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**THREE NORTH SAMOYEDIC PROHIBITIVE AUXILIARIES:
NENETS *ńo-*, *ńō-*, *ńu-*, *ńū-*, NGANASAN *ńe-* AND ENETS *i-***

Abstract. Among North Samoyedic prohibitive auxiliaries the Nenets *ńo-* etc. is exceptional because it does not match the general tendency in North Samoyedic as it states that the secondary *ń* precedes palatal vowels only. The consonant *ń-* is regarded as secondary among North Samoyedic negative auxiliaries. Therefore the *ńo-* should actually be an *ń*-initial primary stem (**ńo-*). According to the M. A. Castrén's Samoyedic grammar, the prohibitive stems Nenets *ńo-* etc., Nganasan *ńe-* and Enets *i-* were very restrictedly used in his time. In subject literature researchers did not pay any special attention to the limited use mentioned above. However, it is conspicuous that the spheres of the limited use in all three languages coincide in Castrén's treatment: only for the 2P. It may not at all be accidental.

Keywords: Samoyedic, Nenets, Nganasan, Enets, use and etymology of prohibitive auxiliaries.

According to the M. A. Castrén's Samoyedic grammar, a part of North Samoyedic prohibitive stems was very restrictedly used in his time. Those included the Nenets *ńo-*, *ńō-*, Nganasan *ńe-* and Enets *i-* (Castrén 1854 : 436–437, 493–494, 518.) Their use appears in Table 1, in which I have underlined the forms of respective stems to make them prominent.

Table 1
North Samoyedic prohibitive auxiliaries according to Castrén 1854¹

		NENETS		
		Sg	Du	Pl
Indef. conj.:	2P	<u><i>ńo-n</i></u>	<u><i>ńō-di</i></u> [?]	<u><i>ńō-da</i></u> [?]
	3P	<i>ńī-jea</i>	<i>ńī-jaha</i> [?]	<i>ńī-jea</i> [?]
Def. conj. (singular object):	2P	<u><i>ńo-r</i></u>	<u><i>ńo-ri</i></u> [?]	<u><i>ńo-ra</i></u> [?]
	3P	<i>ńi-mda</i>	<i>ńi-mdi</i> [?]	<i>ńi-mdu</i> [?]
Def. conj. (dual object):	2P	<i>ńi-hijud</i> etc.		
	3P	<i>ńi-hijumda</i> etc.		

¹ In South Samoyedic the prohibitive auxiliaries were preserved only most rudimentarily, therefore possible traces of respective limited use (like in North Samoyedic) are impossible to find in those languages.

Def. conj. (plural object):	2P	<i>ńi-n</i> etc.
	3P	<i>ńi-mda</i> etc.

Infinitive: *ńi-ś²*

NGANASAN

		Sg	Du	Pl
Indef. conj.:	2P	<i>ńe-³</i>	<i>ńi-ńiri</i>	<i>ńi-ńire</i>
	3P	<i>ńi-ńā</i>	<i>ńi-ńa'agai</i>	<i>ńi-ńā</i>
Def. conj. (singular object):	2P	<i>ńe-ta³</i>	<i>ńi-ńiri</i>	<i>ńi-ńire³</i>
	3P	<i>ńi-ńa'ade</i>	<i>ńi-ńa'adi</i>	<i>ńi-ńa'aden</i>
Def. conj. (dual object):	2P	<i>ńi-keińa</i> etc.		
	3P	<i>ńi-ńa'ageit'i</i> etc.		
Def. conj. (plural object):	2P	<i>ńi-ńa</i> etc.		
	3P	<i>ńi-ńa'ait'i</i> etc.		
Reflexive conj.:	2P	<i>ńi-dij</i> etc.		
	3P	<i>ńi-ńai</i> etc.		

