

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[obstruents]

FN *kopa* ~ TN *xoba* ‘fur’ < PN **kopa*

FN *kǎpta-* ~ TN *xǎbta-* ‘extinguish’ < PN **kǎpta-*

FN *wǎta* ~ TN *wǎda* ‘hook’ < PN **wǎta*

FN *ŋǎmsa* ~ TN *ŋǎmca* ‘meat’ < PN **ŋǎmsa*

FN *myełsya* ~ TN *myercya* ‘wind’ < PN **myersya*

FN *xǎqpǎ-* ~ TN *sǎpǎ-* ‘hack’ < PN **sǎqpǎ-*

FN *wǎqta* ~ TN *wǎta* ‘extra’ < PN **wǎqta*

FN *syaqku* ~ TN *syako* ‘red-breasted goose’ < PN **syaqko*

FN *tyeqsyǎ-* ~ TN *tyecyǎ-* ‘be cold’ < PN **tyeqsyǎ-*

FN *jǎxa* ~ TN *yǎxa* ‘river’ < PN **jǎka* **[jǎxa]**

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[*m* / *w*]

FN *ŋǎwa* ~ TN *ŋæwa* ‘head’ < PN **ŋæwa*

FN *tǎwa* ~ TN *tæwa* ‘tail’ < PN **tæwa*

FN *wǎma* ~ TN *wæwa* ‘bad’ < PN **wæma*

FN *kǎma* ~ TN *xæwa* ‘bone marrow’ < PN **kæma*

FN *ŋǎmata* ~ TN *ŋəmada* ‘eat’ obj.sg3sg < PN **ŋəmmata*

FN *temaq* ~ TN *temaq* ‘sinew’ poss. 1pl < PN **temmaq*

FN *syimya* ~ TN *syímya* ‘become full of holes’ 3sg < PN **syímmya*

FN *nyeŋwa* ~ TN *nyema* ‘sleep’ < PN **nyeŋwa*

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[*ny*]

FN *tyonya* ~ TN *tyonya* ‘fox’ < PN **tyonnya*

FN *myĩnye-* ~ TN *myinye-* ‘transport’ < PN **myinnye-*

FN *wyĩja* ~ TN *yinya* ‘strap’ < PN **wyinya*

FN *tyeje-* ~ TN *tyenye-* ‘remember’ < PN **tyenye-*

FN *ŋǎnu* ~ TN *ŋəno* ‘boat’ < PN **ŋənno*

FN *wyexana* ~ TN *yexana* ‘sturgeon’ < PN **wyekana*

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences [liquids]

FN *koṭa* ~ TN *xora* ‘bull’ < PN **kora*

FN *mătu* ~ TN *məro* ‘greedy’ < PN **məro*

FN *pyeṭye-* ~ TN *pyerye-* ‘endure’ < PN **pyerye-*

FN *xatyu* ~ TN *saryo* ‘rain’ < PN **saryo*

FN *kaṭya* ~ TN *xalya* ‘fish’ < PN **kalya*

FN *ḡṭă-* ~ TN *yilə-* ‘raise’ < PN **jilə-*

FN *ḡṭye-* ~ TN *yilye-* ‘live’ < PN **jilye-*

FN *ṭi* ~ TN *li* ‘bone’ < PN **li*

FN *pyĩntyū* ~ TN *pyilyo* ‘gadfly’ < PN **pyillyo*

FN *ḡyĩntyī* ~ TN *ḡælyī* ‘strange’ < PN **ḡællyī*

FN *tonṭa-* ~ TN *tola-* ‘read’ < PN **tolla-*

FN *măntyē-* ~ TN *məlye-* ‘end’ < PN **məllye-*

(cf. Castrén *məllye-* etc.)

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[palatality]

FN *tyejimyă-* ~ TN *tyenyewə-* ‘know’ < PN **tyenyemyə-*

FN *jempyăq-* ~ TN *yempəq-* ‘dress’ < PN **jempyəq-*

FN *syetyă-* ~ TN *syelə-* ‘clean horns’ < PN **syelyə-*

FN *wyetyăq-* ~ TN *yerəq-* ‘cut into pieces’ < PN **wyeryəq-*

FN *syütyăt-* ~ TN *syudər-* ‘whistle’ < PN **syutyər-*

FN *tyony*[°] ~ TN *tyon*[°] ‘fox’ acc.pl < PN **tyonnyə*

FN *tyeqsyă-* ~ TN *tyecyə-* ‘be cold’ < PN **tyeqsyə-*

FN *pănty*[°]*q* ~ TN *pəly*[°]*q* ‘dense’ < PN **pəllyəq*

FN *ŋătyă-* ~ TN *ŋədyə-* ‘be visible’ < PN **ŋətyə-*

FN *kăny*[°] ~ TN *xəny*[°]*h* ‘frost’ < PN **kənnnyəŋ*

FN *jemnyă-* ~ TN *yemnyə-* ‘repair’ < PN **yemnyə-*

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[FN palatal velars]

