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Titel: A corpus-based examination of double plural pronouns in Tuvan

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Ort: Wiesbaden

Jahr: 2010

PURL: https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?666048797_0014|LOG_0032

A corpus-based examination of double plural pronouns in Tuvan

Vitaly Voinov

In the Tuvan language of south Siberia, certain personal and demonstrative plural pronouns can be marked with an extra plural morpheme. Although cross-linguistically double plurality is used primarily as an honorific device, in Tuvan repluralization can have other functions as well: to ascribe to the referent a special status that is not necessarily related to social deixis, and to characterize the referent as having a greater quantity of constituents than if referred to by a regular plural pronoun. This paper documents repluralization in Tuvan mainly on the basis of tokens of such pronouns in a corpus of Tuvan literature, although the function of these is analyzed in coordination with judgments by native Tuvan speakers.

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1. Introduction

In his comparative study of how languages mark differing degrees of respect or social distance in their pronominal systems, Head (1978: 161) mentions an interesting phenomenon which he calls double plurality or repluralization:

> In some languages, plural pronouns used formerly in polite address of individuals have acquired general usage in address, losing both their earlier social meaning and their original number, only to be repluralized later. The repluralized or new plural form may then come to be used like the original one was earlier: for showing greater respect or social distance than the opposing form … When used in reference to individuals, repluralized forms always show greater respect or social distance than the earlier ones.

The present paper uses a corpus-based approach to document the double plural phenomenon in Tuvan, which was not included in Head's list of languages that exhibit this feature.[1] Tuvan belongs to the northeast branch (Sayan subgroup) of Turkic

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[1] Concrete data on many languages spoken within the Soviet Union were not easily obtainable in the 1970s when Head wrote his article. To my knowledge, the only significant de-

languages and numbers about a quarter of a million speakers in the Russian Federation, mostly within the Republic of Tuva in south Siberia, and up to 30,000 more in Mongolia and China, according to the 2002 census of the Russian Federation and the 16th edition of the Ethnologue. Though double plural pronouns (henceforth, DPPs) occur not infrequently in the Tuvan language, they have not yet received any serious coverage in dictionaries, grammars, or linguistic articles dealing with Tuvan. I hope to begin to fill in this lacuna with this paper.

In documenting the specifics of repluralization in Tuvan, I respond to several of Head's 21 proposed language universals dealing with degrees of respect or social distance in pronominal reference (1978: 190–194). In particular, I attempt to show that the Tuvan DPP data do not fully support his fourth universal. This universal, reflected in the above citation, states that the primary function of DPPs is to indicate greater respect or social distance than that indicated by non-DPPs. I argue that though heightened respect and social distance are the prototypical functions of the Tuvan DPP, there seems to be a more basic function underlying these, namely, an indication of the speaker's marked attitude towards a referent as possessing a special status, and that a non-social function may also exist for certain DPP forms.

In addition, I show that Tuvan fits into Head's typology of languages as a less common language in relation to two processes of pronominal variation. First, Tuvan 2nd and 3rd person DPPs exhibit variation in social meaning for *both* individual and plural referents, in contrast with Head's universal #18, which posits that such processes "occur more commonly in reference to individuals than in reference to more than one person" (1978: 193). Second, for socially marked reference to the addressee, Tuvan allows the use of plural and repluralized proximal demonstrative pronouns, but not the 3rd person plural pronoun or DPP, whereas Head's universal #15 states that "variation between different sorts of third person pronouns is not a common means" for indicating differences in social marking (1978: 192).

An outline of this paper is as follows. Section 2 offers a general discussion of the morphology and semantics of basic Tuvan pronouns and relates my preliminary observations and initial hypotheses concerning the function of the extra plural morpheme in Tuvan DPPs. Section 3 describes the small corpus of Tuvan texts that I compiled to research this question. Section 4 presents findings produced by a corpus analysis of Tuvan DPPs, specifically with regard to the relative frequency and inflectional productivity of DPP forms in comparison to non-DPP forms. Section 5 examines the contexts in which DPP forms are used in Tuvan literature, focusing on their different possible functions in these contexts. Section 6 concludes by summarizing the main findings of the paper, with interspersed suggestions about possible further research on DPPs.

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scription of Tuvan in the English-language linguistic literature at that time was John R. Krueger's *Tuvan Manual,* which did not mention repluralized forms.

2. Tuvan personal pronouns

The Tuvan paradigm for free-standing basic personal pronouns, given in the nominative case, is shown below:

(1)   sg.   pl.
   1   *men*   'I'   *bis*   'we'
   2   *sen*   'you (sg)'   *siler* 'you (pl)'
   3   *ol*   'he/she/it'   *olar*   'they'

At first glance, this looks like a standard six-pronoun system, considered cross-linguistically most common (Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990: 81). Of these six basic pronoun forms, *men, sen, bis* and *siler* also function as person-marking clitics on certain verb forms and verbal elements (see Harrison 2001: 35). The following example illustrates the different position in the sentence for the pro-droppable independent pronouns and the obligatory person-marking clitics (orthographically represented as separate words):

(2)   INDEPENDENT   CLITIC

   (Men)   *avamnï*   *düün*   *körgen*   *men.*
   1s   mother-1s-ACC yesterday   see-PST.II   1s
   'I saw my mother yesterday.'

The first complication for a neat, six pronoun analysis of the pronominal paradigm is presented by the existence of a pluralized form of the 1p pronoun *bis-ter*, used only as an independent pronoun, never as a clitic. The standard Soviet grammar of Tuvan (Isxakov & Pal'mbax 1961: 216) mentions the existence of *bister* in passing, calling it a double plural, inasmuch as the final *s* of *bis* was itself historically a plural morpheme in proto-Turkic (see Róna-Tas 1998: 73). However, it must be noted that *-s* is not a *productive* marker of plurality in modern Tuvan. Anderson & Harrison (1999: 25) observe that in some dialects of Tuvan, *bister* is used as the primary 1p pronoun, almost to the exclusion of *bis*. No linguistic works were found that mention whether the pluralized 1p pronoun exhibits any semantic or pragmatic differences from the basic form *bis*.

