

# Nganasan language materials in space and time

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## 1. Introduction

The goal of this study is to provide an overview of Nganasan fieldwork data and archive resources. This description focuses primarily on the textual and sound materials, but other aspects that contribute to the documentation of Nganasan will also be touched on, whereas textbooks and dictionaries will not be considered here. We give a detailed survey of the available published and unpublished material as well, however, we do not discuss in detail fieldwork materials only available in Russian, e.g., such as Dolgikh's rich folklore collection.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 gives some information on Nganasan and related languages. Section 3 addresses the early field notes, i.e. the resources before Castrén's trip and his materials. Section 4 exemplifies the fieldwork activities of the 20th century. After that, in Section 5 we turn to the digitally available materials. The description is then rounded off in Section 6 with the description of the planned Nganasan database. The basic idea of the database is to collect and archive material from fieldwork.

## 2. Nganasan and related languages

Nganasan, together with the languages closest to it, Enets and Nenets, belongs to the Northern group of the Samoyedic branch of the Uralic language family. At present, it comprises two dialects, Avam and Vadeyev, which do not differ significantly. Today people speaking Nganasan live solely in villages in the Taimyr Autonomous District, which is part of the Krasnoyarsk Krai of the Russian Federation. The Avam variety is spoken in the western part of the peninsula, while the Vadeyev speakers live in the eastern part of the peninsula.

Nganasan is a highly endangered language. According to data from the Russian census of 2010, of the total population of 807 people, there are only about 125 speakers. By our estimation, the total number of Nganasan speakers is much lower. The average age of the speakers is over 50, and there are no speakers under the age of 40, or, if there are, they can be only considered semi-speakers. Children neither speak nor understand Nganasan. All

speakers are bilingual, and the main language that they use in everyday life is Russian. Nganasan is used in everyday life only when both speakers are Nganasans. However, such families are practically non-existent, thus, everyday communication in Nganasan is almost gone. Some elderly speakers can speak or at least understand Tundra Enets.

Nganasan, in addition to Nenets, is perhaps the best-studied Samoyedic language. The first grammatical description was published by Castrén in 1854, the last by Wagner-Nagy in 2019. (For more about Nganasan, see Tereshchenko 1979, Helimski 1998, and Wagner-Nagy 2019, among others.)

### 3. Early field notes

#### 3.1. Materials before Castrén

The first recorded Nganasan words are from the 18th century. These are contained in the diary of Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt (1721–1723), but they have been published in Julius Klaproth's *Asia Polyglotta* only a century later, in 1823. Also, a few Nganasan words can be found in the book *Das Nord-Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia* (1730) by the Swedish officer Philipp Johann Strahlenberg (republished in 1975). He collected language data from several languages during a journey in Siberia. Peter Simon Pallas's polyglot dictionary *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa* (1786–1789) also contains valuable Samoyed material, including Nganasan. Vocabulary lists and comparative tables of various sizes can also be found in Pallas' travelogue (1776). Word lists of various lengths and comparative tables are included in his itineraries (1776) as well. All these data can be used only in a limited way for linguistic analysis because their authors had no linguistic training whatsoever and the purpose of the records was not linguistic. Pallas had also used and published the materials of Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783). Müller was a German historian and ethnographer, who led a group of scientists on the second (so-called great) Kamchatka expedition (1733–1743). During the expedition, he described the people and collected historical and geographical materials, word lists, and a few sentences from several Siberian languages including Nganasan. The lexical material was collected according to semantic groups such as numerals and religious terms (names of God and the devil), etc. Müller used a word list of approximately 240 lexemes. The source language was usually Latin, however, in some cases Russian. A good portion of the materials, except for the geographical and historical parts of his works, are unfortunately still unpublished. Eugen Helimski dealt with Müller's estate in several publications (Helimski 1993, 1987). He described Müller's manuscripts preserved in the Russian State Archives of Ancient Acts (RGADA) in Moscow. Here the materials are located in archival collection 199, archival inventory 2, portfolio 513, files 2 and 7. Helimski also used Müller's materials in his publications and published some parts such as Mator and Kamas wordlists, however, Helimski never published the whole material, and the Nganasan word lists are still unpublished.

### 3.2. Castrén and his works

The first systematic Nganasan language material was collected by Matthias Alexander Castrén (1813–1852). He visited Finno-Ugric peoples several times but only began to study the Samoyedic languages on his third expedition in 1842, which began in 1841 with Elias Lönnrot, the collector of the Kalevala, in Lapland. Castrén traveled from Arkhangelsk to Berezovo, during which journey, he became acquainted only with Nenets speakers. He was forced to interrupt his work due to his illness and to return home to Finland, where his health had improved somewhat, and after an eight-month stay at home, he headed back to the Samoyeds again. Between 1845 and 1849, he toured the Siberian countryside from the Arctic Ocean to the Sayan Mountains. He spent some time also in Dudinka, where he gathered Nganasan linguistic materials. Already during his first Samoyed journey, he developed a short grammatical description, which, however, he did not publish. Returning home from Siberia, he set out to organize his material. In 1852, however, his condition worsened again, and he died after a few weeks of suffering. He could not finish his work. His legacy, which remained in manuscripts, was sent by his family to the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, whose Department of Philology and History commissioned Castrén's friend Anton Schiefner to publish the legacy materials. The manuscripts entrusted to Schiefner were published in 12 volumes between 1853 and 1862 (*Nordische Reisen und Forschungen von M. A. Castrén*), including the grammar (1854) and vocabularies (1855) of the Samoyedic languages. Among other things, the spelling of the published materials does not match Castrén's plans. This was one of the reasons why the decision was made to republish Castrén's materials in the early 2000s. Unfortunately, the work is proceeding slowly, so the Nganasan materials are still not published.

Unfortunately, Castrén did not collect textual materials for Nganasan (or Enets), so only the lexicon and grammar were documented from this period. His work can be considered to be a good source for the history of the Nganasan language. In his work one can still find word forms that sound different today, therefore, based on his materials, the time of the sound shift or consonant deletion can be determined.

