


Turkisms in the Balkan Languages			Linguistics
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Daniela Tamo		University of Tirana. Faculty of Foreign Languages Department of English Language. Tirana, Albania.	
Lindita Xhanari - Latifi		University of Tirana. Faculty of Foreign Languages Department of English Language. Tirana, Albania.	
Abstract			
<p>This study was conducted to make an analysis of the introduction of Turkisms in the Balkan languages. Turkish words have entered these languages at different periods of time and they have had their impact on different areas as institutions, trade and social life among others. A great number of words are borrowed by languages as Albanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, Greek, and Romanian. Turkish borrowings have served as a means for enriching the languages. The authors have studied the historic, cultural, ethnographic, literary and linguistic issues. To this end, a number of documents were researched by the authors in order to get to know the situation of Turkisms in Balkan languages at different periods of time. Numerous examples are provided so as to give evidence to the conclusion that Turkisms have become an organic part of the Balkan languages. They belong not only to the past, but also the present reality.</p>			

Introduction

The introduction of Turkisms, which has lasted for about five centuries, is presented as a colourful landscape that incorporates historic, cultural, ethnographic, literary and linguistic issues. All the languages spoken in the Balkans have been affected by Turkisms and have preserved these elements to date. Turkish borrowings have become a natural component of Balkan languages, being adapted to their phonetics and grammar.

In this study, the aim is to bring to the attention of the reader a clear picture about the following:

1. History of introduction of Turkisms into Balkan languages
2. Evocation of studies on Turkisms for each Balkan language
3. Common Balkan Turkisms fund and lexical and grammar features.

1. History of introduction of Turkish borrowings into the Balkan languages

Turkish has been one of the most important sources of enriching the vocabulary of the Balkan languages, during the five centuries of Ottoman invasion. All Balkan languages have given and taken elements from each other, at different degrees. The influences in these languages, however, have been local and restricted only to bordering dialects. In contrast to these influences, Turkish borrowings are more proliferated in such a uniform way across Balkan languages that a considerable number of these borrowings may be defined as “Balkan Turkisms”.

Various Balkan linguists use the term “orientalisms” for these borrowings, arguing that a good part of such words originate from Persian or Arabic. In this article, the authors prefer and chose the term “Turkisms” for two reasons:

- First, Balkan people were in direct contact with the Ottomans and not the Arabs or the Persians;
- Second, all the words were borrowed directly from Turkish, after having been Turkish-ised, and were adopted in the meaning they were used in Turkish

Sporadic examples on the use of words deriving from Turkish in various linguistic textbooks across the Balkans (Albanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, Greek, and Romanian) may be traced from early XV century. The process of borrowing elements from Turkish into these languages peaked in the XIX century. For the Balkans people, Turkish was the language of communication within the Ottoman Empire. Most of the Turkish lexemes were not only adapted to Balkan languages, but they also became a natural component of the overall and regional language. Borrowed words were incorporated in the spoken languages of the Balkans, and made their headway in literature, learned religious language, administrative documents and other written texts. The natural outcome of contacts between different nations, throughout the history, is the interaction between their culture and languages. With the arrival of the Ottomans in the Balkans, a new state system was introduced, along with a new culture and a new religion. These novelties led to huge social, economic, educational and cultural changes across the Balkans. The new culture was dominant for centuries. Religion and traditions brought in from the Turks, in other words, the lifestyle that they introduced, was embraced by most of the Balkan people. While Turkish was adopted massively, it is a known fact that it never received the status of the *lingua franca*, as all the people in the Balkans continued to use their mother tongue in their everyday life.¹¹ The status of Turkish was completely different from that of the other oriental languages, as Arabic and Persian were limited to only a few fields of life such as: religion, science and education. Turkish, on the other hand, extended its roots into the everyday routine as the language used in governmental institutions, trade and social life. An indicator of this influence is the large number of Turkish borrowed words introduced in the language of the people living in the Balkans. The novelties that were introduced by the Turkish culture, introduced also new concepts, which until then were unknown to these lands. Until then, there had been no words in the mother tongue for these new concepts, or as long as no new words were obtained, the Turkish words and terminology were transferred in almost all the languages in the Balkans. In addition, the transition to a new lifestyle was followed by the borrowing of Turkish words, which existed already in these languages. Words, which had their equivalent in the respective languages, were borrowed. This situation reinforces the fact that the borrowing owed not only on linguistic, but also on extra-linguistic bases.

