

## 1. How the Nivkh people lived in the old days

26-08-2000, Nekrasovka

V.Khein

G.Lok

T.de Graaf

H.Shiraishi

GL: We will talk about everything, we will talk and he is going to record our conversation. We will talk about something.

VH: Yes, we will talk about everything.

GL: Drink some tea.

VH: I am drinking tea. You should drink tea.

GL: Eat something, drink tea. Eat quickly.

VH: I'm fine.

GL: Drink tea. Eat.

VH: What are we going to talk about?

HS: Please say something about the settlement of Tengri.

VH: About Tengri?

HS: How did the Nivkh people live in the past?

VH: In the past, the Nivkh people, when they lived in Tengri. They caught fish, they made dried fish. They caught fish and hung them on long racks to dry.

GL: Every young woman,

VH: Every young woman did so. They killed fish and dried. They divided the spine from the fish, and hung them. We made a lot of dried fish.

GL: Who lived there?

VH: When we lived there, when I lived there with Petro, the family of Yugain lived there.

GL: How about Agniun?

VH: Agniun lived there, too. The father of Valentina Filimonovna lived there.

GL: And Vidain?

VH: Yes, the family of Vidain lived there, too.

GL: How about the Kekhan family?

VH: No. They did not live there. The family of Kekhan lived in the settlement of Langri.

GL: How about the family of Koton?

VH: Koton, they also lived in Langri.

GL: Did they live in Grot?

VH: Yes, they lived in Grot. I don't know where they lived. They lived there for a while. The family of your father lived there, too. The family of Shyvun lived there.

GL: Where did the family of Vygrshkyn live?

VH: Vygrshkyn didn't live there. They lived in their own settlement.

GL: Their settlement was always named after their family name.

VH: They lived in their own settlement.

GL: What was it called?

VH: Vygrshkynvo.

GL: Vygrshkynvo?

VH: Vygrshkynvo? No.

GL: Magrvo?

VH: No, Lukvo.

GL: Lukvo.

VH: Yes. Lukvo. What was that settlement called later? They called it "The Small Stream of Vygrshkyn". Yes. They lived near a small stream. It was called "The Small Stream of Vygrshkyn."

GL: Near (the settlement of) Chingai?

VH: Sorry?

GL: Was that near from Chingai?

VH: No. It was upstream from Tengi.

GL: Ah, on the same side as Nyida?

VH: No, lower. Look (from south to north), Tengi, then Pyrki, then Chingai, and then Magrvo. On the same side as Magrvo, go up to Lukvo. The next settlement is Vygrshkynvo. "The Small Stream of Vygrshkyn".

GL: How about Grot? Whose settlement is it?

VH: Grot, Grot, Grot,

GL: Not family Kekhan? Or family Koton?

VH: Yes. Then there is the settlement of Langri.

GL: These are all settlements facing the *Amurskij Liman*.

HS: Yes.

VH: At that time the parents of Vygrshkyn and Kekhan were also living in Lukvo. They also lived in Lukvo.

GL: How about the mother of Matak?

VH: The mother of Matak? The parents of Matak lived in Chingai, didn't they? No, at that time they were already living in Langri. They came to live in Langri.

GL: So only the family of Koton lived there?

VH: I don't know. Koton,

GL: They lived in Grot.

VH: They lived either in Grot or in Pyrki. They have lived in many places. They lived here and there, the family of Koton.

GL: Here in Tengri, and also in Noksi, right?

VH: Noksi is located south of Tengri. The family of Kokhtolok lived there.

GL: Who?

VH: Kokhtolok.

GL: Who are they? Uilta?

VH: Kokhtolok, Kokhtolok. They are Pogiun.

GL: Are the family of Pogiun related to that family?

VH: Kokhtolok.

GL: Ah, I see. Kokhtolok.

VH: Kokhtolok. His father,

GL: Because he had a fat belly (Kokhtolok literally means "fat belly"-HS)?

VH: No. It is his name.

GL: His name?

VH: His name. He was called Kokhtolok.

GL: Because he was very fat?