## 4. Milestones in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

### 4.1. Prokofiev, Popov and Dolgikh

The value of Castrén's work is increased by the fact that for many decades afterward no progress was made in the study of the Nganasan language and culture. There were no language collections during these decades. After the Soviet revolution, attempts were made to develop a Latin alphabet for the small peoples of the new Soviet state, and language books were produced. Of the Samoyedic languages, however, only Nenets and Selkup were affected by this program.

Concerning Nganasan, from these times, the ethnographic collections of A. A. Popov should be highlighted. Popov dealt with both the material (Popov 1936, 1948; Popov 1966) and the spiritual culture of the Nganasans (Popov 1984). His works are valuable sources of ethnographic descriptions to this day. In the field of ethnography, another name also deserves mention: Boris Dolgikh's (1904–1971), who traveled to Siberia and also spent several months among the Nganasans and Dolgans. One of the results of his work is the book in which he published Nganasan myths and folklore texts (Dolgikh 1938). Dolgikh collected and published these legends only in Russian, nevertheless, they are essential for the research of Nganasan spiritual culture. Equally important are his still unpublished manuscripts, which are preserved in the Archive of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology in Moscow.

It is also crucial to mention the grammar published by G. N. Prokofiev in 1937 since no comprehensive work of this kind was published for about 40 years afterward, and this is the first such grammar in Russian. However, it does not represent substantial advancement as it partly relies on the data discussed by Castrén. Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that Prokofiev's grammar includes a small text that he collected from Torunte Kosterkina in 1933. It is the first ever published text in Nganasan. The text is very short, it consists of only nine sentences.

#### 4.2. Mikola's collection

One of the most important stages of Nganasan scholarship was the collection of Tibor Mikola (1936–2000), who collected not only grammatical materials but three small texts (altogether 81 sentences). Mikola worked in Leningrad in October 1968 with an eighteen-year-old Nganasan informant, Alexei Molkovich Turdagin (1950–1973), with whom he remained in contact after their work together ended, until the young man's tragic and untimely death. However, Mikola continued to correspond with Turdagin's sister for many more years and gathered lexical material from her as well.

The collected materials were published in 1970 and 1980 with translations in Hungarian (Mikola 1970, 1980). The 1970 publication contains a list of words, paradigms, and three small texts, while the 1980 one only a wordlist. The texts were also recorded by Mikola, but unfortunately, one of the sound recordings has been lost. Thus, only two recordings with a children's tale about a mouse and a reindeer and with a short narrative have been preserved. The motive of the tale is a very famous motive not only among the Nganasans but also among the Enets and other Siberian peoples. These recordings are not free or spontaneously produced texts, but the speaker very likely first put down the texts on paper and then read them out loud. These texts are one of the first voice recordings of Nganasan. There are only some older recordings each from 1961, 1963, 1964, and two from 1965 (see also section 6 below). The significance of Mikola's study lies also in the fact that it includes some three hundred previously unknown words. Table 1 lists the

materials with the basic data in Mikola's collection. All texts are included in the *Nganasan Spoken language Corpus* (cf. Brykina et al. 2018), whose basic purpose was to create an electronically searchable corpus for Nganasan (cf. §5.3 below). This corpus is being further developed as a database and has been integrated into the INEL project<sup>1</sup>.

Table 1. Mikola's collection

Title	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	number of sentences	duration
Djajku	TAM_681018_Djajku_flkd	34	–
Hill	TAM_681104_Hill_nar	13	00:00:45
Reindeer and the mouse	TAM_681113_Reindeer_flkd	34	00:03:24

#### 4.3. The field trips of members of the Dulzon School and the materials in Tomsk

About 200 volumes of fieldwork notes on different Siberian languages are stored in the archives of the Department of Siberian Indigenous Languages at Tomsk State Pedagogical University. The archives of the Department include hand-written card catalogs: appr. 120,000 cards on a Ket-Russian dictionary, 80,000 cards on a Selkup-Russian dictionary, relatively small catalogs on other languages (Nganasan, Dolgan, and Chulym-Turkic), 242,000 cards on Siberian, Far Eastern, and Central Asian toponyms. In addition to the lexical data, there are a lot of books with fieldwork notes which contain texts, sentences, and lexical data collected from Khanty, Selkup, Enets, Nganasan, Chulym-Turkic, and Dolgan. Some of these texts were published in the series *Skazki Narodov Severa* (Tales of the Peoples of Northern Siberia, 1976, 1980, 1981), however, a considerable amount of the collected materials was published only in the series *Annotated Folklore Prose Text of Ob-Yenissey Language Area* in the recent past. (For more about these topics, see Kryukova 2016 and Galkina & Osipova 2000, among others.)

Between 1968 and 1972, members of the Dulzon School (Ekaterina Petrovna Bol'dt née Nojfeld; E. I. Machkinis, A. K. Stolyarova, and Lyubov Sergeevna Petrovskaya) carried out fieldwork among the Nganasans and collected grammatical data, word lists, and several texts. There are a total of twelve archive volumes containing Nganasan material, however, volume 11 also contains Dolgan material. Some texts are not only in one volume but were copied into several volumes. In total, materials were collected from 17 speakers, all of them are speakers of the Avam dialect. The following content types can be identified: translation of sample sentences that have been compiled to illustrate grammatical descrip-

<sup>1</sup> Grammatiken, Korpora und Sprachtechnologie für indigene nordeurasische Sprachen <https://www.slm.uni-hamburg.de/inel/projekt.html>

tions; text types such as narratives and fairy tales; lexical data, sample sentences, and data about the speakers; declension and conjugation paradigms; and pictures of human figures, arrows, or sleds. In the tradition of the Dulzon School, numerous narrative texts were collected that describe everyday work steps. These texts provide not only valuable linguistic but also ethnographic information. In some cases, the researchers or the speakers drew small pictures to illustrate the texts. A picture of clothing is shown in Figure 1.

