

## NIVKH AS A URALO-SIBERIAN LANGUAGE

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In his magnificent book on the language relations across Bering Strait (1998), Michael Fortescue does not consider Nivkh (Gilyak) to be a Uralo-Siberian language. Elsewhere I have argued that the Indo-European verbal system can be understood in terms of its Indo-Uralic origins (2001). All of these languages belong to Joseph Greenberg's Eurasiatic macro-family (2000). In the following I intend to reconsider the grammatical evidence for including Nivkh into the Uralo-Siberian language family. The Indo-Uralic evidence is of particular importance because it guarantees a time depth which cannot otherwise be attained.

Nivkh initial consonants are subject to mutations which are strongly reminiscent of Celtic. Adopting Ekaterina Gruzdeva's transcription (1998) except for the uvulars  $q$ ,  $q'$ ,  $\bar{g}$ ,  $\bar{x}$ ,  $\bar{y}$  and the velar nasal  $\eta$ , we can summarize the alternations as follows:

- (1)  $p$ ,  $t$ ,  $t'$ ,  $k$ ,  $q$  become  $v$ ,  $r$ ,  $z$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\bar{y}$  after a vowel (which may have been lost) and analogically in certain categories;
- (2)  $p$ ,  $t$ ,  $t'$ ,  $k$ ,  $q$  become  $b$ ,  $d$ ,  $d'$ ,  $g$ ,  $\bar{g}$  after a nasal (which may or may not be lost);
- (3)  $p$ ,  $t$ ,  $t'$ ,  $k$ ,  $q$  become  $f$ ,  $\check{r}$ ,  $s$ ,  $x$ ,  $\bar{x}$  after the 2sg. prefix  $\check{c}$ - and the reflexive prefix  $p'$ -;
- (4)  $p'$ ,  $t'$ ,  $\check{c}$ ,  $k'$ ,  $q'$  become  $f$ ,  $\check{r}$ ,  $s$ ,  $x$ ,  $\bar{x}$  under the same conditions as (1) and (3) but remain unchanged under the conditions of (2);
- (5)  $p'$ ,  $t'$ ,  $\check{c}$ ,  $k'$ ,  $q'$  become  $v$ ,  $r$ ,  $z$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\bar{y}$  after the 3sg. prefix  $i$ -/ $e$ - in ablauting and cluster-initial verbs, e.g.  $iyd'$  'kills' of the verb  $k'u$ - 'kill' (cf. Krejnovič 1958: 23f., Mattissen 2001: 142-146).

On the basis of these alternations I reconstruct \*VC for the voiced fricatives, \*VNC for the voiced stops, \*VHC for the voiceless fricatives, and \*HC for the aspirated stops, where \*C represents  $p$ ,  $t$ ,  $t'$ ,  $k$ ,  $q$ . Moreover, \*VNHC > \*VHC and \*VHCC > \*VCC. If \*H developed from \* $h$  < \* $s$ , this brings the original consonant system rather close to the one reconstructed for Proto-Uralic (cf. Kortlandt 2001: 7).

Among the morphological elements for which I have suggested an Indo-Uralic origin (2001: 5f.), the following are likely candidates for a comparison with Nivkh (I retain the numbering of Greenberg 2000):

1. first person *\*m*,
4. second person *\*t*,
8. demonstrative *\*i/e*,
11. demonstrative *\*t*,
12. demonstrative *\*s*,
14. dual *\*ki*,
15. plural *\*t*,
25. genitive *\*n*,
44. participle *\*nt*,
45. participle *\*l*,
46. verbal noun *\*s*,
54. reflexive *\*u/w*.

Other possible connections are less convincing. Nivkh case markers and postpositions appear to have a lexical source (cf. Panfilov 1962: 143-156 and Mattissen 2001: 93). The Uralic participle in *\*-pa* (Collinder 1960: 270) and the Nivkh gerund in *\*-pa* (Panfilov 1965: 145) may represent the only Uralo-Nivkh formation without an Indo-European cognate unless they are related to the root of the English verb 'to be'. The reconstruction of interrogative *\*k* and relative *\*j* is highly questionable.