Like *bister*, the 2nd and 3rd person plural pronouns *siler* and *olar* were also historically formed by the addition of the plural suffix /LAr/ to an older stratum of pronominal forms (Isxakov 1956: 210–213). The vowel and consonant variations are due to phonological processes and are not relevant to the issue at hand:

(3)   1 p   **bis-LAr*   → *bister*
      2 p   **si-LAr* (or *siz-LAr*)   → *siler*
      3 p   **o-LAr*   → *olar*

It should be noted that while the 1p pronoun *bister* is still morphologically parsable as *bis* + plural suffix, the 2nd and 3rd person plural pronouns are no longer recognized by the average speaker of Tuvan as containing a plural morpheme; an attempt to truncate this element by backformation would produce singular forms that do not exist in modern Tuvan, **si-* from *si(ler)* and **o-* from *o(lar)*. This means that *siler* and *olar* have monomorphemic status in modern Tuvan, even though etymologically they contain a plural morpheme.

As to their semantic scope, the 1p forms *bis* and *bister* both seem to always indicate a true plural group consisting of [I and 1+ persons] or [the group to which I belong]. I have never encountered either a "plural of majesty" or an "editorial we" (in fact denoting a single individual) in natural Tuvan usage. The 2p pronoun *siler* is used both for addressing numerous people (true plural) and as an honorific—Brown & Gilman's (1960) V form—that conveys respect for or distance from a singular referent. On a more formal level of analysis, this honorific is likely grounded in at least two of the sociological factors posited by Brown & Levinson (1987) for determining the level of politeness demanded of interlocutors-relative power and social distance—although this point awaits further research in the Tuvan language. The 3p form *olar* is, to my knowledge, never used to refer to an individual in the same way that 2p *siler* is. Although the singular honorific usage of 3p pronouns does exist among the world's languages, it is somewhat rarer than the similar use of the 2p pronoun (Head 1978: 162–163).

Before moving on, I should mention that the social aspects of pronouns are not monolithic throughout the Tuvan language. For instance, according to anecdotal evidence, speakers of the southeastern dialect in Erzin and villages on the border with Mongolia are more likely to use T/V forms asymmetrically, while speakers of the Todzhin dialect of northeast Tuva are more likely to employ reciprocal T forms. Thus, a Tuvan child in Erzin will usually address either of his parents with *siler*, the V form, and receive *sen*, the T form, focusing on the unequal power relationship, while a Todzhin Tuvan child is more likely to talk to his father or mother using a reciprocal T form, focusing on the intimacy or solidarity of nuclear family relations. A systematic study of these differences remains to be carried out in order to empirically document the ranking of social factors that influence linguistic usage in various spheres of Tuvan society.

2.1. Paradigm for DPPs

The plural suffix /LAr/, which we saw in (3) above to have been productive in forming the plural personal pronouns of Tuvan at an earlier stage of the language's history, has been reapplied by some Tuvan speakers to these pronouns so as to produce a third pronominal series—double plural forms. Double plural marking also occurs with the proximal demonstrative pronoun *bo* 'this one'. This yields a somewhat more complex pronominal paradigm:

(4)		sg.	pl.	DPP
	1	*men*	*bis, bister*	*bisterler*
	2	*sen*	*siler*	*silerler*
	3	*ol*	*olar*	*olarlar*
	DEM	*bo*	*bolar*	*bolarlar*

Although other types of Tuvan pronouns besides personal and proximal demonstrative pronouns can take plural marking, none of these have been found to naturally occur as repluralized forms. For example:

(5) a. *ïndïg-lar* 'such (ones)'   but not   * *ïndïg-lar-lar*
     b. *demgi-ler* 'those (ones)'   but not   * *demgi-ler-ler*

The pronominal system given above reflects speech patterns of Tuvan as spoken in the Republic of Tuva. According to Mawkanuli (1999: 137), the Jungar dialect of Tuvan spoken in China has a slightly different system that distinguishes the 2nd person pronouns more symmetrically along the axis of familiarity/politeness, and does not include a 1st person DPP *bisterler* at all.

(6)			sg.	pl./DPP
	1		*men*	*bis, bister*
	2	familiar	*sen*	*senner*
	2	polite	*siler*	*sileler*
	3		*ol*	*olar, olalar*

Note the more advanced grammaticalization of the forms *sileler* and *olalar*, which have both lost the final *-r* of the first plural suffix /LAr/ so that this segment is even harder to recognize as an original plural morpheme than in standard Tuvan. No indication is given by Mawkanuli (1999) of the existence of repluralized demonstratives in the Jungar dialect. Although it would be interesting to look at how Jungar Tuvan speakers use their DPP forms in comparison to usage by speakers in the Republic of Tuva, this must be left outside of the scope of the present paper due to the very limited amount of Jungar Tuvan language data available.

2.2. Meaning of DPPs

While living in Tuva, I sporadically encountered DPP forms in overheard conversations and printed materials, but, as mentioned above, was unable to find any substantial discussion of their semantic properties in the Tuvan linguistic literature. One Tuvan-Russian dictionary (Tenišev 1968) briefly explains that the demonstrative DPP *bolarlar* indicates a heightened level of politeness or respect (*forma podčjorknutoj vežlivosti ili počitel'nosti*) in 2p reference, while another (Monguš 2003) states that *bolarlar* is used to politely substitute for both *siler* 'you (PL)' and *bo kiži*

'this person', i.e., it is an honorific for either 2nd or 3rd person referents. However, both dictionaries give the same explanations for the corresponding non-DPP demonstrative pronoun *bolar*, and no difference in meaning is proposed between the DPP and non-DPP forms.

The plural morpheme is used as a marker of social meaning in other parts of the Tuvan language as well. Certain pluralized honorific titles, such as the archaic *deergi mïndaagïlar* 'your/their highness', can be used to refer with heightened respect to an individual in either 2nd or 3rd person. Likewise, Anderson and Harrison (1999: 13, fn. ii) observe that double marking of the plural can occur on verbs in certain dialects of Tuvan:

(7) *olar   amda   bibliotekada   olurubušaan   nomčunup   olurlarlar*
    3P   still   library-LOC   sit-CV   read-RFL-CV   AUX-PL-PL
    'They are still sitting in the library reading'

However, it is not certain that this extra plural marking on the verb in example (7) is necessarily social in meaning. Several native speakers even questioned the grammaticality of this utterance as recorded, proposing that Anderson and Harrison misheard the present-future verb form *olur-ar-lar* 'AUX-P/F-PL' as an impossible double plural form **olur-lar-lar* 'AUX-PL-PL'.