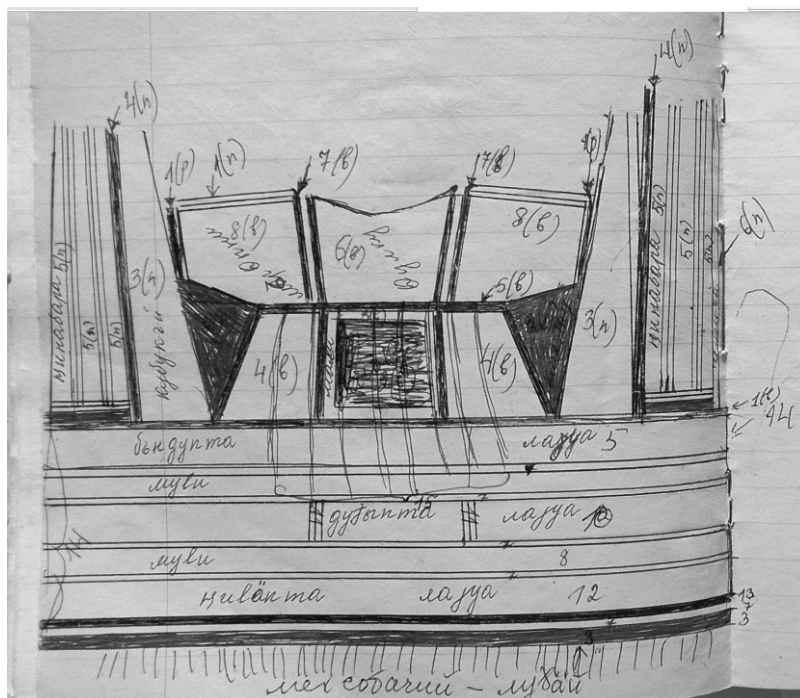


Figure 1. A part of the parka and the names of the parts

(Source: Nganasan volume 9, page 734)

In Tomsk, some cassettes with recordings were also preserved, which were digitized in 2016. Unfortunately, there are no recordings of the collected texts, the cassettes found in the archive contained only word lists from several speakers.

No detailed catalog for the Tomsk materials is available, unfortunately, but the only existing catalog offers an overview (Kim 1998). Due to space limitations, we cannot list all Nganasan materials from the archive here, but Table 2 indicates text materials. Some of the texts have already been published and integrated into the *Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus* (NSLC) (cf. Brykina et al. 2018) – this is also indicated in the table. Here only the abbreviated code of the speaker is given, the full name is given in the list of the abbrevia-

tions. A complete catalog of the (Nganasan) materials in Tomsk is already assembled in Hamburg with the cooperation of Tomsk colleagues and it as already been published in electronic form<sup>2</sup>.

*Table 2. A brief catalog of the text materials*

Title	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Vol: page-page	Published
How to build a tent	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:431–432	no
Where we lived before	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:433–434	no
How sleeves are made	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:435	no
How knives are made	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:437–438	no
How to smoke fish	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:439	no
How I make a parka	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:441	no
Wedding	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:443–444	no
Reindeer	KSM	1969	not yet included	3:445–446	no
Parka	TMP	1971	TMP_71_Parka_nar	5:152–156	Gusev 2012: 143–150
Djajku	PKK	1971	PKK_71_Djajku_flkd	5:266–286	Gusev 2010: 229–262
Ibula	PKK	1971	PKK_71_Ibula_flkd	5: 287–301 11:1–39	Wagner-Nagy & Brykina 2015:194–216
Bird man	PKK	1971	PKK_71_BirdMan_flkd	5:302–308 11: 77–82 (only in Russian)	Wagner-Nagy & Brykina 2015:185–193; SNSS 1980:52–54.
One tent	PKK	1971	PKK_71_OneTent_flkd	5: 309–320	Gusev 2010: 212–229

<sup>2</sup> <https://inel.corpora.uni-hamburg.de/portal/dulson/> (last visited: December 06, 2022)

Title	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Vol: page-page	Published
				11:83–96 11:111–123	
Fish	PKK	1971	PKK_71_Fish_nar	5: 321–322 11:101	Gusev 2012: 151–154
Net	PKK	1971	PKK_71_Net_nar	5:323–324 11:106	SNSS 1981:165–166
How to build a tent	PKK	1971	PKK_71_BuildTent_nar	5:325–326 11:103	Gusev 2012: 155–157
How to fish	PKK	1971	PKK_71_HowFish	5:327–328 11:102	SNSS 1981:166
Polar fox	PKK	1971	PKK_71_PolarFox_nar	5:331–332 11:104–105	SNSS 1981: 166-167
Fish	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Fish_nar	6:506–507	Gusev 2012: 158–160
Sledge	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Sledge_nar	6:508–509	Gusev 2012: 161–162
Relatives	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Relationship_nar	6:510–511	Gusev 2012: 176–182
How to build a tent	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Tent_nar	6:516–519	Gusev 2012: 170–175
Knife	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Knife_nar	6:520–521	SNSS 1981: 175–176
Shaman	KBD	1971	not yet included	6:522–525	SNSS 1981: 176-177
Play Children	KBD	1971	not yet included	6:526–527	SNSS 1981: 177
PolarFox	KBD	1971	KBD_71_PolarFox_nar	6:528–531	Gusev 2012: 166–169
How to make a boat	KBD	1971	KBD_71_Boat_nar	6:532–533	Gusev 2012: 163–165
Deers	KBD	1971	not included	6:534–541	
Barusi	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Barusi_flkd	7:76–87	Brykina & Wagner-Nagy 2020: 150–196
Bone	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Bone_nar	7:162–186; 11:317–413	SNSS 1980: 34–48