FN *kyimya* ~ TN *xíbya* ‘who’ < PN **kímya*

FN *kyimyim-* ~ TN *xæbyim-* ‘become shorter’ < PN **kæmyim-*

FN *xyinta-* ~ TN *sínta-* ‘preserve’ < PN **sínta-*

FN *ɲyintɣi* ~ TN *ɲælyi* ‘strange’ < PN **ɲællyi*

FN *kyĩ* : *kyi-* ~ TN (der.) *xír* ‘grey hair’ < PN **kí*

FN *kisuj*^o ~ TN *xasuy*^o ‘dry’ < PN **kasuj*^o

FN *kiji* ~ TN *xayi* ‘stay, remain’ 3sg < PN **kaji*

FN *xitɣum-* ~ TN *saryum-* ‘start raining’ < PN **saryum-*

FN *ɲisi* ~ TN *ɲesi* ‘camp’ < PN **ɲesi*

FN *ɲijum-* ~ TN *ɲayum-* ‘start thawing’ < PN **ɲajum-*

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[vowel height difference]

FN *pyema* ~ TN *pyíwa* ‘reindeer fur boot’ < PN *pyæma

FN *syewa* ~ TN *syíwa* ‘shovel’ < PN *syæwa

FN *ḡutyet*^o ~ TN *ḡudyid*^o ‘hand’ poss. pl2sg < PN *ḡutyætə

FN *jo-* ~ TN *yú-* ‘block the river’ < PN *jæ-

FN *josyita-* ~ TN *yúsyeda-* ‘lie (of people)’ < PN *jæsyeta-

FN *-xǎjo* ~ TN *-xəyú* obj.du < PN *-xəjæ

[TN nasalizable glottal stop]

FN *tǎḡ* [**taḡ**'] ~ TN *təḡ* ‘summer’ < PN *təḡ

Nenets cognates with regular sound correspondences

[initial consonants]

FN *xat̪yu* ~ TN *saryo* ‘rain’ < PN *saryo [before back vowels]

FN *wyesya* ~ TN *yesya* ‘iron, money’ < PN *wyesya

FN *ḵt̪ye-* ~ TN *yilye-* ‘live’ < PN *jilye-

FN *kat̪ya* ~ TN *xalya* ‘fish’ < PN *kalya

[unstressed vowels]

FN *syaqku* ~ TN *syako* ‘red-breasted goose’ < PN *syaqko

FN *xat̪yu* ~ TN *saryo* ‘rain’ < PN *saryo

FN *ḵt̪yiq* ~ TN *yilyeq* ‘live’ conneg. / imp. subj.2sg < PN *jilyeq

FN *tyamt̪iq* ~ TN *tyamteq* ‘frog’ < PN *tyamt̪æq

Forest Nenets sound changes

Metaphony

(in stressed syllables before syllables with *i or *u)

PN *ə > FN ĭ	*ŋənnu > <i>ŋĭnu</i> ‘boat’ acc.pl
	*tosaqkəpti > <i>tosaqkĭpti</i> ‘be suspicious’ 3sg
*a	i
	*nyaŋu > <i>nyĭŋu</i> ‘chin, jaw’
	*saryum- > <i>xĭtyum-</i> ‘start raining’
	*kaji > <i>kĭji</i> ‘stay, remain’ 3sg
	*kajuq > <i>kĭjuq</i> ‘stay, remain’ imp. 2sg
	*ŋajum- > <i>ŋĭjum-</i> ‘start thawing’
*æ	i
	*tæwipyita > <i>tiwipyita</i> ‘is reaching it’
*e	i
	*ŋesi > <i>ŋĭsi</i> ‘camp’
*o	u
	*posipyita > <i>pusipyita</i> ‘[the wind] is blowing’

Restructuring of the vowel system

PN *ə	> FN ǎ	*ŋənno > <i>ŋǎnu</i> ‘boat’
*æ	ǎ	*ŋæwa > <i>ŋǎwa</i> ‘head’
*æ	ä	*ŋæwə > <i>ŋäw^o</i> ‘messenger’

(high vowels only in the first syllable, e.g.)

