

Functional and Semantic Characteristic of Marker-N in Turkic Languages

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Abstract

Background: The article presents comparative and historical description of the polysemy and multifunctionality of indicators with formant *-n* that may be found in one or more grammatical groups and are characteristic of agglutinative languages. The semantic unity of the root and affixal morpheme is the basis for the formation of the whole word-building, morphological and inflectional system of the language, whereas the structure of this system reflects the gradual development of affixes. **Methods:** The article focuses on the word-formation potential, as well as the semantics of the abovementioned marker in Old Turkic language, Kazakh language, its dialects and other Turkic languages. The authors also studied how this affix can operate in two or more grammatical groups. The authors consider the role and function of formant *-n* in different lexical and grammatical groups of Kazakh and other Turkic languages. **Findings:** This article analyzes semantic phenomenon caused by this formant. The authors claim that one cannot study the semantics of affixes in Turkic languages in isolation. Since its concept might affect the usage area of a particular lexeme, its tasks, which in its turn somehow changes the meaning of a word. This may refer to word-building, inflectional features, as well as co-occurrence. **Improvements:** The novelty of the proposed method stems from the fact that the conducted research allowed us to describe the linguistic development of suffixes and prefixes which has made it possible to learn more about derivational characters of morphemes evolving from a specific meaning, its wider usage, and an increase in the number of semantic groups where this affix can be found.

Keywords: Affix, Kazakh Language, Suffix, Turkic Languages, Word Formation

1. Introduction

Due to the fact that affixes in Turkic languages can vary a lot, it is sometimes difficult to determine their relationship to each other according to their external shape. In addition, some completely different affixes may resemble each other so much in terms of their phonetics and semantics, that one may get an idea of their genetic relationship.

The linguistic agreement of the stem and bound morpheme is the basis for the formation of the whole word-building, morphological and inflectional system of the language, whereas the gradual development of affixes is reflected in the structure of this system¹.

Evolutionary diversity of the Turkic language suffixes and prefixes is connected with their linguistic development. The modification can be decoded by multifunctionality and multivalence, the wider use of wordforms. Some affixes demonstrate the extension of abstract (generalized) grammatical meanings along with the increasing quantity of connoted words. Multifunctionality and multivalence influence the meanings of the bound morphemes and their relation to some particular groups (derivations, inflections, form-construction, word-combining)².

The function of the same affixes in two or more morphological groups indicates multitasking functionality of agglutinative markers, a certain degree of their freedom,

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reveals other linguistic case typical of the language studied. These grammatical markers include such affixes of modern Kazakh language as *-n*, *-yn*, *-än* // *-en*: 1) *-n*, *-yn*, (*qorgan* 'fortrees', *tiyın* 'cork', 'stopper', *egin* 'planting'); 2) *-än*, *-yn* (*hajuan* 'biest', *zhasulan* 'lad'); 3) *-län*, *-lyn* (*Qobilan* (name of man; *qabilan* 'panther'); 4) *-tän*, *-dyn* (*sirttan* 'male'").

2. Concept Headings

Modern Kazakh linguistics has works which to some extent or another focus on certain formants, describe their functions and grammatical nature. For example, in modern Kazakh word formation suffixes *-n*, *-in*, *-in* *-an*, *-en* are considered as productive affixes (e.g., *qulqun* (*qulıq+in*) 'throat', *qalqan* (*qalqa+n*) 'cart body', *boran* / *buran* / *bögen* / 'water body', *tolqın* 'wave', *ayın* 'stream', *zhjın* 'gathering', *tıjın* 'knot')³. According to modern Kazakh linguists *-yn*, *-in* "combine the verbal stem, form the reflexive pronoun (*žuın* 'wash oneself', *taran* 'comb one's hair', *kjin* 'dress oneself'), some verbs can form nouns (*boran* 'snow-storm', *kelin* 'bride', *žuın* (noun), 'dishwater' – *žuındı*, *qujın* 'whirlwind', *žjın* 'gathering', 'meeting'), some names can form verbs (*kırsın* 'sign', *čegin* 'walk backwards', *talpın* 'be inclined to'), some verbs can create nouns as well as a verb variation (*maqtan* 'boast', or 'brag', "vaunt", *qoryqan* 'protect yourself' and 'protection', *žasırın* - 'conceal oneself' and *žasırın* 'secretly' (adverb). This confirms the multifunctionality and a wide usage of this grammatical phenomenon⁵.