Based on these snippets of information in the linguistic literature and on my own inquiry into the meaning and context of use of DPPs among my Tuvan acquaintances, I developed a working hypothesis that the 2nd and 3rd person DPPs *silerler* and *olarlar*, as well as the proximal demonstrative DPP *bolarlar*, function in three primary ways (we will return to 1st person *bisterler* later):

i. Extrarespectful singular honorific: Indicates an even higher level of politeness or respect for a singular referent than the corresponding non-DPP form. An honorific function for the plural morpheme is reported in at least two other Turkic languages, Turkish (Zeyrek 2001: 60) and Uzbek (Ken Keyes, p.c.),[2] as well as in unrelated languages such as Tamil with its pluralized 'super-V' form (Agesthialingom 1967: 46; Brown & Levinson 1987: 184). To borrow Brown and Levinson's comment about Tamil honorifics, it seems that in Tuvan as well, "it is the plurality itself that is the 'honorific' feature" (1987: 200).

ii. Plural honorific: Indicates politeness or respect for a group of people to whom reference is made. This is a somewhat interesting function because, as mentioned in the introduction to this paper, it is fairly rare among the world's languages to find the same honorific form applied to both individuals and groups of people, according to Head (1978: 193).

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[2]   Ken Keyes (p.c.) offered the following example of a polite 3rd person reference to a woman using a plural suffix in Uzbek: *Nazokat xonim bor mïlar?* 'Is Mrs. Nazokat here?' (lit. 'Are Mrs. Nazokat here?')

iii. Quantity: One young Tuvan man from the village of Kungurtug (southeast Tuva) told me that DPP forms like *olarlar* can also indicate that there is a particularly large number of individuals in the group constituting the referent, without any connotation of heightened respect or politeness. This was a somewhat unexpected explanation for me, and when I questioned other native speakers about this proposed function, no one else could confirm it. If this reading of the DPP could be demonstrated, it would constitute a non-social meaning quite separate from the other two proposed meanings.

The situation with the 1st person DPP *bisterler* was somewhat different. Though the existence of this form is mentioned in the standard Soviet grammar of Tuvan (Isxakov & Pal'mbax 1961: 216) and I seemed to remember having encountered this form a few times in the wild, I was not at all sure as to its usage. Moreover, several Tuvan acquaintances whom I asked about *bisterler* could tell me nothing about it. Some said that they had never encountered this form before, while some responded that they had heard others using it, but never used it themselves. One writer (Nikolai Kuular, p.c.) said that this sounds like a form that aristocrats, or other people who have a high opinion of themselves, might use in self-reference. No one could tell me whether or not *bisterler* was limited only to certain dialects. Since, as noted above, 1p *bis* and *bister* are never used of individuals, I expected that this would also hold true for the DPP *bisterler*. The main uncertainty had to do with the function of this pronoun: does it indicate heightened self-respect toward a group of 1st person referents (Plural honorific reading)? Or is it rather used to refer to a large number of people comprising the 1p group (Quantity reading)? Or is some other factor involved? These are some of the key questions to which I wanted to find answers.

When I checked my working hypothesis of the functions of DPPs with my primary Tuvan consultant (a linguist by training), she responded that the 3p *olarlar* indicated to her that there was a greater distance between the speaker and the referent than when *olar* was used as a referring expression, but not necessarily greater respect. She thereby made a distinction between the social deictic categories of distance and respect. A similar distinction is noted by Reesink (1987: 57) about the use of the 2P pronoun in the Usan language of Papua New Guinea: "Social distance as a feature of plural address or reference to an individual may be more appropriate than respect". However, my consultant continued that, in her view, the Tuvan DPP does not necessarily mark either heightened distance or politeness *per se*, but rather indicates any sort of marked attitude (my translation of the Russian phrase *osoboje otnoshenie* that was used in our discussion) that the speaker might have towards the referent, whether positive or negative.

Even though *in vacuo* usage judgments by native speakers such as the ones offered by my Tuvan consultants are often very insightful, what is ultimately needed to confirm or qualify these judgments is a study of linguistic data occurring in natural contexts. I therefore decided to further my research of Tuvan DPPs by examining occurrences of them in an electronic corpus of Tuvan texts. The design and implementation of this corpus is described in the next section.

3. Designing the corpus

As Levinson (1983: 63) points out, deictic systems operate on "an essential assumption of that basic face-to-face conversational context in which all humans acquire language". I therefore assumed that the ideal type of language data to examine to find numerous tokens of DPPs would be a corpus of natural spoken Tuvan conversations; deictic issues related to politeness, respect, solidarity, etc., could be expected to frequently surface in live interaction between people. However, since no such corpus yet exists for the Tuvan language, and producing one would be exceedingly work-intensive and time-consuming, I decided to turn to written Tuvan materials that approximate real-life social situations. Two text-types that fit this criterion are plays and novels, because these genres typically make heavy use of conversation between characters. Because of this, previous language researchers (for instance, Brown & Gilman (1960)), have successfully used plays or novels as a source of data for studying pronominal usage.

A fairly large number of original (i.e., not translated) novels and plays have been published in the Tuvan language since its orthography was first developed by Soviet linguists in 1930. Even though such material is invented, we can reasonably expect that the authors structured the conversations according to the speech norms accepted by most native speakers of the language. At the same time, it is also true that authors may unconsciously skew their presentation of the linguistic forms used in actual conversation. For example, Stvan (2006) describes such skewing of spoken discourse markers in written English texts, while Srinarawat (2005) mentions a similar distortion in the portrayed usage of indirect speech in Thai novels. Nonetheless, if the author is an acknowledged master of the written word in Tuvan society, we should generally expect to see forms occurring in the text that Tuvan speakers at least *believe* to be representative of their conversation. Until a corpus of spoken Tuvan discourse can be developed, a literary corpus is probably the best source of data available for dealing with linguistic issues such as the one raised by this paper.

3.1. Texts included in the corpus

The following table presents the nine Tuvan literary texts that made up my small corpus (a brief description of each text is provided in Appendix A). Five of these texts were obtained directly from their authors or publishers as computer files, while the remaining four were scanned and recognized using an OCR software package called ABBYY FineReader Pro v.9.0.

