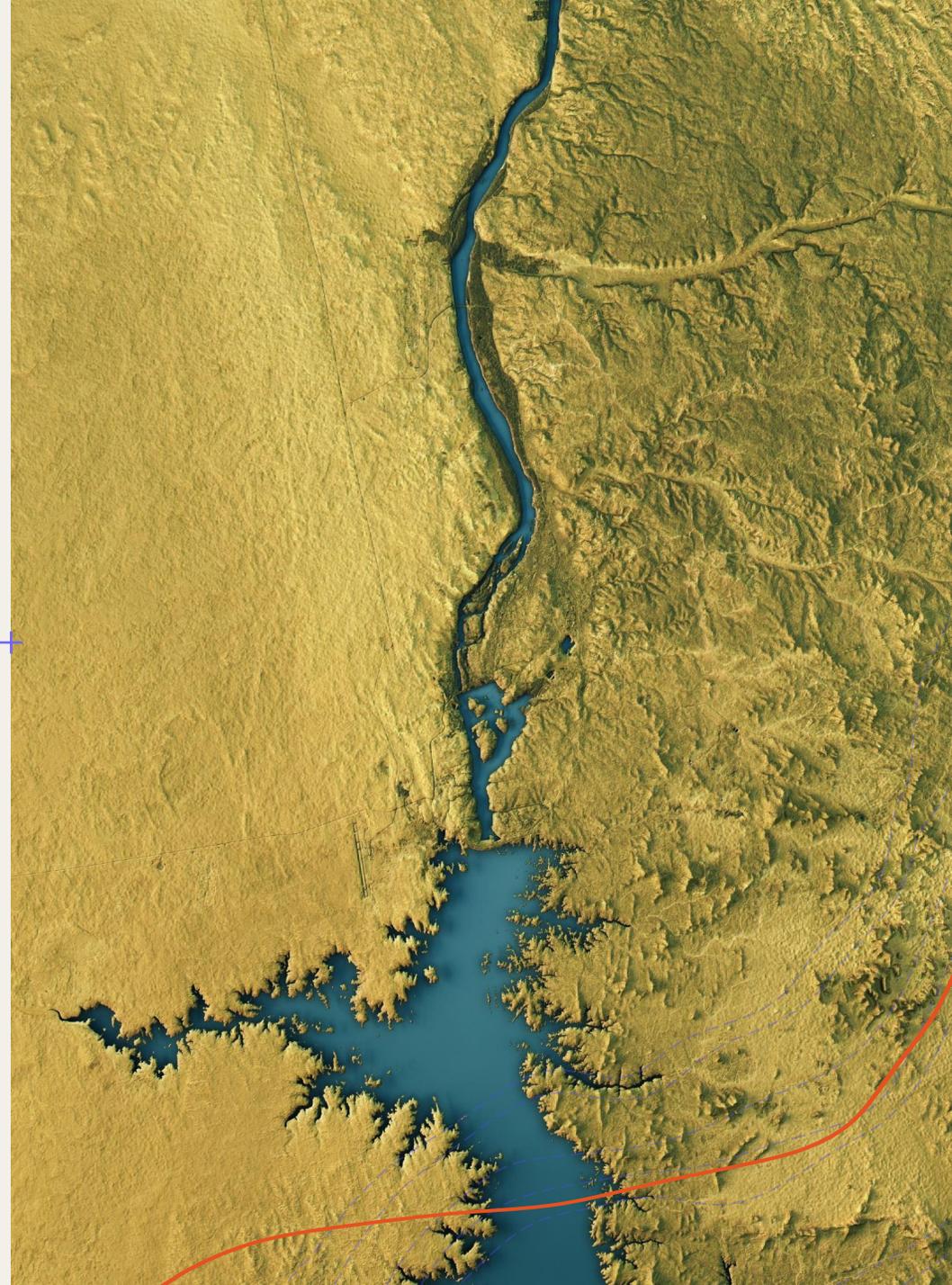


An open-accessed living digital platform for storage and exchange of dynamic toponymic knowledge (based on Evenki place names)

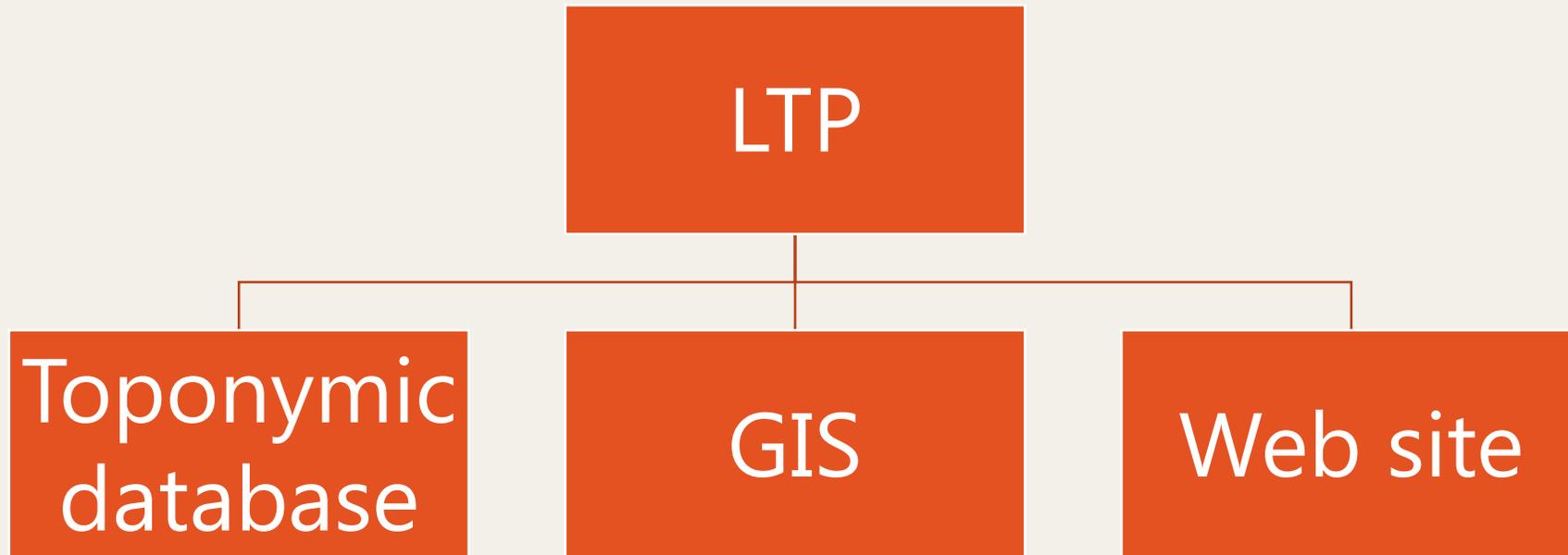
Nadezhda Mamontova, Banting research fellow, University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, Canada