VH: He became fat after a while.

GL: When I was young they called me "nutshell" (because my nose looked like a nutshell-GL).

VH: I don't know.

GL: People called me "nutshell" after my nose.

VH: Nutshell. They lived,

GL: How about the mother of Yurik? Did she live there?

VH: The parents of Yurik lived in Magrvo. Magrvo is their settlement. The family of Kokhtolok came from Tengri to live there, in Magrvo. The wife of Kokhtolok was called "Verek".

GL: Was she called Verek? Not Lida?

VH: No, no.

GL: Whom did he marry? Kazak?

VH: No, no. The wife of Kokhtolok was called Verek. She is the grandmother of Tim. She said so. *Do you remember her* (VH asked in Russian)?

GL: No. Ask me in Nivkh.

VH: She is the grandmother of Tim.

GL: Where did the family of Akr live?

VH: Who?

GL: Akr.

VH: The family of Akr lived in Tengii.

GL: On the same side as Pogibi?

VH: No, they came from there. They came to Nyida and lived there for a while. Then they moved to Zelengai and lived there. Then they moved to Tengii. Then they moved to Zelengai and lived there. And there, he froze to death.

GL: Who? Akiliak?

VH: Akr.

GL: Ah, Akr.

VH: Akr.

GL: The father of Vadim.

VH: The father of Vadim.

GL: Did Hodia die?

VH: Hodia died not long ago.

GL: When we went to the shooting of the film<sup>1</sup>, we were always laughing at him with Zoia. Did the Japanese come to our region?

VH: What?

GL: When you were still young, did they come to the Amur region, or to this island (Sakhalin)?

VH: No, no. They didn't come.

GL: Didn't you see anybody (foreigner)?

VH: No, no. At that time, only Chinese lived in Chingai. I've seen them. But no other people.

GL: Where did the Ainu come from? For instance, my mother, or Kut'k. What

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<sup>1</sup> *Pegii Pes Begushchii Kraem Moria* 1990, (Spotted Dog Running along the Seashore, director K.Gevorkian), based on a short story of the same name by Chingiz Aitmatov. In *Mother Earth and Other Stories* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 229-309.

is their relation to Ainu?

VH: I don't know. I don't know how they are related to Ainu.

GL: Where did they come from, the Ainu?

VH: I don't know where they come from.

GL: The old Chelmik, he is Ainu, perhaps.

VH: What?

GL: The old Chelmik.

VH: Our father, my uncle, the father of Vovk,

GL: Yes, Chelmik. Vovk lives here (in this village), right?

VH: Yes.

GL: The child of Nadia Vagan, Kolia, died not long ago.

VH: He died?

GL: Yes. He was a beautiful boy. He really looked like Ainu. He looked like his grandfather, Chelmik.

VH: Yes, he looked like his grandfather.

GL: He really looked like an Ainu. The old Chelmik.

VH: Yes. I don't know. The father of Chelmik. The father of Chelmik, he is..., Big Grandmother (*Pilkar ytik*),

GL: Is she his wife or sister?

VH: Big Grandmother. She is our grandmother. My mother, Chelmik,

GL: Yes,

VH: Who else? These two. And the mother of Katik. When Pogiun married to her, she died. She was pregnant. Katik was born, and her mother died.

GL: Her mother?

VH: Yes. There were three sisters and three brothers.

GL: One mother, one father,

VH: One mother, one father.

GL: Right.

VH: My mother, and Chelmik (they were bothers and sisters).

GL: So you also have Ainu blood?

VH: (The clan of) Chvynyn,

GL: Ah,

VH: Chyivyn,

GL: Chyivyn. Is my father from the clan of Chyivyn?

VH: Chyivyn.

GL: My father and Smedun, too, aren't they?

VH: Chvynyn, Chvynyn, Chyivyn. The Chyivyn clan was called “People who like to eat *muvi*”<sup>2</sup>. Your parents are not from the clan of Chvynyn, but from Chyivyn.

GL: Chyivyn,

VH: From the clan of Chyivyn.

GL: Yes,

VH: But,

GL: How about Smedun?

