Düysenâli Âbdîlâşîm. Eski Kazak jazba tili
[The Old Kazakh written language]
(Beijing, 2015. 230 pages)

Jumabay Uldanay, Institute of Empirical Linguistics, Goethe University (Frankfurt am Main); jumabai.uldabay@gmail.com

The paper presents a review of Düysenâli Âbdîlâşîm's monograph "The Old Kazakh Written Language" ("Eski Kazak Jazba Tili"), which is written in Kazakh and published in Beijing in 2014. The monograph is a linguistic description of the documents of the Kazakh Khanates written in the period from the first half of the 18th century until the early 19th century. The Old Kazakh documents were mostly written by Kazakh Khans and Sultans and sent to Chinese emperors of the Qing dynasty and to officials in charge of the border. Currently all the documents are preserved in the First Historical Archives of China in Beijing. The monograph is designed as a manual for university students studying Kazakh philology. The significance of the book lies in its being the first and only book providing a comprehensive linguistic description of the Old Kazakh historical documents. The monograph is divided into three chapters. The phonetics and writing system of the Old Kazakh documents are studied in the first chapter. Chapter 2 investigates the nominal morphology, in which five word classes: nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals, and function words have been discussed. The last chapter presents lexical terms for temporal units. The review provides a short description of all chapters and points out that the usage of the term "Turki" is more appropriate for defining the language of the presented documents than the term "Old Kazakh Written Language", since it manifests prevalence of non-Kazakh features.

Keywords: Old Kazakh Written Language, Modern Kazakh language, Old Kazakh documents, Qing Dynasty, Kazakh Khanate, phonetics, morphology, word classes

DÜYSENÂLİ ÂBDİLÂŞİM. ESKİ KAZAK JAZBA TILI
[ДЮЙСЕНАЛИ АБДУЛАШИМ. СТАРОКАЗАХСКАЯ ПИСЬМЕННОСТЬ]
(ПЕКИН, 2015. 230 С.)

Улданай Жумабай, Институт эмпирической лингвистики Университета имени И. В. Гёте (Франкфурт-на-Майне);
jumabai.uldabay@gmail.com

В работе представлен обзор монографии Дюйсенали Абдулашима (Düysenâli Âbdîlâşîm) «Староказахская письменность» ("Eski Kazak Jazba tili"), написанной на казахском языке и опубликованной в Пекине в 2014 г. Монография представляет собой лингвистическое описание документов казахских ханств, написанных в период с первой половины XVIII в. и до начала XIX в. Староказахские эпистолярные документы являются письмами, написанными казахскими ханами и султанами и отправленными китайским императорам династии Цин и ответственным за границу чиновникам. В настоящее время все документы хранятся в Первом Историческом архиве Китая в Пекине. Монография предназначена в качестве учебного пособия для студентов вузов, изучающих казахскую филологию. Ее значимость обусловлена тем, что она является первой и единственной книгой, дающей полное лингвистическое описание староказахских исторических документов. Монография разделена на три большие главы. В первой главе изучается фонетика и система письменности староказахских документов. Во второй главе исследуется морфология именных частей речи, среди которых выделяются пять классов слов: существительные, прилагательные, местоимения, числительные и функциональные слова. В последней главе представлены лексические термины, обозначающие единицы времени. В рецензии дается краткое описание всех глав и указывается, что использование термина «язык тюрки» более уместно для обозначения языка, на котором написаны эти исторические документы, чем термин «староказахский письменный язык», поскольку язык данных документов имеет большое количество неказахских особенностей.

Ключевые слова: староказахский письменный язык, современный казахский язык, староказахские документы, династия Цин, казахское ханство, фонетика, морфология, классы слов

1. Introduction

In 2005, Professor Erkin Awghaly at the Minzu University of China received two documents from the First Historical Archives of China of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing. These old documents turned out to be in Turkic written in Arabic script. Among Chinese written sources of the time of the Qing Dynasty, there are numerous documents concerning the political and economic relations between the Qing Dynasty and the Kazakh Khanate. However, most of them are written in Chinese. Documents written in a language other than Chinese are fewer. In 2006 and 2009, Awghaly published these two documents one after another with a description of their language and a Modern Kazakh translation (see [Awghaly 2006, 2009]). His publications attracted the keen attention of scholars both in China and in Kazakhstan.

