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## THE BURYAT PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE

### BURYAT HALKI VE DİLİ

#### Geographical position

The Buryats, the northernmost of the Mongol people, live in the territories of Russia, China and Mongolia. Their self-designation is *buryād*.

Most speakers of the Buryat language live in three administrative units of the Russian Federation: the Buryat Republic or Buryatia, situated to the east and south of Lake Baikal, with a population of 272,910 (27.8 %); the Aga National District of Chita Province, situated in the east of Buryatia,<sup>1</sup> with a population of approximately 45,150; and the Ust'-Orda National District of Irkutsk Province, to the west of Lake Baikal,<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 53,650.

Additionally, at least 40,600 ethnic Buryats live in the northern and north-eastern provinces of Dornod, Khentei, Selenge, Bulgan and Khövsgöl in Mongolia. The Buryats are the fifth largest ethnic group in Mongolia after the Khalkhas, Kazakhs, Dörbets and Bayits (for details, see Oyuntungalag 2008).

The Buryat language is also spoken by about 20,000 people in a small community in China, in the north-eastern part of Inner Mongolia, in Hulun Buir Province, Barga Banner, in Manchuria, China. Their self-designation is *šenexen buryād*, 'the new Buryats'.

Some of the Buryats living in Mongolia and China migrated or were sent there in the 18th century. Others emigrated from the Soviet Union after the revolution in 1917 and the Russian Civil War. With

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<sup>1</sup> This was an independent district from 1937 to 2008, when it merged with Chita Province to form the Zabaikalskiy Territory.

<sup>2</sup> It was also an independent district from 1937 to 2008, when it merged with Irkutsk Province.

the new policy of open borders with China and Mongolia, a certain number of Buryat families are now leaving their present living-places and emigrating back to Buryatia.

All in all, the Buryats currently number approximately 432,300.

### Territorial groups

Traditionally, the Buryat people are divided into two principal territorial groups: the Western (or Cis-Baikalian) Buryats and the Eastern (or Trans-Baikalian) Buryats. Although it is not entirely precise, this division also explains dialectal and cultural differences. The cultural differences have tended to increase since the 18th century, when the Eastern Buryats started to convert from Shamanism to Buddhism, while the Western Buryats were Christianized. As a result, the Western Buryats became subjects of russification (for details, see Skribnik 2003: 102). As an example, we find many Western Buryat names and surnames that are usually of Old Russian origin. The Eastern Buryats generally have names and surnames of Mongolic, Tibetan or Sanskrit origin.

### Religious beliefs – Shamanism and Buddhism



The Dacan of Ivolga

Since ancient times, the Buryats were shamanists. The supreme deity was believed to be the Eternal Blue Sky or *Xüxe Münxe Tengeri*. Connection with the deities and spirits was established by the shaman. To become a shaman, a person must first of all have an inherent *udxa*, a shaman ancestor.

Shamanists did not have specially constructed temples. Ceremonies, and primarily the *tailgan*, were held outside, at a particularly revered place. It was believed that, through sacrifices and revering the traditions, a person is able to influence the gods and spirits. Some of the traditions are preserved up to the present (for details, see Mikhailov 2004: 352-360). The Buryats to the west of Lake Baikal maintained their original faith and remained shamanists under a Christian glaze, while the Buryats living on the eastern side turned to Buddhism under the influence of the Mongols.

Along with Buddhism, the cultural influence of Tibet and Mongolia penetrated into the territory of Buryatia. In 1723, 100 Mongolian and 50 Tibetan lamas arrived in Transbaikalia. In 1741, the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna issued a decree, according to which the existence of Buddhism in Buryatiya was acknowledged, and allowed the existence of 11 temples and the presence of 150 lamas. In *dacans* or monasteries, schools were opened and book printing was initiated.

In 1916, there were 36 *dacans* and over 16,000 lamas in Buryatia. After the October Revolution of 1917, the Soviet realm began to struggle against Shamanism and Buddhism. From 1927 to 1938, all temples were closed and destroyed. From 1938 to 1946, there were no functioning dacana in the territory of Buryatia. In 1947, the Dacan of Ivolga was built to serve as a museum some 40 kilometers south of Ulan-Ude. Shortly, the Dacan of Aga was reopened. Over the next 44 years, only these two temples served the religious needs of Buryat believers. From 1991, many new dacans were built in different parts of Buryatia, and a reflourishing of Buddhism may be observed among the Buryats (for details, see Abaeva 2004: 397-415).

### Shamanist places of worship



"oboo"- the Shamanist place of worship

Around Lake Baikal there are places of worship connected to the owner spirits of the territory, called *Ezens*. An *Ezen* is the owner of places, mountains, valleys, ridges, rivers or lakes. Stone piles called *obō* are very common in Mongolia and Buryatia, usually on the tops of the mountains and the passes of the trails and roads. Even today, when travelers reach such places, they stop to sprinkle alcohol, or a pinch of tobacco, coins or buttons in honor of the spirit of the location. The value of

the things does not matter – it is the fact of the offering that is important (for details, see Mikhailov 2004: 360-366; Abaeva 2004: 398-399).

### Folk festivals

Another important and interesting part of the cultural life of Buryats is the folk festivals.

*Sagaalga* is a holiday of the White month or the New Year, with a long tradition. It is believed that a new year starts with the new moon in the late winter or early spring. By tradition, many people go to dacans and visit each other to celebrate the New Year. During the celebration, people symbolically burn old things, and it is believed that in this way all the sins of the past year are burned.

In early summer each year, there is a national Buryat holiday called *surxarbān*, which means 'shooting in the skin target *sur*'. *Surxarbān* is held on Sundays in early June. This is the time when the rural Buryat population is free of agricultural tasks: sowing has already been completed and haymaking has not yet begun. To divert people from religious acts, this holiday was established after the October Revolution, and is arranged at the same time as the Buddhist and Shamanist ceremonies *obō taxilga* and *tailgan*. The program of the holiday includes national sports, such as horse racing and wrestling. Practically, it is the same festival as *nādam* in Mongolia. The feasts necessarily include the practice of the Buryat national dance, *yōxor*. This is a rhythmic circular dance, with ancient origins and several styles. The dance begins in the evening and lasts all night until dawn (for details, see Dašieva 2001; 2004: 208-219).

Feasting the holidays is symbolized by the wearing of national costumes. Today, national dress appears only on such outstanding days. It is decorated with beads and necklaces of coral, jade, unpolished amber, malachite, or sets of silver coins. The Buryat national dress consists of a cap called *malgai*, the national costume embroidered with golden patterns called *degel*, and shoes called *gatal*. Women also have a waistcoat, called *ūža* (for details see Badmaeva 1987; Nikolaeva 2004: 151-166).