Table 1: Texts in Tuvan corpus

Title	Genre	Wordcount
Aŋgïr-ool	novel	129,849
Arzïlaŋ Küderek (chs. 1–10)	fictionalized biography	18,539
Buyan Badïrgï (pp. 85–123)	fictionalized biography	10,459
Čirgilčinner	play	8,998
Döngür-ool	play	9,890
Kežik-kïs	novel	36,801
Kïm sen, Sübedei	play	17,503
Tanaa-Xerel	children's novel	12,492
Yozulug er	play	5,969

The total wordcount of the corpus was 250,500 tokens (31,982 word types), as calculated by the concordancing software package AntConc. Five of the works were prose, while four were plays. All were written by professional Tuvan authors. Eight were written for an adult audience and one was intended primarily for children. Seven of the works were composed in the late 20th or early 21st century, while *Aŋgïr-ool* and *Döngür-ool* were written in the mid-20th century. These latter two works were included in the corpus as an attempt to get a bit of diachronic perspective on the use of DPPs.

Since the wordcount includes some extratextual mark-up added to the files, it is reliable only for gauging the relative lengths of the constituent texts. As is visible from the widely divergent wordcounts of these texts (i.e. almost 130,000 tokens in *Aŋgïr-ool* but only 6,000 in *Yozulug er*), I did not consider it crucial to make the constituent texts proportional in size. What was more relevant for this study was to find as many tokens of the DPPs as possible. I thus used the texts that were available to me without worrying about statistical distribution.

3.2. Annotation

The only part-of-speech annotation that was vital for me to do in order to facilitate an examination of Tuvan DPPs was such that would distinguish the 1st and 2nd person-marking clitics *bis* and *siler* from the independent pronouns of the same form in the bare nominative case (as discussed in section 2). The rationale behind this was that since the pronominal forms *bister, bisterler, silerler, olarlar*, and *bolarlar* can never occur as person-marking clitics, their distribution and function should be compared only to that of the freestanding plural pronouns *bis, siler,* and *olar*, not to the clitic uses of *bis* and *siler* (*olar* never appears as a clitic). I therefore added special tags to clitic uses of *bis* and *siler* in my corpus texts in order to separate them out, thereby ensuring that they played no part in the data analysis. Similar tags could be added to the clitic uses of *men* and *sen*, but this was not necessary to do at this

point because these pronouns do not have corresponding DPP forms that could be compared with non-DPP forms.

4. Frequency and productivity of DPPs in the corpus

Once my textual corpus was compiled and annotated, I produced a concordance of all tokens of the pronouns *bis, bister, bisterler, siler, silerler, olar, olarlar, bolar* and *bolarlar* in the corpus. This section describes what an analysis of these DPP tokens showed in terms of their frequency and inflectional productivity.

4.1. Relative frequency of DPP lemmas

Because Tuvan nominal roots can take numerous suffixes, including six case endings (besides the bare nominative), the plural ending, possessive markers, and other cliticized morphemes, I decided to lemmatize[3] each of these nine pronouns in Ant-Conc. For each of the pronouns, I inputted all of the suffixed forms that showed up in the AntConc wordlist into a separate file that allowed them to be counted together with their root forms, and ran the wordlist in AntConc again. The lemma figures for the plural and DPP forms are shown in the table below:

Table 2: Lemma frequencies of plural pronouns versus DPPs

	1st person	2nd person	3rd person	Demonstrative
plural	*bis*: 1087	*siler*: 585	*olar*: 733	*bolar*: 81
	bister: 68			
DPP	*bisterler*: 0	*silerler*: 23	*olarlar*: 24	*bolarlar*: 7

The general gist of the relative frequencies of these pronouns is clear. Each of the available DPP lemmas occurs significantly less frequently than its non-DPP counterpart. This paucity of DPPs is what one would expect of them as more marked forms of deixis. We can also note that the pluralized form *bister* occurs much less frequently than the basic form *bis*. This indicates that 1p *bister* (not the 1st person DPP *bisterler* as in my original hypothesis) is patterning similarly to the 2nd and 3rd person DPPs in terms of markedness. I was disappointed but intrigued to find that there was not a single token of the 1st person DPP *bisterler* in my entire corpus of a quarter million words. This means that I will have to continue building up my corpus to continue the search for this elusive pronoun. It may also be necessary to look in a different text type to find tokens of *bisterler*.

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[3]   In corpus linguistics, a lemma is defined as the basic form of a word together with all of its inflectional forms; for example, in English, 'eats', 'eating', and 'ate' all belong to the lemma EAT.

Looking only at the texts *Aŋgïr-ool* and *Döngür-ool*, which were written several decades before the other seven texts in my corpus, I found very few tokens of any DPP. Even though these two texts constitute more than half of the word tokens in the corpus (with *Aŋgïr-ool* providing the lion's share, see Table 1 above), they provided only two tokens of *silerler* and one of *bolarlar*. This may indicate that DPPs have become more widespread in Tuvan speech only in the past several generations. An alternative interpretation is that DPPs were present in speech back then as well, but were not considered literary enough to be included in books. However, this is not very likely, since the distinction between literary and non-literary forms in Tuvan does not seem to have yet been rigid at that early stage in the history of Tuvan literature.

4.2. Inflectional productivity of DPPs

Another interesting finding in my corpus is that DPPs have a restricted inflectional productivity in comparison to non-DPPs, as can be seen in the following table.

Table 3: Number of inflectional forms occurring with plural pronouns versus DPPs

	1st person	2nd person	3rd person	Demonstrative
plural	*bis*: 8	*siler*: 11	*olar*: 14	*bolar*: 10
	bister: 6			
DPP	*bisterler*: 0	*silerler*: 4	*olarlar*: 4	*bolarlar*: 4

Even though the same wide array of inflectional forms (see 4.1) is available in the Tuvan language for DPPs as for non-DPPs, and no ungrammaticality would be constituted by using a DPP with any of these suffixes, in practice the DPPs *silerler, olarlar,* and *bolarlar* are found in only the four most frequently-occurring forms in my corpus: the nominative, genitive, accusative and dative case. Other inflectional forms which occurred widely with plural pronouns in the corpus, such as the ablative case (e.g. *bis-ten* 'from us') or possessed forms (e.g. *bo-lar-ïm* 'these ones of mine'), were altogether absent from DPPs.

In this respect, however, the pluralized 1st person pronoun *bister* patterns differently from the DPPs, exhibiting almost as many different inflectional forms (6 forms) as the basic 1p *bis* (8 forms). A tentative conclusion about *bister* that can be drawn from its lemma frequency and inflectional productivity is that this pronoun is currently in transition between status as a semi-DPP and status as the basic form of the independent 1p pronoun. This accords well with Anderson and Harrison's (1999: 25) observation, already mentioned in 2.0, that in certain dialects of Tuvan, *bister* has almost completely replaced *bis* as the basic independent 1p pronoun.