Awghaly gave his student Düysenalı Abdılășım the task of collecting and studying Kazakh documents preserved in the First Historical Archives of China in Beijing. Abdılășım wrote his doctoral dissertation on this topic. As he was studying in Kyoto, his study “Historical research on the Kazakh documents of the 18—19 century” was written in Japanese and completed in 2010. Düysenalı Abdılășım is currently professor at the Minzu University of China and is doing research on Old Kazakh documents and Kazakh philology.

According to Abdılășım [Abdılășım 2016: 35—42], the collected documents are letters, mostly written by Kazakh Khans and Sultans and sent to Chinese emperors of the Qing dynasty and to officials in charge of the border. There are also letters sent by imperial envoys to Russian authorities. Abdılășım attributes these documents to three main geographical areas: those of the Left Khanate, those of the Right Khanate, and those of the Western Khanate. There are 25 letters from the Left Khanate, 109 letters from the Right Khanate, and 17 letters from the Western Khanate. By now, altogether 151 letters have been found by Abdılășım. Among them, the earliest 17 documents were written in the *tod* (‘clear’) script. They came from different Khanates: seven letters from the Left Khanate, nine from the Right Khanate, and one from the Western Khanate. They were written during the period 1757—1780. The other documents were written in the Arabic-based Chaghatay script. According to Noda and Onuma [Noda, Onuma 2010: 11], the earliest letters were written in 1757 by Ablai-Khan to the Chinese emperor of the Qing dynasty. The latest one was written in 1828 to the Chinese emperor of the Qing dynasty by the ruler of the Right Khanate Altınsarıĭ, one of the descendants of the Sultan Abulfeyz. Noda and Onuma [ibid: 3—4] state that the identification of the language is still an open question, because the texts bear features of several different Turkic varieties: the South-Eastern, or Karluk, Turkic group and of the North-Western, or Kipchak, group. Furthermore, the language differs greatly from Modern Kazakh. Mawkanuli and Martin [Mawkanuli, Martin 2012: 69] argue that the letters¹ “were handwritten in Turki and include vernacular Turkic forms as well as Russian loan words, marking them linguistically rich and challenging sources of analysis”. Here the term Turki refers to “a variety of Chaghatay with typical Kipchak features and reflecting the spoken varieties of the steppe region”.

Düysenalı Abdılășım’s book under review here, “Eskı Kazak Jazba tılı” ‘The Old Kazakh Written Language’, is written in Kazakh and published in Beijing. It is a linguistic description of the above-mentioned Old Kazakh documents, designed as a manual for university students studying Kazakh philology. The book aims to present linguistic features of the Kazakh documents of the Kazakh Khanates written in the period from the first half of the 18th century until the early 19th century. The significance of the book lies in its being the first and only book to provide a comprehensive linguistic description of the Old Kazakh historical documents. As mentioned above, these Kazakh documents are letters written by Kazakh Khans and Sultans to the heads of the Russian Empire and the representatives of the Qing Dynasty, or to their local governors. There are also a few letters written by Kazakh Biys (judges). His second book, “Research on Kazakh Documents in the First Historical Archives of China”, was published in 2016 in Kazakh. It analyzes additional 67 letters with their copies, their Latin transcriptions and modern Kazakh translations. Facsimiles of some letters have been also attached. This book will hopefully be reviewed separately in the near future.

2. Brief description of sections

In the introduction, the author describes the Kazakh literary language and the main historical periods of its development. He then explains the reasons why he applies the name “Old Kazakh” to the Kazakh literary language, starting from the establishment of the Kazakh Khanates (the middle of the 15th century) until the beginning of the 20th century. The Kazakh literary language of the given periods had been denoted differently by researchers: e.g., Kazakh-Chaghatay, Chaghatay-Kazakh, the Old written literary language, the Old Kazakh written literary language, and even Tatar. The author suggests that it would be appropriate to designate it as the Old

¹ Their paper “Nineteenth century Kazakh correspondence with Russian authorities: Morphemic analysis and historical contextualization” deals with a letter written by Kazakhs to Russian imperial officials in the year 1832.