### The place of Buryat within the family of the Mongolic languages

From linguistic and historical aspects, the Mongolic languages are divided into the archaic and non-archaic groups.

In such a division, Buryat belongs in the non-archaic group, which includes the central, the northern and the western subgroups. Buryat with its dialects is a member of the northern subgroup. The central subgroup consists of Khalkha, which is the official state language of the Republic of Mongolia, and other Mongolic dialects and languages of Inner Mongolia, e.g. Chakhar, Khorchin, Ordos and Kharchin. Kalmuck and Oirat with their dialects form the western subgroup.

The archaic group of Mongolic languages also consists of three subgroups. The speakers of the north-eastern (Dagur; Khamnigan Mongol) and the south-eastern (Monguor (Mangghuer and Mongghul), Bonan or Baoan, Santa or Dongxiang, Shira Yughur) archaic languages live in Inner Mongolia, while the Moghol people, whose language belongs in the western sub-group, live in the territory of Afghanistan.

The division of the modern Mongolic languages into the archaic and non-archaic groups was based on phonetic differences, e.g.

1. The preservation of the Middle-Mongolic initial *h-* in the archaic group, while in the non-archaic group it disappeared, e.g.

Middle-Mo. *harban* 'ten' ~ Dagur, Monguor *xarban*, Shira Yughur *harwan*, cf. LM *arban*, Khalkha *araw* ~ *arwan*, Buryat *arba(n)*, Kalmuck *arwn*;

Middle-Mo. *hodun* 'star' ~ Dagur *xodo*, Bonan *xodon*, Santa *xodun*, cf. LM *odun*, Khalkha, Buryat *odon*, Kalmuck *odn*;

2. The breaking of *e-* before *-ü-* does not occur in the archaic group, e.g.

Middle-Mo. *ebesün*, LM *ebüsün* 'hay' ~ Dagur *ews*, Moghol *ebasun*, Monguor *wese*, cf. Khalkha *öws*, Kalmuck *öwsn*, Buryat *übhen*;

Middle-Mo. *ebečin* 'disease', LM *ebed-* 'to be ill' ~ Dagur *ewde-*, Moghol *ebatu-*, Monguor *idi-*, cf. Khalkha *öwdö-*, Buryat *übde-*, Kalmuck *öwd-*;

3. The regular breaking of *i* in the non-archaic group, e.g.

Middle-Mo. *šira*, LM *sira* 'yellow' ~ Moghol *šira*, Monguor *šira* (Dagur *šar*) cf. Khalkha, Kalmuck *šar*, Buryat *šara*;

Middle-Mo. *miqan*, LM *miqa* 'flesh, meat' ~ Moghol *miqān*, (Dagur *myaga*) cf. Khalkha *max*, Kalmuck *maxn*, Buryat *myaxa*;

Middle-Mo., LM *ničügün* 'naked' ~ Dagur *nitškō*, Monguor *nitšigōr*, cf. Khalkha *nücgen*, Kalmuck *nütsügn*, Buryat *nyüsegen*;

4. The regular spirantization of *q* in the non-archaic group, e.g.

Middle-Mo., LM *yaqai* 'pig, hog' ~ Dagur *gaya*, Moghol *γōqāi*, Monguor *xagē*, cf. Khalkha, Kalmuck, Buryat *gaxai*;

Middle-Mo., LM *saqal* 'beard' ~ Dagur *sayal*, Moghol *saqalaq* 'the lower jaw', Monguor *sagar*, cf. Khalkha *saxal*, Kalmuck *saxl*, Buryat *haxal*;

Middle-Mo. *hoqar*, LM *oqor* 'short' ~ Dagur *xuakar*, Monguor *xuguor*, Moghol *uqar*, cf. Khalkha, Buryat *oxor*, Kalmuck *oxr*.

The differences between the archaic and the non-archaic Mongolic languages reveal the close relationship of the Buryat, Khalkha and Oirat languages, though the differences between these three languages are still considerable.

## The Buryat language

### Buryat ethnic groups and dialects

As mentioned above, the Buryats are divided into two territorial groups: the Western and Eastern Buryats.

The Barguzin Buryats have a quite special situation, since linguistically they belong in the Western (Ekhirit-Bulagat) group, but they live to the east of Lake Baikal in territories dominated by the Eastern Buryats. They also display another important difference from the Western Buryats: their religion is Tibetan Buddhism.

It appears more correct to divide the Buryats into ethnic groups and further into dialectal groups:

**1.** The largest ethnic group is the **Khori**. They speak Khori, Aga, Tugnuy and North Selenga dialects. Additionally, most of the Buryats living in Mongolia and a small group of emigrants living in Hulun Buir Province of Inner Mongolia are speakers of this Khori group.

**2.** The Western Buryats: **Ekhirits** and **Bulagats**. Linguistically, they belong in the Ekhirit-Bulagat group. Territorially, they live in the Ust'-Orda National District, the island of Ol'khon, the Barguzin and the Baikal-Kudara districts.

**3.** The **Khongodor**. They live to the south-west of Lake Baikal in the Alar, Tunka, Oka, Zakamna and Unga districts and comprise the Alar-Tunka dialectal group. Some speakers of the Tunka dialect have relatively recently moved to the Mongolian side of the border.

**4.** The **Lower Uda Buryats**. They live in the western periphery of the Buryat territory. Their dialect is the most isolated Buryat dialect, which shows the strongest traces of Turkic and other non-Mongolic substratal and adstratal influences.

**5.** The Southern Buryats: **Tsongols** and **Sartuls**. They live to the south of Lake Baikal. Their dialects comprise the Tsongol-Sartul dialectal group. According to Poppe (1963: 12), these are transitional dialects, forming a bridge between Buryat and Khalkha. For political reasons, the first modern literary Buryat language, created in 1931, was based on these Tsongol and Sartul dialects. The intention was to create a literary standard that could also serve the Mongols of Mongolia. In 1936, the basis of the literary language was changed to the Khori dialect.

**6.** The **Khamnigans**. They speak the Onon-Khamnigan dialect and live in Chita Province along the River Onon. According to Damdinov, Khamnigans are emigrants from Inner Mongolia and are of Mongolic origin. On the other hand, Cydendambaev considers that they are Tungusic people assimilated by Mongols (for details, see Buraev & Šagdarov 2004: 241).

**7.** The **Bargut**. They speak the Old Bargut (or Chibchin) and New Bargut dialects. Since the 17th and 18th centuries, they have lived in the territory of the modern Hulun Buir Province, Barga Banner in Manchuria.

Of these, the Ekhirit-Bulagat group, the Alar-Tunka group and the Lower Uda dialect are spoken by people territorially representing the Western Buryats, while the Khori and Bargut groups are spoken by the Eastern Buryats.

