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# Mongolic Perspectives on Bilingual Verbs: The Case of Chinese Influence on Dongxiang and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language

*Lianqun Bao and Julie P.M. Lefort*

## 1 Introduction

In bilingual communities' speech and in contact languages, bilingual verbs represent a specific type of verb: they are composed of an element from a donor language (content word or lexical item) which is borrowed by a receiving (or a matrix) language. Different strategies are adopted in order to integrate the verbs into the receiving language and these have been analysed in various ways by researchers (Matras 2009; Wohlgemuth 2009, etc.). Muysken (2000:184–220) classifies the different types of bilingual verbs according to whether they are *inserted* or form a *bilingual complex verb*. Regardless of the strategy used, bilingual verbs have been observed in a wide variety of matrix languages around the world involving different donor languages, though recent studies tend to focus on the specific issue of bilingual complex verbs (Chatterjee (2014) for Bengali, Muysken (2016) for several languages spoken 'from Colombo to Athens', Medina (2020) for Belize Spanish; Purmohammad, Vorwerk and Abutalebi (2022) for Persian, etc.).

Although in China there is a great diversity of bilingual communities involving non-Sinitic matrix languages and varieties of Chinese spoken by national minorities (*shǎoshù mínzú* 少数民族), little work has so far been carried out specifically on the subject of bilingual verbs (see for example Bāo 2013 on Manchu, Bāo 2024 on Bonan (Bao'an), Yamakoshi 2026, this volume, on Shinekhen Buryat). The present study aims at filling this gap by examining the morphosyntactic features of bilingual verbs in Dongxiang (Gansu) and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language (DMCL) (Heilongjiang), two Mongolic languages of China spoken by communities in which widespread bilingualism with Chinese has been described (Lefort 2012; Bāo 2011). Despite the fact that the type of contacts in these communities involve similar language families and combinations of languages (Chinese as the donor language and a Mongolic receiving language), they have two distinct identity profiles that fit into two different sociolinguistic contexts.

Dörbed Mongolian relates ethnically, culturally and linguistically to a broader family, Central Mongolic, and is in contact with a variety of Chinese which is very close to Standard Mandarin, i.e. Northeastern Mandarin. Bilingualism arose with the migration of Han Chinese to the region in relatively recent times, which led to the Dörbed Mongolian population becoming a minority, linguistically ‘outnumbered’ by Chinese speakers. The DMCL is also an instable variety, demonstrating great variation between the various categories of speakers within the community.

Dongxiang is an isolated language whose speakers relate more to their religious identity than to an ethnic or a linguistic one and are only partially aware that they speak a Mongolic Language. They are concentrated in a mountainous region which was isolated for a very long time and where the great majority of people speak Dongxiang fluently. Bilingualism arose quite early through contacts with the neighbouring Hui community who speak an ‘Altaicised’ variety of Chinese (see for example Dwyer 1992) known as Hezhou or Linxia (henceforth referred as to ‘Linxia Chinese’). Thus, it is because the Dongxiang people went outside of their region that they acquired Chinese, and not because of the migration of Chinese speakers into their region. Up to the present day, the Dongxiang people remain significantly more numerous than any other group. Bilingualism is also widespread in the Dongxiang community because of Islam, since preaching is done in Linxia Chinese. This leads us to believe that Mongolic-Sinitic bilingualism is stable and has been present since at least the late 1800s.

By comparing bilingual verbs in these two communities, we aim to determine to what extent the sociolinguistic context, the variety of Chinese involved, and the community’s identity have an effect on the production and morphosyntactic features of bilingual verbs. In order to do so, we will test Muysken’s framework (2000) for bilingual verbs against the facts of these two languages to see if significant differences can be found. We will also test Muysken’s hypothesis on universally shared patterns found for bilingual complex verbs (Muysken 2016) and will examine the verbal borrowing patterns found in the Dongxiang language and the DMCL in light of Matras’ borrowing verb continuum (Matras 2009:176–182).

Dongxiang verbal morphology and borrowed verbs have been described in different grammars (Liu 1981; Bùhé 1986; Field 1991, 1997; Kim 2003), but the specific issue of bilingual verbs has not been addressed. Bao Saren (Bāo 2017) provides an overview of the phenomena, but with very few details on the mechanisms involved in the borrowed Chinese verb integration and derivational process. Very little work on Dörbed Mongolian in general has been done up to now (see for example Zhāng and Bō 1990; Bāo 2011) and this variety is usually

mentioned in studies on the Khorchin dialects (Bayančogtu 2002; Janhunen 2003b). There is no complete grammar or dictionary available. The most valuable research on the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language and the borrowed lexicon from Chinese remains Bao Lianqun's work (Bao 2011, 2013), in which she describes in details the bilingual verb situation in this variety.