VH: They are from the clan of Chyivyn,

GL: Chvy, Chyivyn,

VH: Chyivyn, people who like to eat *muvi*.

GL: What?

VH: *Muvi* lovers.

GL: Ah, *muvi* lovers.

VH: Yes, they are *muvi* lovers.

GL: The Chyivyn,

VH: The Chvynyn, the Chvynyn clan liked to eat fin.

GL: Ah,

VH: My parents are from the clan of Chvynyn.

GL: Fin lovers.

VH: Chyivyn, Chyivyn, they are,

GL: Smedun and Yalin, right?

VH: The old Yalin,

GL: Yes, the father of Valera. Family Vagan, or not? They really look like Ainu. They have Ainu blood, perhaps.

VH: Yes, they have Ainu blood. I don’t know. They killed..., I don’t know, they killed our grandfather.

GL: Who was killed? Your grandfather? Why was he killed? Because of women? Or did he want another woman?

VH: No. It was the wife of Chelmik. He (the father of Chelmik) took the wife of his son. He wanted to take the wife of his son. So Chelmik conspired with his mother to kill his father. And so they killed the father.

GL: Who killed him?

VH: The father wanted to kill the son (Chelmik). Chelmik was suffering the

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<sup>2</sup> A porridge of berry and fish or potatoes (see page v).

whole time from his father's desire for his wife. So they asked Tigan to kill him.

GL: The father of Vit'k.

VH: Yes, the father of Vit'k. Tigan killed him. When Tigan was still young. We had a big house in Chingai. The house had two platforms. The house had a long corridor and a backdoor. The Big Grandmother used the backdoor when she was cooking. The old Niavan and other old people were sitting. They were eating. They were talking. They were eating together with the father of Chelmik. After a while, they took him outside, to the balcony of the house and leant him against the wall. They sat him down on a chair. My mother told me about this. They sat him down. Tigan was ready to shoot him from below.

GL: With a gun?

VH: With a gun.

GL: Was he (the victim) aware of what's going to happen?

VH: Yes. He cried, "Son, son, why do you want to shoot me? Don't do that. Have mercy on me." In vain he implored his son to have mercy. Tigan shot him and killed him. Chelmik survived. Chelmik was saved.

GL: He (the father) wanted to take the wife of his son.

VH: Yes. He wanted the wife of his son. They would have killed the woman (wife) anyway, and so she disappeared without any trace.

GL: Did she have children?

VH: No.

GL: Was she still young?

VH: Yes.

GL: She was supposed to marry Chelmik, right?

VH: Yes. She was betrothed to Chelmik. Chelmik didn't marry her. If Chelmik hadn't killed his father, his father would have killed his son (Chelmik).

GL: That was how things worked among Nivkh at that time.

VH: Yes.

GL: I wanted to ask you about something, but I forgot.

VH: What did you want to ask me?

GL: I wanted to ask you about something, but I forgot. Who lived in Nganivo (Romanovka)?

VH: In Nganivo? I don't know. At that time, we,

GL: Do you know,

VH: I only lived in Tengri.

GL: No, when you came to Tengri from Langri. You didn't live in Langri but in Baidukov, right?

VH: Yes, we came from Baidukov in 1935. We came here to Sakhalin. I was still young then.

## **2. I came to Sakhalin when I was still young**

26-08-2000, Nekrasovka

V.Khein

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H.Shraishi

VH: I came to Sakhalin when I was still young. Then, in 1964,

TG: That's 40 years ago.

VH: 40 years ago. I went back to my place of birth. Where the family of my father came from. No, that was in 1963. I was married. I came to Sakhalin in 1935. I grew up here. And then I married Petr. I visited the homeland of my parents on the continent with him. My father came to Romanovka. So we went to the continent with my father. I remember it very well. I was introduced to the relatives of my father's. To my father's brothers and sisters. To the family of Chokrun and to Pnigryn. They are the family of Eduskin.

GL: Edusko?

VH: What?

GL: Edusko?

VH: No. Not Edusko.

GL: Who?

VH: The Pirgins.

