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THE DECEPTIVE PRODUCTIVITY OF GREEK AND LATIN FORMATIVES IN KAZAKH LINGUISTIC TERMINOLOGY

Abstract. While compiling a trilingual dictionary of Greek and Latin terminological elements used in linguistic terminology, the formatives VOC-, CATA-, and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- were identified as the only candidates for reverse configuration status. The Kazakh material initially demonstrated productivity where the English and Russian material did not. The productivity of each formative was verified in two stages: first, its dictionary attestation was established, and then its actual combination with different bases in modern academic literature was examined. A line-by-line analysis of seven primary sources of Kazakh-language scientific discourse did not confirm this initial assumption, since in every case the formative occurred as part of a word borrowed in its entirety. Kazakh case, number, and word-forming markers are attached to the word as a whole, while the formative does not participate in this process as a separable and combinable element. This type of inflection is typical of any assimilated borrowing in an agglutinative language and does not indicate the productivity of its parts. The same diagnostic criterion, when applied to all the languages, proved less reliable for Kazakh precisely because of this regular suffixation, which led to the misleading finding. No reverse configuration was found in the corpus under study; the three items in question represent not exceptions to the general typological asymmetry but a separate category – more specifically, cases of words borrowed in their entirety and mistakenly classified as productive derivation.

It is recommended that this criterion be tested using data from another agglutinative language. The research findings are methodologically significant for the terminography of languages with different types of inflection.

Keywords: terminological element; formative productivity; reverse configuration; derivational word formation; agglutinative language; trilingual terminography; typological asymmetry

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Introduction

Linguists differ in their opinions on the classification of the Greek and Latin elements. Bauer considers that there is no distinct boundary between roots and affixes and there is only a transitional zone (Bauer, 1998). Those scholars who admit this class can be divided into two groups: the first includes word compounding, abbreviation and analogy (Mattiello, 2022). The second group narrows the concept to affixoid (Kastovsky, 2009). It is not clear if the specific element is integrated into the recipient language in the same way as an ordinary loan word (Pulcini and Milani, 2017); and if the formative productivity is transferred automatically from one language to another (Panocová and ten Hacken, 2020). The distinction of the status of Greek and Latin elements and the nature of their productivity are still being actively discussed (Hayashi, 2024). These elements have previously been studied in terms of linguistic terminology, primarily at the level of their semantics and functions (Vasilieva, 1983). The issue of whether these elements keep the status of productive word-forming units after their inclusion in a typologically different language as the agglutinative Kazakh language, remains largely uninvestigated.

The linguistic terminographic dictionary (Suleimenova, Azamatova, 2026) contains 111 Greek and Latin term elements in the Kazakh, English, and Russian languages. When developing this dictionary, three forms (VOC-, CATA-, and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT-) were standing out as the only candidates for the status of reverse configuration. In these forms, the Kazakh language was the language that turned out to be productive, while the other two languages were not. Before being accepted as a significant finding but not as an artifact of insufficient verification, it had to be verified separately. Of these three formatives, two of them are of Greek

origin. CATA- originates from the Greek word *κατά*, which means 'down', 'against', or 'according to', while ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- comes from *ὄνομα*, *ὀνοματ*- which means 'name.' VOC- originates from the Latin term *vox*, *vocis*, which means 'voice' and is also the source of the Latin verb *vocare*, which means 'to call.' In ancient Greek and Latin, as well as in the international language of science, each of the three formatives has the ability to combine with different lexical bases. The reason why this investigated case is interesting lies in the fact that the element that is productive at the level of international scientific discourse turns out to be the integral part of the whole word in all receptor languages simultaneously.

The present article conducts this verification line-by-line according to the primary sources of the Kazakh scientific discourse for each formative and demonstrates that we do not have an exception from the whole picture but a phenomenon different by its nature.

