Middle Mongolian Dialects and Modern Mongolian Languages in Regard to Their Spatial Case Systems

Grountov, Ilya

Paradoxically, there is still no universally accepted classification of Mongolian languages. According to the most widespread classification modern Mongolian languages are divided into three main groups: Northern Mongolian (Khalkha, Buriat, Kalmyck, Oirat, Ordos, Khamnigan and Dagur), Western Mongolian (Moghol) and South Mongolian (East Yogur, Monguor /Minghe and Huzu dialects are quite different/ and Dongxian-Bonan subgroup). Written Mongolian language has a special status. Although it is used as a modern written language by several North Mongolian dialects and languages spoken in Inner Mongolian Autonomous region of China, actually it reflects a separate, independent Mongolian language. Literary tradition conserved this language in a very archaic form. Many scholars pointed out the interdialectal use of Written Mongolian. This function of Written Mongolian appeared due to the fact that Written Mongolian is quite close to all North Mongolian languages, but does not coincide with any of them.

Middle Mongolian monuments in accordance with N. Poppe[1] are usually regarded as representing 2 dialects: "East Middle Mongolian" (the language of *The Secret History of the Mongols*[2], *Hua-yi Yi-yu*[3] and other Sino-Mongolian monuments of the 13-14th centuries as well as the language of the monuments in hPags-pa script[4]) and "West Middle Mongolian" (all monuments in Arabic script).

Hereafter we will investigate the subsystems of spatial cases in modern and medieval Mongolian languages.

Middle Mongolian monuments reflect two rather distinct systems of spatial cases. First system occurs only in the dictionary *Muqaddimat al-adab*[5]. Second system is represented in *The Secret History of the Mongols*, *Hua-yi Yi-yu*, manuscripts in hPags-pa script and perhaps in Ibn-Muhanna glossary.[6]

Here is the system of spatial cases in **West MiddleMongolian:**[7]

Dative-Locative-Lative case	*-du*
Dative-Reflexive case	*-daγan*
Ablative case	*-āsa*
Dative-locative case	*-dur* (rare)
	-da/a (rare)
Dative-Reflexive case	*-duri'ān* (3 cases)

[1] Poppe, N.: *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies.* Helsinki 1955

[2] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, the largest of the literary medieval Mongolian monuments, presumably was written in 1240.

[3] *Hua-yi Yi-yu sino* - Mongolian monument of the 14th century. It includes dictionary and a number of Khan`s edicts.

[4] hPags-pa script was created in 1269. It served as an official system of writing for Mongolian court of Yuan dynasty in China.

[5] *Muqaddimat al-adab* is a tetraglot dictionary (Turkic-Mongolian-Persian-Arabian) in Arabic script. The main part was compiled in 12th century, but Mongolian translations were added only in 14th century.

[6] Monument in arabic script written at the beginning of the 14th century. Unlike Poppe we include this monument to the corpus of East Middle Mongolian dialect.

[7] In the list of case-markers we don't mention vowel harmony alternants *a/e*, *o/ö*, *u/ü* as well as variants with initial voiced or voiceless consonant: *-dur/tur*, *-da/ta*, *-du/tu*.

The use of case-marker *-da* is very scarce in *Muqaddimat al-adab*. There are only 13 examples (not counting petrified forms like *ende* "here", or *tulada* "for").Some of them are just borrowed from Turkic: *qaiguda* "in grief" is a translation of Turkic *qaiguda* "id", *namazda* "during *namaz*" is a translation of Turkic *namazda* "id" and so on. Every form that is not borrowed has a parallel form with *-du*: *uile-da* "in work" ~ *uile-du* "in work" etc.

-du counts several hundreds of examples in various functions such as dative, locative and lative. Examples:[8]

(p. 110) *balγasun-du*
town-*du*
"in the town"

(p. 329) *sun-du* *čina-qsan* *xurma*
milk-du boil-PERF.P. persimmon
"persimmon boiled in milk"

(p. 100) *aman-du* *orki-ba* *em-i*
mouth-*du* put-PAST medicine-ACC
"(he) put a medicine into (his) mouth"

(p. 213) *kele-be* *tun-du* *qayγu-yān*
tell-PAST this-*du* grief-POSS
"told him his grief"

-dur occurs in *Muqaddimat al-adab* more often than *-da*, but also many times less than *-du* (36 examples). Examples:

(p. 195) *ile-be* *eme-yi* *ere-dur* *in-u*
Send-PAST woman-ACC husband-*dur* 3SG:POSS-GEN
"(He) sent the woman to her husband."

(p. 297) *qa'ur-ba* *buγdai-yi* *taba-dur*
roast-PAST wheat-ACC pan-dur
"(He) roasted wheat on the pan."

As for the forms with dative-reflexive, we find in *Muqaddimat al-adab* only three examples of *-duri'ān*.

