

HABITUAL AND CONTINUOUS ASPECTS IN SAKHA

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Abstract. *The article is dedicated to the analysis of the habitual and continuous aspects in Sakha (Yakut) language. This study mainly focuses on Sakha, a Turkic language spoken by approximately 360000 speakers in Siberia, Russia. Although genetically Sakha is a Turkic language, it is very different from other Turkic languages due to contact with its neighbouring languages, which are from families such as Mongolic, Tungusic, and Slavic. The aspectual system of Sakha differs from English and other inflectional languages because Sakha is an agglutinating language whereas English or Russian are synthetic. The aspectual system in Sakha is expressed through verbal endings, converbs or other verbal morphology.*

In this article I discuss two types of aspect: Habitual and Continuous. This study investigates the ways of formation (synthetic and analytical) of different verbal aspects in Sakha, i.e. which way is used to express each aspect. The system I use in this article is based on Comrie's classification into two main aspects. The category of aspect is hardly found in most studies on Turkic morphology.

It is hoped that by focusing on the formation of verbal aspects in Sakha, this article can offer insights into the aspectual system of the Sakha language.

Keywords: *habitual, continuous, aspect, iterativity, imperfective.*

In discussing habituality and continuousness, it is easiest to start by giving a positive definition of habituality, leaving continuousness to be defined negatively as imperfectivity that is not habituality.

In some discussions of habituality, it is assumed that habituality is essentially the same as iterativity, i.e. the repetition of a situation, the successive occurrence of several instances of the given situation. Habituals describe individual persons' habits [1].

Comrie finds this terminology misleading in two senses. Firstly, the mere repetition of a

situation is not sufficient for that situation to be referred to by a specifically habitual (or, indeed, imperfective) form. If a situation is repeated a limited number of times, then all of these instances of the situation can be viewed as a single situation, albeit with internal structure, and referred to by a perfective form. He gives an example of a scene where a lecturer stands up, coughs five times, and then goes on to deliver his lecture. In English, this could be described as follows:

(1) The lecturer stood up, coughed five times, and said . . .

It would not be possible to use the specifically habitual form with *used to*:

(1a) *The lecturer stood up, used to cough five times, and said . . .

In Russian we can use the Perfective here:

(2) Dokladčik vstal, kašljanul pjat' raz i skazal ...

In Sakha it looks as follows:

(3) Āghāchchy turda, bieste sötöllön baran
3SG. stand.PST. fivetimes cough.PF.CVB go.CVANT
uonna ette...
and say.PST.1SG.

(3a) Āghāchchy tur-da bies-te sötöll-öbüte
3SG. stand-PST3SG. five-times cough.-PST.3SG.
uonna et-te ...

and say-PST.1SG.

The verb *sötölün* (impf. to cough, have a cough, give a cough) itself has a meaning of a multiple, vibrating action.

Secondly, a situation can be referred to by a habitual form without there being any iterativity at all.

- (4) Semen abāhy-ny iteghey-er ete
Simon abāhy-DAT.PL. believe-PTCP AUX-PST.3SG
'Simon used to believe in ghosts'.
(4a) 'Simon abāhyny itegheyechchi ete.
Simon abāhy-DAT.PL. believe-PTCP AUX-PST.3SG
'Simon used to believe in ghosts'.

The (4) form *iteghey-er ete* is an analytical form with a participle *-er* (*ar-*) and a conjugated defective verb *e-*. Verbs in such form can express past actions and also iterative feature, i.e. repeated actions on a regular basis. In both languages there is no necessary implication that there were several occasions on

each of which Simon believed in ghosts, with intervening periods when it did not; with this particular sentence, the natural interpretation is precisely that Simon believed in ghosts throughout a certain single period, without intermission.

Another example of this form:

- (5) Agham türgen-nik k̄yhyr-ara, ol gyn-an
fatherPOSS.3SG quick-ADV. get angry-CVANT3SG. but do-CVANT
baran türgennik aharara
go-CVANT quick-ADV. pass.CVANT3SG.

