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THE USAGE of ADJECTIVES WHICH HAVE NEGATIVE MEANINGS as ADVERBS of QUANTITY in TURKISH

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ABSTRACT

As it is known, adverbs effects gerunds, adverbials and other adverbs in terms of time, place, direction, quality, quantity, reinforcement and question. Adverbs make the meaning of those clearer. It is known that in Turkish has a limited number of adverbs and nouns, adjectives and pronouns are used as adverbs. Adverbs are classified in Turkish grammars as time, direction, manner, quantity and question. In this classification, the adverbs of quantity determine the extent and meter of the word which is signified. In the grammars it is stated that these adverbs are limited in number and en "most", daha "more", pek "quite", çok "very", az "slightly" are examples of this category, and some other words can be included in this class. The focus of the study is the usage of the words with negative meanings as adverbs which do not have this function originally. In literary Turkey Turkish sentences such as "Kız, oğlana kötü tutuldu." (The girl is badly in love with the boy) Felaket güzel bir gün" (An awfully nice day) the words kötü (badly) and felaket (awfully) are used as adverbs of quantity. In some sources, these usages are labelled as incoherent, however they can be witnessed form the old periods of Turkish language. In the present study, these structures which are used to make the expression more vivid are analyzed and the examples from old Turkish to Turkey Turkish are given. The transfers among word classes are shown with reference to adverbs of quantity.

Key Words: *adverbs of quantity, negative meaning, language-mind relation*

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Türkçede Olumsuz Anlamlı Sıfat ve Zarfların Miktar Zarfı Olarak Kullanımı

ÖZET

Bilindiği üzere zarflar fiilleri, sıfatları, sıfat-fiilleri ve diğer zarfları zaman, yer, yön, nitelik, durum, azlık-çokluk, pekiştirme ve sorma gibi çeşitli yönlerden etkileyip değiştirerek anlamlarını daha belirgin duruma getiren kelimelerdir. Türkçede zarf olan kelimelerin sayı bakımından sınırlı olduğu, zarfların daha çok isim, sıfat, zamir gibi kelime sınıflarından alınan sözlerle kurulduğu bilinmektedir. Zarflar çeşitli gramer kitaplarında işlevleri bakımından zaman zarfları, yer ve yön zarfları, durum zarfları, miktar zarfları ve soru zarfları olarak sınıflandırılmaktadır. Bu sınıflandırmada yer alan miktar zarfları sıfatın, zarfın ya da fiildeki oluş/kılışın miktarını, derecesini, ölçüsünü belirleyen zarflar olarak tanımlanır. Gramer kitapları bu zarfların sayıca sınırlı olduğunu vurgulayarak tipik miktar zarflarının en, daha, pek, çok, az olduğunu; bu kelimelere miktar bildiren az sayıda kelimenin de ilave edilebileceğini ifade eder. Bu çalışmanın konusu Eski Türkçeden itibaren miktar zarfı olmadığı, miktar ve derece ifadesi de taşımadığı halde miktar zarfı olarak kullanılan olumsuz anlamlı sıfat ve zarflardır. Ölçünlü Türkiye Türkçesinde görülen “Kız, oğlana kötü tutuldu. Felaket güzel bir gün” vb. kullanımlarda kötü ve felaket sözcükleri artık miktar bildiren zarflar durumuna gelmiştir. Kimi kaynaklarda anlatım bozukluğu olarak görülen bu türden kullanımlar Eski Türkçeden itibaren dilde var olan biçimlerdir. Bu bildiride, anlatıma canlılık katmak amacıyla kullanıldığını düşündüğümüz bu yapılar ele alınmış, bu türden kullanımlar Eski Türkçeden Türkiye Türkçesine örneklerle işlenmiştir. Çalışmada amaçlanan tarihten günümüze Türkçenin kelime sınıfları arasındaki geçişleri miktar zarfları bakımından göstermeye çalışmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: miktar zarfları, anlam olumsuzluğu, dil-zihin ilişkisi

Using *korkunç* (awesome), *dehşet* (terribly), *inanılmaz* (unbelievably), *felâket* (dreadfully), *müthiş* (frightfully), which have negative meanings, instead of *çok*, *daha*, *en*, *pek* etc. to show the degree of adjectives and adverbs is not grammatical” **Korkunç** güzel bir programdı. (It was an awesome program) <http://turkdili.gen.tr/anlat-m-bozukluklar-.html> (access date: 20.06.2014). This kind of information can be found not only in the website but also in many university

entrance exam preparation and grammar books. The focus of the study is that this information is not correct and the usage of such kind has existed in Turkish since the earliest texts.

