**Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki:**
*Toward a revised analysis of Rinchen’s notes on a Tungusic language of Mongolia*

Andrew ShimuneK (University of Naples “L’Orientale”)


This paper discusses my efforts in analyzing the important linguistic data on Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki, a probably now extinct Tungusic language of Mongolia documented by the Mongolian scholar Academician B. Rinchen in the 1960s and published in his book, *Mongol Ard Ulsîn Xamnigan Ayalguu* [*The Tungusic Dialects of the Mongolian People’s Republic*]. Rinchen’s book is essentially the only source of linguistic data on Khamnigan Ewenki as once spoken in the provinces of Khentii and Dornod in northeastern Mongolia.

* This article is a revised and expanded version of a paper I presented on October 29, 2016, at *The 13th Seoul International Altaistic Conference (SIAC)* at Seoul National University. I am grateful to Professor Ko Dongho (Chŏnbuk National University), Professor Kim Juwon (Seoul National University), Professor Yu Wonsoo (Seoul National University), and Professor M. Bayarsaikhan (National University of Mongolia), who all provided helpful comments and questions on my paper during the conference, Professor Yümjiriin Mönkh-Amgalan (Orkhon University Centre for Mongolian Language and Culture) for helping me locate copies of Rinchen’s book in the Dankook University Yulgok Memorial Library and the D. Natsagdorj Ulaanbaatar City Public Library, and Professor G. Gantogtokh (National University of Mongolia) for providing a photocopy of Žamcarano’s early study of the Khamnigan and Tungusic peoples of Mongolia. I am also grateful to Professor György Kara for introducing me to Ewenki at Indiana University in the fall of 2006. Khamnigan Mongol forms in this article are my own transcriptions, from my 2006 and 2009 fieldwork in Binder and Dadal, Khentii province, supported by a Fulbright Fellowship and the American Center for Mongolian Studies. I thank the Khamnigan Mongol speakers I met for generously sharing their language with me. I am also grateful to the two anonymous *Altai Hakpo* reviewers whose helpful comments have improved the quality of my paper. Any errors in this paper are entirely my own.
Mongolia; however, the data in Rinchen’s book is largely unanalyzed and much progress has been made in the field of language description since the publication of Rinchen’s book.

In this paper, I present some findings of my work toward a revised analysis of Rinchen’s notes, including an interpretation of the phonological inventory, morphological analyses, notes on the lexicon, and my efforts toward a sketch grammar of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki based on Rinchen’s data. My reanalyses of Rinchen’s data currently consist of an interpretation of the phonological values intended by Rinchen’s practical Cyrillic transcriptions of Khamnigan Ewenki data, reanalyses of morphemes and lexical items transcribed by Rinchen but not fully analyzed, a revised analysis of several short Khamnigan Ewenki texts documented by Rinchen, sentential data, and notes on the lexicon.

**Keywords:** language documentation and description, Tungusic, Khamnigan, Ewenki, Khentii, Dornod, Mongolia, morphology, phonology, lexicon

### 1. Introduction

This paper discusses my efforts in analyzing the important linguistic data on Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki, a probably now extinct Tungusic language of Mongolia documented by the Mongolian scholar Academician B. Rinchen in the 1960s and published in his book, *Mongol Ard Ulsîn Xamnigan Ayalguu [The Tungusic Dialects of the Mongolian People’s Republic]*. Aside from a very brief wordlist by L. Mishig (1960: 188-189), Rinchen’s book is essentially the only source of linguistic data on Khamnigan Ewenki as once spoken in the provinces of Khentii and Dornod in northeastern Mongolia; however, the data in Rinchen’s book is largely unanalyzed and much progress has been made in the field of language description since the publication of Rinchen’s book. There are also many typographical errors in Rinchen’s book, the vast majority of which were undoubtedly committed not by Rinchen himself, but by his typist or typists.

In this paper, I present some findings of my work toward a revised analysis of Rinchen’s notes, including an interpretation of the phonological inventory, morphological analyses, notes on the lexicon, and my efforts toward a sketch grammar of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki based on Rinchen’s data. My reanalyses of Rinchen’s data currently consist of an interpretation of the phonological values intended by Rinchen’s practical Cyrillic transcriptions.
of Khamnigan Ewenki data, reanalyses of morphemes and lexical items transcribed by Rinchen but not fully analyzed, and a revised analysis of the several short Khamnigan Ewenki texts documented by Rinchen, sentential data, and notes on the lexicon.

2. My reanalyses of Rinchen’s data

2.1 The phonology of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki

2.1.1 Phonological inventory

2.1.1.1 Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td>t d</td>
<td></td>
<td>k g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>ts ds</td>
<td>tf ʧ ds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>f s</td>
<td>f s</td>
<td>j [x]</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhotic</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m n</td>
<td>n ɲ ŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>w y</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki consonants (my reanalysis)

In some varieties, /h/ is realized as a velar fricative [x].

