THE ROLE OF THE TURKIC IN THE EVIDENTIALLY BELT

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Abstract: The article is to give a brief general survey of Turkic indirectives. Turkic languages known to us display indirective categories expressed by specific grammatical items opposed to non-directive items. Writing a grammar of Old Turkic has for two main reasons proven a quite formidable task. The first reason is the sheer size of the corpus, which has, during the last decade, kept growing at a breathtaking pace.

Key words: languages, reflexes, branches, morphemes, evidential meaning, location, classification, circumstances

In most of the Turkic languages there exists a special set of verbs that can occur as main verbs or as light verbs (i.e. converbs). In this capacity, these verbs usually indicate aspect, perfectivity, or status/modality. When used in this way, their meanings are glossed in small caps, e.g. Uzbek ol-‘to take/be.able’, Kazakh žat-‘to lie.When citing material from other sources, the original glosses are preserved [3; 604].

In Uzbek and Kazakh, we are concerned with the modern reflexes of five morphemes. Three of these are bound to the verbal root and express past tense: the Simple past tense *-di(Uzbek -di, Kazakh -dI), which is confirmative; the Perfect *-GAn(Uzbek -gan, Kazakh -GAn), which is unmarked (in the modern languages) for confirmativity; and the Converbal verb *-(I)p(Uzbek -(i)b, Kazakh -(I)b*)*, which is non-confirmative. The other two morphemes that concern us are derived from combinations of verbal markers and the copula: **er-kan (<*er+GAn) (Uzbek ekan, Kazakh eken)*, which is non-confirmative and may express either non-firsthand information source (i.e. evidentiality) or admirativity, and *er-miš (Uzbek: emish, Kazakh -mis), which expresses either reportativity or admirativity. In reviewing these morphemes, we see that evidential meaning is not the primary meaning of any of them. Rather, because certain morphemes are marked as non-confirmative, they may express specific types of non-confirmativity, such as non-firsthand information source (i.e. non-firsthand evidentiality) or admirativity [2;113].

If, as Aikhenvald (2004) has proposed, the Turkic languages are responsible for the spread of this particularly Eurasian type of evidentiality, some background information on the Turkic languages is necessary to understand how

this belt came to be. Moreover, as Uzbek and Kazakh, the subjects of this study, are Turkic, it is useful to understand their relationships to the other Turkic languages, so that a future comparison between Uzbek, Kazakh, and their relatives may be undertaken [10; 8].

The Turkic language family consists of some forty languages spoken in a region bounded by Turkey and the Balkans in the southeast, stretching through Central Asia, all the way to northeastern China, north through Mongolia, the Altay-Sayan region, and through to northern Siberia. Karaim, an endangered language spoken in Lithuania, represents the north western most limit of Turkic. In the case of Turkic, this homeland should be located in the Altay-Sayan region, where China, Mongolia, Russia, and Kazakhstan meet, and where representatives of the Altay-Siberian, Kipchak, Sayan, Yenisey, and Southeastern branches of Turkic are spoken [11; 16].

The Turkic languages are located in the center of the Eurasian spread zone and have, as predicted by Raun Alo's theory of spread zones, generally spread from east to west. The westward movements of Turkic-speaking peoples have generally coincided with the movements of other peoples, including the Huns (who may, in fact, have been Turkic-speaking) and the Mongols [7; 55].

The close association between speakers of Turkic and Mongolic languages has resulted in a debate over whether the features shared by these two language families are a consequence of prolonged contact or of genetic relatedness within a larger Altaic language family. The hypothetical Altaic family, which typically includes Turkic, Mongolic, and Tungusic, and sometimes Japanese and Korean, is defined by a number of typological features (such as SOV word order) and a number of potential cognates (including pronouns: *bi ~ min1st person nominative and oblique, *si ~sin 2nd person nominative and oblique). [8; 100].

While the Altaic hypothesis remains contentious, there is no debate over what languages should be considered Turkic. A number of words are common to most Turkic languages, including *(h) adaq"foot" (Uzbek oyoq, Kazakh ayaq), *al-"to take" (Uz. ol-, Kaz. al-), and *tag"mountain" (Uz. tog', Kaz. taw), as well as personal pronouns and the numerals one through ten. [4; 114].

It is, however, somewhat challenging to produce a satisfactory internal classification of Turkic. The difficulty in classifying these languages lies in the recent divergence of the various branches of Turkic (not much earlier than 2000 years ago, according to Koc Kenan [5;66]), following the splitting of communities of speakers across national boundaries and intensive and prolonged contact of peoples speaking languages belonging to other branches of Turkic.

Most Turkic classification systems are based upon shared phonological innovations. It is widely agreed that Chuvash (the last surviving member of the Bolgar branch) is the most divergent Turkic language, as it exhibits a number of sound changes not found in the other Turkic languages, including [6;90]. A secondary split divided Turkic into three further branches: Lena Turkic (which includes Sakha [Yakut] and Dolgan), the Khalaj language of Iran, and the remainder of the Turkic languages, which Schönig (1999) calls Norm Turkic.

Central Turkic is the branch that contains the best-known of the Turkic languages, and it is divided into three branches based upon the behavior of word-final voiced velar sounds. These three branches are Kipchak (includingKazakh, Kyrgyz, Tatar, and others), Southeastern (made up of Uzbek, Uyghur, and a few related dialects), and Oghuz (including Turkish, Azerbaijani, and Turkmen). A fourth Altay-Siberian branch, which includes Northern Altay, Kondoma Shor, and Lower Chulym, is sometimes included in Central Turkic [9; 101].

Crimean Tatar is another example of a language that cannot be easily classified. Features of both Oghuz and Kipchak are found mixed within the language, which exhibits both Ag and Awas reflexes of Proto-Turkic Ag. Subsequent population upheavals (namely, the migration of Greek Orthodox speakers to the Donetsk region, the decimation of Jewish and Karaite speakers during the Holocaust, and the deportation of Crimean Tatars to Central Asia) resulted in further mixing of these varieties, leading to the difficulty in classifying modern Crimean Tatar [8;104].

While Kazakh is solidly a Kipchak language, Uzbek does not always meet the criteria for being classified as Southeastern. In certain circumstances it, too, has lost final **G* after high vowels, as in the adjective forming suffix *lIG, which has become *-liin* modern literary Uzbek *(e.g. tog'-li mountainous').* As the loss of **G* occurs only in this context, however, it is more likely that this is a contact effect. In support of the contact hypothesis is the existence of a 'dialects' of Uzbek that are clearly more Kipchak than Southeastern [1;122].

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