Title	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Vol: page-page	Published
Seven girls	POJ	1971	POJ_71_SevenGirls_flkd	7:87–93; 11:127–161	SNSS 1980: 3–7
Dried fish	POJ	1971	POJ_71_DriedFish_nar	7:94–95 11:443–449	unpublished
Shaman	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Shaman_flkd	7:96–101 11:467–479	Brykina & Wagner-Nagy 2020: 197–228
Sledge	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Sledge_nar	7:102–103 11:451–457	unpublished
Yellow Eyes	POJ	1971	POJ_71_YellowEyes_flkd	7:106–119 11:265–315	SNSS 1980: 24–34
Djako	POJ	1971	not yet included	7:120–121	unpublished
Djaku	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Djajku_flkd	7:142–149 11:225–253	SNSS 1980: 19–24
Bridal advertising	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Bridal Advertising_nar	7:122–123 11:431–435	unpublished
Sigie	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Sigie_flkd	7:124–142 11:163–223	SNSS 1980: 7–19
How I tan a hide	POJ	1971	POJ_71_HowImakeFur_nar	7:120–121 11:419–423	unpublished
Squirrel	POJ	1971	POJ_71_Squirrel_nar	7:150 11:437	unpublished
A wise girl	POJ	1971	POJ_71_WiseGirl_flkd	7:162–186 11:317–413	SNSS 1980: 34–48
How to make bread	POJ	1971	not yet included	7:243–244	unpublished
How to build a tent	POJ	1971	not yet included	7:244–245	unpublished
How to make a (...)?	POJ	1971	not yet included	7:245	unpublished

Title	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Vol: page-page	Published
How to sew a parka	POJ	1971	not yet included	7:245–246	unpublished
Lucky boys	TMT	1972	TMT_72_TwoLuckyBoys_flkd	8: 537–591	SNSS 1981: 167–171
One tent	TMT	1972	TMT_1972_OneTent_flkd	8: 593–643 9: 847–879	unpublished
Many tents	ChKD	1972	ChKD_72_ManyTents_flks	9:749–799	Wagner-Nagy & Gusev 2017: 247–298
Two lucky boys	TLH	1972	TLH_72_TwoLuckyBoys_flkd	9:815–846	unpublished
Fairy tale	TZD	1972	TZD_72_Fairytale_flkd	9:897–927	unpublished

#### 4.4. Tereshchenko's collection

One of the most prominent Samoyedic scholars of the second half of the 20th century was Natalya Tereshchenko (1908–1987), who, in addition to Nganasan, was also an excellent scholar of the other two North Samoyedic languages, Nenets and Enets. She became familiar with the Nenets language and culture during her studies in Arkhangelsk and at the Herzen Institute in Leningrad in the 1930s. Her husband, Anton Pyrerka (1905–1941), who was a Nenets, was also interested in linguistics and folklore.

Tereshchenko's first major studies on Nganasan appeared from the mid-1960s onwards. The culmination and summation of her work is a detailed grammatical description of the Nganasan language, which was published in 1979. This grammar is based on data that Tereshchenko collected from native speakers. Although she also recorded many texts from the consultants, she never published them. The materials she collected are accessible on the homepage of the Institute of Linguistic Studies at the Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg).<sup>3</sup> Here one can find not only a list of materials compiled by Lyublynskaya (*Нганасанские тексты: опись*) but the manuscript can also be downloaded (*Нганасанские тексты: публикации*). Some of these texts have already been integrated into the *Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus* (Brykina et al. 2018, see §5.3 below). Based on Lyublinskaya's description, Table 3 lists the collected texts. The exact date of the collection is unknown in all the cases.

<sup>3</sup> <https://iling.spb.ru/nord/materials.html> (last visited: November 17, 2021)

Table 3. Text materials of the Tereshchenko archive

Title	Speaker	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Number of sentences
Reindeer	MACH	MACH_XX_Reindeer_flkd	14
Nenets	MACH	MACH_XX_Nenets_flkd	49
Salya Banka	MACH	MACH_XX_SalyaBanka_flkd	118
Two shamans	MACH	MACH_XX_TwoShamans_flkd	31
Nenets	KSM	KSM_XX_Nenets_flkd	45
Fox	MACH	MACH_XX_Fox_flkd	60
Igula	MACH	MACH_XX_Igula_flkd	69
Kehy Luu	MACH	MACH_XX_KehyLuu_flkd	135
Two rich Men	KES	not yet included	
Fox and a hunter	TN	not yet included	
Tankaga	KT	not yet included	
The hunter and the underworld	ChN	not yet included	
Xyudyaku Mojbyudy	PK	not yet included	
Son of Nganasan and Son of Nenets	MACH	not yet included	
Silly Ibula	KD	not yet included	

#### 4.5. Materials by Labanauskas and Dobzhanskaya

The collected volumes edited by Kazis Labanauskas (1942–2002) should also be highlighted. He lived in Dudinka for decades and participated in numerous fieldwork projects among the peoples of the Taimyr Peninsula. He published his preliminary Nganasan collections in a small booklet in 1992. The collection, published in 2001, contains 58 texts, most of which are narrative folklore texts, some of them lyrical, and some of them riddles. The original recordings of the texts have not always been preserved, among other reasons because Labanauskas used the tapes several times, overwriting the recordings. Nevertheless, some recordings contain the original soundtrack. However, the preserved recordings are not yet cataloged. The texts were collected between 1973 and 1979 in Novaya

(Khatanganskij Rayon) and Ust'-Avam and Volochanka (Dudinskij Rayon) with the assistance of S. T. Momde, N. Kupchik, M. Ch. Okko, and T. Okko. Some texts were taken from former publications, however, unfortunately, Labanauskas did not indicate the exact source. Since his death, the manuscripts of his articles, books, his drawings, photos, and maps have been kept in the House of Folk Art of the Taimyr Peninsula and the Museum of Local History in Dudinka. Table 4 lists the items published in the text collection from 2001. (For more about Labanauskas, see Dobzhanskaya 2012.)