In Old Turkic texts we can find that words with formant *-yn* // *-in* // *-n* were used both to name things and give their characteristics. For example, the word defining objectivity and essential quality *tolun* can be of different parts of speech: 'jailed' and 'a prisoner'⁵. In Kazakh dialects this suffix was used to make words both from nominal and verbal stems. This affix, joining some noun stems, has the diminutive, weakening meaning. For example, in Kazakh dialects when naming the object: *bögen* 'internal wood of the boat'⁶.

3. Methods

A comprehensive study of the linguistic nature of formant *-n* in Kazakh language, its dialects and other Turkic languages was carried out by means of a descriptive method with the elements of analysis and synthesis. We applied

descriptive and historical methods when collecting, classifying and systematizing the linguistic material. Using descriptive method, we sorted linguistic units, to be more exact, the source words and derivatives into categories and types. The historical approach allowed us to examine the processes and show the link between the function of this formant and the history of the development of Kazakh language and Turkic languages in general. The method of analysis enabled us to reveal morphemic composition and structure of the word, grammatical meanings of the element analyzed. The findings of the study can contribute to the development of descriptive morphology, morphemics and word formation. Some conclusions can also be used to study the historical grammar of Kazakh language and comparative historical grammar of Turkic languages. The practical significance of this study stems from the fact that this paper can be used when creating general and specific dictionaries, as well as doing research on morphemics and word formation.

4. Results

4.1 Semantic Paradigm of Formant-n

Formant *-n* (*-an* // *-en*, *-in*, *-in*), used in both simple and complex elements, is characterized by various semantics.

For example, when expressing the objectivity: the noun forming element *-än* // *-yn*, *-in*), has the diminutive and augmentative semantics, which can be illustrated by the following: *başyan* 'big fish', *evran* 'upper world' < *ev* 'part of the skies', *inän* 'she-camel' < *in* // *en* 'before, front', *oglan* 'lad', *ärän* 'cattle yard'; 1) 'horse 2) 'cavity', '. In Kazakh regional languages: *zyryn* 'cup', *kysryn* 'large cup', *čıyan* 'steppe', as a grammatical word: *typ-tän* ~ (*dialog*) 'strongly'. Used as an adjective: *zhalgan* 'wrong', 'misleading' (*zhalgan kiši* 'deceiver'), *zhämän* 'ugly' < *zhäm* 'mud.

In addition to that, formants *-än* // *-yn* in the Kazakh language *pičen* 'straw' < *pič* 'grow ripe', *kızen* 'ferret', *qulan* 'moose' possess a common root. The Kazakh formants *-än* // *-yn* belong to the formants that cannot form words anymore. Its word-formation function is limited: *-in* // *-in* *-n*: *žau+in* 'rain', *kelin* 'daughter-in-law', *qıjın* (< *qıjyan*) 'heavy rain', *ayın* 'current', *boran* 'snow storm'. It is just that the marker *-n* in most cases reflects not an action characteristic, but notion. For instance, it names an activity: *tolqın* 'motion', *pichen* 'hay', *tiyın*

'stopper'; qarqin (dialect) < 'sheepshearing time', egin 'planting', žjin 'harvesting', žauin 'shower'; the agent of the process: kalin 'the wife of one's son', t̡tin 'smog'; denoting the result or the object: t̡jin 'knot', 'seed bud', žalin 'flame', sauin 'milking animals'⁷.

