Baytursınuli’s Works on the Kazakh Language – an Attempt at Assessment

The aim of this paper is to present the ideas about language of Aqımet Baytursınuli, the founder of Kazakh linguistics and the first Kazakh author of Kazakh grammar. An attempt was made to present and discuss grammatical categories and linguistic terms as well as to assess his methods and identify possible sources of linguistic description.

1. Life and professional career

Baytursınuli, also called Baytursun ~ Baytursın, Baytursunof, Baytursynov in the official Russian use (born 1873, Sarıtübekte – executed 1938, Almaty), was a great Kazakh scholar, theoretician, practitioner, political activist, publisher and enlightener. He was an active member of the Kazakh national Alash movement and Alashorda government (1917–1920), its commissary for education, and after its fall a commissary of culture and education in the government of the Kazakh (then called Kirghiz) Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In the first years of the establishment of Soviet authority in Kazakhstan, similarly to other leading members of Alash, he cooperated with the Bolsheviks, although he did not hesitate to oppose those decisions that he deemed were against his country and nation. The period 1913–1928 was the most fruitful for him and his contribution to the progress in Kazakh culture, education and research in this period is invaluable.

Aside from poems, newspaper articles and occasional writings, Baytursınuli published primers, textbooks and grammars for schools. When he started his career, there were no national schools and institutions, and the number of educated Kazakhs was low. Therefore, his works were designated for schools as practical
aids for both children and adults to educate them in the national language. His
textbooks were designed for the teaching of language and literature. Although
written with a practical purpose, his grammar of 1914, reprinted many times in
updated and revised editions, must be assessed as a work with a serious theoretical
background, unlike any other grammar written by a Turkic author of that time. His
literature textbook that was published in 1926 also presents a very high level and
at the same time is a study on the theory of literature.

Baytursinuli completed a two-year Russian school in Torgay in 1891, then
he studied four years at a school in Orenburg. Between 1895–1909 he worked
as a teacher in various schools for Kazakh children. He was engaged in a mass
protest on the wave of the Russian revolution of 1905 and put under observ-
vation. Arrested in 1909 and jailed in Semey (Semipalatynsk), he was exiled
from Kazakh territories to Orenburg in 1910 where he was forced to live until
1917. It is during the Orenburg period that he, together with Älihan Bökeyhan
and Mirjaqıp Duwlatuli, published the first long-existing Kazakh weekly Qazaq
(1913–1918) and wrote and published his first textbooks. He was very active un-
til 1928, when the repression against the Kazakh intellectuals started, especially
against those who had participated in the national movement. Afterwards he was
arrested and jailed, released in 1934, but in 1937 arrested again, sentenced to
death and executed (Qıyrabayev, Sızdıqova, Qoygeldiyev 2009: 90–93). After
1928, his name disappeared from public life.

It must be said that a detailed, critical assessment of his works is difficult,
for probably no library in the world has all his books. A good collection of
Baytursinuli’s publications, though not all, is kept in the National Library of the
Republic of Kazakhstan, some on microfilms and scanned. There is a good anno-
tated bibliography of Kazakh publications published in 1925 and 1927, compris-
ing the years 1923–1927, recently republished (Duwlatuli 2003: 253–356), as well
as a new catalogue of publications in Arabic and Latin scripts by Asqarbekova and
Zamzayeva, 2006 and 2007, respectively (henceforth AZ and AZ-2).

2. Baytursinuli’s works on language

2.1. Primer (oquw quralı or qazaqça älibə ~ älippe)

Baytursinuli’s role in the creation and implementation of the reformed Arabic writ-
ing for schools in Kazakhstan has been evaluated by many researchers. One of the
best studies in the West that shows its Russian and Soviet background was writ-
ten by Baldauf (1993), while one of the most recent studies in Kazakhstan is Wäli

The first part of Baytursinuli’s primer Oquw quralı lit. ‘tool for reading’
was first published in 1912 in Orenburg (Jüsipulu 1998: 206) and reprinted six
times in 1914, 1921, 1922 (two printings), 1923 and 1925 (Duwlatulı 2003: 258, Baytursınulı 2006 (volume 4): 306). I do not have access to the first edition of this book, as it was unavailable at the National Library of Kazakhstan while I worked on Baytursınulı’s works, and it was absent from the catalogue of the library. Fortunately, a photocopy of the title page was provided in Baytursınulı (1992: 32) and Baytursınulı (2006 (volume 4): 16). It is likely that the fourth edition of 1922 which came out in Tashkent was very similar or identical, since it bears an identical title (AZ 79), although various editions have different numbers of pages, varying from 74 to 96. The title page of the 1922 edition can be seen in a photograph in AZ (13): Detector. It was reprinted two times in 1923 and 1925.