Nonetheless, borrowed elements, terms and a limited number of suffixes from Turkish, despite the wide use across all Balkan languages, have never posed any threat to the failure of their essence.¹² Borrowings found their place in the lexicon of each language they entered, and later continued their life in the new system, adapting to the features of the respective language. This is not about borrowing words and their meaning in the language of they come from. Initially, because of the already known historic circumstances, Balkan languages borrowed words that denoted unknown meanings and notions. Later, these words were accepted and started to be acquired massively, as they were frequently used in the everyday social and administrative life. Once accepted, used and acquired, Turkish-oriental borrowings started to be elaborated and enriched in the Balkan languages. This is a chain reaction that has taken place over a very long period of time. Nowadays, Turkisms have a significant place in the lexis of all Balkan languages. Although often some semantic and especially phonetic differences exist, the words that entered the Balkan languages many centuries ago, were borrowed in the form and meaning that were most widely spread at that time. Indeed, the words that were borrowed initially through the spoken language were in fact borrowed by Turkish dialects spoken in the Balkan region. That was not pure Turkish and differed significantly from the Turkish spoken in Istanbul, on which the literary Turkish builds. The borrowings that were in harmony with the system of the language they were incorporated into preserved their original forms; those that were not in harmony, however, were subjected to phonetic and morphological changes. Moreover, with the passing of time, Turkish has undergone many specific changes and developments in the spectrum of the meaning of various words. Therefore, the differences between the Turkish words that still exist in these languages and their use in modern Turkish is a natural result of language development.

¹¹Filan, Kerima, "Language-Culture Relation: Its Significance in Turkish Language Education in Bosnia", Council of Europe 2001 European Years of languages, 24-27.

¹²Filan, Kerima, "Language-Culture Relation: Its Significance in Turkish Language Education in Bosnia", Council of Europe 2001 European Years of languages, 24-27.

2. Studies up to date on Turkisms for each Balkan language

Based on the studies on modern dictionaries of Balkan languages, the bulk of Turkish borrowings is relatively large and varies from one language to another. Although the influence of the Ottoman power was almost the same across all these countries, linguistic influence was not the same, not only because of the linguistic features of the respective language, but, above all, for reasons related to the issue as to what extent Islam was embraced by the Balkan people, and in which countries there was a flow of Turkish minorities, which still exist in the form of national minorities in different parts of the Balkans. To date, various scholars of the Balkan languages, from the Balkans and elsewhere, have been evidencing Turkish borrowings for each Balkan language separately, trying to analyse the chronology of their entry. They have also classified the borrowings semantically, and have studied the grammatical influences, especially with regard to formation of words. The studies reveal that:

Albanian has borrowed some 4406 words, of which about 1400 are listed in the *Dictionary of Modern Albanian (Fjalori i gjuhës së sotme shqipe)*. When speaking of the Albanian language, we analyse not only the language spoken in Albania, but also the Albanian spoken in Kosovo and Macedonia. Many Albanian and foreign scholars have studied this language, to mention a few: E.Çabej¹³, A. Kostallari¹⁴, A. Krajni¹⁵, M. Samara¹⁶, G. Meyer¹⁷, F. Miklosich¹⁸, and N. Boretzky¹⁹. The greatest contribution, however, is attributed to T. Dizdari²⁰, who has left us a magnificent manuscript: *Dictionary of Orientalisms*, which is, to date, the most accurate and scientific study on Turkish borrowings. The dictionary consists of 4406 borrowings, which the author labels as borrowed directly from Turkish. Dizdari determines clearly the words borrowed from Turkish and provides significant data for further study on the lexical meaning of the borrowed words, on the phonetic transformation they underwent while being adapted to Albanian, as well as on their spreading across the Albanian dialects and other Balkan languages. In addition to words, Turkish wordformation suffixes have also entered the Albanian language. Suffixes borrowed from Turkish, which have become somewhat productive in Albania are: xhi (-ci;-ci;-cu;-cu); -çi (-çi;-çi;-çu;-çu); -llëk (-lik;-lik;-luk;-luk); -qar (**-kâr**); -çe (-çe;-ça); -li/-lli (-li;-li;-lu;-lu); -sız/-söz; -dan. Despite their existence in phonetic variations in conformity with the vocal harmony of Turkish, all these suffixes have penetrated into the Albanian language being adapted to its phonetic system and grammatical structure.

