

The markers of the verbal plurality in Kalmyk¹

Kalmyk (Mongolian, Altaic) markers **-cxa-**, **-ld-** and **-lc-** (plurality of participants)

1. The suffix **-cxa-**

The suffix **-cxa-** — “a number agreement marker”.

1. Optional:
 - (1a) *Küükə-d qäräd-dhä-(cxä)-nä.*
girl-PL jump-PROG-(PLR)-PRS
‘The girls are jumping’.
 2. Plurality of participants is obligatory:
 - (1b) *Küükən qäräd-dhä-(*cxä)-nä.*
girl-PL jump-PROG-PLR-PRS
‘The girl is jumping’.
 3. This suffix doesn’t indicate the number of events:
 - (2a) *Badma dhil bolqən xasha-qan shird-nä / *shird-cxä-nä.*
Badma year every fence-P.REFL paint-PRS / *paint-PLR-PRS.
‘Badma paints the fence (lit. “his fence”) every year’.
 - (2b) *Mini ax-nər dhil bolqən xasha-qan shird-cxä-nä*
1SG.GEN elder.brother-PL year every fence-P.REFL paint-PLR-PRS
/ *shird-nä.*
/ paint-PRS
‘My elder brothers paint the fence (lit. “his fence”) every year’.
 4. Agreement or marker of verbal plurality?

Single participant; grammatical form — plural => * **-cxa-**

- (3a) *Tadən shirä deer-äsə aaq-mud av-tən.*
2PL table surface-ABL plate-PL take-2PL
‘You (pl / polite sg) are taking the plates from the table’.
- (3b) *Tadən shirä deer-äsə aaq-mud av-cxa-tən.*
2PL table surface-ABL plate-PL take-PLR-2PL
‘You (pl / *polite sg) are taking the plates from the table’.

¹ The material is based on the data collected during the linguistic expeditions to Kalmykia in 2006-2008 organized by the Saint-Petersburg State University. The research is made with support of grant from the Russian Foundation for Basic Research № 07-06-00278.

Grammatical form — singular; situation implies plurality of participants => ^{ok} -*cxā-*

(4) *Kün xurəg-tə ir-cxä-sən uga.*
Person meeting-DAT come-PLR-PC.PRF NEG.COP
'Nobody came to the meeting'.

(5) *Kövün bolqən alymə av-cxa-v.*
boy every apple take-PLR-PST
'Every boy took an apple'.

bolqən — head in the phrase *kövün bolqən*

(6) *Adun teeg-är güü-dhə jov-cxa-na.*
herd steppe-INS run-CV.IPFV walk-PLR-PRS
'A herd is running (about) in the steppe'.

It can combine with plural markers of 1 and 2 person:

(7) *Madən jov-cxa-na-vidən / *jov-cxa-na-v.*
1PL walk-PLR-PRS-1PL / * walk-PLR-PRS-1SG
'We are walking'.

Affix order:

Finite forms:

aspect > *cxā* > tense > person.number

It can be also used in non-finite forms of verbs (4).

BUT In 'compound' verbs -*cxā-* — in the finite part that has the grammatical markers (cf. 6 and 8):

(8) * *Adun teeg-är güü-cxä-dhə jov-na.*
herd steppe-INS run-PLR-CV.IPFV walk-PRS
'A herd is running (about) in the steppe'.

Other Mongolian languages

-*sagaa-/segee-* in Buryat – marker of repetitive / pluritative aspect (*helsegee* 'to talk from time to time') [Darbeevea 1997: 44]

-*cagha-/cigha-* in Moghol means "actions performed by many actors (pluritative or verbal plural)" [Weiers 2003: 253]

-*qaghaa-* in Mongghul means "pluritative" [Georg 2003: 294] and others

Hypothetical development of the marker:

plurality of events > plurality of participants > agreement marker

In Kalmyk -*cxā-* — between plurality of participants and agreement marker.

2. The suffix *-ld-*

1. Describing sociative situations

- (9a) *Ämtän inä-nä / inä-ld-nä.*
people laugh-PRS / laugh-RECP-PRS
'People are laughing'.
(9b) *Kün inä-nä / *inä-ld-nä.*
man laugh-PRS / laugh-RECP-PRS
'A man is laughing'.

2. The suffix *-ld-* — “reciprocal marker”.

- (10) *Ämtän neg neg-tä-qän cokə-ld-na.*²
people one one-ASSOC-P.REFL hit-RECP-PRS
'People fight with each other.'

It is true for a fixed number of verbs. Kalmyk speakers prefer describing reciprocal situation with the reciprocal construction with a pronoun *neg negän* 'each other':

- (11) *Ämtə-n neg neg-än cokə-(ld)-na.*
people-EXT one one-P.REFL hit-RECP-PRS
'People fight with each other.'³

The suffix *-ld-* can be used but it does not change the argument structure and becomes optional.

Subject-oriented reciprocal constructions: (10).

Object-oriented reciprocal constructions:

- (12) *Badma üür-müd-än neg neg-tä-qän tanyə-ld-ul-v.*
Badma friend-PL-P.REFL one one-ASSOC-P.REFL know-RECP-CAUS-PST
'Badma presented his friends to each other'.