The principal evidence for the Uralo-Siberian character of the Nivkh language is provided by the pronominal elements *\*m*, *\*t*, *\*i/e*, *\*t*, *\*s*, *\*u/w*. The personal pronouns are the following (cf. Gruzdeva 1998: 25f.; my reconstructions):

- 1sg. *n'i*: *\*n'i*,  
 1du. *megi/mege, meŋ, memak*: *\*meŋki*,  
 1pl.in *mer/mir, meŋn/miŋn, min*: *\*mer*,  
 1pl.ex *n'yŋ, n'in*: *\*n'iŋ*,  
 2sg. *či*: *\*či*,  
 2pl. *čyŋ, čin*: *\*čiŋ*,  
 3sg. *if, i, jaŋ*: *\*iw*,  
 3pl. *imy, ivŋ, imy, iŋn, in*: *\*iwŋ*.

These paradigms can be derived from the Indo-Uralic pronouns 1sg. *\*mi*, 1du. *\*men-ki* ('the two of us'), 1pl. *\*me-t*, 2sg. *\*ti*, 3sg. *\*i/e* (cf. Kortlandt 2001: 9f.), where sg. *\*mi*, *\*ti*, pl. *\*me* are the reconstructed stems and *\*-n*, *\*-ki*, *\*-t* are the suffixes for genitive, dual and plural mentioned above. The Indo-Uralic cognates suggest that Nivkh *n'i* and *či* developed phonetically from *\*mi* and *\*ti*, respectively. While the latter development is commonplace, the former is remi-

niscent of Czech [mnʹ] < *mj-*, e.g. in *město* [mnʹesto] ‘city’, also (as Jos Schaecken reminds me) North Russian [nʹ] < [mnʹ] < \**-mj-*, e.g. *na zenʹ* ‘on the ground’, *na zenʹ* ‘to the ground’ (Zaliznjak 1995: 62, Honselaar 2001: 23). It has been suggested that the pronominal stem *me-* must be derived from the numeral stem *me-* ‘two’ (cf. Austerlitz 1959: 109, Panfilov 1962: 205f.). This is highly improbable because it does not explain the occurrence of *me-* in the plural, the semantic contribution of the suffixes, and the unexpected order of the pronominal and the numeral element (cf. Greenberg 1997: 192), cf. also *megi men* ‘we two’ (Panfilov 1962: 233), which cannot possibly be glossed as \*‘two-du. two’. I reconstruct \**iw* for 3sg. *if*, oblique stem *iv-*, because this pronoun is limited to the Amur dialect, where \**w* > *v* (cf. Gruzdeva 1998: 11), and corresponds to *i*, oblique stem *j-* in Sakhalin (cf. Mattissen 2001: 20). It seems attractive to derive this \**-w* from the Indo-Uralic reflexive element \**u/w*, which may have been used as a reinforcement of the 3sg. pronoun \**i/e*. The Indo-Uralic demonstratives \**t-* and \**s-* are reflected in the Nivkh demonstrative stems *t-* ‘this’ and *h-* ‘that’ (cf. Gruzdeva 1998: 26, Mattissen 2001: 21).

Apart from the personal pronouns, there are personal prefixes which denote the possessor of a following noun or the undergoer of a following verb form (cf. Mattissen 2001: 62ff. for the distribution of the allomorphs):

1sg. *nʹ-*, *nʹi-*, *nʹe-*, *n-*,  
 2sg. *č-*, *či-*, *če-*, *tʹ-*,  
 3sg. *i-*, *v(i)-*, *j-*, *e-*,  
 reflexive *pʹ-*, *pʹi-*, *pʹe-*,  
 reciprocal *u-*, *v-*, *o-*.