Elena Klyachko, research fellow, Department of Typology and Areal Linguistics, Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia

The research is partially supported by RSF grant No17-18-01649



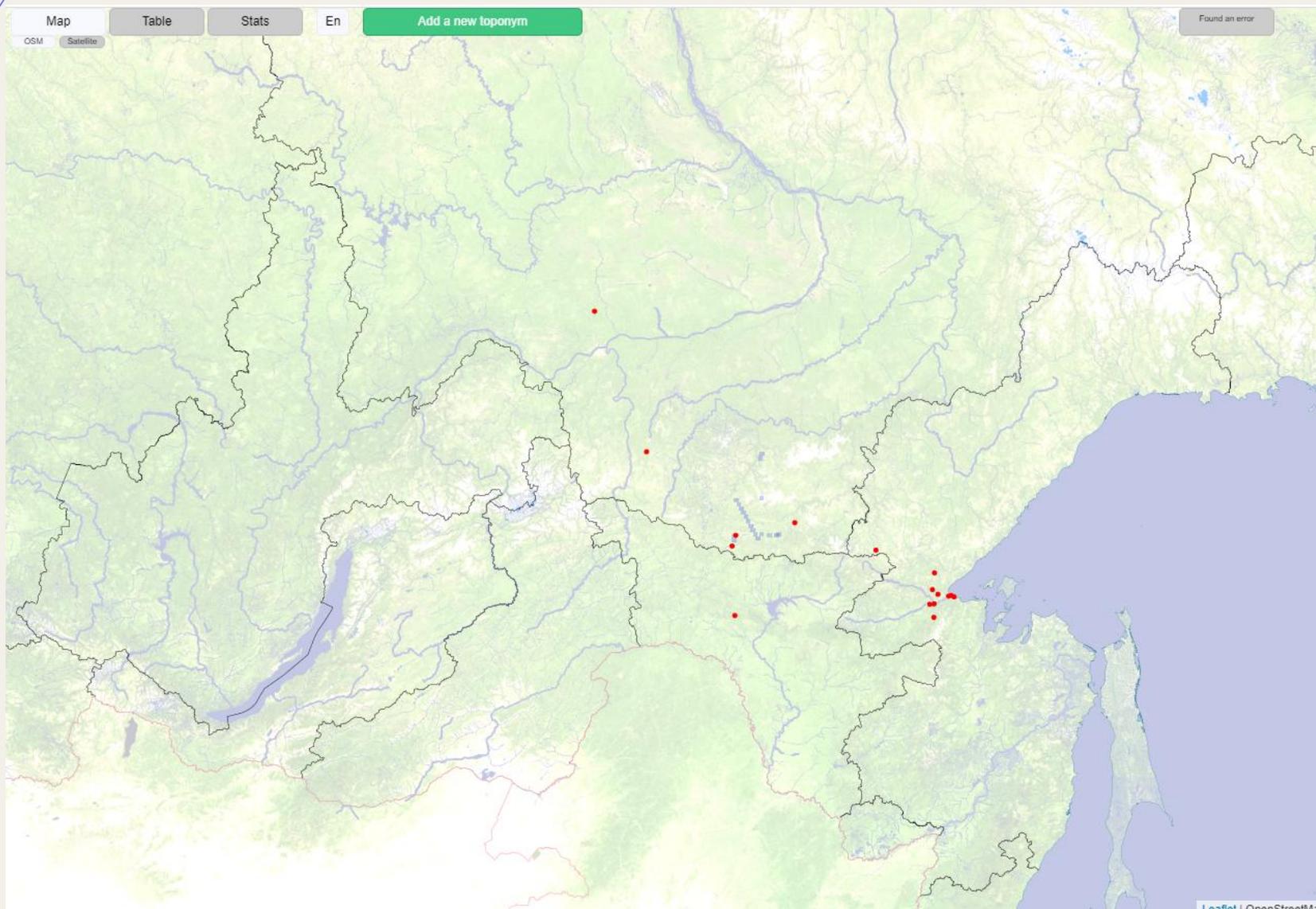
What is a living toponymic platform (LTP)



What are the characteristics of LTP?

- + Toponymic data storage with open access
- + A flexible tool of representing and sharing Indigenous place names knowledge
- + An attempt to bring together Indigenous vernacular cartography (sketch maps, oral stories, narratives about place and space) and GIS technology
- + A community-engaged platform enabling Indigenous communities to contribute, share and exchange their knowledge here-and-now
- + An analytical tool for doing research on Indigenous place names in a comparative perspective
- + An open-ended project (requires minimum supervision; can be adopted to other language communities)