Infinitive: *ńi-se*

Gerund: *ńi-fi³*

ENETS

		Sg	Du	Pl
Indef. conj.:	2P	<i>i-³</i>	<i>ńe-ti³</i>	<i>ńe-ta³</i>
	3P	<i>ńē</i>	<i>ńē-ggo³</i>	<i>ńē-³</i>
Def. conj. (singular object):	2P	<i>i-ro</i>	<i>ńe-ti³</i>	<i>ńe-ta³</i>
	3P	<i>ńē-dda</i>	<i>ńē-ddi³</i>	<i>ńē-ddu³</i>
Def. conj. (dual object):	2P	<i>i-huno</i>	<i>ńe-huri</i>	<i>ńe-hura</i>
	3P	<i>ńē-hura</i>	<i>ńē-huri³</i>	<i>ńē-huru³</i>
Def. conj. (plural object):	2P	<i>i-nu</i>	<i>ńi-ri³</i>	<i>ńi-ra³</i>
	3P	<i>ńi-³ira</i>	<i>ńi-³iri³</i>	<i>ńi-³iru³</i>
Reflexive conj.:	2P	<i>i-ro³</i>	<i>ńi-ri³</i>	<i>ńi-ra³</i>
	3P	<i>ńi-³iddo</i>	<i>ńi-³iddi³</i>	<i>ńi-³iddu³</i>

Infinitive: *i-si*

Gerund: *i-bu⁴*

Péter Hajdú considered their initial consonant *ń* as secondary (Hajdú 1982 : 127).⁵ However, among the listed prohibitive auxiliaries the Nenets

² The reason of the long vowel occurrence in the Nenets variant *ńi-* is not clear.

³ The long *i* in the Enets general prohibitive auxiliary (Castrén 1854 : 518) has obviously emerged through adherence of the plural marker **j* that designates any plural object, on the one hand, and the marker **j* of reflexive conjugation, to the original stem vowel *e* (*ńi-* < **ńe-j-*), on the other (see e.g. Mikola 2004 : 123–126). The reason of the long vowel occurrence in the Enets variant *ńē-* is not clear.

⁴ According M. A. Castrén, the stem *i-* is used also in the Enets conjunctive (Castrén 1864 : 516–517), whereby the length of the stem vowel (*i-*) is most likely caused by adherence of the conjunctive marker *ji* to the primary stem vowel *i* (*i-* < **i-ji-*) (see e.g. Mikola 2004 : 111–112). The use of the stem *i-* in the conjunctive could be explained by some kind of special development in Enets and should not substantially mar the picture about the relative unity of the North Samoyedic "limited usage" in question.

⁵ P. Hajdú has quite right written that "In Northern Samoyed a tendency prevailed (to a varying degree, depending on the language or dialect in question) which resulted

ńo-, *ńō-* is exceptional because it does not match the general tendency in North Samoyedic as it states that the secondary *ń* precedes palatal vowels as the *o* is a velar vowel. Therefore the *ńo-*, *ńō-* should be an *ń*-initial primary stem (**ńo-*), and not a secondary version of the stem *o-* (the latter being *ɣo-* altogether). Certainly, an exception from the general tendency cannot be excluded (see also Sammallahti 1988 : 497) but there seems to be no obvious reason for any exception. Therefore I regard it as possible to suppose that etymologically the Nenets *ńo-*, *ńō-* does not belong to other North Samoyedic negative auxiliary stems with the secondary initial consonant *ń-* (Nenets *ńĩ-*, Nganasan *ńi-*, Enets *ńe-*), but is a separately standing independent word *ńo-*, *ńō-* (< **ńo-*), instead. Quite a different question is raised in connection with the etymology of this word which in the given case should be an independent prohibitive verb.

On the other hand, Hajdú gave modern examples about the Nenets negative imperative, all of which were formed only from the stem *ńo-* (not partly from *ńi-*, *ńĩ-*) (Hajdú 1968 : 71–72, cf. equivalents of similar verb forms also in Терещенко 1965 : 908). In grammars of Nganasan after Castrén the prohibitive stem *ńe-* does not come forth any more and the stem *ńi-* is used instead (cf. first of all Терещенко 1979 : 215, 260–262). As far as Enets is concerned, Castrén's grammar of Samoyedic languages (1854) has remained the most systematic source for the topic. According to Castrén, the Enets imperative in all forms of Sg2 used the prohibitive auxiliary stem *i-* only (infinitive and gerund, also, used the stem *i-*).