A problem of the classification of Buryat dialects is the relationship of Tsongol-Sartul and Khamnigan to the Buryat language. Linguistically, the Tsongol-Sartul group spoken at the border between Buryat and Khalkha may be viewed as varieties of Khalkha proper which have been spoken on the Russian side of the border since the 17th and 18th centuries. The situation is similar for Khamnigan. Most Buryat linguists regard Onon-Khamnigan as a Buryat dialect, but some researchers view Onon-Khamnigan as one of the dialects of Khamnigan Mongol, which belongs in the archaic Mongolic group (for details see Skribnik 2003: 104; Buraev & Šagdarov 2004: 235-242).

### Data and sources

The first Literary Buryat language, created in 1931, was based on the Tsongol and Sartul dialects. Five years later, in 1936, the basis of the literary language was changed to the Khori dialect, spoken by the majority of the Buryats. Today, Khori-Buryat is a standard language with its own writing system based on Cyrillic, and is used in printed publications, in education, and in radio and television broadcasting.

The first grammar of Buryat was published by the Finnish scholar Castrén (1857a). This was in use for more than 50 years. The first Buryat dialectological research was documented by the Russian scholar Rudnev in three volumes (1913-14).

The next important period in Buryat linguistic research took place during Soviet times. There are several grammars and grammatical sketches by Nicholas Poppe (1938), G. D. Sanžeev (1941, 1962), and Bertagaev and Cydendambaev (1962). A western textbook was compiled by James Bosson in 1962. The first Buryat grammar in English was published by N. Poppe in Bloomington in 1960. In 1982, V. I. Rassadin wrote a comparative historical phonology of Buryat, which is still generally considered to be the best. The work on Buryat phonology by I. D. Buraev (1987) should also be consulted. E. Skribnik gave a good overview of the Buryat language in 2003. The largest Russian – Buryat and Buryat – Russian dictionaries are those by Cydendambaev (1954) and Cheremisov (1973, 2010). Today Buryat is one of the best-documented Mongolic languages (for details, see Skribnik 2003: 103-105).

### The written language

Before the introduction of the modern literary language, from the 17th century until the 1930s, the Eastern Buryats (but not the Western Buryats) used Written Mongol as the principal literary medium. There is a representative literature, including historical chronicles, genealogical descriptions, and translations of religious and philosophical texts.

In 1905, the Buryat scholar Agvan Doržiev, following the principles of the Oirat script, created a separate orthography for Buryat. The Buryat phoneme *h* was expressed by a special letter, while diacritics were used to indicate vowel length and palatalization. This alphabet was never widely applied.

In 1931, as for many other languages in the Soviet Union, a Latin script was introduced, but after eight years, in 1939, the Buryats started to use the Cyrillic orthography with three extra letters for *ö*, *ü* and *h*.

## Buryat phonetic features

### Vowels

Buryat is a typical Mongolic language; it displays typological features characteristic of the Mongolic language family as a whole. Like all Mongolic languages, it is an agglutinative language. Stems and suffixes are subject to vowel harmony. Generally, the Mongolic vowel system is divided into three harmonic pairs and one neutral vowel. The back vowels are /a/, /o/ and /u/, in opposition to the front vowels /e/, /ö/ and /ü/. The symmetrical basic set of seven vowel phonemes can be classified with respect to the features front versus back, unrounded versus rounded, and high versus low. The high unrounded neutral vowel *i* has an isolated position. It has been suggested that there was a harmonic opposition in Proto-Mongolic between a front *\*i* and a back *\*i*.

	back (velar)		neutral	front (palatal)	
	unrounded	rounded	unrounded	unrounded	rounded
High		<i>u</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>ü</i>
Low	<i>a</i>	<i>o</i>		<i>e</i>	<i>ö</i>

The vowel system of Mongolic languages

### The opposition of the short and long vowels in Buryat

The distinction between the short and long vowels is essential, because many words differ from each other only in their vowel-shortness or vowel-length, e.g.

a	ā
<i>zan</i> 'character'	<i>zān</i> 'elephant'
<i>sana</i> 'ski'	<i>sāna</i> 'beyond, behind'
o	ō
<i>boro</i> 'grey'	<i>borō</i> 'rain'
<i>odon</i> 'star'	<i>ōdon</i> 'short'
u	ū
<i>ula</i> 'sole'	<i>ūla</i> 'mountain'
<i>zun</i> 'summer'	<i>zūn</i> 'one hundred'
ü	ũ
<i>ülen</i> 'hungry'	<i>ũlen</i> 'cloud'
<i>üden</i> 'feather'	<i>ũden</i> 'door'

### Short vowels

#### Mongolic short vowels according to Buryat vowel harmony

In general, with a few exceptions, the original Mongolic vowels of the initial syllable are preserved in Buryat. There are some differences in the non-initial positions, which can be explained by vowel reduction, or assimilative processes, e.g.

- \*a:  $a_1 - u_2 \rightarrow a_1 - a_2$ : LM *amur* 'peace' ~ Buryat **amar**, cf. Khalkha *amar*;  
 LM *daru-* 'to press' ~ Buryat **dara-**, cf. Khalkha *id.*;
- \*o:  $o_1 - a_2 \rightarrow o_1 - o_2$ : LM *olan* 'many' ~ Buryat **olon**, cf. Khalkha *olon*;  
 LM *qota* 'city' ~ Buryat **xoto**, cf. Khalkha *xot*;  
 $o_1 - u_2 \rightarrow o_1 - o_2$ : LM *tosun* 'oil, fat, grease' ~ Buryat **tohon**, cf. Khalkha *tos(on)*;

LM *odun* 'star' ~ Buryat **odon**, cf. Khalkha *od(on)*;

\*u:  $u_1 - u_2 \rightarrow u_1 - a_2$ : LM *usun* 'water' ~ Buryat **uhan**, cf. Khalkha *us(an)*;

LM *tuyul* 'calf in the first year' ~ Buryat **tugal**, cf. Khalkha *tugal*;

In some cases, a change to -o- may be observed, which is an irregular change, e.g.

\*u:  $u_1 - u_2 \rightarrow o_1 - o_2$ : LM *sumun* 'arrow' ~ Buryat **homon**; cf. Khalkha *sum(an)*;

LM *numun* 'bow (weapon)' ~ Buryat **nomon**; cf. Khalkha *num(an)*;

The vowel *e*- before -*ü*- is assimilated in Buryat, as in other non-archaic Mongolic languages, e.g.

\*e:  $e_1 - \ddot{u}_2 \rightarrow \ddot{u}_1 - e_2$ : LM *edür* 'day' ~ Buryat **üder**, cf. Khalkha *ödör*;

LM *temür* 'iron' ~ Buryat **tümer**, cf. Khalkha *tömör*;

The vowel *ö* is usually represented by *ü* in Buryat, e.g.

