

Demarcation between Converbs and What Are Not Converbs in Mongolian: Focusing on Combinations of a Verbal-nominal Suffix and a Case Suffix

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This article investigates Khalkha Mongolian forms that are considered to be canonical (i.e., simplex) converb suffixes in some studies but not in others. For example, *-XAAR* (successive) as in *namaĵg ir-e-xeer* (1SG.ACC come-EP-*XAAR*) ‘when I come ...’ is regarded as a canonical converb suffix by some scholars but is treated by others as a combination of the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X* and the instrumental case suffix *-AAR*. This study considers the morphological decomposability of four forms that can apparently be analyzed into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix, namely, *-XAAR* (successive), *-XAAR* (purposive), *-XAAR* (comparative), and *-XAD* (time point), and demonstrates that *-XAAR* (successive), *-XAAR* (purposive), and *-XAD* (time point) are decomposed as such, while the boundary between *-X* and *-AAR* in *-XAAR* (comparative) is less transparent at least from a synchronic perspective.

Keywords: Khalkha Mongolian, converb, quasi-converb, verbal nominal, case, inflection, conjugation, morphology

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1. Aim of the present article

Previous works dealing with Khalkha Mongolian verb conjugation vary as to the number of converb suffixes. As will be shown in Table 2 in Section 3.3, previous studies identify between ten to fifteen morphemes as converb suffixes. Various factors may explain the discrepancy between studies. Some of these include the target readers (whether for learners or researchers), and the scope of description (whether or not to include suffixes employed with a low frequency in the scope of investigation). In addition, researchers also disagree as to how to treat forms that appear to consist of more than one morpheme. For example, some studies consider *-XAAR* (its allomorphs according to vowel harmony

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are *-xaar*, *-xoor*, *-xeer*, and *-xöör*) as in *namajg ir-e-xeer* (1SG.ACC¹ come-EP²-*XAAR*³) ‘when I come ...’ to be a converb suffix (simplex suffix) while others analyze it as two suffixes (the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X* and the instrumental case suffix *-AAR*). This article deals with four such forms that are regarded as converb suffixes by some studies, but which are decomposed by others into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix. These four forms are: *-XAAR* (successive), *-XAAR* (purposive), *-XAAR* (comparative), and *-XAD* (time point).

The structure of this article is as follows. Section 2 provides background information concerning the present study. Section 3 provides an overview of each previous study’s analysis of the four forms. Section 4 first introduces a method for estimating their degrees of internal morphological transparency (i.e., whether they are simplex converb suffixes or combinations of a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix), and then applies this test to the four forms. Section 5 summarizes the results.

2. Grammar sketch

2.1. General characteristics of Khalkha Mongolian

Khalkha Mongolian is spoken in Mongolia and has more than two million native speakers. It is one of the largest dialects of Mongolian (Mongolian proper), which is a member of the Mongolic language family. Its morphology is agglutinative with suffixes. It is dependent-marking and has a nominative-accusative case system. The basic word order is SOV, and a modifier usually precedes the head that it modifies. Sentence constituents (e.g., the subject and object) are often absent when they can be deduced from the context.

Khalkha Mongolian (hereinafter simply referred to as “Mongolian”) exhibits vowel harmony. Phonological interpretations of this phenomenon, and inventories of phonemes, differ among researchers.⁴ In order to avoid unnecessary confusion caused by adopting any one of the phonological notations proposed by previous studies, this article employs the orthography used in Mongolia, with the Cyrillic characters transliterated into Latin ones: a=a, б=b, в=v [β], г=g, д=d, е=jе/jө, ө=jo, ж=ž [dʒ~tʃ], з=z [dz~ts], и=i, й=j, к=k, л=l [ʎ], м=m, н=n, о=o [ɔ], ө=ö [ø], п=p, р=r, с=s, т=t, у=u [ʊ], ү=ü [u], ф=f, х=x, ц=c [tʃ^h], ч=č [tʃ^h], ш=š [ʃ], ь=’’, ы=y [i:], ь=’, э=e, ю=ju/jü, and я=ja.

¹ The subject in the subordinate clause appears in the accusative, genitive, or nominative case. A detailed explanation of the choice from among these three cases is not provided because it is not the major concern of this article.

² In some instances, a vowel is inserted when a morph beginning with a consonant follows one that ends in a consonant. In a similar fashion, when a morph beginning with a long vowel follows one that ends in a long vowel or diphthong, the consonant *g* appears between them.

³ Because it is not obvious at this stage of the present discussion whether *-XAAR* is analyzed into two suffixes or not, a specific gloss is not provided for it; rather, the notation of the form itself is repeated.

⁴ For an explanation of differing interpretations among researchers, see Svantesson et al. (2005: 22–25).