*Table 4.* Text materials from Labanauskas 2001

	Title	Number of sentences	Locus of other publication
1	Two bears	15	
2	Dengku	11	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 198–199
3	Spells	9	
4	The Moon's husband	16	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 204–205
5	Two shamans	14	
6	Elk	18	
7	God of Luck	23	
8	Old story	18	
9	The man and the wolf	17	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 204–205
10	Arrival of the man	19	
11	The clever shaman	11	
12	Orphan girl	18	
13	Fire-Mother's present	16	
14	Proverbs	10	
15	Ogre	28	
16	Old shaman	23	
17	Ice-God and Earth-Mother	32	
18	Riddles	10	
19	Land of idols	33	
20	A story in the forest	38	

	Title	Number of sentences	Locus of other publication
21	Old Birdman	31	
22	Folk wisdoms	12	
23	Barusi-woman	39	
24	Talking with a dog	30	
25	Sinsime	48	
26	Thunder God	57	
27	Sayings	12	
28	Odyoloku	44	
29	Two hunters	60	
30	Shaman's doom	45	
31	The reindeer and the mouse	34	Mikola 1970: 69–70 (original text) Wagner-Nagy 2002: 208–209
32	Revenge of the wolf	46	
33	God's message	55	
34	Anecdote	29	
35	Working	30	
36	Allegorical song	16	
37	Allegorical song	14	
38	Naughty sons	68	
39	The seven brothers' sister	77	
40	Three brothers	79	
41	Two Ibula	96	
42	In the land of the dead	81	
43	Soymu's son	100	
44	Life of reindeer herders	93	
45	Sayings	18	
46	Competition of two strongmen	93	

	Title	Number of sentences	Locus of other publication
47	The hunter's death	82	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 222–225
48	Unhappy old lady	71	
49	The old man's three daughters	138	
50	Dyajku	112	
51	Two men	171	
52	Lakuna's sons	183	
53	Wife of the Yellow-Eyed Man	153	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 226–231
54	The dead old woman	235	Wagner-Nagy 2002: 244–251
55	The daughters of the Nganasan woman	253	
56	Admonitions	18	
57	Proverbs	95	
58	Shaman story	343	

Oksana Dozhanskaya also conducted several comprehensive expeditions to study the traditional and contemporary culture of indigenous peoples in the Taimyr Peninsula. Since 1987 she has been a participant and later the leader of musical and ethnographic expeditions to collect the musical folklore of the Nganasans, Dolgans, Nenets, Enets, Evenks, Khanty, and Tofa. Some cassettes recorded by her were given to Larisa Leisiö for digitization and transcription. A list of the material collected by her is given in Table 5. Most of the texts have not been published to date. Some have already been transcribed by Nadezhda Kosterkina, Valentin Gusev and Maria Brykina. The existing recordings will be integrated into the database with Dobzhanskaya's permission (cf. §6 below).

Table 5. Dobzhanskaya's collection

Title	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Year	Speaker	Length
Tute Xorezume	KTD_XX_TuteHorezume_flk	unknown	KTD	00:46:49
Syxarty Ngadyabta	KTD_XX_SyxartyNgadyabta_flk	unknown	KTD	00:38:35 00:46:34 00:46:26 00:11:03
Conversation	KTD_XX_Conversation	unknown	KTD	00:08:44

Title	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Year	Speaker	Length
Lerui Sidite	KTD_86_LeruiSidite_flks	1986	KTD	00:42:38 00:43:37 00:44:36
Nganasan children	not yet included	1986	KTD	00:43:57 00:43:33 00:43:29 00:43:27
Two Momde	KTD_86_TwoMomde_flkd	1986	KTD	00:39:40 00:39:37
Evenki Chief	KTD_86_EvenkiChief_flks	1986	KTD	00:43:24 00:43:29
Tale	not yet included	1986	KTD	00:44:49 00:44:41
Short Syteby	KDD_XX_Syteby_flks	unknown	KDD	00:08:16
Shamanic ritual	KDDe- TNH_90_ShamanicRitual_flk	1990	KDDe and TNH	00:29:54 00:29:47 00:30:04 00:29:44 00:30:46 00:31:29
Two brothers	MDB_91_TwoBrothers_flkd	1991	MDB	00:44:26 00:41:52
Two Huantie	MDB_91_TwoHuantie_flks	1991	MDB	00:26:05 00:44:14
Three tents	MDB_91_ThreeTents_flks	1991	MDB	00:44:14 00:40:27
Two sisters	KVB_9408_TwoSisters_flkd	1994	KVB	00:29:07
Two Lemdutite	KVB_9408_TwoLemdutite_flks	1994	KVB	00:47:11 00:32:30
Orphan chief	PSM_9408_OrphanChief_flks	1994	PSM	00:47:06 00:11:34
Songs	not yet included	1994	PMS	00:21:59

Title	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Year	Speaker	Length
Conversation (a lot of it in Russian)	not yet included	1996	PHL and KNT	00:21:35
My Life	PHL_96_MyLife_nar	1996	PHL	00:29:07
Solatui Ngaangku	ChND_00_SolatuiNgaangku_flks	2000	ChND	00:11:37
Relationship	JSM_060901_Relationship1_nar	2006	JSM	00:12:29

#### 4.6. Helimski's field materials

Beginning with the 1980s, Eugen Helimski (1950–2007) repeatedly conducted fieldwork and collected Nganasan, Enets, and Nenets materials on the Taimyr Peninsula alone or with his students. One of his most significant achievements is the description of Nganasan (Helimski 1994, 1998) and the development of the complex morphophonological rules (such as syllabic and rhythmic consonant gradation, nunnation, and vowel harmony), since the monograph published by Tereshchenko in 1979 did not pay much attention to these phenomena.