2.1.1.2 Vowels and diphthongs

Rinchen’s description of Khamnigan Ewenki vowels suggests that the vowel system is similar to Oluguya Ewenki and Khamnigan Ewenki as spoken in China, as documented by Tsumagari (1992). I present my interpretation of Rinchen’s Cyrillic transcriptions below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>u</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ɔa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki vowels (my reanalysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>uy</th>
<th>un</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uy</td>
<td>uy</td>
<td>un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ɔa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay</td>
<td>ay</td>
<td>au</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki diphthongs (my reanalysis)
2.1.3 Dialectal variation in phonology

As Rinchen notes several times in his book, the Khamnigan Ewenki of Mongolia spoke not a single uniform dialect, but numerous dialects of Ewenki. This dialectal diversity among the Tungusic-speaking Mongolian Khamnigans is evident from statements such as the following (given here in my English translation of Rinchen’s Mongolian original, and with my phonological interpretations of his Cyrillic-based practical transcriptions):

“…зарим монгол хамнiganы аман аялгуунaa Ḫунaaʤи гэдэг үгийг Ḫунaaд гэдэг” [In some Mongolian Khamnigan dialects, the word Ḫunaadji is Ḫunaaad...]
(p.55).

“Зарим монгол хамнigan аялгуунaa…” [In some dialects of Mongolian Khamnigan...]
(p.55).

“монгол хамнiganы зарим аман аялгуунаа…” [In some dialects of Mongolian Khamnigan...]
(p.56).

There are many statements like these throughout Rinchen’s book, but the precise linguistic characteristics of these dialects and their geographic distribution are not discussed by Rinchen. It is thus highly likely that Mongolian Khamnigan Ewenki, like Manchurian Khamnigan Ewenki as described by Janhunen (1991), consisted of different varieties of Mongolic-influenced Ewenki. This dialectal diversity is also implied in the title of Rinchen’s book, *Mongol Ard Ulsîn Xamnigan Ayalguu* [The Tungusic Dialects of the Mongolian People’s Republic], where ayalguu denotes ‘dialects’ (unspecified for number), referring to the many dialects of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki and dialects of the Mongolic language Mongolian Khamnigan Mongol which he observed during the course of his fieldwork.1)

1) Note that Rinchen’s usage of the word *xamnigan* often denotes the older meaning of this word as ‘Tungusic’ in general. I am grateful to Professor M. Bayarsaikhan (National University of Mongolia) for reminding me of this fact at SIAC 2016. In modern usage in Mongolia today, the word *xamnigan* usually denotes a specific ethnic group—the Khamnigan ethnic group. This meaning is also present in Rinchen’s book in his description of the Mongolic language Khamnigan Mongol. These two semantic senses of the word are attested in Mongolian as early as Žamcarano’s early 20th century book *Darqad, Köbsögöl nayur-un uraiyangqaï, dörbed, qotong, bayad, ögeled, mingyad, jaqačin, torγud, qošud, čaqar, darįyangya,
In my revised analyses of Rinchen’s data, I have identified the following, apparently dialectal, variation between different phonemes:

**ʦ ~ ʧ ~ ʃ**

In some varieties of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki, the possessive-attributive suffix denoting ‘having X’ is -ʧi (e.g. gərbi-ʧi ‘having a name’, p. 76), but in certain other varieties it is -ʦə (e.g. dəl-ʦə ‘having a mane’, p. 80). In post-nasal environments, a -ʤi variant is attested (e.g. ninakin-ʤi ‘having a dog’ and nɔyɔn-ʤi ‘having a noble person’, p.78).

The ʦ ~ ʧ variation is also evident in verbal forms, e.g. the past tense morpheme analyzed by Rinchen is /-ʦA-/ (e.g. p.75), but in certain dialectal forms documented by Rinchen, the corresponding morpheme is /-ʧAA-/ where /A/ indicates an unspecified vowel archiphoneme realized phonetically according to the vowel harmony of the verb stem (e.g. ukurgala-ʧɔɔ-w ‘I caught it with a lasso-pole’, p.78).

Note also the dialectal variation between aaʦən ~ aʃ in ‘negative existential copula’, often translatable as ‘none’ (e.g., p.76).

**s ~ ʃ**

Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki dialects as documented by Rinchen also exhibit dialectal variation between unpalatalized s(i) and palatalized ʃ(i). For example, progressive forms like ūʃindj (arrive.2S.PRES) (p.77) in certain varieties, but conservative forms like bisindj (exist.2S.PRES) (p.74) in other varieties. Note also KDKE uguʧigi ‘back’ (pp.79, 114) and its Siberian Ewenki cognate ugiski ‘upward’ (SE form quoted from Nedjalkov 1997: 44, 91, 306).

**ʣ ~ ʤ ~ dy**

Variation between these phones appears to have been free in certain dialects,
e.g. the word *ʤuɔg\(^2\) ~ ʤɔɔg\(^3\) ~ ʤɡɔɔg\(^4\) ‘yurt, home’ (pp. 58, 79, 105) and ʤɡəə\(^5\) ~ ʤyəə\(^6\) ~ ʤyɡəə\(^7\) ~ ʤəə\(^8\) ‘grandchild (child of one’s daughter)’ (p. 54). Note also the apparently free variation within the following single sentence: ʤuₐlələ ʤəəɡən-i wa-ŋki-w (R: *waa-ŋki-w) ‘In the south, I kill gazelles’ (from §4.5 below). Rinchen also gives the forms ʤəəɡən and ʤəəɡəən ‘gazelle’ (p. 62).