GIS map with toponyms



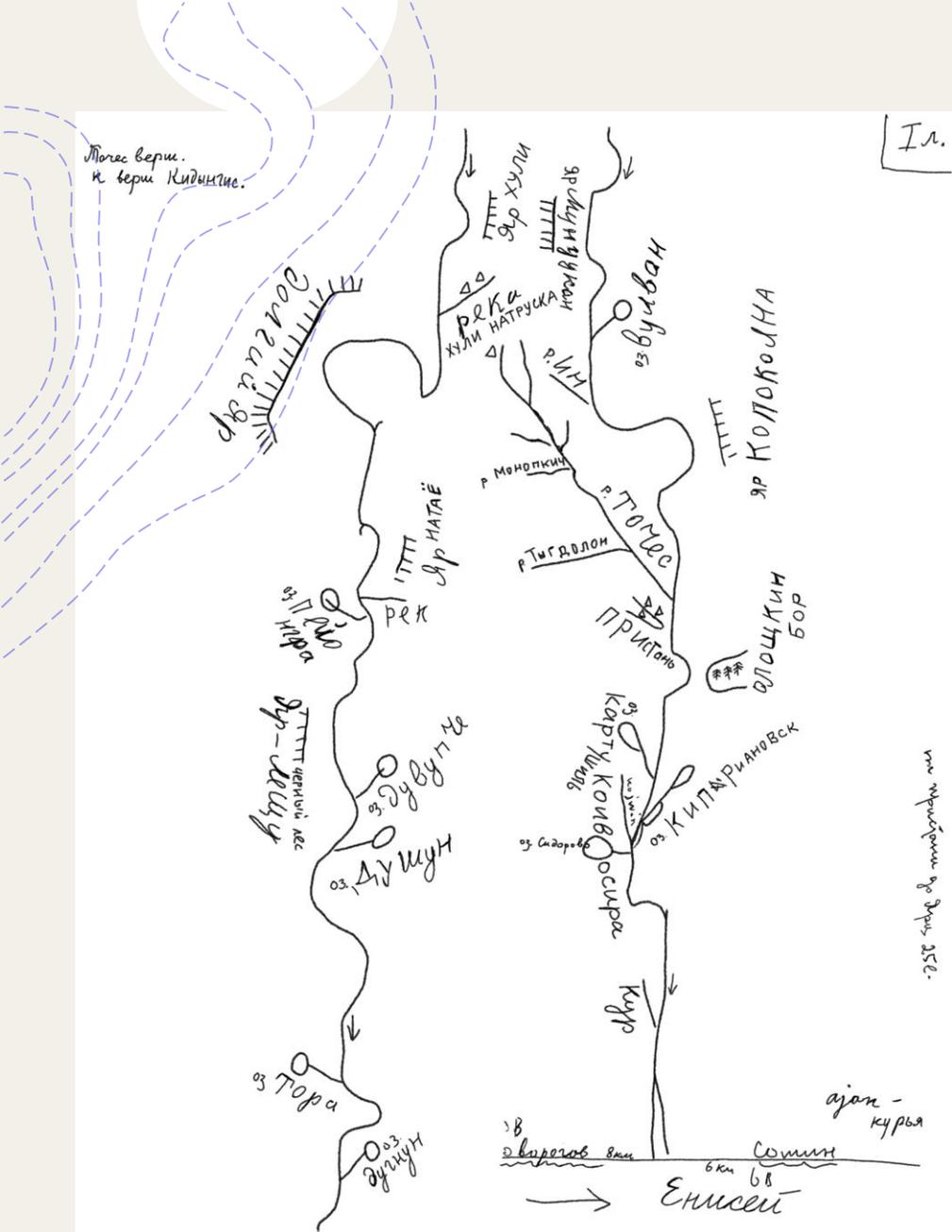
Digital database of Evenki place names

« < 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 > » Page size   Record Count: 1013

	Name	Translation (Russian)	Translation (English)	Motivation (Russian)	Motivation (English)	Comment	Area it belongs to (Russian)	Area it belongs to (English)
  	Болгик	Стланик	NA	флора	flora	куст	None	None
  	Болгикта	Стланик	NA	флора	flora	куст	None	None
  	Болгиктакан	Маленький стланик	NA	флора	flora	куст	None	None
  	Болдикта		NA	неизвестно	unknown		None	None
  	БолодэкиТ	Осенняя стоянка	NA	круг кочевания	nomadic circle		None	None
  	Болсоира Тугульчес		NA	иноязычное	foreign language	кет	None	None
  	Бохорук		NA	неизвестно	unknown		None	None
  	Бугунар		NA	неизвестно	unknown		None	None
  	Буарик	Горелое место	NA	ландшафт	landscape	экотоп	None	None
  	Буарикта	Горелое место	NA	ландшафт	landscape	экотоп	None	None

The location of river systems from Vasilevich's archival maps and the number of riverine names in each system





Toponymic database

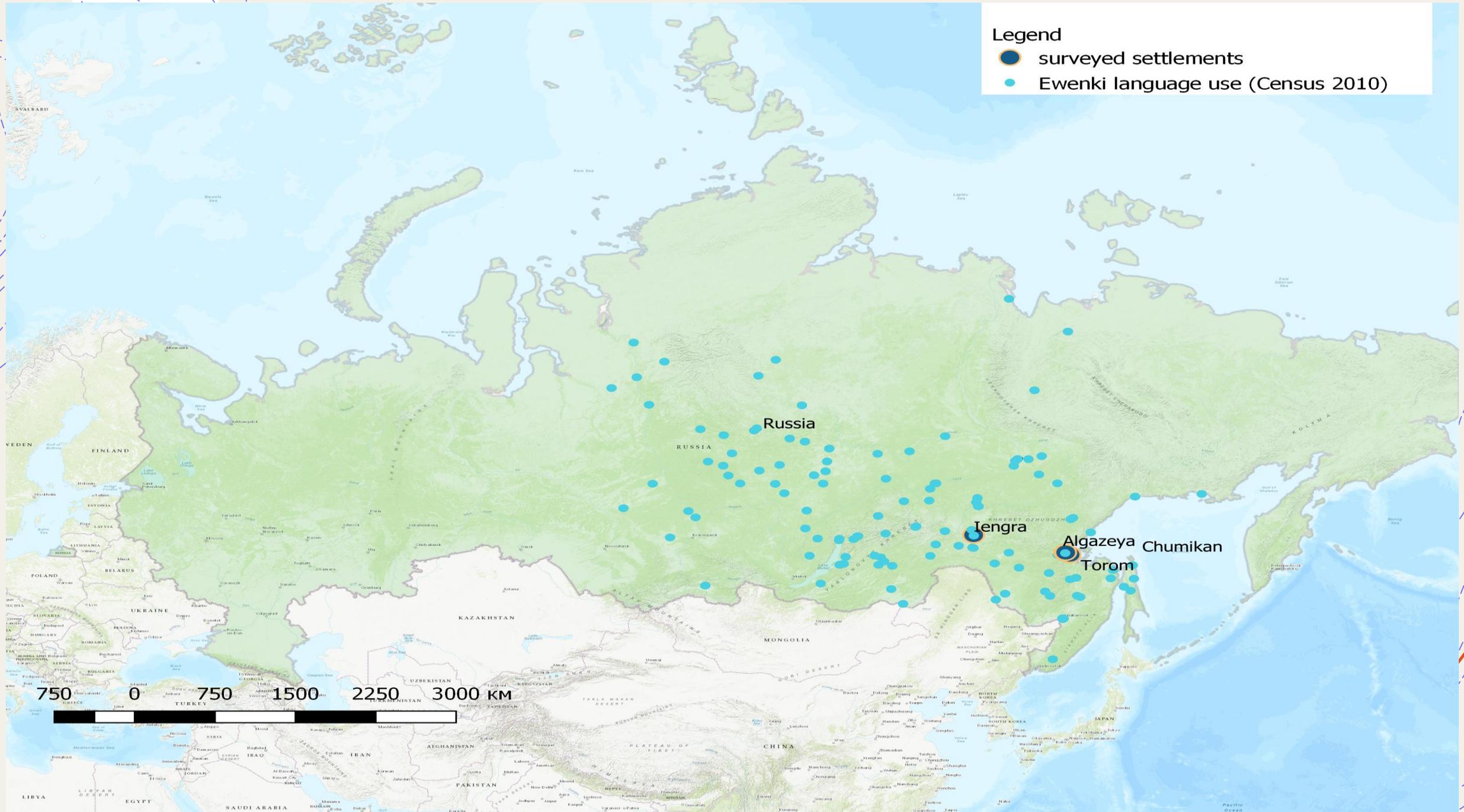
Field materials collected by N. Mamontova from Evenki in Khabarovsk Territory (2017) and Yakutia (2018), 12 maps + 220 toponyms

