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On the Project of a Diachronic Cognitive Onomasiological Dictionary of the Nganasan Language¹

The first part of the paper presents the theoretical basis of the project of the diachronic cognitive onomasiological online dictionary of the Nganasan language (University of Szeged, 2012–2015), namely the method of the ‘filiation’ worked out by Paul Gévaudan (2007). The second part investigates some practical issues concerning the compilation of the dictionary and demonstrates the expected utility through Nganasan examples.

Key words: Nganasan, Diachronic Cognitive Onomasiology, Lexical Typology, Lexicography

1. Introduction

The aim of the article is to give an overview of the theoretical background of the project of the diachronic cognitive onomasiological online dictionary of the Samoyedic languages.² The main focus is to compile the Nganasan section in the period of 2012–2015. In order to create this dictionary, a specific structure and program needs to be set up. Since the relations of the word forms and their meanings are classified by formal and semantic/cognitive points of view, the existing diachronic and synchronic lexicographical programmes do not relate to this project. These classifications allow different and complex search and browse capabilities, which will provide an easy access to the dictionary. Developing the section of Nganasan is perfectly realistic, and would create a “historical thesaurus” of the Nganasan language. Once the Lexicographical Program is created, the database can be extended in several directions (e.g. as regards the number of the languages, lexemes, concepts, semantic domains, analytical parts, etc.). The classification of the relations between lexemes will require basic research such as etymological, and areal linguistic study. The systemizing of the classifications could result in new discoveries relating to the modeling of lexical pathways.

2. The Nganasan language

The main focus of the research lies on the Nganasan language with the following supporting arguments:

¹ This paper is a written version of a presentation at the 4th International Samoyed Workshop in Hamburg, 2012. A Hungarian version of this paper has been edited in *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények*.

² Diachronic Cognitive Onomasiological Dictionary of the Nganasan Language (University of Szeged, OTKA Research Fund: K100854; 2012–2015).

(1) The Nganasan electronic corpus exists. When it comes to building corpora, projects utilizing less documented languages are not only costly, but time-consuming, as well. The advantage of my project is that I am able to utilize the electronic corpora of Nganasan provided in the last 10-15 years. I was fortunate to participate in some previous projects, which consequently gave me the opportunity to jumpstart my research. The most important items of the electronic corpora are:

A) Dictionaries

The Morphological Dictionary of the Nganasan Language (Wagner-Nagy 2006). Cc. 6000 entries.

Nganasan-Russian-Nganasan dictionary by Kosterkina–Momde–Zhdanova (2001). Cc. 8000 entries.

B) Texts

Kazys Labanauskas's folklore text collection (2001) – analyzed in our previous project (The Computational Morphological Analyzer of the Nganasan Language, OTKA). Cc. 3 500 sentences. Materials of Valentin Gusev's research group from 2005-2008. Cc. 50,000 sentences.

C) Own materials (collected in 2008 with Beáta Wagner-Nagy in Ust-Awam), mostly lexicological questionnaires and texts (Cc. 1000 sentences).

The significance of the electronic corpora lies in the fact that these data have already been analyzed and organized in a systematic order. The organized corpus makes the research easier and faster. The conversion of the electronic corpus to the database will be complicated and expedient due to the requirements of dictionary creation and data entry. This will entail in depth research such that each word needs to be investigated etymologically, lexicologically, and areally. Consequently the data will be uploaded manually.

(2) Nganasan as a Siberian language:

The linguistic map of Siberia is not completely known. A cognitive linguistic research has hardly been detected. Former historical and etymological studies have been replaced by documentation linguistic researches. Due to this significant replacement many new modern grammars and vocabularies have been created. These materials provide an excellent basis for the creation of the cognitive background of the lexicalization processes of the Samoyed languages.

(3) Nganasan as an endangered language:

The Nganasan language is one of the most endangered Uralic languages. The number of native speakers is approximately 400, and that of the full speakers is only several dozen. These numbers imply an urgent need for collecting linguistic material.

