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OLD TURKIC DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN 'THIS' AND ITS BROADER ETYMOLOGY

ESKİ TÜRKÇE "BU" İŞARET ZAMİRİ VE ONUN GENİŞ ETİMOLOJİSİ



Özet

Bu makalede Eski Türkçe "bu" zamirinin meydana gelme sorunları incelenmektedir. "Bu" işaret zamiri, genel kelime hazinesinin önemli parçalarındandır. Onun kökleri Eski Türkçe devrine kadar ve hatta büyük nostratik makro ailenin bir parçası olan Altay Dil Birliğine kadar uzanmaktadır. "Bu" işaret zamiri, Türk dillerinin ve onlara akraba olan dillerin yapısında önemli rol oynamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

İşaret zamirleri, Türk ve Altay etimolojisi, morfolojik yapı, şahıs zamirleri, söz varlığı.

Abstract

The article deals with some issues of etymology concerning the OT pronoun 'this'. This demonstrative is an important item of the core vocabulary. Its etymology is traced back to Old Turkic period and further to the Altaic linguistic community being a part of the Nostratic stock. This pronoun plays an important role in the structure of Turkic and kindred languages.

Key Words

Demonstrative pronouns, Turkic and Altaic etymologies, morphological structure, personal pronouns, core vocabulary.

The pronoun in question belongs to the core vocabulary of all human languages and as such is listed in the 100 word list of M. Swadesh.

The etymology of this demonstrative has been much researched by many linguists with a name in the field of Turkic and Altaic studies, suffice here to mention only one special investigation by A. von Gabain [3].

This pronoun belongs to a vast group of Common Turkic one-syllable words and is reconstructed as **pū* 'this', see (Scherbak 1970, 196). Still other scholars engaged in the Old Turkic grammar research prefer to reconstruct a voiced bilabial in the Anlaut. Thus, we see **be* 'demonstrative pronoun' in (Kononov 1980, 296) with a variant *bu* (Opus citatum, 298). In a more recent Old Turkic grammar by M. Erdal this demonstrative has the shape of *bo* [2: 18, 45, 123 ff.]. More useful information on the history of this demonstrative word can be found in the well-known book written by noted Turkish linguist T. Tekin [7] In scholarly works in the field of Altaic studies one can come across demonstrative *bü* (oblique form *mu-n*) 'this' (Ramstedt), compare it with Turkic **bu(-n)* 'this', see [6: 85].

This demonstrative possesses a wide all-Turkic distribution, some examples of which follow below: Orkhon Turkic *bu, bun-*, Old Uyghur *bu, mun-*, Turkish *bu*, Bashkir *by-l*, Kirghiz *bu(l)*, Kazakh *bu-l*, Khakas *pu*, Oyrot *bu*, Tofalar *bo*, Yakut *bu*, Dolgan *bu (mun-)*.

The word in question is considered to be Altaic with such cognates as Proto Mongolic **mō-n* 'he, same': Khalkha *mön*, Buryat *mün*, etc.

As evidenced from scholars who have composed 'An Etymological dictionary of the Altaic languages' (henceforth EDAL) the Proto Japanese cognate looks like **mənə* 'thing, method, being', Kagoshima dial. *monó*, while the Pre-Korean cognate is reconstructed as *móm* 'body', Modern Korean being *mom* (Opus cit., 912).

It is interesting to observe in this context some dialectal forms of this demonstrative in Bashkir, native language of the present author, viz. in the eastern, middle and southern dialects *myna, mynay*, the form *byna* means 'this one'; the *manau, mynau, menäü* phonetic variants bear the sense 'this'; Standard Bashkir *bynau* (taken from field notes of the author).

According to the theory of Nostratic linguistics this demonstrative of one-syllable is a stem denoting a demonstrative of wide meaning. V. Illich-Switych (1976, vol. 2, 70-71) compares the Turkic-Mongol stem with Proto Kartvelian **m(a)-*, pra Uralic **mū / *mō*, etc.

After many comparatives and historical linguists' opinion there may exist an *historical connection* between the demonstrative pronoun under study and the personal pronoun *men* 'I'. If so the latter takes part in the *pronominal type of conjugation* peculiar to Turkic and some other Altaic languages. This can be seen in the suffixed pronominal forms – a brief specimen of which follows below (with the verb 'come'):

Kirghiz	Uzbek	Crimean Tatar	Turkish
l - <i>men</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>ben</i>
we - <i>biz</i>	<i>biz</i>	<i>biz</i>	<i>biz</i>
kel-er- <i>min</i>	kel-er- <i>men</i>	gel-er- <i>im</i>	gel-ir- <i>im</i>
(suppositional future)		gel-er- <i>miz</i>	gel-ir- <i>iz</i>
		(habitual)	(habitual)

Note here a varying degree of abbreviation and modification of erstwhile demonstrative and/or personal pronoun.

The 1st person is also of the Nostratic distribution which may be exemplified by, say, Hindi *māi* 'I'. The fact that a bilabial nasal is often present in first person pronouns and/or pronominal endings in many a language of Eurasia that are not (in mainstream linguistics) accepted to be genetically related has been observed a long time ago and this feature has been commented upon on quite a few occasions.

Old Turkic presents many instances of this common ending as a grammatical element in various paradigmatic forms. The following illustrations are taken from [5, number of paragraphs given in Arabic numbers.

- tīm*/ -*tim* 'past tense 1st person sg. 28
- tīmiz*/ -*timiz* 'past tense 1st person pl. 20. 22
- dum*/ -*düm* 'past tense 1st person sg. 20 *confero* with
ben 'pronoun 1st person sg, p. 237 *op. cit.*
- am* 'possessive affix 1st person sg, *locus cit.*
- im* 'the same meaning' 22 *confero* with *bu* 'demonstrative pronoun' 298.
- biz, miz, bän* Old Turkic personal pronouns cited in (Erdal 2004: 10, 22, 99, 123, 144 ff.).

The article-like function of demonstratives is also well-known in general linguistics. This observation holds good especially in the Uralo-Altaic tongues.

To sum things discussed briefly up we may conclude that the OT demonstrative meaning 'this' presents an important item of the core vocabulary, *the etymology of which possesses vast ramifications concerning many aspects of language's main structure.*

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