5. Contexts and functions of different DPPs

In this section, I provide some textual examples from the Tuvan corpus to illustrate the interplay of referential and social meanings encoded by the DPPs. In keeping with my interest in Head's (1978) universals, I focus my attention on the issue of referential number (i.e. singular or plural referents) and function (respect, social distance, or something else, like institutional formality or an otherwise marked attitude).

5.1. *Silerler*

Upon examining the distribution of the DPPs, I was surprised to find that the vast majority of tokens in my corpus occur in a single work, an excerpt from the semi-fictional (or "novelized") biography *Buyan Badïrgï*. Of the 23 corpus tokens of the 2nd person DPP *silerler*, nineteen (82.6%) occurred in this work, even though this text constitutes only 4.2% of the entire corpus by wordcount. Interestingly, the pronoun *siler* is used only once as a freestanding pronoun in this excerpt of *Buyan Badïrgï*.

A typical example of this usage is shown in the following example, in which a Soviet emissary to Tuva is addressing Buyan Badïrgï (an important early 20th century Tuvan political leader):

(8) *Ol*   *xuralga*   **silerlerni**   *čalap*   *keldim.*
     that   council-DAT   2DPP-ACC   invite-CV   come-PST.I-1s
     'I have come to invite **you** [DPP] to that council.' (Buyan 100)

In the corpus, the referent of *silerler* is singular in all cases but one, in which the DPP is used to refer to a group of Soviet emissaries to Tuva:

(9) *Buyan-Badïrgï*   *ïrak*   *čerden*   *kelgen*   *orus*   *kižilerni*
     B.   far   land-ABL   come-PST.II   Russian   person-PL-ACC

     uzun   *čugaanïŋ*   *soonda*   *dïštandïrar*   *bodaan:*   *"Daštïn ögge alïŋar*
     long   talk-GEN   after   rest-CAU-P/F   think-PST.II   outside yurt-DAT

     xonup   *ïrak*   *čerden*   *kelgen*   *ulus*   *mogaan*
     spend.night-CV AUX-2p   far   land-ABL   come-PST.ïï   people   tire-PST.ïï

     boor   *siler.*   **Silerlerge**   *tuskay*   *ögnü*   *bolgaš.*   *a'š-čemni*
     PSB-P/F   2p   2DPP-DAT   separate   yurt-ACC   and   food-ACC

     beletkep kaan ... "
     prepare-CV AUX-PST.ïï

     'Buyan Badïrgï decided to allow the Russians, who had come from far away, to rest after their long conversation: "Spend the night in the yurt outside. Having come from far away, you are probably exhausted. A separate yurt and food have been prepared for **you** [DPP] ... " (Buyan 101–102)

In the above example, Buyan Badïrgï uses *silerler* to address his social equals, the Soviet emissaries. In other passages, he uses the same form to address his subordinates (a lower level functionary and a Buddhist monk), while these subordinates reciprocally address him with *silerler* and usually an honorific title, such as *xayïraatï* 'sir, lord'. This function of *silerler* may therefore be interpreted as having mainly to do with institutional formality, not social distance or unequal power relations.

It is interesting that all nineteen occurrences of *silerler* in this novel are spoken either to Buyan Badïrgï or by him. This is in keeping with Ide's (2005: 61–62) observation, taken from Japanese society, about the correlation between appropriate honorific use and the social status of the speaker: "The higher the social status of the speaker, the more elaborate the linguistic forms they are likely to use ... The elaborate use of high honorifics indexes the features of the category of high status persons."

There are no cases in *Buyan Badïrgï* of *silerler* being used with a negative connotation, although this does occur in the play *Döngür-ool*, where the protagonist is angrily rebuking a subordinate, first using a 2s form of address, then switching to *silerler* in a seemingly ironic use of the DPP.

(10) *Baar   čeriŋge   bar! **Silerler-** bile mïnčap   oynap   turar*
     go-P/Fplace-2s-DAT go   2DPP   with do.thus-CV play-CV AUX-P/F

     šöleen   čok, medee-xayaažok ulug ažïldïg   kiži   men.
     leisure   NEX   tremendously   large work-ADJ   person 1s

     'Go where you [sg] need to go! I don't have time to play around with **the likes of you** [DPP], I have a lot of important work to do.' (Döngür-ool 135)

As Ide (2005: 57) notes for Japanese, "if a high honorific is chosen inappropriately, that is in a context where a less polite honorific form is expected, it could imply 'irony', 'alienation', or any other number of other meanings". A similar use of *silerler* can be found in *Kežik-kïs* (p. 77), where a young woman is imagining herself reproving a pair of elderly men whose unethical behavior disgusts her. Because they are older than her, the young woman at first addresses them politely with the fictive kin term *kïrgan ačaylar* 'grandfathers', but then begins railing against their behavior. She cannot contain her emotion and addresses them once as *silerler*, which cannot be anything but ironic in this context.

5.2. *Olarlar*

Of the 24 tokens of 3rd person DPP *olarlar* in my corpus, 23 occurred in *Buyan Badïrgï* and one in *Kežik-kïs*. Only six of these 24 uses (25%) occur in depicted conversation, whereas sixteen occur in the authors' descriptions of referents in their

texts, and two in informants' recollections about Buyan Badïrgï and his family.[4] This distribution goes against my original expectation that conversation would be the most likely text genre for socially marked pronouns to occur, unless written texts are seen as a form of conversation between the author and the reader.

The following table breaks down the entities referred to with *olarlar* by number and proposed function.

Table 4: Referents of olarlar *in Tuvan corpus*

singular	8	Honorific
plural	16	12 Honorific / 4 Quantity

Only eight of the 24 tokens of *olarlar* (33.3%) are used in honorific reference to a single individual. Most frequently, this is Buyan Badïrgï himself, as in the following instance:

(11) *Buyan-Badïrgïnï   čüge   boolap   šiitkenin   bilbes   men.*
       B.   why   shoot-cv condemn-3-ACC   know-NEG   1s

       Bistiŋ   čerge   olarlarnïŋ   adïn   bezin   adaarï
       1p-GEN   land-DAT 3DPP-GEN   name-3-ACC even   name-P/F-3

       xoruglug   turgan   čüve.
       forbidden   be-PST.II   DISC

       'I don't know why Buyan Badïrgï was condemned and shot. It was forbidden to even mention **his** [DPP 'their'] name in our land.' (Buyan 104)

However, other important individuals (Buyan Badïrgï's wife, his nobleman father, the Russian tsar, and a Soviet emissary) are each referred to with *olarlar* in the corpus as well.