For adverbs of quantity, which are defined as “functioning to state the degree of an occurrence” (Banguoğlu 1995: 372); “declaring quantity and degree” (Ergin 1993: 248); “determining the quantity, level and degree of an adjective, adverb and occurrence in a verb” (Korkmaz 2003: 517); “expressing degree and quantity by prepositioning to adjectives and adverbs” (Eker 2009: 357); “showing the degree of a verb, adjective or another quantifier” (Atabay 2003: 89) in grammar books examples such as *çok* (very), *pek* (quite), *az* (slightly), *aşırı* (excessively), *biraz* (some), *en* (most), *fazla* (much), *epey* (quite), *gayet* (highly), *fevkalade* (extraordinarily), *son derece* (extremely) etc. are given. However, the words *kötü* (badly), *felaket* (dreadfully), *korkunç* (awesome), *müthiş* (frightfully) in the following sentences are used as quantity adverbs although they do not have quantity sense; “Kız, oğlana *kötü* tutuldu. (The girl is badly in love with the boy)” “Sandık kokan masallarını önlerine gelene anlatmaktan *korkunç* zevk duyarlar (They terribly take pleasure from telling the stories which smell chest) (GTS.).” “*Felaket* güzel bir akşamdı. (It was an awesome nice evening)” “*Müthiş* güzel günler yaşadık” (We had frightfully good days). In each of these sentences these words have the meanings of “many, much, very, excessively”.

In the present study, the usage of like *kötü* (badly), *felaket* (dreadfully), *korkunç* (awesome), which have negative meanings¹, as quantity adverbs has been analyzed. The topic has found only a little space in some studies. Jean Deny, stated that the words *gayet* (quite), *katı* (very), *fevkalade* (extraordinarily), *azîm* (very) and *yavlak* (badly) are also used as quantity adverbs (Deny 1941: 294). However, he did

¹ In the present study “negative meaning” does not refer to a grammatical category, rather it used for the words *kötü*, *fena*, *berbat* etc. which have negative connotations.

not explain why these words are used with this function. In the grammars which were scanned with this regard it was observed that this topic has not been analyzed in detail. Some examples of these words are counted among the quantity adverbs in some studies. An important study about the issue was conducted by Mesut Şen (Şen 2008). In the study, the writer gave the examples of quantity adverbs with negative meanings from historical literary languages, but he did not analyze the issue in terms of semantics. The present study differs from the previous one as it explains the semantic basis of the issue.

It is known that the function of a given word can be determined with syntactic relations. In other words the kind of a word is determined by its position and usage. Some of the quantity adverbs in Turkish have also this property. The determination of adverbs in syntactic relations was explained by Karağaç as “The most convenient words for description and qualification, that is for being adjective and adverbs are the nouns used for colors, quality, quantity, number and situation, which cannot be used alone” (Karağaç 2012: 427).

A semantically suited word can function differently in syntactic relations. More clearly the word *çok* (*very*), which means big and excessive in terms of number, quantity, value, power, degree etc., opposite of little (GTS.)”, may functions as noun, adjective, adverb and pronoun. The word *çok* (*very*) is used as adverb in “*çok konuşuyorsunuz*” (You are talking too much), as adjective in “*çok naz âşık usandırır*” (If you behave too cloy you will lose your lover), as pronoun in “*çoğu gitti azı kaldı*” (most of it is over) and as noun in “*burada bizi tanımayan çoktur*” (There are many who don’t know us here). No matter with which function these words are used in the sentences, it can be observed that *çok* (*very*) maintains its meaning in all the sentences.