Suffix *-n* in Old Turkic defined the importance and result of the activities, for example: tiğin 'cork', 'stopper' < tik 'close', 'plug', qiğin 'punishment' < qiy 'cut', 'kill'⁸. In a few cases one can see forms with the qualitative semantics: jaşurun 'secretly' < jaşur 'hide', adin 'other', 'alien' < ad- ~ au//aj as a verb 'share', 'alienate', ytyñ 'disgraceful' < yt 'indignity', chygan 'inferior', zhakyn 'near', zhelbin 'supernatural' < zhelb 'heave', 'quiver', ortun 'middle', oyin 'other' < oy - 'fade', tözüñ 'enduring', utun 'harmful', 'bad'; a pronoun: tükiñ 'complete, entire, whole', an adverb jchin 'among', ichtin 'into, intra, within', kedün 'later', jazun 'before summer', kuzun 'before autumn', Kazakh erten, Mongolian erten, Khalkha ert, ertiñ 'tomorrow', Kazakh žasirin, Bashkir jaşeren 'secretly'.

In modern Kazakh language, within nominal words where the root and affix can hardly be distinguished, we can still identify formants *-an//en, -n*. For example, qaiñ (mal) 'bride-money' < qat 'thicken, solidify' > qatın 'wife, woman, qaj 'what' > qajin 'husband's relatives to a wife and the other way around' > qal-in-diğ 'bride', žuan 'fat, overweight' < ž̡u+an, joy > joyan 'thick', ̡lken 'big, tos-in 'unexpected' < tos 'new, unfamiliar'⁹. Ancient Turkic word uzan 'chanter, story-teller' (< uz 'practical, experienced') qarın < qar 'womb, only-begotten', 'stomach, qojin < qoj 'pocket, embrace, erin < er 'edge, plane, miqin < miq// b̡k 'side'⁵.

4.2 Ancient Formants *-an* and *-aŋ* (with Phonetic Variants)

In Kazakh language marker *-n*, part of a complex affix *-lan*, can be found in a small number of nouns, mainly those denoting wild animals. Formant *-lan* consists of connected markers *-la + n* that form verbs with the semantics of frequency.

Kazakh *sirttan* < *sirtta* 'estrangle oneself, move away', in ancient Turkic and Turkish languages *sirit* 'hold a grudge, sneer, bare the teeth', Kazakh *qabilan*, Turkish *kaplan*, Turkmen *gapan*, Old Turkic *qaplan* 'leopard, tiger', Tatar *kaplan* 'leopard', Uzbek *qoplon* 'panther, leopard' < *gopla ~ kapla* – Old Turkic 'catch, grab', Kazakh *aristan*, Bashkir *arışlan*, Kirghiz *arstan*, Uzbek *arşlon*, Azerbaijani *aşlan*, Tuvinian *arşilan*, Chuvash

arışlan 'lion' etc. Some researchers believe that the basis of this word is a derivative verb (*arşla-*, *arşilda*, *arş* – onomatopoeic word). B. Sagyndykuly points out that the formation of words from a combination of an adjective *arşal* 'red', 'chestnut' with the word *-lan* 'dog'¹⁰. The emergence of the word *sirttan* meaning 'wild beast that is outside' (or Old Turkic *sirt* 'height, ascent', 'noble animal', may be related to the meaning of the word *qabilan qap // qau* – 'beast that bites', Old Turkic *qap* 'bite' or with words *qau* 'unmowed dried thick grass, qauyadağ 'big as a bucket' (about a head). As for the formants, then *-il* is the formant that bears the concept of an adjective, while *-n* – that of a nominal. E.V. Sevortyan attributes affix *-lan* to formant *-j(an)*¹¹.

Formants of Turkic languages *-n* and *-än />(-zhän)* *-län* form denominatives with different meanings: 1) naming a location: *aklan* 'gutter to drain rainwater from the tent' < *-aq* – 'flow', in dialects 'irrigation ditch', 'riverbed', 'river', 'gully', 'stream'. *̡alan* 'stony, rocky place' < *kala* 'rock'; 2) naming a feature, an attribute: *baylan* 'pampered', 'capricious' < *bay* 'rich'; 3) names the weakening attribute: *aklan* 'whitish' 4) bears diminutive meaning: *arklan* 'groove'.

