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Remarks on the Uilta folktale text collected by B. Pilsudski

Toshiro TSUMAGARI
Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University

1. Tungusic materials by B. Pilsudski
Bronislaw Pilsudski (1866-1918), a Polish ethnologist, much contributed to the ethnological and linguistic studies on the aboriginal peoples of Sakhalin and Amur region. His Tungusic materials have been collected in a single volume by the recent publication of Majewicz (2011). The collection covers three Tungusic languages, and each section includes the following materials:

(A) Uilta (Orok)
   c. An Uilta-Polish glossary (2730 entries with 332 personal and place names) (cf. Tsumagari 1985 as a general commentary and evaluation).

(B) Olcha (Ulcha, Ulchi)
   a. An Olcha-Polish glossary (1540 entries with 124 personal and place names).
   b. Texts: a prayer, 14 riddles, 2 songs and a legend.

(C) Nanai (Gold)
   a. A Nanai-Russian glossary (about 1050 entries including personal and place names) with 26 riddles.

2. A folktale “A rat mother and a frog mother”
I will take up here the Uilta folktale text (emphasized above), which provides a complete story consisting of 12 pages of manuscript (including 98 lines in the Polish version). In Majewicz (2011: 582-603) we can find the original text with Polish glosses (see Fig. 1) added by English equivalents, a full text both in original transcription and in linguistically reconstructed Cyrillic transcription, a Russian translation based on the reconstruction, and an English translation. The reconstruction, made by L. V. Ozolinja, is a ‘hypothetical’ one (Majewicz 2011: 571) and needs much elaboration. An attempt of full reconstruction of the text with grammatical analysis and Japanese translation will be published separately (Tsumagari 2014).
paper is a preliminary work on the text, in which I will make some remarks on the contents of the story and discuss a linguistic problem.

Fig. 1 The first page of the text in Pilsudski’s manuscript (Majewicz 2011: 565)
2.1 Outline of the story
The story of the folktale is summarized as follows (cf. Ikegami 1985: 170-71; Ikegami 1987: 278):

A rat mother and a frog mother went up the river by boat to gather berries. The frog mother could not climb the tree and got no berries. The rat mother got many, but gave none of them to the frog mother. When they came back home, the children of the rat were happy, while the children of the frog were sad. The frog mother killed an elk and got much meat. The rat mother attempted to steal the meat, but was hit bitterly by the frog mother. To heal her wound, a crow shaman, a raven shaman and a bird shaman were called one by one. The bird shaman told the truth and was sent away by the rat mother.

2.2 Comparison with another version
The same story was recorded by Ikegami (2002: 87-92 [2007: 93-98]) from another speaker more than half a century later. We can see the similarity and difference between the two versions in the Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilsudski</th>
<th>Ikegami 2002 [2007]</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collected from an Uilta man Kisungin near the mouth of the Poronai river in 1904</td>
<td>Collected from an emigrant Uilta woman Chiyo Sato (Napka) in 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regarded as a saxuri ‘fairy tale’</td>
<td>Not regarded as a saxuri by the narrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both versions lack the opening phrase daa xazilaccee which is a formal feature of saxuri.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An onomatopoeia of rowing a boat: toombo bok bok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rat held the frog’s stomach to get back a berry.</td>
<td>Squeezed the frog’s throat with the seat board of the boat and trod on her stomach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The frog children lost their sight in frustration.</td>
<td>(no mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no mention)</td>
<td>Finding that the frog mother got elk’s meat, the rat mother sent her child with berries to the frog, but the child was repelled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The moaning of the rat: xoarri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both the crow shaman and the raven shaman were sent away before telling the reason of the rat’s wound.</td>
<td>Both the crow shaman and the raven shaman were sent away because they told the reason of the rat’s wound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bird shaman was sent away because he told the truth.</td>
<td>The bird shaman told a lie to please the rat, and got a reward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The call of the crow, the raven and the bird respectively: gaak/karr/ciin ciin ciruwaldas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wound of the rat was healed after all the shamans went back.</td>
<td>(no mention)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 1. Comparison between two versions by Pilsudski and Ikegami
In addition to sharing a general motif, the common use of particular onomatopoeic words, such as *tomboo bok bok* (representing rowing a boat), implies the same origin of the two.

### 2.3 Similar stories in other languages

We find similar stories among the neighboring Tungusic and also in Nivkh, as shown below. In some Amur Tungusic languages (such as Negidal, Olcha and Nanai), instead of a rat and a frog, another combination of a squirrel and a tortoise may play each part, but their stories are generally not so elaborated and dramatic as Uilta’s. The Nivkh version represents much more similar situation of a rat and a frog, but it lacks the latter half of the corresponding Uilta story. In Japan, we find also a similar motif with a monkey and a crab (Saito 1993: 138ff).