The first publication of 1912 was reprinted in Cyrillic script in Baytursınulı (1992: 32–47), then in Baytursınulı (2006 (volume 4): 16–33). The primer presents 29 letters (i.e. Baytursınulı’s 28 letters and the palatalizer) one by one, provides examples, short phrases and sentences after each letter as well as additional words and short texts for reading in the second part.

This primer combines Baytursınulı’s invention with the rules of easy or so-called phonetic reading, first elaborated by Ismail Bey Gasprinski in the Crimea in the 1880s and spread among the Tatars in Kazan and elsewhere, although the method was adopted from Turkey.

The second part of Oquw quralı was published a year later, also in Orenburg. It is absent from Jüşipulı’s bibliography (1998: 205–214), but the catalogue provides the full title of it in both Arabic and Cyrillic scripts (AZ 75), which may be transcribed as Oquw quralı. Qazaqdan basqa түркі, ‘arab, фарси sөздерine jazilatın өтөрлөө учүн hам огувға tösel欧盟 учүн тәртіб тәртіб утилген айы бөлүгө жалгас. 2-нці китаб ‘Primer. A continuation of the primer composed for teaching and learning letters occurring in words of non-Kazakh origin, i.e. Turkish, Arabic and Persian’, 52 pages (Baytursınulı 1913). According to the editors of Baytursınulı (2006: (volume 5): 280), it was reprinted two times in 1923 and 1924, but the catalogue does not show these editions. ¹

¹ It should be added that there were a few other publications prepared by Baytursınulı and also called Oquw quralı, e.g. one printed in Semey on 30 pages, designated for
When we assess Baytursənulu’s primer, we have to say that the Kazakh enlighteners like him had a very difficult task to do. There were neither Kazakh national schools nor written standard Kazakh. The Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Volga-Ural region as well as to some extent the northern Caucasus and Dagestan used written Eastern Turkic, called Türk (in Kazakh pronunciation [türkü]), called Chaghatai in the West, which existed in a few local variants. Baytursənulu was aware that this literary language, not used in natural communication, was quite distinct from spoken Kazakh and because of multiple Arabic and Persian words difficult to understand. Therefore, he endeavored to combine teaching genuine Kazakh with words and texts characteristic of Türk. The term oquw quralt coined by Baytursənulu shows his invention which manifests more extensively in his grammar of 1914.

Baytursənulu’s primer was very simple and written with a minimum of instructions and remarks. Conciseness is a characteristic feature of Baytursənulu’s style, when we read his works it appears that there is no single excessive word. Whereas we may abridge the narration of some authors, it is not possible with Baytursənulu, since any reduction makes his text incomprehensible.

Baytursənulu was an ardent opponent of the shift to Latin writing. He argued that the modified, reformed Arabic alphabet, Kaz. töte jazuw ‘simple, easy writing’ was quite adequate for Kazakh. He was afraid that the introduction of a new writing system in a nation that had just started its adventure with education would be a disaster. In 1925, one year before the representatives of Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union decided in Baku that all Turkic languages would use a unique Latin alphabet, Baytursənulu prepared a new edition of his primer, entitled Älib-biy. Jaña qural, which was published in 1926 and reprinted two times, the second edition released in 1927 and the third and final in 1928 (AZ 105, 122, Duwlatulõ 2003: 258, 317).

In the new edition Baytursənulu replaced the Ottoman terms with Kazakh equivalents, e.g. usůl-i savtıye with dibis negizgi ādis and dibis ādisi ‘phonetic principle; phonetic method’, usůl-i cedîd with jaña ādis ‘new method’ and the term ālib-biy ‘primer’ with ālib-biy (Baytursənulu 1926: 3).