3. Why the need for a diachronic cognitive onomasiological³ dictionary?

Similar historical and electronic databases do not contain searchable classifications of the formal and cognitive relations such as the Historical Thesaurus of English (University of Glasgow, libra.englant.arts.gla.ac.uk/historicalthesaurus). In my dissertation (Szeverényi 2008) I applied methods of diachronic cognitive onomasiology with emphasis on the property concepts. This dictionary can be applied to numerous linguistic subdisciplines such as diachronic onomasiology, and semasiology. In the last 20 years the traditional onomasiology got fresh impulse by the development of cognitive semantics. This statement is shown in the foundation of Onomasiology Online (by Joachim Grzega). There is very important research from the DECOLAR project [University of Tübingen, SFB441: Linguistic Data Structures: On the Relation between Data and Theory in Linguistics, 1999–2008 – first of all by Peter Koch and Andreas Blank, B6 project: Lexikalische Motivation im Französischen, Italienischen und Deutschen (LexiTypeSyn)], Dirk Geeraerts's works (Geeraerts 1997, 2010), research on the English historical lexicology (Christian Kay, especially Kathryn Allan 2007). Koch and Blank emphasize in many places that the diachronic cognitive onomasiology has numerous advantages in contrast to the traditional etymological researches. Namely, "it enables us to discover material that is interesting independently of any etymological relationship. In this way we can postulate a potentially polygenetic evolution within one and the same language family" (Koch 2008: 109).

The applied method is the diachronic model of lexical 'filiation' (Gévaudan – Wiebel 2004, Gévaudan 2007), which can be considered as the diachronic model for lexical typology. Essentially it implies investigation of lexicalizational processes, classifying and modelling of the processes, however, as Joachim Grzega mentions DCO „is more or less the theoretical side of the practical combination of semasiology, onomasiology, word formation, and etymology" (Grzega 2002: 1023). The newness of this approach actually lies in the combination of these areas as a multiple approach through an easily readable access

³ „Cognitive onomasiology, thus, requires both, an enlarged sample of languages in order to avoid circularity and a deepened insight in diachronic lexical processes in order to understand processes of conceptualization that, by time, have become opaque. Combining diachronic lexicology with onomasiology and applying it to more than only one or a few languages can enable us to show empirically which conceptualizations are proper to a single or very few speech communities and which can be found universally and thus may match with a biological predisposition of man in perceiving the world. Cognitive onomasiology then can procure us deeper insight into the way our mind works. It is important to say that "universally recurrent conceptualization" does not mean that it has to be found in every language of the world and even not in most of them: first, there are always some speech-communities that, for some reason or other, prefer a cognitively unprivileged way of conceptualizing a given concept, and second, several cognitively salient ways of conceptualization may parallelly exist and compete with each other." (Blank 2001: 11)

and reasonable system on computer. It takes into consideration all kinds of lexical evolutions and offers standardised explanations of all different kinds of lexical innovation (Gévaudan – Wiebel 2004: 2).

The basic thesis of the model is that „formal and cognitive motivation are two dimensions of non-phonetic linguistic motivation, since there is no formal motivation without cognitive motivation and vice versa” (Koch – Marzo 2007: 262). From a typological point of view, Koch and Marzo emphasize three major scopes for its application (Koch – Marzo 2007: 273):

- (i) motivational profiles of particular languages;
- (ii) identification of cross-linguistic motivational tendencies and idiosyncrasies with respect to the language facts (are there more or less formally transparent languages? Are there predominantly metaphorical languages? etc.)
- (iii) universal/language type-specific motivational preferences and gaps with respect to combinations in the two-dimensional grid

The investigation of a lexical motivational mechanism has been worked out a two and a three dimensional model in Tübingen. Gévaudan’s filiation model (2007) has been applied e.g. in DECOLAR project (<http://www.decolar.uni-tuebingen.de/>; Bienvenus sur le site du Dictionnaire Étymologique et Cognitif des Langues Romanes). The two dimensional grid is applied to synchronic motivation investigations. Gévaudan’s three dimensional filiation model has three components:

- 1. semantic filiation (Semantische Filiation): determination of cognitive relations between related lexical units;
- 2. morphological filiation (Morphologische Filiation): determination of formal relations between related lexical units;
- 3. stratificational filiation (Stratische Filiation): comparison of language strata. There are two subgroups: direct and paradigmatic filiation (Stratisch-direkte Filiation – Stratisch-paradigmatische Filiation). E.g. borrowing belongs to the former group, lexical continuity (Stratische Kontinuität), antonomasy, onomatopoezis etc. belong to the second one as calque, analogy etc.