Kazakh written language. His reasoning is that the letters have more Kazakh than Chaghatay or Tatar features. The Old Kazakh written language is based on the traditions of the Chaghatay language, and numerous Chaghatay features can be encountered in the early Kazakh sources from the time when the Kazakh Khanates were established. Along with the growing strength of the Kazakh Khanates, more and more Kazakh spoken features were used in the written language. Over time, the official Kazakh written language was established.

The Kazakh documents comprise two categories. The first includes the Western documents, written by the Khan of the Junior Zhuz Abul Khair (Kazakh: Äbilkayır) and his descendants and sent to the Russian Empire and its local governors in order to establish political and economic relations. Most of the preserved letters are nowadays dispersed in archives in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kazan, Tashkent, Orenburg, and Almaty. Some of these letters have been published by Kazakh scholars in Kazakhstan (see [Äbilkäşimov 1988]). Äbdiläşim refers to these publications and cites one letter. The second category contains the Eastern documents, written by Kazakh Khans and Sultans, such as Ablai, Ärbülfeyz, and their descendants, to Chinese Emperors of the Qing Dynasty and local Chinese governors after the middle of the 18th century. These documents are preserved in the First Historical Archives of China in Beijing.

The archive actually possesses copies, not the original manuscripts themselves. The author mentions that he discovered several mistakes in the documents, but it is far from clear whether the mistakes were in the original documents or were made by the copyists.

The book contains 64 digitalized (computer typed) versions of the documents written in the period 1732–1828. Most of the documents published in the book are Eastern ones, i.e. letters sent to China. There is only one Western letter.

The first chapter is devoted to phonetics. The author describes the alphabet of the documents, based on the Chaghatay-Arabic script. There are 33 characters and eight diacritic signs *fatha*, *kasra*, *žamma*, *sukūn*, *tašdīd*, *tanwīn*, *hamza*, *madda*. Some of the characters are used only for Arabic and Persian loanwords. Although the script includes special characters for some typical Turkic sounds (such as *p*, *č*, *g*), they are practically never used in the documents. The character /b/ (ب) is used to represent both *b* and *p*, the character *j*² (ج) covers both *j* and *č*, and the character *k* (ك) is employed to represent both *k* and *g*. The nasal uvular sound *ŋ* is represented by the combination of the characters *n* and *k*. The nine Kazakh vowels are expressed by only four characters, three of which also having consonantal values; i.e. the character *o* (و) is used to render *o*, *ö*, *u*, *ü*, *ū* (in word-internal position), and *w*, *v*; the character *e* (ه) is used for *a*, *ä*, *e*, and *h*; the character *y* (ي) represents the sounds *e*, *i*, *ī*, and *y*. Only the character *a* (ا) is used exclusively to render vowels *a*, *ä*, and *ā*.

Further, the author gives a relatively complete description of the sound system of the documents. Thus, according to him, the Old Kazakh written language has nine vowel phonemes, like Modern Kazakh, and 25 consonant phonemes. He gives a detailed phonetic description of each phoneme and its usage and illustrates them with examples from the documents.

The second chapter is devoted to nominal morphology. Here, the author describes five word classes occurring in the Old Kazakh written language: nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals, and function words. The description is organized in five sub-chapters.

In the sub-chapter devoted to nouns, Äbdiläşim first describes derivational suffixes that build both derived denominal nominal stems (-čI, -IİK, -čIK, -dAš, -čA, etc.) and derived deverbal nominal stems (-GUčI, -(U)w, -čIİK, -KIn, -mA, -(I)š); e.g. *egincī* ‘farmer’, *esānliķ* ‘health’, *üyčik* ‘small house’, *yoldaš* ‘friend’, *qalmaķča* ‘the Kalmuck language’, *tutķučī* ‘ruler’, *awruw* ‘sick person’, *tiłānčilik* ‘begging’, *kačķun* ‘escaper’, *tuyma* ‘family’, ‘natural’, *uxšaš* ‘same’.

Inflectional suffixes that are attached to nouns to express various grammatical categories, such as plural, possessive, case, and person markers are then presented.