This chapter is organised as follows: in section 2, we first provide an overview of the sociolinguistic contexts of the two communities, including the general characteristics of Mongolic languages' verbal morphology. In section 3, we present our methodology, including the theoretical background to bilingual verbs, the general situation of verbs of Chinese origin in Dongxiang and Dörbed, and the type of verbs under discussion in this paper. In section 4, we describe the types of bilingual verbs found in Dongxiang and provide a tentative classification. In section 5, we give an overview of bilingual verbs in the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language before comparing the data and results in the two languages in section 6. Based on these descriptions, we try to determine if a common pattern can be found.

## 2 Context

### 2.1 *The Dongxiang Language and the Other Languages Used in the Dongxiang Community*

The Dongxiang language, also known as Santa, forms part of the Shirongolic branch of the Mongolic Family (Janhunen 2003a) and is mainly spoken in the southern part of the Province of Gansu, in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Dongxiang people were recognised by the PRC authorities as a distinct group (*Dōngxiāngzú* 东乡族) in 1949 and, since that, have developed a minority identity. Before, the Dongxiang people self-identified rather as Muslims (referred to as Santa in the Dongxiang language) or Hui (*Huízú* 回族), based on the strong sense of religious unity that remains prevalent and on which they still rely. The exact history of the settlement of the Dongxiang people in their current location remains unknown. However, one of the dominant ideas among the research community is that they were originally several groups of Turkic-speaking languages, artisans and prisoners, that shifted to Middle Mongolian during the Gengiskhanid invasions and were deported from Central Asia to Gansu during the late-13th century (Mǎ and Mǎ 1982; Mǎ 2004).

Since at least the late 15th century the Dongxiang language has been in contact with Linxia (临夏) Chinese, the local variety of Chinese, also known as the Hezhou dialect (河州话), spoken by the neighbouring Hui communities. Linxia Chinese has long been a *lingua franca* in the Dongxiang Autonom-

ous County and the whole region, and features a set of morphosyntactic elements highly unusual in Sinitic languages, such as a main OV word order on the clause and sentence-level coupled with an underlining VO word order for lexicalised verbal compounds, aspectual markers, converbial-like morphology, and nominal cases (Dwyer 1992). Its syntax is thus, in many ways, closer to Turco-Mongolic languages than to typical Sinitic languages, whereas its lexicon remains strictly Chinese. For this reason it is sometimes considered as a kind of Chinese-based “creole”, a “mixed language” or a “Chinese hybrid dialect”, that shows some degree of mutual intelligibility with other local Sinitic varieties spoken in the region (Dwyer 1992; Wurm 1995; Lee-Smith Mei 1996; Janhunen 2015; Kawasumi 2018, etc.).

Today, there are about 300,000 speakers of Dongxiang in Gansu Province, concentrated in the autonomous county.<sup>1</sup> The main languages of the Dongxiang linguistic community can be divided into the languages of communication, which are Dongxiang (vernacular), Linxia Chinese (vehicular) and the North-western<sup>2</sup> Mandarin dialects, often associated with Standard Chinese (vehicular), on the one hand, and Arabic, the written language with a religious function on the other.<sup>3</sup> The community comprises monolinguals (Dongxiang), bilinguals (Dongxiang-Linxia Chinese) and trilinguals (Dongxiang-Linxia-Standard Chinese/Northwestern Mandarin), who, together, form a heterogeneous group of speakers (Lefort 2012). Generalised bilingualism on the community-level has been attested since at least the end of the 1950s (Chén 2006). It is believed by the Dongxiang speakers to be a situation that ‘has always existed’ (Lefort, fieldwork 2010). It is indeed plausible that bilingualism started to become generalised long ago, especially through the diffusion of Islam, traditionally taught in Linxia Chinese. Trilingualism, on the other hand, has developed more recently. The degree of proficiency in each variety varies according to the speakers’ place of residence, sex and level of education. Although attempts to introduce the Dongxiang language into the education system were made during

1 For details on the Dongxiang community, see Lefort 2012.

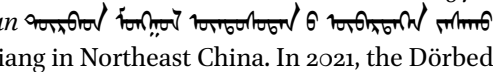
2 The term “Northwestern Mandarin” here designates the dialects belonging to the Lan-Yin subgroup of Mandarin (兰银官话 i.e., literally, the Mandarin spoken between Lanzhou and Yinchuan) and the Central plain dialects (中原官话) in which the varieties of Linxia is classified. The distinction between Northwestern Mandarin and Standard Chinese is unclear for the Dongxiang speakers who, most of the time, use a ‘language compromise’ and mix different Mandarin dialects in their speech which, however, in their representations, corresponds to Standard Chinese. As Linxia Chinese was for a very long time the sole variety of Chinese spoken among their group, the Dongxiang people used it as a general reference for ‘Chinese’.