Here are some examples from Blank 2001:

E *tea* ‘drink’ > ‘afternoon meal’

- manner of verbalization: semantic change
- type of relation: conceptual contiguity (= metonymy)

It *ragazzo* ‘boy’ + *-ino* → *ragazzino* ‘little boy’

- suffixation / taxonomic subordination (= diminution)

- It *ragazzo* + *-one* → *ragazzone* ‘big boy’
 – suffixation / taxonomic subordination (= augmentation)
 F *bien* ‘well’ → (*le*) *bien* ‘the good’, ‘property’
 – conversion / conceptual identity
 G *Wüste* ‘desert’ + *Schiff* ‘ship’ → *Wüstenschiff* ‘camel’
 – compounding / conceptual contiguity + metaphorical similarity
 E *motor* + *hotel* → *motel*
 – word blending / conceptual contiguity + taxonomic subordination + formal similarity

Besides the diachronic onomasiology there are two fields playing important roles in the construction of the dictionary :

Etymological research

Since the publishing of Janhunen’s Samoyedic Etymological Dictionary (1977), the published Samoyedic materials have been multiplied; however, these materials have been analyzed diachronically only partially (Helimski 1986, 1992-93, 1997; Aikio 2002). This dictionary could be the first step towards the building of a historical dictionary of the Samoyedic languages.

It is good to see that as results of descriptive fieldworks some new historical-comparative dictionaries have recently been edited, such as Irina Nikolaeva’s Yukaghir Historical Dictionary (2006), Comparative Eskimo Dictionary with Aleut Cognates (1994, 2010, by Michael Fortescue et al.), Comparative Chukotko-Kamchatkan Dictionary (2005, Michael Fortescue), Heinrich Werner’s dictionary (2002), the Relationship of Nivkh to Chukotko-Kamchatkan (2011, Michael Fortescue). Hence, it seems that today the focus is on the history of individual languages and language families as opposed to „large-scale” Siberian theories.

Cognitive metaphor-theory

The results of the cognitive metaphor researches (e.g. Lakoff–Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2005) can be applied in lexicology as well. It is very important because data from Siberian languages have not been used as sources of the cognitive metaphor-theory. However, it must be mentioned that research on Nganasan texts, from a figuratively point of view, are limited. As a result, the only area for improvement is in lexicology. Additionally, diachronic metaphor research has shown new results as well (e.g. HTE online dictionary, Kathryn Allan’s monograph, 2007).

4. The structure of the dictionary

The primary goal of the dictionary is to classify the cognitive and formal relations of the lexemes and concepts, and to systematize and interpret the classification. The starting point is the well-known motivational square

lexeme 1 (L1)	concept 1 (C1)
lexeme 2 (L2)	concept 2 (C2)

(L1 = source form, L2 = target form, C1 = source concept, C2 = target concept)

Where C1 is in cognitive relation with C2, L1 is in formal relation with L2. We must classify both the cognitive relation (C1>C2) and the formal relation (L1>L2), then systematize the classifications of concepts and forms. At last we will classify the pathways, i.e. the kind of tendencies (universal, culture-specific etc.) that can be established. Problems may arise during my analysis, and below are some preceding statements:

- Source concept/source forms can be target concept/target forms at the same time. This means that theoretically never-ending semantic chains can be detected.

- One meaning (concept) belongs to one form.

The reconstructed protoforms are labeled as absolute source form and source concept.

- The direction of the semantic change is not always clear. In such cases, fictive stems will be established as a collective source.

To illustrate the schema, I show two examples:

forms:	L1: basa	>>	semantic change	>>	L2: basa
concepts:	C1: IRON, METAL	>>	contiguity (Material for Object)	>>	C2: MONEY
forms:	L1: ɲənduj	>>	compounding	>>	L2: tuu ɲənduj
concepts:	C1: A KIND OF BOAT	>>	similarity	>>	C2: STEAMBOAT, STEAMSHIP
			>> taxonomic subordination >>		
					(<i>Tuu</i> is the genitive form of <i>tuj</i> ,fire'.)

According to the motivational square, the following informations of a lexeme should be contained:

- (1) Lexeme (form)
 - (1a) language
 - (1b) parts of speech
 - (1c) morphological structure
 - (1d) opacity [+/-] or [?]
 - (1e) literature (sources)
 - (1f) in context (if exists)
 - (1g) comments (e.g. frequency of the forms; certainty of the etymology etc.).
- (2) concepts (< semantic domains)
- (3) pathways:
 - (3a) source forms of
 - (3b) source concepts of
 - (3b/I) classification of the cognitive link
 - Main types of the relations: contiguity, similarity, partiality, contrast
 - (3b/II) Classification of formal relation of the two forms (source and target):
 - compound, derivation, conversion, loan etc.
 - (3c) target form(s) of
 - (3d) target concept(s) of
 - (3d/I) classification of the cognitive link
 - Main types of the relations: contiguity, similarity, partiality, contrast
 - (3d/II) labeling of the source and target forms
 - Classification of formal relation of the two forms (source and target):
 - compound, derivation, conversion, loan etc.