GL: The Pirgins. Who else?

VH: There was the family of Soqrun,

GL: A, Soqrun,

VH: Pirgin, and Nirik.

GL: Nirik?



VH: Yes, Nirik.  
 GL: Where did these Nivkh come from?  
 VH: They are all brothers and sisters.  
 GL: All right.  
 VH: I came to know all my relatives. I was introduced to them.  
 GL: Where did they come from? They are living in Baidukov, right?  
 VH: They lived in Baidukov, but when I visited them they were living in Makarovk.  
 GL: Yes.  
 VH: They moved to the kolkhoz of Makarovk.  
 GL: Ah,

### 3. When we went picking cowberry

19-10-2001, Okha  
 V.Khein  
 G.Yalina  
 G.Lok  
 A.Latun  
 H.Shiraishi

GL: When we visited Matak in Magrvo, his wife Galia was still alive. I went to the taiga (to pick berries). The berries were very big there.  
 VH: Yes, in Magrvo. We always picked berries and gathered the root of *tuks*. We picked bog bilberry and cowberry. There are all sorts of berries: bog bilberries, cowberries.  
 GL: Yes, when we picked cowberries there,  
 GY: Ashberries,  
 VH: Ashberries, Scotch rose, everything. There are all sorts of berries in Magrvo. But I don't know anything about Kryuvo.  
 GL: Once, when I went to pick berries with Ruza, there were a lot of berries. I walked past little ones, I picked only big ones. Matak and Galia didn't see me, they saw only my footsteps. They walked and walked. Suddenly, Matak cried "Galik, where are you? Where are you?" I stood up and

looked. Matak said, "I only see her footsteps. Perhaps she only picked big berries." They followed my footsteps, so they picked only small ones.

GY: This year, the Russians dropped all the berries around Rybnovsk. And bears did so, too. They chewed cowberries and spit.

VH: Indeed.

GY: Like a human being. They chew "chaf, chaf, chaf"

VH: Of course.

GY: Once a bear was chewing nearby my son. He thought it was his father. He said "Hey, what are you chewing there?" He went there but he saw nobody. Then his father came from another direction.

GL: It was a bear?

GY: It was a bear.

VH: Chewing,

GY: Then he looked around, and found footsteps from bear. A bear was chewing berries. There were still berries on the ground which the bear spit out.

GL: The bear was sucking berries.

VH: Chewing. Like a human being.

GY: "There were a lot of berries," he said. "I will follow the footsteps and pick further."

VH: Do bears really eat bad berries?

GL: Like me?

VH: Like you, like you. They eat only good, big and sweet berries. Sweet berries can be found at some places.

GY: Depending on the place, there are very sweet berries.

VH: There can be very sour berries, too, depending on the place. Bears eat only sweet berries.

GL: How sweet these berries are! Cowberries.

VH: When you chew these berries, sweet cowberries,

GL: The berries, which we ate yesterday, were very delicious.

VH: Yesterday, you gave me berries (cowberry) which you picked last year, they were real berries. But this year, cowberries didn't ripen. I looked at the berries in the fridge but they were not ripe. So I made *muvi* from them. I brought *muvi* with me. I can still make *muvi* a couple of times.

GL: In Nogliki when I went berry-picking with Lida, we only found cowberries once. When people go berry-picking in the fall, I always follow

them to pick. In the weekends I can't sleep that long so I get up early.  
 VH: Ripe cowberries are like Japanese crowberries<sup>3</sup>. They become dark.  
 Bears eat only such berries. Because the bear is the keeper of the taiga.  
 GL: Because the bear is the keeper of the taiga.  
 VH: Because the bear is the keeper of the taiga.  
 GL: I am like a bear because we are also the keeper of the taiga.  
 VH: Yes, we are keepers of the taiga.

