



Imperfectives in Turkic and Mongolic

Imperfective Modalities in the Caucasus and Beyond
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Today

- viewpoint operators (Johansonian framework)
- Turkic intraterminal systems
- Mongolic intraterminal systems
- Some final remarks

Viewpoint operators

Johanson, L. 2000. **Viewpoint operators in European languages.** In: Dahl, Osten (ed.), *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe* (Empirical Approaches to Language Typology; Eurotyp 20-6.) Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 27-187.

Johanson, L. 1999. **Typological notes on aspect and actionality in Kipchak Turkic.** In: Abraham, Werner & Kulikov, Leonid (eds.) *Tense-aspect, transitivity and causativity. Essays in honour of Vladimir Nedjalkov.* (Studies in Language Companion Series 50.) Amsterdam & Philadelphia: Benjamins. 171–184

Johanson, L. 1971. **Aspekt im Türkischen. Vorstudien zu einer Beschreibung des türkeitürkischen Aspektsystems.** (Studia Turcica Upsaliensia 1.) Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Johanson, L. 2021. **Turkic.** Cambridge University Press.

Viewpoint operators

Viewpoint aspect operates on actional phrases, whose structures determine their semantic interpretation. The aspectual views may be localized in time by temporal expressions, e.g. distant (anterior) copular particles. Aspect and actionality constitute complex interacting phenomena in morphosyntax, semantics, and pragmatics, expressed by numerous markers and their combinations (Johanson 2021: 624)

In Turkic, the relevant tense opposition concerns anteriority vs. non-anteriority [\pm PAST].

Intraterminal view

An intraterminal view means a vision <intra terminos> 'between the limits'. A postterminal view means a vision <post terminum> 'after the (relevant) limit'. They are basic modes of presentation emanating from the narrow <hic et nunc> ('here and now') perspective, the natural vantage point for perceiving and conceptualizing the flow of events ('what is going on', 'what has happened').

Intraterminality ⟨intra⟩ envisages an event from an internal point of view, in its course. The current event does not appear in its totality in the range of vision. This aspect category yields imperfective and progressive meanings, typical of presents and imperfects in many non-Turkic languages. Turkish simple ⟨intra⟩ markers include {-(Ø)iyor}, {-mAK-tA}, {-(V)r}, which form nonpast intraterminals, e.g. ⟨Yaz|iyor⟩ ‘X writes’, and intraterminals-in-past, e.g. ⟨Yaz|iyor|du⟩ ‘X was writing’ (Johanson 2021: 624).

Postterminality

Postterminality ⟨post⟩ envisages an event at a vantage point where its relevant limit has already passed. This limit depends on the phase structure of the actional phrase (Johanson 2021: 625).

Actional phrase

An actional phrase consists minimally of a verbal lexeme and is characterized by an internal phase structure (IPS). This can be **transformative**, which implies the presence of a crucial limit, or **nontransformative**, which implies the absence of a crucial limit. Transformative actional phrases are of two kinds: **initiotransformative** and **finitransformative**, depending on whether the initial limit or the final limit is the crucial one.

Recategorization

The IPS of actional phrases can be subject to recategorization, that is to a change of their internal phase structure.

Nontransformativizing actional phrases can undergo transformativization, and transformativizing actional phrases can undergo nontransformativization.

Auxiliary verb constructions (**actionality markers**) serve these purposes by functioning as actional recategorizers.

Sayan Turkic nontransformativizers

- (X)p tur-* (CB + 'stand up/stand')
- (X)p jĩ^ht-* (CB + 'lie down, lie')
- (X)p joru-* (CB + 'move')
- (X)p olur-* (CB + 'sit down, sit')

Focality and Defocalization

An important parameter in the aspectual domain is the degree of focality, a scalar property. Intra- and postterminals display higher or lower focality degrees depending on the relative narrowness/broadness of the range of vision at a given vantage point. Their 'nowness' is more or less restricted. **High-focal intraterminals put a narrow focus on what is currently going on at the orientation point, in the sense of 'X is just now in the middle of doing'. Focal intraterminals often correspond to English progressives, e.g. Turkish <Gel-iyor-du-m> (come-INTRA-COP.PAST-1SG) 'I was coming'. Other intraterminals apply more extended ranges of vision (Johanson 2021: 625).**

Structure of intraterminals

- Simple
- Periphrastic markers

Intraterminals (used as finite forms) display pronominal-type of personal marking

Intraterminals (Old Turkic)

- ❑ The oldest known intraterminal base is that of the so-called aorist.
- ❑ The East Old Turkic “aorist” is an intraterminal category usable in a focal sense, e.g. ‘X is acting’, and in less focal senses, e.g. ‘X acts/usually acts’.