Not only the function but also the meaning of a specific word can change in syntactic structure. The different usage related with

syntax is called as *meaning value*. Meaning value refers to the meaning which a word gains as a result of relations with the other words in phrase and is one of the factors which determines meaning: *karı koca* (husband and wife), *kocakarı* (an old woman), *Bundan kurtulmanın yolu yok* (There is no way to escape) (Yol: Behavior, attitude, way of behaviour), *Bu köyün yolu yok* (Yol: road, transportation line that connects accommodation units)

In the sentences “*Kız, oğlana kötü tutuldu*” (The girl is badly in love with the boy) or “*Sandık kokan masallarını önlerine gelene anlatmaktan korkunç zevk duyarlar*” (They terribly take pleasure from telling the stories which smell chest) the words *kötü* (*badly*) and *korkunç* (*terribly*) are not used with their central meaning. More clearly, the alternation of a word’s function in syntactic structures in which meaning and context suit is natural. However, when a word is not used with its central meaning or it gets a function which is not suitable with the meaning is thought-provoking. The issue is not so simple to conclude that in the sentence “*Kız, oğlana kötü tutuldu*” (The girl is badly in love with the boy) the word *kötü* (*badly*) cannot be used with this function considering its central meaning and there is ungrammaticality in this structure.

Moreover, it possible to encounter to nouns with negative meanings to convert to adverbs of quantity expressing excessiveness since the oldest times in all periods and dialects of Turkish language. *anyığ* (*bad*), *yablağ* (*bad*), *yaman* (*bad*) and their derivatives, which have negative meanings, were used as adverbs of quantity in old literary languages:

There are many examples of “*anyığ*” and its phonetic derivatives, which mean bad, evil², used as adverb of quantity meaning “very, much, excessive” in Old Uygur texts:

² In some studies both bad/evil and very/much/excessive meanings of *anyığ*, *yablağ/yavlağ*, *yaman* are given. However, the former meaning is secondary and

“Yine küreg ağzında muntağ sav eşidip *ayı*³ busantımar (We felt badly sorry to hear these words from the escape) (Tekin 2004a:298-299).” “ança bilingler *ayığ* edgü ol (known as such this fortune is good) (IB. 18)”; “ol közsüz kişi *ayığ* bilge tetir (The eyeless person is called extremely wise) (İKP. 47); *ayı* uluğ arduğ körkle et’üz belgürdür (It remarks extraordinary big body) (ETŞ. 72-73); xan samtso açarı üzä ärtingü amramaq köngül-lüg üçün samtso açarıy kizlämiş yerdä qop etig-kä yaratıyqa tükällig *ayı* körkle stup etdürdi. (As he had much affection for Tripitaka master the emperor had a very beautiful tomb constructed adorned with flowers and ornaments) (HB. 52-77).

There are examples of this word’s usage as adverb of quantity in Kharahanid Turkish: “bu dünyä qutınğa inanma *ayığ* (Do not trust much to the happiness of this world.) (KB. 5175)”; “*ayı* munkarur sen bu kün sen mini (Today you are bothering me much.) (KB. 4024).”

In Nehcü’l-Ferâdis, a work belong to Harezmi Turkish, there are examples of *yavlaq* used as adverb of quantity: Ey zeyd, bu halîfâlıq işi *yavlaq* düşvâr turur (Hey! Zeyd, this caliphate is very difficult) (NF. 106-13).

It is also observed in Old Oghuz Turkish the same word is used as adverb of quantity: “suya *yavlaq* muhtâc olmuşlarıdı (They were very needy for water) (KE. 310-11)”, qaranful ki buruşuğı olmaya dögeler iki günde bir dutan sıtmaya içüreler ve dürteler *yavlaq* fâyide kıla (If they crush and give clove which is not creased to the sick person it would be very useful) (MŞ. 126a/1).”

appeared as a result of syntactic relations. More clearly, the words at first meant only bad/evil and it is obvious that the meaning of “very” is a meaning extension.

³ According to Clauson *ayı* and *ayığ* ~ *añığ*’ are just phonetic variants of the same word (EDPT 182). However, that the forms with and without final /-ğ / can be found in the texts of same period makes it necessary to revise –ğ > -∅ occurred in *ayı*, accordingly it also makes it necessary to revise whether they are the variants of the same word.

The examples from Cagatay texts usage of *yaman* as an adverb of quantity: Kış irdi, künler *yaman* savuķ irdi (It was winter and it were very cold) (ŞT. 75a-15).

It can be seen in the examples that the words *anyığ* (*badly*) and its phonetic variants in Kharahanid and Old Uyghur, *yawlaķ/yavlaķ* (*badly*) in Harezmi and Old Oghuz Turkish and *yaman* (*bad*) in Cagatay were used as adverbs of quantity.

