THE PASSIVE MORPHEME IN KAZAKH

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ABSTRACT

As it is the case for some other Turkic languages, the so-called passive morpheme -l in Kazakh has two different functions. One function of it is to make a verb passive and the other function is to mark a transitive verb as intransitive. The fact that some sporadic verb forms in Kazakh marked with two passive morphemes, namely -l and –n, and also that the morpheme cluster –lXn is utilized to derive passive and intransitive verb stems in Old and Middle Turkic (Middle Turkic is represented here with Divan ü Lügati't Türk) suggest that once existed two separate morphemes, namely -l and -n (which can be argued that it is represented by -lXn in OT and MT) for passivizing and intransitivizing verbs. In later stages of the language, however, as we find in Kazakh (and also in Turkish and other Turkic languages) these two separate functions have been collapsed into one and carried out by a single morpheme, i.e., the so called passive morpheme -l.

Key Words: Kazakh, Old Turkic, Middle Turkic, passive, intransitive

ÖZET

Diğer bazı Türk dillerinde olduğu gibi Kazakçada da edilgenlik eki olarak adlandırılan –l ekinin iki ayrı işlevi bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan birincisi eylemi edilgenleştirmek, ikincisi ise geçişli eylemlerden geçişsiz eylemler yapmaktır. Nadir olarak, Kazakçada bazı fiil gövdelerinin edilgenlik eki olarak adlandırılan –l ve –n eklerinin her ikisini de bulundurması ve ayrıca–lXn birleşik morfeminin Eski ve Orta Türkçede hem edilgen ve hem de geçişsiz fiil gövdeleri türetmede sıkça kullanılması bir zamanlar edilgenlik ve geçişsizlik için kullanılan –l ve –n olmak üzere iki ayrı ekin varlığını düşündürmektedir. Türk dilinin sonraki dönemlerinde ise bu farklı eklerle ifade edilen iki ayrı işlev, yani edilgenlik ve geçişsizlik birleşerek Kazakçada olduğu gibi tek bir ekle, yani edilgenlik eki olan –l ile ifade edilmeye başlanmış olmalıdır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kazakça, Eski Türkçe, Orta Türkçe, edilgenlik, geçişsizlik

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The voice in general affects the verb valency which connects the nominal structures and the verb. According to the Projection Principle in Generative Grammar, the argument structure of a verb is determined at the level of lexicon. Later on, they are projected on to d-structure (i.e., deep structure) by the theta criterion where they acquire their first syntactic realization (Sezer, 1991). In this respect, the voice is a syntactic process whether or not it accompanies the morphological projections in individual languages[1].

There are different views regarding how passives are derived at surface structure. According to the theory developed in Relational Grammar, it is done by 2-to-1 advancement rule which moves object to subject position[2]. This movement is constrained by the rule according to which only one argument can advance to the subject position.

Another hypothesis states that since the predicates are not strictly subcategorized for the external arguments, as opposed to internal ones, the external argument position, i.e., the subject position may have no theta role. Thus, passive structures are explained as the absorption of the external theta role by the passive morphology (The original idea belongs to O. A. Jaeggli as stated in Taneri's work) (Taneri, 1993:14).

As it is the case for other Turkic languages, in Kazakh the voice is implemented through verbal inflection. For this purpose, deverbal derivational morphemes are used. The true passive voice in Kazakh is marked on a verb as *-(I)l* (*-(I)n* after the consonant *l*) and original object of the sentence at deep structure becomes the surface subject.

example: Khat   zhaz   -ıl   -dı

    letter   write   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

'The letter was written.'

Birzhan khat   -tı   zhaz   -dı

    B.   letter   ACC   write   Past T

'Birzhan wrote the letter.'

The agentive subject which is suppressed by the passive structure rarely surface in ablative case (and in some cases in instrumental case) as in:

Aqın **Birzhan**   **-nan**   zheng -il   -di

ABL   defeat   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

'Aqın was defeated by Birzhan.'