Although in a table on p. 76 Baytursənulu shows the alphabet consisting of 24 letters, in the main body of the book he in fact presents 28 letters, since four of the twenty-four were taught on pages 66, 70, 72 and 74 with the modifier as ی [i], ئ [ü], ئ [ö], ی [ä]. The alphabet consisted of the basic Arabic letters except those that were unnecessary for Kazakh (ت ح د ص ض ط ع غ ب پ) with the addition of two Persian گ and two Turkic letters ژ for consonants, more exactly, the latter for semi-vowel [w]. The former two letters were also used earlier for some other adults (probably the predecessor of the later Sawat aşqüs, see also a publication co-authored with Şonanulõ, which was a large chrestomathy comprising 412 pages, republished in Cyrillic script in Baytursənulu (2004); see a photocopy of its original title page on p. 21.
Turkic languages, including Ottoman Turkish (though not in all manuscripts and books), whereas the latter two were used for Tatar (again, not in all manuscripts and books). The Kazakh consonant [s] (š) was noted with the letter ğ, as in earlier publications in Kazan, but in the new edition in 1926 it was replaced with ʃ, which rendered Kazakh pronunciation more properly and broke with the old Turkic tradition. The vowels were rendered by five letters ى ى ى ى ى ى, but four of them occurred with the modifier as shown above. While the modifier called däyekşi was Baytursinuli’s invention, the damma above wāw, which rendered [u] and with the däyekşi [ū] was used earlier by Tatar reformists. The use of the diacritical sign above wāw was the object of a debate in Kazakhstan, since in Tatar the letter ّ did not render [u ū], like in Baytursinuli’s alphabet, but [ö Ň], though etymologically Turkic /u ū/, since in Tatar u → Ň and ū → Ň.

In general one has to agree with Baldauf (1993: 255) who stresses that the Kazakh language reform was rooted in Tatar, at least at the beginning, and that linguistically Kazakh was emancipated from Tatar earlier than the writing. Even the idea of däyekşi was first considered by the Tatar reformists, who however did not implement it, so it should be regarded as Baytursinuli’s idea, at least in practice (Baldauf 1993: 272). One has to agree with Baldauf, who argued that the implementation of the reform was easier for the Kazakhs who did not have a long tradition of written literature than for such Turkic peoples as the Tatars, the Uzbeks or the Azerbaijanians and who had to reckon with their written tradition.

2.2. Grammar (til-qural)

Baytursinuli is the author of a complete grammar, i.e. consisting of phonetics, orthography and basic morphology (1914, 1925a), a detailed morphology (1915) and syntax (1925b), although phonetics was just a few paragraphs. Qyrbayev, Sizdiqova and Qoygeldiyev’s (2009: 95) information that the first publication of 1914 is morphology, the second one of 1915 is phonology and a volume “published from 1916 on” is syntax, is inexact. In fact, there is no volume devoted exclusively to phonology and the volume published in 1915 is morphology. The date 1916 provided by these authors is enigmatic, since no Baytursinuli’s work is known to me from that year, nor it is listed in the catalogue.

One should have in mind that all these volumes were of a practical character and intended for schools. Baytursinuli has planned his grammar carefully and published it in subsequent parts, some reprinted, some republished with minor and terminological changes. In the introduction to the first edition he noted that the teachers should instruct pupils slowly, trying to be rather careful and thorough than superficial and hasty. The whole series was planned for three years of instruction in primary schools.
Baytursınulı has explained his interpretation of grammar and the meaning of his term *til-qural* a few times in his grammars; the most extensive definition was presented in his *Til-jumsar* of 1928. He says there that language is a mechanism (*qural*) composed of multiple components and he compares it to a machine (Bayrursınulı 2005 (voume 3): 283). He said that there are two types of language users, understood as the users of a machine: one group of people only has a general knowledge how to use it in practice without knowing language’s inner structure, while the other group of people also knows its deeper structure – they are like specialists who are familiar with the construction of a mechanism. Baytursınulı tried to teach schoolchildren and illiterate adults how language is constructed, how it works, and of what parts it is composed.

2.2.1. First grammar of 1914 (*sarf*)

As mentioned above, this grammar (Baytursunof 1914) is phonetics with orthography and basic morphology. The term *sarf*, although sometimes understood as morphology, in Ottoman Turkish denoted ‘grammar’ (NRTED 985) and in this sense spread in the Crimea and among Volga Tatars. The author says that this is a grammar for the first year of teaching and it contains general information on speech and sentence; words and syllables; syllables and sounds, and the letters used for them as well as orthography; and lastly the forms of words. It was first published in Orenburg in the Tatar printing house of the Huseinov brothers and reprinted in 1918 in Tashkent. Later this grammar was reprinted a few more times, in 1920 and 1922 and recently it was republished in Cyrillic script in Baytursınov (1992: 140–171) and Baytursınulı (2005: 28–69). An updated and linguistically modernised edition appeared in 1925 with the misleading sub-title *Dibis jüyesi men türleri* ‘phonetics and the types of sounds’ (see below) – it was republished in Cyrillic script in Baytursınulı (2005: 70–104).