3 For a detailed description of language representations and language use within the Dongxiang community, see Lefort (2012).

the early 2000s, the main language taught at school remains Chinese, officially Standard Chinese although in reality the situation is more complex. Until the implementation of the new education reform in the late 2010s, teachers were recruited locally. Dongxiang teachers would use a mix of Dongxiang and Linxia Chinese to teach from the first to the third years of primary school, that is, until the students had a sufficient proficiency level in Linxia Chinese to be taught only in this language (Lefort, fieldwork 2014). The Hui teachers, who usually had a better level of education, would then teach from year four in Linxia Chinese, mostly because of their lack of training in and knowledge of Standard Chinese. However, since 2015, teachers originally from outside the region have begun to be recruited and sent to the Dongxiang Autonomous County in order to enhance the level of Standard Chinese (or *Putonghua*) of the students. Since 2019, this process has been reinforced and accelerated and nowadays only Standard Chinese is used in primary schools.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, no written form of a Mongolic language has ever been widely shared among the Dongxiang community, whether through education or in everyday life.<sup>5</sup> In other words, there is no variety of any language genetically related to Dongxiang which could be seen as ‘prestigious’ by the speakers, and the High varieties involved in the diglossic situation of the community are Arabic and Chinese, i.e., languages that are not from the same family (Lefort 2025). It would therefore be difficult to establish a single, representative profile of all the speakers within the community. We can, however, say that the Dongxiang community is predominantly bilingual and that most Dongxiang people living in the autonomous county have Dongxiang as their mother tongue and acquire Linxia Chinese as a second language. According to Lefort (Lefort 2025), a perfect bilingualism exists in which the functions of Chinese and Dongxiang are shared across all domains in which either language is used.

Dongxiang Mongolian’s vocabulary has been, for the greatest part, inherited from Middle Mongol (Field 1997; Bāo 2006; Lefort 2022) while a significant proportion of its lexicon has been borrowed from Linxia Chinese (Field 1991).

## 2.2 *The Dörbed Mongolian Community Language (DMCL)*

Dörbed Mongols are concentrated in the Dörbed Mongol Autonomous county (*Dùěrbótè Ménggǔzú zìzhìxiàn* 杜尔伯特蒙古族自治县, *Dörbed Mongyol ündüsüten-ü öbertegen jasaqu šıyan* , in the province of Heilongjiang in Northeast China. In 2021, the Dörbed

4 Lefort field data 2023; see Lefort (2012) for details on formal and informal education.

5 The Xiaojing, an Arabic script was used at various points in history to transcribe the Dongxiang language, but was limited to mosques and religious matters.

Mongol Autonomous County's total population comprised 252,000 people from 21 different ethnic groups, including Mongol, Han, and Hui. The Mongols accounted for 18.2% of the total population (about 40,000 people).<sup>6</sup> They are officially recognised as part of the Mongol national minority (*Ménggǔzú* 蒙古族) and are not subdivided into their own distinct ethnic group. Their identity relies on a strong sentiment of being culturally and ethnically part of the Mongol people.

The Dörbed Mongol Autonomous County is a multilingual environment where three languages of communication are used by the Dörbed Mongols: Dörbed Mongolian, local Chinese (Northeastern Mandarin) and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language, an intermediary lect, mixing elements from Mongolian grammar and the Chinese lexicon. In addition, Standard Mongolian, based on the Chakhar Mongolian variety, is used in formal contexts: for instance, it is the language taught in schools, along with Standard Chinese.

Different factors have led to the emergence of the DMCL, including the decline of the proportion of the Dörbed Mongol population, the increase of Han Chinese people in the area, and intermarriage between Dörbed Mongols and Han Chinese. The Mongols were, for a long time, numerically predominant, but Han Chinese already represented half of the population in 1934. Dörbed Mongols came to be outnumbered during the second half of the 20th century, especially during the period of migration of Han Chinese from Shandong to Heilongjiang during the 1950s–1970s (Yáng 2023). The proportion of Dörbed Mongols has been a stable percentage at 18% since 2000 (see Bào 2011:58).

There has, at the present date, as yet been no census of the proportion of Chinese speakers, Mongolian speakers and DMCL speakers among the county's population.

