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Chuvash people and language

Chuvash population: about 1,800,000 (890,000 people in the Chuvash Autonomous Republic) + Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia)

Capital: Čeboksarï (Šupaškar).

Contact languages: Tatar and Bashkir; Finno-Ugric: Cheremis (or Mari), Votyak (or Udmurt) and Mordvin; Russian

<u>The Chuvash ortography</u>

See the alphabet in the Handout.

1. śăltăr   [**śăl**Dăr]   'star'
2. văkăr   [**vă**Găr]   'ox'
3. χĕrača   [χĕra**DŽa**]   'little girl'
4. ĕntĕ   [**ĕn′**D′ĕ]   'now, already'
5. śĕršïv   [śĕr′**Ž′ïv′**]   'country'
6. ală śulta   [**ală**źul**Da**]   '(he/she is) fifty years old'
7. ikkĕ   [**ik**kĕ]   'two'
8. tăvată   [tă**va**ttă]   'four'
9. šărt   [šărt]   'bristle'
10. *śïrat′*   [śï**rat′**]   'he is writing'

1. A voiceless consonant is a medial lenis in intervocalic position (No. 2. No.3. No. 8) and after a sonorant (*l, m, n, r, v, y*) (No. 1, No. 4, 5). The intervocalic position can be inside a word or at word boundaries. (No. 5, No. 6.)

2. The consonants remain unvoiced if they are geminated (No. 7., No. 8.)

3. A voiceless consonant in final position, even after a sonorant remains voiceless: No. 9.

4. Before and after font vowels the consonants are pronounced palatalized (4, 5, 7).

5. There can be a palatalized consonant in a back vocalic word as well, it is marked with the soft sign of the alphabet as in the case of 3rd person present tense: No. 10. *šïrat′* 'he is writing'

Counting rhyme.

Pěrre – pěrel	One – Once
Ikkě – yěkel	Two – Acorn
Viśśě – viśel	Three – three times
Tăvattă – tvatkal	Four – square
Pillěk – pileš	Five – serviceberry
Ulttă – ulma	Six – apple
Śičče – śilme	Seven – fishing sweeps
Sakkăr – salma	Eight – dumplings
Tăχχăr – tărna	Nine – crane
Vunnă – pulnă	Ten – there was

The origin of Chuvash phonemes

1. **Rhotacism**: in place of the Common Turkic *š* we can find *l* in the corresponding Chuvash word

        Old Common Turkic   Chuvash

    bez ~ bö:z 'cotton cloth'   *pir*
    yüzük 'finger-ring'   *śěrě*
    uzun 'long '   *vărăm*
    täz- 'run away, fly'   *tar-*

2. **Lambdacism**: in place of the Common Turkic *š* we can find *l* in the corresponding Chuvash word.

    CT *ya:š* 'a year of one's life'   Chuvash *śul*
    CT *altmïš* '60'   Chuvash *utmăl*
    CT *kümüš* 'silver'   Chuvash *kěměl*

"halfway came to a standstill"

    CT *baš* 'head'   Chuvash *puś*
    CT *yemiš* 'fruit'   Chuvash *śiměś*

3. *si- > ši-* (only in word initial position)

    CT *sirkä:* 'a nit' cf. Chuv. *šărka*
    CT *sïrt* cf. Chuv. *šărt* 'crest, mane'
    CT *sil-* 'to rub, wipe' cf. Chuv. *šăl-* 'to sweep'

Secondary:

    CT *sarïǧ* 'yellow' cf. Chuv. *šur(a)* 'white' (!)(< OB *siarïγ < *sārïǧ)

4. **ti > či**

    CT *yeti:* 'seven' cf. Chuv. *śičě*
    CT *til-* 'to cut into slices' cf. Chuv. *čěl-*

Secondary i: CT *ta:š* 'stone' cf. Chuv. *čul*

5. **Spirantization** of primary gutturals, affricates and –d-.

q > χ
    CT *qara:* 'black' cf. Chuv. *χura*
    CT *qat* 'layer' cf. Chuv. *χut* 'floor'
    CT *qo:l* 'upper arm' cf. Chuv. *χul*
    CT *soq-* 'to beat' cf. Chuv. *săχ-*

-CG- / -GC- > -C-
    CT *bälgür-* 'to appear' cf. Chuv. *palăr-*
    CT *ädgü* 'good' cf. Chuv. *ïră*
    CT *oġrï* 'thief' cf. Chuv. *vără*
    CT *yaġmur* 'rain' cf. Chuv. *śumăr*

