

Nyamsuren Batjantsan, *Zur Bildung moderner Begriffe im Khalkha Mongolischen* Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2014, 184 pp.

The book under review *Zur Bildung moderner Begriffe im Khalkha Mongolischen* is a publication of Nyamsuren Batjantsan's doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Professor Emeritus Michael Weiers at the University of Bonn. It was printed 2014 by Harrassowitz Verlag in Wiesbaden. The author analyses *termini technici* in the contemporary Mongolian¹ language with the aid of Werner Betz's typology of linguistic borrowing.

Dr. Nyamsuren Batjantsan points out that the way modern *termini technici* have been created in Mongolian so far has been neither homogenous nor binding. As the author of the book mentions in her work, every economic system requires its own technical terminology. After Mongolians switched from the planned economy to the market economy, the Khalkha language was suddenly in need to absorb numerous technical terms from various foreign languages to cover the meaning of new elements of the economic, political and social reality. In particular, it received a strong boost through the emergence of various loan translations and new Mongolian words defining the achievements of modern technologies. Having noticed that there has been lack of consequence in the creation of modern *termini technici*, the author takes the challenge to analyze and present the mechanisms of forming new Mongolian terms in the past, i. e. before 1989/1990. As a main source of information, she uses seasonal series published by the State Commission for Terminology. On the basis of her observations regarding the previous borrowing processes, she suggests the way of forming new terms in the future. Therefore, the main objective of the author is to propose the method of creating contemporary items in the written Mongolian language that can be checked against potential flaws and used in a repetitive manner.

In her work, Nyamsuren Batjantsan analyzes the *Glossary of Mongolian Technical Terms* (1958) by Frederick N. Buck, and 147 issues of *The report of State Commission for Terminology* regarding 26 disciplines that have been released quarterly between 1954–1989. She orders new Khalkha lexical items to the specific categories of Betz's system, e. g. foreign words, loan words, assimilated loanwords etc., while trying to discover the mechanisms that have been prevailing in forming the modern *termini technici* until 1989/1990.

The book consists of 10 chapters, and the first one constitutes a brief introduction, as well as a presentation of economic, scientific and global factors that caused the increase of loanwords in Mongolian language after the country adopted the market economy. Chapter 2 relates specifically to the development of writing systems in Mongolia, starting from the Uyghur system, through the Latin alphabet, to the Cyrillic script. Chapter 3 presents the state of research on loanwords in the Khalkha language, and briefly summarizes Werner Betz's typology of borrowings. It also includes literature, dictionaries and lexicological works on the contemporary Mongolian terminology and the results of research carried out by the State Commission for Terminology in particular. Chapters 4–9 show categories

¹ In most instances, the term *Mongolian* is used interchangeably with *Khalkha* in the book.

of loanwords according to Werner Betz's typology and are followed by brief summaries. The author systematically puts Mongolian borrowings into these groups of loanwords. However, it is not an ordinary list of borrowings. Nyamsuren Batjantsan tries to ascribe the origin (i. e. the language from which the word was borrowed) to the analyzed Mongolian terms. She poses the question how these terms have been formed, and also endeavours to plan a system for creation of new words. Chapter 10 is a summary of research carried out by the author and suggestions regarding the future creation of *termini technici*. It also includes an interesting remark on the need to create a *Business Mongolian* language in the future, specifies challenges that might await Mongolian language due to the process of globalization and the need for further standardization of the language.

The results of Nyamsuren Batjantsan research show that the majority (69%) of borrowings in the Mongolian language are foreign words (*Fremdwörter* – not much assimilated into the language from a phonetic and morphological perspective) and loanwords (*Lehnwörter* – much more assimilated). Loan translations (*Lehnübersetzung*), where every part of the term has been translated into Mongolian, constitute 14% of the borrowings. Loan creations (*Lehnschöpfung*) – Mongolian terms that have a Mongolian morphological structure and form that have been invented to translate a foreign term account for 9% of the group. Loan renditions, where particular parts received loose translation and some parts have been literary translated (*Lehnübertragung*), constitute 5%. Partly loanwords (*Teillehnwörter*), where a part of a term is a loan word, whereas the other part has been translated into the receiving language, take as much as 3%. Close to 0% represents the group of words that have been present in Mongolian for a very long time, but they borrowed new meanings from foreign words, so that now they have loan meanings (*Lehnbedeutung*). Consequently, the Author makes it clear that Khalkha language easily absorbs foreign words and that the State Committee for Terminology was successful in adjusting the foreign terminology to Mongolian morphology and phonetic conditions. Nyamsuren Batjantsan also mentions that there were clear attempts of this committee to replace the prevailing Russian borrowings with the translation of whole phrases into Mongolian (Loan translation – *Lehnübersetzung*) or with a borrowed translation (Loan rendition – *Lehnübertragung*). The Author highlights the fact that most borrowings that appeared in Mongolian from 1958 to 1989 originally came from Russian, followed by Chinese, German and English languages. It might be surprising that Tibetan language was not one of the main sources of borrowings, given the traditional ties between Mongolia and Tibet. The dominance of Russian borrowings certainly reflects the leadership of the USSR in the group of countries to which Mongolia belonged during the works of State Committee for Terminology.