\*ö:  $\ddot{o} \rightarrow \ddot{u}$ : LM *köl* 'foot, leg' ~ Buryat **xül**, cf. Khalkha *xöl*;

LM *bös* 'cotton stuff' ~ Buryat **büd**, cf. Khalkha *bös*;

$\ddot{o}_1 - e_2 \rightarrow \ddot{u}_1 - e_2$ : LM *örge* 'wide, broad' ~ Buryat **ürgen**, cf. Khalkha *örgön*;

LM *köke* 'blue' ~ Buryat **xüxe**, cf. Khalkha *xöx*;

If the Mongolic *ö* was represented in both syllables, it changed to *ü* in the first syllable, and to *e* in the following syllable, e.g.

\*ö:  $\ddot{o}_1 - \ddot{o}_2 \rightarrow \ddot{u}_1 - e_2$ : LM *kökö* 'to suck' ~ Buryat **xüxe-**, cf. Khalkha *xöxö-*;

LM *nökör* 'friend' ~ Buryat **nüxer**, cf. Khalkha *nöxör*;

$\ddot{o}_1 - \ddot{u}_2 \rightarrow \ddot{u}_1 - e_2$ : LM *öndür* 'high' ~ Buryat **ünder**, cf. Khalkha *öndör*;

LM *mörgü* 'to bow' ~ Buryat **mürge-**, cf. Khalkha *mörgö-*;

The case is similar with the vowel *ü*. If it is in both syllables, it is preserved in the first syllable and becomes *e* in the following syllable, e.g.

\*ü:  $\ddot{u}_1 - \ddot{u}_2 \rightarrow \ddot{u}_1 - e_2$ : LM *küčün* 'strength' ~ Buryat **xüsen**, cf. Khalkha *xüč*;

LM *ükü* 'to die' ~ Buryat **üxe-**, cf. Khalkha *üxe-*;

The situation with Mongolic *i* is special. It is a neutral vowel, which can occur in both back- and front-vocalic words.

In the initial position in the back-vowel words, it is usually preserved, e.g.

\*i:  $i_1 - a_2 \rightarrow i_1 - a_2$ : LM *inaγ* 'loved one, lover' ~ Buryat **inag**, cf. Khalkha *yanag*;

LM *ila-* 'to win' ~ Buryat **ila-**, cf. Khalkha *yala-*;

In the front-vowel words in the different positions, it regularly becomes *e*, e.g.

\*i:  $i \rightarrow e$ : LM *žil* 'year' ~ Buryat **žel**, cf. Khalkha *žil*;

LM *ki-* 'to do, to perform' ~ Buryat **xe-**, cf. Khalkha *xī-*;

$i_1 - i_2 \rightarrow e_1 - e_2$ : LM *bičig* 'letter' ~ Buryat **bešeg**, cf. Khalkha *bičig*;

LM *iči-* 'to be ashamed' ~ Buryat **eše-**, cf. Khalkha *iči-*;

Before *e*, metathesis occurs in some cases, e.g.

\*i:  $i_1 - e_2 \rightarrow e_1 - i_2$ : LM *ider* 'young, vigorous' ~ Buryat **edir**, cf. Khalkha *ider*;

LM *ide-* 'to eat' ~ Buryat **edi-**, cf. Khalkha *ide-*;

In a few cases, however, a prothetic *y*- and an assimilated vowel appear, just as in Khalkha, e.g.

- \*i:  $i \rightarrow y$ :- LM *imayan* ‘goat’ ~ Buryat **yamān**, cf. Khalkha *yamā*.;  
 LM *iro* ‘omen, sign’ ~ Buryat **yoro**, cf. Khalkha *yor*;

In numerous cases the vowel *i* has been assimilated to the vowel of the immediately following syllable. This phenomenon is called the „breaking” of *i*, e.g.

- \*i:  $i_1 - a_2 \rightarrow a_1 - a_2$ : LM *sira* ‘yellow’ ~ Buryat **šara**, cf. Khalkha *šar*.;  
 LM *jiyasun* ‘fish’ ~ Buryat **zagaha(n)**, cf. Khalkha *dzagas*.  
 \*i:  $i_1 - U_2 \rightarrow U_1 - A_2$ : LM *jiřum* ‘order, rule’ ~ Buryat **žuram**, cf. Khalkha *řuram*.;  
 LM *sidün* ‘tooth’ ~ Buryat **šüden**, cf. Khalkha *šüd(en)*.

### Long vowels

1. All long vowels in Buryat are secondary. They developed from the contraction of a former *Vowel-G-Vowel* (VCV) pattern, e.g.

- AGA → Ā: LM *ulayan* ‘red’ ~ Buryat **ulān**, Khalkha *id*.;  
 LM *degere* ‘above’ ~ Buryat **dēre**, cf. Khalkha *dēr*;

- UGU → Ū: LM *buyural* ~ Buryat **būral** Khalkha *būral*.  
 LM *küjügün* ‘neck’ ~ Buryat **xüzün**, Khalkha *xüdzü*;

2. It is a rule that the quality of the long vowel which develops from the *Vowel-Consonant-Vowel* pattern depends on the quality of the second vowel of the pattern, e.g.

- iGA → Ā: LM *jiya-* ‘to demonstrate, to instruct’ ~ Buryat **zā-**, cf. Khalkha *dzā-*.;  
 LM *sige-* ‘to urinate’ ~ Buryat **šē-**, cf. Khalkha *id*.;  
 LM *niya-* ‘to glue’ ~ Buryat **nyā-** (n’ā-), cf. Khalkha *nā-*.;  
 LM *büligen* ‘warm’ ~ Buryat **bülyēn** (bül’ēn), cf. Khalkha *id*.;

- iGU → Ū: LM *busiyu* ‘quickly’ ~ Buryat **bušū**, Khalkha *id*.;  
 LM *ebčigü* ‘sternum, sterna’ ~ Buryat **übsü**, cf. Khalkha *öwčü*.;  
 LM *niyur* ‘face’ ~ Buryat **nyūr** (n’ūr), cf. Khalkha *nūr*.;  
 LM *serigün* ‘cool, fresh’ ~ Buryat **heryün** (her’ün), Khalkha *serün*.;

- AGU → Ū: LM *ayula* ‘mountain’ ~ Buryat **ūla**, Khalkha *ül*.;  
 LM *jegün* ‘east; left’ ~ Buryat **zün**, cf. Khalkha *dzün*.;

3. In turn, if the first vowel is a labial one, then the quality of the long vowel depends on the first vowel. According to vowel harmony, there is a long  $\bar{o}$  or  $\bar{ö}$  in place of the *Vowel-Consonant-Vowel* pattern, e.g.