(a) **Tungusic**

One of the most popular animal stories in the Amur basin is about a rat and a frog. Uilta in Sakhalin also has such a story. I got two different versions in Udihe: one with a squirrel and a tortoise, and another with a squirrel and a frog. In any versions, the story goes like this: “The two fellows go to gather berries together. The rat or squirrel climbs the tree and eats as many berries as he likes, and teases his partner (frog or tortoise). After that, the frog or tortoise gets his revenge on his greedy partner.” (Kazama 2011: 31)

(b) **Nivkh**

Why do frogs have small eyes? This is a story about a frog and a rat. Once a frog and a rat were living together friendly. One day the rat came home and said to the frog, “I found a good place to get many berries. Let’s go together tomorrow.” At first the frog rowed the boat, and the rat steered. The boat ran so slowly that the rat changed to row. Then the boat ran swiftly, and they reached the place. At once the rat landed ashore and climbed the tree, on which he ate the berries. The frog, unable to climb the tree, kept looking up the tree. Then a berry dropped into the frog’s mouth. The rat, looking at it, pushed the frog down and regained the berry by squeezing the frog’s stomach with the board of the boat, and ate the berry for himself. The frog lay down for a while, and then another berry dropped into his eye. This is the reason why frogs have small eyes. (Austerlitz 1992: 157)

### 3. Some unusual forms in the text: (-)nuci etc.

Here I will concentrate on a linguistic problem found in the text. We find many occurrences of an unusual form (-)nuci and other related forms (*nuci–muci; also as nuni–muni*) which are difficult to identify. The followings are all occurrences of the sentence with the form concerned: the text is restored (except for the forms in question) and transcribed phonologically.

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4 The original Japanese description is cited in English translation hereafter.

5 The transcription adopted here is basically the same with Ikegami (1997) except for ć and ẑ, which correspond to Ikegami’s ć and ẑ respectively.
on the basis of the original manuscript in Roman script by Pilsudski (the original transcription in square brackets []). The translation doesn’t reflect the meaning of (-)nuci etc.

3.1 Examples of (-)nuci and related forms

(1) /1 aciga ənini-nuci mookki muktaxani, sinɔktɔ tɔgbemptioni.
The rat mother climbed the tree to gather berries.
/2 udala ənini-nuci daatanduni uisəi xənee kargaxani, aciga ənini tʊgbulisiwɔni tucimi.
The frog mother stayed fixedly under the tree, looking up the rat mother to gather berries.

(2) /1 suun ələu tuzziduni, udala ənini-nuci gisiruukki dapadugacci miktɔmbɔ cigaildxani.
When the sun was almost setting, the frog mother went to cut the rowan tree with the knife.
Cixalindagacci ələ bojo daajjee itxɔni.
When going out to cut the tree, she saw a big beast.
/2 tarinuni too [to9], nooni baaruni amabi turagacci peexani.
That was an elk and he opened the mouth and breathed out toward her with his tongue out.
/3 peeriduni udala ənini-nuci uccini.
At his breathing, the frog mother said.
“toowoo mimbee nuŋbʉ.” taranaçi uccini.
“Elk, swallow me!” thus said.
/4 udala ənini taranaçi uziduni, nuŋbɔxɔni too-nuci nuŋbɔxɔni.
When the frog mother said that, the elk swallowed her.
Too bokkoni dootoini itxɔni.
She entered into the elk’s stomach.
Itxɔni caa gisiruuxi bokkomboni jaari jaar pukɔciwɔni, xarpicixɔni.
Inside the stomach, she cut and ripped it to pieces with the knife.
/5 too muni pakeg tuxɔni.
The elk fell down.
/6 bokkokeeni noɔdxɔni. udala ənini-nuci duktakki ɵɔnuxɔni.
The frog mother came out of the stomach and went home.
Ungacci purilbi gadumi isuxani, tooŋutakki [too mutakki]. coocci tɔldɔxɔni.
She came back to her elk with her children. Then she divided the meat.
/7 purilni-nuci dooricici duktakkeeri maludu suk sunzi urruucici.
The children brought the meat home and piled up behind the fireplace.
Cipal dooricici duktakkeeri, doorimɔri xozixaci.
They finished carrying into the house all the meat.
Xozicceeri cipal iiduxɔci, akpambuddoori.
They all entered the house to sleep.

6 Majewicz (2011: 586) mistyped the word as ot. Ikegami (1987: 209) transcribed the word as toowo, and explained: ‘a kind of deer (bigger than reindeer, found not in Sakhalin but in the continent)’.
The frog mother put all her children to sleep. Then she kept guard.

She kept guard for the rat mother.

At night the rat mother came to steal the meat.

The children went to call a shaman and brought the crow shaman.

The crow shaman sang and divined.

"That is enough," said the rat mother.

After their crow shaman went back, the rat mother said to her children, "My kids, go and take the raven shaman!"