#### 4. There were only few mushrooms

19-10-2001, Okha  
 V.Khein  
 G.Yalina  
 G.Lok  
 A.Latun  
 H.Shiraishi

GL: Delicious, sweet (berries).  
 VH: I brought you to my place, today. When the husband of Lida Koton came, he brought me there on his motorbike. I said,  
 "Let's go, let's go to gather mushrooms." We went there but there was nothing. I looked and looked but couldn't find any. There were some, but they had all been gathered.  
 GL: When the Japanese came, you brought me to a place where there were lots of berries.  
 VH: Right. I went there with another women, Vera-Chyvl. She went there on foot with her own friends. She had already been there but there were no berries any longer. But they didn't know about that place. I was the only one to pick berries there. I cannot go there by myself now. I have to go there with someone else.  
 GL: Chyvl is still young, isn't she?

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<sup>3</sup> Japanese crowberry: *Empetrum nigrum var.japonicum*.

## 5. Nivkh customs

19-10-2001, Okha

V.Khein

G.Yalina

G.Lok

A.Latun

H.Shiraishi

GL: Tell us something about the customs of Nivkh. How did they keep bears?

VH: When you keep a bear, you should catch fish in the summer and make dried fish so that you can feed the bear in the winter. You keep the bear for one year, two years, three years. Then, you will send it back to its homeland. A male bear should be kept for three years.

GL: How about female bear?

VH: Female bear should be kept for four years.

GY: Two years.

GL: No.

VH: One year, you keep her for four years.

GL: For four years,

VH: You won't keep a female bear for four years nowadays, because people are scared.

GY: No.

VH: Only for one year,

GL: No, for four years.

GY: Because it is hard to feed the bear.

VH: It is hard to prepare enough food. You make a stock of berries and bury it under the ground. Then you keep the bear for two, three years.

GL: Why should people keep bears for three years and four years?

VH: Because bears are like human beings.

GL: So why should a human woman three years...?

VH: What?

GL: What does it mean that a man is three years and woman four years?

VH: I don't know. It was so in ancient times.

GL: There should be some reason to do so, I guess.

VH: There should be some reason. But I know nothing about human beings.

GY: What is the clan of bears?

VH: What?

GY: People who keep bear have good luck, don't they?

VH: They have luck.

GY: People are not allowed to go bear-hunting.

VH: No.

GY: Bear, fox. They are all like human beings. Among human beings there are lazy people.

VH: When I was still young my parents kept a bear. A big bear. I was almost beaten by the bear when people took it for a walk. (The arrows) lay on the other side, close to the door. The bear came to my bed. But it slipped down. Everybody was crying. They said that I played with the bear every night.

GL: Inside the house?

VH: Yes, inside the house. Our house was a winter cottage. It was on the island of Baidukov.

GY: In Langrvo?

VH: There were big buildings, summer cottages and winter cottages.

GL: Are these cottages still standing?

VH: When I went there with Kolia, there was nothing. It was a long house.

GY: Was it the house of your (grand) parents?

VH: Yes. A long house. Every night, we played, or did something. Men were always sitting and telling legends or fighting. The winner was invited to fight with the bear.

People said, "Fight with the bear. You are strong enough. Fight with the bear." They sent the winner to the cage of the bear and poked the bear with sticks to provoke it. The winner jumps to the head of the bear and hold it with his arms. That's how he fought with a bear. First, you poke it with a stick, and then the winner jumps onto it. The winner is quick. Thanks to his quickness he could win from the others.

GL: Quickness,

GY: Khagan was still young (at that time), wasn't he?

VH: What?

GY: Khagan was still young, wasn't he?

VH: Yes, he was.

GY: Very quick and nimble.

VH: Yes, he was very nimble.

GY: He was very quick, wasn't he, that boy?

GL: What did you say?

GY: Khagan.

GL: Khagan?

GY: Yes, he is the husband of my father's sister (*ziat*). He married the sister of my father.

VH: Yes. He,

GL: The husband of the sister of your father is, the husband of your aunt. That is your *ora* in Nivkh?

GY: Yes, that person is your *ora*.

VH: They were young and little, they looked like contemporary children.

They played, fought with the bear. They provoked the winner, "Jump onto the bear!" The winner then jumped onto the bear and held its head with his arms. He tried to jump onto the bear but he had no confidence. Finally, he jumped on the bear, held its head and quickly jumped off from again. The kids learned in this way (how to deal with bears). They made a name that way. That's how people taught their children to deal with bears.