In this paper, we are going to suggest that although the deverbal morpheme *-(I)l-* is addressed as passive voice marker in a substantial part of the linguistic literature related to Kazakh language (see Isqaqov 1991 and Khasenova 1959, for instance), passivizing sentences is not the only function it carries out. This should be obvious at first glance of the following sample sentences:

asıl-   a Et   as   -ıl   ıp   zhat   -ır

meat   hang   PASS Pres. Ger. Aux. (progress.) Aorist

'The meat is hanging.'

b Bul   köterilis -te   köp   adam   as   -ıl   -dı

   this   revolt   DAT   many   man   hang   PASS Past T

   'Many men were hanged in this revolt.'

buwıl-   a Tamagı   buw -ıl   -ıp   söyle   -y   al

throat strangle PASS Pres. Ger.   speak Pres. Ger.   manage

ma   -dı

Neg   Past T

'Something got stuck into his throat (i.e., He choked), and he couldn't
          speak.'

b Zhük   -ter   buw   -ıl   ıp   bit -ti

   load   Plur   tie   PASS Pres Ger   end Past T

   'The load was tied completely.'

zhazıl- a Biz "Pravda" gazet -i   -ne   zhaz -ıl   -dı - k

   we   paper 3rd Per Poss DAT write PASS Past T 1st prs
          Plur

'We subscribed to the newspaper 'Pravda'.'

b Khat   zhaz   -ıl   -dı

  letter write   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

  'The letter was written.'

zhayıl-   a Kir   zhay   -ıl   -dı

  stain   spread PASS Past T (3rd prs sing)

  'The stain spread.'

b Tösek   zhay   -ıl   -dı

  bed   spread   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

  'The bed was unfolded/made.'

zharıl-   a Shölmek   eki   -ge   zhar   -ıl   -dı

  container   two   DAT   split   PASS Past T (3rd prs sing)

  'The container split in two.'

 b Otın   zhar   -ıl   -dı

        wood   chop   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

'The wood was chopped.'

zhinal-   a Munda zholdas   -tar   zhina -l   -dı

  here   fellow   Plur   gather PASS   Past T

  'The fellows gathered here.'

b Astıq zhıyna -l   -dı

  grain   gather PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

  'The grain/crop was gathered.'

Looking at the examples above, one can see that sentences of type **a** are different than type **b**. The significant difference between the two is that type **a** sentences are non- passives whereas type **b** sentences have true passive meaning with implied agents. However, one thing common to the

two types of sentences is that they are all intransitives. Now, let us look at another group of sentences which have more than one reading.

a Yesik   ash   -ıl   -dı

  door   open PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

  1. 'The door opened.'

  2. 'The door was opened (by somebody).'

b Alma -nıng   tileg -i   orında -l   -dı

  Alma GEN   wish 3rd prs. Poss place PASS Past T (3rd prs)

  1. 'Alma's wish came true/took place.'

  2. 'Alma's wish was made true.'

c Bir ay -dan zhumıs ayaqta   -l   -a   dı

  one month ABL work finish   PASS Present T 3rd prs sing

  1. 'The work will end in a month.'

  2. 'The work will be finished in a month.'

d Un   shash -ıl   -dı

  flour spill   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

  1. 'The flour spilt.'

  2. 'The flour was spilt by somebody.'

e Tereze   zhab -ıl   -dı

  window   close   PASS Past T (3rd prs sing)

  1. 'The window closed.'

  2. 'The window was closed (by somebody).'

The second group of sentences is ambiguous. We can get two readings: One of them is the intransitive reading. This function is called 'non-passive' by Leonard Babby[3], and "derived intransitive" by Sezer[4]. The other reading is the passive one. That's because the so-called passive morpheme is a bi-functional one in Kazakh.

According to Leonard Babby the passive morpheme in Turkish and in many other languages are used to reduce the basic valency of the verb by

leaving the agent out which follows a similar pattern as the intransitivizing -*sja* suffix in Russian (see note 3.) In a way, this is a plausible suggestion for the function of Kazakh passive as well since both readings of the 2nd group of sentences are derived from the transitive verbs by reducing their valency.

The bi-functionality of the passive morpheme in Kazakh, as displayed here, may suggest the possible existence of collapsing or merging of two separate morphemes, namely morphemes of intransitivity and passive.

Tietze states that "Turkish does not usually allow the shift from transitive to intransitive function of a single verb form, which so often occurs in English (e.g., *I broke the glass / The glass broke*)". Let's look at a few examples from Turkish in order to see whether Turkish has the similar case of ambiguous sentences as Kazakh does:

Yara   aç   -ıl   -dı

wound   open   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

1 'The wound opened.'

2 'The wound was opened (by the doctor).'

Tel   bük   -ül   -dü

wire   bend   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

1. 'The wire twisted.'

2. 'The wire was bent.'