The children went to call a shaman and came back.

The rat mother was told like that, and struggled.

In example (2) above (with successive lines), together with several occurrences of nuci, we can also find the forms like nuni, muci and muni. In examples (5) and (8)/1, Pilsudski transcribed as ucci, which may be interpreted as a transcriptional variant of nuci in question.

3.2 Possible interpretations for (-)nuci

I suggest the following three possible interpretations, in which the last one is proved to be acceptable.

(a) Diminutive suffix resulted from nucci ‘small’?

Pilsudski identified the element in question (-nuci in his transcription) with an adjective nucci ‘small’, and this interpretation, being unsuitable both syntactically and semantically, is
maintained in Majewicz (2011). Pilsudski recognized that the element muci (as well as muci) followed some specific noun phrases, and suggested in his glossary as ‘a nominal suffix’ without defining its meaning (Majewicz 2011:386). If the element is derived from the adjective muci ‘small’, it may function as a diminutive suffix. However, such a suffix usage of muci has not been attested both in the previous materials and from present speakers. Moreover, the occurrences in the text above don’t seem to reflect the diminutive meaning.

(b) Appositional third person plural pronoun nooci ‘they’?

On the basis of some similarity with the third person plural pronoun nooci ‘they’ (sing. nooni), we may regard the element as an appositional pronoun for some emphatic purpose, as in the expression like “The rat mother, she climbed the tree.” The interpretation is again dubious: in addition to the vowel difference, the plurality of the pronoun is incompatible with the preceding singular nominal phrases, such as aciga enini ‘rat mother’. In this connection, we remind that in Udihe, a kind of the third person singular pronoun b/937j/937ni (<b/937j/937-ni ‘body/oneself’-3S) may follow a personal name and function as a honorific title like ‘Mr./Ms.’: e.g. kanchuga b/937j/937ni ‘Mr. Kanchuga’. Such a reading here is also out of context.

(c) Cliticization of the indirect (alienable) possessive form in -ŋu-ci ‘their ‘

Considering that the distinction between n and ŋ is often inconsistent in Pilsuduski’s transcription7, the form muci may well be regarded as -ŋu-ci (<Alienable possessive-3P ‘their … /… of them’), just seen in (5) gaaji-ŋuci and (8)/1 naciga samani ŋuci. It possibly lost the original possessive meaning and changed into a definite or topic marker8. The form -ŋu-ni (with 3S marker) may also have a similar function. It is often the case with other Tungusic or Mongolic languages that an original possessive form develops to a definite or topic marker. Note that in the examples above, each noun phrase with this marker is contextually definite and functions as a subject or topic of the sentence.

The forms -muni/-muci, which appeared only after the word too (possibly from toowo as transcribed by Ikegami 1997:209) may be a reflection of the labial sound of the stem (too-muni/-muci<toowo-ŋuni/-ŋuci).

Such a non-possessive definite usage of -ŋu-ni/-ŋu-ci is generally not found in Ikegami’s text. The frequent occurrence in the above text implies that it may be ascribed to a personal habit of talking. We can find similar examples in Magata 1981 (cf. also Kazama 2001:148), in which the selective meaning of ŋuci is observed from his translation:

wasilaiŋuni goci bojoombo waaxani. “Wasilai, as you know him, hunt a bear again.”
geedaŋuci uccini. “One of them said.”
siŋuci mastta topdo nari. “You, among all, are the very honest man.”

7 Tsumagari 1985:187. In the text above, we find ‘ŋunny’ for ŋunu- (5 and 8/1). The transcriptions samani-nuci (3/2) and samani ŋuci (8/1) may represent the same form samani-ŋuci.
8 I had an opportunity to ask an Uilta speaker about the form ŋuci, who explained the form by analogy with a Russian conjunction a ‘while, as for’.

Though a possessive suffix usually may not follow another possessive form, the construction like [[aciga aní-ní]=nu-ci] implies that the element nu-ci is a clitic whose host can be not a word but a phrase.

4. An example of folk belief concerning a disease
As an additional topic, I would like to point out that the text contains an interesting example of folk belief concerning a disease. We can see the paragraph (9) below9, in which the frog children lost their sight because their mother brought no berries for them:

(9) /1 udala aníni puttoní agdami wuxí, xee xee zildaccini.
The frog children, joyfully croaking, came down to the riverside.
/2 udala puttoní animbi isuxandani, agdami zildaccini.
They shouted, delighted that their mother came back.
/3 aciga aníni puttoní agdami wuxí.
The rat children came down to the riverside.
/4 ceek ceek zildami agdami wuxí, animbi isuxanduni, aciga puttoní.
The rat children came down, joyfully squeaking, delighted that their mother came back.
/5 aciga aníni wuxí, manga bara kurkóm(bó) cak dalupuxí, aciga aníni.
The rat mother gathered many berries, making her basket full.
/6 udala aníni geadadda accini gaddoo,
The frog mother brought not a single berry.
/7 purilli isal cipal toktodonocici xunikku [xun’ukuzi] xunimori.
All the frog children lost their sight in frustration.
/8 cipal kaapaduwaci móñó móñó duktakkeeri.
Both families went up home respectively.