The data were obtained from three native female Mongolian speakers. One of them was born in Xarxorin, Övörxangaj Province in 1989, and the other two in Ulaanbaatar, in 1979 and 1987, respectively.

2.2. Cases

Mongolian nominals decline in eight cases: nominative (marked by a zero morpheme), genitive, dative-locative, accusative, ablative, instrumental, comitative, and directive (allative). As will be explained in Section 2.3, verbal-nominal forms (a group of verbal conjugational forms) can also take a case suffix.

Among these eight cases, the dative-locative and instrumental cases are relevant to the present discussion. Some, but not all, of their usages are listed below.

(i) Dative-locative

(i-a) Beneficiary, recipient

- (1) *Bi Tujaa-d nom ög-sön.*
 1 SG.NOM PSN.F-DAT book.NOM give-VN.PST
 ‘I gave [a]⁵ book **to Tuyaa**’

(i-b) Time point

- (2) *Bi önöödөр najman cag-t bos-son.*
 1 SG.NOM today eight o'clock-DAT get.up-VN.PST
 ‘I got up **at eight o'clock** today’

(i-c) Spatial point, goal

- (3) *Ter xүн өчгдөр Mongol-d ir-sen.*
 that person.NOM yesterday Mongolia-DAT come-VN.PST
 ‘That person came **to Mongolia** yesterday’

(ii) Instrumental

(ii-a) Instrument, measure

- (4) *Xarandaa-g-aar биш үзг-еер бич-еереж.*
 pencil-EP-INS NEG pen-INS write-TV.OPT
 ‘Write **with [a] pen**, not **with [a] pencil**’

(ii-b) Pathway

- (5) *Ene зам-аар jav-”ja.*
 this way-INS go-TV.VOL
 ‘Let’s go this way’

⁵ Square brackets in translations denote that no corresponding words appear in the original Mongolian sentences.

Literal translation [LT]: ‘Let’s go **through** this **way**’

- (6) *Conx-oor* *xog* *xaja-ž* *bol-o-x-güj*.
 window-INS garbage.NOM throw.away-CVB.IPFV may-EP-VN.NP-NEG
 ‘You should not throw away garbage out the window’
 LT: ‘[You] should not throw away garbage **through** [**the**] **window**’

(ii-c) Period of time

- (7) *Ter xün* *öngörsön* *sar-yn* *sүүлč-eer* *ir-sen*.
 that person.NOM last month-GEN end-INS come-VN.PST
 ‘That person came here late last month’
 LT: ‘That person came [here] **around** [**the**] **end** of last month’

2.3. Verbal conjugational forms

Verbal inflectional (conjugational) forms are classified into the following three groups:

- (8) Three types of verbal inflectional (conjugational) forms
 (a) Terminating forms (formed by attaching a terminating suffix to the stem): past, non-past, and optative, among others.
 (b) Converb forms (formed by attaching a converb suffix): perfective, imperfective, and conditional, among others.
 (c) Verbal-nominal forms (formed by attaching a verbal-nominal suffix): past (or perfective), non-past, imperfective, and habitual, among others.

Note that the terms “terminating verbal (form),” “converb (form),” and “verbal nominal (form)” denote types of verbal **word forms as a whole**, while “terminating suffix,” “converb suffix,” and “verbal-nominal suffix” refer to inflectional **suffixes** that form corresponding verbal word forms.

The functions of these three types of conjugational forms are as follows:

- (9) Functions of three types of verbal inflectional (conjugational) forms
 (a) A terminating form is used as a finite verb and concludes a clause. See *jav-na* (go-TV.NP) ‘will go’ in (10).
 (b) A converb form can compose an adjunct clause. See *ir-vel* (come-CVB.COND) ‘if [someone] comes’ in (10). Some, but not all, converb forms are followed by an auxiliary verb such as *baj-* ‘be,’ *čad-* ‘be.able.to,’ and *bol-* ‘may/be.alright’ to constitute various types of aspectual and modal complex predicates. A relevant

example is *xaja-ž bol-o-x-güj* (throw.away-CVB.IPFV **may**-EP-VN.NP-NEG) ‘may not throw away’ in (6) above.

(c) A verbal-nominal form can perform the following functions:

(c-i) It can constitute a nominal clause. When employed in this usage, a verbal-nominal form can further take a case suffix, as seen in *av-san-d-aa* (receive-VN.PST-DAT-REFL) ‘at [the event in which someone] received’ in (11).

(c-ii) A verbal-nominal form can also compose an adnominal clause. See *ög-sön* (give-VN.PST) ‘[... which someone] gave’ in (12).

(c-iii) Some verbal-nominal forms can conclude sentences. *Bajarla-san* (be.glad-VN.PST) ‘was/were glad’ in (11) and *gee-sen* (lose-VN.PST) ‘lost’ in (12) are used in this way.