- OGA →  $\bar{O}$ : LM *noyoyan* ‘green; grass’ ~ Buryat **nogōn**, cf. Khalkha *id*.;  
 LM *bögere* ‘kidneys’ ~ Buryat **bōre**, cf. Khalkha *bōr*.;

4. The pattern *UGA* in Buryat becomes the long vowel  $\bar{O}$ , e.g.

- UGA →  $\bar{O}$ : LM *jiřuya* ‘ambler’ ~ Buryat **žorō**, cf. Khalkha *řorō*.;  
 LM *čilüge* ‘free time’ ~ Buryat **sülō**, cf. Khalkha *čölō*.;

5. The development of a long vowel in different Mongolic languages took place in different periods. This explains why in some cases the complex was retained in Buryat, while in Khalkha a long vowel developed, e.g.

LM *erügün* 'chin' ~ Buryat **ürgen**, cf. Khalkha *erü*;  
LM *quruyun* 'finger' ~ Buryat **xurgan**, cf. Khalkha *xurū*;  
LM *degel* 'gown' ~ Buryat **degel**, cf. Khalkha *dēl*.

### Diphthongs

According to Poppe (1955: 76), the diphthongs are combinations of the type *Vowel+yi*.

1. The Mongolic diphthongs in the first syllable are usually preserved:

LM *sayin* 'good' ~ Buryat **hain** (hǎn), cf. Khalkha *sain*;  
LM *moyilsun* 'wild cherry' ~ Buryat **moihon** (mōhon), cf. Khalkha *moi*;  
LM *uyitan* 'tight, narrow' ~ Buryat **uitan** (ūtan), cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
LM *küyiten* 'cold' ~ Buryat **xüiten** (xūten), cf. Khalkha *id.*;

An exception is the diphthong \**eyi*, which became *ī* as in Khalkha, e.g.

LM *eyimü* 'such one' ~ Buryat **ime**, cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
LM *deyile-* 'to overcome, to beat; to win' ~ Buryat **dīle-**, cf. Khalkha *id.*;

2. In the last syllable, the Mongolic diphthongs *-ai* and *-ei* before *a* and *e*, respectively, are preserved, but before *o* the diphthongs *-ai* and *-ui* are changed according to the vowel harmony, e.g.

before *a*: LM *dalai* 'sea' ~ Buryat **dalai** (dalā), cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
LM *yaqai* 'pig' ~ Buryat **gaxai** (gaxā), cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
before *e*: LM *delekei* 'universe' ~ Buryat **delxei** (delxēi), cf. Khalkha *delxī*;  
LM *begelei* 'glove' ~ Buryat **bēlei** (bēlēi), cf. Khalkha *bēlī*;  
before *o*: LM *noqai* 'dog' ~ Buryat **noxoi** (noxō), cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
LM *moyai* 'snake' ~ Buryat **mogoi** (mogō), cf. Khalkha *id.*;  
LM *qormui* 'lower part of the cloth' ~ Buryat **xormoi** (xormō);

3. The Mongolic diphthongs in the last syllable, *-ui* and *-üi* after *a* and *e*, respectively, and *-ei* developed to the long vowels *-ī* and *-ī̄*:

-ui: LM *qaryui* 'road, path' ~ Buryat **xargī**, cf. Khalkha *xargui*;  
LM *qančui* 'sleeve' ~ Buryat **xamsī**, cf. Khalkha *xancui*;  
-üi: LM *kedüi* 'how much? how many?' ~ Buryat **xedī**, cf. Khalkha *xedī*;  
LM *tedüi* 'so much, so many' ~ Buryat **tedī**, cf. Khalkha *tödī*;  
-ei: LM *ügei* 'no; not' ~ Buryat **ügī**, cf. Khalkha *ügüi*;  
LM *nekei* 'sheepskin' ~ Buryat **nexī**, cf. Khalkha *nexī*;  
LM *kei* 'wind' ~ Buryat **xī**, cf. Khalkha *id.*;

### Consonants

Mongolic consonants in the different positions are usually preserved in Buryat.

The table below lists the Buryat correspondences of the Common Mongolic consonants. Mongolic		Buryat		Khalkha	
č-	<i>čayan</i> 'white' <i>čeber</i> 'clean'	s-	<i>sagān</i> <i>seber</i>	c-	<i>cagān</i> <i>cewer</i>
VčV	<i>qačar</i> 'cheek' <i>čečen</i> 'wise'	VsV	<i>xasar</i> <i>sesen</i>	VcV	<i>xacar</i> <i>cecen</i>
či-	<i>čilayun</i> 'stone' <i>čidkür</i> 'demon'	š-	<i>šulūn</i> <i>šüdxer</i>	č-	<i>čulū(n)</i> <i>čötgör</i>
-či-	<i>ačıyan</i> 'load' <i>bičig</i> 'script'	-š-	<i>ašān</i> <i>bešeg</i>	-č-	<i>ačā</i> <i>bičig</i>
ǰ-	<i>ǰebe</i> 'rust' <i>ǰajila-</i> 'to chew' <i>ǰerge</i> 'degree' <i>ǰaqa</i> 'border'	ž-	<i>žebe</i> <i>žažal-</i>	dz-	<i>dzew</i> <i>dzažla-</i>
-ǰ-	<i>ǰaǰar</i> 'land' <i>üǰe-</i> 'to see' <i>olǰa</i> 'gain, profit'	z-	<i>zerge</i> <i>zaxa</i>		<i>dzereg</i> <i>dzax</i>
		-z-	<i>gazar</i> <i>üze-</i> <i>olzo</i>	-dz-	<i>gadzar</i> <i>üdze-</i> <i>oldz</i>
ǰi-	<i>ǰıryal</i> 'happiness' <i>ǰıl</i> 'year' <i>ǰıyasun</i> 'fish' <i>ǰıruy</i> 'picture'	ž-	<i>žargal</i> <i>žel</i>	ǰ-	<i>ǰargal</i> <i>ǰıl</i>
-ǰi-	<i>aǰıl</i> 'work' <i>qaǰıyu</i> 'near' <i>aǰırya</i> 'stallion' <i>geǰige</i> 'pigtail'	z-	<i>zagaha(n)</i> <i>zurag</i>	dz-	<i>dzagas(an)</i> <i>dzurag</i>
		-ž-	<i>ažal</i> <i>xažū</i>	-ǰ-	<i>aǰıl</i> <i>xaǰū</i>
		-z-	<i>azarga</i> <i>gezege</i>	-dz-	<i>adzrag</i> <i>gedzeg</i>
s-	<i>sara</i> 'moon' <i>seleme</i> 'sabre' <i>sambar-a</i> 'desk' <i>soyol</i> 'culture'	h-	<i>hara</i> <i>helme</i>	s-	<i>sar</i> <i>selem</i>
VsV	<i>nasun</i> 'age' <i>sünesün</i> 'soul' <i>küse-</i> 'to wish' <i>jasay</i> 'state'	s- (irregular)	<i>sambar</i> <i>soyol</i>		<i>sambar</i> <i>soyol</i>
		VhV	<i>nahan</i> <i>hünehe(n)</i>	VsV	<i>nas(an)</i> <i>süns(en)</i>
		VsV (irregular)	<i>xüse-</i> <i>zasag</i>		<i>xüse-</i> <i>dzasag</i>
-s	<i>mangus</i> 'monster' <i>bös</i> 'cotton textile' <i>ǰoyos</i> 'coin' <i>tas</i> 'condor'	-d	<i>mangad</i> <i>büd</i>	-s	<i>mangas</i> <i>bös</i>
		-s (irregular)	<i>zös</i> <i>tas</i>		<i>dzös</i> <i>tas</i>
q-	<i>qara</i> 'black' <i>qudal</i> 'lie'	x-	<i>xara</i> <i>xudal</i>	x-	<i>xar</i> <i>xudal</i>
VqV	<i>baqa</i> 'frog' <i>noqai</i> 'dog'	VxV	<i>baxa</i> <i>noxoi</i>	VxV	<i>bax</i> <i>noxoi</i>
k-	<i>kelen</i> 'language' <i>ködel-</i> 'to move'	x-	<i>xelen</i> <i>xüdel-</i>	x-	<i>xel(en)</i> <i>xödlö-</i>
VkV	<i>üker</i> 'cow, ox'	VxV	<i>üxer</i>	VxV	<i>üxer</i>