PN *i	> FN ĭ	*pyinə- > <i>pyĭnǎ-</i> ‘boil’
*u	ũ	*ŋuta > <i>ŋũta</i> ‘hand’
*í	i	*pyínə- > <i>pyinǎ-</i> ‘fear’
*ú	u	*púna > <i>puna</i> ‘after’

(cf. PN *pyiryepyita > FN *pyĭtyipyita* ‘cooks it’ ~ TN *pyiryebyida*)

Merger of *æ with *e after palatal consonants

PN *yæ > FN *ye* *pyæma > *pyema* ‘reindeer fur boot’

***ɲutyætə > *ɲǔtyet*^o ‘hand’ poss. pl2sg**

Simplification of the vowel system in unstressed positions

PN *o > FN *u* *ɲənno > *ɲǎnu* ‘boat’

***ɲinno > *ɲǐnu* ‘bow’ acc.pl**

***e *i* *sənnyeq > *xǎnyiq* ‘tail of a bird’**

***æ *i* *tyamtæq > *tyamtiq* ‘frog’**

(dialectally *æ may remain distinct, symbolized with *tyamtïq*)

(cf. poss. pl2sg *ɲǐnot*^o, pl *xǎnyes*^o*q*, pl *tyamtät*^o*q*)

Phonemization of vowel reduction

- rule: PN *ə > FN ° in even syllables
- exception: the habitual suffix has ° irrespective of the position, e.g., *jĩlyesy°qtu* ‘live’ habit. 3sg (cf. TN *yilyesyəti*)

Vowel shortening in monosyllabic forms

PN *V > FN *Ṽ* *ti > *tĩ* ‘reindeer’
*myaq > *myǎq* ‘tent’
*syí > *syĩ* ‘hole’
*tu > *tũ* ‘fire’

Merger of shortened mid vowels with high vowels

PN *e > FN *ĩ* *syē > *syĩ* ‘tongue’
*teŋ > *tĩŋ* ‘sinew’
*o *ũ* *to > *tũ* ‘lake’

(reversed in FN dialects with additional vowels *syě*, *těŋ*, *tõ*, etc.)

Palatalization of velars before *i* (< *æ, *î)

PN *ŋ > FN *ŋy* *ŋælyi > *ŋyintyi* ‘strange’
*k *ky* *kímya > *kyimya* ‘who’
*kæwi > *kyiwi* ‘be sinful’ 3sg
*kæmyim- > *kyimyim-* ‘become shorter’
*s *xy* *sínta- > *xyinta-* ‘preserve’
*sí > *xyĩ* ‘stock’

Merger of laterals with trills

PN *l > FN *r* *li > *rĩ* > *łĩ* ‘bone’
*ly *ry* *səlya > *xǎrya* > *xǎłya* ‘cape’

Dissimilation in geminate liquids

PN *ll > FN *nr* *səllə > *xǎnr°* > *xǎnt°* ‘stump’
*lly *nry* *pyillyo > *pyĩnryu* > *pyĩntyu* ‘gadfly’

Relateralization of trills (conditionally or sporadically!)

PN *r > FN *l* *sərmyiqkə > *xǐlmyiqk*^o ‘sable’

*l *l* *səqla > *xǎqla* ‘stupid’

*luqkə > *lǔqk*^o ‘capercaillie’

Semivocalization of the intervocalic palatal nasal

PN *ny > FN *j* *wyinya > *wyǐja* ‘strap’

*tyenye- > *tyeje-* ‘remember’

Shortening of nasal geminates

PN *nn > FN *n* *kənnə > *kǎn*^o ‘sledge’

*jannəŋ > *jan*^o ‘earth’ dat.sg

*nny *ny* *myinnye- > *myǐnye-* ‘transport’

*mm *m* *ŋəmmata > *ŋǎmata* ‘eat’ obj.sg3sg

*temmaq > *temaq* ‘sinew’ poss. 1pl

*mmy *my* *syímmya > *syimya* ‘become full of holes’ 3sg

Denasalization of *ŋk (conditionally or sporadically!)

PN *ŋk > FN k *jaŋku > *jiku* ‘is absent’

***nyenyaŋkə > *nyejaŋk*^o ~ *neyjak*^o ‘mosquito’**

***Nyatəŋkəna > *Nyat*^o*kăna* ‘on Nadym’**

Phonemization of the fricativization of the intervocalic velar stop

PN *k > FN x *jəka [jəxa] > *jăxa* ‘river’

***jakəna [jax^ona] > *jax*^o*na* ‘earth’ loc.sg**

**Emergence of the intervocalic glottal stop in the diminutive suffix,
e.g., *nyŭtyaqŭji* ‘very small’**

Velarization of initial non-palatal sibilant

PN *s > FN x *saryo > *xatyu* ‘rain’

***ə (> ĭ) > ĭ in secondarily stresses positions before *x**

PN *ə > FN i *karwətə[x]əna > kał°tĭx°na ‘village’ loc.sg
***tæwəjə[x]əŋ > tăw°jĭxăŋ ‘arrive’ refl.3du**