As Nyamsuren Batjantsan legitimately points out, the methodology of introducing loanwords into Mongolian language has not attracted enough attention of scholars yet. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that Munhtuya Nadmid wrote her doctoral thesis *Neologisms in the political, legal, economic, technological and scientific terminology of the contemporary Mongolian language* (*Neologizmy w terminologii politycznej, prawnej, ekonomicznej i naukowo-technicznej współczesnego języka mongolskiego*) under the

supervision of Professor Stanisław Godziński from the Department of Turkish Studies and Inner Asian Peoples, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw in 2007. Although Munhtuya Nadmid did not concentrate her work on Werner Betz's typology of linguistic borrowings, she highlighted the origins of the borrowings in the Mongolian language and analyzed loanwords from the perspective of their structure, i. e. simple loanwords, compound loan phrases, noun phrases consisting of 3 parts and noun phrases formed by numerous elements. Unfortunately, the thesis has never been published and has not been translated from Polish into other languages, and understandably Nyamsuren Batjantsan did not have the opportunity to read it. Moreover, a worth mentioning, positive move towards the standardization of Mongolian language comes in 2015, 1 year after publishing of *Zur Bildung moderner Begriffe im Khalkha Mongolischen* by Nyamsuren Batjantsan. Namsrai Munkhtsetseg from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences presented a speech *Today's Situation of Mongolian terminology standardization* in the European Parliament on December 3rd 2015 that supports many of Nyamsuren Batjantsan's theses and most importantly, highlights the fact that standardization of language is indispensable for further development of a country. At the moment, the author of this review has access to the text of the speech only through the website of Directorate-General for Translation Terminology Coordination Unit <http://www.termcoord.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Namsrai-term-standardization.pdf> [Access date: 15/01/2016].

Nyamsuren Batjantsan's book offers a substantial help to readers searching for information on technical terminology that appeared in Mongolian before the collapse of the communist system. The book's great asset is that the Author chose a very clear and logical way of proposing methods of creating *termini technici* in the future. Consequently, by carrying out research on the lexical items created in the past, she develops mechanisms to be applied in the future directly following the researched period. In addition, the book deserves significant attention because the Author promotes the typology developed by Werner Betz in 1949 that was originally applied to Latin loanwords in Old High German language. The original model has been presented in German language books, such as *Sprachgeschichte: Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Erforschung* published by Walter de Gruyter (2004) or in the article *Sprachliches Lehngut im world wide web* (2005) by Silke Jansen and luckily for those unfamiliar with German, also in the book *Anglicism in German. Borrowing, Lexical Productivity, and Written Codeswitching* by Alexander Onysko from 2007. The author of this review might risk a statement that the knowledge about Betz's typology is not much widespread in Poland and therefore, the work of Nyamsuren Batjantsan is very helpful for Polish users. Using Werner Betz's model, she successfully analyzed a vast research corpus, while carrying out research on terminology from 27 various disciplines over the time frame from 1958–1989. The work of Nyamsuren Batjantsan and Werner Betz's typology can potentially be used in the Altaic studies in analyzing loanwords within the group of Mongolian, Turkic, Tungusic languages and a Manchu language. Antoine Meillet states in the *Introduction à l'étude comparative des langues indo-européenne*, that the methodology of comparative studies that he presents in his book properly functions only within Indo-

European languages and does not necessarily have to work in relation to other groups of languages. Nyamsuren Batjantsan shows that the typology of borrowings by Werner Betz originates from the same Neogrammarian tradition and yet it is possible to apply it both to an Indo-European (i. e. German) and an Altaic (i. e. Mongolian) language. Therefore, her publication might give boost also to future comparative Altaic studies.

The book might be a precious source of information for those interested in the writing systems of Mongolian people. The Author rightly states that this topic deserves more attention in the scientific literature. Yet it is worth remembering such publications in this field as *Writing in the Altaic World* (1999) edited by Juha Janhunen and Volker Rybatzki or *Einführung in die mongolischen Schriften* (2008) by Otgonbayar Chuluunbatar. Taking into account the discussion on whether Mongolian constitutes a part of the Altaic language family or the Altaic league of languages, the statement present in the book that Mongolian is a member of the Ural-Altaic language family (out-dated already in the 1950's) might rise one's eyebrows. It is certainly not the main topic of the reviewed book, but it would be worth asking the reason for which the Author chose particularly this definition of Mongolian language.

Nyamsuren Batjantsan states in the conclusion, that the progressing economic development in Mongolia makes it necessary to standardize the mechanisms of creating technical terminology. Following the pattern of Business English, the Author suggests working on the emergence of the Business Mongolian, i. e. economic Mongolian language that could be used both in state institutions and private enterprises, and potentially make creating business documentation more precise. She draws readers' attention to the emergence of English loanwords in Mongolian and suggests a reasonable way of handling these new lexical items. Moreover, the Author warns that Mongolians who have spent some time abroad should be careful when spontaneously introducing new loanwords into Mongolian, because the emergence of such terms in the language should follow standardized mechanisms. Nyamsuren Batjantsan points out as well that not to underestimate is the influence of loanwords from other Asian countries on the Khalkha language, as Mongolia actively maintains relations with China, South Korea and Japan. In this respect, the Author also proposes a systematic way of introducing borrowings into the Mongolian. At the end, she reminds Mongolian studies researchers of an important challenge to be faced in the future. Mongolian language has not been standardized to the same extent as European languages yet. Having dealt with this task will surely facilitate introducing new *termini technici* into Mongolian. Systemized and created in a unified way technical terms will potentially enrich the language, and not overflow it. Nyamsuren Batjantsan's *Zur Bildung moderner Begriffe im Khalkha Mongolischen* is definitely an important step forward to develop consistent standards for mechanisms of creating future technical terminology in the Mongolian language.

Joanna Dolińska