Vasilevich's archival data from sketch maps collected from Evenki (1920s – 1960s), stored in MAE RAN (uncatalogued), around 1500 toponyms

Evenki place names from the sketch maps published by Adler (2010) *planned*

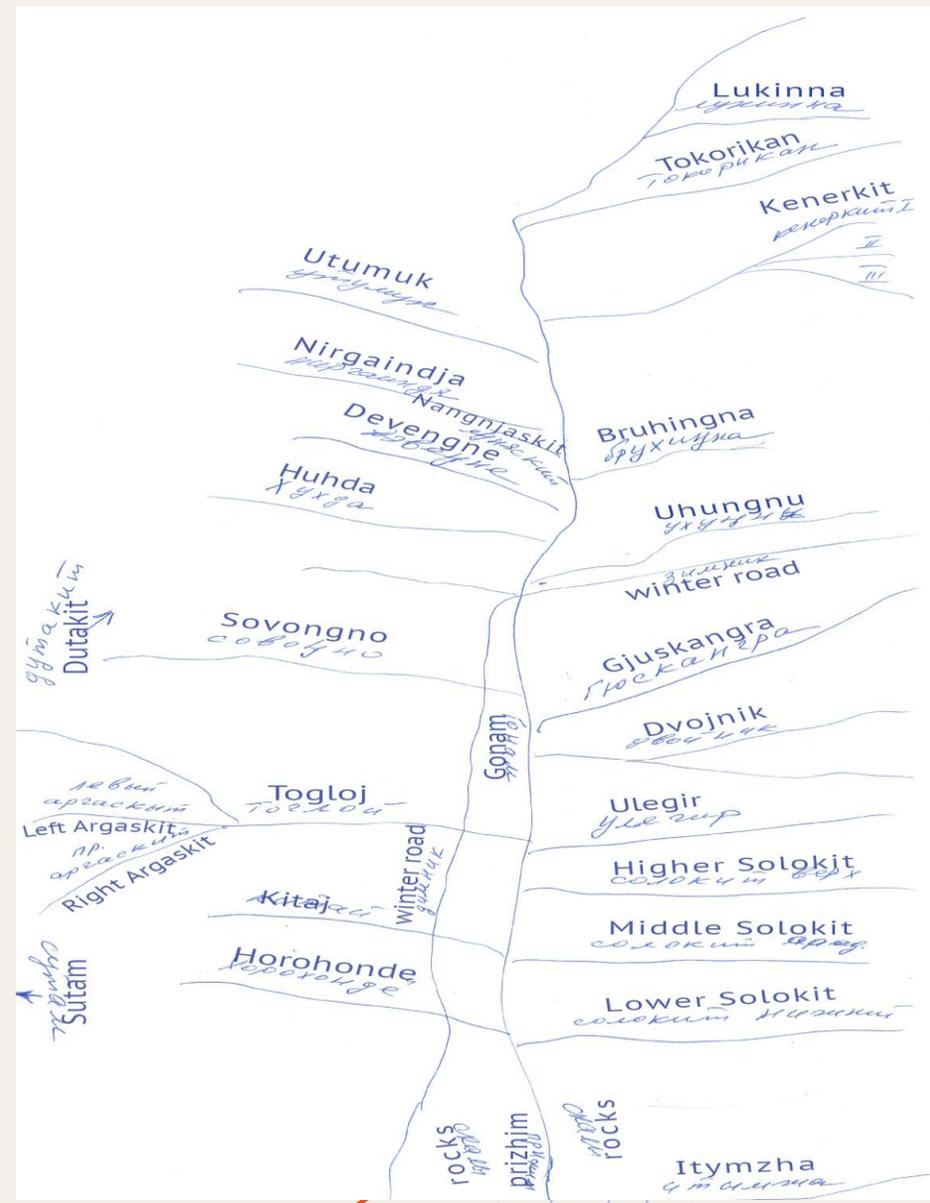
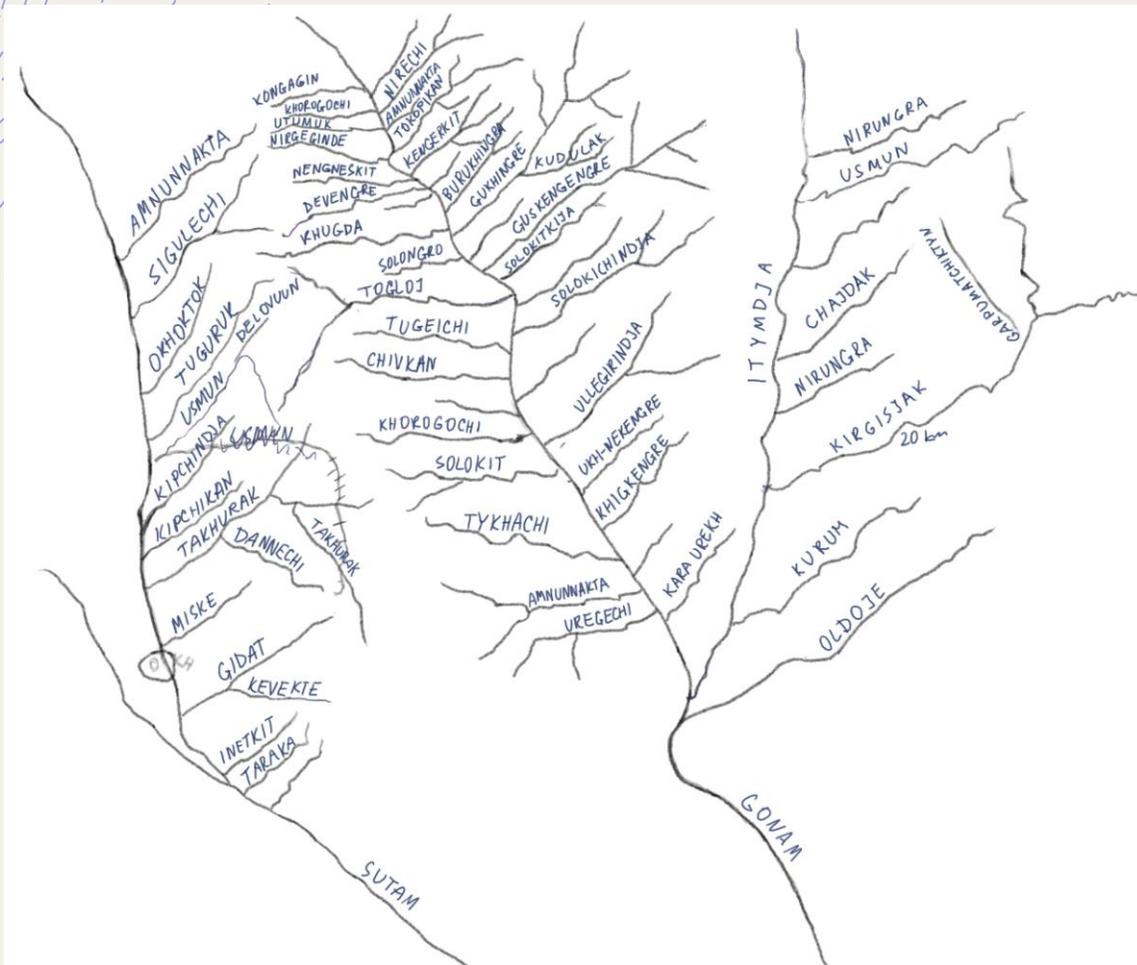
Legend