Conditional loss of consonants adjacent to the schwa

PN *C > FN ∅ *pyisy[°]ŋ > pyĭsy° ‘laughter’
***pyisy[°]ŋkəna > pyĭsy°kăna ‘laughter’ loc.sg**
***jann[°]ŋ > jan° ‘earth’ dat.sg**
***səqŋat[°]m > xăqŋat° ‘be strong’ 1sg**
***karw[°]təta > kał°tăta ‘village’ poss. 3sg**
(in dialects also kałw°tăta)

Elimination of palatalization

PN *Cy > FN C *pəryityennya > pĭtyityena ‘black’
***wyiqkən(y)a > wyĭqk°na ‘water’ loc.sg**

Tundra Nenets sound changes

Great consonant shift / Великий сдвиг согласных [cf. sandhi]

PN *p > TN *b* / V_

*kopa > *xoba* 'fur'

*t > *d*

*kəpta- > *xəbta-* 'extinguish'

*s > *c* / C_

*wəta > *wəda* 'hook'

*ŋəmsa > *ŋəmca* 'meat'

*myersya > *myercya* 'wind'

*q > $\emptyset$ / _C[obstr]

*səqpə- > *səpə-* 'hack'

*wəqta > *wəta* 'extra'

*syaqko > *syako* 'red-breasted goose'

*tyeqsyə- > *tyecyə-* 'be cold'

*k > *x* / V_V
/ #_

*jəka > *yəxa* 'river'

*kopa > *xoba* 'fur'

Semivocalization of the intervocalic labial nasal

PN *m > TN w *wæma > wæwa ‘bad’
*ɲumo > ɲuwo ‘grass’ acc.pl
*my > wy *nyæmya > nyíwya > nyíbya ‘needle’
*nyimye > nyiwye > (irr.) nyubye ‘имя’ acc.pl

Shortening of sonorant geminates [a recent change]

PN *nn > TN n *kənnə > xən^o ‘sledge’
*nny > ny *myinnye- > myinye- ‘transport’
*ll > l *səllə > səl^o ‘stump’
*lly > ly *pyillyo > pyilyo ‘gadfly’
*mm > m *ɲəmmata > ɲəmada ‘eat’ obj.sg3sg
*mmy > my *syímma > syímya ‘become full of holes’ 3sg

Nasalization of postconsonantal *w [cf. aud., partic.fut, partic.neg]

PN *ɲw > TN *m* *nyeɲwa > *nyema* ‘sleep’

Delabialization of initial *wy

PN *wy > TN *y* *wyesya > *yesya* ‘iron, money’

Glottalization of final velar nasal

PN *ɲ > TN *h* *wíɲ > *wíh* ‘tundra’

Merger of *æ with *í after palatal consonants

PN *yæ > TN *yí* *pyæma > *pyíwa* ‘reindeer fur boot’

(in non-initial syllables *í > *i*, e.g.)

***ɲutyætə > *ɲudyid*^o ‘hand’ poss. nom.pl2sg**

Depalatalization of palatal labials before non-initial *ə

PN *Cy > TN C *tyenyemyə- > *tyenyewə*- ‘know’

*jeqpyə- > *yepə*- ‘be hot’

*jempyəq- > *yempəq*- ‘dress’

Depalatalization of palatal dentals (not *sy) before non-initial *ə

PN *Cy > TN C *syelyə- > *syelə*- ‘clean horns’

*wyeryəq- > *yerəq*- ‘cut into pieces’

*syutyər- > *syudər*- ‘whistle’

*tyonnyə > *tyon*^o ‘fox’ acc.pl

(except after *ə, e.g.)

PN *Cy ≡ *pəlyəq > *pəly*^o*q* ‘dense’

*kəryə- > *xəryə*- ‘dock’

*ŋətyə- > *ŋədyə*- ‘be visible’

*kənnnyəŋ > *xəny*^o*h* ‘frost’

Non-initial vowel contractions (except before *x)

PN *əwə > TN *uə* *juqtəmə > *juqtəwə > *yutu*^o ‘stockfish’

*patəmə > *patəwə > *padu*^o > *padəw*^o ‘my bag’

*əjə > *iə* *jurkəjəq > *yurki*^o*q* ‘rise’ refl.3sg

*patəjəta > *padi*^o*da* ‘write’ obj.pl3sg

Conditional loss of the velar nasal (except before *x)

PN *ŋ > TN ∅ *kataŋarə > *xadaər*^o ‘kill’ obj.sg2sg

(cf. obj.du2sg *xadaŋax*^o*yud*^o)

Sporadic contractions

PN *VCV > TN *Və* *pəjer- > *pæər*- ‘do’

*joryer- > *yoər*- ‘fish’

Reanalysis of non-initial *æ

PN *æ > TN *e* *jaqkæ > *yake* ‘smoke’