(c-iv) Some verbal-nominal forms can constitute adjunct clauses.

- (10) *Tüün-ijg ir-vel bi jav-na.*
 3SG-ACC come-CVB.COND 1SG.NOM go-TV.NP
 ‘If he comes, I will go’

- (11) *Tujaa Gerel-ees zaxia av-san-d-aa*
 PSN.F.NOM PSN.F-ABL message.NOM receive-VN.PST-DAT-REFL
ix bajarla-san.
 much be.glad-VN.PST
 ‘Tuyaa was very glad to have received a message from Gerel’
 LT: ‘Tuyaa was very glad at [the event in which she] received [a] message from Gerel’

- (12) *Bold Dorž-ijn ög-sön nom-yg gee-sen.*
 PSN.M.NOM PSN.M-GEN give-VN.PST book-ACC lose-VN.PST
 ‘Bold lost [the] book [that] Dorj gave [to him]’

The functions of the three types of conjugational forms are summarized in Table 1. The symbol “(✓)” (“✓” enclosed by parentheses) indicates that only some verbal-nominal forms serve the function in question.

Table 1 Functions of three types of conjugational forms in Mongolian

Types \ Functions	Concluding a sentence	Adjunct	Nominal	Adnominal
Terminating verbal (TV)	✓			
Converb (CVB)		✓		

Verbal nominal (VN)	(√)	(√)	√	√
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3. Previous studies

3.1. Crosslinguistic definition of “converb”

According to Haspelmath (1995), a “converb is a verb form that is part of the inflectional paradigm of verbs” (ibid., p.4) and “is usually⁶ marked by **an** affix that is attached to the verb stem” (ibid., p.9; emphasis in boldface is mine). Following this definition, the syntactic function of converbs (namely, to constitute adjunct clauses) is brought about by attaching to the stem only one conjugational affix, not more than one.

When the adjunct-forming function of a verb form is realized by attaching two (or more) affixes, it is not usually called a converb.⁷ In particular when the adjunct-forming function is realized by simultaneously adjoining a masdar/verbal-nominal⁸ affix and a case affix to the stem, the verb form in question is specifically termed a “quasi-converb” (Ebert 2008: 20).⁹ When contrasting quasi-converb affixes to indivisible simplex ones, the term “canonical” (Nedjalkov 1995: 102–103) has been used for the latter type of converb affix.

3.2. Definition of “converb” in studies on Mongolian

Most of the forms that are labeled “converb suffixes” in previous studies on Mongolian conjugation pertain to the definition proposed by Haspelmath (1995: 4, 9). Also, combinations of a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix are not considered to be converb suffixes by most previous studies (i.e., they are recognized as quasi-converb suffixes though they are not explicitly named as such).

⁶ According to this definition, there are some “unusual” instances where converbs are not marked by an affix. Although Haspelmath does not mention what they are like, one of the possible candidates would be verb forms that are produced not by attaching an affix but by vowel/consonant mutation (i.e., it is not the indefinite article “a” but the noun “affix” that the adverb “usually” in Haspelmath’s definition modifies).

⁷ Nedjalkov (1995: 103) states that the “term converb is sometimes also used generically to cover both the terms quasi-converb and converb” (the term “quasi-converb” will be introduced later in this paragraph). In this article’s terminology, however, “quasi-converb” is not a subtype of “converb,” and these two terms are employed for two different types of verb forms (a “quasi-converb” is “a stem + a verbal-nominal suffix + a case suffix” whereas a “converb” is “a stem + a converb suffix”).

⁸ In the narrow sense, a “verbal nominal” refers to a verb form that functions as a nominal. However, as explained in Section 2.3, Mongolian verbal-nominal forms can also compose adnominal clauses (and some verbal-nominal forms even constitute adjunct clauses or conclude clauses). In other words, Mongolian verbal-nominal forms possess more functions than the name implies. In this article, “masdar” is used as a cross-linguistic general term for verb forms that serve as nominals, while “verbal nominal” is employed as a language specific term for Mongolian verb forms that function as nominals (and also as adnominals, etc.).

⁹ Ebert (2008: 20) remarks that “the term ‘quasi-converb’ was coined by V. Nedjalkov (1995) for forms with a participial [i.e., masdar] suffix + case marker which have verbal function” (supplementary statement in square brackets is mine). However, Nedjalkov himself does not explicitly define “quasi-converb” as such. According to him, quasi-converbs are “combined-converbs” (ibid., p.103) involving elements “that also have other functions, especially functions that are typical for the participle, the infinitive and the gerund” (ibid., pp.102–103). Although Nedjalkov mentions that quasi-converbs involve a masdar-like element (the participle, infinitive, or gerund), he does not explicitly state what this element is combined with to compose a quasi-converb (i.e., according to Nedjalkov’s statement, an element other than a case affix (or an adposition) can also be combined with a masdar-like element to form a quasi-converb). Ebert’s definition, rather than Nedjalkov’s, is cited above because the former is more useful/relevant at least to the discussion in the present article.