Variant *-n//an, -en, -in//in* of this element forms derivatives with different meanings. For instance, *tozaŋ/tozun* 'pollen', 'grain', *kölün* 'levee', *qatiñ* 'crocery', 'vase', *ölän* 'grass' < *öl* 'moist', *täjin* 'squirrel'. It also shapes words with the meaning of an adjective: *tüzän* (urtum *tüzän*) 'straight, direct', *yälin kün* "windy day". In Kazakh dialects: *mazaŋ* 'restless', *qolaŋ* (čaç) 'long braid' < Old Turkic *qol-* 'branch', *soran* 'quagmire'. Cf.: (standard) *sibaj* – 'single', (dialect) *auan* – 'naive', 'gullible' etc. It can reflect a slight weakening of the attribute: Kaz. *žasan* (dialect *žasamal* 'younger', *masaŋ* 'bright in the eye', *öleŋ* (čöp) ~ 'withering grass', *k̡reŋ* (*qara*), 'darkish', *tosañ* 'fail to hear', *ojaŋ* 'cavity'¹².

According to N.K. Dmitriyev sound *̡* (*ŋ*) is older than sonorous *h* (*n*). The letter *̡* was in usage till XIV century, later substituted for *-h*¹³.

Formant *-an//in* in complex affixes *-čan, -čaŋ//san* expressed different parts of speech, whereas in Kazakh it is used for adjectives: Old Turkic notion: *zhemchan* 'Artemisia'¹⁴. As an adjective: *čevšän* 'short-sighted', *eryñceŋ* 'untidy', *ayançaŋ* 'dedicated'. Kazakh regional languages have: *̡jalçaŋ* 'blushful', (standard) *žajsañ* 'honorable' (Old Turkic *zhai* – 'stretch' *tiseŋ* 'carnivorous', as an adverb *čapçaŋ* 'speedy', *alaŋ-qulaŋ* 'restless'.

As constitutive part of augmentative phrase: *eresen* 'large', 'enormous', with diminutive meaning: *chekun* 'baby gopher', *örtän* 'sparkle' < *ört* 'flame'. In addition, along with formant *-en// -en*, we may find it is used with collective and multiple meaning. For example: Kaz. (dialect) *čöp-čalan* 'grass', *öse-ajan* 'gossip'.

These linguistic examples prove that old formants *-än// -ēn -yn// -in* and *-än// -yn -in// -in* possess similarities in terms of meanings and word-building potential. affixes used in Kazakh dialects are characterized by frequent alternation of *-n* and *-ŋ*: standard *öleŋ* – dialect *öleŋ* 'song', standard *ajqaj-sŋren*, *sŋrgin* – dialect *sŋren* 'fuss', 'clatter and chatter', standard *sılan* – dialect *sılan* 'coquette', standard *qalıŋ* – dialect *qalıŋ* 'dense, thick'.

4.3 Formant -n Bearing the Function of Diminutive and Augmentative Meaning

A.M. Scherbak believes that variants *qoj // qon // qoç* (*a*) that can be found in the 14th century texts in the form *qojun* date back to the word *qoç*. The prototype of *koš* was the word *košun*, while formant *-un* is a morphological element with diminutive meaning¹⁵. One should also consider the use of the word *kiči* in Ugric language and some languages of Turkic people *kičin // kečen*: inhabitants of Hungary use *kichin/* 'little', 'tiny', 'short'. The formants *-ch, -in* have the diminutive meaning like in Kazakh *kiui*, Bashkir *käsē* 'junior', Chuvash *kezhen* 'insignificant', 'delicate', where *-n/en* appears in *kichin // kezhen* as an auxiliary diminutive meaning¹⁶.

The alternative *-än* of markers *-n, -yn, -in* was used as an affix denoting an individual augmentative meaning (Old Turkic, Chuvash *avtan* – *teč* 'rooster' < *ata* 'father', *la-ken* 'big', *la-n* 'a boy', *üzä-n* 'stream', *ätän tuje* 'camel', *arstan* 'lion', *qabilan* 'leopard'). The linguistic data prove *-č// -s* with diminutive semantics can be used as augmentatives *anaš* 'big grandma', 'mum', Yakut *atas* – 'friend', 'mate', Kazakh *teč* (*ata+č*), Tatar *tš*, Bashkir – *tš* 'rooster', Kazakh *keŋ-is(tik)* 'space'.