Phonemization of vowel reduction

– rule: PN *ə > TN ° in even syllables

– exceptions: several suffixes with ° irrespective of the position, e.g.,

yísyal°ma ‘got crazy’ < PN *wyísyaləma > FN *wyisyatǎma*;

yilyey°btye- ‘live for a while’ < PN *jilyejəptye- > FN *jǐlyijǎptye-*;

lǎkad°ta- ‘click’ < PN *lǎqkatəpta- > FN *lǎqkatǎpta-*;

ŋidey°da ‘hung them’ < PN *ŋitajəta > FN *ŋǐtajǎta*

(cf. *tideyəda* ‘smelling of cedar’)

Emergence of the intervocalic glottal stop, e.g., *xabtyeq°* ‘ox’ (< PN *kaptyeqj° > FN *kaptyeqj°*), *tyuqəd°* ‘from above’

Consonant systems of Forest Nenets and Tundra Nenets

FN

m	my	n	ny	ŋ	ŋy	
p	py	t	ty	k	ky	q
		s	sy	x	xy	
		l	ly			
		ɬ	ɬy			
w	wy		j			

TN

m	my	n	ny	ŋ	
p	py	t	ty	k	q/h
b	by	d	dy		
		c	cy		
		s	sy	x	
		l	ly		
		r	ry		
w	(wy)		ÿ		

Forest Nenets vowel system

+ = in stressed syllables

– = in unstressed syllables

+

ĩ	ũ	i	u
(ě)	(õ)	e	o
ä	ă	ä	a

–

	i	u
◦	(ä)	a

Tundra Nenets vowel system

A = the ‘schwa’ only in unstressed syllables (allophone in PN)

B = the short vowel only in stressed syllables

C = the ‘basic’ vowels in all syllables

D = the ‘diphthongoid’ vowel only in initial syllables (after PN)

E = the long high vowels only in initial syllables (before PN)

A

B

C

D

E

i

u

í

ú

e

o

◦

ə

a

æ

Proto-Nenets sound changes

Deaffrication

PS *č > PN *t *čen > *ten > *teŋ ‘sinew’
 *səlčə > *səltə > *səllə ‘stump’

Glottalization of syllable-final non-labial obstruents

PS *t > PN *q *pitmä > *pyiqmya ‘trousers’
 *mat > *mät > *myaq ‘tent’
 *k > *q *wajkkê > *wäjqkê > *wyæqkə ‘neck’
 *s > *q *səntäs > *sənnyeq ‘tail of a bird’

Progressive assimilation of dental sonorant–stop clusters

PS *nt > PN *nn *kântâ > *kønnə ‘sledge’

~ TE *kodo* ~ FE *kodo*

*mentä- > *minte- > *myinnye- ‘transport’

*jântâŋ > *jannəŋ ‘earth’ dat.sg

*lt > *ll *sălčə > *səltə > *səllə ‘stump’

~ TE (der.) *sode’ei* ~ FE (der.) *sore’e*

*rt > *r *kârtå > *kəra ‘curve’

~ TE *koda* ~ FE *kora*

Dentalization of the velar nasal before *t

PS *ŋ > PN *n *aŋtâ > *äntâ > *nyantə ‘blade’

Merger of *i and *e with a consequent vowel shift (final *ä ≡)

PS *e > *i > PN *yi *petä > *pitä > *pyitya ‘nest’
*ä > *e > *ye *kälü > *kelü > *syelə ‘sister-in-law’
*elä- > *ilye- > (irr.) *jilye- ‘live’
*a > *ä > *ya *mat > *mät > *myaq ‘tent’
FN *myăq* : acc.pl *myatu* : 3sg *myaqta*
Ng *maq* : gen.pl *maδuq* : 3sg *matu*
*kīta > *kītä > *kitya ‘cup’
Ng *kita* : gen.pl *kiδaq* : 3sg *kitaδu*
*ota > *otä > *ŋotya ‘berry’
Ng *ŋuta* : gen.pl *ŋuδaq* : 3sg *ŋutaδu*
*å > *a *kåtå > *kata ‘grandmother’

[cf. Ng *biq* < PS *wet < PU *weti, *mīn-* < *men- < *meni-, *siq* < *ket
< *keti, *tītī(d'a)* < *čěčä < *čěčä, *xītī* < *petä < *pesä]

Monophthongization in stressed positions (examples)

PS	*ôj	>	PN	*æ	*tôj > *tæ	‘birchbark’
	*åj	>		*æ	*wåjmå > *wæma	‘bad’
	*aj	>		*yæ	*wajkkô > *wäjqkô > *wyæqkə	‘neck’
	*äj	>		*yæ	*äjmä > *ņejmä > *nyæmya	‘needle’
	*oj	>		*o	*tojtô > *totə	‘vomit’
	*uj	>		*ú	*uj- > *ņú-	‘swim’
	*ij	>		*yí	*tijmä > *tyímya	‘fathom’