In the case of classification (cognitive relations and semantic domains) a good and adequate system can be found in the literature. We analyze the cognitive relations (and cognitive motivations) according to the works of Grzega (2004), Blank (2001), and Koch (2001). The basis of the classification of the forces (processes) is Grzega's work (2004), and Blank's work (2001). The system of the semantic domains of the Nganasan language can be created based on these systems. The basis of the system of the semantic domains is the Dictionary Development Process (http://www.sil.org/computing/ddp/DDP_downloads_tb.htm) for the description of underdocumented languages (*List of Semantic Domains (v.4) for Rapid Word Collection* (<http://rapidwords.net/>)). However, I want to

apply other systems too (e.g. Tucker 1998 that I used in my PhD-dissertation for the property concept), although the Zhdanova–Momde–Kosterkina’s Nganasan dictionary serves as a base for the semantic domains of Nganasan. Besides classification, the most important feature of the dictionary is the complex search and browse. Here are some examples for multiple searches with the five main components, i.e. language / lexeme / concept-domain / relation / process):

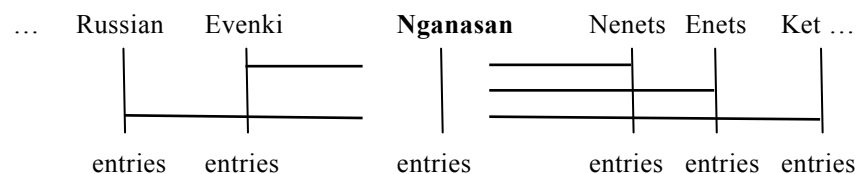
- A) Nganasan forms where the source concepts belong to COLOR
- B) Cognitive relations where the formal process is caritive derivation
- C) Metaphorical relations where the target form is X
- D) Conceptualization of a concept in different Samoyedic languages

4.1. Further aims for development

In the course of the development of the dictionary we intend to develop a dictionary that is flexible with the possibility of enlargement. In this section I present two of these plans.

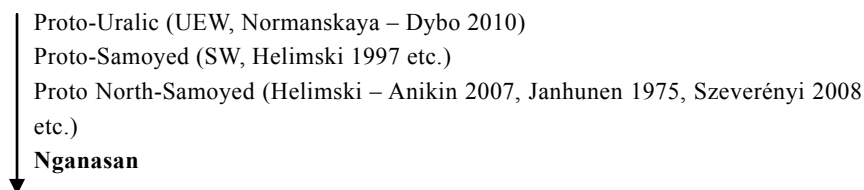
4.1.1. Areal dimensions

The dictionary will visualize not only the ancient (Proto-Uralic and Proto-Samoyed origin) part of the Nganasan vocabulary, but it will contain different kinds of borrowings. As a result, when we enter build a loanword into the system, we start building the section of that language: e.g. Evenki, Ket, Nenets, Enets or Russian:



4.1.2. Genetic dimensions

During the development it is important to pay attention to the oldest stratum of Nganasan and thus consider the historical-etymological literature. The history of Nganasan is not possible to divide different periods basing on the sources (the only exception is Matthias Alexander Castrén’s material from the 19th century, although a quantity of this material is hardly sufficient for deep lexicological analysis). As follows we can correlate the Nganasan lexemes mainly to the proto-languages. We handle the proto-languages as natural languages in the dictionary due to practical reasons. Differences between daughter languages and the proto-languages only occur when qualifying the formal and cognitive relations.



Thereby, we elaborate as large vocabulary as possible, we can determine all lexemes with unknown origin.

4.2. Problems

Of course, many different theoretical and practical problems can arise during the analysis. Now I focus on two of them.

4.2.1 Languages and dialects

The Nganasan language has only two dialects: Avam and Vadeev, which do not differ significantly from each other. The dictionary in the case of Nganasan should not be concerned with dialects due to the nature of the corpus and the language. However, the situation changes when we intend to integrate newer languages and ones that are dialectally spread. In this case we try to find the golden mean. On the one hand the primary corpus is preferably composed of the latest lexicon and on the other logical reasonability is expected with regard to the display of dialects. In the case of Nenets we include two languages (Tundra and Forest), in the case of the Enets too (Tundra and Forest). Sometimes we should process language data whose dialectal category/classification is uncertain. In such cases the relevant language is the default one.