Serbian has borrowed some 8742 words, of which 6500 are still used. All the Turkish borrowings into this language are incorporated in: *Turkish Words in Serbian-Croatian Languages*, Abdullah Škaljić²¹. Later, they were studied by Milan Adamović, who has extensively addressed this issue in his study “Tanitma”²². He determines about 6500 Turkish borrowings as words of daily use. Stachowski²³ points out that suffixes -dzija/ -lija/ -luk in Serbian are not at all productive in modern Serbian. On their side, A. Xhuvani and E. Çabej in their study “*Prapashtesat e gjuhës shqipe*” (*Suffixes in the Albanian Language*), underline that the following suffixes are used in Serbian, as well: -lik (-lik/-luk/-lük), -li (-li/ -lu/ -lü) and -ci (-ci/-cu/-cü/-çi/-çi/-çu/-çü). They list examples such as: *bojali, demirli, dertli, obrazlija, Bosnalija, pasaluk, Arnautluk*.

With regard to Bosnian (Bosniac), author Škaljić, A.²⁴ in his work “*Turcizmi u Narodnom Govoru i Narodnoj Knjizevnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*”, Sarajevo 1957, identifies about 9000 Turkisms. The words he mentions are collected primarily from oral literature and spoken language. Bosnian has borrowed a relatively high number of wordformation suffixes from Turkish, which appear to be very active to date, for example xhi (-ci;-ci;-cu;-cu); -llëk (-lik;-lik;-luk;-luk); -çe (-çe;-ça).

¹³Çabej, E., Për një shtresim kronologjik të huazimeve turke të shqipes, SF.

¹⁴Kostallari, A., Rreth depërtimit të turqizimeve në gjuhën shqipe gjatë shekujve XVII-XVIII”

¹⁵Krajni, A., Hymja e turqizimeve në shqipen dhe përpjekjet për zëvendësimin e tyre, SF.

¹⁶Samara, M., Zhvillime leksiko-semantike të turqizimeve në gjuhën shqipe, SF.

¹⁷Meyer, G., Etymologisches Wörterbuchderalbanische Sprache.

¹⁸Miklosich, F., DieTürkischen elemente in den südost-und osteuropaischensprachen (V.I-II).

¹⁹Boretzky, N. Dertürkische Einfluss auf das Albanisch

²⁰Dizdari, T.: Fjalor i Orientalizmave

²¹Škaljić, A.: Turcizmi u Srpskohrvatskom yaziku

²²Adamović, M.: Tanitma,

²³K.Kazazis, The status of turkisms, pg. 109-110

²⁴Škaljić, A.: Turcizmi u Narodnom Govoru i Narodnoj Knjizevnosti Bosne i Hercegovine

Croatian, according to the studies of the Croatian Turkologist I. Esih²⁵ and the dictionary he compiled: Turcizmi Rječnik (turskih, arapskih i perzijskih riječi u hrvatskomknjizevnom jeziku i pučkomgovoru) there are about 5000 Turkisms. Even in Croatian, the Turkish suffixes have entered and have become productive: xhi (-ci;-ci;-cu;-cu); -çi (-çi;-çi;-çu;-çu); -llëk (-lik;-lik;-luk;-luk); -qar (-kâr); -çe (-çe;-ça);

The Greek language, according to various scholars: Miklosiç²⁶, Gustav Meyer²⁷, Rouzevalle²⁸ Krumbacher²⁹, Pavlos Georgidas³⁰, Evangelia Ahladi³¹ is believed to have borrowed about 4200 words. Triantaphyllidēs³² in his observations points out that the suffix -ci is also used pejoratively in Greek. He adds that the suffix -lik, is also used pejoratively, except when used to denote nouns that describe functions or official positions; however, it is being used increasingly in the ironic and mocking context. For the suffix -li³³ instead, he says that it is unproductive in the standard Greek.