##### 4.6.1. Audio materials

Unfortunately, the audio materials and transcripts collected by him have been relegated to the background and are still only sporadically available. Helimski did not pay much attention to publishing the texts and lexical materials or to archiving the sound recordings. After his untimely death in 2007, the cassettes of his scientific legacy, containing not only Nganasan but also Enets, Nenets, and Selkup recordings, were digitized and archived in the Phonogram Archive in Vienna. The cassettes were not in the best condition, so some of them could not be processed at all. The digitization of the materials was also complicated by the fact that the speed was often changed during or between the recordings. The list of the audio materials in Nganasan is presented in Table 7. As can be seen, a good portion of the recordings contains word lists. Some cassettes are recordings copied from other researchers, such as Jean-Luc Lambert. These recordings have not been included in this list. Lambert was at the Taimyr Peninsula several times and collected mainly ethnological materials. He recorded many stories, which he gave not only to Helimski but also to other researchers. His materials are partially integrated with his permission into the Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus (see § 5.3)

A major part of the data in Helimski's estate represents the Avam Nganasan variety, only some words are recorded from a Vadeyev speaker. As can be seen in the table, some numbers (for example, the numbers 2 and 3) occur twice. In such cases, they are distinguished by lower case Latin letters, e.g., 2a and 3a.



Table 7. The list of Helinski's audio recordings

Tape	Speaker	Dialect	Year	Place of recording	Content
2a-A	Kokore	Vadeyev	1976	Dudinka	wordlist
2a-A	PHL	Avam	1976	Dudinka	wordlist
2b-A/B	PH	Avam	1976	Dudinka	Story about Djuhode Honjaku
2a-A, 2a-B, 3a-A	PHL	Avam	1976	Dudinka	wordlist
3a-A	PT	Avam	1976	Dudinka	wordlist
5-A	PHL	Avam	2000	Dudinka	a narrative about the father
9-A/B	KTD	Avm	1987		Iron head
19-A/B	TNH	Avam	1986	Ust'-Avam	Text: Hüyübča
19-B	TNH	Avam	1986	Ust'-Avam	songs
20-B	TNH	Avam	1986	Ust'-Avam	songs
21-A	TNH	Avam		Ust'-Avam	songs
21-A	KDD	Avam	1986	Ust'-Avam	Dajku
22	KTD	Avam	198?	Ust'-Avam	Recording is slowed
24-A/B	KTD	Avam	1988	Ust'-Avam	Hotaryə D'iaduaši
23-A/B	PHL	Avam	198?	Ust'-Avam	conversation
23-A	KES	Avam	198?	Ust'-Avam	2 fairy tales
26-A	PHM	Avam	1992	Volochanka	Tales
26-A	KChH	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	Life narrative
26-A	JN	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	Life narrative
26-B	TNI	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	Fragment of a text
26-B	PKM	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	Recording of a work session
26-B	MDM	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	Conversation

Tape	Speaker	Dialect	Year	Place of re-cording	Content
26-B	TS	Avam	1992	Volochnaka	unknown
25	TCh	Avam	1996	Ust'-Avam	unknown
32	MACH	Avam	1999	Dudinka	The book 'Nganasan language' is read by the author
33	KNT	Avam	2000	unknown	Letter from N. T. Kosterkina to Helimski

#### 4.6.2. Text materials

The folders with the transcribed Nganasan texts, lexical materials, and phonetic notes have been sent to Valentin Gusev as requested by Helimski. The lexical materials will be integrated into the dictionary, which Valentin Gusev is compiling currently. The text materials will be integrated into the *INEL Nganasan Corpus*. A Word document of some texts such as Seu Melangana has already been provided on Gusev's Homepage (for this, see § 5.1 below). These materials from Helimski are listed here in Table 8. There are 19 shorter or longer texts in total. Some of the texts were not collected by Helimski (HE) himself, but by Nadezhda Tubyakovna Kosterkina (KNT), who gave them to Helimski. These are also included here. The name of the collector, the genre, the date of the collection, and the length of the text are indicated. If the text is already integrated into the database version of the Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus, this is also indicated.

Table 8. Helimski's text archive

Topic	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Number of sentences / pages	Audio	Collected by
Seu Melangana	KTD	unknown	KTD_XX_SeuMelangana_flks	1463	no	KNT
Beturaku woman	KTD	1986	KTD_86_BeturakuNy_flks	1961	1:03:45	KNT
Iron head	KTD	1987	KTD_87_IronHead_flks	1530	1:25	EH
Lembie	KTD	unknown	KTD_XX_Lembie_flkd	34	no	unknown

Topic	Speaker	Date	Title in INEL Nganasan corpus	Number of sen- tences / pages	Audio	Collected by
Dir Terisi	KTD	1983–85	KTD_83_DirTerisi_flks	appr. 500	no	HE
Kehy Luu	KTD	unknown	KTD_XX_KehyLuu_flkd	24 pages	no	KNT
Shamanic session	KTD	1978	not included	published in 1994		
Kalade Munke	?KTD	unknown	not included	46 pages in Russian, 4 pages in Nganasan		
Seven chil- dren	KBD	unknown	not included	22 pages	no	?KNT
Life earlier	PHL	1989	PHL_890815_Life_flkd	9	no	HE
One tent	JECh	1992	not included	9	no	HE
Song of my mother	JECh	1992	not included	3	no	HE
Song of my father	JECh	1992	not included	4	no	HE
Leptimaku's song	JECh	1992	not included	2	no	HE
Nadya's song	JECh	1992	not included	3	no	HE
Lusa's song	JECh	1992	not included	2	no	HE
Clan Chunanchar	KES	unknown	not included	5	no	HE
Partridge's song	ChT	unknown	not included	23	no	HE
Hetandi Derbie	MDN	1992	MDN_920816_ HetandiDembie_flk	15 pages	00:37:5 0	HE

Just like the manuscripts in Tomsk, Helimski's notes also include drawings. Figure 2 shows the drawing made by Nadezhda Tubyakovna Kosterkina. She recorded the given text from her father.