The above-mentioned variation is merely from my cursory study of Rinchen’s data. An in-depth, comprehensive study of Rinchen’s data will likely reveal even more variation and diversity.

### 3. Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki morphology

#### 3.1 Noun affixal morphology

##### 3.1.1 Case affixal morphology

Rinchen gives partial case paradigms for several Khamnigan Ewenki nouns, identifying eight cases, i.e. nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, ablative, instrumental, comitative, and ‘prosecutive’ (pp.72-73).

Despite this analysis, however, it is clear from his data that there are actually at least nine different case forms, i.e. nominative, genitive, dative,
definite accusative, indefinite accusative, ablative, instrumental-comitative, comitative, and prolative. Below I present my revised analysis of the attested Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki case affixes (my revisions to Rinchen’s analyses are given in bold):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Type</th>
<th>Affixes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>-Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>-ŋi ~ -ni ~ -gin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>-du ~ -də</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite Accusative</td>
<td>-wA ~ -bA ~ -bAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite Accusative</td>
<td>-yi ~ -i ~ -Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ablative</td>
<td>-duk ~ -duuki ~ -dukə ~ EMPH -duukəə ~ -duukəə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental-Comitative</td>
<td>-ʤi ~ -ʤii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitative</td>
<td>-nun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolative</td>
<td>-duli ~ -li</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki case affixes (my analysis)

The case which Rinchen identifies as “Acc.” (i.e. accusative, pp.72-73) is actually definite accusative. Note the following examples of this case in Rinchen’s data:

\[ \text{mɔɔ-wa} \]
\[ \text{tree-ACC.DEF} \]
\[ \text{‘the tree’ (p.72)} \]

\[ \text{əri-wə} \]
\[ \text{this-ACC.DEF} \]
\[ \text{‘this’ (p.73)} \]

\[ \text{sələ-bə ədə saa-rəə kuurəə} \]
\[ \text{iron-ACC.DEF NEG know-ACT file} \]
\[ \text{‘a file which does not know the iron’ (p.78)} \]

Note also the following example of the definite accusative case in a Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki folksong in poetic style:
‘He chose the best of his horses—the dark chestnut horse with the fathom-long mane.’ (p.80).

Rinchen’s data, although not his analysis of it, also provides clear examples of the *indefinite accusative* case, indicated with -yi (after vowels) ~ -i (after consonants), a suffix cognate to Siberian Ewenki /-yA/ ‘indefinite accusative case suffix’. For example, note the following examples (the morphological analyses are my own):

- **damga-yi ta-kal**
  tobacco-ACC.INDEF pull-IMP.2S
  ‘Smoke some tobacco!’ ~ ‘Have a cigarette / some cigarettes!’ (p.76).

- **mɔ-ypi ali-ŋki-w.**
  wood-ACC.INDEF chop-HAB-1S
  ‘I chop wood.’ (from §4.3 below).

- **bi tarbaka-yi waa-ŋki-w.**
  1S.NOM marmot-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S
  ‘I kill marmots.’ (from §4.5 below).

- **ʤulələ ʤəərgən-i waa-ŋki-w (R: *waa-ŋki-w).**
  south gazelle-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S
  ‘In the south, I kill gazelles.’ (from §4.5 below).

The indefinite accusative case was apparently not used by certain speakers, or was falling into disuse, since Rinchen’s data also provides examples of zero-marked indefinite accusative case, probably under the influence of Khalkha Mongolian or Khamnigan Mongol, in which indefinite accusative and nominative are both zero-marked. Note the following examples from Rinchen’s data with unmarked indefinite accusative case in Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki:

- **uldə ʤap-kal**
  meat eat-IMP.2S
  ‘Eat some meat.’ (p.77).
Rinchen’s data also provides the following example of a less common Khamnigan Ewenki genitive suffix /-gin/, probably borrowed from Khalkha Mongolian:

nuŋan-daki bəə-gin ɔrin-du min-ʤii əmə-tsəə
six-ORD month-GEN twenty-DAT 1S-COM come-PST.3S
‘He/she/it came with me on the 20th of June’ (p.77).

Rinchen analyzes the ablative case suffix as /-duk/ (e.g. pp.72-73). The unanalyzed data he gives provides evidence of at least four additional variants of this suffix, i.e. /-duuki/ ~ /-dukə/ and the emphatic sung variants /-duukəə/ ~ /-dɔɔkəə/ as in the following examples:

mɔrin-duuki
horse-ABL
‘from/off the horse’ (p.77)

ulaanbaatur-duka
Ulaanbaatar-ABL
‘from Ulaanbaatar’ (p.76)

ayl-duukəə
household-ABL
‘from the households’ (p.80)

aduun-dɔɔkəə-n
horse-ABL-3.POSS
‘from the horses’ (p.80)

3.1.2 Other noun affixes not analyzed by Rinchen but evident from his data
Rinchen’s data, although not his analyses of it, provides evidence of the subject-possessive (reflexive) suffix -bi ~ -mi (< Ewk.). Note the following examples (from text §4.3 and §4.6 below):
I bring water back to my yurt.'