The plural marker is the all-Turkic *-lAr*; e.g. *Qazaqlar* ‘the Kazakhs’, *şizlār* ‘you:PL’. In comparison with Modern Kazakh, the Old Kazakh plural marker has several characteristics that do not exist in Modern Kazakh. For instance, in Modern Kazakh, the plural suffixes are not added to nouns already having the semantics of quantity and to numerals having values more than two. The Old Kazakh written language allows such combinations; e.g. *köp kişilār* ‘many persons’, *mñ yilķilar* ‘a thousand horses’, *üč hānlarumuz* ‘our three Khans’. The third person plural possessive affix *-lArI* can be used to define more than one possessor or as an honorific form expressing respected possessor(s); e.g. *atalarī Abū al-hayr hān* ‘their father Abul Khair Khan’ and *oylılarī Nūr’alī* ‘Your son Nurali’. The possessive category is expressed by such forms as 1SG *-(U)m* ~ *-(I)m*, 2SG *-(U)ŋ* ~ *-(I)ŋ* (informal), 2SG *-(U)ŋIz* ~ *-(I)ŋIz* (formal), 3SG *-(s)I*, 1PL *-(I)mIz* ~ *-(U)mIz*, 2PL *-lArIŋ* ~ *-lArUŋ* (informal), 2PL *-lArIŋIz* ~ *-lArUŋIz* (formal), 3PL *-lArI*, signaling person and number of the possessor; e.g., *ayamyā* ‘to my elder brother’ (DAT), *ataŋ* ‘your father’ (NOM), *söziŋizya* ‘to your words’ (DAT), *balasın* ‘his son’ (ACC),

² In the edition, the sign *j* is used to transliterate this character. We are using here a Turcological transcription.

qolımızya ‘to our hand’ (DAT), *kişilariñni* ‘your people’ (ACC), *işlariñizgä* ‘to your works’ (DAT), *yoldaşları* ‘his/her/their friends’ (NOM). It is worth mentioning that suffix harmony is not consistent. The last syllable of the stem cannot determine the quality of a following suffix with respect to rounded-unrounded, or “labial”, harmony. For example, the rounded *ö* in *söz* ‘word’ followed by the second person unrounded possessive suffix *-iñiz*: *söz-iñiz* ‘your (formal) word’ instead of *söz-üñiz*, since both morphological variations *-uñiz* and *-üñiz* are existent in the language. The unrounded vowel *i* in *yarlıy* ‘command’, on the other hand, is followed by the rounded variant of the second person (formal) possessive suffix *-uñiz*: *yarlıy-uñiz* ‘your (formal) command’, as well as in *balalar-uñniñ* ‘your children’s’. However, in some cases, the last syllable of the stem and a following suffix displays the “labial sound harmony”, e.g. *köñliñiz* ‘your (formal) feel’. Due to the fact that the letters were written by different people, the variation can reflect dialectal features.

Seven case markers occur in the documents. The genitive case has the marker *-nıñ*; e.g. *Qazaqnıñ hāñi* ‘the Khan of the Kazakhs’, *ileniñ jañ juñ*³ ‘the general of the Ili’. Abdılâşım also gives examples in which other forms of the genitive are used or the genitive is used in a non-canonical way. The dative case markers are *-GA*, *-A*, *-nA*, e.g. *pādsāhka* ‘to the king’, *bızlārā* or *bızlārgā* ‘to us’, *Buḥāra šaharına* ‘to the city Bukhara’. The accusative case markers are *-nı*, *-du*, and *-n*, e.g. *bır yigitni kaytarıp* ‘returning a young boy’, *hatimdu yibardım* ‘I sent my letter’, *künñi köziñ* ‘(to see) the eye of the sun’. In some cases, the direct object bearing a possessive marker is in the nominative, e.g. *tamyam saldıñ* ‘I sealed my stamp’. The locative case marker is *-da*; e.g. *ekı yoldaşı ilān bu küñda* ‘in these days with his/her two friends’, *tur degān yer-iñizda* ‘on the place where you ask to stop’. The ablative case is *-dın* and *-DAn*; e.g. *on beş yaşımdın* ‘from my 15 years’, *ata babamızdan* ‘from our ancestors’, *altın etāktān* ‘from the golden skirt’. The instrumental case is *-In*, but it is seldom used, e.g. *ötkān kışın segiz hātūn birlān on baynı ustadı* ‘he arrested eight women and ten men last winter’. The semantics of the instrumental case is also expressed by the postpositions *bılān*, *pılān*, *birlān*, *birlā*, e.g. *öz qolım birlā hat mohrumnı bastım* ‘I sealed my stamp with my own hands’. The personal markers on nominal predicates are *-mın*, *-mız*, *-sız*, e.g. *men hānmın* ‘I am a king’, *jawmız* ‘we are enemies’. The copular particle *-dur* is also used in the third person, e.g. *bızgā šonday duşmāndur* ‘they are such enemies for us’. This particle is not in use in Modern Kazakh.