On the basis of the alternations in the root-initial consonant I reconstruct the following paradigms (cf. Mattissen 2001: 66-69):

*paḅ* ‘stone’,  
*nʹvaḅ* ‘my stone’ < \**mi-*,  
*čfaḅ* ‘your stone’ < \**tis-*,  
*pʹfaḅ* ‘one’s own stone’ < \**pis-*,  
*ibaḅ* ‘his/her stone’ < \**in-*,  
*nʹyḅbaḅ* ‘our stone’ < \**minkun-*,  
*nʹzadʹ* ‘beats me’ < \**mi-*,  
*čsadʹ* ‘beats you’ < \**tis-*,  
*pʹsadʹ* ‘beats him/herself’ < \**pis-*,  
*zadʹ* ‘beats someone’ < \**i-*,  
*idʹadʹ* ‘beats him/her’ < \**in-*,  
*nʹyḅdʹadʹ* ‘beats us’ < \**minkun-*,

where *\*-kun* is the plural suffix (cf. Gruzdeva 1998: 16, Greenberg 2000: 116). The 3sg. possessive prefix *v(i)-*, which is limited to the Amur dialect, apparently represents *\*iwin-* and may have been introduced when initial *\*i-* was lost. The final nasal of possessive *\*in-* may represent the original genitive suffix *\*-n* and may have been introduced into the verbal prefix for emphasis (cf. Mattissen 2001: 65). The reconstruction of final *\*-s* in *\*tis-* and *\*pis-* accounts both for the following voiceless fricative and for the aspiration of the preceding plosive after the syncope of the intervening vowel.

The labial element of *p'i-* has no obvious etymology. It is reminiscent of Latin *ipse* 'self', but also of dative *sibī*, Greek pl. *sphi* < *\*sb<sup>hi</sup>* beside sg. *hoi* < *\*swoi* (for earlier *\*sui*, cf. Kortlandt 2001: 9), Slavic *sebě*, of which *p'i-* could be the phonetic reflex, further Prussian *supš* 'self', Gothic *sibja* 'clan', *silba* 'self', cf. Greek *philos* 'dear', Indo-European *\*b<sup>hi</sup>* 'near', which is perhaps related to Nivkh *fid'* 'be in a place', *p'inj* 'inhabitant' (Greenberg 2000: 146). The prefix *p'i-* may have ousted *u-* from its original reflexive function into secondary reciprocal use, as in Russian *oni celujutsja* 'they kiss each other' but *oni celujut sebja* 'they kiss themselves', cf. Nivkh *ozmud'* 'love each other' versus *p'ezmud'* 'love him/herself' (Panfilov 1965: 52). This idea is supported by the possibility of identifying the labial of the 3sg. possessive prefix *v(i)-* < *\*iwin-* with the reciprocal verbal prefix *u-*, as was suggested above. It allows us to identify the latter with the Indo-Uralic reflexive morpheme *\*u/w* (cf. Kortlandt 2001: 14).

The verbal ending *-d'*, *-t'*, *-d*, *-nd*, *-nt*, *-t* < *\*-nt(i)* (Gruzdeva 1998: 22, 33) can be identified with the Indo-Uralic participial suffix *\*nt* (cf. Collinder 1960: 269f., 277f., Greenberg 2000: 184f.). It is found in finite and infinite verb forms and in participles and verbal nouns in Nivkh, Uralic, and Indo-European (cf. Panfilov 1962: 64-68, 1965: 153f., Kortlandt 2001: 16) and is therefore a strong piece of evidence for a common origin. Another participial formation which may have been inherited are the verbal adjectives in *\*-l-* (cf. Panfilov 1965: 85-88, Greenberg 2000: 190), e.g. Latin *bibulus*, Nivkh *raxyła n'ivx* 'drinker, drunkard', as opposed to *ra n'ivx* 'drinker, person drinking'. This suffix is found in iterative verbs in Uralic (cf. Collinder 1960: 275f.). Finally, the Indo-Uralic verbal noun in *\*-s-* (cf. Collinder 1960: 271, Greenberg 2000: 191f.) may be reflected in the Nivkh deverbal nouns in *-s/-ř* < *\*-s-t(i)* denoting subject, object, instrument or result and in *-f* < *\*-s-p(i)* denoting place of action or result (Panfilov 1962: 41-48, Gruzdeva 1998: 22). The labial of the latter suffix may again be identified with Indo-European *\*b<sup>hi</sup>* 'near' and with the root of the Nivkh verb *fid'* 'be in a place'. Thus, I think that we have strong indications of a close relationship between Nivkh and Indo-Uralic. The relations between these and the other Uralo-Siberian languages remain to be clarified (cf. also Bouda 1960, Tailleux 1960, Naert 1962).

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