'I get my horse.'

'a dog which does not know its kind'

3.2 Verb affixal morphology

3.2.1 Tense, mood, and aspect (TMA) affixes

Rinchen provides partial paradigms for the verb bi- ‘exist, be’, tuksa- ‘run’, and ukurgala- ‘catch with a lasso-pole’ (pp. 74-76). I have reorganized these verbal paradigms and have added all other verbal forms attested in his data, to provide the most complete paradigms of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki verbs as attested by Rinchen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>bi- ‘exist’</th>
<th>tuksa- ‘run’</th>
<th>umə- ‘come’</th>
<th>gɔgɔ- ‘bark’</th>
<th>iʃi- ‘arrive’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>bisim</td>
<td>tuksam</td>
<td>umən</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>bisindi</td>
<td>tuksandəə</td>
<td>umənda</td>
<td></td>
<td>ifindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>bisin</td>
<td>tuksaran</td>
<td></td>
<td>gɔgoran</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td>bisif</td>
<td>tuksam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V</td>
<td>bisis ~ bisifi (?)</td>
<td>tuksaran</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td>bisi</td>
<td>tuksara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>dɔmə- ‘come’</th>
<th>saa- ‘know’</th>
<th>tuksi- ‘be cloudy’</th>
<th>kaŋkinaa- ‘clang’</th>
<th>turəə- ‘scold’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>saam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>dɔməndi</td>
<td>saandi</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>saaran</td>
<td>tuksiron</td>
<td>kaŋkinaaran</td>
<td>turəəron</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1P</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3P</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Present tense verbal paradigm (revised and expanded from Rinchen’s data)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>bi- ‘exist’</th>
<th>tuksa- ‘run’</th>
<th>anə- ‘go’</th>
<th>anə- ‘come’</th>
<th>suru- ‘go’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>biʦəəw</td>
<td>tuksatsɔw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>biʦəəs</td>
<td>tuksatsas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>biʦəə</td>
<td>tuksatsa</td>
<td>anəʦəə</td>
<td>anəʦəə</td>
<td>suruutsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td>bıʦəəwun</td>
<td>tuksatsɔw</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V</td>
<td>bıʦəəsun</td>
<td>tuksatsawun</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td>bıʦəəl</td>
<td>tuksatuksaran</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Past tense verbal paradigm (revised and expanded from Rinchen’s data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>bi- ‘exist’</th>
<th>tuksa- ‘run’</th>
<th>sə- ‘arrive’</th>
<th>mayuu- ‘climb a mountain’</th>
<th>sura- ‘study’ (← Mgl)</th>
<th>undun- ‘rain’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>bıʣigəf</td>
<td>tuksadcɔw</td>
<td>mayuu蓢ɔw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>bıʣigas</td>
<td>tuksadcas</td>
<td>səʣas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>bıʣigən</td>
<td>tuksadcɑŋ</td>
<td>suraʤɑɑn</td>
<td>undunʤɑɑn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td>bıʣigəwun</td>
<td>tuksadcawun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V</td>
<td>bıʣigasun</td>
<td>tuksadcasun</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td>bıʣigal</td>
<td>tuksadɑŋ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Future tense verbal paradigm (revised and expanded from Rinchen’s data)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ukurgala- ‘catch with a lasso-pole’</th>
<th>əmə- ‘come’</th>
<th>ənə-‘go (off)’</th>
<th>waa-‘kill’</th>
<th>bii- ‘exist, be’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S ukurgalaŋkiw əməŋkiw ənəŋkiw waaŋkiw biiŋkəw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S ukurgalaŋkis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S ukurgalaŋki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P ukurgalaŋkiw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V ukurgalaŋki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P ukurgalaŋki</td>
<td>kasu- ‘go around’</td>
<td>əmuu-‘bring’</td>
<td>aldi-‘chop’</td>
<td>aasi-‘take’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S kasuŋkiw əmuuŋkiw aldiŋkiw aasiŋkiw</td>
<td>kasuŋkiw əmuuŋkiw aldiŋkiw aasiŋkiw</td>
<td>kasuŋkiw əmuuŋkiw aldiŋkiw aasiŋkiw</td>
<td>kasuŋkiw əmuuŋkiw aldiŋkiw aasiŋkiw</td>
<td>kasuŋkiw əmuuŋkiw aldiŋkiw aasiŋkiw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>əminna- ‘give water’ (to animals)</td>
<td>puli-‘go’</td>
<td>yuu-‘go out’</td>
<td>ʧoku-‘put a saddle on a horse’</td>
<td>i-‘enter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1S əminnaŋkiw puliŋkiw yuunŋkiw ʧokuŋkiw iŋkiw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8.** Habitual aspect verbal paradigm (revised and expanded from Rinchen’s data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bi- ‘be, exist’</th>
<th>tuksa- ‘run’</th>
<th>əmə- ‘come’</th>
<th>ʧəp- ‘eat’ (?)</th>
<th>ʧəp- ‘eat’</th>
<th>ʧə- ‘rise, get up’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2S bikəl</td>
<td>tuksaŋkal</td>
<td>əməkəəl</td>
<td>ʧəpkəl</td>
<td>ʧəpkəl</td>
<td>ʧəŋkəl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S tuksaŋkəl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P/V tuksaŋkalduy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʧə- ‘give’</td>
<td>ʧə- ‘hit’</td>
<td>ʧə- ‘go’</td>
<td>ʧə- ‘put’</td>
<td>ʧə- ‘give’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S garkukəl</td>
<td>sukəkəl</td>
<td>nanakəl</td>
<td>nəəkəl</td>
<td>buukəl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S</td>
<td>sukakəl</td>
<td>nanakəl</td>
<td>nəəkəl</td>
<td>buukəl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.** Imperative paradigm (revised and expanded from Rinchen’s data)
3.3 Question marking