Only Janhunen (2012) differs from the other studies in that he classifies “converb markers” (i.e., converb suffixes) into two subcategories: “primary” and “secondary.” According to him, secondary converb suffixes can synchronically be decomposed into two (or more) morphemes, while primary converb suffixes cannot (i.e., they are simplex). To cite his statement:

- (13) Only relatively few converb markers are “primary” in the sense that they do not seem to contain synchronically identifiable morphological constituents. Others are “secondary” and contain more or less transparent derivational and inflectional elements.¹⁰ Ultimately, it is a matter of synchronic analysis as to which converb markers are regarded as morphologically indivisible entities.

(Janhunen 2012: 164)

Although what Janhunen calls “secondary” converb markers might seem identical to quasi-converb affixes, he distinguishes between them. He defines “quasiconverb” (in accordance with Janhunen’s spelling, “quasiconverb” is spelled without a hyphen here when used in reference to his study) as follows:

- (14) Quasiconverbs may be defined as complex verbal forms with a converbial function and a morphologically transparent structure. Formally, quasiconverbs are case forms of participles [“verbal-nominal forms” in the terminology of the present article] used as action nouns. Although participles can be inflected in all cases, only the adverbial case forms qualify as quasiconverbs, since only they can have verb-chaining functions of the same type as actual converbs.

(Janhunen 2012: 169; supplementary statement in square brackets is mine)

(13) and (14) indicate that both secondary converb and quasiconverb suffixes have a transparent internal structure (i.e., they both are complex). At first glance, it is not obvious how they differ. However, judging from the fact that Janhunen employs the modifying expression “more or less” in (13) (“[secondary converb markers] contain **more or less** transparent derivational and inflectional elements”), he seems to assume that these two types of suffixes can be demarcated in terms of **degree** of internal morphological transparency: The internal morphological structure of secondary converb suffixes is **more**

¹⁰ The term “secondary converb” is used with a different meaning by Alpatov and Podlesskaya (1995), which deals with Japanese converbs. In their terminology, the “**primary**” converb corresponds to what Janhunen refers to with the identical term: It is “a nonfinite verb form that consists of a stem and an inflection” (Alpatov and Podlesskaya 1995: 465). In contrast, the “**secondary**” converb is defined as “a nonfinite verb form that consists of a primary converb in combination with agglutinative affixes or function words (postpositions, particles, conjunctions)” (Alpatov and Podlesskaya 1995: 465). According to this definition, secondary converbs are composed out of primary converbs. On the other hand, the base of what Janhunen names a “secondary converb” is not a primary converb.

or less transparent, while that of quasiconverb suffixes is **totally** clear. If this is what he actually intends, then the difference among “primary converb,” “secondary converb,” and “quasiconverb” suffixes can perhaps be presented as follows:¹¹

(15) Degrees of internal morphological transparency of the three types of “converb” suffixes

- (i) Primary converb suffixes: not transparent
- (ii) Secondary converb suffixes: more or less transparent
- (iii) Quasiconverb suffixes: totally transparent

3.3. Mongolian converb suffixes identified in previous studies

As observed in Section 1, studies on Mongolian conjugation have recognized different numbers of converb suffixes. Table 2 displays the inventory of converb suffixes (including secondary converb and quasi(-)converb suffixes) that are identified by each of the following thirteen studies: [A] Todaeva (1951: 142–154), [B] Sanžeev (1963: 140–168), [C] Street (1963: 215, 219–228), [D] Luvsanvandan (1968: 61–73), [E] Poppe (1970: 135–140), [F] Luvsanžav (1976: 83, 143, 180), [G] Luvsanvandan (1987: 108–138), [H] Kuribayashi (1992: 510), [I] Hashimoto and Tani (1993: 86–115), [J] Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 156–174), [K] Önörbajan (2004: 270–283), [L] Bjambadorž (2006: 167–176), and [M] Janhunen (2012: 163–173). (Letters in square brackets correspond to those in the “Previous studies” column headers in Table 2.)

¹¹ By Janhunen’s definition, quasiconverb suffixes are combinations of a participial (“verbal-nominal” in this article’s terminology) suffix and a case suffix. In contrast, secondary converb suffixes are composed of two (or more) derivational or inflectional suffixes. This means that secondary converb suffixes are not only combinations of a participial (verbal-nominal) suffix and a case suffix, but also can be other types of complex forms such as a deverbal nominal suffix plus the reflexive suffix ([10] -*NGAA* in Table 2 is analyzed as such by Janhunen 2012: 167). To put it differently, secondary converb suffixes can be composed of more various types of elements than can quasiconverb suffixes. In this manner, secondary converb and quasiconverb suffixes differ not only in (i) degree of internal morphological transparency but also in (ii) types of morphemes that compose them. Note that the three types of forms are arranged in (15) only with regard to the viewpoint (i).