At the beginning Baytursınulı writes that his grammar is intended for three-year schools. He stresses that the Kazakh children who attend Russian or Tatar schools are educated in these languages and are unable to use Kazakh properly. This is why he has prepared this grammar. Then Baytursınulı gives some general information on language and languages. He says that there are three types of languages: (1) isolating languages (*tübirşik til*); (2) agglutinating languages (*jalğamalı til*) and (3) inflective languages (*qoparmali til*). He gives examples and says that Kazakh is an agglutinating language like Turkish and Finnish.

Proceeding to the description of Kazakh, he makes a distinction between such categories and notions as *söylev* ‘speech’ and *söylem* ‘sentence’ (p. 1), *söylem* ‘sentence’ and *söz* ‘word’, *söz* ‘word’ and *büwun* ‘syllable’ (p. 3), *buwun* ‘syllable’ and *dibis* ‘sound’ (p. 4).
Baytursınulı describes such units of morphology as tübir ‘root’, tuwindı ‘derived (form)’, qos söz ‘compound word’, qosalqi söz ‘enclitic’ and qosmsa ‘suffix’ (p. 19). The suffixes may be lexical (jurnaq) and grammatical (jalğawä). He classifies words into two major groups, atawë söz der lit. ‘naming words’ and şilaw söz der ‘connecting words’. The former group includes such word classes or parts of speech as zat esim ‘noun’ (p. 32), sin esim ‘adjective’ (p. 35), san esim ‘numeral’ (p. 36), esim dik ‘pronoun’ (p. 38), and etistik ‘verb’ (p. 40). The latter group contains üstew ‘adverb’ (p. 42), demew ‘particle and conjunction’ (p. 44), jalğawäq ‘postposition’ and odağay söz ‘interjection’ (for the two latter see the new edition, Baytursınulı 2005: 64).

A drawback of Baytursınulı’s phonetic approach in this grammar is that the sounds are not always clearly distinguished from letters. On the one hand Baytursınulı is quite aware of this difference which is clear from the title of the section Qazaq sözindeği dibisdar hâm olardiñ hârfderi ‘the sounds of the Kazakh language and their letters’ (p. 6) as well as what he writes just below, i.e. Qazaq tilinde 24 dîbîs bar ‘there are 24 sounds in the Kazakh language’ or when he says that Dibisdar dawıstit, dawıssız hâm jartı dawıstı boladi ‘the sounds fall into vowels, consonants and semi-vowels’. Moreover, whenever he thought the term hârf is ambiguous or should be distinguished from ‘vowel’, he used it, e.g. Söz basında a dibisi joq jerde 1 hârfı tursa, ol basça dawustı dibısqá süyew üçin gøyılığan tayaq esebinde goyılsa da aytilmaydı ‘If a letter stands in the initial of a word where there is no vowel a, it stands as a support for another vowel and is not pronounced’ (p. 11). However, despite distinguishing between a sound, dîbîs, and a letter, hârf, he shows five ‘voiced letters’ (dawustı hârfder) below: ە و ئ ى ێ، and not dawustı dibısdar ‘vowels’.

This contradiction was caused by the fact that Baytursınulı prepared an alphabet strictly on the phonetic (more exactly, phonemic) principles according to which each letter renders a distinct sound, i.e. a letter is practically equal to a sound. However, as formerly in his primer, Baytursınulı does not show four front letters with the modifier däyekşi, also called palatalizer. Another reason was Baytursınulı’s very concise style, see above. Wäli (2013: 47) interprets four of Baytursınulı’s five vowels as invariant phonemes, each of which has two variants, one back [a o u ı], the other front [ä ö ü i].

2.2.2. Morphology (sarf, şöz jüyesi)

The first edition of the comprehensive morphology of 1915 has the same title as the above one with the only difference being that the subtitle says it is intended for the second year of study (see the bibliography in Baytursınov 1992: 443).2 It

2 Note that the date on the title page is 1914.
was unavailable to me as it was, absent from the catalogue of the National Library. The analysis is based on a modern edition in Cyrillic script (Baytursınulı 2005: 105–190). This edition is in general reliable, but there are some mistakes stemmed from an incorrect reading of the original.

The morphology discussed here is the most voluminous of the entire series of grammars. In contrast to Baytursınulı’s book on phonetics and basic morphology of 1914 called sarf, republished in 1925, see above, this one does not contain phonetics. It starts with the section söylew bölümleri ‘parts of speech’ (105) and describes nine word classes. The first is zat esim ‘noun’ (105–129). The author divides nouns into jalqı ‘proper’ and jalpı ‘common’ (106). The following noun categories are discussed: jekelik and köptik (ayurs) ‘singular and plural (number)’, qalip ‘form’ of which there are two types, one jay ‘simple’, the other taweldi ‘possession’. In the possessive form the noun takes suffixes that express oñaşa ‘one possessor’ and ortaq ‘more possessors; collective’. The possessive suffixes also show jaq ‘person’: 1st person or mendik ‘I-ness’, 2nd person or sendik ‘you-ness’ and 3rd person or bögdelik ‘other-ness’.