(p. 115) *bayasu-qsan* *dušmandur-i'ān*
to be glad-PERF.P. enemy-*dur*-POSS
"pleased with his own enemy"

[8] Hereafter pages are indicated according to the edition Poppe, N.: *Mongol'skij slovar` Muqaddimat al-adab I-II.* Moskva – Leningrad 1938.

(p. 329) *suike* *durube* *eme* *čiqin-dur-i'ān*
ear-ring pass through woman ear-*dur*-POSS
"A woman passed ear-rings through her ears."

(p. 232) *labasat* *okiba* *erdem-dur-i`ēn*
reproach give-PAST knowledge-dur-POSS
"to reproach in his knowledge"

On the contrary the basic form of Dative-Reflexive in *Muqaddimat al-adab* is *-dān* ⇦ *-da'an*. There are 31 example of this form. Examples:

(p. 99) *amandān* *usun* *kodel-ge-be*
mouth-*dān* water move-CAUS-PAST
"(He) made water in his mouth move"

(p. 328) *suyke* *čiqin-dān* *olgube* *eme*
ear-ring ear-*dān* hang-PAST woman
"A woman hung ear-ring on her ear."

(p. 351) *toχtaba* *oran-dān*
stay-PAST place-*dān*
"(He) stood on his place."

Ablative case suffix in *Muqaddimat al-adab* is *-āsa/ēse*. Examples:

(p. 99) *aman-āsa* *usun* *tusuba*
mouth-*āsa* water drop
"Water dropped from his mouth."

(p. 98) *ali* *bidan-āsa*
which we-*āsa*
"Which of us?"

The system of spatial cases in **East Middle Mongolian** is quitedifferent:

Dative-Locative case	*-da/-a (-na)*
Lative-Locative case	*-dur*
Locative-Reflexive case	*-duriyan*
Ablative case	*-ača/-dača*
Dative-Reflexive case	*-da'an* (rare)

Examples of Dative-Locative case *-da/-a (-na):*[9]

[9] Examples are taken from *The Secret History of the Mongols*. Figures in parentheses indicate the paragraphs.

(§53) *Qadaan-taiji-da* *ugule*
Qadaan-taiji-*da* tell-IMP
"Tell Qadaan-taiji!"

(§134) *Kereid-un* *Tooril-a* *vaŋ* *nere* *tende* *ok-ba*
Kereid-GEN Tooril-a van name there give-Past
"(They) give there the title of *van* to Tooril of Kereits."

(§1) *Onan-muren-no* *teriun-e* *Burqan-qaldun-na* *nuntuqla-ju ...*
Onon-river-GEN head-*e* Burhan-qaldun-*na* nomade-CONV
"While nomadizing in the head of the river Onon at the Burqan-qaldun mountain …"

Lative-Locative case *-dur*:

(§85) *ger-tur* *i-no* *oro-basu ...*
house-*tur* 3SG:POSS-GEN enter-CONV
"When (they) entered his house …"

(§131) *Čiŋgis-qagan* *seuder-tur* *sau-ju ...*
Genghis khan shadow-*tur* sit-CONV
"Genghis khan sitting in the shadow …"

Locative-Reflexive case *-duriyan*. Examples:

(§28) *ger-duriyen* *ire-ju*
house-duriyen come-CONV
"Entering his own house …"

(§82) *nidun-duriyen* *gal-tu,* *niur-turiyen* *gere-tu*
eye-*duriyen* fire-COM face-*turiyen* light-COM
"There is fire in his eyes and light in his face."

Ablative case *-ača/-dača*:

(§15) *Tere* *goreesun-o* *miqan-ača* *na-da* *ok*
That deer-GEN meat-ABL I-DAT give
"Give me (a part) from the meat of that deer!"

(§122) *jamuqa-dača* *2qagača-ju*
Jamuqa-*dača* separate-CONV
"(They also) separated from Jamuqa."

Dative-Reflexive case *-da'an* (only 14 examples):

(§169)	*Narin-Keen*	*basa*	*aduuči-daan*	*Qišliq-a*	*ugule-run*
	Narin-Keen	again	horse-herd-*daan*	Qišliq-DAT	tell-CONV
	"Narin-Keen said to his horse-herd Qishliq again …"				

Written Mongolian paradigm is almost the same as in East Middle Mongolian.

Pre-Classical Written Mongolian:[10]

Ablative case	*-ača/-eče*
Dative-locative case	*-da/-a, -dur/-tur*
Dative-Reflexive	*-da'an/-ta'an,-duriyan*

Classical Written Mongolian:[11]

Ablative case	*-ača/-eče*
Dative-Locative-Lative case	*-dur/-tur; -du/-tu*
Dative-Reflexive case	*-da'an/-ta'an*
	-duriyan/-turiyen
	-duban/-tuban

We can see that the forms *-du/-tu* appear rather late, only in 17th century. Probably they were borrowed from the spoken North Mongolian dialects of that time. The form-*duban/-tuban* appears to be created by analogy with the forms *-ača-ban* (ABL-POSS), *-luγa-ban* (COM-POSS).

