

Turkish (Altaic)

Bayram-la-ş-ama-dık-lar-ım-ız-dan-dır.

is a sentence in Turkish, pronounced

/bayramlaşamadıklarımızdandır/

(Note that Turkish spelling is phonemic)

It means:

‘He is among those with whom we haven’t been able to exchange Season’s greetings.’

bayram = ‘holiday’

bayramlaş = ‘to exchange Season’s greetings’¹

-la = Denominal verb derivation

-ş = Reciprocal form of verb

-ama = Negative potential (i.e, the ‘not being able to do’) form of verb.

-dık = Deverbal agentive noun derivation (cf. Eng *-er, -ist*)

-lar = Plural of preceding agentive noun

-ım = First person possessive suffix (*Px*)

-ız = Plural *Px* (i.e, *-ımız* together means ‘our’)

-dan = Ablative case ending (i.e, ‘from’) on the plural agentive noun

-dır = Auxiliary enclitic, third person of verb *be*; i.e, ‘he’s’

(derived from third person aorist form of verb *durur* ‘to stand, stop’).

This is an example of **agglutination**, one of several varieties of **inflection**. Turkish is a highly inflected language with agglutinative inflections.

It’s also a good example of why asking how many words a language has is not a fruitful strategy; millions of Turkish words as specific as this one can be – and are – composed on the fly, by using regular grammatical processes that everybody learns before they’re old enough to go to school.

¹ The “Season” is the holiday around the end of Ramadan and the New Year.