Baytursınulı was ahead of his time in discovering the category of politeness. In addition to the above noun categories, he demonstrated suffixes expressing sipayılıq ‘polite, politeness’ and anayılıq ‘plain, plainness’, e.g. ataların ‘your forefathers PLUR PLAIN’ and atalarıniz ‘your forefathers PLUR POLITE’ (109–110). In the later part of this morphology, he also pointed out the category of politeness on the verb.

The final noun category discussed by Baytursınulı is septik ‘case’. The following six case suffixes and the rules of suffixation are presented: (1) ataw ‘nominative’, (2) ilik ‘genitive’, (3) bars ‘dative’, (4) tabıs ‘accusative’, (5) jatis ‘locative’, and (6) şığıs ‘ablative’ (111 ff). Then Baytursınulı proceeds to word formation, where he discusses the suffixes that form words from nouns (122–129).

Adjectives (sin esim) in Baytursınulı’s classification fall into tek simi ‘expressing a feature pointing to the origin’, e.g. ağas; maqta ‘wooden; made of cotton’ and sir simi ‘expressing a feature’, e.g. biyik; qızıl ‘tall, high; red’ (129). There is also a section on word formation in which the author presents the suffixes that form words from adjectives (134–136).

The next word class is san esim ‘numeral’ with some types such as eseptik, rettik, jadağay, temildik ‘ordinal, cardinal, collective, partial’ (136–137).


Among the verb (etistik) categories there are ten types of diathesis (etis) and fourteen of mood (ray). Diathesis includes some forms that we at present really consider diathesis, i.e. ortaq ‘cooperative’, özdík ‘reciprocal’, özgelik ‘causative’, bedeldi ‘factive causative’, ıraqsız ‘passive’ or şağıs ‘cooperative causative’,
but other types are different categories, i.e. transitivity, such as *sabaqtı* ‘transitive’ and *salt* ‘intransitive’, actionality such as *dürkindi* ‘iterative’ and *ösiňki* ‘intensifying’ (148–152). Among Baytursınuli’s classes of mood there are such that can be taken as modal categories, i.e. *biylik* ‘imperative’, *şarttı* ‘conditional’, *erewil* ‘concessive’, *reniş* ‘recenting’, *qalaw* ‘desiderative’, *senimdi* ‘optative, hoping’, *senimsiz* ‘dubitative’, *boljal* ‘suppositive’, *könis* ‘declarative’, *qayraw* ‘incentive’, and *teris* ‘optative’ but also *tuyiq* ‘infinitive’, *aşıq* ‘plain (i.e. no exponent)’, *muń* ‘sorrowful’, and *azali* ‘affective’ (152–166).

After that Baytursınuli presents four auxiliary verbs that express the progressive and he calls this category of action *nağız osı şaq* ‘true present tense’ (167). There are three converbs, *kösemşe* (168), three participles, *esimše* (174), and at the end of the verb section, formation of words derived from verbs (179–182). Diathesis and mood are illustrated with multiple tables and examples.

The remaining word classes are identical to those in the 1914 grammar, though presented more in-depth.

2.2.3. Phonetics (*dibıs jüyesi*)

As mentioned above, this is a ghost volume. Despite the subtitle *dibıs jüyesi*, the 1925 edition is in fact the fifth updated, revised version of the 1914 book (Duwlatulı 2003: 258); see also the copy of the title page of the original publication in Baytursınuli (2005: 70), which I will provide in the transcription: *Til-qural. Dibıs jüyesi men türleri 1. til tanıtqış kitab. Qazaq-qırğız bilimpazdarınıñ 1-nşi tobınıñ qawlısı boyınşa özgertilib 5-nşi basıluwı* ‘Grammar. Sound system and its parts. First part of the textbook for language teaching. Fifth edition updated according to the decision of the first department of Kazakh-Kirghiz scholars’, and also in Russian: *Грамматика казахского языка. “Тил-Курал” Часть 1-я. Фонетика*. It is an intriguing question why this book was titled in such a misleading way. We may try to explain this inaccuracy supposing that one word, *söz* ‘word’, was dropped from the title *Dibıs jüyesi men türleri*, since in such a case the title would have the form *Dibıs jüyesi men söz türleri* ‘Sound system and word classes’. However, this edition was reprinted twice in two subsequent years 1926 and 1927, apparently in the identical form and with an identical title (AZ 96, 105).