'My father used to get angry quickly but quickly calmed down' (this was his character, which was seen every time when similar situations occur) [2].

- (6) Synn'alang künneriger kini kinige āghar ete
restPL. dayPL. 3SG. bookACC readPST.3SG. AUX-PST.3SG

'On his days off he used to read books' (this happened regularly, i.e. every day off)'.

The (4a) *itegheyechchi ete* is formed with an affix *-chchi* (*achchy*) to the base verb *iteghey* + auxiliary verb *e-*. With an auxiliary verb *e-* such sentences can refer to Past.

According to Grammatika of modern Yakut language [2], the form of a base verb + affix *-āchchy* (*-chchy*) is called the mood of a usually performed action. It was first recorded by E. I. Ubryatova in her work on the Norilskiy Dolgan language. Böhtlingk thought that "verbal name with *-āchchy* is always the one who does the action and is used as an adjective with a noun and also as a noun" [3]. The above form is quite unlimited in time, i.e. has a timeless feature, meaning the action occurs habitually or always. The examples (4a), (7), (8), (9) with affixes *-āchchy* are phonetic variants of the same participial form that has an analogy in other Turkic languages of North-Eastern group. In contrast to other Turkic languages, the participle

with *-āchchy* has preserved its verbal meaning.

The forms with *-ar* (5), (9), (10) and (11) and forms with *-āchchy* (4a), (7), (9) are very close in their semantics. A participle with *-ar* is used to express an action that happens regularly, usually, always. A participle with *-āchchy* is used to express actions that occur usually, regularly or more or less regularly.

In the above mentioned examples we can see that affix *-āchchy* has a constant character of actions and is of a more accentuated character than examples with an affix *-ar*.

However, with the auxiliary verb *e-* (4), (4a), (6) such actions can be expressed in the Past Tense, the actions are completed or incompleting in the past.

- (7) Min erde turāchchybyn
1SG. early.ADV. standHAB.
'I usually wake up early'.
- (8) Ehigi kihini kyragha da möghōchchügüt
2SG. person.ACC.PL. little and tell off.HAB.
'You usually tell off others for little things'.
- (9) Ardakh saiyn tügher
rain.3SG. summer.DAT. fall.PRS
'In rains in summer' (that is its mature).
- (10) Kini buldu olus söbülür
3SG. hunt very love.PRS.3SG.
'He loves to hunt' (it is his constant quality, feature).
- (11) Pochtany samolöt tahar
mailACC. planeNOM. carry.PRS.3SG.
'Mail is brought by plane (routine).'

The feature that is common to all habituais, whether or not they are also iterative, is that they describe a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period. If the individual situation is one that can be protracted indefinitely in time, then there is no need for iterativity to be involved (as with Simon example), though equally it is not excluded. If the situation is one that cannot be protracted, then the only reasonable interpretation will involve iterativity.

Iterativeness or recurrence of actions, according to some researchers, expresses 'the repeated playback of the action in time and space, regardless of the number of repetitions and transmitted in the language by means of different levels' [4].

Continuous aspect is an imperfective aspect that expresses an ongoing, but not habitual, occurrence of the state or event expressed by the verb. Progressive aspect is a continuous aspect that expresses processes, not states.

Continuous verb forms describe activities in progress. They suggest that the activity is temporary, and may not be complete. Compare:

- (12) Min töröppütterbin kyttā olorobun.
1SG. parents.POSS. with live.PRS.1SG.
'I live with my parents'.
- (13) Min biligin töröppütterbin kyttā olorobun.
1SG. now parents.POSS.2SG. with live.PRS.1SG.
'I'm living with my parents. (temporary period only)'.

Here we can see that the only difference between (12) and (13) is the word *biligin* that means 'now'.

- (14) Min en tuskunan tokkuidū syld'abyn.
1SG. you side think. PROG. AUX.PRST.
'I'm thinking about you'.

Here in (13), I assume that Continuous aspect (now) is expressed by the participle *-ar* (*-y*) with an affix of person marking. In (14), (15) the Continuous aspect is formed by an analytical process, i.e. with an auxiliary verb *syryt-* and *syt-*. Such combinations can be formed by other auxiliary verbs: *tur-* 'stand', *olor-* 'sit', *is-* 'go'.

