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Review

Astrid Menz: Review of Margarete I. Ersen-Rasch. *Türkische Grammatik für Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene*. München: Hueber, 2001. x + 299 pp. 3-19-005185-2.

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Ersen-Rasch's *Turkish grammar for beginners and advanced learners* is an extended and re-arranged version of her grammar book in the three-volume Turkish course *Türkisch für Sie*. While the latter was arranged according to the sequence in the workbook lessons, her new grammar book is arranged by grammatical subject. It consists of some introductory remarks on Turkish and Turkic, 18 chapters on grammar, references (pp. 283-287) and an alphabetical index of grammatical terms, suffixes and forms (pp. 288-299).

The introduction (Einleitung, pp. 1-3) gives a short description of the Turkic language family and its various branches, and some basic features of Turkic, such as agglutination, vowel harmony, etc. as well as some short remarks on the Turkish language reform. It is followed by a chapter on alphabet, pronunciation, and orthography (Alphabet, Aussprache und Rechtschreibung, pp. 4-8). The chapter on phonology (Zur Lautlehre, pp. 9-15) is divided into a subchapter on the vowel phonemes, the two types of vowel harmony in suffixes and the conditions for exceptions from palatal harmony and some other related phenomena, and one on the Turkish consonant phonemes and the phonological changes such as assimilation, etc. related to them. It also contains some paragraphs on (mostly word) stress. The next chapter is on basic grammatical terms (Grammatische Grundbegriffe, pp. 16-23), in which Ersen-Rasch describes very vividly and—especially valuable for the beginning student—sometimes with the help of German examples, some basic linguistic terms (word classes, transitivity, valency and sentence constituents) that the learner needs in order to understand her description of Turkish syntax. The chapter on the noun (Das Nomen, pp. 24-66) contains a description of Turkish nouns and nominal inflection as well as the functions of the various inflectional suffixes. In this chapter, Ersen-Rasch also deals with the pragmatic function of word-order changes in Turkish. Besides this, Turkish adjectives, comparison and the formation of intensive adjectives, and finally numerals, their derivatives and their use are treated.

The following chapter deals with the pronouns (Die Pronomina, pp. 67-84), including pronominal expressions with the suffix *-ki*. The next chapters are on adverbs (Das Adverb, pp. 89-98), postpositions (Die Postpositionen, pp. 101-108)

arranged according to the case they govern, conjunctions (*Die Konjunktionen*, pp. 109-116), and interjections (*Die Interjektionen*, p. 117).

These are followed by the most extensive chapter in this grammar, on the verb (*Das Verb*, pp. 118-197). This chapter deals only with the finite verb forms, starting with a description of the Turkish equivalents for to be, to become and to have. Then follows an account of the form and function of the basic tense suffixes as well as of their combinations with the copula forms in *idi* and *imış*. Subsequently, non-indicative and modal forms are treated. The last ten pages of the chapter are devoted to voice in Turkish. The next three chapters are on Turkish non-finite verb forms. The chapter on verbal nouns (*Die Verbalnomina*, pp. 198-227) describes the form and function of verbal nouns proper as well as of participles. Converbial forms are dealt with in two separate chapters. The first one on converbs (*Die Verbaladverbien*, pp. 228-239) gives a description of the primary converbs of Turkish. The second one on further verb-forms used adverbially (*Weitere adverbial gebrauchte Verbformen* pp. 240-251) treats converbial units formed of participles and case and/or postpositions. In the chapter called "more on verbs" (*Weiteres zu den Verben* pp. 252-260) one can find information on the semantic values and valency of some verbs in contrast to their German counterparts, the use of auxiliary verbs, postverbs and certain combinations of participles + auxiliary or the existential copula.

The chapter on word formation (*Die Wortbildung* pp. 261-275) contains four lists with the most important suffixes for deriving denominal and deverbal nominals and denominal and deverbal verbs. Included is also a selection of Arabic and Persian derivational affixes. As these are not productive affixes in Turkish and most words derived with them are rarely used in the contemporary language, one might ask if such a list is necessary for the language learner. In any case this list should have also included a remark about their non-productivity and the fact that they combined almost exclusively with Arabic and Persian words. The last part of this chapter is on compounding.

The penultimate chapter is on suffix- and word-suspension, and morphological and syntactical analysis (*Suffix- und Wortaussparung sowie Suffix- und Satzgliedbestimmung*, pp. 276-279), and the final one contains tables (*Tabellarische Übersichten* 280-282) of the verb inflection of a verb in all tenses (except *-mekte* and its combinations), the conditional forms, necessitative, optative and imperative.

Ersen-Rasch states in her foreword that the book does not claim to be a complete grammar. This is to be expected because it is not a descriptive grammar but rather a learner's grammar. It is indeed a very valuable tool for the learning and teaching of Turkish and clearly profits from Ersen-Rasch's many years of successful Turkish teaching as well as her immense theoretical and active knowledge of the language. Due to her substantial active knowledge she has included much information on semantic subtleties that is not often found in grammar books. Every chapter starts with a short definition and contrastive explanations of the respective subject, which is a great help for students/learners that have no previous linguistic knowledge or have never studied a language before. Everything is explained very clearly and contrasted

with German translations of the examples. The alphabetical index and also the layout of the table of contents are of great help for the student searching for answers. Although I do not always agree with Ersen-Rasch's explanations of the semantic differences between alternative forms and have also detected some minor mistakes that will surely be revised in a further edition, e.g. including the suffix *-lar* in the list of denominal nominal suffixes (p. 264), or errors in the index references, I do believe that this book is the best Turkish grammar available in German, as, by the way, was her earlier grammar book. Those who have used the *Türkisch für Sie* grammar book will be glad to now have a thematically arranged grammar.