The section on phonetics in the 1925 edition is very similar to the first edition of 1914. There are differences in the lexicon and terminology. In the updated edition some Eastern Turkic words were replaced with Kazakh equivalents, e.g. in place of *söylew häm söylem* there is *söylew men söylem* ‘speech and sentence’ (74), instead of *buwın häm dibıs* there is *buwın men dibıs* ‘syllable and sound’ (77). The Kazakh word *tañba* ‘sign; mark’ was in some paragraphs substituted for the Arabic *härf* ‘letter’ (78) and instead of *jazuw qagliydaları* ‘rules of spelling’,
we see söz jazwimń jalpı erejeleri ‘general rules of writing words’ (83), though ereje used for qağyda is also a loanword, a Persian borrowing, but a more adapted one, and is also present in the earlier version.

As it was mentioned above, it is in this edition that Baytursınulı introduced the term däyekşi ‘modifier’ in the form of the Arabic hamza without a support placed before a word to mark its front vowels. However, he points to the rule of vowel harmony only directly and does not change his approach in his later works. At this point we have to note that vowel harmony in Kazakh was demonstrated as early as 1922–1923 by Dosmuhambetov. Dosmuhanbetov first published his article on this question in the journal Çolpan (see a modern edition: Dosmuhambetov 2010: 39–41, 134–139, 272–280), and shortly after that in 1925 his study appeared in the form of a book (Duwlatuli 2003: 264). Although Baytursınulı had time to revise his approach, he did not do so. It must be observed that neither Baytursınulı nor Dosmuhambetov acknowledged the existence of rounded-unrounded harmony in Kazakh explicitly.

2.2.4. Syntax (söylem jüyesi) and other works

The last part of Baytursınulı’s grammar series is syntax. According to the bibliography in Bautursınov (1992: 443), it was first published in 1923 in Orenburg and was called Söylem jüyesi hâm türleri. Üşinşi til tanıtqış kitap. Birinşi basılıwı ‘The system of sentence and its types. The third part for teaching language. The first edition’. The catalogue lists only its second edition of 1924 under the title Til-qural. Söylem jüyesi hâm türleri, published in Qızıl Orda (AZ 84). The new, third revised edition appeared in print in 1925 with a slightly kazakhised subtitle Söylem jüyesi men türleri (Duwlatuli 2003: 259, AZ 90). Then it was reprinted a few more times, apparently in an unchanged form, since Duwlatuli points to a fourth edition in 1927 (2003: 318; absent from AZ), and AZ shows an eighth edition of 1928, probably the last one (AZ 122). The bibliography in Baytursınulı (2006 (volume 5): 280) points to five editions in the years 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926 and 1927, which contradicts what was said before.

I will discuss the third revised edition of 1925 which was reprinted in Cyrillic characters in Baytursınulı (2005: 191–266), to which I have access. In the introduction the author explains the meaning of the term söylem ‘sentence’, its difference from söylev ‘speech; utterance’ and he says what ‘syntax’ is (191–192). In the subsequent part he deals with the parts of sentence, i.e. bastawiş ‘subject’ (194–199), bayandawiş ‘object’ (199–207), amuqtawiş ‘attribute’ (208–211), tohqatawiş ‘compliment’ (212–216), and pisiqtawiş ‘adverbial’ (216–221). He also points to embedded words that are not strictly integrated with the rest of the sentence. In the second part of the syntax, Baytursınulı shows various types of sentence as well as
subordinate and main clauses (234–253). The basic part of the syntax is followed by examples for exercises.

Baytursınulı also prepared a book called Til jumsar lit. ‘language user’ in two volumes: volume one Til-jumsar. Söylew, oqiw, jazuw tilin jumıs täjiribesi arqlı tanıtatan 1-inşi kitap in 1928, 46 pages (AZ 122), for a photocopy of the title page see Baytursınov (1992: 334), and volume two Til-jumsar. Söylew, oqiw, jazuw tilin jumıs täjiribesi arqlı tanıtatan ekinşi kitap in 1929, 90 pages (AZ 133), which may be translated as ‘Language user. The first/second book teaching spoken, read and written language by exercises’. I have not had access to the original editions, but the first part was republished in Cyrillic script in Baytursınov (1992: 335–356) and Baytursınulı (2005 (volume 3): 283–308). As the author says in the introduction to the first part, this book is a practical aid to teach the structure of the language to children with the application of a new method. Baytursınulı stressed the importance of exercises and practice. The second part was intended to broaden and deepen the acquired knowledge and abilities.