Materials and methods

The material of research includes two groups of sources. The first group comprises the trilingual terminographic dictionary (Suleimenova, Azamatova, 2026). The dictionary is based on twelve sources of linguistic terminology. There is a set of four dictionaries for each of the three languages. It is the material that established the dictionary fixation of all 111 Greek and Latin terminological elements of the corpus. The second group includes seven primary sources of the Kazakh scientific discourse. These sources were used to verify the productivity of VOC- (Aralbayev, 1988; Omarbekova, 2023), CATA- (Meirmanova & Kenzhegulova, 2021; Abdikarim, 2022), and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- (Aidarbek, 2010; Rustemova, 2013; Beibitova et al., 2025).

Only three of the 111 term elements have been classified as candidates for the status of reverse configuration. The formative was described as productive while the other two languages had a reverse case which called for a different verification using the second group of sources. The productivity of the three formatives in English and Russian was previously established in a wider corpus verification and will not be considered again in this paper. The objective of this study was to verify the formatives in the Kazakh language resources as the incorrect classification occurred in that language.

At the first stage of the research, the formative was fixed in the normative dictionaries and established in several independent publications by using the method of exhaustive sampling. Also, the formative was considered fixed in the cases when a dictionary item divided a larger term into the constituent parts by brackets.

The formative was considered productive if it participated regularly in the formation of new words rather than in the separate isolated cases of usage (Bauer, 2001), since a single dictionary attestation was not sufficient for this. A comparable two-stage design, combining dictionary and corpus evidence to establish the productivity of new combining forms, has recently been applied to American English (Huang & Gao, 2025). The following verification stage was based on the word formation analysis, not on the etymological one. This stage required identifying at least two words that are not only listed in dictionaries but also factually used in the modern academic literature. These two words should combine the formative with different bases instead of representing two forms of one and the same derivative. Even if two words of such a pair mean different phenomena, this is not sufficient, since both can be transferred into the language in the ready-made form, by the same way of borrowing, and then the formative in them is not an active element of word formation, but only a recognizable part of the common donor word. In other words, it was necessary to distinguish a word constructed by attaching an element to an independent base within a given language from a word entirely borrowed from another language along with this element.

Results

VOC-

According to the preliminary classification, the element VOC- was referred to the cases of reverse configuration, since only Kazakh out of the three languages demonstrated the productive behavior of the formative. This was the only similar example in the corpus, so it required a separate verification before being considered a theoretically significant finding.

The verification was conducted using two sources, and it is important to immediately specify what they prove and what they do not. Neither Aralbayev nor Omarbekova discuss the origin of the words *vocalism* and *vocative* and do not qualify them as borrowings. The etymological status of these words is established by using other data. The data obtained during the study show the real terminological functioning and grammatical mastery of complete words with this component in the Kazakh-language scientific text.

Aralbayev offers three specific pieces of evidence of this statement. If we start with the subject relationship, then his work refers *vocalism* to the system of vowel phonemes of the modern Kazakh language: “Қазіргі қазақ тілінде он бір дауысты фонема бар. Вокализм солардың өзара қарым-қатысынан құралады” (1988, p. 30) (lit. There are eleven vowel phonemes in the modern Kazakh language. Vocalism is based on their interaction). As for its terminological function, the word is used not

by chance, but as the name of the object of description. The section is called “Қазақ вокализмі” (lit. Kazakh vocalism), and all subsequent analysis of vowels is based on this term. From the point of view of grammatical mastery, the form *вокализмі* (lit. vocalism) indicates the Kazakh possessive marker *-i*, that is, the word is embedded in Kazakh grammar as an ordinary noun. At the same time, the source does not establish that the word is formed by means of the Kazakh language, or that it is perceived as an independent element. He also does not claim that the term is opposed to other words with VOC-, or that this element is productive.

Omarbekova has a different picture: as the central subject of analysis, anthroponymic vocatives are collected from M. Auezov's letters and grouped according to their lexico-grammatical features (2023, p. 130–143). The article contains the forms *вокативтер*, *вокативтердің*, *вокативтерге*, *вокативтерді*, *вокативі* and the derivative *вокативтік*. *Vocatives* are understood here as Kazakh personal names (*Muratai*, *Yskak*, *Smagul*, *Gabiden* and others). Omarbekova, like Aralbayev, does not qualify *vocative* as a loanword and does not consider *voc-* as a separable element. The listed forms are obtained by attaching Kazakh affixes to the same word “*vocative*”.