3.3.1 Interrogative particle for yes/no questions
For yes/no questions, the interrogative particle is /-gu/, similar to Khamnigan Mongol and Buryat. For example, Rinchen gives the following attestation of this interrogative marker in Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki:

\[ suŋni \ nituk-du \ bayuni \ bisin-gu? \]
\[ 2V.GEN \ land-DAT \ gazelle \ exist.3S-Q \]
‘Are there any gazelle in your land?’ (p. 76).

3.3.2 Optional interrogative particle for WH questions
For WH questions, an optional interrogative particle attested in Rinchen’s data is /-bə/, probably a borrowing from Khamnigan Mongol [-bee] ~ [-bɛɛ] or its Khalkha cognate бэ ~ вэ ‘interrogative marker for WH questions’.
Note the following example from Rinchen’s data:

\[ suŋni \ gərbi \ ni-bə? \]
\[ 2V.GEN \ name \ who-Q \]
‘What is your name?’ (76).

3.3.3 Fusional interrogative verbs
The verbal form bisində seems to be a fusion of bisindi ‘exist.2S.PRES’ with -bə ‘interrogative particle for WH questions’ (see §5 below for examples).

4. Analyses of texts given by Rinchen

The following consist of my morphological reanalyses of, and text-critical notes on, several Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki texts transcribed and glossed by Rinchen (pp. 77-80). Rinchen does not provide morphemic analyses for these texts, although he provides rough translational equivalents for most, though not all, of these sentences.

4.1 Reminiscing on shamanism among the Khamnigans

\[ urda-du \ awəŋki \ bəyə-l-du \ samaa-səl \ həgdii \ bi-ʦəə. \]
\[ before-DAT \ Ewenki \ person-P-DAT \ shaman-P \ many \ exist-PST.3 \]
tari samaa-sol-ni dulin-du-n aya samaan *bi-tsəə.*
DIST.DEM shaman-P-GEN inside-DAT-3POSS good shaman exist-PST3

ədii samaan bi-tsəə.
man shaman exist-PST3

atirkaan samaan bi-tsəə.
woman shaman exist-PST3

kuŋa samaan aatsən.
child shaman NEG.EXST.COP

‘Previously, among the Ewenki people, there were many shamans. Among those shamans, there were good shamans. There were men shamans. There were female shamans. There were no child shamans.’

4.2 Religion and education among the Khamnigans

urdə-du əwəŋki bəyə-l-du bunəəŋkə bi-tsəə.
before-DAT Ewenki person-P-DAT evil.spirit exist-PST3

səbəki bi-tsəə.
good.spirit exist-PST3

lama bi-tsəə.
Buddhist.monk exist-PST3

burkan bi-tsəə.
Buddha exist-PST3

ərdəmu-ŋə bəyə aatsən.
education-POSS.ADJ person NEG.EXST.COP

‘Previously among the Ewenki people there were evil spirits. There were good spirits. There were Buddhist monks. There was the Buddha.’

9) Rinchen’s “liʦəə” is clearly a typographical error for biʦəə. It is unlikely that Rinchen typed his own book manuscript. At that time period in Mongolia’s history, it was common for secretaries to type professors’ book manuscripts. Many of the errors in Rinchen’s book are undoubtedly due to the typist not understanding the professor’s notes. It is hoped that in the future the original handwritten manuscript of Rinchen’s book will appear, as this would potentially help to clear up some of the errors in the printed book.

10) Due to its semantic extension in Khalkha, the Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki
educated people."11) (reanalyzed from Rinchen, pp.78-79).

4.3 Oral autobiography of an elderly man of the Dolood clan

bi dɔlɔɔd ɔmɔk-ʧi bisim.
1S.NOM Dolood clan-POSS exist.PRES.1S

əmun əmolgi-ʧi bisim.
one son-POSS exist.PRES.1S

əmun hunaadgi-ʧi bisim.
one daughter-POSS exist.PRES.1S

atirka-ʧi bisim.
wife-POSS exist.PRES.1S

nadanyəə ʣul-ʧi bisim.
seventy two-POSS exist.PRES.1S

abdu-du puli-ŋki-w.
livestock-DAT go-HAB-1S

nimər-du kəsu-ŋki-w.
household-DAT go.around-HAB-1S

mɔrin-mi əminna-mki-w.12)
horse-REFL water-HAB-1S

word burkan is ambiguous, and can be translated as any of the following: ‘the Buddha’ ~ ‘Buddhas’ ~ ‘Bodhisattvas’ ~ ‘gods/deities’.