3. Assessment of Baytursınulı’s works on language

Most importantly, we have to answer the question of what is original in Baytursınulı’s grammar and what is modeled on existing grammars he could have used. Looking at morphology, word classes and syntax, it is evident that Russian grammars affected Baytursınulı’s ideas, but his terms and categories are far from just a simple imitation. For example, if we compare his grammar with Russian grammars he had access to, e.g. Vostokov’s grammar of 1831 and some subsequent ones, we see many similarities, but also many differences. What is similar is the order of word classes in morphology, i.e. the noun, the adjective, the numeral, the pronoun, and the verb. However, in Russian grammars of that time there is no common term for the remaining word classes, as Baytursınulı’s şilaw sözder.

Some terms are also similar in meaning to the Russian equivalents, e.g. the name of the nominative ataw and the Russian именительный, but names of other cases are different, e.g. родительный and ilik ‘genitive’, дательный and barıs ‘dative’. Also the term septik ‘case’ has nothing in common with the Russian падеж.

Although the position of the verb is the same as in Russian grammars, the treatment of verb categories is different. The parts of sentence are the same, some and particular units have names with similar meanings, e.g. tolıqtawış and Russian дополнение ‘compliment’, though some are different, e.g. bastawış, Russian подлежащее ‘subject’.

Even if Baytursınulı used Russian grammars as a model, he did it in a creative, not imitative way. It was so because he was aware of the structural difference
between Russian and Kazakh, which he expressed in the introduction to the first book in the series. Therefore, some categories of Russian, e.g. grammatical gender, irrelevant to Kazakh, are not discussed, and some other, e.g. the postposition, are his novelty.

It may be claimed that the following aspects are innovative in his grammar: the description of vowels and consonants; the category of politeness; the classification of possessive suffixes into one possessor and more possessors or collective; the types of diathesis; the types of mood.

It is unlikely that a grammar of a Turkic language could influence his ideas and description. As for Turkish, there were many grammars written in Europe before 1914, but most of them presented the description of Turkish in a pre-modern way. Even if Baytursinulı had access to European grammars in Orenburg between 1910–1914, it is unlikely that he could read Latin, German, or French. We should not forget that his education lasted only six years. Moreover, in 1926 Baytursinulı admitted himself that he was proficient in three languages only: Russian, Kirghiz and his native Kazakh (Baytursinulı 2006 (volume 4): 276). The same problem is with the Turkic languages spoken in Russia. It is unlikely that Baytursinulı could read Böhtlingk’s compendium of Yakut (1851) or Castrén’s grammar of Koibal and Karagas (1857), both written in German, but even if so, the comparison shows that they are quite different. Kazembek’s grammar of Turkish-Tatar was also written in a completely different way (Kazem-bek 1846). There were some grammars of Kazakh, but the only good one written by a Turkologist was that by Melioranski (1894, 1897). However, the comparison of these two grammars shows that Melioranski is very different and could not be a model for Baytursinulı.

Therefore, although his education in Russian and the years spent in Orenburg influenced most of his ideas about language, his description of Kazakh is original and innovative. Although in some respects, such as the relation to Arabic script, Baytursinulı was conservative, he realized the fact that the progress of the Kazakh people was only possible on the basis of the national language. He was convinced that the Kazakhs could get ahead only if they overcame illiteracy and became educated through the medium of their national language. This conviction helped Baytursinulı break with Tatar, Chaghatai and Russian models of description. It helped him understand his language. Most of his linguistic terms are words understood by common people and they are an important key to using the language creatively. It is evident if we look how influential he was in the circle of the emerging Kazakh intelligentsia. Naturally not all of his ideas are correct, as I tried to point out above, as he confused some categories and neglected others.

If we evaluate Baytursinulı’s work we have to take into consideration the circumstances in which he worked. A son of a political victim, he was arrested and jailed a few times and deported as far as Arkhangelsk. His constant travels across the immense lands of Kazakhstan certainly did not facilitate his work; he could not
have a rich library nor other materials to work with. Except for Orenburg, there were no good libraries or bookstores, if any, in most places where he stayed. To really understand how he lived and worked, it is very instructive to visit his museum, in Baytursunuli’s street in Almaty. He was a very modest man and possessed so little.