The *вокодеп/vocoder* pair, which we initially considered as a candidate for transcoding status, was also verified separately. However, since there was only one source for the Russian version, which was insufficient to confirm the regularity of this model, the pair was excluded from the evidence base.

Both sources confirm the lexico-terminological and morphosyntactic integration of these (complete) words into the Kazakh scientific discourse. *Vocalism* is a mastered international term that is regularly applied to the vowel system of the Kazakh language, and *vocative* is a morphologically mastered term that is regularly applied to anthroponymic addresses in a Kazakh–language epistolary text. Both cases indicate the borrowing and subsequent grammatical adaptation of whole lexemes, but they do not indicate reproducible Kazakh word formation with VOC-. No source considers it as a separate productive element.

The initial reverse configuration for this position is not confirmed, but not because borrowing as such has been proven, but because there is no positive evidence of the formative productivity in any of the primary sources.

CATA-

The initial classification referred CATA- to the same type of reverse configuration as VOC-: unlike English and Russian, Kazakh demonstrated the productive behavior of the formative.

Meirmanova and Kenzhegulova define the word *cataphora* as “*Катафораны шартты түрде “алдын алушы” деп қолданамыз*” (2021, p. 136) (lit. We

conventionally designate the cataphora as a precursor). In the same article, there are forms such as *катафораны* (the word in the accusative case), *катафоралық* (the relative adjective with the Kazakh suffix *-лық*, meaning “referring to the cataphor”) and *катафоралы* (the relative adjective with the Kazakh suffix *-лы*, meaning “having a cataphorical property”). At the same time, *cata-* is not divided anywhere as a separate element, *катафоралық* and *катафоралы* are formed using Kazakh suffixes from the whole word *катафора*, and the article does not explain the meaning of *cata-* or formation of other terms with its help. Other mentions of the cataphora found (a secondary student retelling and a Russian-language article without Kazakh material) do not add independent data.

The word *catachresis* is found in Abdikarim in the enumeration of a number of stylistic devices: “catachresis, oxymoron, hendiadys, enallage” (2022, p. 95). We see that here the form of this word remains unchanged, and there are no Kazakh inflectional indicators. The *cata-* element is not attached to an independent base here or anywhere else.

Cataphora and catachresis in Kazakh scientific discourse turn out to be the same case as *vocalism and vocative* in 3.1, that is, the complete borrowed terms have grammatically been mastered by Kazakh morphology, but without being separated into *cata-* as a separable, productive element. The initial reverse configuration for CATA- is not confirmed for the same reason as for VOC-.

ONOMAS-/ONOMAT-

The forms ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- initially showed the same picture as VOC- and CATA-: a productive form in Kazakh with its absence in English and Russian.

Aidarbek introduces the term in a monograph entirely devoted to Kazakh terminology: “Ономасиологияның ең басты мақсаты – сөйлеушінің аталымдық қызметті орындау барысында ұстанатын негізгі принциптерін анықтау” (2010, p. 12) (lit. The main purpose of onomasiology is to determine the principles that guide the speaker in nominative activity). This word is not a one-time mention here, but the central concept of the entire book, so you can find its different forms: *ономасиологияның* (genitive case), *ономасиологияда* (local case), *ономасиологиялық* (relative adjective), *ономасиологияны* (accusative case). At the same time, the monograph does not single out *onomas-* anywhere as a separate element and does not use it to construct other Kazakh terms. *Ономасиологиялық* is formed by the Kazakh suffix from the whole word, and not from the element *onomas-*.