Not only in old dialects but also in modern ones it can be seen that nouns with negative meanings can be used as adverbs of quantity with the meanings *very, much*. As a result of a short scan it was found *yaman* (*badly*) and its phonetic variants in Kazak, Karacay-Malkar, Kazan Tatar, Modern Uyghur and Kirghiz are used with the meanings “very, much”

Ekesin körgende **jaman** kuvandı. (He was very pleased to see his father) (Kaz. 158); **caman** Bad, evil, **caman** much, very (Krç. Mlk. 137); **yaman** 1. Bad, useless, scamb. 2. Inapt. 3. Devious. 4. Difficult. 5. Very (Kaz. T. 329); **yaman yoğan** *Very big*, **yaman yaxşı** *very good* (Y. Uyg. 457); **caman** much, very. **caman cakşı** *very good*, **caman çoğ** *very big* (Kirg. 171).

The usage of nouns with negative meaning as adverbs of quantity in a phenomenon which is not unique for Turkish. An example from English is *badly* which can also be used as adverb of quantity with the meaning “very, much”: They want to see her very *badly*. awful is another example for the situation: It was *awful* slow. In German the word *schrecklich*, which means bad, terrific” is also used with the meaning “very, much”. There many examples from other languages, but they were not included into the present study.

It is more convenient to analyze the reason for this usage found in old Turkish literary languages and in Turkey Turkish rather than judge them as ungrammatical. Aysu Ata’s statements related to the

topic are outstanding: “In Turkish a relation between being bad and worthless and being abundant was established (Ata 1996: 16)”. This view can bring light to usage of *çok* as an adverb of quantity at first had been used with the meaning “bad”, but it does not explain the usage of nouns with negative meanings to come to use as adverbs of quantity because not only the nouns with the meanings “bad, evil” but also the nouns meaning “good, superior, extraordinary” are also used as adverbs of quantity (An awfully nice day), and this usage can be seen since the early periods. As it is not directly related to the topic not many examples from Old Turkic languages are not included in the study, but it is suggestive to remind that Old Uygur *adinçig* “astonishing, extraordinary” [*adinçig edgü: fevkalade güzel, çok güzel (EDPT, 63)*], *tanlançig* “astonishing, marvellous” [*tanlançig yürüñ tısları: her wonderful white teeth “harika ‘çok’ beyaz dişleri” (EDPT, 522)*] were used as adverbs of quantity.

This phenomenon can be explained with language-mind relations. Human mind uses the exaggeration statements with negative and positive meanings to make the message more effective when expressing excessiveness. With this context, there is no difference between the meanings of *muhteşem* (*frightfully*), *fevkalade* (*extraordinarily*) and *felaket* (*dreadfully*) in the sentences “*muhteşem güzel bir gün*” (A frightfully nice day), “*fevkalade güzel bir gün*” (An extraordinarily nice day) and “*felaket güzel bir gün*” (A dreadfully nice day). All of the words related to the study express excessiveness. The underlying reason for the usage of nouns with negative and positive meanings as adverbs of quantity is that both of the categories (positive: *muhteşem* (*frightfully*), *fevkalade* (*extraordinarily*), *şahane* (*marvelous*), *super* (*super*) and negative: *korkunç* (*awesome*), *felaket* (*dreadful*)) have the meaning of excessiveness. In both of the classes the excessiveness is at an astonishing level and accordingly these words do not have difficulty in gathering new meanings as very and much. The question which needs to be answered is that why these nouns with

negative and positive meanings are used with the meaning very when there are adverbs of quantity. There is tendency for exaggeration in Human beings. All the writes since Gilgamesh and Homeros have used of this. It is clear that this tendency lies beneath this situation. This eagerness led up to the usage of nouns with negative and positive meanings instead of adverbs of quantity to make the message more effective. In addition, that the words meaning excessiveness have the semantic convenience to for exaggeration led up to their usage as adverbs of quantity.

Adverbs of quantity express four functions, namely equality, comparative, superlative and excessiveness (Atabay 2003: 89-90, Korkmaz 2003: 517-522). That converting to adverbs with just the function of expressing excessiveness shows that the desire for exaggeration in Human beings caused these words to come to be used as adverbs of quantity.

