

The question about the foregoers of dental fricatives in the Uralic languages

Statements on etymology and phonological development in the book by András Róna-Tas and Árpád Berta (RTA 2011a, RTA 2011b) encouraged the author to write about certain consonants in the Proto-Uralian / Proto-Finno-Ugric language again in his recent book (Honti 2017), but the main topic of the volume did not make it possible for him to discuss all the important details, and some new answers have been elaborated since then.

This paper focuses on the following consonants: $*\delta$, $*\delta'$, $*\vartheta$, $*\vartheta'$, $*\Lambda$, $*\Lambda'$, $*s$, $*\check{s}$. The author refutes the presence of the $*\delta$ and $*\delta'$ sounds in the proto-language, but suggests accepting the early existence of the $*\Lambda$, $*\Lambda'$, and $*\vartheta$ sounds.

The author endeavours to assess the presented events in the history of sounds by quoting previous opinions from the relevant literature, and summarizes his views published earlier on these issues, adding some further, more recent arguments and proofs. The latter include the following: the author argues that the Proto-Ugrian $*\vartheta$ became \emptyset in Hungarian via $*h$, reciting facts from the history of the sounds in the Lappish, Finnish and Iranian languages; the author also presents in what circumstances the rare sequels of the non-palatal sibilants in present-day Ugrian languages were formed: U/FU $*s \times *\check{s} >$ early Ug $*s >$ late Ug $*\vartheta >$ Ostyak s , Vogul s and Hungarian sz , instead of the general and regular Ostyak $l, \Lambda, t, j, \emptyset$ -, Vogul t and Hungarian \emptyset correspondences, on the basis of the available etymological evidence, the author argues that the presence of the $*\vartheta'$ sound in the Proto-Uralian / Proto-Finno-Ugric language is not justifiable.

Keywords: Uralic languages, dental fricatives, historical phonetics.

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