Also, Janhunen points out in (13) that it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between primary and secondary converb markers. However, he does not mention anything as to whether the borderline between secondary converb and quasiconverb suffixes is clear-cut or not.

Table 2 Converb suffixes identified in previous studies

Previous studies	Forms												
	[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]	[F]	[G]	[H]	[I]	[J]	[K]	[L]	[M]
[1] <i>-N</i> Associative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[2] <i>-Z</i> Imperfective	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[3] <i>-AAD</i> Perfective	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[4] <i>-SAAR</i> Progressive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	sec.
[5] <i>-VČ</i> Concessive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	sec.
[6] <i>-VAL</i> Conditional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	sec.
[7] <i>-TAL</i> Terminative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[8] <i>-MAGC</i> Immediative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[9] <i>-NGUUT</i> Concomitant		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	prim.
[10] <i>-NGAA</i> Incidental		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	sec.
[11] <i>-SNAA</i> Successive (1)			VN-REFL						✓		✓ ¹²		Q
[12] <i>-MAAŽIN</i> Preconditional				✓			✓		✓	✓	✓ ¹²	✓	sec.
[13] <i>-XLAAR</i> Successive (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	sec.
[14] <i>-XAAR</i> Successive (3)		VN-INS					VN-INS		✓	VN-INS	VN-INS	✓	
[15] <i>-XAAR</i> Purposive		VN-INS	VN-INS	VN-INS		VN-INS		VN-INS (fused)	✓ or VN-INS?	✓	VN-INS		sec. (VN-INS)
[16] <i>-XAAR</i> Comparative		✓	✓										
[17] <i>-XAD</i> Time point	VN-DAT		VN-DAT			VN-DAT		VN-DAT (fused)	✓ or VN-DAT?				Q (VN-DAT)
[18] <i>-LGÜJ</i> Negative						NDS-NEG?	✓	NDS-NEG (fused)	✓ or NDS-NEG?		✓	✓	
[19] Other listed forms		-XAA		-XAA							-XAA, etc. ¹²	-MAAR	-S -XAA
Previous studies	Forms												
	[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]	[F]	[G]	[H]	[I]	[J]	[K]	[L]	[M]

The names provided to the forms in Table 2 are only tentative.

¹² [K] Önörbajan (2004: 282) states that some works consider [11] *-SNAA* (successive), [12] *-MAAŽIN* (preconditional), and [19] *-XAA* to be converb suffixes. However, he does not explicitly mention whether he himself recognizes them as converb suffixes or not.

Lines 14 to 17 are emphasized with a thick border to highlight the scope of this investigation: These four forms are those that are considered to be converb suffixes by some studies but which are analyzed into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix by others.

The canonical converb suffixes referred to in each study are marked with “✓” signs. “VN-INS” indicates that the form in question is analyzed into a verbal-nominal suffix (specifically, the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X*, as far as the four forms under investigation are concerned) and the instrumental case suffix *-AAR*. In a similar fashion, if a form in question is regarded as divisible into a verbal-nominal suffix (again, the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X*) and the dative-locative case suffix *-D*,¹³ then the notation “VN-DAT” is given in the relevant cell.

As mentioned in Section 3.2, [M] Janhunen (2012) adopts a tripartite distinction: primary converb, secondary converb, and quasiconverb suffixes. The forms marked with “prim.” are what Janhunen recognizes as primary converb suffixes. Those marked with “sec.” and “Q” are secondary converb and quasiconverb suffixes, respectively. The abbreviations provided in parentheses under “sec.” and “Q” (i.e., “(VN-INS)” and “(VN-DAT)”) indicate that the secondary converb and quasiconverb suffixes in question are synchronically analyzed as such by Janhunen. (This notation is only provided for the forms under the present investigation.)

According to [H] Kuribayashi (1992: 510), the forms with the notation “(fused)” are obtained by fusion of the two suffixes indicated in the cell.¹⁴ It is not clear whether he considers these “fused” forms to be canonical converb suffixes or not.

[I] Hashimoto and Tani (1993) appear to regard [15] *-XAAR* (purposive), [17] *-XAD* (time point), and [18] *-LGÜJ* (negative) as canonical converb suffixes and designate a term for each of them: a “converb expressing ‘when’” for [15] (ibid., p.99), “purposive” for [17] (ibid., pp.96–97), and “negative associative” for [18] (ibid., pp.104–105). At the same time, however, Hashimoto and Tani imply that these three forms are divisible by indicating their internal morphological structures with notations such as “purposive converb suffix *-XAAR*: < verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past + instrumental case suffix” (adapted from ibid., p.96) for [17], and so on. It is not evident whether they actually consider them to be canonical converb or quasi-converb suffixes. As a reflection of this ambiguity, both interpretations are displayed in the relevant cells. As for [14] *-XAAR* (successive), however, Hashimoto and Tani do not indicate its internal morphological structure, so they seem to recognize it as a canonical converb suffix (ibid., p.107).

