

## Tense-aspect-evidential differences between Mongolian dialects

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While Mongolian dialects are known to differ in their inventory of case forms, pronouns, finite and converbal verbal suffixes (e.g. Secenbagatur et al. 2005), the strong focus on form in Mongolian studies has so far prevented an exploration of the functional differences related to these different structures. In this presentation, I will focus on the tense-aspect-evidentiality systems of the Mongolian dialects Khalkha, Khorchin and Oirat. Their structural differences are summarized below:

	past suffixes				non-past suffixes						complex constructions		
	- <i>san</i>	- <i>laa</i>	- <i>jee</i>	- <i>v</i>	- <i>yu</i>	- <i>mu</i>	- <i>n</i>	- <i>dag</i>	- <i>aa</i>	- <i>h</i>	converb + copula	participle + copula	number of copulas
Middle Mongol	(+)	+	+	++	+	+	-	-	(+)	+	+	+	2
Oirat (1980)	(+)	+	+	++	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	≥1
Khalkha (2010)	++	+	+	(+)	-	-	+	+	+	(++)	+	+	3
Khorchin (2010)	(+)	+	++	(+)	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	1

(++: very frequent, +: occurs, -: doesn't occur, ()): only in peripheral finite function)

Oirat (Orulamjab 2013) seems to have retained a past system similar to Middle Mongol (Street 2009) with neutral *-v* and evidential *-laa* and *-jee*. Meanwhile, the past systems of Khalkha (Song 1997, Binnick 2012) has replaced the old neutral marker by the old perfect, while Khorchin has reanalyzed *jee* as neutral and *-laa* as imminent and thus lost evidentiality altogether. While all Mongolian dialects innovated the imperfective forms *-n* and *-dag* (Poppe 1960, Bayancogtu 2002, Orulamjab 2013), Khorchin lost it by the 1980s. Middle Mongol resultative *-aa* was reanalyzed into a non-past evidentiality marker in Khalkha and probably Oirat, but never in Khorchin. The overall complexity of evidential and aspectual forms can at least partly be explained by language contact with Tibetan, Turkic and Chinese.