[cf. TN *ti* ~ TE *tia* ~ Ng *taa* ‘reindeer’ (SW *t¹eô);

TN *li* ‘bone’ ~ Ng *laa* ‘ring’ (SW *lɛ);

TN *mi* ‘nutrition’ ~ TE *mu* ~ Ng *maa* ‘what’ (SW *mɛ)]

[cf. TN *po* ~ TE *pua* ~ Ng *hüə* ‘year’ (SW *poôj vs MS *poa / *pua);

TN *to* ~ TE *tua* ~ Ng *t’üə* ‘wing’ (SW *tuôj vs MS *tua);

TN *xo* ~ TE *kua* ~ Ng *küə* ‘birch’ (SW *koôj vs MS *kua)]

Monophthongization in unstressed positions

PS *âj > PN *o *tâŋâj > *təŋo ‘summer’
*əj > *ye *tərəj > *təre > *tərye ‘body hair’

Merger of the reduced vowels

PS *ê > PN *ə *têŋ > *təŋ ‘summer’
*ə > *ə *tər > *tər ‘body hair’
*əptə > *ŋəptə ‘smell’
TN *ŋəbt*^o : acc.pl *ŋəbtye*
*səlčə > *səltə > *səllə ‘stump’
Ng *səltə* : gen.pl *səltiq* : 3sg *səltəδi*

Elimination of vowel sequences (examples)

PS *åê > PN *a *jåê > *ja ‘earth’
*iə > *yí *tiərü > *tyírə ‘cloud’
*üə > *yú *nüənä > *nyúnya ‘loon’

Merger of unstressed short high vowels with *ə

PS *i > PN *ə *ǎjwǐ > *ǎæwə ‘messenger’

FN *ǎw*^o : poss. pl2sg *ǎwǎt*^o [cf. *ǎwǎt*^o]

TE *ai* : gen.pl *ai*’

Ng *ǎjbi* : gen.pl *ǎjbiq* : 3sg *ǎjbiδü*

*ǎrǎti > *ǎrətə ‘size’

FN *ǎtǎt*^o : poss. pl3pl *ǎt*^o*tǎtun* ~ *ǎt*^o*tutun*

TE *arodi* [cf. *d’abu* : *d’abodi*]

*i > *yə *jünti > *junnyə ‘message’

*tönti > *tyonnyə ‘fox’ acc.pl

Ng *tunti* : gen.pl *tundiq* : 3sg *tuntiδi*

*u > *ə *kǎru > *kərə ‘knife’

*kopu > *kopə ‘fur’ acc.pl

TE *kôba* : acc.pl *k[ô]bu*

Ng *kuhu* : gen.pl *kubaq* : 3sg *kuhuδu*

*ü > *ə *tiǎrü > *tyírä ‘cloud’

Shortening of unstressed long high vowels (examples)

PS *iə > PN *yi *åniə > *aní > *ɲanyi ‘other’
 *uê > *u *aɲuê > *äɲú > *nyaɲu ‘chin, jaw’

Nasal prothesis

PS ∅ > PN *ɲ *utå > *ɲuta ‘hand’

Translocation of palatality

PS *C[̥]V̥ > PN *CyV *limpä > *lyimpya ‘eagle’
 with a consequent merger of velars with dentals, e.g.
 *ɲ[̥]V̥ > *nyV *ämä > *ɲemä > *nyemya ‘mother’
 *k[̥]V̥ > *syV *tupka^{1j} > *tupsyæ ‘axe’ acc.pl

[cf. PS ***ña** > Ng *ña* ~ TN *nya* ‘friend’, PS ***na**kur > Ng *nagür* ~ TN *nyax^or* ‘three’, PS ***ña**råmå > Ng *ñorumu* ~ TN *nyarawa* ‘copper’, PS ***a**ɲ > Ng *ɲaɲ* ~ TN *nyah* ‘mouth’]

Semivocalization of the intervocalic palatal nasal

PS *ń > PN *j *ĩnô > *ɲijə ‘tame’
 *weŋü > *wińü > *wyijə ‘brother-in-law’

Velarization of final dental nasal

PS *n > PN *ŋ *čɛn > *tɛn > *teŋ ‘sinew’

