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EUROCORES Programme
European Collaborative Research

EuroBABEL

Better Analyses Based on Endangered Languages

**EUROPEAN
SCIENCE
FOUNDATION**

1st International Conference on Language Endangerment:
Documentation, Pedagogy, and Revitalization

Elena Skribnik • Veronika Bauer • Zsófia Kováts

The Relevance of Language Documentation for Language Users

Models and Case Studies from EuroBABEL





The EuroBABEL programme

- "Better Analyses Based on Endangered Languages" (Euro-BABEL)
- 22 research projects from 9 different countries within and beyond Europe
- Running time: 2009-2011
- Research budget: approx. 5 million €



Overview

1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Khanty and Mansi, their recent sociolinguistic situation
2. Currently existing textbooks and dictionaries
3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL"



1. The Ob-Ugric Languages

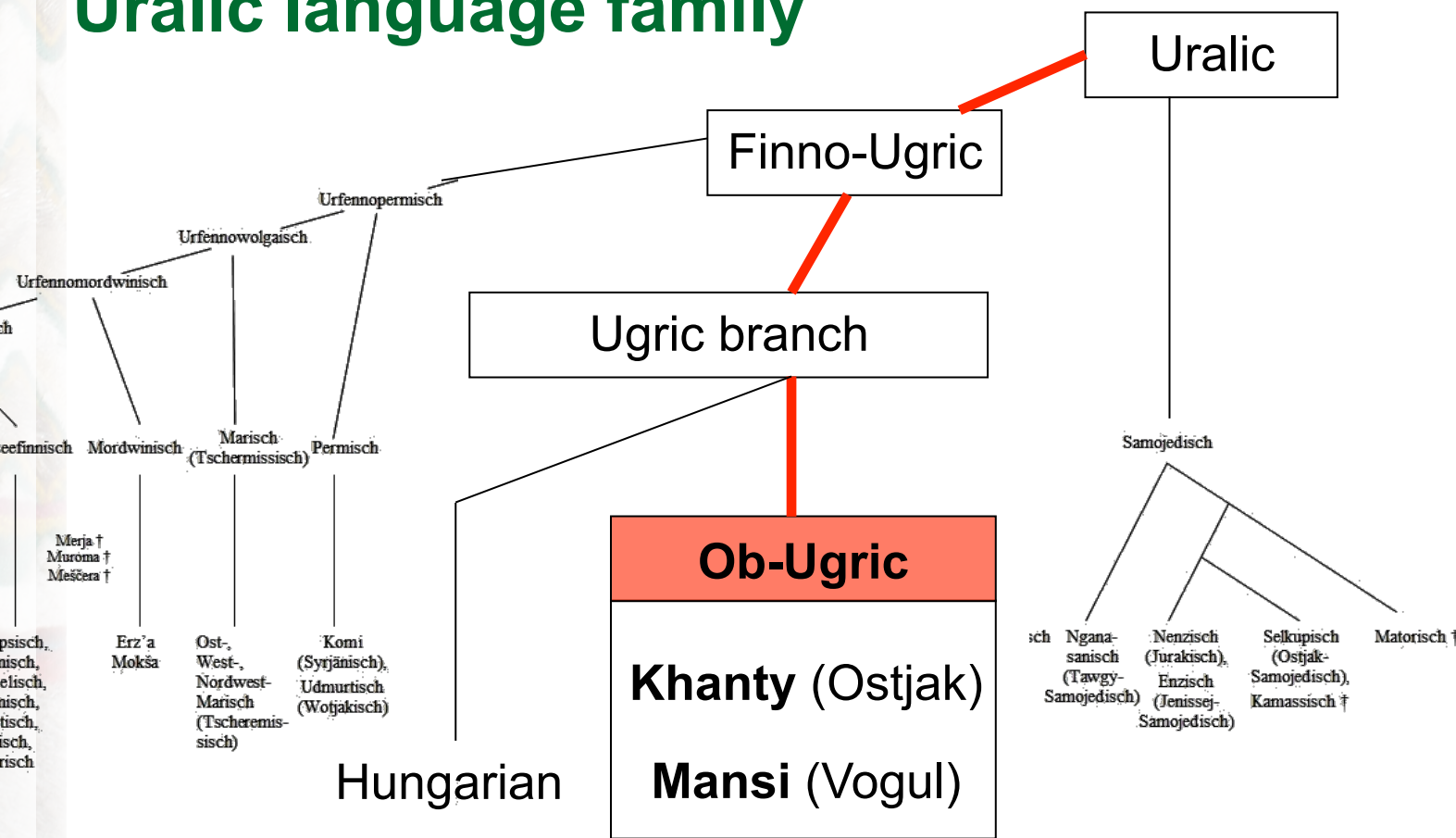
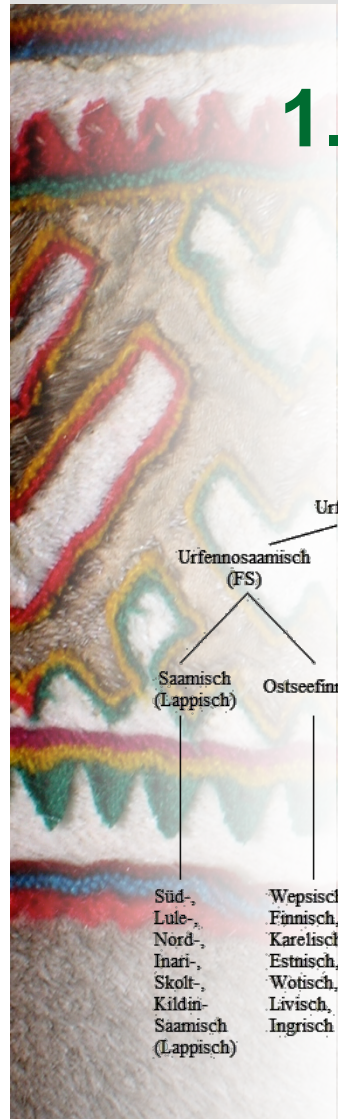