«Heavy» marker (pronoun *neg negän* 'each other') > prototypical reciprocal meaning (13a).

«Light» marker (suffix *-ld-*) > additional meaning (13b).

- (13a) *Madən neg neg-än üz-dhä-nä-vidən.*
1PL one one-P.REFL see-PROG-PRS-1PL
'We see each other'. (* 'We meet with each other'.)
(13b) *Madən (neg negən-tä-qän) üzə-ld-nä-vidən.*
1PL (one one-ASSOC-P.REFL) see-RECP-PRS-1PL
'We meet (with each other)'. (* 'We see each other'.)

3. The suffix *-lc-*

1. Sociative situation, “sociative marker”

- (14) *Badma Bajrta-ta duul-lc-na / duul-na.*
Badma Bajrta-ASSOC sing-SOC-PRS / sing-PRS
'Badma and Bajrta are singing'.

² ASSOC — a kind of the comitative case.

³ *Neg negän* is an accusative form of the pronoun.

- (15) *Ämtän maxən tus tus-t-an shar-cxa-na /*
 people meat opposite opposite-DAT-P.REFL roast-PLR-PRS /
*sharə-ld-na / *sharə-lc-na.*
 roast-RECP-PRS / * roast-SOC-PRS
 ‘People are roasting meat . They do it separately’.

2. Assistive situation

- (16a) *Bi gerə shird-nä-v.*
 1SG house paint-PRS-1SG
 ‘I paint the house’.
- (16b) *Enə nandə gerə shirdə-lc-nä.*
 this 1SG.DAT house paint-SOC-PRS
 ‘He helps me to paint the house’.

The Kalmyk speakers prefer use another construction — with the phrase *nökəd bol-* ‘to become a helper’:

- (17) *Enə nandə gerə shird-xə nököd bol-dha-na.*
 this 1SG.DAT house paint-PC.FUT helper become-PROG-PRS
 ‘He helps me to paint the house.’

3. Reciprocal situation

«Heavy» marker (pronoun *neg negän* ‘each other’) > prototypical reciprocal meaning

- (18a). «Light» marker (suffix *-lc-*) > additional meaning (18b).

- (18a) *Madən neg neg-än xälä-dhä-nä-vidən.*
 1PL one one-P.REFL look-PROG-PRS-1PL
 ‘We are looking at each other’. (* ‘We look after each other’.)
- (18b) *Madən neg negə-d-än xälä-lc-nä-vidən.*
 1PL one one-DAT-P.REFL look-SOC-PRS-1PL
 ‘We look after each other’. (* ‘We are looking at each other’.)

Table 1

	<i>-cxa-</i>	<i>-ld-</i>	<i>-lc-</i>
Sociative situation	+	+	+
Assistive situation	-	-	+
Reciprocal situation	-	+	+

4. The suffixes *-lc-*, *-ld-* and *-cxa-* in texts

30 texts, 2800 verbs

Table 2

	<i>-cxa-</i>	<i>-ld-</i>	<i>-lc-</i>	Sum
Sum of occurrences	3	46	2	51
Plurality of participants without any other components of meaning	1	0	0	1
Sociative situation	2	41	2	45
Reciprocal situation	0	5	0	5
Assistive situation	0	0	0	0

In ‘compound’ verbs:

- (19) *...gi-ld-äd* *güü-ld-äd*
 talk-RECP-CV.ANT run-RECP-CV.ANT
bää-cxä-nä *tedən*
 be-PLR-PRS they
 ‘They are running talking.’

Table 3

	“Light” marker	“Heavy” marker
Reciprocal situation	(<i>-ldə</i>) 5	(<i>neg negän</i>) 5
Assistive situation	(<i>-lcə</i>) 0	(<i>nökəd bol-</i>) 2

- (20) *Chonə övg-na* *ard-asə* *köö-ld-äd* *övgən*
 Wolf old.man-GEN behind-ABL send.away-RECP-CV.ANT old.man
gerə *kür-tl-än* *güü-dhə* *ir-äd...*
 house reach-CV.TERM-P.REFL run-CV.IPFV come-CV.ANT
 ‘The wolf pursued the old man, the old man was running up to his home’.

Conclusion:

The markers *-cxa-*, *-ld-* and *-lc-* are connected with the plurality of participants. They are optional and are used rather rarely. They can be used in various functions. The suffixes *-ld-* and *-lc-* are more derivational while the suffix *-cxa-* has more grammatical properties.

References

Darbeeva, A.A. 1997. Buryatskij yazyk. In: Alpatov, V.M. et al. (eds.). Yazyki mira. Mongol'skie yazyki. Tunguso-manchzhurskie yazyki. Yaponskij yazyk. Koreiskij yazyk. M.: Indrik. 37-51.

Georg, Stefan. 2003. Mongghul. In: Janhunen, Juha (ed.). The Mongolic languages. London: Routledge. 286-306.

Weiers, Michael. 2003. Moghol. In: Janhunen, Juha (ed.). The Mongolic languages. London: Routledge. 248-264.