

## Proto-Uralic derivational morphology and the problem of affix homonymy

In this presentation we investigate the problem of suffix homonymy in Proto-Uralic and analyze the problems involved in the reconstruction of certain derivational suffixes. The topic is connected to larger problems of Uralic derivational suffixes and to methodological issues of affixes in general. Very little up-to-date research on Proto-Uralic word formation is, in general, available (a concise overview is provided by Aikio 2022: 19–21). In traditional presentations of the diachronic derivational morphology of the Uralic languages (such as Kövesi 1965, Rédei 1975, Riese 2001, Maticsák 2015) little attention has been paid to the functions of the suffixes and it has been taken for granted that homonymous suffixes that have been reconstructed must be etymologically connected. This is a problematic approach, as more detailed analysis of the phonology of the reconstructed suffixes can sometimes reveal that the homonymy is only apparent.

A good example is the issue of the \*-rV suffix or suffixes of Proto-Uralic. UEW reconstructs several nouns and verbs ending in \*-rV to Proto-Uralic and it is assumed that all of these are derivatives. Such views are found, for example, in Kövesi (1965), Rédei (1975) and Bakró-Nagy (1990). Kövesi (1965: 281–285) even states that there is no need to pay attention to the original function of the suffix as its use emerged in a time when word classes did not exist yet. However, it is highly doubtful that the same suffix is indeed involved in, for example, the Proto-Uralic noun \*šinjiri ‘mouse’ (> Finnish *hiiri*, Erzya Mordvin *čejeŕ*, Hungarian *egér* etc.) and the verb \*pućiri- ‘squeeze’ (> Fi *puser-ta-*, Hungarian *facsar* etc.).

In this presentation we discuss this suffix and other problematic suffixes and the methodological problems involved.

## References

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