Pencere aç   -ıl   -ma   -dı

window   open   PASS   Neg   Past T (3rd prs sing)

1. 'The window didn't open.'

2. 'The window wasn't opened.'

Again we have the similar ambiguity in Turkish examples that we had in Kazakh. Once the transitive verbs of the sample sentences are affixed with the passive morpheme, they acquire both passive and intransitive meanings. According to Tietze, this ambiguity is limited to some verbs and can be removed by providing a context for them. He calls the non-passive function of the passive suffix as 'medio-reflexive' and ascribes the non-passive 2nd readings of the sentences above to the sentences with non-human subjects (Tietze, 1989:286). Defining whether those certain group of verbs in Turkish and in Kazakh also is **unaccusative** requires further analysis which is not going to be pursued here.

Normally Kazakh does not allow doubly marked passives in personal passives. Nevertheless, sporadically, some verbs may carry double passive morphemes, even though the second so called passive morpheme does not bring any change to the meaning of the passive sentence:

bayqa-	'to notice, be aware'	>	bayqa-l-	'to be noticed'
zertte-	'to make a search'	>	zertte-l-	'to be searched'
zhe-	'to eat'	>	zhe-y-il-	'to be eaten'
de -	'to say'	>	de-y-il-	'to be said'
bayla-	'to tie'	>	bayla-n-ıl	'to be noticed'

When take double passive suffixes, the same verb stems become:

zhe-l-in-: Et   zhe   **-l**   **-in**   -ip   sorpa ish -il   -di

meat   eat   PASS PASS Past GER soup drink PASS Past T

'The meat was eaten, and the soup was drunk.' (literally)

'People ate meat and drank soup.'

de-l-in-: Ot   zhag   -ıl   -sın   de   **-l** **-in**   -di

fire burn PASS 3rd prs imp say PASS PASS Past T (3rd prs sing)

'It was told to set the fire.'

bayqa-l-ın-   Osı   zhaz   -gan   barsha söz -den bayqa **-l**

                        that   write   Past Participle   all   word

ABL   notice   PASS

-ın   -ar   bar   shın   -ım

PASS   Aorist whole truth   1st prs poss.

'My all truth is to be noticed from all my writings.'

bayla-n-ıl-   At   bayla **-n**   **-ıl**-   dı

             horse   tie   PASS   PASS   Past T (3rd prs sing)

             'The horse was tied.'

Those verbs carrying double passive morpheme seem to be the frozen forms which are not very productive in Kazakh for the time being. Although we find two passive morphemes attached to the verb stems in the sentences above, the second passive does not have any syntactic projection, nor does it have any semantic significance. The verb valency changes only once.

Marcel Erdal draws attention to some vocative forms in Old Turkic which, probably are relevant to the frozen forms in Kazakh and Turkish, but are more productive in Old Turkic.[5] He states that, in Old Turkic, two formatives, namely *-(I)l* and *-(I)n* combine together as *-lXn-* without having the initial vowel of the first one. Although he makes no comment regarding the isolated functions of those two morphemes combining into one, he categorizes it together with the passive morpheme *-l* and what he calls the medial, reflexive and anti-transitive *-n* of Old Turkic. He further argues that this suffix cannot be treated as a sequence of –l and –n suffixes, but should be considered as the combination of the two. The suffix *-lXn* combines only with transitive verb stems, and the verbs marked with it may take either passive or intransitive meaning (or both) as illustrated by the following examples:

in Old Turkic:

suq- >   suq-lun- 'to get stuck into something'

tik- >   tik-lin- 'to be placed, or place oneself vertically'

tök- >   tök-lün- 'to pour out, ooze out'

üz- >   üz-lün-   'to break of a rope'

yet- >   yet-lin-   'to disappear'

yuq- >   yuq-lun- 'to be polluted of filth, to adhere'

in DLT:

aç- >   aç-lın-   'to open (int.)'

bog- >   bog-lun- 'to choke'

bög- >   bög-lün- 'of water, to be stagnant' (Erdal, 1991:642)

He states, on the other hand, that the passive suffix in Old Turkic is *-(I)l-* , and this suffix often has 'anti-transitive' meaning as it is evident in the following examples:

passive

biti-l-   'to be written'

buz-ul-   'to be spoiled'

bil-il-   'to be known'

çöz-ü-l-   'to fall apart, to be dispersed'

anti-transitive

aç-ıl-   'to open' (intr)

es-il-   'to diminish' (intr)

ävri-l   'to turn, revolve, turn back'

In addition to the sporadically encountered verb stems carrying double passive morphemes as discussed above, the data from Old Turkic may suggest that the double functions, namely the passivizing and intransitivizing functions of the so-called passive morpheme *-l* have existed in the older stages of the Turkic languages. However, the existence of a separate morpheme cluster , namely *-lXn-* which is mostly used as anti-transitive leads us into thinking that two separate forms of anti- transitive, supposedly *-(I)n-*, and passive *-(I)l-* collapsed or even merged into one form in time causing the passive suffix undertake both functions.