-VGV- (> VV) > V
    CT *yuġur-* 'to knead' cf. Chuv. *śăr-*
    CT *boġuz* 'throat' cf. Chuv. *pïr ~ pur*

-IG > -Ă
    CT *ällig* 'fifty' cf. Chuv. *allă*
    CT *sarïġ* 'yellow' cf. Chuv. *šură* 'white'

-VG(V-) > -Vv(V-)
    CT *aġïr* 'heavy' cf. Chuv. *yïvăr*
    CT *ägir-* 'to surround' cf. Chuv. *avăr-*
    CT *teg-* 'to reach' cf. Chuv. *tiv-*

-Vg > -U
    CT *ta:ġ* 'mountain' cf. Chuv. *tu*
    CT *toġ-* 'to be born' cf. Chuv. *tu-* 'to make, do'
    CT *ya:ġ* 'fat, oil' cf. Chuv. *śu*

6. *č > ś*
    CT *ač-* 'to open' cf. Chuv. *uś-*
    CT *burčaq* 'pea' cf. Chuv. *părśa*
    CT *čabaq* 'a kind of fish' cf. Chuv. *śupaχ*
    CT *uč-* 'to fly' cf. Chuv. *věś-*

7. *y- >ĵ- > ś*
    CT *yel* 'wind' cf. Chuv. *śil* id.
    CT *yalïn* 'flame' cf. Chuv. *śulăm* 'fire'
    CT *yaġu:q* 'near' cf. Chuv. *śïvăχ* id.
    CT *yük* 'a load, burden' cf. Chuv. *śăk* id.

8. **"second-rhotacism':** –d- > –δ- > -z- > -r- (if the preceding sound is not an *r, l, m* or *n*)
    CT *qo:δ-* 'to put down' cf. Chuvash *χur-*
    CT *aδaq* 'leg, foot' cf. Chuvash u*r*a
9. **b- > p-**
    CT *bal* 'honey' cf. Chuv. *pïl*
    CT *bar-* 'to go' cf. Chuv. *pïr-*
    CT *bašla:-* 'to begin' cf. Chuv. *puśla-*
    CT *bil-* 'to know' cf. Chuv. *pěl-*
10. **n > m** (sporadically)
    CT *bütün* 'complete, entire' cf. Chuv. *pětěm* 'all'

CT *qïrqïn* 'maid' cf. Chuv. *χǎrχǎm* 'slave, slave girl'
CT *uzun* 'long' > *vǎrǎm*

11. -VyV- > -VvV-; -Vy > -V

CT *quya:š* 'the sun' cf. Chuv. *χĕvel* id.
CT *uya:* 'a bird's nest' cf. Chuv. *yǎva* id.
CT *qïrġu:y* 'sparrow-hawk' cf. Chuv. *χĕrχi, χĕrχü* id.

Systematic vowel-shift

Velars	Palatals
*a > **o** (> **u**); **ï**	*e > **i**
*o > **u**	*ö > **ü**
*u > **ǎ**	*ü > **ĕ**
*ï > **ǎ**	*i > **ĕ**
*ä > **a**	

Protesis:
CT *o:n* 'ten' cf. Chuv. **vun**
CT *ikiz* 'twins' cf. Chuv. **yĕkĕr**
CT *a:s* 'ermine' cf. Chuv. **yus**

Vowel harmony
Exceptions:
1. The plural suffix +*sem*
2. The third person possessive suffixes –*ĕ/-i*
3. Verb personal marker in the third person
4. The attributive –*i*
5. The ordinal numeral suffix –*mĕš*

Chuvash morphology
The plural: +sem/ +sen
yal-sem 'villages'
tu-sem 'hills

!!!! Order of suffixes: *unǎn ači-sem* 'his/her children' cf. *ača* 'child' → *ači* '(his/her) child' ←→ *onun çocuk-lar-i*

Pronouns:
The personal pronouns

	I	you	he/she/it	we	you	they
Nom.	*epĕ*	*esĕ*	*vǎl*	*epir*	*esir*	*vĕsem*
Gen.	*manǎn*	*sanǎn*	*unǎn*	*pirĕn*	*sirĕn*	*vĕsen*
Acc.-Dat	*mana*	*sana*	*ǎna*	*pire*	*sire*	*vĕsene*
Loc.	*manra*	*sanra*	*unra ~unta*	*pirĕnte*	*sirĕnte*	*vĕsenče*
Abl.	*manran*	*sanran*	*unran*	*pirĕnten*	*sirĕnten*	*vĕsenčen*
Instr.	*manpa*	*sanpa*	*unpa*	*pirĕnpe*	*sirĕnpe*	*vĕsempe*
Priv.	*mansǎr*	*sansǎr*	*unsǎr*	*pirĕnsĕr*	*sirĕnsĕr*	*vĕsemsĕr*
Caus. -Purp.	*manšan*	*sanšǎn*	*unšǎn*	*pirĕnšĕn*	*sirĕnšĕn*	*vĕsemšĕn*