¹³ The *A* between *-X* and *-D* in *-XAD* is an epenthetic vowel.

¹⁴ To cite Kuribayashi’s (1992: 510) statement: “the forms below [i.e., [15], [17], and [18] in Table 2] also have a converbial function. They are fused forms of two suffixes.” (The translation from Japanese and note in square brackets are mine.)

4. Analysis of *-XAAR* (successive), *-XAAR* (purposive), *-XAAR* (comparative), and *-XAD* (time point)

None of the previous studies listed in Table 2 provides concrete criteria for estimating the degree of internal morphological transparency of what appears to be decomposed into more than one suffix. Section 4.1 introduces a morphological characteristic exhibited by case suffixes. Section 4.2 first demonstrates that this characteristic can serve as a test for estimating whether the four forms under the present investigation are divisible into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix. This test is then applied to the forms.

4.1. Case suffixes attached to coordinated noun phrases or nominal clauses

First, let us examine some instances where case suffixes are attached to coordinated noun phrases. When they inflect in case, only the last noun phrase usually takes a case suffix.

- (16) *Nijt suragč bolon bagš-nar-t-aa öglöön-ij*
 all student and teacher-PL-DAT-REFL morning-GEN
mend xürge-je.
 greeting.NOM deliver-TV.VOL
 ‘[I] send my morning greetings **to** all our **students** and **teachers**’

- (17) *End baj-g-aa širee, škaf, taviurn-uud¹⁵-yg*
 here be/exist-EP-VN.IPFV desk cupboard shelf-PL-ACC
xaja-čix-aaraj.
 throw.away-COMPL-TV.OPT
 ‘Please throw away this desk, cupboard and shelf’
 LT: ‘Please throw away [the] **desk, cupboard** [and] **shelf** [that] exist here’

The same also applies when coordinated nominal clauses (i.e., clauses involving a verbal-nominal form) inflect in case. For example, in (18) and (19), where two clauses are coordinated that are each composed by the verbal-nominal form for the non-past (involving the suffix *-X*), the case suffix is adjoined only to the verb in the last clause.

- (18) *Ene öröön-d jum id-e-x bolon tamxi*
 this room-DAT thing.NOM eat-EP-VN.NP and tobacco.NOM

¹⁵ The plural suffix *-uud* in this example does not necessarily denote the plurality of *taviur* ‘shelf’ alone. Rather, it expresses that there are at least three of the items that include a *širee* ‘desk,’ *škaf* ‘cupboard,’ and *taviur* ‘shelf’ in total. Therefore, it might be the case that only one desk, one cupboard, and one shelf are mentioned in this sentence. (When a certain type of suffix is attached to *taviur* ‘shelf,’ *n* appears at the end of the base.)

tat-a-x-yg *xoriglo-no.*
 smoke-EP-VN.NP-ACC forbid-TV.NP
 ‘Do not eat or smoke in this room’
 LT: ‘[We] forbid **to eat** things and **to smoke** tobacco in this room’

- (19) *Tedn-ij kompani ergelt-ijn xöröng-ijn dutagdl-aas*
 3PL-GEN company.NOM circulation-GEN capital-GEN shortage-ABL
bolž üjl#ažillagaa-g-aa tür zogsoo-x, al’#esvel
 because.of activity-EP-REFL temporally stop-VN.NP or
xeden ažiłtn-uud-aa xal-a-x-aas öör arga-güj
 some worker-PL-REFL dismiss-EP-VN.NP-ABL other method-NEG
bol-čix-son.
 become-COMPL-VN.PST
 ‘That company now has no choice but to temporally suspend operations or dismiss
 some workers because of shortage of working capital’
 LT: ‘Their company, because of shortage of working capital, has [now] become
 without [any] other measures [than] **to** temporally **suspend** operations or **than to**
dismiss some workers’

4.2. Internal morphological transparency of -XAAR (successive), -XAAR (purposive), -XAAR (comparative), and -XAD (time point)

Now, we will examine whether the four forms under the present investigation can synchronically be decomposed into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix. Let us take [14] -XAAR (successive) as an example.

- (20) *Xüčtej šuurga bol-o-xoor tanaj ene bajšin*
 powerful storm.NOM become-EP-XAAR 2PL.GEN this building.NOM
nur-čix-a-ž magadgüj šüü.
 collapse-COMPL-EP-CVB.IPFV maybe MP
 ‘When you have a violent storm, this house of yours might collapse’
 LT: ‘**When** [a] violent storm **occurs**, ...’