11) Literally, ‘There did not exist person possessing knowledge/education’. The suffix /-ŋə/ here indicates an adjectival form denoting ‘having NOUN’. As shown by Rinchen (p.88), this is the same suffix as in the old Tungusic toponym */sələ-ŋə/ ‘having iron’, the name of the Selengge River. This early Tungusic toponym is attested as early as the 8th century Old Turkic runiform inscriptions, e.g. in the Bilge Qaγan inscription as säläŋä (GOrkT 367) or seleğe, transcribing early Tungusic *sələ-ŋə or *sələ-ŋə (cf. LASM.AC).

12) The morpheme /-mki-/ in this sentence differs from the /-ŋki-/ attested elsewhere. Another possibility is that this /-mki-/ could be a typist’s error. Cursive Cyrillic m and n sometimes look similar, especially in personal notes.
I am of the Dolood clan. I have one son. I have one daughter. I have a wife. I am 72 years old. I go to [my] livestock. I go around from household to household. I water my horse. I bring water back to my yurt. I chop wood. I take it home. I go out in the morning. I get my horse. I put my saddle on [my horse]. I ride off on my horse. I come back. I enter my yurt.’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p.79).

13) This -ha is a converb suffix probably cognate to Siberian Ewenki /-ksA/, for which Vasilevič gives dialectal variants, including /-hAA/ (Vasilevič 1958, Table XXVI).

14) Rinchen translates this sentence as ‘I get up in the morning’ but it is clear from other examples given by Rinchen, and from Siberian Ewenki comparanda, that KDKE yuu- denotes ‘go out’ and not ‘get up’ (e.g. SE yuu- “выйти”, Vasilevič 1958: 572a). Rinchen gives ila- as a verb for ‘get up’. 
4.4 Excerpt from an Khamnigan Ewenki oral folksong

adun-dɔɔkəə-n sələ-ʦaa
horse-ABL-3POSS choose-PST3

alda dəl-tsə kəyər-baa-n!
fathom mane-POSS chestnut.horse-ACC.DEF-3

ayl-duukəə sələ-ʦaa
household-ABL choose-PST3

abagay15) ləpəstiiŋka tɔymɔg-əə!16)
miss PERS shaved.head-EMPH(?)

əməgəl kadal kaŋkinaa-ra-n.
saddle bridle clang-PST-3

 snapchat amyəən turəə-rə-n!
mother father scold-PST-3

‘He chose the best of his horses—the dark chestnut horse with the fathom-long mane;
He chose the best of the households—Miss Lepestinka with the shaved head;
The saddle and bridle clanged;
Her parents scolded him.’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p.80).

4.5 Hunting in Tsagaan-Owoo county, Dornod province

bi tfagaanɔwɔɔ-du bii-ŋkə-w.
1S.NOM PLACE.NAME-DL exist-HAB-1S

15) This abagay is a loanword from Mongolian, used in its older usage as a ‘respectful word for a woman’ (MXITT). Here it could be translated as ‘miss’.

16) The tɔymɔg element here is a loanword from Mongolian. In modern Khalkha Mongolian (albeit now somewhat older usage), toimog denotes ‘shaved head’ or ‘a person with a shaved head’ (MXITT). Its usage in this folksong probably emphasizes that the Russian lady in this song had short hair, apparently shorter than usual for Ewenki women. It is not clear what the /-əə/ element denotes—perhaps it is an emphatic suffix, or an added syllable for metric purposes—since this is only a short excerpt from a folksong, we do not know the full metric structure of the song.
bi *bayu-ʦə-w (?)\(^{17}\)
1S.NOM hunt-PST-1S (?)

bi tarbaka-yi waa-ŋki-w.
1S.NOM marmot-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S

gipsə-yi waa-ŋki-w.
roe.deer-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S

guskə-yi waa-ŋki-w.
wolf-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S

dʒulələ dzərgən-i wa-ŋki-w (R: *waa-ŋki-w).
south gazelle-ACC.INDEF kill-HAB-1S


4.6 Selected Khentii-Dornod Ewenki proverbs and phrases

bayə aki-ʦəə,
person elder.brother-POSS,
sun ḏaka-ʦəə
robe collar-POSS
‘People have elder brothers, [just as] robes have collars’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p.78).

tərəl-bi əʣi saa-rii ninakin,
kind-REFL NEG know-ACT dog,
sələ-bə əʣi saa-raə kuurəə
iron-ACC.DEF NEG know-ACT file
‘A dog which does not know its kind [is like] a file which does not know the iron’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p.78).

---

\(^{17}\) The original text has bi bayutsəl (unglossed by Rinchen), which could be a typographical error for bi *bayuʦəw ‘I have hunted’. A less likely possibility is that it could be a grammatical error in the speaker’s speech, in which the subject and verb do not agree in number: bi is first-person singular nominative, but the suffix -l is a plural suffix. This seems very unlikely since this agreement is a basic grammatical feature of Ewenki.

