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Foreword

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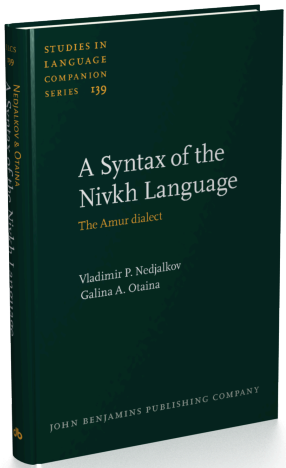

Pages xxiii–xxviii of
A Syntax of the Nivkh Language: The Amur dialect
Vladimir P. Nedjalkov and Galina A. Otaina
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Foreword

This publication is a translation from Russian of the *Syntaksis nivxskogo jazyka (The Amur dialect)* (Syntax of the Nivkh Language (Amurskij dialekt). (In Nedjalkov, V.P. & Otaina, G.A. 2012. *Ocherki po sintaksisu nivkhskogo jazyka.* Edited by E. Geniušienė. 18–237. Moscow: Znak). The latter is in its turn a posthumous edition of a pre-final unpublished draft under the same title found in the linguistic archives of Vladimir P. Nedjalkov. The typescript dated 1988–1990 needed the authors' editing and they certainly planned it, but the events in Russia in the early 1990s and the untimely death of Galina A. Otaina in 1995 prevented this as well as the publication.

Shortage of works on Nivkh grammar available in English gave us an idea of translating this book into English. This publication on the syntax of the Nivkh language may fill in an existing gap to a certain degree. Werner Abraham (University of Vienna) supported this idea and thus encouraged us to undertake this project.

It should be stressed that the original manuscript is an unedited draft, with occasional inconsistencies, vague statements and faulty typing. The Russian publication required thorough checking of the Nivkh material (often misspelt), renumbering the examples and sections, adding the *Table of Contents* and *References*, and a number of other editorial corrections.

This foreword is followed by the *Foreword* from the Russian edition of the book which the reader is advised to read first as it contains the basic information about the work. This foreword is meant to supplement the latter one and inform the prospective reader of the additional editorial changes made in the English version.

In this version, the authors' text is preserved intact, the translation being as close to the Russian original as possible. In the course of translating from Russian, the translator had to curb her impulses to sometimes edit the style, when the text begged for improvement, and, occasionally, complete some statements for clarity (in her belief that the authors would have done so if they had had a chance to write and edit the final draft). Finally the editors checked the entire translation carefully with the purpose of weeding out the changes that might have slipped in when the translator had lost vigilance. The authors' terminology is preserved without updating.

The English translations of the Nivkh sentential examples are in fact translations of the authors' Russian translations, (only sometimes slightly changed with regard to the glossing. Hence the occasional differences between the translations and morpheme-by-morpheme glossing.

The reader may as well be warned that sometimes the spelling of some Nivkh words varies, e.g. the verb 'look' may be spelt as *j-ajma-*, *j-ama-*, *j-añma-*; the verb 'enter house' is spelt in the manuscript in three different ways: *təvə-*, *təvu-* and *təvɣ-*. This variation, probably caused by the differences in the idiolects of the informants and absence of codified orthography, is retained in each case (generally, the authors' orthorgraphy is preserved, though in Latin transliteration, with the exceptions mentioned below).

If a word has several meanings, e.g. *ţīr* 'tree', 'forest', 'firewood', it is glossed according to the first (main) meaning and translated according to the context.

With regard to the Nivkh material, we have deemed it necessary to do the following:

1. We have added the interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glossing (the draft was written at a time when glossing was not as yet required in Russian publications).
2. We have also added attribution to the examples borrowed from the works by V.Z. Panfilov and E.A. Krejnovich, which were missing in most cases. In V.Z. Panfilov's and L.Ja. Shternberg's examples we have chosen to preserve their spelling and translations.
3. The list of *Abbreviations* with grammatical morphemes has also been added.
4. Also added are the *Subject*, *Name* and *Language indexes*.
5. We have added editorial notes and comments as footnotes. The authors' notes are entered in the text, as they are in the manuscript.

We have also appended a list of publications on Nivkh grammar authored by V.P. Nedjalkov and G.A. Otaina.

Despite its shortcomings, the work has certain value due to some original unorthodox interpretations different from those suggested by other nivkhologists, also due to the problems raised and experimental and quantitative data provided by the authors. The native intuitions of Galina A. Otaina and typological expertise and insights of Vladimir P. Nedjalkov are doubtless a precious contribution to the investigation of the Nivkh language.

The editors wish to express their gratitude to those who helped during the work on this version of the *Syntax of the Nivkh Language*: the native speakers of Nivkh Zoja Ljutova and Alexandra Khuryun who helped to clarify the meaning of some Nivkh words and sentences, and also I.V. Nedjalkov for checking the orthography of the Nivkh material at the initial stage. We are particularly grateful to Johanna Mattissen (University of Cologne) for carefully reading the final draft of this volume and making some useful suggestions, and also pointing out a considerable number of misprints.

Emma Geniušienė
Ekaterina Gruzdeva

Foreword

to the Russian edition of *Essays in Nivkh Syntax*
(V.P. Nedjalkov, G.A. Otaina. 2012. Ocherki po sintaksisu nivkhskogo jazyka. Moscow: Znak. Edited by E. Geniušienė)

This collection of papers contains four works on the Nivkh language co-authored by the eminent typologist Vladimir P. Nedjalkov (1928–2009) and Galina A. Otaina (1930–1995), a talented linguist and ethnographer, a native speaker of Nivkh who had a perfect knowledge of her language. The papers were written during the period of nearly thirty years of their joint work on Nivkh grammar. The papers are prefaced by short articles about Vladimir Nedjalkov and Galina Otaina and also by a brief note on the Nivkh language (from V.P. Nedjalkov's linguistic archive).