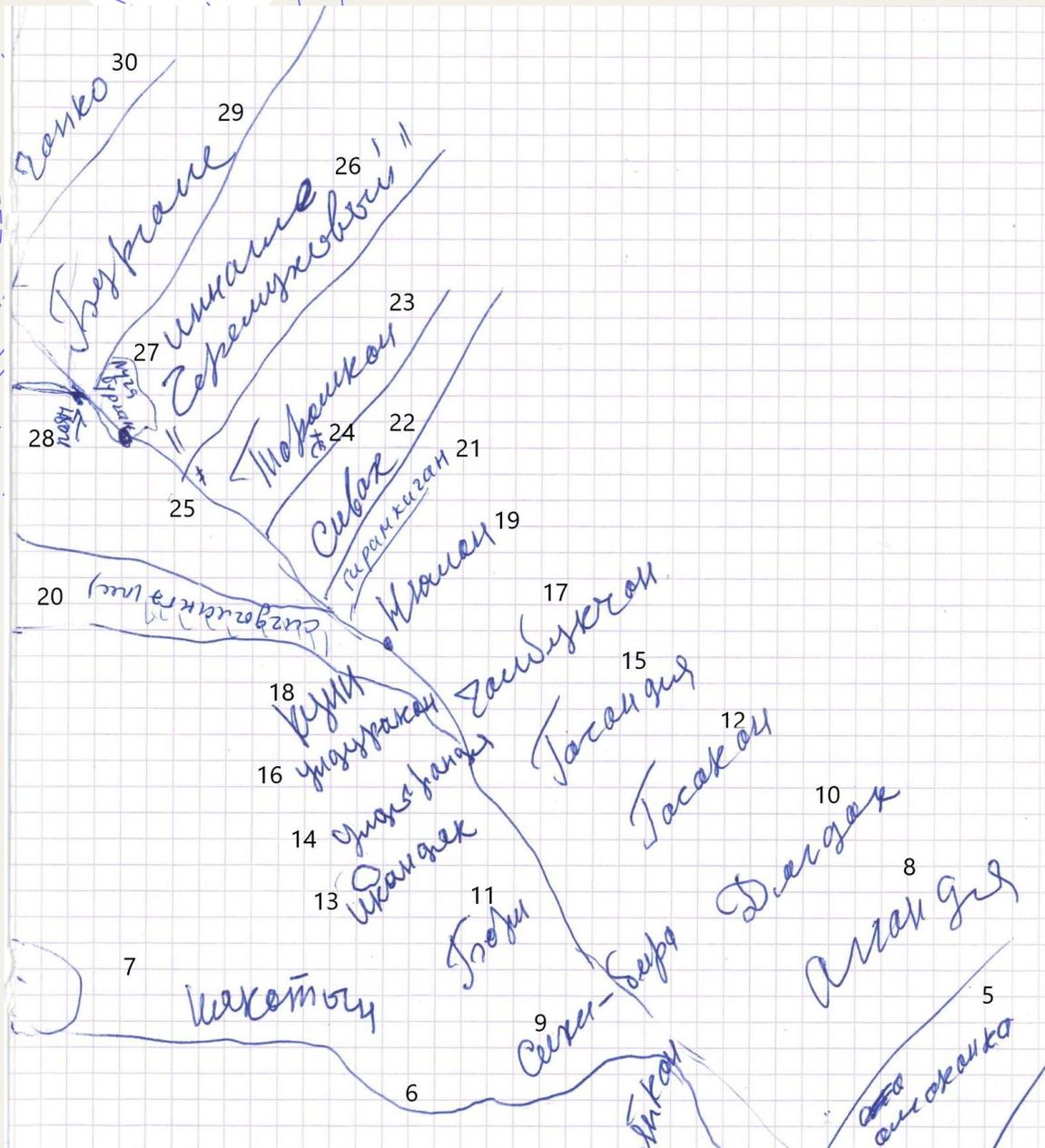
- surveyed settlements
- Ewenki language use (Census 2010)