The second sub-chapter is devoted to adjectives starting with denominal suffixes forming adjectives: *-lı*, *-sız*, *-G³I* (*G* has three variants of *k*, *k*, *g*), *-lıK*, *-DAy*; e.g. *fāydalı* ‘useful’, *şansız* ‘countless’, *tışkı* ‘outside’, *yağışlık* ‘good’, *künday* ‘like the sun’. There are also affixes copied from Persian, such as *bī-*, *nā-*, *-bān*, etc.; e.g. *bīgūnāh* ‘innocent’, *nārāzī* ‘unsatisfied’, *mehrbānlu* ‘kind’. The comparative is formed with *-rAK*, e.g. *alısrak* ‘rather far’, *keçgiprak* ‘being rather late’. Superlatives are formed with the particle *bek*, e.g. *bek katıy* ‘hardest’, *bek köp* ‘the most’.

The third sub-chapter describes numerals. The cardinal numbers are *bır* ‘one’, *ekı* ‘two’, *üç* ‘three’, *tört* ‘four’, *beş* ‘five’, *altı* ‘six’, *yetı* ‘seven’, *sekiz* ‘eight’, *tokız* ‘nine’, *on* ‘ten’, *kırık* ‘forty’, *altmış* ‘sixty’, *yüz* ‘hundred’, *mıñ* ‘thousand’, etc. Ordinal numerals are derived with *-InçI*, e.g. *ekinçı* ‘second’, *üçünçı* ‘third’, *altınçı* ‘sixth’. Collective numbers are derived with *-Aw*, e.g. *üçāw* ‘three together’, *törtāw* ‘four together’. Approximate expressions are formed with juxtaposed numerals, e.g. *bır ekı* ‘one or two’, *on beş yigirmi* ‘15 or 20’. Fractions are expressed by the lexemes *yarıñ*, *yartı* ‘half’, e.g. *mıñ yarıñ* ‘one thousand and a half’.

The fourth sub-chapter is devoted to pronouns. The personal pronouns are *men/ben* ‘I’, *sen* ‘you:SG’, *sız* ‘you:SG (formal)’, *u/ol* ‘he, she, it’, *bız/bızlār* ‘we’, *sız/sızlār* ‘you:PL (plural/formal)’, *alar/anlar* ‘they’. In Old written Kazakh, there is no second person informal plural form such as Modern Kazakh *sender* ‘you (plural)’. The declension of some pronouns differs from the above-mentioned case paradigm, similar to Modern Kazakh (table 1).

Table 1. Personal pronouns in the documents

	<i>men/ben</i>	<i>sen/sız</i>	<i>ol</i>	<i>bız/bızlār</i>	<i>sızlār</i>	<i>anlar</i>
nom.	<i>men/ben</i>	<i>sen/sız</i>	<i>ol</i>	<i>bız/bızlār</i>	<i>sızlār</i>	<i>anlar</i>
gen.	<i>meniñ</i>	<i>sızniñ/sızüñ</i>	<i>anıñ</i>	<i>bızniñ/bızlārniñ</i>	<i>sızlārniñ</i>	<i>anlarnıñ</i>
acc.	<i>meni/beni</i>	<i>sızni</i>	<i>anı</i>	<i>bızni/bızlārni</i>	<i>sızlārni</i>	<i>anlarnı</i>
dat.	<i>maga/bağa</i>	<i>sızgā</i>	<i>oga</i>	<i>bızgā/bızlārgā</i>	<i>sızlārgā</i>	
loc.	<i>bendā</i>					
abl.	<i>bendın</i>	<i>sendın</i>	<i>andan</i>	<i>bızdın/bızlārdın</i>		<i>olardın/anlardın</i>