Conditional loss of the velar nasal

PS *ŋ > PN ∅ *naŋêrǎ > *nyaəra ‘мездра’
 *têŋêŋ > *təəŋ ‘summer’ gen.sg

Optionality of palatalization

PS *Cy > PN *C *wetkənǎ > *wyiqkən(y)a ‘water’ loc.sg

Reconstructed consonant systems of Proto-Nenets and Proto-Samoyed

PN

m	my	n	ny	ŋ	
p	py	t	ty	k	[q]
		s	sy	[x]	
		l	ly		
		r	ry		
w	wy		j		

PS

m	n	ń	ŋ
p	t		k
		č	[č]
	s		
	l	l'	
	r		
w		j	

[PN *l'epsâ > Ng *labsə* : 3sg *labsədu* 'cradle' ~ TE *l'it'o* ~ TN *yebc*^o : acc.pl *yebco*; cf. SW *jepsâ (? *jeâpsâ) ~ *leâpsâ (ng, en) vs MS *l'e(ə)psə]

Proto-Samoyed vowel system (*e = SW *i, *ä = SW *e, *a = SW *ä)

*i	*ü	*j	*u
*e	*ö	*ɛ	*o
*ä		*a	*å

*ə

*â

Changes from Proto-Samoyed to Tundra Nenets (≈ PN)

*i > yi	*ü > yu	*j > i	*u > u
*e > yi	*ö > yo	*ɛ > e	*o > o
*ä > ye		*a > ya	*å > a

*ə > ə

*â > ə

Nenets reflexes of Proto-Samoyed initial consonants

(i) before back vowels minus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*∅	* ŋ	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
*p	*p	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
*t	*t	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>
*č	* t	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>
*k	*k	<i>x</i>	<i>k</i>
*m	*m	<i>m</i>	<i>m</i>
*n	*n	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
*ń	*ny	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny</i>
*w	*w	<i>w</i>	<i>w</i>
*j	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*s	*s	<i>s</i>	<i>x</i>
*l	*l	<i>l</i>	<i>r</i> > <i>l</i>
*l'	* j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>

(ii) before front vowels plus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*∅	* ny	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny</i>
*p	*py	<i>py</i>	<i>py</i>
*t	*ty	<i>ty</i>	<i>ty</i>
*č	* ty	<i>ty</i>	<i>ty</i>
*k	*sy	<i>sy</i>	<i>sy</i>
*m	*my	<i>my</i>	<i>my</i>
*n	*ny	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny</i>
*ń	*ny	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny</i>
*w	*wy	<i>y</i>	<i>wy</i>
*j	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*s	*sy	<i>sy</i>	<i>sy</i>
*l	*ly	<i>ly</i>	<i>ry</i> > <i>ty</i>

Nenets reflexes of Proto-Samoyed intervocalic consonants

(i) before back vowels minus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*p	*p	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>
*t	*t	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>
*č	*t	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>
*k	*k	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>
*m	*m	<i>w</i>	<i>m</i>
*n	*n	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
*ń	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*ŋ	*ŋ	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
*w	*w	<i>w</i>	<i>w</i>
*j	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*s	*s	<i>s</i>	<i>s</i>
*l	*l	<i>l</i>	<i>r</i> > <i>l</i>
*r	*r	<i>r</i>	<i>r</i> > <i>l</i>

(ii) before front vowels plus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*p	*py	<i>by</i>	<i>py</i>
*t	*ty	<i>dy</i>	<i>ty</i>
*č	*ty	<i>dy</i>	<i>ty</i>
*k	*sy	<i>sy</i>	<i>sy</i>
*m	*my	<i>by</i>	<i>my</i>
*n	*ny	<i>ny</i>	<i>j</i>
*ń	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*ŋ	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*w	*wy	<i>wy</i> > <i>by</i>	<i>wy</i>
*j	*j	<i>y</i>	<i>j</i>
*s	*sy	<i>sy</i>	<i>sy</i>
*l	*ly	<i>ly</i>	<i>ry</i> > <i>ty</i>
*r	*ry	<i>ry</i>	<i>ry</i> > <i>ty</i>

Nenets reflexes of selected Proto-Samoyed consonant clusters

(i) before back vowels minus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*rk	*rk	<i>rk</i>	<i>rk</i>
*ŋk	*ŋk	<i>ŋk</i>	<i>ŋk</i>
*nt	*nn	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
*ŋt	*nt	<i>nt</i>	<i>nt</i>
*lč	*ll	<i>ll > l</i>	<i>nr > nt</i>
*čk	*qk	<i>k</i>	<i>qk</i>
*kt	*qt	<i>t</i>	<i>qt</i>
*pt	*pt	<i>bt</i>	<i>pt</i>
*ŋw	*ŋw	<i>m</i>	<i>ŋw > w</i>
*t ³ m	*qm	<i>qm</i>	<i>qm</i>
*nj	*nj	<i>nȳ > ny</i>	<i>nj</i>

(ii) before front vowels plus *a

PS	PN	TN	FN
*rk	*rsy	<i>rcy</i>	<i>rsy</i>
*ŋk	*ŋsy	<i>ncy</i>	<i>nsy</i>
*nt	*nny	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny</i>