Written Oirat language[12] had some features of the Written Mongolian and some of the spoken languages:

Ablative case	**3**-*eče*
Dative-Locative case	*-du/-tu*
Dative-Locative-Reflexive case	*-dān/-tān*
	-duban/-tuban (rare)

Let`s have a look on the modern systems of spatial cases in Mongolian languages:

Ablative case: Khalkha *-ās*; Kalmyck *-ās*; Buriat *-hā* ⇦ **-āsa*; Khamnigan *āxa* ⇦ **asa*; Ordos *-ās*; Dagur *-ās(e)*; Monguor *-sa*; East Yogur *-sa*, *-dasa*; Dongxian *-se*; Bonan *-se*; Moghol *-asa*/*-ase*, *-sa*/*-se*, *-dasa*.

All these forms reflect a protoform **-asa*. It is necessary to point out that despite Poppe **-asa* and **-ača* can not be the alternants of the same morpheme (Poppe assumed that here is "exceptional development of the ancient affricate **č*."[13]). There are no cases when Proto-Mongolian **č* develops into *s* in all modern Mongolian languages. Neither can Proto-Mongolian **s* develop into *č* in all modern Mongolian languages.

[10] The earliest stage of the Written Mongolian. Includes monuments in uighur script from 13th to 16th century.
[11] The first monuments in Classical Written Mongolian appeared in the 17th century.
[12] First monuments in Todo bičig – the system of writing adopted for Oirat language – appeared in the 17th century.
[13] Poppe, N.: *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies.* p. 200.

Dative-locative case: Khalkha *-d/-t*; Kalmyck *-də/-tə*; Buriat *-da/-ta*; Ordos *-du*; Khamnigan *-du*; Dagur *-da*; Monguor: Huzu *-də*, Minghe *-du*; East Yogur *-da*, *-de*; Dongxian *-de*; Bonan *-da*; Moghol *-du*/*-tu* (rare *-da*, *-a* – with certain lexemes).

In Khalkha, Buriat, Kalmyck and Dagur we cannot say for certain that the affix of dative-locative *-da/-d* originates from *-du* or *-da* because of a strong vowel reduction in non-initial syllables. The only North Mongolian language that preserves well the vowel of the non-initial syllable is Ordos.

Cf. also: Written Mongolian *yasu* "bone"; Hua-yi Yi-yu *yasun*; Secret History *yasun*; Muqaddimat al-adab *yasun* – Buriat *yahan*; Khalkha *yas(an)*; Kalmyck *yasn̥*, Dagur *yase*, but Ordos *yasu*. That`s why it is possible to reconstruct the protoform **-du* for these forms. (We can also mention the Written Language of Oirat, which was under strong influence of the Classical Written Mongolian, but contained certain features of the 17th-century spoken language. It has *-du* as a dative-locative case-marker.)

Dative-reflexive case: Khalkha *-dā*; Kalmyck *-dān*; Buriat *-dān*; Ordos *-dān/-tān*; Khamnigan *-dân*; Dagur *-damul*; Monguor:Huzu *-dena*, Minghe *-duna*; Dongxian *-dene*; Bonan *-dana*; Moghol *-duna*.

The forms of all North Mongolian languages go back to the protoform **-daγan* (perhaps with the exception of Dagur). Other languages created the form of dative-reflexive case on the basisof their actual affix of dative. Nevertheless, none of the forms goes back to **-duriyan*.

Thus, the system of West Middle Mongolian seems to be very productive.

In fact, all modern Mongolian languages have an ablative case marker reflecting an old form **-asa*.

Most of the modern Mongolian languages have dative-locative-reflexive affix descending from **-daγan*.

As for the dative-locative affix, the rules of historical phonetics allows us to reconstruct protoform **-du* for most of the modern Mongolian languages.

On the contrary, the distinctive features of the East Middle Mongolian dialect were not inherited by any of the languages except Written Mongolian:

- None of the Mongolian languages has *-dur* as a lative or locative affix.
- None of the Mongolian languages has *-duriyan* as a dative-locative-reflexive affix.
- None of the Mongolian languages has *-a* as a productive dative or locative affix
- None of the Mongolian languages has *-ača* as an ablative affix.

The only exception is Written Mongolian which can be regarded as a language created on the basis of the East Middle Mongolian dialect but influenced much by spoken languages.

Therefore we can conclude that modern Mongolian languages inherited the system of spatial case markers from West Middle Mongolian dialect, while the system of East Middle Mongolian has had deep influence on literary tradition but generated no descendants among modern Mongolian languages. This fact can help us in elaborating a classification ofMongolian languages which would be adequate in both synchronic and diachronic aspects.

Abbreviations

ABL	ablative case	GEN	genetive case
ACC	accusative case	IMP	imperative mood
CAUS	causative	PAST	past
COM	comitative case	PERF.P	perfect participle
CONV	converb	POSS	possessive particle
DAT	dative case	3SG:POSS	possesive pronoun of 3 Sg.

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