Demonstrative pronoun: *śak, śakǎ* 'this', *śav, śavǎ* 'that one (further)', *ku* 'this' ; *lešĕ (leš)* 'that, the other' (*ku mar, lešĕ* 'not this, the other one'

Interrogative pronoun: *mĕn* 'what?', *ăśta* 'where?'

Case morphemes and allomorphs

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	**Ø**	**+*sem***
Gen.	**+(Ă)n**	**+*sen(ĕn)***
Acc.	**+(n)A**	**+*sene***
Loc.	**+rA ~ + tA**	**+*senče***
Abl.	**+rAn ~ +tAn**	**+*senčen***
Instr.	**+(Ă)pA**	**+*sempe***
Priv.	**+sĂr**	**+*semsĕr***
Purp.	**+šAn**	**+*semšĕn***

Morphophonological changes of Chuvash word stems:
– A final *–u* and *–ü* > *-Ăv* before Genitive and Accusative-Dative suffixes and with the possessive suffix:

> *śïru* 'letter' > *śïrăv+* → *śïrăvăn* 'of a letter', *śïrăva* 'the letter; to the letter', *śïrăvăm* 'my letter'
>
> *kĕtü* 'herd' > *kĕtĕv+* → *kĕtĕvĕn* 'of the herd', *kĕtĕve* 'to the herd', *kĕtĕvĕ* 'his herd'
>
> *pü 'body'* > *pĕv+* →*pĕvĕn* 'of the body', *pĕve* 'to the body', *pĕvĕ* 'his body'

– Stem ends in two consonants plus a reduced vowel the final reduced is dropped before the Accusative-Dative suffix:

> *purtă* 'axe' → *purta* 'the axe, to the axe'

– The disyllabic stems ending in reduced *–Ă* > a stem alternation which geminates the consonant preceding before the Accusative – Dative marker *–A* and possessive suffixes:

> *pulă* 'fish' → *pulla* 'the fish, to the fish'; *pullăm, pullu, pulli* (my fish, your fish, etc)
>
> *yïtă* 'dog' → *yïtta* 'the dog, to the dog'
>
> *külĕ* 'lake' → *külle* 'the lake, to the lake'

– After word final *–l, -r, -d* the locative and ablative markers are the ones beginning with *+t-*:

> *χĕvel* 'sun' → *χĕvelte* 'in the sun'; *χĕvelten* 'from the sun'

– Nominal stems ending in full vowel take the Acc-Dat suffix *+nA*, and have the *+rA, +rAn* markers in Loc. and Abl. cases:

> *ĕne* 'cow' → *ĕnene* 'to the cow', *ĕnere* 'at the cow'; *ĕneren* 'from the cow'

Possessiv suffixes

Sg.	-C	-V	Pl.	–C	–V
1.	**+Ăm**	**+m**	1.	**+ĂmĂr**	**+mĂr**
2.	**+U**	**+U**	2.	**+Ăr**	**+Ăr**
3.	**+ĕ; (+Ăšĕ)** (-dift.)	**+i**	3.	**+ĕ**	**+i; (+Ăšĕ)**

> !!!*tu* 'hill' → *tăvăm; tăvu, tavi; tăvămăr; tăvăr; tavi*;
>
> *pulă* 'fish' → *pullăm, pullu, pulli* (my fish, your fish, etc)
>
> *ĕne* 'cow' → *ĕnĕm, enü, eni ….*

Words ending in *–t* (or in foreign words *-t′, -d′* or *-d)* > *–č-* in the 3rd person:

> *yat* 'name' → *yačĕ* 'his name'
>
> *vut* 'fire' → *vučĕ* 'his fire'

kinship terms: Px3: +Ăšĕ

Amăšne	**păχ**	**ta**	**χĕrne**	**il.**	'Anasına bak da kızını al'

Mother:PX3ACC   look at:IMP   end   daughter:(PX3)ACC   take:IMP

'Look at the mother and marry her daughter'

> *ama* 'female'> *amăšĕ* 'her/his mother' → amăšne 'her mother (Acc)'
>
> *χĕr* 'daughter' > *χĕrĕ* 'her daughter' → *χĕrne* 'her daughter (Acc)