The other sixteen tokens of *olarlar* in the corpus are used to refer to a plural entity. Twelve of these occurrences appear to be employing the DPP as a plural honorific. In the following example of this function, the DPP is used to refer to the two main political leaders of Tuva after it became a protectorate of Russia:

(12) *tïva   čonnuŋ   ulug dargalarï   ambïŋ noyan   Kombu-Doržu*
       Tuvan   people-GEN   great boss-PL-3   A.   lord   K.

       bile   güŋ   noyan   Buyan-Badïrgï   apargannar.   öske
       and   G.   lord   B.   become-PST.ïï-PL other

---

[4] It is not clear how much the author of *Buyan Badïrgï* reworded his informants' recollections to fit his own writing style.

kožuunnarnïŋ	*darga*	*düžümetteri*	***olarlarnï***	*xündüleer*
district-PL-GEN	boss	functionary-PL-3	3DPP-ACC	honor-P/F

bolgaš	***olarlarga***	*čagïrtï*	*bergenner.*
and	3DPP-DAT	submit-CV	BEN-PST.II-PL

'... the Ambïng-lord Kombu-Dorzhu and Güng-lord Buyan Badïrgï became the foremost leaders of the Tuvan people. The leading functionaries of the other administrative districts showed **them** [DPP] honor and submitted to **them** [DPP].' (Buyan 85)

Some of the other plural entities referred to with *olarlar* according to this function are Buyan Badïrgï and another of his associates, a couple of personages from Tuvan mythical history, and the Soviet-era political leaders who were responsible for executing Buyan Badïrgï. In light of the author's clear allegiance to Buyan Badïrgï, the last occurrence (p. 107) is hard to interpret as being motivated in any way by the author's personal respect for these men; rather, it seems that he is linguistically marking them as being of greater than usual significance. None of these plural uses can have the Quantity reading proposed in section 2.2, since the contexts demonstrate that only a small number of people (frequently a pair) is referred to. Therefore, it must be that *olarlar* is used in these cases instead of *olar* specifically as a plural honorific. The existence of this usage in Tuvan can be taken as a corrective to Head's (1978: 163) statement that among the world's languages 3rd person honorifics are not used to refer to more than one person.

In the remaining four occurrences of *olarlar* with a plural referent, the use of the DPP does not seem to be conveying any social meaning such as politeness, respect, or institutional formality. Rather, it appears to have something to do with the numerical size of the group involved, as per the Quantity usage. In the following examples of this proposed function, the DPPs are used to refer to a squadron of soldiers (13) and to a flock of mountain goats (14):

(13)
Saf'yanovtu	*kïzïl*	*šerigler*	*üdep*	*čoruur,*	***olarlarnïŋ***
S. -ACC	red	soldier-PL	accompany-CV	go-P/F	3DPP-GEN

arazïnda	*Nepomnyashchiy*	*baza*	*bar*	*dižir*	*turgan.*
among-3-LOC	N.	also EX		say-P/F	be-PST.II

'Safyanov was accompanied by Red soldiers, and it was said that Nepomnyashchiy was among **them** [DPP].' (Buyan 96)

(14)
Kodan	*te, čuŋmalar*	*bolza,*	*baza-la*	*bir*	*baštïŋnïg*	*bolur,*	*ol*
flock	mountain.goat-PL	TOP	also-EM	one	leader-ADJ	be-P/F	that

baštïŋnïŋ	*aayïndan*	*olarlar*	*ertpes*	*bolur.*
leader-GEN	control-3-ABL	3DPP	pass-NEG	be-P/F

'As far as a flock of mountain goats is concerned, they too have a leader and **they** [DPP] submit to that leader's will.' (Buyan 95)

An honorific reading of *olarlar* in these two examples seems highly unlikely, especially in reference to the flock of mountain goats. The other two tokens of *olarlar* in my corpus that could be interpreted as having the Quantity reading are used to refer to a contingent of merchants, travelers, and functionaries (Buyan 88), and the various evildoers in the world (Kežik-kïs 76). In these cases as well, there seems to be no contextual support for an honorific reading of the DPP.

Upon checking the validity of the Quantity interpretation of *olarlar* in these four cases with two native Tuvan speakers, however, I received differing explanations of the pronoun's function. One of my consultants said that the use of *olarlar* was completely infelicitous in all four passages, and that these must have just been poorly edited texts. In other conversations, this speaker indicated that for him DPP forms can properly have only a respect reading. My other consultant also did not endorse the Quantity interpretation as stated above (i.e., indicating that an especially large number of individuals makes up the group), but rather proposed a related non-social meaning of the DPP in these cases. Specifically, she understood the repluralization as signaling that the individuals constituting the plural referent *olarlar* were not a single, unified group, but rather consisted of subgroups with their own internal boundaries. This can be called an internal plurality reading. An attempt to graphically schematize this interpretation is offered below (with the symbol x representing individual members of the group):

Figure 1: Proposed internal plurality distinction between *olar* and *olarlar*

3p *olar*   3 DPP *olarlar*
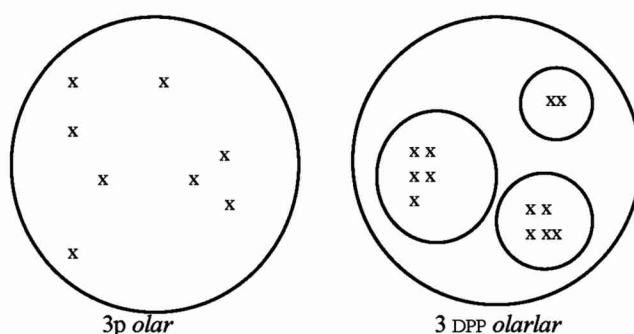
The internal plurality interpretation seems to fit well with the four non-honorific cases of *olarlar* in the corpus. At the same time, it must be admitted that no such use was found for the 2nd person DPP *silerler*, nor for the demonstrative DPP *bolarlar* (see below), and that we so far have no plausible explanation for the other consultant's total lack of acceptance of this as a possible meaning of the DPP.

