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**Reminiscences of a bear ceremony of the Turukhan Selkups  
in the context of Selkup bear hunting stories<sup>1</sup>**

The existence of the bear cult among the Selkups was mentioned and its elements were described by lots of ethnologists, historians and linguists. As far as the bear ceremony concerns (which is so common for many peoples of Siberia, including the Selkups' close neighbours Khantys, Evenkis and Kets), the recognized expert in Selkup ethnology, E.D. Prokofieva, who could observe traditional Selkup culture in its blossom in the 1920s supposed that the Selkups might have never had a proper bear ceremonialism at all (Prokofieva 1976: 117). Some elements of the bear ceremony were revealed in Selkup tradition (Shatilov 1927; Uraev 1927; Skalon 1931; Gemuev 1989; Kim 1996), but as far as I am informed, up to recently, no bear ceremony description coming from a ceremony participant and produced in Selkup, has ever been recorded or published. Strangely enough, a rather precise description of a Selkup bear ceremony was recorded during my fieldwork in the Selkup language ruins of the village of Farkovo, Turukhansk district, Krasnoyarsk territory, in 2014 from a Selkup lady of 59 as an episode of her lifestory. The ceremony took place in the early 1960s, the story-teller participated in it being a child of eight.

In the paper I am going to present and to analyze this description both from the viewpoint of its content and its linguistic features, putting it then into the context of a collection of Selkup bear hunting stories recorded during the last two decades from the speakers of the four Taz-Turukhan dialects and of the Ket dialect.

Among other grammar issues, the use of evidential verb forms in the 'bear texts' will be considered.

References

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