4.2.2 Diachrony and synchrony

Hopefully, it can be seen in the dictionary that, despite our intentions, the synchronic and diachronic approach blend. Thousands of papers deal with the question where the border between semantic change and polysemy is (e.g. one of the latest is Zalizniak 2008). In the case of an underdocumented language it can be much more problematic, since in many cases it is hard to differentiate a semantic change from a polysemic pair – lack of sufficient and relevant data. Leastwise we always have to take stand on the problematic or uncertain relations – we have some tools for marking the questionable cases: e.g. marking the certainty of the labelling of the classification, or giving an explanation in a commentary section.

4.3. Examples

In the section I present some options of utilization.

4.3.1

Naturally, the first question of course concerns the basic information of a certain lexeme. The word *labsə* is our example below:

form: *labsə* concept: CRADLE

- word class: adjective
- morphological str: stem
- literature: Kosterkina et al 2001: 85

labsə is the source form of the followings:

- concept: THE YOUNGEST CHILD IN THE FAMILY
- form: *labsəkəə*
- literature: Kosterkina et al. 2001: 85
- cognitive relation: conceptual contiguity
- formal process: derivation > adjectival derivation

labsə is the target form of the followings:

- target concept of: CRADLE
- target form of: *lapćɜ́ (l'apşɜ́)*
- opacity: +
- literature: UEW

Discovering the pathways, we can establish „wordchains“:

<i>lapćɜ́ (l'apşɜ́)</i>	>	<i>labsə</i>	>	<i>labsəkəə</i>
PU		Ng		Ng

This example perfectly illustrates how we can describe the semantic map of the Nganasan vocabulary with the method of filiation.

4.3.2. Word formation and cognitive relations

The example of *hunsə* illustrates that the former historical research focused on mainly the ancient strata of the Nganasan vocabulary. A diachronic onomasiological analysis shows not only the historical background of a lexeme, but its formal and cognitive relations as well.

The lexicological, lexicographical works on Ng. *hunsə*- only mention its Samoyedic origin, but nothing more about its derived forms and their meanings. It is important because the Nganasan language is rich in derivational suffixes and it means that many prototypical meanings are expressed by derived forms.

Source1: Proto-Samoyed * <i>ponsə</i> 'fremd' (SW127)				
Source2: Nganasan * <i>hunsə-</i>				
PoS	target concept	targetform	formal process (derivation)	cognitive relation
Adj.	OTHER/ANOTHER/DIFFERENT	hunsə-ə	adjectival	C O N T I G U I T Y
Verb	TO CHANGE	hunsə-im-ši	translative	
	to discern, to distinguish	hund'ə-mtī-sī	transformative	
	to be separated, to separate	hund'a-ir-sī	frequentative	
	TO TURN ASIDE, TO TURN AWAY; TO GO BACK	hunsə-bə-sa	?	
Adv.	OTHERWISE	h u n s ə - ə - mānu	adj.+prolative	

table 2.

4.3.3 The source concepts of the adjectival class

Next we will search for the source of a certain word class and we will describe the processes. The next table shows the source concepts of the Nganasan adjectives (Szeverényi 2008). The table contains only the concepts and does not show the further certifications.

From a typological point view we can claim that the relations listed in table 3 are not peculiar. It is no surprise that e.g. the source form of a lexeme with meaning 'sweet' is a unit meaning 'sugar', or the word meaning 'sense, mind' is the source of the word meaning 'clever', or 'blue' comes from 'sky'. From the typological point of view those pairs are more of interest where a lack of an entity or property refers to a positive property (e.g. 'without lie' > 'honest', 'without dirt' > 'clean' etc.).

On the whole, in view of such a list we can establish relevant facts on the cognitive background of the lexicalizational mechanisms in a certain language. If we complete the pairs of concepts with lexical units, cognitive relations, formal processes, we will be able to execute a complex linguistic analysis. Of course, we will get a lot of unsortable information on the opaque lexems with unknown origin. Lastly, if we have systematic systematized list of words and relations from more languages, we can do a detailed comparative research (typological, etymological etc.) as well.