Modern Macedonian has about 4500-5000 Turkish borrowings. In this language, Turkish borrowings are considered to some extent similar to those in Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian. They have been studied by authors for example: Olivera Nasteva³⁴, and Golab Zbigniev³⁵. Similarly to other Balkan languages, Macedonian has borrowed a number of Turkish suffixes, which are still productive, such as: xhi (-ci;-ci;-cu;-cu); -çi (-çi;-çi;-çu;-çu); -llëk (-lik;-lik;-luk;-luk); -qar (-kâr); -çe (-çe;-ça); -li/-lli (-li;-li;-lu;-lu).

Romanian has borrowed about 3900 words, of which about 1700 are everyday terms. Numerous scholars address Turkish borrowings in Romanian, for example: Miklosich³⁶, Lazar Saineanu³⁷, Theophil Lobel³⁸, Karl Lokotsch³⁹, Heine F. Wendt⁴⁰, M. Guboğlu⁴¹, Muammer Nurlu⁴² and Kerim Altay⁴³, who, in his four Romanian Dictionaries, notes that the Turkish borrowings corpus, used in everyday context, may amount to 2000 words. Romanian has also borrowed some Turkish suffixes. In his study, Werner Bahner⁴⁴ highlights that the suffix -giu (-ci) continues to be productive in contemporary Romanian as a pejorative suffix. To illustrate this, he gives such examples as: laptagiu, cazangiu, cafegiu, odagiu, hangiu, and borangiu. A. Xhuvani and E. Çabej in their "*Prapashtesat e gjuhës shqipe*" (Suffixes in the Albanian language), find that Romanian uses also the suffix lik (lik/luk/lük). To illustrate it, they give examples such as: çiflic, geamlıc, babalic, caraghioslic.

Bulgarian has borrowed about 5200 words. They belong mainly to economic and political realm, as well as to everyday life. Turkish borrowings have been studied by: Alf Grannes⁴⁵, M. Türker Acaroğlu⁴⁶, etc. The studies⁴⁷ reveal that about 5000 Turkish toponyms have also entered Bulgarian. In the third edition of the Dictionary of foreign words⁴⁸, however, only 3548 words originating from Turkish, Arabic, or Persian, have been introduced into the

²⁵Esih, I.: Turcizmi Rječnik (turskih, arapskih i perzijskih riječi u hrvatskomknjizevnom jeziku i pučkomgovoru).

²⁶Miklosich, F., Die Türkischen elemente in densüdost-und osteuropaischen sprachen (V.I-II)

²⁷Meyer, G.: Die Griechischen und Romanischen Bestandteile in Wortschatzedes Osmanisch-Türkischen

²⁸Rouzevalle, L.: Les emprunts turcs dans la grec vulgaire de Roumelie et spécialement d'Adrianople

²⁹Krumbacher, K.: Griechischenelemente in Arabischen und Türkischen, ByzantZeitschrift, 2

³⁰Georgidas, P.: Die lautlichen Veränderungen der türkischen Lehnwörter im Griechischen

³¹Ahladi, E.: Odunçleme Sureci ve Dilbilimsel Görünümü: Türkçe ve Yunancada Odunçlemeler

³²K.Kazazis, The status of turkisms, p. 102-103.

³³K.Kazazis, The status of turkisms, p. 104-105.

³⁴Nasteva, O.: Turskite Leksički Elementi vo Makedonskiot yazik

³⁵Zbigniev, G.: The influence of Turkish upon the Macedonian Slavonic Dialects, Folia Orientalia, Vol. L

³⁶Miklosich, F., Die Türkischen elemente in densüdost-und osteuropaischen sprachen (V.I-II)

³⁷Saineanu, L.: Elemente turcesti in limba romana

³⁸Lobel, Th.: Elemente turcesti arabeti si persane in limba romana, Leipzig

³⁹Lokotsch, K.: Etymologischen Wörterbuch der europäischen (germanischen, romanischen und slavischen), Wörter orientalischen Ursprungs

⁴⁰Heine F. Wendt: Die türkischen Elemente im Rumanischen, Berlin

⁴¹Guboğlu, M.: Rumanya Türkolojisi ve Rumendilinde Türk sözleri hakkında bazı araştırmalar