Onomatopoeia shows a similar picture from two sources. Rustemova explains the origin of the word through Greek: “Ономатопоеа сөзі көне гректің *ὀνοματοποιᾶ* ... деген сөзінен шыққан” (2013, p. 98) (lit. The word “onomatopoea”

comes from the ancient Greek ὀνοματοποιᾶ) and explains the initial components as *ὄνομα* “name”, *ποιεῖω* “do”. The author explains the origin of the complete word in its entirety, rather than showing that the *onomat-* functions as a productive element of Kazakh word formation. Beibitova et al. give a broader case range: *ономатопеялық*, *ономатопеяның*, *ономатопеяны*, as well as the word *ономатопеялар-ды* in the plural form as a stable declension and word formation from the whole base (2025, p. 56, etymology p. 49). The Kazakh suffix is productive here on a borrowed base, but not the *onomat-* itself.

Onomasiology and onomatopoeia agree with the already analyzed *vocalism/vocative* and *cataphora/catachresis* in one point: we have complete borrowed terms mastered by Kazakh morphology, but not formatives, isolated and productive as such. As in the first two examples, the reverse configuration is not confirmed here. Table 1. summarizes the data for all seven sources.

Table 1. Verification of the productivity of VOC-, CATA-, and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- in the Kazakh material

Position	Source	Kazakh forms	Indicators	Verdict
VOC-	Aralbayev, 1988, p. 30	<i>вокализмі</i>	possessive	not productive
VOC-	Omarbekova, 2023, p. 138	<i>вокативтер</i> , <i>вокативтердің</i>	plural, genitive case	not productive
CATA-	Meirmanova and Kenzhegulova, 2021, p. 136	<i>катафораны</i> , <i>катафоралық</i> , <i>катафоралы</i>	accusative case, two derivational forms	not productive
CATA-	Abdikarim, 2022, p. 95	<i>катахреза</i>	none (unchanged form)	not productive
ONOMAS-/ONOMAT-	Aidarbek, 2010, p. 12	<i>ономасиологияның</i> , <i>-да, -лық, -ны</i>	genitive, locative cases, relative adjective, accusative case	not productive
ONOMAS-/ONOMAT-	Rustemova, 2013, p. 98	<i>ономатопоеа</i>	none (unchanged form)	not productive
ONOMAS-/ONOMAT-	Beibitova et al., 2025, p. 56	<i>ономатопеялық</i> , <i>-ның, -ны, -лар-ды</i>	relative adjective, genitive and accusative cases, plural	not productive

Discussion

None of the three candidates for the status of reverse configuration (see section 2) was confirmed in section 3. The formative turned out to be unproductive not only

in Kazakh, but also in the other two languages. This is not the same case that confirms the general pattern of asymmetry once again, since VOC-, CATA-, and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- are not on a par with positions where only English and Russian are productive.

We propose to consider them as a special, independent category, separate from both the typical asymmetry and the hypothetical reverse configuration. In other words, we classify it as a category introduced in this study, rather than introduced from an existing typology. Taking into account the fact that the remaining 108 positions of the corpus were not such candidates from the beginning, no real reverse configurations were found in the collected material.

A narrower methodological result concerns the nature of the error itself in the original classification. In all three situations, the Kazakh material demonstrates a strong grammatical mastery of the complete borrowed word. *Вокализмі* indicates a possessive marker. *Вокативтер* and *вокативтердің* are indicators of number and case. *Катафораны*, *катафоралық* and *катафоралы* are formed using case and word-forming affixes. *Ономасиологияның*, *ономасиологияда*, *ономасиологиялық* and *ономасиологияны* demonstrate the same set of case and word-formation forms. *Ономатопеялық*, *ономатопеяны* and *ономатопеялар-ды* repeat the same pattern.

Seven sources were independently verified, but the result was the same: both case and word-formation indicators were regularly attested, but the formative itself never acts as a separable, combined unit.

The grammatical mastery of a complete word by agglutinative indicators and the synchronous productivity of a formative within this word are different phenomena, and it turned out to be easy to confuse them not once, but three times, on independent material and in different sources each time.