(Johanson 2021: 627)

Intraterminals (some modern Turkic examples)

Oghuz (Turkish)

-*Vr* + COP

-*lyor* + COP

-*mAKtA* + COP

Oghuz (Azeri)

-*Ar* + COP

-*lr* + COP

-*mAKdA* + COP

(Iran-Turkic) *var* (existential particle) + personal markings + **VS-HF.INTRA**-personal markings (feature clearly copied from Persian)

Dukhan (Sayan Turkic) intraterminals

(-past) level

- the low-focal suffix -*Vr*
- the more focal item -*Bəšaan*
- the high-focal items -*(X)p-turə/-olərə/-jorə/ -jĩ^htərə*
- and the “perceptive” focal/non-focal item -*V/y-dXr(X)*

(+past) level

- -*Vr + cop*
- -
- the high-focal items -*(X)p-tur/-olər/-joru-/ -jĩ^ht-* + *postterminal/evidential/past suffixes*
- -

-Ar dur-gan (low-focal INTRA + COP-past) (Dukhan [Sayan Turkic])

Purəngə

previous

uləs-tar aya

people-PL trip-bow

pəle

with

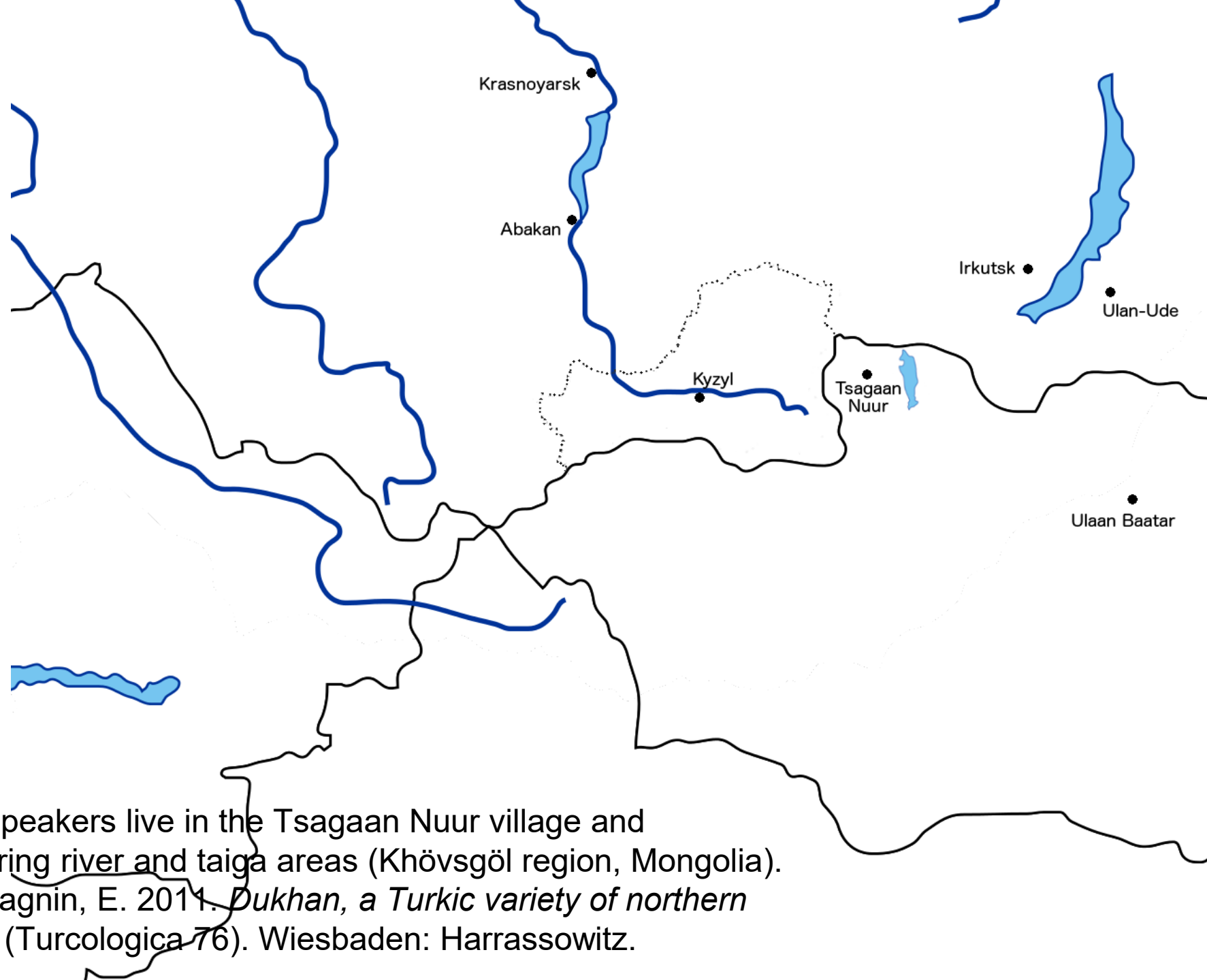
aŋna-ar

hunt-INTRA.VBN

tur-gan.

COP-POST

‘Previous people used to hunt with the trip-bow.’



Dukhan speakers live in the Tsagaan Nuur village and neighbouring river and taiga areas (Khövsgöl region, Mongolia). See, Ragagnin, E. 2011. *Dukhan, a Turkic variety of northern Mongolia* (Turcologica 76). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.



More cases....

VS-*Vr* + **kiši** (person) + COP

aṇna-ar

kiši

tur-gan

hunt-INTRA.VBN

person

COP(to stand up, to stand)-POST

VS.

aṇna-ar

tur-gan

hunt-INTRA.VBN

COP(to stand up, to stand)-POST

to enter the state of being

a) *X-er* / b) *non X-er*

Šanji aššak aŋna-vas bol-u ber-gen

Šanji old man hunt-INTRA.NEG become-CB give-POST