Imperative

> **Atăla   kurmasăr,   attuna   an   χïv.**
> Volga (=Etil):ACC   see:NEGCONV   boots:PX2ACC   NEGPREF   pull off:IMP.
> 'Don't pull off your boots before seeing Volga' / 'Volga'yı görmeden çizmeni çıkarma'
>> *kur-* < *kör-* 'to see'
>> *attuna* 'your boot (Acc)' < *attu* 'your boot' *ată* < **ätük* 'boot'
>> *χïv-* 'to put down, to place,

The present tense

Kam   ĕśle<u>mest</u>,   văl   śi<u>mest</u>.
who   work:NEGPRES3   that   eat:NEGPRES3
'If you don't work, you won't eat'
The temporal marker of the durative present:–*(A)t*. Negativ: –*mAs- t-*

Sg1	–*(A)t-Ăp*	–*mAs-t-Ăp*
Sg2	–*(A)t-Ăn*	–*mAs-t-Ăn* -
Sg3	–*(A)t´ (palatalization)*	–*mAs-t´ (palatalization)*
Pl1	–*(A)t-pĂr*	–*mAs-t-pĂr*
Pl2	–*(A)t-Ăr*	–*mAs-t-Ăr*
Pl3	–*(A)ś-śĕ*	–*mAs-čĂ*

śietĕp 'I'm eating'	*săvatăp* 'I'm counting'
śietĕn	*săvatăn*
śiet	*săvat'*
śietpĕr	*săvatpăr*
śietĕr	*săvatăr*
śieśśĕ	*săvaśśĕ*

Šannă   yăvara kayăk   śuk,   te<u>śśĕ</u>.
expect:PASTPART   nest:LOC bird   NEG   say:PRESPL3
'It is said, there is no bird in the nest where one expects.'/ 'Umduğun yuvada kuş olmaz, derler.'
Vut   χumasăr   tĕtĕm   tuχm<u>ast'</u>.
 Fire   lay:NEGCONV   smoke   appear:NEGPRES3
'There is no smoke without fire' /'Ateş koymadan duman çıkmaz'
>> *χu(r)-* < *qod-* 'put down, lay'
>> *tĕtĕm* < *tütün* 'smoke'
>> *tuχ-* 'to come out, appear, start, come into existence' < *toġ-*

Verbs ending in –r drop their final –r:

kür- 'bring here',	*per-* 'to throw'	*yar-* 'enged'
kĕr- 'to go in'	*pïr-* 'to go'	*šăr-* 'to soak
yĕr- 'to weep, cry'	*tăr-* 'to stand'	
par- 'to give'	*χur-* 'to put down'	

Future tense: stem + personal endings.

		Negativ
Sg1	-*Ăp*	–*mĂp*
Sg2	-*Ăn*	–*mĂn* -
Sg3	-*ĕ*	–*mĕ*
Pl1	-*ĂpĂr*	–*mĂpĂr*
Pl2	-*Ăr*	–*mĂr*
Pl3	-*Ăś*	–*mĕś*

ăśta   kayăn,   čĕkeś,   śumăr vitĕr,
where   go:FUT2P swallow rain   through
ik śunatu   tărăχ   šïv   yuχtarsa?
two wing:PX2 from:POSTPOZ   water flow:CAUSCONV
'Where are you going, swallow, trough the rain (while) water is dripping from your wings.'

       ăśta ~ χăśta ~ kăśta 'where, where to'
       kay- 'to go away'
       čĕkeś 'swallow'
       śumăr < yaġmur 'rain'
       tărăχ 'from, trough' + Nom
       yuχ- to flow' (<*āq-) → *yuχtar-* (Caus) 'to pour, flow'

Numbers: two– three forms: *pĕr ~ pĕrre*; *ikĕ, ik ~ ikkĕ, viśĕ, viś ~ viśśĕ* etc.
Long form: subject, object or predicate.
Short form: attribute
<u>Ordinal number</u>: *–mĕš* (invariable): *ikkĕmĕš* '2nd'

Past tense: the tense formant:–rĂ- ~ –tĂ

		-V- / -C- except	-l-, -r-, -n-	**Negativ**
Sg1.	*-m*	*kala-ră-m* 'I said'	*śïr-tă-m* 'I wrote'	*kil-me-rĕ-m* 'I didn't come'
Sg2	*-n*	*kalarăn*	*śïrtăn*	*kilmerĕn*
Sg3	Ø	*kalarĕ*	*śïrčĕ*	*kilmerĕ*
Pl1	*-mĂr*	*kalarămăr*	*śïrtămăr*	*kilmerĕmĕr*
Pl2	*-r*	*kalarăr*	*śïrtăr*	*kilmerĕr*
Pl3	*-ś*	*kalarĕś*	*śïrčĕś*	*kilmerĕś*