We may further conclude that the Old Turkic and the contemporary Turkic languages like Kazakh are representing the continuing stages of that development. The sporadic concrete forms, such as 'zhelin-' and 'delin-' and others in Kazakh should be taken as evidence to confirm the existence of such a distinction of passive and anti-transitive in older stages.

NOTES:

1. Whether or not passive structures are the products of syntactic or lexical level in Kazakh is not the focus of this paper. However, in her article 'A case for Emerging Functional Categories', Kornfilt compares Old Turkic of 8th century to Modern Turkish in order to see if those languages have syntactic passives structures or passives at all. She concludes that OT does not have passives but only "middles", since the functional categories (such as IP's) are not fully developed in OT period. According to her conclusion, Modern Turkish, which she sees a closely related dialect of Old Turkic, if not a direct descendent, has developed those categories over time and possessed syntactic passives accordingly (Kornfilt, 1991:30).

2. Sezer suggests that passive verbs are derived in lexicon by suppressing the external argument of a verb. They also lose their ability to assign accusative case to their internal arguments. He also takes Burzio's generalization as the base according to which "a verb which lacks an external argument fails to assign accusative case" as the syntactic motivation of passives (Sezer, 1991:55).

3. Babby regards the external argument position as the "empty" position and filled by the transformation that moves the contents of the direct object NP into the subject NP. This is a syntactic operation, and in the case of Turkish, the suffix

-il is added to the basic transitive stem to mark its syntactically derived intransitivity. Both the passive formations and derived intransitives are done by the same syntactic means that were explained above.

It follows that passive is a derived intransitive too, but apart from the plain derived intransitives, passives have passive agents with adverbial morphology which surfaces optionally, crucially, by "lexical insertion" and not by "transformation" (Babby, 1981:4).

4. The parallel sentences in Turkish are examined by Sezer.

e.g. a) Ali kapı-yı   aç-   tı

       door Acc.   open   PAST T (3 prs sing)

   "Ali opened the door."

   b) Kapı   aç-   ıl-   dı

      door   open   PASS   PAST T (3 prs sing)

     "The door opened."

According to those examples, Sezer states that the sentences are ambiguous between the passive and intransitive readings. In the first sentence, the verb "open" is transitive and selects an external argument, whereas in the second one, the verb is intransitive and selects only an internal argument, which occupies the object position. For the passive reading, we find an agent in the place of external argument which is suppressed by the passive structure. The agent may optionally surface as adjunct (that is, as "by phrase") in the surface structure, or does not surface at all. For the derived intransitive reading, there is an external argument, which is not "agent", but a "cause" as illustrated as follows:

   a) Rüzgar kapı- yı   aç-   tı

           wind   door ACC   open   PAST T (3 prs sing)

       'The wind opened the door.'

   b) Kapı rüzgar- dan   ac-   ıl-   dı

     door wind   ABL   open   PASS   PAST T (3 prs sing)

     'The door was opened by the wind.'

In a way, the contrast between the passive and the derived intransitive readings is explained by the sort of the theta role that is assigned to the external argument and the suppression of the external argument in both structures. In both readings, the verb is unable to assign accusative case to its internal argument and thus the internal argument has to move to subject position in order to acquire a case.

5. In Turkish the *-l* form of the passive suffix is not allowed after vowels and the consonant *l*. That is the reason why we do not have the *-(I)l +(I)n* sequence, but the reverse order of what we have in Kazakh.

ABBREVIATIONS:

ABL: ablative

ACC: accusative

Aux: auxiliary

DAT: dative

DLT: Divan ü Lügati't Türk

imp: imperative

intr: intransitive

MT: Middle Turkic

Neg: negative

OT: Old Turkic

PASS: passive

prs: person

Plur: plural

poss: possessive

Pres. Ger: present gerund

sing: singular

T: tense

tr: transitive

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