GY: They taught their children how to fight.

VH: This is how children were taught, not individually but in groups. The adults would teach the young.

GL: Did the clan of my father keep a bear?

VH: No. I don't know. I didn't see it.

GL: Perhaps, my father was a lazy person.

VH: Why do you think so? No. Not at all.

GY: There were only few people who kept bears, right?

VH: Yes, very few. There were only few people who kept bear. The family of Khitun kept a bear. They were the only people who kept bears here (west-coast of North Sakhalin), perhaps.

GY: How about the family of Vizof in the lower Amur region?

VH: Yes, they also kept bears. And my parents also kept a bear. The Vizof family and my parents.

GY: My grandparents also kept a bear in Magrvo.

VH: And my parents, too.

GY: My grandfather Ezdanok also kept a bear.

VH: Vizgun, too.

GY: My grandfather, my mother, the younger brother of my father,  
 GL: Akiliak also kept a bear, perhaps.  
 GY: People who lived nearby the sea.  
 VH: I don't know.  
 GL: Akiliak kept a bear. Who else kept a bear here? In Tamlavo, who else?  
     Nina<sup>4</sup>, who kept bears in your settlement?  
 AL: My father kept a bear.  
 GL: What is his name?  
 AL: What?  
 GL: What is his name?  
 AL: Khalin.  
 VH: Khalin, Ah,  
 GY: Maghmaghun,  
 VH, GL: Maghmaghun, Maghmaghun,  
 GL: I remember Maghmaghun,  
 VH: Maghmaghun was a very skilful bear-hunter. Early in the spring, in  
     March, he used to hunt bears. He drove the bear from its cave, caught the  
     cubs and brought them to the settlement.  
 GY: Now his grandson has become a very good hunter, right? He hunts many  
     bears, sometimes three bears. When he catches a cub he brings it to the  
     settlement. He is the son of Dusia Mamantova.

## 6. Counting in Nivkh

19-10-2001, Okha  
 V.Khein  
 G.Yalina  
 G.Lok  
 A.Latun  
 H.Shiraishi

GL: When we count (in Nivkh), we count “Two (person), one (person).” When  
     we count dogs, we use different words to count. When we count people we

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<sup>4</sup> The nickname of AL.

count them with different words.

VH: We use different words to count (different things).

GL: When we count houses, you count them with different words.

VH: Right, counting is different in words.

GL: Why is that so?

VH: How can I explain? When you count dogs, you count "One (dog), two (dogs)." But how can you count people and dogs with the same words? Of course, you cannot. When you count people you have to use another term. Would you use terms for dogs to count people? No. You have to count "One (person), two (persons)," this way. "One dog, two dogs," this way. Why should you count human and dogs alike? No. "One dog." and that is the way you count dogs.

GL: "One dog" (with words counting human),

VH: Are you a dog? You should say "One person," and not "One dog."

GL: "One person,"

VH: "One person."

GL: "One woman,"

VH: "One woman."

GL: "Two woman,"

VH: "Two woman,". No, you should say "two women,"

GY: "Two dogs." You should say this way.

VH: No, "Two women, three women." This way. I would say this way, "There came three women."

GL: How many women are sitting here now?

VH: There are four women here. Four women.

GL: Four women are sitting down. How about men?

VH: Only one man.

GL: Only one young man.

VH: Only one.

HS: That's me.

VH: That's you. There is only one young man here.

GL: We are talking about you.

GY: We are talking about you.

VH: Yes, we are talking about you. There is only one young man. We are talking about you.

GL: They are talking about you.