SOURCE CONCEPT	TARGET CONCEPT
WITHOUT INNER DEAL	EMPTY
CRADLE	YOUNG (the youngest child of a family)
SUGAR	SWEET
SILENT	CALM
BONE	THIN
FROST	GREY-HAIRED
SWEET	DELICIOUS/TASTY
SKY	BLUE
HUMAN	POLITE
BILE, GALL	GALL-COLORED (YELLOW~GREEN~BROWN)
WITHOUT STRENGTH	WEAK
MIND, SENSE	CLEVER, WISE
EATING/FOOD	HUNGRY
WITHOUT BRAIN	STUPID
BEING TIRED	WEAK
UP, UPWARD	LONG
RAISING HEAD	HAPPY
WITOUT FEAR	BRAVE
CLOUD	BLUE
CROOKED, CURVE	BEING TIRED
WORM	LONG
FRECKLE ON HAND	BLUE~GREEN
DREGS (OF FLUIDS)	OPAQUE, FUZZY (YELLOW, GREEN, BROWN)
SUFFOCATION	NARROW, TIGHT
SMOG, STEAM, FUME	GREY, BLUE
GENNY	BITTER/SOUR
STONE (?)	RUDE
WEAK	LASY
HEAR	FAMOUS/WELL-KNOWN

SOURCE CONCEPT	TARGET CONCEPT
SOON	FAST
STOMACH	FAT
WITHOUT LIE	HONEST
TRUE, REAL, RIGHT	HONEST
GAP	SPACIOUS, WIDE
WITHOUT MEAT	THIN
LIVING WELL/ IN GOOD CONDITION	RICH
HARD HEART	BRAVE
SMALL	FEW, LITTLE
CIRCLE	ROUND
WORK	HARD-WORKING
(HAVE) NAME	OLDER
SLOW	RESTFUL/CALM
WITH DIRT	DIRTY
WITHOUT DIRT	CLEAN
STICKY NOSED	GREEDY
HAVE DEER	RICH
HAVE WEAK/POOR BONES	THIN
HAVE ILL/BAD HUMOUR	SAD, MISERABLE
SALT	SALTY (HAVE A SALINE TASTE)
WITHOUT SALT	UNSALTED
UNPITHYING	RUTHLESS
SOFT/WARM	KIND/GENTLE
DRY	SHALLOW
COAL-DUST	BLACK
LUCK, SUCCEED	LUCKY, HAPPY
WITHOUT LUCK, SUCCEED	UNLUCKY, UNHAPPY
BEING WITHOUT HEART	CHICKEN (COWARD)
REQUIRED	HARD-WORKING

SOURCE CONCEPT	TARGET CONCEPT
NARROW, TIGHT	HUNGRY
ROLL, WRAP UP	CIRCLE
EGG-YOLK	YELLOW
FINGER	THIN
SEDIMENT	OPAQUE
CROW	BLACK

table 3.

4.3.4. Semantic fields: names of animals

Finally, I will show a simple example of utility: the use of realizing what we do not know. The basic corpus contains (= Kosterkina et al. 2001) 72 names for animals. When we group these terms by their origin, we get the following results: (secondary sources: UEW, Normanskaya – Dybo 2010, Janhunen 1976, Helimski – Anikin 2007, Helimski 1997)

Proto-Uralic		7
Proto-Samoyed		12
Proto North-Samoyed		6
other North-Samoyedic, not certified cognates		6
loans	Russian	2
	Evenki (Tung.)	3
formed autuchtonously, transparent		2
origin is not known, not motivated		34

table 4.

If we are aware of these data and statistics, we can determine a narrower research area. It can be seen that the origin of almost half the names of animals are unknown and the close relatives use other lexemes. The rate/number of the loans and of the autochthonously formed, motivated lexemes are low. So the challenge is describing lexemes with an unknown origin what requires thorough research.

If we analyze the whole known vocabulary of Nganasan statistically, we can establish the following conclusions. The dictionary of Kosterkina et al. (2001) contains cc. 3500 Nganasan entries. Cc. 500 lexemss belong to the oldest stra-

tum (PU, PS, PNS) of Nganasan, including units occurring only in Castrén and other fieldworkers' materials collected in the 18th and the 19th century. The number of the borrowings is only some dozens excluding the newest loanwords from Russian. On the basis of these numbers we can calculate that the origin of the cc. 80% of the Nganasan vocabulary is not clear or derived. So, we can state that many questions still remain...

Szeged

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