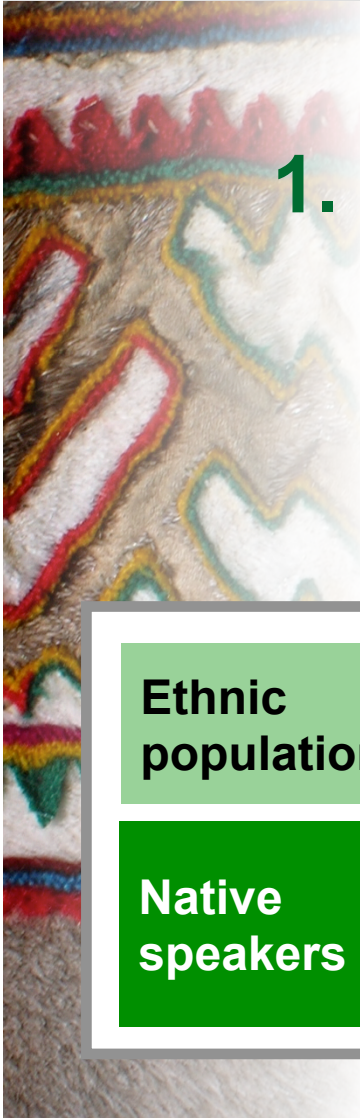
Russian Federation > Western Siberia



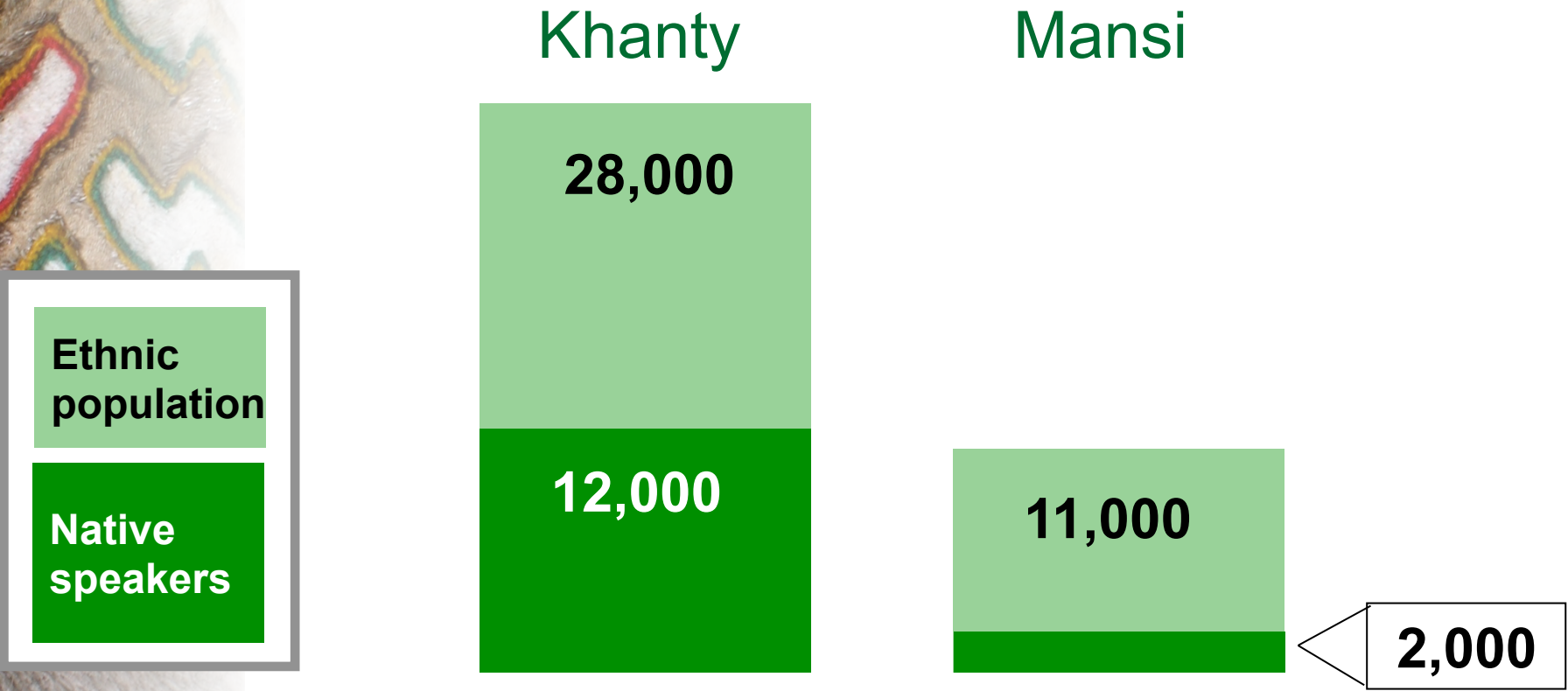


1. The Ob-Ugric languages as a branch of the Uralic language family





1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Census 2002





1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Socio-political developments 1990-2010

- National autonomy with economic rights
- Administrative and financial support of national education and culture
- Four educational and research institutions promoting native expertise, extensive publication activity
- revitalization activities



1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Recent political developments (since 2009)

- Putin 's new policies on nationalities, the strategy of abolishing national autonomies
- New governor declaring that there are no indigenous peoples in her district



1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Recent political developments (since 2009)

- Closing of
 - the Department for Peoples of the North in the district administration
 - closing of the chairs for Khanty and Mansi Philology at the Yugra University of Khanty-Mansiysk
- throttling of publications



1. The Ob-Ugric Languages: Summing up recent political developments

New need for independent platforms and linguistic resources, accessible for native speakers

➔ New tasks for the EuroBABEL project



2. Currently existing textbooks and dictionaries



2.1 Textbooks for national schools

- ABC-books, textbooks, readers
 - uncritical recycling of textbooks from the 1920's
 - for native speakers
- Textbooks with new approach
 - compiled and used mainly at universities
 - low number of copies published



2.2 Dictionaries of Ob-Ugric languages

- Group 1: "By linguists for linguists"
 - ➔ **Of no use for speaker community**
- Group 2: "For bilingual speakers and speakers of Russian"
 - ➔ **Restricted availability and accessibility**
- Group 3: "For language learners"
 - ➔ **Dictionaries as an element of revitalization**



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL"



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL": tasks for the EuroBABEL project

- New need for independent platforms and linguistic resources accessible to native speakers
- New responsibilities both for documentation and for online presentation of linguistic materials



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL": tasks for the EuroBABEL project

- Making the scientific database usable as an educational resource for the language community and the wider public