Modern morphology for this category distinguishes between an affix, which is combined with different roots of its class, and a welded form. It is a related element, phonologically and structurally inseparable from the specific base with which it once merged (Haspelmath, 2021). The formative *voc-/cata-/onomas-* is productively connected to the base by means of the recipient language in none of the seven sources. Each word where it occurs is borrowed in this form entirely, ready-made, and not assembled from a formative and an independent base within the Kazakh, English or Russian word formation. At the same time, the Kazakh language reveals a predominantly agglutinative organization of the word form, although a single set of features that reliably unites all languages of this type has not been empirically established (Haspelmath, 2009). For the present study, special attention should be paid to the following point: the indicator is attached to almost any noun, regardless of its

origin and internal structure (cf. Kirchner, 1998; Abish, 2022), which is confirmed by the material of specific case indicators (Dees, 2025).

It is significant not only the fact that there is a complete borrowing (it is expected for international scientific vocabulary in any of the three languages of the studied corpus), but that the same diagnostic test gave different verdicts depending on the language. As shown by a broader verification of the corpus (see section 2), for English and Russian material, the referential difference of the pair (*vocative and vocalic* really mean different phenomena) was considered insufficient to conclude about productivity. Both words were recognized as integral borrowings in spite of this difference, which is consistent with independent results on the degree of Latinization for the same language pair based on terminology from related fields (Sokolova, 2022). The same test initially worked differently for the Kazakh language because of this regular suffixation (see above), which created a deceptive impression of mastery exactly in the point where there was no such signal for English and Russian material at all. We believe that the same productivity criterion should be applied to different languages equally strictly, and agglutinative morphology is not the basis for a milder verification, but a source of additional risk of a false positive result.

The distinction between these two phenomena can serve as a hypothesis for testing on other agglutinative material, and not just a diagnostic observation based on Kazakh data. For lexicographical practice, it also means a more specific consequence. The trilingual terminographic dictionary based on this study (Suleimenova & Azamatova, 2026), like any similar publication for agglutinative languages, encounters this distinction whenever it is necessary to decide whether to allocate a formative to a separate dictionary entry as an independent word-formation unit. The article has shown the example of all three forms when a grammatically mastered borrowing is at the risk of being periodically considered as productive derivation without strict two-step verification. Moreover, word-forming suffixes, unlike the case and numerical formalization of a borrowed word, have already been described as an independent, truly productive mechanism for creating new terms through calque (Aldash et al., 2025), and the inconsistency of terminological practice between related Turkic languages is fixed as a separate problem requiring coordination (Kurmanbaiuly, 2025).

Conclusion

The formatives VOC-, CATA- and ONOMAS-/ONOMAT- never act as separable units of word formation in the Kazakh material. In all three cases, the element is closely linked to the specific base from which it was borrowed, and does not combine freely with other bases. There is no reverse anomaly in the corpus; there is

only an appearance generated by the fact that an agglutinative language grammatically masters any noun, regardless of its origin.

The article considers only three positions of one (Kazakh) language. The productivity of the English and Russian material is taken from a broader verification of the corpus and is not reestablished here, although the corpus itself (Suleimenova, Azamatova, 2026) serves as the material of the entire case study. Before considering the proposed distinction as a general diagnostic criterion, we recommend verification on material from another agglutinative language. Trilingual terminographic publications for languages of this type require a method to differentiate one word from the other, otherwise a complete borrowing will continue to resemble productive derivation.

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ҚАЗАҚ ЛИНГВИСТИКАЛЫҚ ТЕРМИНОЛОГИЯСЫНДАҒЫ ГРЕК-ЛАТЫН ФОРМАНТТАРЫНЫҢ АЛДАМШЫ ӨНІМДІЛІГІ