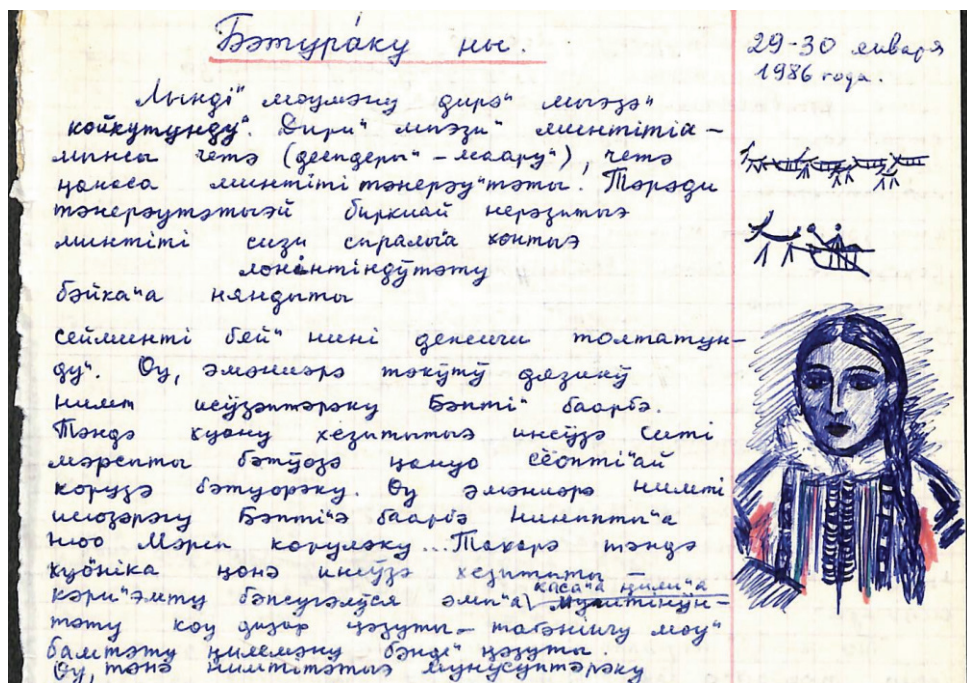


Figure 2. The manuscript of the text Beturaku Ny

## 5. Digital materials

This section provides an overview of the materials available online. First, the text collections are explained, then the chapter is devoted to the corpora.

### 5.1. Text collections with or without glosses

In the project *Typology of Negation in Ob-Ugric and Samoyedic languages*<sup>4</sup> (acronym: NOS, 2008–2011, supported by the Austrian Science Foundation) conducted at the University of Vienna two glossed texts (of 583 sentences altogether) with audio recordings were published online as *html* and *pdf* files. The texts were collected by Beáta Wagner-Nagy (1994, 1996) and Florian Sobanski (1996).

Within the framework of the *LangueDOC*-project<sup>5</sup> that was carried out in Moscow, seven items are available with video recording and glossing on the sample page. One text is not glossed, only the video recording is available. The everyday stories and tales were

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.univie.ac.at/negation/sprachen/nganasana.html> (last visited: November 17, 2021)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.philol.msu.ru/~languedoc/eng/ngan/corpus.php> (last visited: November 17, 2021)

collected by Valentin Gusev and Maria Brykina in 2006. The glosses are also provided by Gusev and Brykina. The collection comprises altogether 322 sentences.<sup>6</sup>

Gusev published other materials as well: on the homepage titled *Corpus of Nganasan Folklore Texts*<sup>7</sup> 54 texts were available until recently. This page was created as part of the project *Ethnocultural Interaction in Eurasia* (2003–2005) and published materials collected by several scholars. The texts were published without exception as Word documents, the audio or/and video recordings were not available. The collection comprised approximately 14,928 utterances and about 28,000 word forms. Table 9 lists the names of the collectors, the date of the collections, and information is provided on who the researchers worked with. The exact description of the texts can be found on the homepage.

Table 9. Collected data of the Corpus of Nganasan Folklore Texts

Collector	Date of collection	Informant (initials)
Brykina, Maria	2004, 2005	ChND, KES, PED, TKF
Daniel, Michail	2000, 2003, 2004	ChND, KES, PED, SEN, TKF
Gusev, Valentin	2003, 2003	KES, JDH, PED, SEN, TKF
Helimki, Eugen	1987	KTD, TNH,
Kosterkina, Nadezhda	unknown	KTD
Lambert, Jean-Luc	1997, 1999	KVB, MDN, TKF
Voliak, Pavel	2003	TKF

## 5.2. Nganasan Speech Corpus

This corpus is compiled by Larisa Leisiö and located in the Language Bank of Finland maintained by CSC and FIN-CLARIN.<sup>8</sup> According to the description, this corpus comprises videos and audio materials collected between 1986 and 2013. It contains, among other materials, transcripts of fairy tales, biographies, songs, and additional photographs. In total, the corpus contains 5 hours of recordings and 172 hours of video materials. According to the home page, the corpus “will be made available in LAT (<https://lat.csc.fi>)”. The accessibility of the corpus is restricted.

<sup>6</sup> The archive includes 31 texts in total. The landing page ([http://languedoc.philol.msu.ru/ds/indi\\_browser/](http://languedoc.philol.msu.ru/ds/indi_browser/)) can be opened only with Internet Explorer.

<sup>7</sup> <https://iling-ran.ru/gusev/Nganasan/texts/index.php> (last visited: November 17, 2021)

<sup>8</sup> <http://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:lb-2014100302> (last visited: November 17, 2021)

### 5.3. Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus

The aim of the *Nganasan Spoken Language Corpus* (Brykina et al. 2016 and 2018) was to assemble existing data, including data from other researchers, and, thus, to create a corpus that allows for long-term preservation and ensures accessibility. The corpus is not a mere collection of Word (or txt) documents or sound files, but a systematically assembled and annotated corpus that allows researchers to investigate linguistic phenomena systematically.

This first version of the NSLCorpus (named 0.1; Brykina et al. 2016) is a subcorpus that comprises 55 communications, 42 of which contain an aligned audio recording with glossed (Toolbox/Fieldworks<sup>9</sup>) and annotated (EXMARaLDA) transcripts from 15 (10 female, 5 male) speakers. All texts have been translated into Russian and English, some also into German. Some transcriptions are based on archive materials without audio files.