Dörbed Mongolian is a Khorchin subdialect which, along with Juu Uda and the Josotu (Kharachin) dialects (Janhunén 2003b: 180), is classified into the 'Eastern Mongolian' branch (in Chinese *Dōngbù Ménggǔ yǔ* 东部蒙古语) (Bayančogtu 2002). This dialect is spoken still only by a very small number of elderly people and is almost extinct within the Dörbed Mongol Autonomous County. In addition, although teachers and other actors in the education system speak Standard Mongolian,<sup>7</sup> they do not use it in everyday life interactions and switch

6 Official numbers from the People's Government of Dörbed Mongol Autonomous County retrieved on 02/08/2022: [https://baike.baidu.com/reference/8746815/533aYdO6cr3\\_z3kATPGDyFxyMn6RMI-t7beCVOdzqIPoXOpUpniUcY28tUrsPBoAkXIvtd6eNEe2e-hVAlaubJJKahkGOx62CfGBG6Yk6Hk\\_gszhdFCvItHW6URmam16w](https://baike.baidu.com/reference/8746815/533aYdO6cr3_z3kATPGDyFxyMn6RMI-t7beCVOdzqIPoXOpUpniUcY28tUrsPBoAkXIvtd6eNEe2e-hVAlaubJJKahkGOx62CfGBG6Yk6Hk_gszhdFCvItHW6URmam16w)

7 The main language of education is Standard Chinese, while Standard Mongolian is taught in schools as an optional subject. Therefore, the level of proficiency in Standard Mongolian is often fairly low (Bào Liánqún 2011).

to the DMCL in non-formal contexts. Therefore instances of communication in Mongolian proper, Dörbed or Standard, among speakers are rare and limited to formal contexts. Thus, the DMCL is the most prevalent language currently used within the Mongol community, where it has practically displaced Mongolian proper, whether the Dörbed dialect or Standard Mongolian, in everyday life. In spite of the large proportion of Chinese-based lexicon in the language, it is felt by its speakers to be a variety of Mongolian. Its informal status accounts for the lack of any written texts, textbooks or dictionaries.

The Chinese variety spoken in the county is the local Northeastern Mandarin dialect, a variety very close to Beijing Mandarin, and as such, to Standard Chinese (Yin 1998). The status of Chinese within the Dörbed community is more complex: it can be used both as a vehicular and as a vernacular language, depending on the situations, for instance whether or not it is a family language in cases of mixed marriage between Hans and Mongolians. In this case, the language of the family is often determined by the mother's native language (Bao 2011:283–306).

### 2.3 *Mongolic Derivational Morphology and Characteristics of Mongolic Verbs*

Like all Mongolic languages, Dongxiang and Dörbed possess a set of derivational suffixes that enable derivation of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. These suffixes can change the grammatical category of a word, but do not always do so. They can sometimes also add supplementary lexical value to the suffixed verb. In this paper, any suffix added to a stem to form a new lexical item is considered as a derivational suffix and the word it is added to as a derived word, whether or not the word class is modified after the suffixation. In Dongxiang, this kind of derivation includes denominal nouns, e.g. *.tʃi* [occupation] *asun* 'livestock' > *asun. tʃi* 'herdsman'; deverbal nouns e.g. *.n, kielie-* 'to speak' > *kielie.n* 'language, tongue'; denominal verbs, e.g. *.da, tʃinguun* 'ear' > *tʃinguun.da-* 'to inquire about'; deadjectival verbs, e.g. *.re, dzolia* 'soft' > *dzolia.re* 'to become soft'; and deverbal verbs, e.g. *.la, anda* 'to let go' > *anda.la* 'to unfold' (Kim 2003:352). Deverbal verb suffixes are extremely rare in Dongxiang and in Mongolic languages in general where the most productive deverbal verb suffix is the causative voice (Janhunen 2012:147), in Dongxiang the marker *.ka*. In Dörbed, similar derivational suffixation is observed, e.g. denominal nouns, *f* [occupation] *əm* 'medicine' > *əmf* 'doctor'; deverbal nouns *.l, fed-* 'to be able to' > *fedə.l* 'ability'; denominal verb *.la; tut* 'benefit' > *tut.la* 'to help'; deadjectival verb *.lɔ; didʒ* 'big' > *didʒ: lɔ:-* 'to be big', etc. There are no deverbal verb suffixes except for those associated with borrowed verbs that will be described in this paper (see section 5).

One of the main characteristics of Dongxiang phonology is that it lacks vowel harmony, leading to the crystallization of derivational or flexional suffixes in one unique form. Dörbed also has a reduced vocalic harmony system, but still feature vowel length opposition (Bǎo 1997; Bǎo Yù 2011).