⁴²Nurlu, M.: Romencede Türk İzleri, Rumani

⁴³Altay, K.: Romencedeki Türkçe kelimeler, Erciyes

⁴⁴K.Kazazis, The status of turkisms, 108-109

⁴⁵Granes, A.: Turco-Bulgarica, Articles in English and French concerning Turkish influence on Bulgarian

⁴⁶Acaroğlu, M.: Bulgaristanda Türkçe Yer Adları Kilavuzu

⁴⁷Acaroğlu, M.: Bulgaristanda Türkçe Yer Adları Kilavuzu

⁴⁸Gaberov, I.: Reçnik na Çujdite Dumi Bulgarskiy

Bulgarian language. Mircev⁴⁹ underlines that with regard to derivatives formed with suffixes –ci and–lik/ –dzija, lak, in Bulgarian, they have definitively an ironic, mocking and pejorative connotation, although in certain cases they serve to form *nominaagentis*, denoting traditional vocations such as: bojadzija, xalvadzija, and kafedzija. Other Bulgarian formations with this suffix, however, have absolutely no ironic sense. To illustrate this, we may refer to recent introductions such as: kompjuterdzija (computer operator) and balkandzija (Balkanologist). In their work “Prapashtesat e gjuhës shqipe” (Suffixes in the Albanian Language), A.Xhuvani and E.Çabej find that in Bulgarian the suffix lik (lik/luk/lük) is also used. They illustrate it with: Arnautluk, babaluk.

3. Common corpus of Balkan Turkisms and its lexical and grammar features

Based on the insofar studies, which identify Turkisms in Balkan languages, we undertook a generalising analysis, by studying the Turkisms not only in relation to Turkish, but also as a common element of all Balkan languages. The corpus of Turkisms that we collected represents words that, in spite of their nationality, every Balkans citizen knows and uses in the same meaning. It contains about 3500 common Turkish lexemes used in eight languages spoken in the Balkans (Albanian, Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Croatian, and Bosnian). We count as such even the Turkish roots that are used both with Turkish suffixes and language-specific ones. To be loyal to our scope of study, that is “common Balkans Turkisms”, the selection criteria was that a word must be used at least in six Balkan languages. In special cases, given the size of population that uses the word, some words used in five languages have been taken into account. Words used in less languages are not taken into consideration, given their limited use.

The analysis showed that the common corpus of Turkisms may be divided into:

1. Corpus of complete borrowings, that is, the group of words that preserves the same meaning they had in Turkish at the time they were borrowed. These words are still used across all Balkan languages in the same meaning and context they had many years ago.
2. Corpus of partial borrowings, that is, that group of words, which has taken only one meaning from Turkish, either the primary or secondary meaning. For example, in a number of Balkan languages (Albanian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian) the word: *aheng* (did not take the meaning of: harmony), *alamet* (did not take the meaning of: sign), *axhami* (did not take the meaning of: young employee in the Ottoman Empire), *bahçe* (did not take the meaning of: large land plots planted with vegetables), *bajram* (did not take the meaning of: name for national feasts), etc.
3. Corpus of borrowings whose meaning is modified in various languages, that is, the group of words whose meaning does not correspond to the meaning of the respective word in Turkish. The observations suggest that this group includes a limited number of words and must be said that, though significant semantic differences are noticed, these words do have an indirect connection to the meaning they have in Turkish, e.g. *allti*, *avaz*, *bajrak*, *batakçi*, *bojalli*, *burani*, *çomlek*, *damlla*, *divan*, *gjerdan*, *gjoja*, *gjon*, *hajj*, *havale*, *japarak*, *jaran*, *kaçak*, *kamare*, *kanun*, *kara*, *kasaba*, *kiamet*.
4. Corpus of borrowings with a secondary meaning developed by different languages, that is the group of words that, in addition to the borrowed meaning, in Balkan languages (Albanian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, Greek) have developed other meanings, which are not found in Turkish today: *alamet* (is also used to mean: disaster), *arrakat* (is also used to mean: disperse chaotically), *filiz* (is also used to mean: heir of a family), *fishek* (is also used as an adverb to mean: immediately).
5. Corpus of borrowings that have been subject to special figurative and stylistic developments. These meanings have mainly a neglecting, mockery irony, disdain and pejorative connotation. While having a respective synonym in the Balkan languages, most of them continue to be used, especially in colloquial speech. For that reason, they have become apparently an integral part of these languages: *çorape*, *allishverish*, *anadollak*, *avaz*, *badihava*, *bajame*, *bajraktar*, *bakllava*, *bardhak*, *barut*, *bashibozuk*, *behar*, *bizele*, *bojë*, *çadër*, *çakër*, *çanak*, *çervish*, *çezmë*,