- (15) Min d'ieber kelbipper kini utuia sytar ete
1SG. home.DAT. come.PST. he sleep.PROG. lie.AUX.PST. AUX-PST.3SG

‘When I came home, he was sleeping’.

(16) Tokhsunn’uga min byrappar oloroghum.
January.DAT 1SG. brother.POSS. live.FUT

‘In January, I’ll be living at my brother’s’.

(17) Min en tuskunan tokkuidōghum.
1SG. you side think.FUT.

‘I’ll be thinking about you’.

In (16) and (17), I assume that Continuous aspect (future) is expressed by affixation but it is not possible to make a negative form in a synthetic way. The peculiarity of this form is that it does not have a constant temporal meaning, it depends on the context of each situation.

The Habitual Aspect which is a subdivision of an Imperfective aspect is formed with an affix- *chchi* (*achchy*) to the base verb *iteghey* + auxiliary verb *e-*. With an auxiliary verb *e-* such sentences can refer to Past. It is called the mood of a usually done action. It was first recorded by E. I. Ubryatova in her work on Norilskiy Dolgan language. Böhlingk thought that “verbal name with –*ächchy* is always the one who does the action and is used as an adjective with a noun and also as a noun” (Böhlingk O., 1851: 373). The above form is quite unlimited in time, i.e. has a timeless feature, meaning the action occurs habitually or always.

The forms with –*ar* and forms with –*ächchy* are very close in their semantics. A participle with –*ar* is used to express an action that happens regularly, usually, always. A

participle with –*ächchy* is used to express actions that occur usually, regularly or more or less regularly. Affix- *ächchy* has a constant character of actions and is of a more accentuated character than examples with the affix –*ar*. However, by the auxiliary verb *e-* such actions can be expressed in the Past Tense, the actions are completed or incompleted in the past.

Continuous aspect is an imperfective aspect that expresses an ongoing, but not habitual, occurrence of the state or event expressed by the verb. I assume that Continuous aspect (now) is expressed by the participle –*ar* (–*ȳ*) with an affix of person marking. In some cases the Continuous aspect is formed by an analytical way, i.e. with an auxiliary verb *syryt-* and *syt-*. Such combinations can be formed by other auxiliary verbs: *tur-* ‘stand’, *olor-* ‘sit’, *is-* ‘go. In cases of future semantic I assume that Continuous aspect is expressed by affixation but it is not possible to make a negative form by synthetic way. The peculiarity of such form is that it does not have a constant temporal meaning, it depends on the context of each situation.

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ХАБИТУАЛЬНЫЙ И ДЛИТЕЛЬНЫЙ ВИДЫ В ЯКУТСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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***Аннотация:** Статья посвящена анализу хабитуального и длительного аспектов в якутском) языке. Это исследование, в основном, сфокусировано на якутском языке, тюркском языке, на котором говорят примерно 360000 человек в Сибири, Россия. Хотя, генетически, якутский язык является тюркским языком, он сильно отличается от других тюркских языков из-за контакта с соседними языками, которые принадлежат к таким семьям, как монгольский, тунгусский и славянский. Видовая система якутского отличается от английского и других флективных языков, потому что якутский является агглютинирующим языком, тогда как английский или русский являются синтетическими. Видовая система якутского языка выражается через словесные окончания, конверсии или другую словесную морфологию.*

В этой статье рассматриваются два вида: хабитуальный и длительный. В данном исследовании исследуются способы формирования (синтетические и аналитические) различных вербальных аспектов, то есть способы выражения каждого аспекта. Система, которая используется в этой статье, основана на классификации Комри на два основных аспекта. Категория аспекта почти не встречается в большинстве исследований тюркской морфологии.

Проведенный анализ формирования вербальных аспектов в якутском языке послужит материалом для исследования аспектной системы якутского языка.

***Ключевые слова:** хабитуальный, длительный, аспект, итеративность, несовершенный.*