Both Dongxiang and Dörbed are SOV clause chaining languages, as defined by Mansfield and Barth (2021), characterised by the chaining of several verbs linked together by markers on non-finite verbs, usually referred to as converbs (but also gerunds, switch event markers, or *fùdòngcí* 副动词) in the literature. These markers have two main functions: 1) to determine if the moment in which the action takes place is the same for the two verbs, and 2) to specify the semantic and temporal relationship between the two verbs. Tense, aspect and mood is borne by the final clause predicate. In addition, nominalisers (also known as participles) can be found on final clause predicates in Dörbed Mongolian, but not in Dongxiang, which can only accept verbal aspectual suffixes.

Both Dongxiang and Dörbed Mongolian verbs can be monomorphemic (e.g. Dongxiang *suru-* ‘to learn’; Dörbed *tur-* ‘to learn’) and compounded (e.g. Dongxiang *udzədzɨ ciniə-* lit. look-SIM + laugh ‘to make fun of someone’; Dörbed *udz-dʒ unen-* lit. look-SIM + laugh ‘to make fun of someone’), which usually comprise two morphemes. The great majority of verbs are based on [N+V] compounds, while [V+V] compounds are only occasionally found. In the latter case, the verbs can simply be adjoined, or be linked by the simultaneity converb *-dzɨ* in Dongxiang and *dʒ* in Dörbed. This kind of lexicalised compound verb is common in Mongolic languages. They are known as *xorshoo üg* in Central Mongolic languages, that is to say “cooperative words” (Legrand 1997:140).

### 3 Methodology

For this study, we compare the bilingual verbs of the Dongxiang language with those of the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language by using the bilingual verbs framework developed by Muysken (2000) and enriched in later studies (Wohlgemuth 2009; Muysken 2016). The following sections briefly describe the theoretical background to bilingual verbs (3.1) as well as the type of verbs of Chinese origin found in the Dongxiang language and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language, and those selected for this study (3.2). We have used Ma and Chen’s *Dongxiang-Chinese dictionary* (Mǎ and Chén 2012) as the main database for Dongxiang.<sup>8</sup> Data on Dörbed Mongolian and the Dörbed Mongo-

<sup>8</sup> In addition, the following materials have been used for the examples: 1) Buhe (Bùhé 1987),

lian Community Language discussed in this chapter are based on Bao's material (Bão 2011), collected between 2000 and 2006.<sup>9</sup>

#### 2.4 *Bilingual Verbs*

The term 'bilingual verbs' was first coined by Muysken (2000:184) who identified four basic types according to the strategy used to integrate borrowed verbs (BV) from the donor language into the receiving language:

- a) The new verb is inserted into a position corresponding to a native verb, in adapted form or not.
- b) The new verb is adjoined to a helping verb.
- c) The new verb is a nominalised complement to a causative helping verb in a compound.
- d) The new verb is an infinitive and the complement of a native auxiliary.

The first type of verb is what Muysken defines as *inserted verbs*. These can be bare forms or verbs to which inflectional morphemes (native or not) are attached, either directly (e.g. Dutch past participle *ge-zoom-d* containing the English verb *zoom*), or to an adapted form (e.g. Dutch *offr-er-en* from French *offr-ir*). These two categories correspond to Wohlgemuth's (2009) direct insertion and indirect insertion of borrowed verbs. The inserted stem is treated as the equivalent of a native one. The inserted bare verb form may be inserted into a position ordinarily reserved for a native verb. It can also be affixed with an element specific to alien stems or a 'nativizing affix' (used with native words as well). In the latter case, Moravcsik (1978) claims that alien elements are never imported as verbs, but always as nouns, with verbalizing suffixes used as denominal verbs with native verbs in the receiving language. Muysken (2016: 10) thinks this theory holds for different languages, including, for example, Quechua spoken in Peru into which Spanish verbs are imported.

The three other types of verbs are bilingual complex verbs, where the borrowed verb does not require phonological or semantic integration and is used in bare form. In type b), the bilingual verb consists of a 'bilingual compound verb', composed of a 'lexical verb' borrowed from the donor language, which

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material collected in 1981 and 1984; 2) Lefort (Lefort 2023) based on the teaching material used in the bilingual experimental class of Narisi Primary school in the Dongxiang Autonomous County which was edited in 2002; and 3) Lefort (Lefort 2012) Dongxiang material consisting of spontaneous speech collected in 2009 and 2010.

9) Notes on transcription: we have used IPA for Dongxiang as per Ma and Chen (2012) and for Dörbed as per Bao (Bão 2011), transcriptions of Linxia Chinese as per Liu et al. (1996) and Middle Mongolian forms provided for etymology purposes as per Nugteren (2011).

carries the semantic weight, and a ‘helping verb’ from the matrix language, usually with the meaning of “do”, “make”, “be”, etc. The latter bears morphological information on tense, aspect, person, etc., while the lexical verb is used in an uninflected form (Medina (2020); Purmohammad, Vorweg and Abutalebi (2022)). In this paper, bilingual compound verbs consisting of a lexical verb and a helping verb will be referred as to *bilingual complex verbs*.