Variation and change in place names

Two maps representing the Gonam river system: from Vasilevich's archive, 1940s (on the left);
from Iengra village, Yakutia, 2018 (on the right)





Place names as a layered assemblage

The Gatkan river (№ 6) and its possible interpretations:

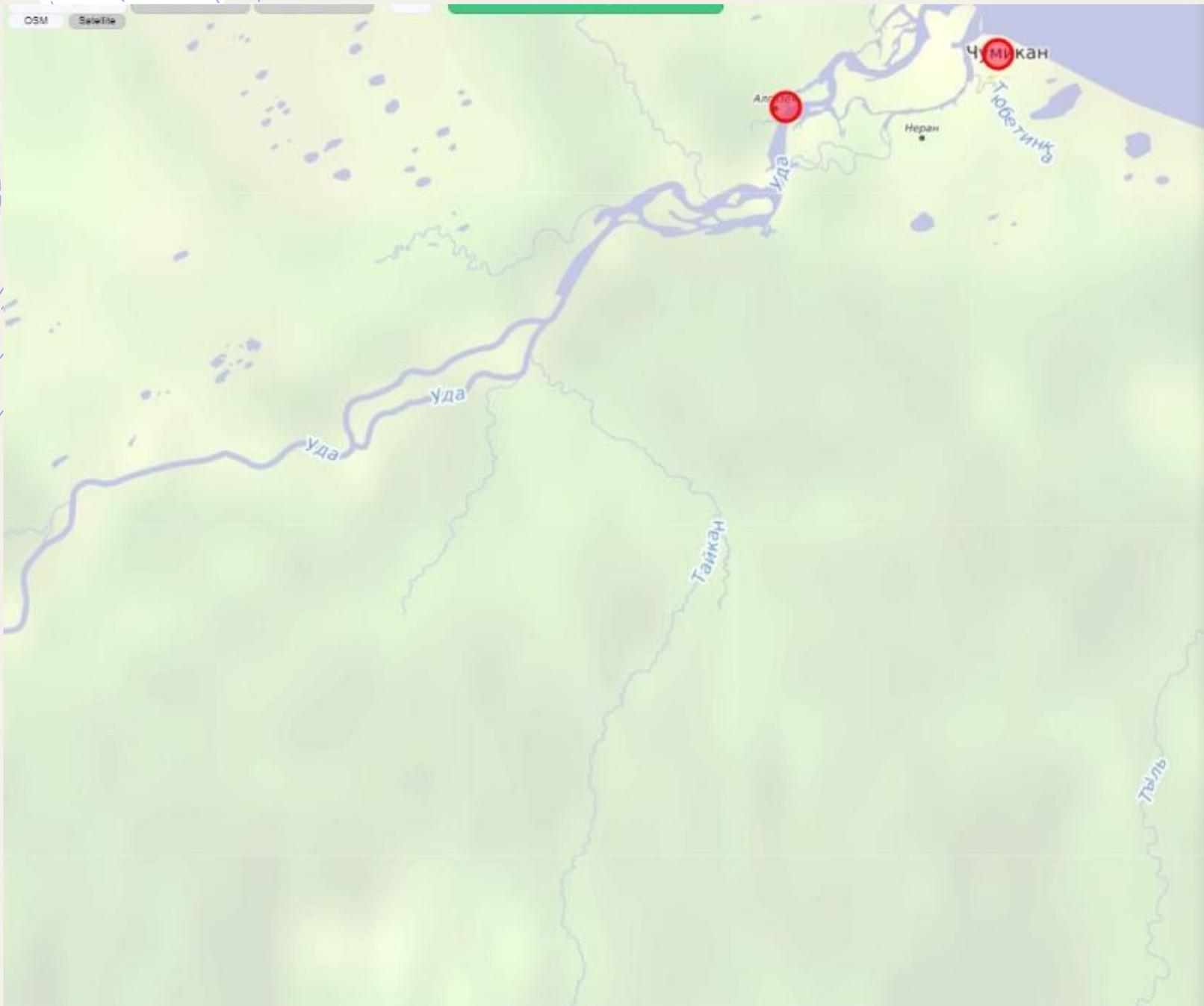
1. gadik, 'place where keta (*O. keta*, a.k.a. dog or chum salmon) is sprawling' (Vasilevich 1958: 81)
2. 'A kind of Pacific fish' with thin and long teeth' (corresponds to chum salmon during sprawling season)
3. The name of a creature or a person whose head people have seen on the river.

Layered simultaneity by Blommaert (2018), when several chronotopes, configurations of space-time in discourse, are synchronised in a way to form a new one, which is more adequate to here-and-now (Mamontova and Thornton 2022).

The map created by Vladimir Koryakin, Torom, Khabarovsk Territory, 2017 (collected by N. Mamontova)

Why a living platform?

- + Open access
- + Minimum editing and supervision
- + Participation in the project after its completion (the platform will remain 'live')
- + Intuitive entry thresholds (easy to add information)
- + Potentially rich and diverse toponymic data, not limited to toponyms only
- + It allows to collect data on changes in toponyms or their etymologies, including multilayered meanings and associated narratives.