Lastly, it must be said that Ädebiyet tanıtqış, his study on literature published in 1926, is more original and theoretically better grounded than his works on language. Nobody else in the Turkic world wrote anything of this kind before him. As we can see, Baytursunuli was motivated by practical needs. Initially, he did not write theoretical studies, since there were few people to read it. Therefore, his first task was to bring literacy to the Kazakhs and after a very short period of time he could see the results. We can be sure that Baytursunuli would write a comprehensive grammar with a better theoretical background, if not the ban, persecution and imprisonment. Therefore, the evaluation of Ädebiyet tanıtqış should be the subject of another, separate article, a homage that should be paid to this exceptional man not only in Kazakhstan but in the whole Turkic world. This has already been done by the Kazakh authors in Kazakh. The most thorough evaluation of Baytursunuli’s Ädebiyet tanıtqış was presented by Isimaqova (2009: 167–176). She argues that some ideas about the novel known as part of Bakhtin’s theory of the 1970s (in fact, his first study was published in 1929) were already formulated by Baytursunuli (Isimaqova 2009: 174).

4. Baytursunuli’s impact

A great tragedy of Kazakh culture, science and national language is that nearly all nation-minded intellectuals, especially those who participated or supported the Alash movement were persecuted, condemned and executed in the 1930s. The name and the works of Baytursunuli were banned and his name appeared anew only in 1989 when a selection of his works was published in the transcription to the current standard Cyrillic writing (Baytursinov 1989). This first new edition was in some points incomplete and some proper names were transformed into Russian forms. The most complete and reliable publication is the five-volume selection of his writings republished in the 2000s (Baytursunuli 2003–2006).

As Baldauf (1993: 273) has demonstrated, his idea of modifier (däyekși) had a great influence not only in Kazakhstan but also outside both on script reformers and advocates of Latin. It was accepted by the Tatars and the Kirghiz, for Kirghiz see also Wäli’s notice (2007: 36). In Baldauf’s opinion (1993: 260) Baytursunuli’s reformed script is the only one that can really be considered phonetic.

Despite the political ban, most of his ideas about language and his multiple terms survived. For example, all names of case suffixes, the terms for ‘diathesis’, ‘mood’, all names of word classes, i.e. noun, adjective, verb etc., the name of such
basic linguistics units as subject, object, predicate, attribute, complement, types of sentence and clauses that he coined are used until presently. Similarly, nearly all his terms of morphology and many terms of phonetics are also retained, such as consonant, vowel, suffix, ending, stem, root and derivation. Baytursınuli was aware that Kazakh must be protected against Tatar and Russian. The emancipation from Tatar succeeded, but Russian was still a great danger. We can see how disastrous Russian influence proved on Kazakh which started in Kazakhstan after the communists got rid of such people as Baytursınuli, Bökeyhan and Duwlatuli, and only allowed to work those who slavishly did what they wanted.

Naturally, not all Baytursınuli’s terms have survived. Some of them, e.g. *til-qural*, are not used any longer and now the international term borrowed via Russian, *grammatika*, is used – see e.g. Jiyenbayuli’s Grammar of 1930, designed for schools (AZ-2 23), as well as many other subsequent grammars. Another term created by Baytursınuli, *oquw quralı*, was replaced with *oquwlıq* ‘textbook’.

However, some Kazakh authors have returned to Baytursınuli’s terminology. For example, Mirzabekov’s practical phonetics published in 1993 as *Qazaq tili fenetikasi* ‘Phonetics of the Kazakh language’ in the 1999 edition was renamed *Qazaq tiliniñ dıbıs jüyesi* ‘the sound system of the Kazakh language’, exactly in Baytursınuli’s spirit. Moreover, the term *oquwlıq* in the subtitle was replaced with Baytursınuli’s *oquw quralı* as well.

Baytursınuli, after whom the Institute of Linguistics at the Kazakh Academy of Sciences is named, is certainly the founder of the Kazakh linguistic school and language teaching. His classifications, concepts and terms are encountered in most textbooks for Kazakh in Kazakhstan. Regrettably, his ideas could not develop for so many years and after the ban on him and other independent Kazakh scholars almost all innovations in linguistics were copied from Soviet linguistics and cut off from the rest of the free world. This is still often seen in Kazakhstan, though a group of conscious Kazakh linguists are doing their best to bring his heritage back to Kazakh linguistics. The greatest homage to Baytursınuli was paid with the appearance of the commemorating volume edited by Malbaqov and Sızdıq (2013), whose title is very instructive of how patriotic Kazakhs respect him: “Ahmet Baytursınuli – spiritual leader of the Kazakhs”. However, his ideas about language and literature are not familiar to the international reader; only Baldauf has evaluated Baytursınuli’s contribution to the creation of a reformed writing system for Kazakh and its impact. Therefore, this is still a task to be undertaken.

**Symbols**

<> graphic representation in ambiguous cases
[] phonetic representation
// phonemic representation
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