	<i>köke</i> 'blue'		<i>xüxe</i>		<i>xöx</i>
ki-	<i>kimusun</i> 'nail'	x'-	<i>x'umhan</i>	x-	<i>xums</i>
	<i>kituya</i> 'knife'	x-	<i>xutaga</i>		<i>xutga</i>
-ki-	<i>takiya</i> 'hen'	-x'-	<i>tax'ā</i>	-xi-	<i>taxia</i>
	<i>čikin</i> 'ear'	-x-	<i>šexen</i>	-x-	<i>čix(en)</i>

### The regular changes of some Mongolic consonants in Buryat and Khalkha

The other Mongolic consonants are preserved in Buryat. Consonant phonemes which do not exist in original Buryat words and appear only in the Russian loanwords are **v**: e.g. *vagon* 'carriage', **k**: e.g. *kolhoz* 'collective farm', **p**: e.g. *počto* 'post', **f**: e.g. *fabrika* 'factory', **c**: e.g.: *cenžūra* 'censorship', **šč**: e.g.: *ščyōtko* 'brush' and **č**: e.g. *čemodan* 'suitcase'.

### Buryat morphological features

The Buryat nouns, their plural and nominal declension, the numerals and the pronouns are of a Common Mongolic type and are quite similar with Khalkha.

### Possessive pronouns

An interesting peculiarity of Buryat is that possessive suffixes are used in Buryat very consistently. It is important that they do not follow the rules of vowel harmony.

	Mongolic	Buryat		
sg.1	<i>minu</i> 'my'	<i>minī</i>	+mni (-V) +ni (-C)	<i>ežimni</i> 'my mother' <i>nüxerni</i> 'my friend'
sg.2	<i>činu</i> 'your'	<i>šinī</i>	+šni	<i>ežišni</i> 'your mother' <i>nüxeršni</i> 'your friend'
sg.3	<i>tere inu</i> 'his or her'	<i>terenei</i> <i>terēnei</i>	-n' (-V) -in' (-C)	<i>ežin'</i> 'his/her mother' <i>nüxer'in'</i> 'his/her friend'
pl.1	<i>manu</i> 'our'	<i>manai</i>	+mnai (-V) +nai (-C)	<i>ežimnai</i> 'our mother' <i>nüxernai</i> 'my friend'
pl.2	<i>tanu</i> 'your'	<i>tanai</i>	+tnai	<i>ežitnai</i> 'your mother' <i>nüxertnai</i> 'your friend'
pl.3	<i>tede inu</i> 'their'	<i>tedenei</i> <i>tedēnei</i>	-n' (-V) -in' (-C)	<i>ežin'</i> 'their mother' <i>nüxer'in'</i> 'their friend'

The Buryat possessive suffixes can be added to the case endings, e.g. see the two sentences below:

Ger-**te-mnai**                      olon    honin                      nom    bī.  
house-DAT.LOC.-POSS1.PL      many   interesting                      book   is.  
'There are a lot of interesting books in our house'

Nüxer-**ei-šni**                      aba    yū                      xe-deg                      be?  
friend-GEN-POSS2.SG      father   what                      to do-HABIT                      QUESTION PARTICLE  
'What does your friend's father do?'

As can be observed in the first sentence, the word *gertemnai* 'in our house' does not follow vowel harmony.

## The verb

### Temporal markers of finite verbs

The verbal system of Buryat is similar to that in other Mongolic languages. It has five temporal markers, which shows a mixed system of original predicative endings and participles:

	Mongolic	Buryat		Khalkha
Present	-mUi	-nA <sup>3</sup>	<i>Šerēn dēre nom baina.</i> 'There is a book on the table.'	-nA <sup>4</sup>
Future (Infinitive)	-KU(i)	-xA <sup>3</sup>	<i>Üglöder kinodo ošoxobdi.</i> 'Tomorrow we will go to the cinema.'	-x
Simple past (Imperfective)	-GA	-Ā <sup>4</sup>	<i>Bagša tahalgada orō.</i> 'A teacher entered the room.'	-Ā <sup>4</sup>
'Short' past (Praeteritum perfecti)	-bA(i)	-bA <sup>3</sup>	<i>Aba gertē haya yerebe.</i> 'Father has just come the home.'	-w
Perfective	-GsAn	-hAn <sup>3</sup>	<i>Ežimni Ulān-Üdede türehen.</i> 'My mother was born in Ulan-Ude.'	-sAn <sup>4</sup>

### Predicative personal endings in Buryat

Another peculiarity that makes Buryat very special is that it has predicative personal endings. There are separate variants for stems ending in vowels, nasal consonants and other consonants in the first person. In the first person singular and plural, the actual personal element can be lost after a stem-final nasal: \*-nbi and \*-nbdi appear as -mbi and -mdi, respectively, e.g. *bi hura-ha-mbi* 'I learnt, I studied'. See the table below:

	-V (Praesens imperfecti -nA)		-C (Habitiva -dAg)		-C(n) (Perfective -hAn)	
sg.1	-b	<i>bi hura-na-b</i>	-bi	<i>bi hura-dag-bi</i>	-(m)bi	<i>bi hura-ha-mbi</i>
sg.2	-š	<i>ši hura-na-š</i>	-ši	<i>ši hura-dag-ši</i>	-ši	<i>ši hura-han-ši</i>
sg.3	-	<i>tere hura-na</i>	-	<i>tere hura-dag</i>	-	<i>tere hura-han</i>
pl.1	-bdi	<i>bide hura-na-bdi</i>	-bdi	<i>bide hura-dag-bdi</i>	-(m)di	<i>bide hura-ha-mdi</i>
pl.2	-t	<i>ta hura-na-t</i>	-ta	<i>ta hura-dag-ta</i>	-ta	<i>ta hura-han-ta</i>
pl.3	(-d)	<i>tede hura-na-(d)</i>	-	<i>tede hura-dag</i>	-	<i>tede hura-han</i>

It is very important not to confuse this personal marker with the question particle *be*, which can be hidden in the word, e.g.