\(^{18}\) Unglossed – see footnote above for discussion.
‘A thief’s knife is sharp.’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p.78).

‘A bad [person] with a dog has no skirt on their robe; a bad [person] with a nobleman has no backbone.’ (reanalyzed from Rinchen, p 78).

‘For an emaciated horse, places are far; For a dead person, the sun is far; For a person with no free-time, friends are far.’ (reanalyzed from p.78)

5. Reanalysis of sentential data given by Rinchen

Below I provide my analyses of some Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki phrases and daily expressions documented by Rinchen:

mandə!
healthy

19) This yaatsən is an optional, phonologically conditioned variant of aatsən ‘negative copula’. When preceded by words ending in consonants, the variant aatsən surfaces, as in kunja samaan aatsən ‘There were no child shamans’ (see §4.1 above) whereas the yaatsən variant optionally surfaces after words ending in vowels, as in the example above. I term this an optional variant since there is at least one counterexample in the sentence ardəmu-ŋə bəyə aatsə ‘There were no educated people’ (from §4.2).

20) *yaatsən is my interpretation of Rinchen’s original, which is “йлсен” (p.78), clearly a typographical error for *йачен, i.e. *yaatsən in my reanalysis.
'Hello' (p.76).

-su mənda!
2V/2P healthy
'Hello' (respectful) (pp.76, 77).

dʒa, aya bisindi?
INTERJ good exist.1S.PRES.Q
'Well, how are you?' (p.76).

aya, aya!
good good
'I am well' (lit. 'good, good') (p.76).

ʤa, ema sönin bisin-bə?
INTERJ what.kind news exist.3S.PRES = Q
'What is new? How's it going?' (p.76).

ema sönin afın
what.kind news NEG.EXST.COP
'Nothing new'. (p.76).

ni gərbi-ʧi bisində?
who name-POSS exist.2S.PRES.Q
'What is your name?' (p.76).

suŋni gərbi ni-bə?
2V.GEN name who = Q
'What is your name?' (respectful) (p.76).

ila-bə nituk?
where-Q land
'Where is your land?' (p.76).

suŋni nituk ila-bə?
2V.POSS land where-Q
'Where is your land?' (respectful) (p.76).

---

21) Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki nituk ‘land’ is a loanword from Khamnigan Mongol nitʊg [n'itʰʊk] ‘land, territory, homeland, birthplace, locality’ etc.
*adiʧi bisinda?*
until.when exist.2S.PRES.Q
‘Until when will you be there?’ (p.76).

*su adiʧi bisinda?*
2V until.when exist.2S.PRES.Q
‘Until when will you be there?’ (respectful)²² (p.76).

*suŋni nituk-du bayuni bisin-gu?*
2V.GEN land-DAT game.animal exist.3S.PRES-Q
‘Are there game animals in your land?’ (p.76).

*bisin, kətə bayuni bisin!*
exist.3S.PRES many game.animal exist.3S.PRES
‘Yes, there are many game animals!’ (p.76).

*su iləkə umə-nda?*
2V where.from come.2S.PRES
‘Where did you come from?’ ~ ‘Where are you from?’ (respectful) (p.76).

*ulaanbaatur-dukə umə-n*
Ulaanbaatar-ABL come-1S
‘I am from Ulaanbaatar’. (p.76).

*ədu adira aŋa-ʣɔw?*
here how.many.days spend.night-1S.FUT
‘How many nights will I spend here?’ (p.76).

*damga-yi ta-kal!*
tobacco-ACC.INDEF pull-IMP.2S

---

²²) This sentence is noteworthy because the subject, *su* ‘you’ (second person *vous*-form or second-person plural), does not agree with the second-person singular predicate (see Table 5). It is not clear if this is due to language erosion—Rinchen notes that at the time of his fieldwork the Khamnigan Ewenki language of Mongolia was already highly endangered—or if this was a regular feature of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki, whereby the honorific nuance was indicated with a 2V/2P subject and the singular number was indicated with a 2S verbal predicate. Future work on the limited data in Rinchen’s book, or on other related Ewenki dialects, may help answer this question.
‘Smoke some tobacco!’ ~ ‘Have a cigarette / some cigarettes!’ (p.76).

manda bisifi?
Healthy exist.2V/2P (?)
‘How are you?’ (p.77).

nii的人来说 bisindi?
who.GEN son exist.2S.PRES
‘Whose son are you?’ (p.77).

adii өмөлгө bisindө?
how.many son-POSS exist.2S.PRES.Q
‘How many sons do you have?’ (p.77).

adii hunaa-tfδ bisindө?
how.many daughter-POSS exist.2S.PRES.Q
‘How many daughters do you have?’ (p.77).

idaa dölбө ина-sə-bə?
why night go-3S.PST-Q
‘Why did he/she/it go at night?’ (p.77).

irgi дома-ndi?
from.where come-2S.PRES
‘Where are you from?’ (p.77).

irgi sə-dəs-bə?
from.where arrive-2S.FUT-Q
‘Where will you arrive?’ (p.77).

adi-bii үсindи-bə?
how.many-Q.EMPH arrive.2S.PRES-Q
‘How old are you?’ (p.77).