The pattern [BV + helping verb] is found across languages the world over, ‘from Colombo to Athens’ (Muysken 2016). Very often, the [BV + helping verb] pattern does not occur in the receiving language, rather, the native [N + helping verb] pattern is found (e.g. Moravcsik (1978) for English stems borrowed in Hungarian; Nishimura (1997), for English stems borrowed in Japanese, Muysken (2016) on Indo-Iranian, Tamil, Indo-Aryan, Arabic, Turkish and Greek receiving languages etc.). Generally, the native pattern in (1a) is replaced, in the bilingual setting, with the pattern in (1b) (Muysken 2016:2):

- (1) a. native: [love<sub>noun</sub> do] ‘to perform love’  
 b. bilingual: [love<sub>verb</sub> do] ‘to do something (namely loving)’

The shift from the native to the bilingual pattern involves a shift from a complementation to an adjunction structure. The pattern in (1b) involves an inseparable lexical compound rather than a separable [auxiliary + infinitive] structure. Muysken (2016: 14) claims that this pattern is universal in adult bilingual speech. However, as we will see, the auxiliary status of the helping verb in Mongolic is questionable.

Type c) verbs involves the nominalisation of the borrowed verb, either with the morphology of the donor language or that of the receiving language, e.g. [‘do’ + V-gerund] (Muysken 2000:206). Type d) verbs implies an auxiliary status for the helping verb. The borrowed elements consist of bare verb phrases used as a complement of the donor language’s helping verb, e.g. AUX<sub>to do</sub> + [NP] (Muysken 2000:216).

In this chapter, we use the term “bilingual verbs” to refer either to the inserted type (bare or affixed verbs) or the bilingual complex verb type (bare verb + helping verb).

According to Matras (2012:182) the strategies used for borrowed verb integration form a continuum of devices and “the theme of this continuum is not the structural effort that is made in order to accommodate verbs, but rather the degree to which the ‘verbness’ of foreign-origin verbs is recognised and accepted”. On one side of the continuum, we find the light verb strategy, in which the role of anchoring the predication is born by the light verb itself, not the borrowed lexical verb. At the other end of the continuum, we find

languages that recognise foreign verbs as both lexical labels (signifiers) and predicate-initiating devices. In between we find strategies, including morphological devices (inserted verbs with suffixation), which enable the borrowed verb to initiate predication. Patterns may also evolve internally within a language, such as with helping verb which may become an auxiliary or cliticize into a suffix. Although these strategies form part of a continuum, they are not constrained by a chronological order and one strategy may develop before another or several strategies could emerge concomitantly.

The choice of one strategy or another greatly depends on the morphological devices for deriving verbs from non-verbs available in the receiving language. Therefore, 'isolating languages' may use direct insertion and 'flexional languages' will often require additional suffixation (indirect insertion) to integrate those verbs. As Dörbed and Dongxiang are both Mongolic languages, it is to be expected that similar strategies for borrowed verb integration will be identified.

### 3.2 *Verbs of Chinese Origin in Dongxiang and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language (DMCL)*

This section introduces the various types of verbs of Chinese origin in the Dongxiang language and in the DMCL, and specifies those under discussion in this chapter.

Verbs of Chinese origin in Dongxiang and the DMCL are found as 'direct loans' and 'calques'. In the case of direct loans, the verb keeps its original Chinese phonological form with more or less adaptation in the receiving language (e.g. loss of pitch, vocalic harmony adaptation). In other words, the directly loaned verbs are borrowed almost 'as they are'. On the other hand, for calques, the morpho-semantic structure of the borrowed verb is copied in the receiving language, with adaptation, if needed, so to match the receiving language (OV) word order.

Direct loans in Dongxiang and the DMCL include Chinese borrowed nouns and adjectives that are suffixed to produce new verbs (therefore, the word category is changed), as well as the Chinese borrowed verbs. These two kinds of verbs are reanalysed as monomorphemic verbs in the receiving language, regardless of their original morphophonological structure in the source. Chinese borrowed verbs differ from Chinese borrowed nouns and adjectives derived to produce a verb in that the borrowed item is a verb in Chinese and continues to be used as verb in the receiving language, with no word class change observed. Consider the following examples:

## Derived Chinese borrowed nouns/adjectives

- (2) a. DX: *guguai.sa* 'finding (something) weird' (v.) < *gǔguài* 古怪 'weird' (adj.)  
 b. DMCL: *lianban.la* 'to divide into two halves' (v.) < *liǎngbàn* 两半 'two halves' (n.)

