

**THE MORPHO-PHONOLOGY OF ACCUSATIVE AND GENITIVE CASE IN BARGUZIN BURYAT**

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**1 INTRODUCTION.** I analyze the morpho-phonology of accusative (ACC) and genitive (GEN) case in the Barguzin dialect of Buryat (Mongolic), using original fieldwork data. This language’s morphology for these cases is complex, but (in part) phonologically conditioned. **I argue that** these cases are subject to a phonological alignment constraint (McCarthy & Prince 1993, 1998, a.o.), which when not trivially satisfied, motivates insertion of a dedicated epenthetic morpheme. Analogous phenomena have been observed for Basque and Italian in Arregi & Nevins (2012). These findings contribute to the body of evidence for a theory in which the morphological and phonological components of the grammar are closely interwoven (Wolf 2008, 2009, Pertsova 2015, a.o.).

**2 DATA.** Most case morphemes in this language are simple suffixes (modulo vowel harmony). Accusative and genitive are more complex. When the noun ends in a bi-moraic vocalic segment  $V\mu\mu$  (long vowel or diphthong), these cases are respectively expressed as  $-j\theta$  (1) and  $-n$  (2):

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| (1) <i>Accusative -jθ adjacent to <math>V\mu\mu</math></i> |  |
| a. dugar <b>noxoi-jθ</b> xarana                            | b. bi <b>tax<sup>1</sup>aa-jθ</b> xaraab |
| Dugar <b>dog-ACC</b> see                                   | I <b>chicken-ACC</b> see                 |
| ‘Dugar sees a dog’   | ‘I see a chicken’                        |
| (2) <i>Genitive -n adjacent to <math>V\mu\mu</math></i>    |  |
| a. <b>noxoi-n</b> xool ʌntəi                               | b. <b>əzi-n</b> miisgəi bʌdʌʌn           |
| <b>dog-GEN</b> food expensive                              | <b>mother-GEN</b> cat fat                |
| ‘Dog food is expensive’                                    | ‘Mother’s cat is fat’                    |

When an accusative or genitive suffix attaches to a noun ending in a consonant or short vowel, an element /Ai/ or /ii/ must appear between them. I gloss this as EM for “epenthetic morpheme”. (Note that /A/ is a harmonizing low vowel). In (3) we see this for consonant-final nouns:

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|---|---|
| (3) <i>Epenthetic morpheme with consonant-final nouns</i> |   |
| a. <b>dugar-*(ai/ii)-n</b> miisgəi bʌdʌʌn                 | b. bi <b>dugar-*(ai/ii)-jθ</b> xaranaab |
| <b>Dugar-EM-GEN</b> cat fat                               | I <b>Dugar-EM-ACC</b> saw               |
| ‘Dugar’s cat is fat’                                      | ‘I see Dugar’                           |

As Staroverov & Zelensky (to appear) show, Barguzin Buryat has a regular hiatus-avoidance process which deletes a short vowel when adjacent to a segment  $V\mu\mu$ . Since /Ai/ and /ii/ are  $V\mu\mu$ , when one of these elements is inserted, any final short vowel in the noun stem is deleted (4):

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|--|--------------------------|
| (4) <i>Epenthetic morpheme with short-vowel-final nouns</i> (Note: ‘Dugar’ and ‘Badma’ are names.) |                          |
| a. badma → badm-ai/ii-jθ/n   | b. ʃonɔ → ʃon-oi/ii-jθ/n |
| Badma Badma-EM-ACC/GEN   | wolf wolf-EM-ACC/GEN     |

**In summary**, the accusative  $-j\theta$  and genitive  $-n$  suffixes must either attach to a noun ending in a  $V\mu\mu$ , or an element /Ai/ or /ii/ (both of which are also  $V\mu\mu$ ) must intervene between the case suffix and noun. Consequently, we observe the phonological generalization in (5):

- (5) The generalization: The accusative /jθ/ and genitive /n/ are always adjacent to a  $V\mu\mu$ .

**3 ANALYSIS.** I interpret (5) above as evidence that accusative and genitive case in this language are subject to a phonological requirement, which I formalize with the alignment constraint in (6):

- (6) *ALIGN( $V\mu\mu$ -ACC/GEN), henceforth abbreviated to  $V\mu\mu$ -ACC/GEN*

Assign a \* when an ACC/GEN suffix is not aligned to the right edge of a  $V\mu\mu$  segment.

I argue that /Ai/ and /ii/ are the (variable) realizations of an epenthetic morpheme that is recruited to avoid violations of this constraint. Before proceeding to the implementation, note that Barguzin Buryat has regular purely phonological epenthesis, which inserts the vowel /A/ to break up consonant clusters that span morpheme boundaries (Staroverov & Zelensky, ex. 24), as in (7):