Besides the aforementioned flock of mountain goats, there is one other non-human referent of *olarlar* in my corpus. In the context of this occurrence, a Buddhist monk is bringing a set of confiscated official seals to Buyan Badïrgï's attention:

(14) *Ol   deerge Mančï   törezinïŋ   üezinde   bolgaš*
     3s   TOP   Manchurian period-3-GEN   time-3-LOC and

     mool   dïlda   sösteri   parlattïngan   taŋmalar   bolgay,
     Mongolian language   word-PL-3 publish-PAS-PST.II seal-PL   DISC

     olarlarnï   *silerler tergiin   bilir   bolgay siler, xayïraatï.*
     3DPP-ACC   2DPP   very well know-P/F   DISC   2p   master

     'These are the seals used for publishing decrees in the Mongolian language dur-
     ing the Manchurian era; you [2 DPP] know **them** [3 DPP] very well, master.'
     (Buyan 122)

The context makes it clear that the seals referred to are plural but not numerous. It seems likely that they are designated with the honorific DPP because they are important official symbols of Tuvan political self-determination, and are thus deemed worthy of marked pronominal reference. An alternate explanation is that *olarlar* here functions as an addressee honorific to Buyan Badïrgï, in addition to the 2nd person DPP *silerler* and the honorific title *xayïraatï* 'master'. But this interpretation is less likely, inasmuch as DPPs are not found to function as addressee honorifics anywhere else in my corpus.[5] This usage supports my consultant's hesitance to inter-pet the primary meaning of DPP forms as social distance; since these seals are inanimate objects, social distance between them and a speaker or addressee cannot be a factor that determines their linguistic encoding. The marked attitude explanation, however, makes perfect sense here; the speaker recognizes that the seals possess a special status in the eyes of the Tuvan nation.

5.3. *Bolarlar*

The proximal demonstrative DPP *bolarlar* occurs seven times in my corpus, with the more basic plural form *bolar* occurring 81 times. As mentioned in 2.2, although the existence of *bolarlar* is mentioned in Tuvan dictionaries, its function is not in any way differentiated from its non-DPP counterpart in these works. In the corpus, *bolarlar* is used as a referring expression for both singular referents (16) and plural referents (17):

(16) *Ča,   toolču   am   tavaar   bïdaalap   alzïn,   ooŋ   soonda*
     OK   storyteller now   quietly   eat-soup-CV AUX-JU   3s-GEN   after

     bolarlarnïŋ   *toolun   dïŋnaar bis.*
     DEM.DPP-GEN   story-3-ACC   hear-P/F 1p

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5   According to Nevala (2004: 2130), Comrie (1976) points out that V forms are in fact referential honorifics, not addressee honorifics, inasmuch as "it is possible to show politeness to the addressee only if he/she is referred to in the sentence itself, i.e., when the addressee is the referent."

'OK, let the storyteller eat his soup in peace, then we will hear **his** [DPP 'these ones''] story'(Aŋgïr-ool 134)

(17) ***Bolarlarnï***   *köörümge,*   *bo* *čer* *uluzu*   *eves-daa*   *iškaš,*

     DEM.DPP-ACC   see-1S-DAT   this land people-3   NEG-EM like

     idik-xeviŋer-daa   *bistiinge*   *dömeyleśpes.*

     clothing-2P-EM   1P-ADJ-DAT resemble-NEG-P/F

     'By **your** appearance (lit. when I look at **these ones** [DPP]), you are not like the people of this land, and your (pl) clothing does not resemble ours' (Tanaa 28)

In the above examples, we also see that *bolarlar* can substitute for either 3rd or 2nd person, as already noted in 2.2. In this, it differs from the 3rd person personal pronoun *olarlar*, which in my corpus never substitutes for the 2nd person, i.e., it is never used to refer to the person or people being addressed.

Based on the seven tokens of *bolarlar* in my corpus, its social meaning seems fairly close to the definitions proposed by the Tuvan dictionaries. Respect or awe seem to figure prominently in the speakers' minds in six of the cases, in which the referents are a noble lord (Arzïlaŋ 70), Buyan Badïrgï's childhood friend (Buyan 118), a respected storyteller (Aŋgïr-ool 134; example 16 above), and a group of children from another world who astound the speaker with their otherness (Tanaa 28, 34, 38; example 17 above). In the seventh case (Kežik-kïs 25), the referent is a notorious drug dealer and his entourage. Though politeness or respect is unlikely to be intended in this case by the speaker (another drug dealer), awe of the referent's viciousness does appear to be prominent in the speaker's mind.

If my hypothesis that DPPs can function as extrarespectful honorifics is correct, then presumably the degree to which this is indicated by the double plural marking of *bolarlar* is greater than that of the corresponding non-DPP form *bolar*. However, such a judgment cannot be obtained by a corpus analysis; it is necessary to get a significant sample of native speaker judgments in order to test this hypothesis, which is also left for future research.

5.4. *Bister*

As we saw in Table 2 above, *bister* occurs 68 times as compared to 1087 tokens of *bis* as an independent pronoun, putting it in the same general frequency range as DPPs for the 2nd and 3rd persons. However, it is difficult to deduce from the tokens in this corpus the specific nature of the semantic or referential difference between *bis* and *bister*.[6] In a number of passages, *bister* is used to refer to the Tuvan nation as

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[6]   An anonymous reviewer's suggestion that the difference might be one between inclusive and exclusive reference does not seem likely, inasmuch as *bis* and *bister* frequently co-occur in a single utterance as referring expressions for the same referent.

a whole. In one passage, the female speaker refers to women in general as *bister* (Kežik-kïs 47) Some other referents are the Communist party, a family unit, and the older generation in contrast to the younger generation. Only one token was found in which there may be a connotation of heightened self-respect, that of a local Communist party boss referring to himself and his comrades as *bisterni, xündülüg baštïŋchïlarnï* 'us, the honorable leaders' (Döngür-ool 145), although it is not clear whether the plurality of the pronoun has anything to do with this social meaning.