Type: river

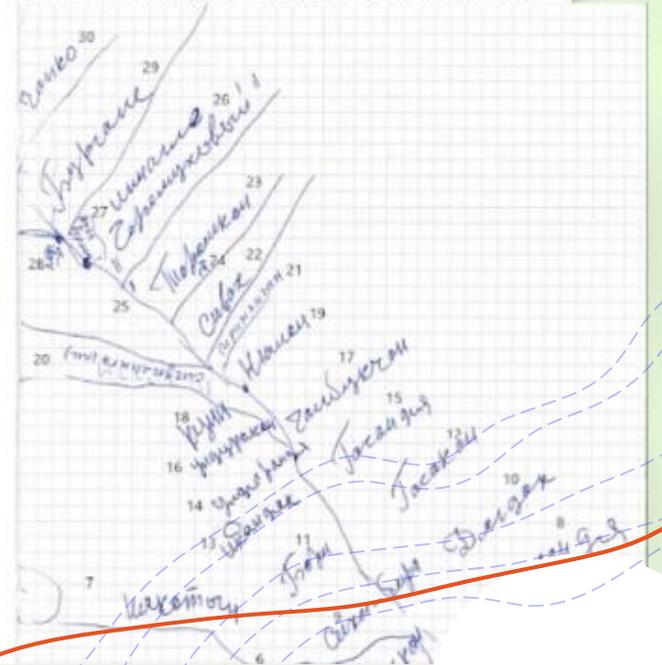
Language: Evenki

Narrative: There is a lot of "gadik" (keta) in some rivers. You cannot cross them barefoot (because the summer keta has long teeth and it can bite you)

Etymology:

1. 'A kind of keta with thin and long teeth' (corresponds to chum salmon during sprawling season) (see gadik, 'place where keta (O. keta, a k.a. dog or chum salmon) is sprawling' (Vasilevich 1958: 81))
2. The name of a creature or a person whose head people have seen on the river

Source: Narrative recorded by Olga Kazakevich and Elena Kiyachko from Konstantin Semyonovich Solovyov (Tugur); map created by Vladimir Koryakin, Torom, Khabarovsk Territory, 2017 (collected by N. Mamontova)



Object type:

Toponym (title)

Transliteration

Nearest landmark

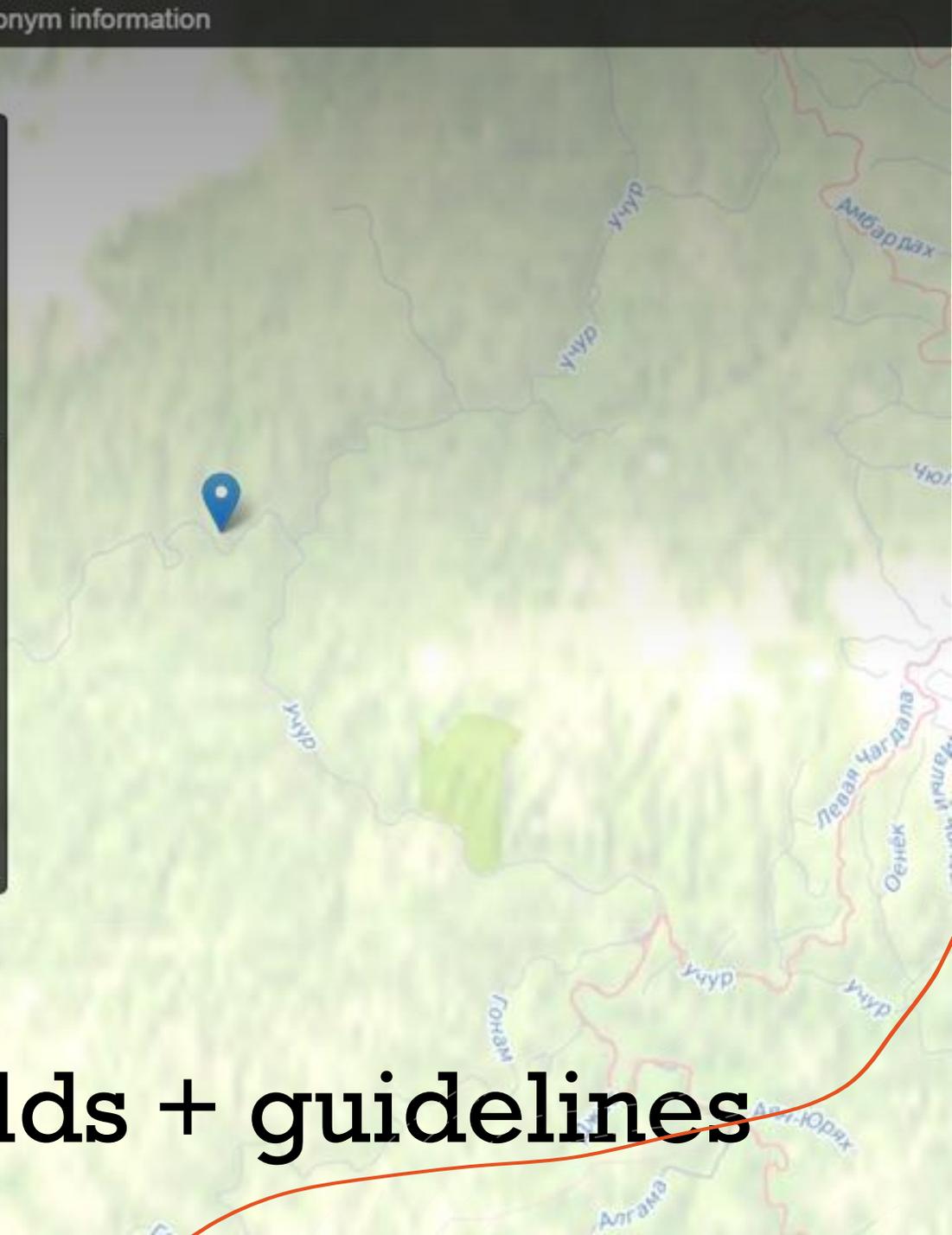
Toponym language:

Link to the file (a picture, a sketch map, video etc)

<< Tell us about the toponym

Save Cancel

- You can also answer the following questions
- Who have you learnt the place name from?
 - Who uses this place name in your community or beyond?
 - When did people start to use the place name?
 - Do you know why people call it this way?
 - How did people use to call this place in the past?
 - How is this place named on the map?
 - How would you define this place in your language?
 - What do you usually do there?
 - Do you know any stories, legends or tales about this place
- Or specify anything else about the place name



Intuitive entry thresholds + guidelines

Names and Narratives

- + Cultural connection with the place
- + Etymology
- + Spiritual associations (see an example) →
- + Subsistence activities (e.g., hunting stories)
- + Mythology (narratives explaining how the named objects appeared or the names were invented)
- + The concept of interanimation by Keith Basso (1996: 107), places provoke a network of associations about past and present, they animate the ideas and feelings in people who attend these places. Such information is absent in more conventional toponymic databases.