- (1) Xen                      ge-že                                      nere-tei-**b**-ši?  
 who                      say-IMPERF                                      name-COMIT-INTERROG. PARTICLE-2.SG  
 'What is your name?'

In the word *nereteibši*, the **-b-** is the interrogative particle, used in interrogative sentences.

The answer is:

- (2) Bi                      Žhargal                      ge-že                                      nere-tei-**b**.  
 I                      Zhargal                      say-IMPERF                                      name-COMIT-1.SG  
 'My name is Zhargal.'

In the word *nereteib*, the **-b** is the first person singular marker.

The situation is similar in the following sentences:

- (3) Xāna-hā                      yer-ē-**b**-ši?  
 where-ABLAT                      come-PAST- INTERROGATIVE PARTICLE-2.SG  
 'Where are you from?'
- (4) Bi            Buryād oron-hō                      yer-ē-**b**.  
 I            Buryatia-ABLAT                      come-PAST-1.SG  
 'I am from Buryatia.'

### Lexicon

Buryat shares its core vocabulary with the other Mongolic languages. Linguistic contacts, however, also resulted in some differences.

### Loanwords from Russian

A fair number of loanwords originate from Russian, and are usually cultural words. It is interesting that the earlier borrowings are phonologically fully adapted, e.g.

- Buryat *xartābxa* 'potato' ← Russian *kartóška*, cf. Khalkha *töms*;  
 Buryat *xilēmen* 'bread' ← Russian *xlyéb*, cf. Khalkha *talx*;  
 Buryat *xapūsta* 'cabbage' ← Russian *kapústa*, cf. Khalkha *baicā* ← Chinese *baicai*;  
 Buryat *orōhon* 'rye' ← Russian *rož'*, cf. Khalkha *xar taria* etc.

In more recent borrowings, especially from the Soviet period, the literary standard preserves the Russian orthographical shape, while orally various degrees of adaption are normally present.

### Loanwords from Chinese

In premodern times, especially among the Eastern Buryat, loanwords were received from Chinese and Tibetan, though in most cases they entered through the intermediation of Mongolic proper. The Chinese loanwords are often connected with the material culture, e.g.

- Buryat *sai* 'tea' ← Chinese *chá*, cf. Khalkha *cai*;  
 Buryat *dālimba* 'drill (cotton fabric)' ← Chinese *dāliánbù*, cf. Khalkha *dālimba*;  
 Buryat *naimā* 'trade, commerce, business' ← Chinese *mǎimài*, cf. Khalkha *naimā*;  
 Buryat *hanj* 'treasure, store house' ← Chinese *cāng*, cf. Khalkha *sanj* (cf. *nomīn sanj* 'library') etc.

### Loanwords from Tibetan

Tibetan loanwords are typically terms of religion or science, e.g.

- Buryat *dasanj* 'temple' ← Tibetan *grva-tshang*, cf. Khalkha *dacanj*;  
 Buryat *gelen* 'rank of monk' ← Tibetan *dge-slong*, cf. Khalkha *gelej*;  
 Buryat *namtar* 'biography' ← Tibetan *rnam-thar*, cf. Khalkha *namtar*;  
 Buryat *seg* 'a dot, point' ← Tibetan *tsheg*, cf. Khalkha *ceg* etc.

### Loanwords from Turkic

Turkic loanwords can be divided into two groups: Turkic elements which are present in other Mongolic languages too, and Turkic loanwords which appear only in Buryat.

#### 1. Most Turkic loanwords are present in other Mongolic languages:

Buryat *xusa* 'ram'; cf. Mongolic: LM *quča*; Khalkha *xuc*; Kalmuck *xutsa* ← Turkic: cf. Old Turkic *qoč* (→ Hungarian *kos*);

Buryat **exir** ‘twin’; cf. Mongolic: LM *ikire* ~ *ikere*; Khalkha *ixer*; Kalmuck *ikr* ← Turkic: cf. Old Turkic *ekkiz*; Chuvash *yěķēr* (→ Hungarian *iker*);

Buryat **gūlge** ‘puppy; young animal’; cf. Mongolic: LM *gōlige* ~ *gōlōge*; Khalkha *gōlōg* ← Turkic: cf. Old Turkic *kōšek*; Old Bulgar *kōlik* (→ Hungarian *kōlyök*) etc.

**2.** In the Western Buryat dialects, there are some Turkic loanwords which are not observed in Eastern Buryat dialects, e.g.

Oka Buryat **balyūhan** ‘small fry’ ← Turkic *\*baliq +sUn* {Mongolic NN}: cf. Old Turkic *baliq* ‘fish’;

Buryat **habagša** ‘thread’ ← Turkic *\*sap-Gči* {Mongolic VN}: cf. Old Turkic *sap-* ‘to thread a needle’;

Barguzin Buryat **zoto** ‘shin of an animal’ ← Turkic *\*jota*: cf. Old Turkic *yota* ‘the thigh’; Khakas; Tuvan; Tofan *čoda*; Altay *d’odo*; Yakut *soto*;

The Turkic donor languages include Tofan and Yakut.

### Loanwords from Tungusic

Of the Tungusic languages, only Evenki had and has direct contacts with Buryat. Many of the Mongolic elements in the local Evenki dialects are therefore likely to derive from Buryat, while Buryat also has Evenki loanwords that are absent elsewhere in Mongolic, e.g.

Buryat **zantaxi** ‘wolverine’ ← Evenki *yantakī* < Tungusic *yandako* ‘a dog, badger’;

Buryat **oro** ‘reindeer’ ← Evenki *oron*;

Buryat **xūxe degli** ‘heron’ ← Evenki *dekeli* ‘the kind of duck similar to a sandpiper’ < Tungusic *deg-* ‘to fly’;

Aga Buryat **degtendi** ‘the case for sewing utensils’ ← Evenki *dektende* ‘box, case’ < Tungusic *dekte* ‘ornament on the birchbark’ etc.