‘Šanji Aššak became a non-hunter / stopped hunting.’

Bat araha iš-pes bol-u ber-gen.

Bat vodka drink-INTRA.NEG become-CB give-POST

‘Bat became a non-Vodka-drinker / stopped drinking Vodka.’

Mongolic

Brosig, B. 2014. **The aspect-evidentiality system of Middle Mongol.** *Ural-Altaic Studies* 13.2: 7-38.

Janhunen, J. 2012. ***Mongolian***. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Svantesson, O. 1991. **Tense, mood and Aspect in Mongolian.** *Working Papers* 38: 189-204. Department of Linguistics, Lund University.

Middle Mongol imperfectives (XIII-XIV c)

(-past)

-*yU* (generic marker)

-*mU* (progressive-habitual)

-*n bu-yu* (progressive)

(+past)

-*jU bü-lüge / a-juγu*

-*QU bü-lüge / a-juγu*

two functions:

1) future in the past

2) **was also used in habitual contexts**

(Brosig 2014)

Modern Khalkha Mongolian intraterminals

(-past)

- **-nA** (non-focal)
 - **-j bai-na** (high-focal) (dialects may also use other postural verbs)
 - **-dOg** (habitual) (participle)
 - **-OO** (non-focal) (participle)
- (describing an action/state started in the past and still on-going)

(+past)

- **-j bai-** + TAME
- Participles + Copula

Flow of grammaticalization

- ❑ Defocalization > renewal of focalization as a cyclic process in Turkic and Mongolic
- ❑ Combination of intraterminals + auxiliary/cop verbs / actionality markers + auxiliary/cop verbs
- ❑ For brainstorming: (Often) fluid border between verbal and non-verbal predicates (especially when nominalizers/particles such as ‚thing/person‘ occur)

**Thank you for your kind
attention**