6. Conclusion

This corpus analysis of Tuvan double plural pronouns has shown us that the 1st person DPP *bisterler* is much rarer than its 2nd and 3rd person counterparts. As for the 1p form *bister*, although it patterns with the 2nd and 3rd person DPPs *silerler* and *olarlar* in terms of relative frequency, it fails to do so in regards to a limitation on inflectional forms. This may be taken as an indication of *bister*'s transitional status in the Tuvan pronominal system as a form that is gradually coming to occupy the position of the basic 1p pronoun. No uses of *bister* were found with a single referent, as predicted in section 2. The contexts in which *bister* occurs indicate that it frequently refers to well-defined groups of people that are not limited to those in the immediate vicinity of the speaker. Heightened respect for the referent (i.e., self-adulation) was not found to be a defining semantic property for *bister*. More corpus research on the difference between *bis* and *bister* is definitely required, and a larger corpus of Tuvan texts is needed to find tokens of the DPP *bisterler*, if this form actually exists and Isxakov and Palm'bax's (1961) grammar of Tuvan was not simply mistaken about its existence (as suggested by Tuvan author Eduard Mižit, p.c.). If this DPP form does exist in standard Tuvan, then the absence of an analogous 1st person DPP form in the pronominal paradigm of Jungar Tuvan may be taken as an indication that *bisterler* developed in standard Tuvan only after its split from Jungar Tuvan.

Most of the tokens of the 2nd person DPP *silerler* came from a single text (*Buyan Badïrgï*), though one token of *silerler* in *Döngür-ool* (written in 1938) demonstrates that the DPP usage is not a new phenomenon in Tuvan. It is not clear why exactly the DPP tokens are concentrated in a single work in my corpus. *Silerler* was found to refer almost always to a singular referent with a positive connotation. No tokens were discovered that encoded a large numerical constituency or plurality of subgroups in the referent; *silerler* never had the proposed Quantity or Internal Plurality readings in this corpus of texts. In most cases in *Buyan Badïrgï*, the 2nd person DPP could be interpreted as an instantiation of institutional formality, i.e., *silerler* may have been (or was at least believed by the author of *Buyan Badïrgï* to have been) the proper form for high-ranking Tuvan functionaries in the pre-Soviet period to use in discourse related to their official capacity. Although the vast majority of *silerler* tokens encode a high level of positive deference, a few with negative connotations were discovered in the corpus as well.

Like *silerler,* the 3rd person DPP *olarlar* occurred almost exclusively in a single text, *Buyan Badïrgï,* but the majority of its uses came from the voice of the author himself, not his characters, contrary to my initial expectation. Several tokens of *olarlar* could not be interpreted as conveying extra respect for their referents and seemed rather to mark the numerical Quantity of the referents. However, this Quantity reading may have more to do with an internal plurality of subgroups making up the referent group, as opposed to merely indicating a large number as proposed in my original hypothesis about the Quantity function. Inasmuch as this non-social function was not universally recognized by native speakers of Tuvan, and, moreover, never manifested itself outside of the 3rd person DPP, more research definitely needs to be done with a broad base of native speakers before any final conclusions can be drawn as to the validity of this proposed function in Tuvan. Several tokens of *olarlar* were also discovered that refer to non-human entities, for which respect or social distance cannot be fitting parameters of referential meaning. These findings tentatively support the proposal that DPPs may mark something other than respect or social distance in Tuvan. Head's (1978) cross-linguistic definition of the function of repluralization may therefore need to be somewhat refined, at least as far as the Tuvan language is concerned. It would be interesting to re-examine other languages with DPPs to learn whether they too may be using the extra plural morpheme with functions other than that of marking respect or distance.

The proximal demonstrative DPP *bolarlar* was found to function very similarly to how it is described as functioning in Tuvan dictionaries—it usually encodes heightened respect for its referents, both 2nd and 3rd person. No clearly negative uses of *bolarlar* were found that could confirm the marked attitude interpretation of the extra plural morpheme as with the other DPPs; however, this omission may be due to the relative rarity of tokens of *bolarlar* in my small corpus.

There were a few tokens of the 2nd and 3rd person DPP forms *silerler* and *olarlar* that still did not fit easily into any of the categories of meaning proposed in this paper. Continuing to expand the Tuvan corpus and analyzing more tokens of the 'residue' sort may eventually lead me to propose another general category of DPP function into which these tokens might fit better. Hopefully, this and other future research will shed greater light on the exact nuance(s) that the extra plural morpheme conveys in Tuvan double plural pronouns.

Appendix A: A brief description of texts included in my Tuvan corpus

1) *Aŋgïr-oolduŋ toožuzu* by Stepan Sarïg-ool (vol. 1: 1961, vol. 2: 1966), a classic semi-autobiographical novel dealing with many facets of the Tuvan way of life.

2) *Arzïlaŋ Küderek,* vol. 2, by Irgit Badra (2005), the second volume of a fictionalized biography of the author's grandfather, a famous Tuvan wrestler who lived at the turn of the 20th century. Though the general chronological outline of the non-fictional protagonist's life forms the main story line of the book, the details (such as

numerous conversations between the characters) are reconstructed by the author. Only chapters 1–10 were included in my corpus.

3) *Buyan Badïrgï* by Mongush Kenin-Lopsan (2000), biography of an early 20th century Tuvan political leader. Though dependent on documented historical sources, it contains many fictionalized elements, notably the reported conversations, which the author could not himself have heard. I selected pp. 85–123 for my corpus because a quick surface examination showed these pages in particular to include many conversations between characters.

4) *Čirgilčinner* by Eduard Mižit (mid-1990s), three one-act plays with a common thematic thread running through them.

5) *Döngür-ool* by Salčak Toka (1938), a Soviet-era propagandistic play.

6) *Kežik-kïs* by Eduard Doŋgak (2010), a novel about the grim realities of life in the modern-day Republic of Tuva.

7) *Kïm sen, Sübedei maadïr?* by Eduard Mižit (2000), a historical play about Sübedei, one of Genghis Khan's generals.

8) *Tanaa-Xereldiŋ čurtunda* by Nikolai Kuular (2004), a children's novel about the adventures of a young boy and his friends in a magical land.

9) *Yozulug er* by Nikolai Kuular (1988), a play about relationships among Tuvan college students.

Acknowledgments

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Abbreviations

ABL	ablative case	DISC	discourse particle	P/F	present/future or
ACC	accusative case	DPP	double plural pronoun		gnomic tense
ADJ	adjectivizer	EM	emphatic	PL	plural
AUX	auxiliary verb	EX	existential	PSB	possibilitative
BEN	benefactive auxiliary	GEN	genitive case		auxiliary
CAU	causative	JU	jussive	PST.I	definite past tense
CV	converb	LOC	locative case	PST.II	indefinite past tense
DAT	dative case	NEG	negative	RFL	reflexive
DEM	demonstrative	NEX	negative existential	TOP	topicalizer