Zajāczkowski classifies *-an, -un* in the examples *l-an* < *og-l-an* 'adolescent', *äl-än* 'humans', *jigit äl-än* 'youth, youngsters', *er-än* 'adult male', *z-än* 'stream' as markers with diminutive meaning: *zhemšen* 'mountain vegetation' < *zhemiš* (*žemis*) 'plant'¹⁷. E.V. Sevortyan supports this idea: *zhanyŋ* 'sparkle', *qülün* 'colt', *älyn* 'metope' < *al* 'grasp', Turkmen *ödyn* 'woods, fuel' < *od* 'flames', *orun* 'place' < *or* 'hole, height'. The researcher believes that *(-e)n* in the word *özen* 'river' bears not

diminutive, but rather augmentative meaning. Indeed, let us compare: *öz* – 'spring', 'well' *z-än* – 'stream' (a lot of water)¹¹.

That points out that during the Old Turkic period marker *-n* was used as a formant with plural meaning: Turkic word *ärän* 'male', *tor-an* 'chain of nets', *uz-en* 'deepest', *bodu-n* 'state', *oy (u)l-an* 'offspring'¹⁸ Formant *-(a)n* in the word *oylan* 'a boy' to an old non-productive plural ending¹⁹. While K. Grønbech gives the meaning of the word *oylan* as 'a boy', 'an adolescent', Kazakh word *lan* has the identical meaning. Besides, Kazakh has augmentative semantics (e.g., boys over 13 years old who reached a certain degree of maturity are called *lan*).

The elements of the plural semantics, collectivity of marker *-n* can be found in the structure of collective numerals, preserved from ancient times. Old Turkic era did not have the form *-ayu*, but the form of substantivated numeral (*šg* 'threesome') *-ayun*. A.N. Kononov represents the phonemic development of this affix as follows: *-ayun*. > *-g* *n-ayu* > *-g*, while F. Iskhakov believes it was *-yun* > *-yu* > *-vi* > *-v* > *-u* > *-*^{20,21}. A.T. Gulyamov relates them to affixes with additional subjective meaning²².

Therefore, on the one hand, in Turkic languages diminutive and augmentative meanings are often carried by subjective affixes, and on the other hand, one should not forget that these subjective elements, according to N.Z. Gadzhieva and B.A. Serebrennikov, appeared first in the language and later became the basis for the formation of the affixes with plural meaning²³. Therefore, if we look at the element's *(-a)n* ability to bear diminutive meaning parallel to the augmentative and plural ones and also be part of the indivisible stem – word-forming meanings, – we may see the interchange that occurred between the primary and secondary meanings evolving later. It can be stated that over time the qualities such as polysemy, multifunctionality, multivalence gradually disappeared and remained only in the semantics of different affixes in a greater or smaller extent.

4.4 Evolution of Element -n in the Word žiren

The word *zhiren* 'red', in Kazakh denotes an adjective (Old Turkic *zhigren jqlq*), in Altai place names (*zhigren jqlq*), denotes not only a horse color, but can also name other objects and phenomena: *jeepen köl* (*köl* 'lake'), *jeereen oj* (*oj* 'thought').

The noun *žire* (*saryilt*) 'red', 'chestnut' initially denoted the horse color. Later it was borrowed by Mongolian language as *cegere* (zoological) 'roedeer' where it marked the name of an animal and its color. After that, the word *cegerde*, returning to Turkic language, developed in the following way and received the meanings: in Khakass *šigren* 'chestnut' (color), in Altai *jeeren* 'roedeer', *jeeren* 'chestnut', 'red', in Tuvian *šeeren*, 'anthelope', in Kirgiz *žeerde at* 'chestnut horse', *žeerde saqal* 'red whiskers', in Chuvashia *suren*, in Yakutia *suär*, Mongolian *ulaan*. *zeerd* 'ruddy red', in Buryat *zeerdehen* (diminutive meaning) 'reddish', *zeerdečeg* 'gingery' etc. Räsänen traces the etymology of the word *žiren* in : *iegyr-en* (*üäzur-en*) *zhigren* (*jegren*)¹⁴, according to V.I. Tsintsius the word has two parts: a stem (*ze*) and a suffix (*-c//s*)²⁴. Besides, the word *zegde* in Manchu-Tungus meaning 1) 'burn', 2) (fig.) 'red-den', 3) 'to warm' reveal the traces of ancient semantic relations between the words *qizil* 'red' – *kireñ* 'dark chestnut' – *žanu* 'burn' – *žiren* 'red'.