The second version (named 0.2, Brykina et al. 2018) of the corpus comprises 176 communications, 136 of which contain an aligned audio recording (approx. 32 hours of sound files), with glossed and annotated (EXMARaLDA) transcripts from 33 speakers. On the one hand, the corpus contains materials collected by different researchers during earlier fieldwork and the colleagues of Taimyr Radio. On the other hand, archive materials from Tomsk and St. Petersburg as well as published materials are also included in the corpus. Additionally, metadata is provided for 34 speakers. There are 21,723 utterances with 142,455 tokens and 35,131 types in the corpus. The oldest text is from 1933, the most recent from 2016. The majority of the texts were recorded in the 2000s. (For a detailed description of the corpus, see Wagner-Nagy et al. 2018.) This version of the corpus is publicly accessible through the Corpus ACA (public)<sup>10</sup> license.

Both versions of the corpus include a metadata set in which every single piece of data is documented in great detail from the moment of recording to transcription, glossing and translation without exception. Every contributor who has ever participated in the processing of the data is named in the metadata (in EXMARaLDA/Coma-format<sup>11</sup> and *html*<sup>12</sup> format) as well as in the guidelines<sup>13</sup> of the project. Texts were not collected

<sup>9</sup> <https://software.sil.org/fieldworks/> (last visited: December 06, 2022)

<sup>10</sup> “HZSK-ACA language resources can be accessed only for research purposes by ACAdemic researchers. The end user does not need to ask for usage permission but can access the resources with a valid account from a research institution that is included in the CLARIN trusted domain.” [<https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/en/corpus-enquiries-licenses> (last visited: December 06, 2022)]

<sup>11</sup> [https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2\\_coma/datastream/COMA/nslc.coma](https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2_coma/datastream/COMA/nslc.coma) (last visited: December 06, 2022)

<sup>12</sup> [https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2\\_coma-overview/datastream/HTML/coma-overview.html](https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2_coma-overview/datastream/HTML/coma-overview.html) (last visited: December 06, 2022)

<sup>13</sup> [https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2\\_NSLCGuidelines/datastream/PDF/NSLCCGuidelines.pdf](https://corpora.uni-hamburg.de/hzsk/de/islandora/object/file:nslc-0.2_NSLCGuidelines/datastream/PDF/NSLCCGuidelines.pdf) (last visited: December 06, 2022)

from all of them, but in some form, they have contributed to the transcription of Nganasan materials.

## 6. The INEL Nganasan Corpus as a database

The Nganasan Spoken Language corpus is currently being expanded as a database and integrated into the INEL project. The goal of this database is to collect and preserve the field research materials. Materials are included here that have not been published until now and thus have never been accessible. At present, it contains materials collected by various scholars and by colleagues of the Taimyr Radio between 1933 and 2019. The list of the collectors is presented in Table 10 below. The database also contains metadata about 93 Nganasan speakers. Texts were not collected from all of them, but in some form, they have contributed to the transcription of Nganasan materials.

*Table 10.* Collectors in the Nganasan Spoken Language Database

Collector	Date of collection
Aksenova, A.	1977
Aksenova, Svetlana	2019
Bołdt, Ekaterina	1971
Budzisch, Josefina	2016
Brykina, Maria	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2019
Daniel, Mikhail	2003, 2004, 2006
Dobzhanskaya, Oksana	1986, 1991, 1994, 2006
Helinski, Eugen	1986, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1996
Gusev, Valentin	1992, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2016, 2019
Lambert, Jean-Luc	1992, 1997, 1999
Machkinis, E. I.	1971
Mikola, Tibor	1968
Popov, N.A.	1965
Prokofiev, G. N.	1933
Sobanski, Florian	1996
Stolyarova, A.	1971, 1972

Collector	Date of collection
Szeverényi, Sándor	2008
Tereshchenko, Natalya	unknown year
Turdagina, Larisa	1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005
Várnai, Zsuzsa	2008
Voliak, Pavel	2003
Wagner-Nagy, Beáta	1994, 1996, 2008, 2016, 2019
Zhdanova, Tatyana	1997

Currently, the database contains 455 units, 356 of which are already transcribed texts, which is 78% of the total. However, it does not mean that all these 356 units are already glossed and added to the corpus. At present, 207 units are glossed and analyzed. A number of units have recordings, but only 57 units do not. The total length of the audio materials is 116:02:05. The number of sentences in the whole corpus is 25,307. This database will be gradually expanded and published in about 2–3 years. Because of the abundance of materials, one cannot expect that all texts will be available in glossed form. However, through the compilation of materials, it is achieved that an extensive collection will be archived sustainably. The materials will be deposited in several archives.

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### A list of speakers:

ChND	Chunanchar, Nina Dentumeevna	KD	Kupchik, Darya
ChN	Chunanchar, Numaku	KNT	Kosterkina, Nadezhda Tubyakovna
JECh	Jarockaya, E. Ch.	KTD	Kosterkin, Tubyaku Dyuhodevich
JN	Jarockij, Numarie	KT	Komchen, Tasi
KBD	Kosterkin, Boris Dyuhodevich	KVB	Kosterkina, Valentina Bintaleevna
KChH	Kokore, Chubo Hetinteevich	MACH	Momde Aleksandre Cheleevich
KDD	Kosterkin, Dyulsimyaku Demnimeevich	MDM	Mirnikh, D. M.
KDeD	Kosterkin, Demnime Dyuhodevich	MDN	Mirnykh, Denduche Nuteevich



PHL	Porbina, Hella Laymoreevna	TCh	Turdagin, Chuamte
PHM	Porbina, Hella Mosareva	TKF	Tuglakov, Kurumaku Fjodorovich
PK	Porbin, Kundyli	TMP	Turdagina, Maria Pulkovna
PKM	Porbin, Kyudapte Morychesovich	TN	Turdagin, Nurumaku
PMS	Porbina, M. S.	TNH	Turdagin, Numumu Xursapteevich
PSM	Porbin, Salira Mydovich	TNI	Turdagin, Nikolaj Ivanovich
PT	Porbina, Tanya	TS	Turdagin, Sumumaku

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