## Chinese borrowed verbs

- (3) a. DX: *huɿ.la-* 'to fool' (v.) < *hǒng* 哄 (v.) 'to fool'  
 b. DMCL: *ʂaɿwaɿ.əl* 'to surf on the Internet' (v.) < *ʂaɿwaɿ* 上网 (v.) 'to surf on the Internet'

In the case of calques, restructuring in the receiving language can be done by using native material, a combination of native and borrowed material, or a combination of borrowed material. In this last case, the new compound is a combination of direct loans forming a calque. The structure is always reorganised so to match the receiving language word order. In the case of Dongxiang and the DMCL, the Chinese VO verbal compound is restructured as OV compound. Consider the following examples:

## Calques of Chinese verbs

- (4) a. DX: *no huɿtura* 'to sleep': *no* < MMo SHM *noyir* (n.) 'sleep' (n.) + *huɿtura* 'sleep' (v.) < MMo SHM *unta* (v.) lit. + sleep, calqued from Chinese *shuǐjiào* 睡觉 lit. *shuǐ* 'sleep' (v.) + *jiào* 'sleep' (n.).  
 b. DMCL: *otas tʃɔxə-* 'to phone': < *otas* (n.) 'telephone' (n.) + *tʃɔxə-* 'hit' (v.), calqued from Chinese *dǎ diànhuà* 打电话. *otas* + *dǎ* 'hit' (v.) + *diànhuà* 'telephone' (n.).  
 c. DX: *nudun tɕi.yi-* 'to blink': *nudun* (n.) < MMo SHM *nidiün* 'eye' + *tɕi.ji* (v.) < *tɕi* 挤 'squeeze'; calqued from Chinese *jǐ yǎn* 挤眼 lit. 'squeeze' + 'eye'.  
 d. DMCL: *xoral kai* 'to participate to a meeting': *xoral* (n.) < *xoral* 会议 'meeting' + *kai* (v.) < *kai* 开 'open', calqued from Chinese *kāihuì* 开会. 'to hold a meeting'.  
 e. DX: *dzui fan.ji* 'commit a crime': *dzui* (n.) < *dzui* 罪 'crime' + *fan.ji* (v.) < *fan* 犯 'commit', from the Chinese VO compound *fàn zuì* 犯罪 'commit a crime'.  
 f. DMCL: *dzui fan* 'commit a crime': *dzui* (n.) < *dzui* 罪 'crime' + *fan* (v.) < *fan* 犯 'commit', from the Chinese VO compound *fàn zuì* 犯罪 'commit a crime'.

In examples (4a) and (4b) above, the Dongxiang verb *no huɣtura* is a typical calque: both stems are of Mongolic origin. Other Mongolic languages have monomorphemic verb to express the same meaning ‘sleep’ (e.g. MMo SHM *unta-*; Chakhar Mongol  $\text{ᠤᠨᠲᠠ}$  *untă-* etc.) and the separable Chinese VO compound structure is copied, reordered as [N+V] in Dongxiang (e.g. *niə no huɣtura* lit. one-nap (n.)-sleep (v.) ‘to take a sleep’). Internally to the Dongxiang calque compound, the verb governs the object *no* as the head, and the compound forms an intransitive verb. The same mechanism is observable for the Dörbed compound verb *utas tʃɔxə-* ‘to phone’ in which the two Mongolic morphemes copy the meaning of their Chinese counterparts and internally to the Dörbed calque compound, the verb *tʃɔxə-* ‘to hit’ functions as the head, governing the object *utas* ‘telephone’. However, it is important to note that calques found in Dörbed are also attested in other Mongolic varieties, such as Chakhar Mongol.

Only Chinese borrowed verbs, such as example (3) above, can be considered to be ‘bilingual verbs’ as per Muysken’s terms and as such will be under discussion in this paper.