5. Discussion

The affix *-(n)* is used with an augmentative idea more than diminutive one: *z-yn* 'long' < Old Turkic *zaz* < *z+a*, *lk-en* 'big' < Old Turkic *luy+en* < *li*. Besides, Kazakh *boj-ča-ñ* 'tall', *Taučan* ~ *Taučen* (a proper name), *qolan* < *qol-añ* ~ ('long', 'thick', 'twisted', *körči-qol-añ* 'neighbors' (collective), *qart-añ* < 'retired' etc. The Old Turkic word *oñыл // ñл* is extended with diminutive affixes *-čiq // -qač // -qina*, *-šaq*, *-š*, *-aq* etc. In Turkic languages diminutive meaning is expressed mainly with formants *-qač*, *-čaq*, *-iq*, *-č*, *-qan*, while marker *-n* is quite rarely used with diminutive semantics: Altai *ulšaqaç* 'boy', Khakas *olaqas* 'boy'; Turkmen *oqlañjik* 'boy', Altai *olaš*, Tuvian *олак*, *oñqač* 'adolescent'. The same affix can have different meanings, and perform multiple functions, this can be explained by its old age and polysemy. These phenomena also include stability of certain affixes, and well-established ways of representing their meaning and information²⁵.

Later this augmentative meaning and collectivity formed affixes used in derivative adjectives (*z-in*, *ortan*, *žařin*, *qj-in*, *bñ-tin*) and degrees of comparison of adjectives (*boz-añ*). Thus, the extension of the semantics of formant *-n// -ñ* led to widening of its functions.

The increasing complexity of an old plural form *-Xn* results in the development of diverse versions of a mor-

pheme, i.e. combination of derived, additional meanings of overall markers of multitude (collectivity, actions, objectivity, attitude, quality, diminutives evolving from the weakening of forms). This emerges a wide range of affixes. This is confirmed, for example, by the fact that the words with formants *-n -in// -in/-an-en* in the Old Turkic period bore plural, augmentative, diminutive, objective meanings, performed the function of an adverb, as well as they expressed quality and weakening of an attribute. Moreover, we can see how the same form is sometimes used in a parallel way, as different parts of speech.

Consequently, the above mentioned morphemes (*-n*, *-Xn*, *-lXn*, *-tXn*, *-dXn*) are elements of various lexemes whose ancient marker consisted of one consonant and which later split into semantic groups.

6. Conclusion

The examples analyzed as part of research on the semantic evolution of Turkic affixes allowed us to conclude the following. The semantic evolution of affixes, led: firstly, to the evolution from a specific meaning of a particular affix to a generalized morphological meaning; then, to the wider usage of the affix, a bigger number of semantic groups where it is used. Such an expansion of the affixes use, as well as a qualitative change in their meaning that occurred during the transition from one group to another, made it possible to use this affix in different parts of speech. Besides, the affix development included the change of words from one category to another.

Semantic affixes cannot be studied independently. The meaning affects the usage of this morpheme, whereas its function changes the meaning. This may refer to derivational, inflectional functions, as well as the function of word-combination.

The main models of developing multifunctionality include the transition of derivational affixes into the category of inflections, and vice versa, inflectional affixes – into the category of derivational affixes or the affixes combining words. These transition processes are based on the semantic evolution of affixes, expanding the scope of their use, lexicalization of word forms with any affix, sometimes the formation of figurative meaning. We would like to point out the transformation of affixes from one category to another with the help of syncretic forms.

Thus, we conducted a comprehensive examination of the functional-semantic characteristic of formant *-n* in

Kazakh and other Turkic languages. Nevertheless, some issues regarding this linguistic phenomenon require further study. In the future, we would like to carry out further detailed research on the functional-semantic feature of element *-n* by comparing Kazakh language with one particular language of the Turkic family, that is, with Bashkir language.

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