As shown in Table 2, some studies analyze [14] -XAAR (successive) into -X (verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past) and -AAR (instrumental case suffix). This -AAR can reasonably be considered a case suffix if it appears only in the last clause’s verb when two (or more) clauses that each involve -XAAR are coordinated. However, if -AAR must be present in the non-last-clause verb(s) as well (i.e., if -AAR cannot be separated from -X), then this -AAR turns not to be a case suffix at least from a synchronic perspective.

As in (21), *-AAR* actually appears only in the last clause's verb when two clauses that each involve *-XAAR* are coordinated.

- (21) *Ix xemžeen-ij cas or-o-x, al'#esvel xüčtej*
 large scale-GEN snow.NOM fall-EP-VN.NP or powerful
šuurga bol-o-x-oor tanaj ene bajšin
 storm.NOM become-EP-VN.NP-INS 2PL.GEN this building.NOM
nur-čix-a-ž magadgüj šüü.
 collapse-COMPL-EP-CVB.IPFV maybe MP
 'When you have a heavy snow or violent storm, this house of yours might collapse'
 LT: '[Around the time when a] heavy snow **falls** or **around** [the time when a] big storm **occurs**, ...'

The data will show that [14] *-XAAR* (successive), [15] *-XAAR* (purposive), and [17] *-XAD* (time point) are decomposed into a verbal-nominal suffix (specifically, the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X*) and a case suffix (the instrumental *-AAR* or the dative-locative case suffix *-D*). On the other hand, when two (or more) clauses that each involve [16] *-XAAR* (comparative) are coordinated, the sentence becomes less acceptable if *-AAR* does not appear in the non-last-clause verb(s). (Two of the three consultants rejected (24) as ungrammatical, and the other regarded it as awkward.) This leads to the assumption that [16] *-XAAR* (comparative) exhibits a lower degree of internal morphological transparency (decomposability), if any, than the other three forms. See below for examples.

Additional example of [14] *-XAAR* (successive)

- (22) *Ene üüd-eer xiin or-o-x ba gar-a-x-aar*
 this door-INS person.NOM go.in-EP-VN.NP and go.out-EP-VN.NP-INS
gerel=n' avtomat-aar as-dag.
 light.NOM=3POSS automatic-INS blink.on-VN.HAB
 'When you go in and out through this door, the light automatically blinks on'
 LT: '[Around times when a] person **goes in** and **around** [times when (s)he] **goes out** through this door...'

Example of [15] *-XAAR* (purposive)

- (23) *Japon xel sur-a-x, al'#esvel Japon-y*
 Japanese language.NOM study-EP-VN.NP or Japan-GEN
jos#zanšil-taj tanilc-a-x-aar manaj nijgemleg-t
 tradition-COM get.acquainted-EP-VN.NP-INS 1PL.GEN society-DAT

olon mongol ojuutan ir-deg.

many Mongolian student.NOM come-VN.HAB

‘A lot of Mongolian students visit our society in order to study Japanese or to get acquainted with Japanese customs’

LT: ‘A lot of Mongolian students come to our society [in order] **to study** Japanese or **in order to get acquainted** with Japanese customs’

Example of [16] -XAAR (comparative)

- (24) ?? *Gomdol garga-ž baj-x, al’#esvel xün-ees*
 complaint.NOM bring.about-CVB.IPFV be-VN.NP or person-ABL
jum nex-e-ž baj-x-aar xij-x jostoj
 thing.NOM demand-EP-CVB.IPFV be-VN.NP-INS do-VN.NP outhgt.to
ažl-aa xij-cgee-je.
 work-REFL do-PLURIT-TV.VOL

Intended meaning: ‘We’d rather carry out our own work than complain or ask others for things’ (This sentence is fully acceptable when *baj-x* (the third word from the beginning) is replaced with *baj-xaar*.)

LT: ‘[Rather than] **be** complaining or **rather than be** asking people for things, let’s do our own work [that] we should do’

Examples of [17] -XAD (time point)

- (25) *Xil-eer gar-a-x bolon or-o-x-d-oo*
 border-INS go.out-EP-VN.NP and go.in-EP-VN.NP-DAT-REFL
passport-aa šalq-uul-a-x xeregtej.
 passport-REFL check-CAUS-EP-VN.NP necessary

‘When you cross the border, you need to get your passports checked’

LT: ‘[At times when you] **go out** and **at** [times when you] **go in** across [the] border, [it is] necessary to let [the immigration officers] check your passports’

- (26) *Xödöö jav-aad xeer xono-x, al’#esvel*
 countryside go-CVB.PFV steppe pass.the.night-VN.NP or
bije#zas-a-x-d-aa noxojn-oos bolgoomžl-ooroj.
 relieve.oneself-EP-VN.NP-DAT-REFL dog-ABL be.careful-TV.OPT