If all the data by Castrén is truthful, it may be a reference to the option that the prohibitive verb stems of the Nenets *ńo-*, *ńō-*, Nganasan *ńe-* and Enets *i-* were very restrictedly used in his time, and that later their spheres of use in imperative usually broadened. In subject literature researchers did not pay any special attention to the limited use mentioned. Certainly, the Castrén grammatical data in question may have concerned only some of the dialectal variants (of the period) or may just have been erroneous. However, it is conspicuous that the spheres of use of the Nenets *ńo-*, *ńō-*, Nganasan *ńe-* and Enets *i-* coincide in Castrén's treatment: only for the 2P. Such an overlapping may confirm the truthfulness of that earlier limited use, and the coincidence of the limited use in three languages may not at all be accidental.

However, the etymological adherence of the Enets *i-* to the Nenets *ńo-* etc. and Nganasan *ńe-* is opposed by the initial vowel: owing to *i*-stem it may be related to the South Samoyedic Kamass prohibitive verb/particle *i-* (see e.g. Mikola 2004 : 128). The relative coincidence of the use of the Nganasan *ńe-* with the use of the Nenets *ńo-* etc. speaks for the relationship with the latter, however, in this case it is hard to explain considerable difference of stem vowels (*o*, *u* vs. *e*). Besides, the Nenets *ńi-*, *ńĩ-* and Nganasan *ńi-* with the secondary initial consonant (both of them come from the primary form **i-* without any initial consonant) are more

in the elimination of the vowels from word initial position by attaching *ɣ-* to initial velar vowels and *ń-* to initial palatal vowels. This process applied to loanwords as well" (Hajdú 1982 : 127).

compatible with the Kamass *i-* mentioned above. In several respects, among Samoyedic negative stems, the Nenets *ńo-* etc. and Nganasan *ńe-* form a fully independent group and both of them descend possibly from some kind of primarily *ń-*initial word stem (**ńV-*).

P. Hajdú brought out a number of circumstances about Nenets negative auxiliaries that may attract interest from the view of the origin of *ńo-*, *ńō-* in question. Namely, several optional suffixes or particles that seem to have an emphatic or determinative function precede or follow the Nenets negative auxiliaries (Hajdú 1982 : 113, 121), e.g. (here and henceforth, I have used bold to make them in examples more prominent) *ńonwa xań* 'don't go out' (Hajdú 1982 : 122), *ńī jāmban wuńiśā xonu* 'he didn't sleep during the night', *mań wuńiśeam meator* 'I didn't ask' (Hajdú 1982 : 120). In Toivo Lehtisalo's papers a variant of the last sentence was found without a negative auxiliary stem thus the sentence lacks a verb altogether: *mań wuśeam meator* — the preterit suffix *-śea-* and Sg1 suffix *-m* immediately follow (either due to sound assimilations, contractions or a language error?) the element *wi-* (Lehtisalo 1956 : 73b).

