

Nivkh: phonological classes

Pavel Iosad

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Analysis task

Examine the following Nivkh sentences and their translations.

1. *if pityə vəkzʃ* 'He lost the book'
2. *cʰxəf ətək ŋafq ruʃ* 'The bear chased the father's friend'
3. *ovla ŋzuʃ* 'The child washed me'
4. *if ŋafq əmək xeq yəlnuʃ* 'He saved the friend from the mother's fox'
5. *ŋi ŋafq vaχ pəkzʃ* 'I lost the friend's stone'
6. *ovla ŋafq zosqɕ* 'The child's friend destroyed it'
7. *kʰeq cʰxəf paχ tʰəprʃ* 'The fox brought the bear's stone'
8. *əmək rəf cosqɕ* 'The mother's house got destroyed'
9. *cʰxəf təf pilʃ* 'The bear's house is big'
10. *ŋivx ovla cʰxəf kəlnuʃ* 'The man saved the child from the bear'
11. *ətək əmək zeŋi ʃəprʃ* 'The father brought the mother's salmon'
12. *ovla cʰo rəvrʃ* 'The child watched the fish'
13. *qan pəkzʃ* 'The dog got lost'

Translate into English

1. *qan cʰxəf cuʃ*
2. *ŋi zuʃ*
3. *if ŋravrʃ*

Translate into Nivkh

1. The child chased the bear
2. The mother's book got lost
3. I brought the friend's bear

Some of the original thirteen sentences have other possible translations. Can you spot any?

Additional task

Examine the plural forms of some of the words from the first task. To simplify your task, they are already grouped by allomorph. Can you describe how the plural is formed in Nivkh? Describe any similarities between the formation of the plural and any other phenomena you are familiar with from the first task.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
<i>c^hxəfku</i>	<i>əməkxu</i>	<i>pityəyu</i>	<i>qangu</i>
<i>təfku</i>	<i>ətəkxu</i>	<i>c^hoyu</i>	<i>ɲivygu</i>
<i>paχku</i>	<i>ɲafqχu</i>	<i>zeniyu</i>	<i>ovlagu</i>
	<i>k^heqχu</i>		

Considering all your previous answers, translate the following sentences into English. Can you observe any new phenomena, and explain why the words behave this way?

1. *if qan t^həprɟ*
2. *əmək qan juɟ*
3. *ovla bityə pəkzɟ*
4. *ɲi ɲivx t^huɟ*
5. *c^hxəf ɲivy bəkzɟ*

If you can, translate 'I saved the child from the father's dog' into Nivkh.