- Particular attention to teaching materials



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL": our tasks (1)

- Free accessible online text corpus
- Readable for native speakers
- Russian translations



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL": our tasks (2)

- Corpus-based dictionaries including a thesaurus
- Adaptation of translation direction according to user groups
- Compiling textbooks based on methods of teaching foreign languages
(Skribnik & Afanasyeva 2007 for Northern Mansi)

3. Online Documentation

"About the project" Encyclopedic section"

- ABOUT THE PROJECT
- ENCYCLOPEDIA SECTION
- LINGUISTIC SECTION
 - Text Corpus
 - e-Dictionary
 - e-Grammar
 - Tables
 - Interactive Form Generator
- LINKS

The screenshot shows the website header with the LMU logo and project title "EUROBABEL BETTER ANALYSES BASED ON ENDANGERED LANGUAGES". Navigation links include "Index", "Sitemap", "LMU-Homepage", and "Login". Language options for "ENGLISH", "РУССКИЙ", and "DEUTSCH" are provided. The main content area includes a sidebar with "ABOUT THE PROJECT", "ENCYCLOPEDIA SECTION", "LINGUISTIC SECTION", and "LINKS". The main text area features a "Text Corpus (site under construction)" section with a description of the project's goals and a sample of glossed and translated Northern Mansi text: "7 maj - radio xotal".



3. Documentation and pedagogy in "Ob-BABEL"

- Appreciation of the documentation by the older generation
- Transmitting linguistic and cultural knowledge to future generations (bypassing the generation that has chosen Russian)



3. The vision of revitalization

The song of Khanty elders

(documented by the ethnologist Prof. Nadezhda Lukina)

When the oil inside our earth runs dry,

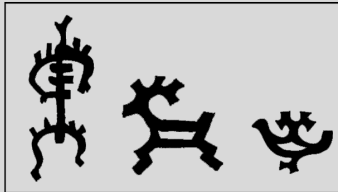
When finally the gas runs out,

Then the earth will start to bear grass again

And we can return to our ancestors ' ways.



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**Thank you
for your attention!**



Literature

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< <http://www.perepis2002.ru/ct/doc/English/4-1.xls> > (2011/03/21)

Salminen, Tapani (2009): Uralic (Finno-Ugrian) languages. Classification of the Uralic (Finno-Ugrian) languages, with present numbers of speakers and areas of distribution.

< <http://www.helsinki.fi/~tasalmin/fu.html> > (2011/03/20).

Skribnik, Elena K. & **Afanasjeva**, Klavdija (2007): "Практический курс мансийского языка 1-2". Ханты-Мансийск: Unknown publishing house.