Among the Nenets emphatic or determinative elements one can find also *ń-*initial ones, e.g. *ńińńi pīn* 'y e t i s / h e n o t a f r a i d ?' (Lehtisalo 1956 : 327a), *mań ńimńo* 'I r e a l l y d o n ' t s e e i t' (Hajdú 1982 : 122), *ńińun to* 'don't come' (Hajdú 1982 : 116). In the case of Forest Nenets words *ńi-ńu-n* 'don't' (Lehtisalo 1956 : 327b) and *ńińun* 'don't' (Sammallahti 1974 : 84), the common prohibitive stem vowels *o*, *ō* were replaced by *u*, *ū*, that could be explained by the vowel alternation *o*, *ō* ~ *u*, *ū* (mainly Tundra Nenets ~ Forest Nenets) (see e.g. Hajdú 1968 : 18).⁶ As can be seen, the forms of the elements in question may also be *-ńo* and *ńu-* (Hajdú 1982 : 121), e.g. *ńāta ńińo ŋad* 'his t e n t r e a l l y c a n n o t b e s e e n' (Hajdú 1982 : 122), *ńuńor māda* 'don't cut it through' (Hajdú 1982 : 116). Thanks to their similarity with the Nenets prohibitive stem *ńo-*, *ńō-*, *ńu-*, *ńū-*, the latter arouse a particular interest. Namely, we need to give attention to Károly Rédei's supposition about the descent of the Hungarian *n-*initial negation words from the Uralic demonstrative pronoun **nā* (MSzFE III 1978 : 464–466; UEW 1986–1988 : 70, 30; Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Ungarischen 1993–1995 : 1022), which is quite possible (see Honti 1997 : 164–165). Emphaticity and determinativity are not far from demonstrativity and it is possible that the Nenets emphatic/determinative element *ńo*, *ńu* has become a prohibitive auxiliary.⁷ Certainly, it is just one possible explanation among many.

For the purpose of a summarizing overview, I gathered stems of Samoyedic negative auxiliaries in Table 2.

⁶ In subject literature no discrimination is often made as to if the data submitted comes from Tundra Nenets or Forest Nenets. Yet the discrimination appears often necessary (and possible), as in this case.

⁷ Likewise, it is possible in the case of the above form *wiśeam* that here the element *wi-* has also become a prohibitive auxiliary.

**Samoyedic negative auxiliaries
with possible North Samoyedic reconstructions**

According to Castrén 1854:

General use		Special limited use in imperative
	NENETS	
<i>ńi-</i> , <i>ńī-</i> (< * <i>i-</i>)		<i>ńo-</i> , <i>ńō-</i> , <i>ńu-</i> , <i>ńū</i> (< ? * <i>ńV-</i>)
	NGANASAN	
<i>ńi-</i> (< * <i>i-</i>)		<i>ńe-</i> (< ? * <i>ńV-</i>)
	ENETS	
<i>ńe-</i> (< * <i>e-</i>)		<i>i-</i> (< ? * <i>i-</i>) (also in all Sg2 forms and in all conjunctive forms)

According to different sources:

General use		Use in imperative
	SELKUP	
<i>aš((š)a)</i> etc. (loan from Even, Katz 1970 : 149–150)		<i>šk(š)</i> , <i>šg(š)</i>
	KAMASS	
<i>e-</i>		<i>i-</i>
	MATOR	
<i>i-</i>		?

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**ТРИ СЕВЕРНОСАМОДИЙСКИХ
ВСПОМОГАТЕЛЬНЫХ ЗАПРЕТИТЕЛЬНЫХ ГЛАГОЛА:
НЕН. *ńo-*, *ńõ-*, *ńu-*, *ńũ-*, НГАН. *ńe-* И ЭН. *i-***

Среди северносамодийских вспомогательных запретительных глаголов нен. *ńo-* и т. д. составляет исключение, так как он не следует северносамодийской общей тенденции, согласно которой вторичный *ń* предшествует только передним гласным. А *ń-* в рассматриваемых северносамодийских глаголах считается вторичным. Поэтому *ńo-* и т. д. может, на самом деле, быть первичной основой с начальным гласным *ń-* (**ńo-*). Согласно самодийской грамматике М. А. Кастрена, запретительные глагольные основы нен. *ńo-* и т. д., нган. *ńe-* и эн. *i-* употреблялись в его время очень ограниченно. В специальной литературе на это ограниченное употребление не обращалось особого внимания. Однако интересным образом сфера такого ограниченного употребления во всех трех языках у М. А. Кастрена совпадает: оно встречается только во 2-м лице. Вполне возможно, что это не случайность.