Nenets reflexes of Proto-Samoyed final consonants excluding glides

PS	PN	TN	FN
*p	*p	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>
*t	*q	<i>q</i>	<i>q</i>
*č	*q	<i>q</i>	<i>q</i>
*k	*q	<i>q</i>	<i>q</i>
*m	*m	<i>m</i>	<i>m</i>
*n	*ŋ	<i>h</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
*ń	*ŋ	<i>h</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
*ŋ	*ŋ	<i>h</i>	<i>ŋ</i>
*s	*q	<i>q</i>	<i>q</i>
*l	*l	<i>l</i>	<i>r > t</i>
*r	*r	<i>r</i>	<i>r > t</i>

Examples of regular sound correspondences between the Nenets languages

gloss	Forest Nenets	Tundra Nenets
another	<i>ɲiji</i>	<i>ɲanyi</i>
flood	<i>xamu</i>	<i>sawo</i>
diminish	<i>tyijum-</i>	<i>tyanyum-</i>
know	<i>tyejimyǎ-</i>	<i>tyenyewə-</i>
strap	<i>wyǐja</i>	<i>yinya</i>
neck	<i>wyeqk^o</i>	<i>yík^o</i>
tent	<i>myǎq (~ myat^o)</i>	<i>myaq</i>
sleeps	<i>kuni (~ konyuŋa ~ konyo^o)</i>	<i>xoni</i>
you killed it	<i>kataŋaɬ^o</i>	<i>xadaər^o</i>
is eating	<i>ɲǎmutɥa ~ ɲǎmutɥa</i>	<i>ɲəworɥa</i>

Examples of lexical differences between the Nenets languages

“cultural words”

gloss	Forest Nenets	Tundra Nenets
needle	<i>xäťuläpsy°</i>	<i>nyíbya</i>
oven	<i>keľ° ~ xät°</i>	<i>pyecy° ~ xor°</i>
table	<i>pyisan°</i>	<i>tol° ~ toly°</i>
cradle	<i>ñipu</i>	<i>yebc° ~ xo°ba</i>
malitsa	<i>myűj°</i>	<i>maly°cya</i>
shirt	<i>jätñas°</i>	<i>yímpit°q</i>
rifle	<i>pos°kan°</i>	<i>tu°nyi</i>
pincers	<i>nyĩqmyitäpsy°</i>	<i>ticyah</i>
paper	<i>nepyaqk°</i>	<i>pad°r</i>
smoke screen	<i>kĩqsyipty°q</i>	<i>pur°q</i>
broth	<i>wiji</i>	<i>yewey°</i>
tobacco	<i>syűn° ~ syön°</i>	<i>tabək° ~ syar°</i>

animals and plants

gloss

Forest Nenets

Tundra Nenets

moose

kūtwaj°

xəbarta ~ xəborta

sable

xīlmyiqk°

toq ~ tos°

hare

tołasyäta ~ tawăł°

nyawa ~ tæwasyi

horse

law°

yuna ~ yuno

black grouse

xătił

syencya

woodpecker

xăw°kat°

tubkabco

worm

xăwa

xəli

louse

ŋan°

pəncyeq°

aspen

pyĩ

nyurka

“basic verbs”

want	<i>xǎq-</i>	<i>xərwa-</i>
love	<i>kamsǎ-</i>	<i>menye-</i>
be born	<i>watyo-</i>	<i>soya-</i>
wait	<i>ɣeta-</i>	<i>ɣətye-</i>
rest	<i>nǐpta-</i>	<i>nila-</i>
hurry	<i>teqtǎ-</i>	<i>pərompə-</i>
speak	<i>munuq-</i>	<i>lax°nə-</i>

natural phenomena

sun	<i>jaɬya</i>	<i>xayer</i>
smell	<i>myelsya</i>	<i>ɣəbt°</i>
air, breath	<i>syeju</i>	<i>yint°q</i>
morning	<i>jǔlk°nu ~ jǒl°nu</i>	<i>xúwi°</i>

body parts

tongue	<i>syĩ</i>	<i>nya^omyu</i>
(running) blood	<i>kěm</i>	<i>weya</i>
(human) skin	<i>teŋk^o</i>	<i>ŋaya</i>
swim bladder	<i>kăql^oqku</i>	<i>xab^odyo</i>

kinship terms

elder sister	<i>apa</i>	<i>nyabako</i>
elder brother	<i>ĩja</i>	<i>nyinyeka ~ nye^oka ~ nya^oka</i>
younger sibling	<i>kăqka</i>	<i>papa</i>
mother's younger brother	<i>xojuqma</i>	<i>tyidya</i>