### Sample text in Buryat language

Гэр бүлэ ‘Family’.

(1)	Манай	гэр бүлэдэмнай	табан	хүн	байна:
	manai	ger büle-de-mnai	taban	xün	bai-na:
	we-GEN	family-DAT.LOC-POSS1.PL	five	person	be-PRES

абамни,	эжымни,	ахамни,
aba-mni,	eži-mni,	aha-mni,
father-POSS1.SG	mother- POSS1.SG	elder brother- POSS1.SG

дүү басагамни	ба	би.
dū basaga-mni	ba	bi.
younger sister- POSS1.SG	and	I.

(2)	Абамни	Доржо Гармаевич	гэжэ	нэрэтэй,
	aba-mni	Doržo Garmarvič	geže	nere-tei,
	father-POSS1.SG	Dorzho Garmaeovich	ge-IMPERF	name-COMIT
	эжымни	Жаргалма Бадмаевна,	ахамни	Алдар,
	eži-mni	Žargalma Badmaevna	aha-mni	Aldar
	mother-POSS1.SG	Zhargalma Badmaevna	brother-POSS1.SG	Aldar

	дүүнэймни dū-nei-mni sister-GEN-POSS1.SG	нэрэ nere name	Сэсэг, Seseg Seseg	би bi I	Зоригто Zorigto Zorigto	
	гэжэ geže ge-IMPERF	нэрэтэйб. nere-tei-b name-COMIT-1.SG				
(3)	Манай manai we-GEN	обог obog surname		Цыбиковтан. Cybikov-tan Cybikov-COLLECT		
(4)	Абамни aba-mni father-POSS1.SG	жолоошоноор žolōšon-ōr driver-INSTR		хүдэлдэг, хүдел-дег work-HABIT		
	тэргэ машиные terge mašina-īe truck-ACC	ябуулдаг, yaba-ül-dag go-CAUS-HABIT		тэрэ tere he	дүшэн зургаан dūšen zurgān forty six	наһатай naha-tai age-COMIT
(5)	Эжымни eži-mni mother-POSS1.SG	эмшэ emše doctor	байна, bai-na, be-PRES	жаахан žāxan small	үхибүүдые üxibū-d-īe child-PL-ACC	
	эмшэлдэг, emšel-deg treat-HABIT	тэрэ tere she	абанаа aba-hā father-ABL	хоёр хогор two	жэлээр žel-ēr year-INSTR	дүү, дүү younger
	тэрэ tere she	дүшэн дүрбэн dūšen dürben forty four	наһатай. na-tai age-COMIT			мүнөө münō now
(6)	Ахамни aha-mni brother-POSS1.SG	хоритой, hori-toi twenty-COMIT		ехэ хургуулиин yexe hurgūli-īn university-ACC	оюутан, oyūtan student	
	тэрэ tere he	дүрбэдэхи dürbe-dexi four-ORDIN	курста kurs-ta year-DAT.LOC	түүхын tūxe-īn history-GEN	факультеттэ fakultet-te department-DAT.LOC	
	хурадаг. hura-dag study-HABIT					
(7)	Одхон odxon the smallest	дүү басагамни dū basaga-mni sister-POSS1.SG	Сэсэг Seseg Seseg	үдэр üder day	бүри büri every	
	сэсэрлигтэ seserlig-te	ябадаг, yaba-dag	мүнөө münō	тэрэ tere	дүрбэтэй. dürbe-tei	

	kindergarten-DAT.LOC	go-HABIT	now	she	four-COMIT
	Харин harin but	би bi I	дунда хургуулин dunda hurgūli-in secondary school-GEN	һурагшаб, hura-gša-b to study-NOM.ACT-1SG	
	долоодохи dolō-doxi seven-ORDIN	класста klass-ta class-DAT.LOC	һурадагби, hura-dag-bi study-HABIT-1.SG		
	арбан нэгэн arban nege eleven	жэлтэйб. žel-tei-b year-COMIT-1.SG			
(8)	Бидэ Улаан-Үдэ bide Ulān-Üde we Ulaan-Üde	хотодо hoto-do town-DAT.LOC	амидаржа amidar-ža live- IMPERF	байнабди. bai-na-bdi. be-PRES-1.PL	
(9)	Зундаа zun-da-ā summer-DAT.LOC-REFL	хүгшэн хүгšen old	эжы абадаа eži aba-da-ā parents	хүдөө хүdō DAT.LOC-REFL	руу rū village to
	ябаха yaba-xa go-INFIN	заншалтайбди. zanšal-tai-bdi custom-COMIT-1.PL			
(10)	Тэдэнэр tede-nerdalan they-PL	далан žel-tei seventy	жэлтэй, sasū-tan year-COMIT	сасуутан bai-na same age-COLLECT	байна. be-PRES
	Мүнөө münō now	пенсидэ pensi-de pension-DAT.LOC	гараа. gara-ā go out-PAST		
(11)	Бүлэмнай büle-mnai family-POSS1.PL	ехэ yexe very	эбтэй, eb-tei concord-COMIT	би bi I	бүлэдөө büle-de-ō family-DAT.LOC-REFL
	дуратайб. dura-tai-b liking-COMIT-1.SG				

## Translation

- (1) Our family has five members: my father, my mother, my elder brother, my younger sister and myself.
- (2) My father's name is Dorzho Garmaevich, my mother's name is Zhargalma Badmaevna, my elder brother is named Aldar, my younger sister is named Seseg, and my name is Zhargal.
- (3) Our surname is Cybikov.
- (4) My father works as a driver, he drives a truck, and he is forty-six years old.
- (5) My mother is a doctor, she treats small children. She is two years younger than my father. She is now forty-four years old.
- (6) My elder brother is twenty years old. He is a student at the university. He is studying in the fourth year at the Department of History.
- (7) My youngest sister attends the kindergarten every day. She is four years old.
- (8) I am a pupil at a secondary school. I am studying in the seventh class. I am eleven years old.
- (9) We live in Ulan-Ude.
- (10) In summer we usually go to visit our grandparents in the country.
- (11) They are both seventy years old.
- (12) They are retired.
- (13) Our family is very friendly, I like our family.

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**Yayıma Hazırlayan: Edanur Sağlam**

**Attachments:**



**The Buryat woman of the Khori tribe** (The end of 19th century, photo of A. K. Kuznecov in Chita)



**Dacan of Ivolga** (The Buddhist centre of Russia, which was built in 1947 as a museum 40 kilometers south of Ulan-Ude)



**Dacan of Ivolga**



The map of Russia (Buryatia situated to the east and south of Lake Baikal, to the north of Mongolia)



The map of Buryatia