The demonstrative pronouns are *bu*, *bukım*, *oşbu/oşpu/aşbu*, ‘this’ indicating close proximity. Other demonstrative pronouns, such as *ol*, *olux*, *oşul*, *şu*, *şol*, *şolux* ‘that’, express distance. The case forms of *bu* and *ol* are:

³ *Jañ juñ* is a loanword from Chinese *jiāng jūn* ‘general’.

bunı (ACC), *munda* (LOC), *mundın* or *bunlardın* (ABL); *anı* (GEN), *ana* (DAT), *anı/olardı* (ACC), *anda* (LOC), *andın* (ABL). The Old written Kazakh reflexive pronoun is *öz* 'self'. Collective pronouns are quantifiers, *barça*, *bări*, *küllı*, *hame*, *jamı* 'all, whole'. Interrogative pronouns are *kim* 'who', *neçük* 'how', *kaçan* 'when', *kaysı* 'which one', *kayuw* 'which'. Among them, the pronoun *kaysı* often occurs with the copular particle *-dur* and the interrogative pronoun *kim*, the latter is then used as a relative pronoun; see *kim* as a relative pronoun in *kaysıdur kim Muxammad Raxım hānya qaraynırları* 'to those who are submitted to the Muhammad Rahim'. The pronoun *kayuw* occurs with the interrogative pronoun *kim* employed as a relative pronoun, e.g. *kayuw kim ol ulıy nasblı Harınyazı sultān* 'that one who is the senior official Harungazi Sultan'. Indefinite pronouns have many sub-classes and are often based on interrogative pronouns: existential *kimsä* 'someone', quantitative *bırneçä* 'some', *neçä wa neçä* 'many', etc. Universal indefinite pronouns are built by indefinite pronouns in combination with *här* 'every', e.g. *härkim* 'everybody', *härkaysı* 'everyone', *här kayuw* 'everything', *härбір* 'each', *här zamān* 'every time'. There are no negative pronouns; the negative semantics ('nobody', 'nothing' and the like) is expressed by interrogative or indefinite pronouns together with the negative particle *hıç*, e.g. *hıçбір* 'nothing', *hıçkim* 'nobody', *hıcnärse* 'nothing'. Notice the negative semantics can be expressed by *hıçбір*, *hıçkim*, etc. if the predicate is negated, e.g. *hıcnärse alyanı yok* 'he takes nothing', *hıcnärsesini kaldırmadılar* 'they left nothing'.

The fifth sub-chapter deals with function words. Three types are distinguished: (i) postpositions, i.e. function words assigning case, *üçün* 'for', *arqılı* 'through', *xaqında*, *toyruşında* 'about', *soñ* 'after', *berı* 'since', *kün ilgri* 'one day ago', 'before', etc.; (ii) coordinators, used to combine noun phrases and clauses, e.g. *yenä* 'and', *bılān* 'and, with', *wa*, *ham* 'and', *alayda*, *lāqın*, *ammā* 'but', *ya*, *yaki*, *yake* 'or'; (iii) function words occurring in dependent clauses, *şol sabablı* 'therefore, so', *şonıñ üçün*, *anıñ üçün* 'so', *agar*, *agarçä*, *agardä* 'if', etc.

The last chapter describes some lexical word classes. The author presents terms for weekdays, months and seasons, and for other temporal units used in the language. The terms for the weekdays are identical with those in Modern Kazakh. However, Persian terms for months are frequently used. Some Arabic month terms are also occasionally employed. The season names are identical with those in Modern Kazakh, except for the Persian loanword *bahār* 'spring'; e.g. *ya'nı oşbu ötmış bahār fasılāñ başındın ta oşbu zamānyaçä* 'well, that is, from the beginning of last spring until now'. The author also mentions that original Kazakh animal names associated with the 12-year cycle are rarely used in the Eastern letters sent to representatives of the Qing Dynasty. As for the Western documents, they often used Arabic numbers. The exact date of writing does not often occur in the letters; the date is lacking from the Eastern documents, e.g. *taxrı olundı Kıryız-Kazak yurtında kawstıñ yawmında 1809 sana yılda* 'this was written in November 1809, in the Kirghiz-Kazakh area'.