Tulayaχ   ta tuχ(ĕ)răm   ep   tul   kur<u>tăm</u>,
outside:INT so go out:PASTSG1 I   outside   see:PASTSG1
Timpĕl kăna   čăpar   ta, ay, ut   kur<u>tăm</u>.
Timpĕl rather   apple-gray   and hey horse see:PASTSG1
'I went outside, I looked what is over there/ so hey, timpĕl, I saw an apple-gray horse'

       tulay 'outside; foreign, foreign country'
       -Aχ emphatic particle, intensifying (very frequent, especially in folklore, where it is
       usually together with the preceding word'
       ta 'and, so also'
       tuχ- 'to go out'
       ep 'the short form of epĕ'
       timpĕl onomatopoetic word
       kăna 'rather, only, merely'
       čăpar 'apple-gray, piebald, pied' < *čubar*
χura vărman kas<u>răm</u>   ta, ep śul χïv<u>răm</u>
black forest   cut:PASTSG1 and I path make:PASTSG1
'I felled the black forest and made a path'

        χura < qara 'black'
        vărman < orman
        kas- < käs- 'to cut, fell (a tree)'
        śul < yol 'way, road'

Past Participle: *+nĂ*. Negative: *–mAn*
Vĕre   pĕlmen   yïtă   kaškăr   kü<u>nĕ</u>.
bark:CONV know:NEGPASTPART dog   wolf   bring:PASTPART
'The dog which cannot bark brings the wolf' / 'Ürümeyi bilmeyen köpek kurt getirir.'
    kür- 'bring, take here'
Vilnĕ   χura   ĕnen(ĕn)   sĕčĕ   tutlă.

die: PASTPART   black(=bad)   cow:GEN   milk:PX3 sweet
'The milk of the dead cow is always sweeter.' / 'Ölmüş kara ineğin sütü tatlı olur.'

Coordinate converb:–sA. Negative form of it in: -*mAsĂr* (-*mAr*). (cf. Ttu. -(X)p)
Atăl   χĕrrine   śitmesĕr,   attuna   an   χïv.
Volga   bank:PX3Dat   reach:NEGCONV   boots:PX2ACC   NEGPREF   pull off:IMP
'Don't pull off your boots before reaching the bank of the Volga'
        χĕrĕ (*χĕr*) < *qïðïğ* 'the edge'
        śit- < *yet-* 'to reach, get somewhere'
        χïv- 'to put down, to place,

Past converb: –*sAn*; negative: -*mAsAn*. (cf. Ttu –DXğX zaman, -XncA)
Ĕś   yïvăr pulsan, śime   tutlă.
work hard   be:CONV food   tasty
'When the work is hard then the food is tasty.' / 'İş ağır olunca yemek de tatlı olur'
        ĕš<*iš* 'work'
        yïvăr < *aġïr* 'heavy, hard'
        pul- < *bol-* 'to be, become'
        śi-me **<** *ye-* 'to eat'+inf
        tutlă < *tatlïğ* 'having a pleasant taste, sweet'

Infinitive: -mA
Śurt lartma yïvăr   mar,   nikĕsne   χïvma   yïvăr.
house set:INF   difficult   NEGPARTIK   foundation:ACC   build:INF   difficult
'It is not difficult to built a house but it's difficult make its foundation' / 'Ev yapmak zor değil,
temelini koymak zor'
        lart- 'to seat, built, erect', Caus. of. *lar-* <**olur-* 'to sit'
        nikĕs 'base, foundation' ← Tat *niges* id. cf. Uyg. Uzb. Kzk, Kkalp. Nog. *negiz*
        mar < *ermäz
        χïv-'to put (down), build; to take off' (Tuv kag- 'klast′, položit′)

Dialects:

Anatri (standard Chuvash)	**Viryal** (more archaic)
ĕ, ă	*ă, ĕ, ŏ, red ö*
u	*o*
Pl. +*sem*	Pl. +*sam* ~ +*sem*
pek 'like'	*pek* ~ *pak*
-*nA*	-*ya*
Present tense mark –t-	Present tense mark Ø
Ordinal num. suff. +*mĕš*	+*mĕš* ~ +*măš*

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