4.1 Lexical explanations for xuni- and xunikku
The Uilta words xunikku and its stem xuni- are attested in Ikegami (1997) in connection with such a disease caused by some frustration:
(a) xuní-ní [stem xuni-] (a child) to have a stomachache without getting what s/he wants. (= xunikulee-ní): puttu xuníxí. “A child had a stomachache wanting a gift from the guest”.
(b) xunikku a (small dog-like) talisman for a child when s/he has a stomachache without getting what s/he wants (when someone visits with no gift). (Ikegami 1997:246)

Pilsudski himself, perhaps on the basis of the present text, listed the words in his glossary with reference to a Nivkh word:

9 In this paragraph, Pilsudski made some mistakes in punctuating the sentences, which were maintained in Tsumagari (2011:107) but are corrected here. See Tsumagari (2014) for details.
4.2 Similar belief among neighboring peoples

We can find the similar folk belief with related words among the neighboring Tungusic people. The following description reports a Nanai case:

When I was invited by a Nanai family and treated with some dishes, the hostess said to me with a smile, “You should taste at least a spoonful of every dish, or you will have xuni.”

What is xuni? It is believed that the visitor who failed to taste any dish will have a stomachache or a minor illness called xuni. To cure a xuni, you have to receive and eat the dish you left. (Kazama 2003:29)

Krejnovich observed in Nivkh a similar disease called kmazind, the word just referred above by Pilsudski. Krejnovich remarks that it is dialectally called xunind, which is clearly related to the Tungusic form:

The Nivkh people in Sakhalin has a belief: some special food such as dog or seal should be shared with others, otherwise the one who was not given it may have an illness called kmazind (in the village Chaivo xunind). Thus they keep it a rule to share such a food with others. If someone of your family came home and became ill, you first has to make clear where s/he was and what s/he saw. After having identified the possible reason for the illness, you should visit the host and ask for a piece of food, cloth, thread or a hair of fur etc. to cure the patient. If you bring back such a gift for the patient, s/he is believed to be cured. In case the illness is worse, you had better cut the gift into pieces and make him/her drink it with water. Of course such a cure has little effect. (Krejnovich 1993:283-284)

It is interesting that Japanese have a traditional eye disease which was believed to be cured by receiving a gift from others, as shown below:

The name of the disease monomorai (lit. ‘to beg a thing; a beggar’) originates from a belief that the eye disease will be cured by receiving a gift from other’s home. The same is true for the dialectal forms such as mekoziki, meboito and mekanzin (lit. ‘eye-beggar’). (A Japanese Etymological Dictionary, Shogakkan 2005:1104)

5. Concluding remarks: Pilsudski and Arsen’ev as collectors of Tungusic materials

In the present paper, I intend to show some values of Pilsudski’s materials both in linguistic and ethnological viewpoints. Finally, I would like to refer to another collector of Tungusic materials of his age, Vladimir K. Arsen’ev (1872-1930), who was a great pioneer of Udihe and
Orochi studies (e.g. Arsen’ev 1995, 2008). Much more attention should be paid for his materials, along with Pilsudski’s. It is particularly worth attention that Arsen’ev possibly made some recordings by wax cylinders, as suggested from the description in his famous book Dersu Uzala. I hope his recordings do exist somewhere waiting for deciphering.

The minority languages of the world are rapidly losing their speakers. Along with the new documentation of living materials, it is also important task for us to find past materials and bring new light on it.

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B.ビウスツキのウイルタ語民話テキストについて

津曲 敏郎
北海道大学

ポーランドの民族学者プロニスワフ・ビウスツキによるツングース諸語資料は、20世紀初頭という比較的早時期における貴重な記録として貴重である。本稿では、彼のウイルタ語資料の中から民話テキストをとりあげ、ウイルタ語原本ならびに内容面を考察する。第１節で彼のツングース諸語資料を概観したのち、第２節では半世紀にわたって採集された同じ民話との比較を行うとともに、周辺諸民族の類話を紹介する。ついて第３節で言語面での特徴として、原文に見られる特異な文法的要素(-)nuiciについて、3人称数動詞所有接続-nyuciが主題標識化したものである、という解釈を示す。さらに第４節では、周辺諸民族に共通する、ある種の民間信仰にかかわる内容が含まれていることを指摘する。最後に、ビウスツキと同時代のツングース諸語資料収集者としてV. K.アルセーニエフがいたことに触れ、危機言語研究においてこうした文献資料の掘り起しが重要であることを述べる。