Another aspect of the issue which must be clarified is the occurrence way of semantic change. It is possible to explain semantic changes in languages in two different manners. One of them is meaning transfer. Meaning transfer defined as “meaning exchange, translation or appearance of new words, phrases or utterances in these languages with the effect of semantics among the languages of nations which have cultural relations” (Aksan 2004: 15) is the extreme point of borrowings. Meaning transfer is the signifier’s usage for a new meaning which was used fir another one formerly by means of translation. The other form is the change related with the structure of language without the effect of other languages and cultures. That the usage of nouns with negative meanings as adverbs of quantity is also observed in other languages suggests that it can be meaning transfer. However, the fact that this phenomenon is seen in all periods and dialects refutes this idea. The semantic change experienced by the nouns with negative meanings occurred independently in languages within the framework of language-mind relations. As is stated above the excessiveness stated by the nouns

with negative and positive meanings together with the exaggeration tendency in human beings endow this phenomenon with quality that can be seen in all languages independently as a result of language-mind relations.

It can be seen that the semantic processes the words such as *anyığ* (*bad*), *yablak* (*bad*), *yaman* (*bad*) experienced can be in different forms. Some words which gained the meaning of “very, much” and came to be used as adverb of quantity, and they may have lost their basic meaning completely. However, sometimes a noun can be encountered with two different meanings, as a result of phono-semantic alteration by preserving its basic meaning. An example for the first one is noun *çok* (*very*). Aysu Ata stated that *çok* (*very*) at first had been used with the meanings of *bad*, *evil*, but as a result of the semantic change it gained its present meaning (for detailed information see Ata 1996). An example of phono-semantic alteration exists in Salar Turkish. In Salar Turkish phonetic variants of the same word (*yaman*: *bad*, *evil*) *yaman* and *yämän* have different semantic usages. *Yaman* is used with the meaning of *very* and *yämän* is used with the meanings of *bad*, *harmful* (Özeren 2014: 118). It can be said that the word at first were used with the form *yaman* meaning *bad*, *harmful*, but in time with a meaning extension it got the meaning of *very*, and this new meaning came to be represented with the new form. The usages of the same word with the meanings of both *very* and *bad*, *evil* without phonetic change have many examples.

CONCLUSION

The usage of nouns with negative meanings as adverbs of quantity is a phenomenon which can be seen in both Turkish and borrowed words since old periods. With this, it is not correct to label this as “ungrammaticality” or “meaning ambiguity”.

It is necessary to evaluate the words expressing excessiveness with the meaning of *very*, *much*, *too* (without taking the negative/positive meaning into consideration) as adverbs of quantity.

It is possible to explain these usages with language-mind relations. This phenomenon must be included in grammar studies under the title of adverbs of quantity and it should be handled in detail.

An outstanding part of this usage is that in the usage of nouns with negative meanings as adverbs of quantity these words are not used for equality, comparative and superlative degrees. They are just used to express excessiveness. The reason for that is their meaning expressing excessiveness.

In modern Turkish Dictionary, some words with this structure are given with the abbreviation *zf.* (adverb) and meaning *very* and some others are not. For consistency in the dictionary, the meaning of adverbs must be included for all the words used as adverb of quantity.

ABBREVIATIONS

- EDPT.** An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish (Clauson 1972)
- ETS.** Eski Türk Şiiri (Arat 2007)
- GTS.** Güncel Türkçe Sözlük (TDK web.)
- HB.** Eski Uygurca Hsüan Tsang Biyografisi X. Bölüm (Tezcan 1975)
- IB.** Irk Bitig (Tekin 2004b)
- İKP.** İyi ve Kötü Prens Öyküsü (Hamilton 1998)
- Kaz.** Kazak Türkçesi Türkiye Türkçesi Sözlüğü (Koç, Bayniyazov, Başkapan 2003)

Kaz. T.	Kazan-Tatar Türkçesi Sözlüğü (Öner 2009)
KB.	Kutadgu Bilig (Arat 2006)
KE.	Kıyas-ı Enbiya (Yılmaz, Demir, Küçük 2013)
Kırg.	Kırgız Sözlüğü (Yudahin 1994)
Krç. Mlk.	Karaçay-Malkar Türkçesi Sözlüğü (Tavkul 2000)
MŞ.	Müntahab-ı Şifâ (Önler 1990)
NF.	Nehcü'l-Ferâdis (Eckman 2004)
ŞT.	Şecere-i Terâkime (Ölmez 1996)
Y. Uyg.	Yeni Uygur Türkçesi Sözlüğü (Necip 1995)

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