VH: These women are talking about you.  
 GL: He is now listening to us. He will go back to his own country and talk this way (to other people).  
 HS: I learned (the language) in Japan.  
 GL: You *will* learn in Japan (in future tense).  
 HS: I *will* learn in Japan.  
 GL: So that we can always talk in our own language.  
 GY: After completing his research, won't he forget us and no longer come here?  
 VH: He will come.  
 GL: After completing his research,  
 VH: Will he forget us?  
 GL: All the people living here,  
 GY: Forget?  
 GL: People would not talk in Nivkh.  
 VH: Will he forget us?  
 GL: We wouldn't be alive.  
 VH: What?  
 GL: We will already be dead by then.  
 VH: Of course we are going to die. How can we live longer?

## 7. I yawn

19-10-2001, Okha  
 V.Khein  
 G.Yalina  
 G.Lok  
 A.Latun  
 H.Shiraishi

GL: I,  
 VH: I am yawning and yawning,  
 GL: I yawned, opened my mouth,  
 VH: Swung like this,  
 GL: She swung towards me and I almost gulped her down.

VH: Gulped, gulped.

GL: I,

GY: Not “pushed (*ghavd*),” but “gulped (*ghaud*).”

VH: Gulped,

GL: Gulped,

HS: Gulped,

VH: She almost gulped me down; she yawned, yawned and swung, and almost gulped me down.

GL: Yes,

GY: Why did you yawn with such a big open mouth? You almost gulped me down.

VH: Yes, why did you yawn that way? How did you do that?

GL: Because I wanted to go to bed.

GY: Tell us, how big a yawn can you make? Sitting and yawning. Yawning and yawning.

GL: Yes, I am sitting here now, yawning and yawning,

VH: Yawn, yawn and yawn,

GL: Yes, I am yawning and yawning,

GY: It is true that our language is rich (with various expressions). You can express something in many ways.

VH: Indeed, it is amazing. You can say it this way, but also that way.

GL: Such a rich language.

HS: A rich language.

VH: A rich language, yes.

GL: But I can’t count.

VH: Count?

GL I can’t count (in Nivkh).

VH, GY: Can’t you count?

GL: No, I can’t. I can’t remember the words.

VH: Why?

GL: Because I am stupid.

VH: Why are you stupid?

GL: I can’t count. Only “one, two, three,” that’s it. How much further?

GY: “One, two three,”

GL: I don’t know.

GY: People,

GL: When you count something (half). When you count chairs, it's this way right? "One, two, three." When you count fish by half, you count in different words, right?

VH: "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven." You count this way.

GL: I don't know. How do you count when you want to count something (by halves)?

VH: What do you mean by halves?

GY: You mean, when counting dried fish by halves?

VH: What?

GL: How do you count dried fish?

GY: "One fish, two half-fish."

VH: Right.

GY: "Two half pieces of fat dried fish. Two half pieces of dried fish without skin." You count this way. "One dried fish."

VH: "One dried fish."

GY: "One dried fish and half of it. Half of a fat dried fish. Half of a dried fish without skin." You should count this way.

VH: Right.

GL: "One fish." How do you count other things than fish?

VH: What do you mean?

GL: What?

VH: What do you mean?

GL: I mean, for instance, when you count berries, how do you count? When you count berries on a table.

GY: How can you count berries? There are so many.

VH: "One berry,"

GY: You can't count that many berries one by one.

VH: "One berry, one berry." How do you count them one by one? How?

GL: "One, two, three," not this way?

VH: No. "One (*niknik*)." (You can't count berries one by one).

GY: No.

VH: No. Not one by one.

GL: One by one.

GY: You don't count berries. It's been said that counting berry is a sin.

VH: You don't count berries when you are picking them.

GY: You count the baskets in which you store the picked berries. "One little

basket.” Like this.

VH: No.

GY: “Big basket. One big basket. That woman picked berries, one big basket full of them.”

VH: A basket?

GY: A basket.

GL: A basket?

GY: Yes. A basket made from birch bark.

VH: A basket made from birch bark.

GL: A basket made from birch bark.

VH: When you go berry-picking and pick big berries,

GY: A basket made from birch bark, a big basket, more than two buckets, almost three.

VH: “Many berries, many berries.” It is a sin to say something like this. If you say that, there won’t be any more berries next time.

GY: There won’t be berries at that place anymore.

VH: GY: There won’t be berries at that place anymore.