The appendix contains typed versions of the 64 letters in the Arabic script without a Latin transcription or translation.

3. Conclusions

Although the language used in the documents is considered by Abdilashim to be Old written Kazakh that is evolved and established on the basis of the Kipchak and Chaghatay written languages, it is still an open question what Turkic varieties it represents. The texts demonstrate several South-Eastern Turkic characteristics; for instance, lack of the pronominal *n* and devoicing of suffix-final *-G*, along with some South-Western elements such as the copular verb *ol-* 'to be' instead of North-Western *bol-* 'to be'. Furthermore, the first-person singular form *ben* is used along with *men* 'I'. But one point is clear to us: the variety of ways in which the letters are quite different from Modern Kazakh and supposedly also from varieties spoken by Kazakhs of that period. Probably, the texts were meant to be Chaghatay, which was considered to be the Standard written Turkic variety in Turkic-speaking Central Asia. Since the language of the documents manifests majority of non-Kazakh features, following Mawkanuli and Martin [Mawkanuli, Martin 2012], we prefer to use the term *Turki* instead of *Old Kazakh Written Language*.

Summing up, the reviewed book does not only publish the Old Kazakh documents collected by the author in recent years, but also analyzes the language of the documents. We hope that Abdilashim's books will draw the attention of scholars who are studying Chaghatay and Kazakh philology.

Abbreviations

1 — first person	ABL — ablative	LOC — locative
2 — second person	ACC — accusative	NOM — nominative
3 — third person	DAT — dative	PL — plural
	GEN — genitive	SG — singular

References

- Äbdiläšim 2016 — *Äbdiläšim Düyisenäli*. Zhūngo birinši tāixi mұrayatında saqtalyan Qazaqşa qūjattar {Research on Kazakh documents in the First Historical Archives of China}. Beijing, 2016.
- Äbılqasımov 1988 — *Äbılqasımov Babaš*. 18—19 ғасырдағы Қазақ әдеби тілінің жазба нұсқалары {Written samples of 18th and 19th centuries literary Kazakh}. Almaty, 1988.
- Awghaly 2006 — *Awghaly Erkin*. 一件清代哈萨克租牧地文书的研究 (yī jiàn qīng dài hāsàkè zū mù dì wénshū de yánjiū) {The Study of a Document about the Kazakhs' Pasture Lease} // 民族研究 (Mínzú yánjiū) {Ethnic Studies}. 2006, 5. P. 70—73.
- Awghaly 2009 — *Awghaly Erkin*. 阿布赉汗后的清哈关系 — 一件清代哈萨克文书的释读 (Ābù lài hàn hòu de qīng hā guānxì — yī jiàn qīngdài hāsàkè wénshū de shídú) {Qing-Kazakh Relation after Ablai Khan: A Kazakh Document from Qing Period} // Eds. *Ding jing, Zhang and Yakup, Abdurishid*. 突厥语文学研究 — 耿世民教授八十华诞纪念文集 (Tūjué yǔwén xué yánjiū — gěngshímín jiàoshòu bāshí huádàn jìniàn wénjí) {Studies in Turkic Philology: Festschrift in Honour of the 80th Birthday of Professor Shimin, Geng}. Beijing, 2009. P. 21—26.
- Mawkanuli, Martin 2012 — *Mawkanuli Talant, Martin Virginia*. Nineteenth century Kazakh correspondence with Russian authorities: Morphemic analysis and historical contextualization // *Turkic Languages*. 2012, 16. P. 68—79
- Noda, Onuma 2010 — *Noda Jin, Onuma Takahiro*. A collection of documents from the Kazakh Sultans to the Qing Dynasty. Tokyo, 2010.