The basis of this collection are two papers published posthumously: *Sintaksis nivkhskogo jazyka (amurskij dialekt)* (Syntax of the Nivkh Language (the Amur dialect), pp. 18–237) and *Vyrazhenie mul'tiplikativnosti, distributivnosti, iterativnosti i uzitativnosti v nivkhskom jazyke* (Expression of mulitplicativity, distributivity, iterativity and usitativity in the Nivkh language, pp. 238–286) found in the linguistic archives of the late V.P Nedjalkov. Included in this collection are two short papers printed in 1969 and 1978 in practically unavailable editions, because they may be of considerable interest to typologists and also linguists interested in the underinvestigated endangered languages of Siberia and the Far East of Russia.

The manuscript of the *Syntax of the Nivkh language* (over 300 typewritten pages), dated 1988–1990, is a pre-final unedited draft of the book. There is no doubt that the authors intended to complete the work and edit it properly (I'd like to note that V.P. Nedjalkov used to write a countless number of drafts of each paper and was especially particular and careful about the editing of his works). There is also no doubt that the authors would have never published this unfinished version of the book. Unfortunately, for a number of extralinguistic factors and failing health of Galina Otaina they could not complete it.

In content, the *Syntax* is a short grammar (rather than a book on syntax) centered on some problems of the syntax of Nivkh and containing some issues of morphology essential for understanding the peculiarities of the unique syntactic structure of Nivkh, a language isolate. It also contains sections concerned with the authors' experiments with the language material, and some quantitative data they obtained.

In the process of editing this work for publication it was decided to make minimally necessary and inevitable editorial changes, such as correcting minor stylistic faults, errors in the numbering of the examples and sections, misprints in the language material, and the like. Numerous cross-references to examples and sections as well as references to publications have been checked and corrected. The authors' terminology has been retained entirely. The language material, imperfectly typed, required a lot of work. In this respect Hidetoshi Shiraishi (Sapporo Gakuin University, Japan) has been of great help. Aleksandr M. Pevnov (Institute for Lingiustic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg) has read the entire text and checked the Nivkh examples with extreme care and made a number of valuable suggestions concerning the meaning of some vague statements and spelling mistakes overlooked by the authors, for which I am extremely grateful to him. Marina A. Tehmina, a native speaker and teacher of Nivkh (Teacher-training College, Nikolaevsk-na-Amure) has contributed by checking the translation of Nivkh examples whenever necessary. Taisia G. Bugaeva helped to correct the mistakes in the numbering of the language examples. Invaluable help during my work on the manuscript came from Ekaterina Gruzdeva (University of Helsinki), the leading specialist in Nivkh grammar. Without exagerration, she has done the main bulk of work at the final stage of editing the manuscript. She has done it with extreme care and thoroughness, in particular, when correcting inconsistencies in the morphemic division of Nivkh words and mispellings in the examples.

Despite the period that has passed since the draft of the *Syntax of the Nivkh language* was written and inevitable changes in the terminology and trends, this work has not become obsolete, due to its descriptive nature and new information. In this book the reader will find a concise presentation of some problematic issues of the syntax of Nivkh and an abundance of language data. The new material is in itself a precious contribution to the documenting of an underinvestigated endangered language of an indigenous minority.

It may be presumed that both Galina A. Otaina, with her intimate language intuition, herself (in some cases when the opinion of unnamed informants was presented) and other native speakers acted as informants (in the vast correspondence between the authors, which covers many years, Galina often refers to the informants she consulted while collecting the language material during her field trips and experimenting with the data, but she mentions no names). The authors also used the Nivkh material from the works of E.A. Krejnovich and V.Z. Panfilov, often, regretfully, without indicating the source.

It seems that this book was written from the viewpoint of a typologist and it was meant in the first place for specialists in typology, general linguistics, theory of grammar, etc., which explains some peculiarities in the composition and choice of problems dealt with. Nevertheless, specialists in Nivkh grammar will also find new information and interpretations.

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This volume is concluded by a list of the authors' publications in Nivkh grammar.

The editor is certain that this volume, being a tribute to the memory of both authors and to the amount of hard work this book required, will be a significant contribution to the investigation of the Nivkh language.

In conclusion I wish to express my gratitude to Nikolaj N. Kazansky for the idea of publishing this volume and for his constant interest in its preparation. I am also grateful to Zoja L. Ronik (Juzhno-Sakhalinsk), Galina Otaina's sister, for her readiness to help and for the materials she made available to me. Thanks are due to Tjeerd de Graaf (Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning) for his interest in the project and his encouragement. I owe a lot to my friend Taisia G. Bugaeva (a specialist in Korean) who was always ready to give me advice and moral support. Sergej Ju. Dmitrenko took care of the project and was of invaluable help as advisor on various problems that often arose, and all I can say to him is thank you. The help of all those named here and above was essential in preparing the volume for publication: without them I would be unable to complete it. I am very grateful and say thank you to all the colleagues and friends who helped me to edit the Russian version of this volume in one way or another: with advice, checking the Nivkh material, consulting, moral support, etc. during my work on it.

But I am particularly indebted to Ekaterina Gruzdeva, the leading nivkhologist, for her exceptional conscientiousness and thoroughness, her respect for the authors' opinions, her responsible attitude to the archival materials, her goodwill and stoic patience with my endless questions, and generous consultations and advice whenever I needed her help, and for all the time she spared for this project. And, which I particularly appreciate, for teaching me how to work with the archival materials. Her contribution to checking the Nivkh data was of utmost importance. Without her help I would never have coped with the task. Katja, THANK YOU!

All the remaining editorial shortcomings and faults are my responsibility.

Emma Geniušienė