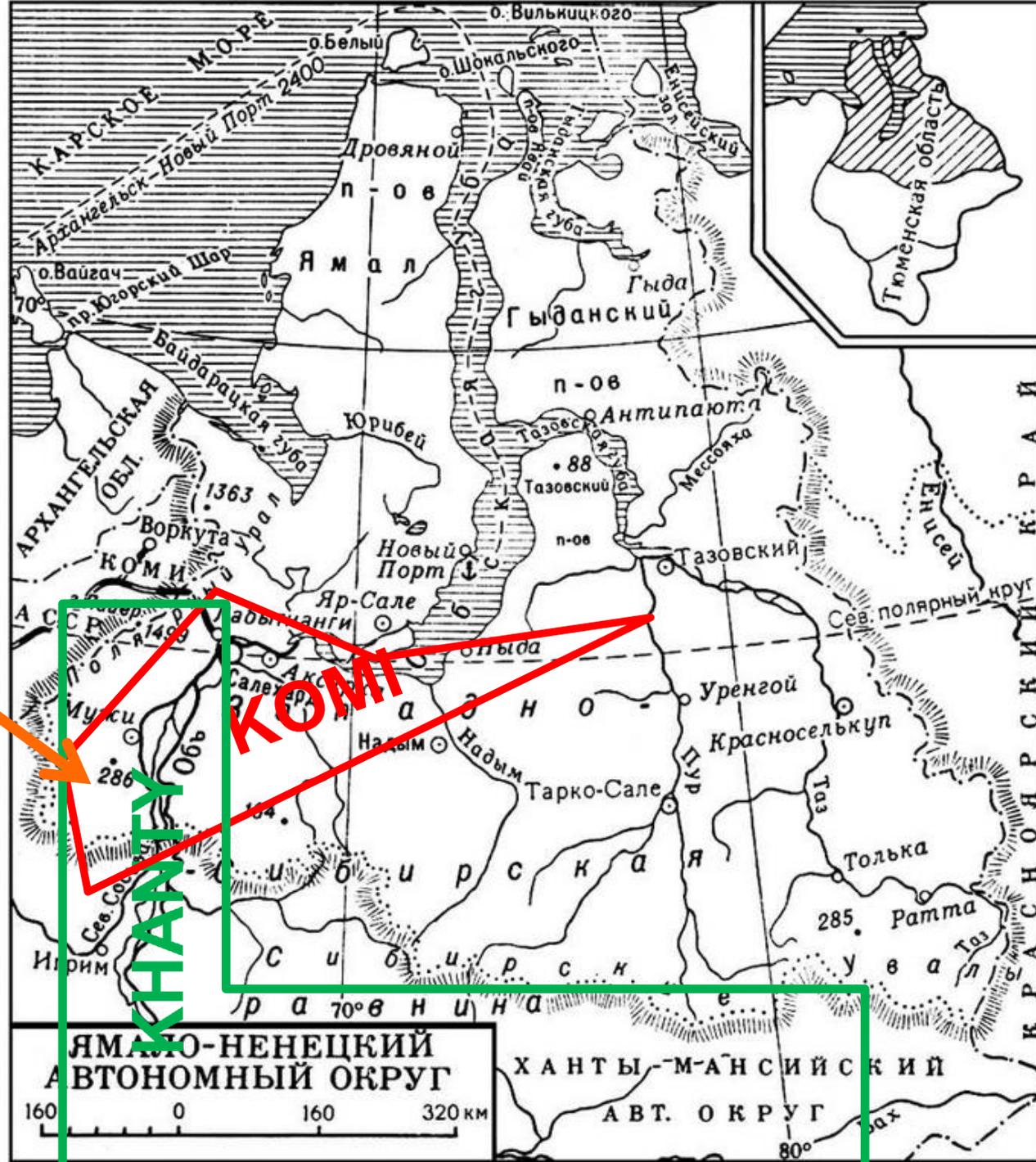
lyja-j-en ‘with sand’

mušku-l-ys ‘his back’

- No prohibition of vowel sequences in Izhma Komi.
- Samburg Komi: a Nenets phonotactic strategy adopted by the speakers much influenced by Nenets.

SIBERIAN KOMI AND KHANTY

- Intense Language contact from the early XIX century.
- Sporadic Khanty borrowings in Komi; borrowing of some material culture lexicon from Komi to Khanty (e.g. Khanty *păsan* ‘table’ < Komi *pyzan* [Lytkin, Guljajev 1970: 235]).
- Growing Russian influence => usually Russian as an intermediary language, including mixed families.
- No mixed reindeer-herding communities.
- A cluster of villages with Komi population in this area, contacts between speakers from different villages.
- Some elderly Komi people speak or understand Khanty.
- The most intense contact attested so far: Ovgort village (a Khanty area; since XIX century – Komi migrants).



Ovgort

КОМІ

ХАНТИ-МАНСИ

SIBERIAN KOMI AND KHANTY

- Sporadic cases of avoiding vowel sequences (following Khanty phonotactics): *puvem* ‘cooked (PTCP)’, *juvas’ny* ‘to ask’.
- Sporadic cases of non-final devoicing (cf. no voiced consonants phonemes in Khanty): *kudyr* ‘turbid’ instead of *gudyr*, *tomema pon* ‘a fastened dog’ instead of *domema pon*.
- Khanty-like possessive constructions in some idiolects (cf. no genitive in Khanty):

me mame rəd’ič’č’is myžyyn ‘My mother (lit.: I + mother-1SG) was born in Muzhi’ (usually *menam mame* ‘I.GEN mother-1SG’).

- No reliable cases of semantic calques so far.
- No similar patterns to Nenets where they could be expected, cf. a broad semantic scope of *ɔmæsti* ‘to sit’ in Khanty (the same is in Nenets), but it is not borrowed by Komi *pukoony* ‘to sit’.

CONTACT-INDUCED CHANGE IN KOMI: SUMMARY

- Russian > Nenets > Khanty.
- [Thomason 2001: 70-71]: various degrees of contact-induced change.
- Just lexical borrowing vs. borrowing some patterns?
- Previous research: focus on lexical borrowing, especially when describing the interaction of Komi and Nenets.
- Our data: structural borrowing (semantic calques; diminutives; phonotactics; possessive constructions) => a larger degree of contact.

CONTACT-INDUCED CHANGE IN KOMI: SUMMARY

- The Nenets influence on Komi is more prominent than the Khanty one, cf. Samburg Komi and Ovgort Komi.
- Why?

| | Samburg | Ovgort |
|--|-------------------|---------------|
| Intermediary language in mixed families | Russian or Nenets | Russian |
| Mixed reindeer-herding communities | Yes | No |
| Neighbouring villages with Komi population | No | Yes |

Thank you for your attention!