Toponym: Toromkon

Type: river

Language: Evenki

Narrative: You must definitely stand by [the grave], smoke, talk a bit, like, "I have come, excuse me, I'm hunting here", and then you share something. Whatever you have, you need to put it [on the grave]. It happens that [the spirit] may disturb you. One year I went to their [the Safronovs'] hunting territory. Once at night I woke up in the tent. The night was moon-lit, and there was a big man sitting by the stove. It was Ehekend'a, there was his grave there. I was frightened. The black silhouette was sitting near the stove like this (he crossed his arms on his belly and bent forward – N.M.). I wanted to go out to the toilet, but I got scared. I had to wait until the morning. In reality. He kept sitting. He was sitting, and the moon was light. Such a shade from a man. I asked Ivan about that. He told me, there is a grave nearby, a little hill, Ehekend'a's grave, a grandfather

Source: Narrative recorded by Nadezhda Mamontova from Yakov Petrovich Porotov, born in 1954, Torom, Khabarovsk Territory, 2017; map draw by Stepan Safronov, Torom, Khabarovsk Territory, 2017

Place name with its etymology

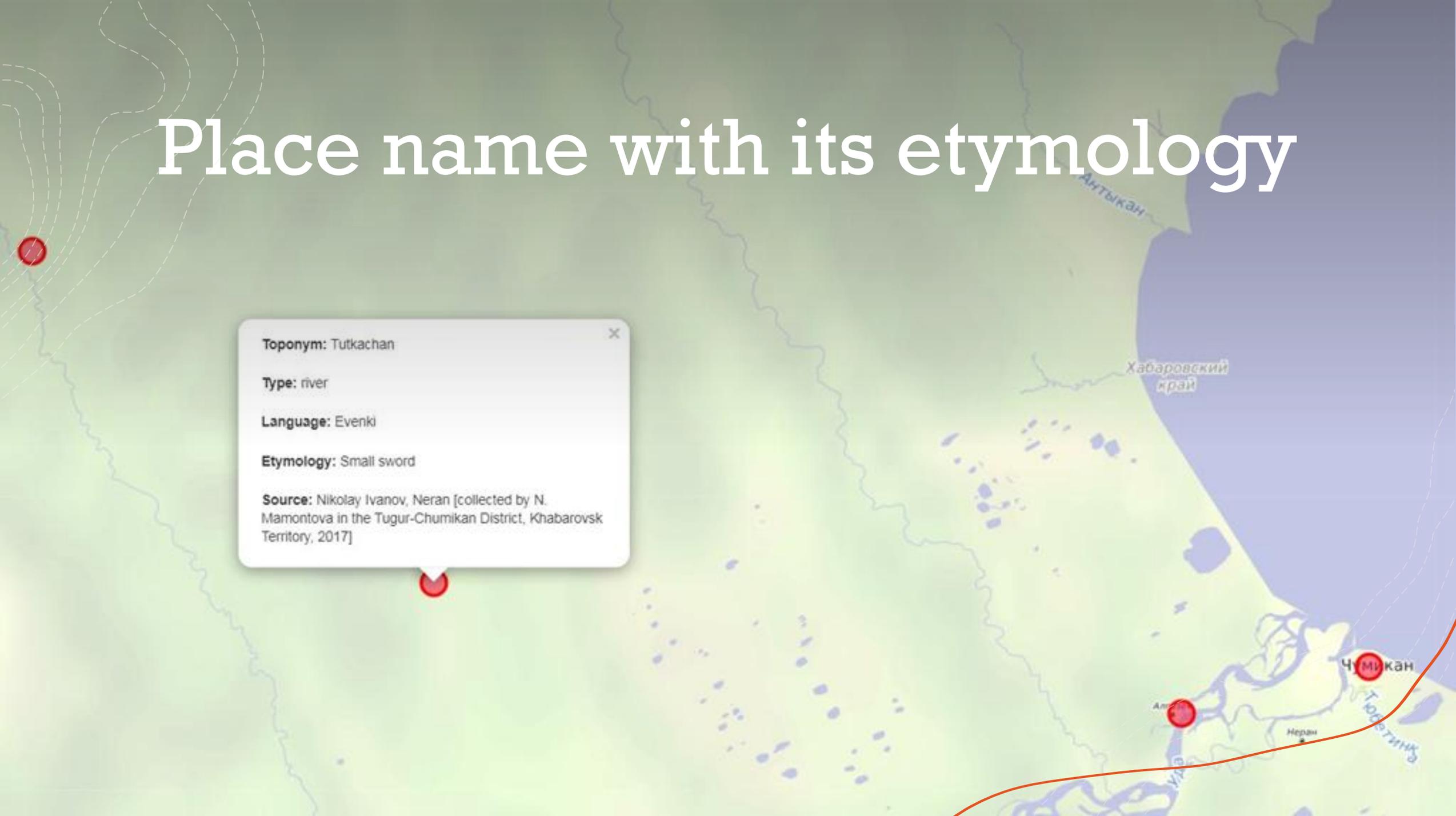
Toponym: Tutkachan

Type: river

Language: Evenki

Etymology: Small sword

Source: Nikolay Ivanov, Neran [collected by N. Mamontova in the Tugur-Chumikan District, Khabarovsk Territory, 2017]



Thank you for your attention!

The Society for Endangered Languages
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