Аңдатпа. Лингвистикалық терминология саласындағы грек-латын терминоэлементтерінің үштілді сөздігін құрастыру барысында ВОК-, КАТА- және ОНОМАС-/ОНОМАТ- деген үш форманттың кері конфигурация мәртебесіне жалғыз үміткер екені анықталды. Қазақ тілінің материалы ағылшын және орыс тілдерінде байқалмаған тұстарда бастапқыда өнімділік танытқан еді. Форманттың өнімділігі екі түрлі кезеңде тексерілді: алдымен оның сөздікте тіркелеуі, содан соң қазіргі заманғы ғылыми айналымда әртүрлі негіздермен нақты тіркесімділігі қаралды. Қазақтілді ғылыми дискурстың жеті бастапқы дереккөзін жолма-жол талдау жасау бұл бастапқы болжамды растамады, себебі формант барлық жағдайда тұтастай енген кірме сөздің құрамына кіреді. Қазақ тіліндегі септік, сандық және сөзжасам көрсеткіштері

сөзге бүтіндей жалғанады, ал формант дербес бөлінетін әрі бірігетін элемент ретінде бұл қосылу процесіне қатыспайды. Мұндай сөз түрлену құбылысы агглютинативті тілдегі кез келген игерілген кірме сөздерге тән қасиет болып табылады және оның құрамдас бөліктерінің өнімділігіне дәлел бола алмайды. Барлық тілдерге бірдей қолданылған осы диагностикалық критерий қазақ тіліне қатысты дәл осы тұрақты жұрнақтану құбылысының салдарынан әлсіреп, алдамшы нәтижеге алып келді. Зерттелген корпуста өнімділіктің кері конфигурациясы мүлдем кездеспейді, ал аталған үш позиция жалпы типологиялық асимметриядан тыс ауытқу емес, жеке санатты, дәлірек айтқанда, өнімді деривация ретінде қате қабылданған тұтас кірме сөздердің мысалдарын құрайды. Бұл критерийді басқа агглютинативті тілдердің материалында тексеру ұсынылады. Зерттеу нәтижелері сөз түрлену типі әртүрлі тілдердің терминографиясы үшін әдіснамалық тұрғыдан маңызды болып табылады.

Түйінді сөздер: терминоэлемент; форманттың өнімділігі; кері конфигурация; сөзжасамдық деривация; агглютинативті тіл; үштілді терминография; типологиялық асимметрия.

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ОБМАНЧИВАЯ ПРОДУКТИВНОСТЬ ГРЕКО-ЛАТИНСКИХ ФОРМАНТОВ В КАЗАХСКОЙ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ТЕРМИНОЛОГИИ

Аннотация. При составлении трехязычного словаря греко-латинских терминологических элементов в лингвистической терминологии было обнаружено, что форманты ВОК-, КАТА- и ОНОМАС-/ОНОМАТ- оказались единственными кандидатами на статус обратной конфигурации. Казахский материал первоначально демонстрировал продуктивность там, где английский и русский ее не показывали. Продуктивность форманта проверялась в два этапа: сначала устанавливалась его словарная фиксация, затем реальное сочетание с разными основами в современном научном обороте. Построчный анализ семи первичных источников казахоязычного научного дискурса этого

первоначального предположения не подтвердил, так как формант во всех случаях входит в состав целиком заимствованного слова. Казахские падежные, числовые и словообразовательные показатели присоединяются к слову целиком, а формант как отделяемый и комбинируемый элемент в этом присоединении не участвует. Подобное словоизменение свойственно любому ассимилированному заимствованию в агглютинативном языке и ничего не говорит о продуктивности его частей. Один и тот же диагностический критерий, примененный ко всем языкам, для казахского оказался ослаблен именно из-за этой регулярной суффиксации, что и породило обманчивую находку. В исследуемом корпусе обратная конфигурация продуктивности нигде не встречается, и обозначенные три позиции представляют собой не исключение из общей типологической асимметрии, а отдельную категорию, точнее случаи целостного заимствования, ошибочно принятые за продуктивную деривацию. Рекомендуется проверить этот критерий на другом агглютинативном материале. Результаты исследования являются методологически значимыми для терминографии языков с разным типом словоизменения.

Ключевые слова: терминоэлемент; продуктивность форманта; обратная конфигурация; словообразовательная деривация; агглютинативный язык; трехязычная терминография; типологическая асимметрия

Authors' contributions

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