23) The expression ‘pull tobacco’ for ‘smoke tobacco/cigarettes’ is a calque from Khamnigan Mongol [tʰamakʰi tʰatʰa-] or Khalkha Mongolian тамхи тат-[tʰæmx tʰḁt-] ‘smoke tobacco/cigarettes’ (literally ‘pull tobacco’).

24) The verbal form bisifi is possibly a variant of bisis (e.g. p.74), the present tense second-person plural or 2V form of ‘be, exist’. Alternatively, bisifi could be the interrogative equivalent of bisis. These possibilities require careful consideration.
ulgə ʤəp-kəl
meat eat-IMP.2S
‘Eat some meat.’ (p.77).

ila-kəl!
rise-IMP.2S
‘Get up!’ (p.77).

nuŋun-daki bəə-gin orin-du min-ʤi əma-təə.
six-ORD month-GEN twenty-DAT 1S.OBL-INSTR arrive-FUT
‘He/she/it will come with me on June 20th.’ (p.77).

marinʤi gərku-kəl
horse-INSTR go-IMP.2S
‘Go by horse.’ (p.77).

məoʤi sukə-kəl
wood-INSTR strike-IMP.2S
‘Hit it with wood.’ (p.77).

min-duuki əma-kəl
1S.OBL-ABL come-IMP.2S
‘Come here.’ (p.77).

marin-duuki yuuʧaa!
horse-ABL dismount-PST(?)
‘Get off the horse!’ (p.77).

6. On the lexicon of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki

Rinchen’s data provides attestations of words with no obvious cognates in Vasilevič’s 1958 compendious dictionary of Siberian Ewenki dialects. For example:

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25) The /-ʧaa/ morpheme here is very similar in form to the third-person past tense suffix (see Table 6 for examples). It is possible that this past tense form denoted a strong imperative. The fact that it appears without the usual second-person suffix /-s/ is noteworthy. An alternative possibility is that this /-ʧaa/ could be the result of interference from the phonologically similar Khalkha Mongolian completive aspect suffix -чих /-ʧʰx/, or its emphatic variant, /-ʧʰx-A/. In Khalkha, a similar construction would be буучих аа /pouv-ʧʰx-A/ ['pʊːʧʰχə] ‘get off (the horse)’. 
*kaka- ‘enter’ (?)

*mayuu- ‘climb a mountain’

*poko- ‘place, land’ (?)

*sa- ‘arrive’

*sala- ‘choose’

At least one Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki word resembles not Siberian Ewenki, but the Southern Tungusic language Ulcha:


Future work on the divergent lexical elements of Khentii-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki as documented by Rinchen should carefully consult Doerfer and Knüppel’s monumental lexicographical study Etymologisch-ethnologisches Wörterbuch tungusischer Dialekte, which includes Shirokogorov’s precious notes on Tungusic dialects and many otherwise unattested words. At the time of writing this paper, I did not have access to this important work.

7. Concluding Remarks

Much more work can and should be done on the precious trove of linguistic data in Rinchen’s book, as it adds to our slowly increasing knowledge of the highly endangered Tungusic language family. Specifically, Rinchen’s book and Mishig’s invaluable notes on Yöröö Khamnigan Ewenki (cf. Shimunek 2016) are integral sources of linguistic data on the minimally documented and possibly now extinct Tungusic languages once spoken in Mongolia.

Symbols, Abbreviations, and Sigla

* reconstruction based on historical-comparative linguistic methods

- morpheme boundary

/ / phonemic form

< language-internal change

26) This word resembles WMgl sili- ‘choose the best of something’, and is probably a loanword from Mongolic.

27) With the exception of one note I had taken years ago when I did have access to this important study.
← loanword or borrowing across languages
1 first-person
2 second-person
2V second-person vous/вы form (respectful)
3 third-person
ABL ablative
ACC accusative
ACT nomen actoris vel actionis (Kara 2006)
ADJ adjective
COM comitative
COP copula
CVB converb
DAT dative
DEF definite
è Cyrillic е (in romanization of Mongolian in Cyrillic script)
EMPH emphatic
EXST existential
FUT future tense
GEN genitive
GORkT Tekin, Grammar of Orkhon Turkic (1968)
HAB habitual
î Cyrillic ы (in romanization of Mongolian in Cyrillic script)
IMP imperative
INDEF indefinite
INSTR instrumental
INTERJ interjection
IPA International Phonetic Alphabet
KDKE Khattei-Dornod Khamnigan Ewenki
LASM Shimunek (2017)
LASM.AC Shimunek. Addenda et Corrigenda to LASM (2018)
MMgl Middle Mongol
MXITT Mongol Xelnii Ix Tailbar Tol’ (2015 mobile edition)
NEG negative
NOM nominative
OBL oblique
ORD ordinal numeral
P plural
PERS personal name
POSS possessive
PRES present tense
PST past
Q interrogative
REFL reflexive
S singular
SE Siberian Evenki (Vasilevič 1958)
SSTM Cincius (1975-1977)
TMA tense, mood, and aspect
WMgl Written Mongol

References

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