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Chuvash Syntactic Nominalizers. On *-ki and its Counterparts in Ural-Altaic Languages
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The appearance of the present new short monograph on the Chuvash syntactic marker **-ki* is a very salutary event in Turkology. Especially because the author – being a non-native speaker of the Chuvash language and therefore having no intuitions for its syntactic structure – aims at giving a very detailed description of *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker* (supposedly functionally similar) suffixes on different levels of linguistic structure and from different perspectives. As he puts it, “the study is both qualitative and quantitative, synchronic and diachronic, and it also includes areal linguistic and typological considerations... The focus in the treatment of the subject will be on morphology and comparisons between different languages. The theoretical framework is mainly that of traditional grammar, with some influences from discourse analysis.” (Chapter 1, Introduction, p. 11.)

The monograph contains six chapters. Chapter 2, entitled „Language family background: The Turkic Languages” deals with the element *-ki* in Modern Turkish. In this chapter the author gives an overview of its morphology and morphosyntax (pp. 12–15), phonological properties, structural models of the *-ki* constructions, some further syntactic considerations, and remarks on the use of *-ki* in discourse (pp. 15–21). This is followed by the representation of *-ki* in Ottoman Turkish and Turkish dialects (p. 23), and the comparative analysis of the *-KI* and *-nKI* forms in Tatar, Chagatay, and that of early forms in written Tatar (pp. 24–30). Finally, the representation of *-ki* is extended to a wider historical dimension: we can find its occurrences in the Old Turkic written sources in comparison to its Common Turkic, Danube and Volga Bulgar correspondences (pp. 30–34).

The first part of chapter 3, “The Chuvash *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker*” (pp. 35–51) follows the tradition of typical descriptive works, as it shows how the similarities and differences of the three morphemes can be most accurately methodized in all relevant aspects of their usage. It contains a presentation of the previous research including Ašmarin’s (pp. 35–39) view and post-Ašmarin views on the suffix *-i* as a ‘category of distinction = 3rd person possessive suffix’, suffixes *-i* and *-χi* as adjectival derivational endings, and suffixes *-i*, and *-χi* as the type *-KI* in comparison with other Turkic languages (pp. 39–51). The functional diversity, being the basic question in previous studies, can be investigated only using a multilateral approach. It is so because in Chuvash there are no formal markers for the differentiation of nominal word classes that could be a starting point for the exploration of the functional differences. Moreover, the convergent changes of genetically different morphemes leading to homophony

are a very frequent phenomenon in Chuvash historical morphonology. The most important conclusions made by Luutonen – taking into account the results of previous research as the starting point for his own investigations – are the following:

1. the distinctive suffix is only homonymous with the 3rd person possessive suffix;
2. the *-i* element in locative case forms (*-ri*, *-ti*, *-či*) cannot be regarded as a derivational suffix, *-ri*, *-ti*, *-či*, and *-χi* should be considered as special functional forms of the word classes from which they can be formed;
3. the 3rd person possessive suffix and the *-KI* morpheme may have been blended in Chuvash;
4. the combination of the Chuvash national and the Western grammatical tradition is required to resolve the questions concerning the three (*-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker*) suffixes.

In the 2nd part of the third chapter the author concretizes how he considers the exposition of the task under point 4 feasible. The investigation is carried out by using a Turku Chuvash Corpus (version 1.0), which contains about 1.24 million words in texts of varying content. This chapter (3.2 Morphology, pp. 52–77) provides an original way for morphological analysis in contemporary Chuvash linguistics: the specific features of the tested suffixes are extrapolated through a regular comparison of their behaviour from an agglutinative point of view, e.g. in left and right morphological contexts of the morphemes of the word. This method integrates the rules of derivational and declensional suffixation, which means that the suffixes and suffix combinations in nouns and participles that can both precede and follow the suffixes *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker* are listed in tables including their position in the declension as well. Regular comparison has shown that there are significant differences in the use of the three suffixes after the plural marker, case endings, and other suffixes. The data are interpreted quantitatively concerning functional and historical perspectives, but the conclusions are drawn mainly on the basis of synchronic language-internal principles. Applying this method, the author managed to describe the morphophonological and morphotactic properties of the three suffixes (pp. 77–78) and also to highlight on the very clear grammatical semantic differences between the *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker* forms (pp. 79–83). The fact that there are relatively rare cases where these morphemes can be mutually substituted for or combined with each other, anticipates an affinity on the abstract functional level: in syntax (pp. 83–86). As it is convincingly explicated by Luutonen, the morphemes *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker* nominalize the adverbial, and substantivize the adjectival word they are attached to. What is more, the syntactic approach is extended to discourse analysis, thus solving the question why *-i* forms cannot be replaced by *-sker* forms, and vice versa (pp. 86–88). Luutonen assumes that

different roles are attributed to these suffixes in the information structure of the sentence. The *-i* forms are often used to refer to objects that have been mentioned in the discourse, whereas *-sker* forms often reveal some new property of the object. Chapter 3 ends with a synchronic summary and conclusions (pp. 88–91).

There is no doubt that the conclusions on synchronic morphological, morphophonological, semantic, and syntactic levels are well established and convincingly documented results. Nevertheless, I must mention that the historical phonological base for the most important synchronic conclusions is not on the same niveau as the rest of the investigation. For example, Luutonen, surveying the use of suffixes *-i*, *-χi*, and *-sker* in *-Alla* forms (pp. 36, 39, 49, 53, 66) could have provided a more precise explanation for the differences, calling attention to the fact that the Chuvash *-Alla* is a grammaticalized ending that originated from an independent noun (for details see Agyagási 2001). Another example could be the interpretation of the Chuvash development of **-ki*. The author, with reference to Ramstedt 1952 and Benzing 1959 argues that Chuvash *-i* developed from the suffix **-ki*. The *k* sound was located between two vowels and in this position it was a voiced parallel of Ottoman Turkish, Tatar, and other Turkic languages. In fact, the voicing of the *k* in intervocalic position was realized earlier, as *k* became *g* in some other Turkic languages, as it is attested by the Old Turkic loanwords in Hungarian (see Róna-Tas 1971, Róna-Tas–Berta 2011: 1075–1077), and also in Russian (Agyagási 2010). The *-i* and *-χi* discussed by Luutonen are the two different Old Turkic dialectal and chronological correspondences of the archaic suffix *-KI* preserved in Chuvash: in the dominant variety of the Western Old Turkic a *-ki > -yi > i* change took place, in the other territorial variety a *-ki > χi* change occurred. The two variants could have been preserved due to their functional split, as its results can be observed in contemporary Chuvash.

This split can serve as an explanation for the differences of their usage and semantics. The correct interpretation of the historical processes is important, because in chapter 4 (Broader background: the Altaic and Uralic languages and Russian, pp. 92–119) the investigation of the chosen topic is carried on in areal and typological interrelation, which cannot neglect the diachronic dimension and the latest results of historical Turkology. This part of the book is a study of very high standard, a nice example of Volgaic areal studies in Bereczki's spirit.

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