⁴⁹K.Kazazis, The status of turkisms, 111-112

çiflig, çikrik, çirak, çizme, çorap, çorbë, dallgë, damlla, defter, din, dizgjin, dua, duzine, dyfek, dylbi, dynja, dyzen, fener, ferman, filxhan, hallall, hallkë, hallvë, han, hanxhar, haram, havan, hejbe, hendek, hesap, hordhi, ibrik, jastëk.

6. Corpus of borrowings whose synonym is another borrowed Turkish word: *allishverish-dallavere, bataqçi-xhambaz, bela-hall-telash, budalla-teveqel-teleshman-hardall-allçak, hall-siklet-zor-telash.*

Analysing the common fund of Turkisms with regard to morphology, the following are observed:

1. In some of the Balkan languages, some borrowings appear as nouns and adjectives. In this case, the same word denotes both the person that bears the quality and the quality itself, for example: *beqar, dallaveraxhi, delenxhi, fakir, gjevrek, gjytyrym, horr, jabanxhi, kadife, kapadai, kodosh, llafazan, maskara, matuf, nursëz, pis, portokall, qylaxhi, qymyr, ryshfetçi, sakat, shakaxhi, tamahqar, xahil.*
2. While some borrowings are adjectives in Turkish, they appear as both adjectives and nouns in Balkan languages, for example: *allçak, baballëk, bajraktar, bataqçi, borxhli, çakër, çapkën, çerek, farfuri, fukara, hajn, hileqar, kara, kopuk, marifetçi, myteber, qose, vesveseli, zengjin, and zevzek.*
3. Besides their use as nouns, the same as in Turkish, some borrowings are also used as adjectives in Balkan languages, for example: *bizele, çelik, futë, jetim, pastërma, pizeveng, turlu, xhambaz, xhelat.*
4. Some borrowings that are used as adjectives in Turkish are also used as adverbs in Balkan languages, for example: *batall, çapraz, dyst, eksiq, hazërxhevap, qelepir, safi, serbes, and ters.*
5. Subject to broadening or narrowing of their meaning, some borrowings have been transformed from one part of speech to another, such as:
 - Noun in Turkish, exclamation in Balkan languages: *aferim.*
 - Cardinal number in Turkish, noun in Balkan languages: *allti, yç.*
 - Noun in Turkish, adverb in Balkan languages: *arazi.*
 - Adverb in Turkish, noun in Balkan languages: *axhele.*
 - Cardinal number in Turkish, adverb and adjective in Balkan languages: *birinxhi.*
 - Verb in Turkish, particle in Balkan languages: *demek.*
 - Adverb in Turkish, particle in Balkan languages: *gjoja, zaten.*
 - Exclamation in Turkish, adverb in Balkan languages: *meazallah*
 - Noun in Turkish, adverb in Balkan languages: *qesim.*

Conclusions

The above-mentioned arguments show that Turkisms have become an organic part of the Balkan languages. They belong not only to the past, but also the present reality. It is rightfully believed that “though not constituting a Balkans linguistic connection, the common corpus of Turkish borrowings reinforces it”⁵⁰.

In spite of numerous studies to date, the study of Turkisms in the Balkans is not exhaustive. Based on the above, some questions arise: What is the present status of the common corpus of Turkisms in the Balkans? Has it changed from the earlier status? What lexical fields does the common corpus include? How have wordformation suffixes in Turkish adapted to the wordformation types in Balkan languages?

It would be of interest in the future, in the framework of Balkans linguistics, to study phonetic transformations of such borrowings in Balkan languages, their adaptation to grammatical forms in these languages, and shifts of their meanings and stylistic connotations they may have undergone over the decades. Such study would contribute to a more accurate determination of common Balkans phraseologies, given that it is already known that many of them originate from Turkish borrowings.

⁵⁰Reinkowski, M.: Zum status der Turkismen in den Sprachen Südosteuropas

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