‘In the countryside, be careful of dogs when you stay in the steppe at night or relieve yourself’

LT: ‘After [you] go [to the] countryside, [at times when you] **pass the night** [in the] steppe or **at** [times when you] **relieve yourself**, be careful of dogs’

To summarize, the *-AAR* in [14] *-XAAR* (successive) and [15] *-XAAR* (purposive) as well as the *-D* in [17] *-XAD* (time point) exhibit the same characteristic as the instrumental and dative-locative suffixes: The *-AAR* and *-D* in these three forms appear only in the last-clause verb. Judging by this fact, [14] *-XAAR* (successive) and [15] *-XAAR* (purposive) can reasonably be analyzed into the verbal-nominal suffix for the non-past *-X* and the instrumental case suffix *-AAR*. In a similar way, [17] *-XAD* (time point) is regarded as the verbal-nominal suffix *-X* plus the dative-locative case suffix *-D*. According to the terminology of Ebert (2008) and Janhunen (2012), these three forms are thus quasi(-)converb suffixes. On the other hand, [16] *-XAAR* (comparative) displays a lower degree of internal morphological transparency. However, the notion of dividing it into two suffixes does not seem totally impossible because Example (24) is not completely rejected as ungrammatical, at least by one of the three consultants. Although it remains unclear how [16] *-XAAR* (comparative) should be treated, one possible analysis might be to adopt Janhunen's tripartite classification and consider the form to be a secondary converb suffix.

Because no previous study deals with all four forms, these observations cannot be directly compared to those in the studies in Table 2. However, there are several remarkable discrepancies that can be noted.

Let us first consider Table 2 horizontally. [14] *-XAAR* (successive) is analyzed in a different manner by [I] Hashimoto and Tani (1993) and [L] Bjambadorž (2006) compared to the present analysis: They consider it to be a canonical simplex converb suffix, rather than decomposing it into two suffixes. As for [15] *-XAAR* (purposive), [J] Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996) evidently differ from this article's analysis as well. They regard it as a canonical converb suffix, not as divisible.

Turning to Table 2 vertically, the observation by [J] Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996) differs from the present analysis. They analyze [14] *-XAAR* (successive) into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix and consider [15] *-XAAR* (purposive) to be a canonical converb suffix. In contrast, this article's findings show that there is no difference between the two forms as far as degree of internal morphological transparency is concerned. The analysis by [M] Janhunen (2012) also disagrees with this article's results. He distinguishes [15] *-XAAR* (purposive) from [17] *-XAD* (time point): He classifies the former as a secondary converb suffix, and the latter as a quasiconverb suffix. According to the present analysis, however, both of them are equally analyzed into two suffixes, that is, they both are quasiconverb suffixes.

5. Conclusion and future directions

This article has explored four forms that are considered canonical simplex converb suffixes by some studies but which are divided by others into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix.

In order to estimate the degree of internal morphological transparency of each form, we considered two (or more) coordinated clauses that each involve the form and observed whether or not the apparent case suffix (i.e., *-AAR* or *-D*) is present in the non-last-clause verb(s). As a result, it was confirmed that among the four forms, *-XAAR* (successive), *-XAAR* (purposive), and *-XAD* (time point) are decomposed into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix, whereas *-XAAR* (comparative) exhibits a lower degree of internal morphological transparency than the other three.

Because this investigation only focused on the forms that can apparently be divided into a verbal-nominal suffix and a case suffix, the other “converbs” that can possibly be decomposed into two suffixes remain unexamined. These forms, which include [4] *-SAAR* (progressive), [5] *-VČ* (concessive), [6] *-VAL* (conditional), [10] *-NGAA* (incidental), [11] *-SNAA* (successive), [12] *-MAAŽIN* (preconditional), [13] *-XLAAR* (successive), and [18] *-LGÜJ* (negative), must be investigated in future research.

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Abbreviations

#	boundary in a compound	GEN	genitive
-	affix boundary	HAB	habitual
=	clitic boundary	INS	instrumental
1	first person	IPFV	imperfective
2	second person	LT	literal translation
3	third person	M	masculine
ABL	ablative	MP	modal particle
ACC	accusative	NDS	noun deriving suffix
CAUS	causative	NEG	negative/abessive
COM	comitative	NOM	nominative
COMPL	completive	NP	non-past
COND	conditional	OPT	optative
CVB	converb	PFV	perfective
DAT	dative-locative	PL	plural
EP	epenthesis	PLURIT	pluritative
F	feminine	POSS	possessive

PSN	personal name	TV	terminating verbal
PST	past	VN	verbal nominal
REFL	reflexive possessive	VOL	voluntative
SG	singular		

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