Because of the extensive contact between Linxia Chinese and Dongxiang, most of the Chinese borrowed verbs in Dongxiang have no Mongolic equivalent anymore. They were either borrowed to introduce new concepts or have replaced the original Mongolic verbs. In either case, there is no other alternative verbal form available to the speakers. Therefore, we can consider that the great majority of Chinese borrowed verbs are fully integrated. Social and cultural motivations behind the borrowing of Chinese verbs include both the need to fill a linguistic gap in the languages and the need to replace an existing native verb and thus contribute to the lexicon shift, or relexification process, as per DeGraff’s terms (DeGraff 2002). Therefore, we identify Chinese borrowed verbs in Dongxiang as both “cultural borrowings” and “core borrowings” as per Haspelmath’s terms (2009:46). The main source of the Chinese borrowed verbs in Dongxiang is Linxia Chinese.<sup>10</sup> This is reflected by verbs using dialect-specific lexicon and phonology, e.g. *nau.ji-* ‘to stew’ < *nɔ* 熬 ‘to stew’ (vs Standard Chinese *ao*<sup>35</sup> 熬), *simu.la* ‘to think’ < *si*<sup>243</sup>*mu*<sup>243</sup> 思谋 ‘to think’ (vs Standard Chinese *kao*<sup>214</sup>*ly*<sup>51</sup> 考虑); *naiɣu giə* ‘to cherish’ < *ne*<sup>42</sup>*ɣu*<sup>42</sup> 爱护 (vs Standard Chinese *ai*<sup>51</sup>*ɣu*<sup>51</sup> 爱护) ‘to cherish’, etc.

In the DMCL, the situation is more complex as great variation is observed in speaker’s speech according to their social profile. Chinese borrowed verbs include both “cultural borrowings” (e.g. *ʃaŋwan.əl* ‘to surf on the Internet’ (v.)

10 Many other Northwestern Mandarin varieties often have formally identical lexical material, but, most of the time and given the socio-historical background of the Dongxiang community, they are unlikely to be the source (see section 2).

< *ᠰᠠᠩᠠᠭᠠᠨ* (v.) ‘to surf on the Internet’) and “core borrowings” (*ᠲᠢᠰᠢᠳᠠᠮ ᠬᠢ* vs Standard Mongolian *ᠲᠢᠰᠢᠳᠠᠮ ᠬᠢ* ᠳᠢᠰᠢᠳᠠᠮ ᠬᠢ ‘to be late’). However, some of the core borrowings actually have Mongolian equivalents. The use of Chinese verbs is closely related to other social factors, such as the level of proficiency of a speaker in Dörbed or Standard Mongolian, but also in Chinese, both dialectal and standard, and the context in which the interaction takes place. Thus, not all Chinese borrowed verbs are fully integrated and their replacement is often closer to a code-mixing phenomenon than a borrowing one (see section 6 for discussion). In the DMCL, the source for Chinese borrowed verbs is Northeastern Mandarin, but, as this variety is very close to Standard Chinese, dialectal-specific phonology is not always reflected in the borrowed form and the source of the borrowing (Northeastern Chinese or Standard Chinese) is difficult to identify.

Verbs of Chinese origin in Dongxiang and the DMCL do not show any Chinese-like prosodic features in that they do not bear a pitch tone.

#### 4 Bilingual Verbs in Dongxiang

The *Dongxiang-Chinese Dictionary* (Mǎ and Chén 2012) comprises 10,145 entries, including monomorphemic words, compound words and toponyms. There are 4358 verbs of all types (monomorphemic and compounds), including 1702 verbs of foreign origin, mostly Chinese (1531), but also Arabic (102), Persian (40) and Turkic (36).<sup>11</sup> Therefore, about 34% of the verbs in the dictionary are of Chinese origin (see section 3.2 above). Among the 1531 verbs categorized as Chinese borrowings in the dictionary, 1061 comprise only one lexical morpheme (*kai.ji* ‘to start’ < *kai* 开 ‘to start’), and the rest are compound verbs (470), composed of two or, occasionally, three lexical morphemes. These compound verbs feature at least one morpheme of Chinese origin, whether it be a noun or a verb, combined with another morpheme of Mongolic, Chinese, Turkic, Persian or Arabic origin. The two lexical morphemes that compose the compound verbs often form a calque of the Chinese verb compound structure (see above section 3.2). Of the 1061 monomorphemic verbs classified as ‘Chinese’ in the dictionary, 596 are Chinese borrowed verbs and the rest are Chinese borrowed nouns and adjectives derived with denominal and deadjectival suffixes.

11 Some of the compound verbs include both a Chinese verb and another one of other origin. Therefore, there is a discrepancy between the total number of loan words and the number of loan words in each category (Chinese, Turkic, Persian, Arabic).

It should be noted that the dictionary also lists many verbs that are actually calques of Chinese bimorphemic verbs, but are not identified as ‘Chinese’, because the stems are of Mongolic origin and are not Chinese lexical material. Therefore, if calques were to be included, the above-mentioned percentage of 34% of the Dongxiang verbs given in Ma and Chen (2012) as being of Chinese origin would be much higher.

This paper focusses on the 596 monomorphemic Chinese borrowed verbs listed in the Dictionary. After review, we have found two types of bilingual verbs, corresponding to Muysken’s (2000) categories of bilingual verbs type a) and b) (Muysken 2000): a) 381 inserted verbs suffixed with native suffixes, which comprise both Mongolic suffixes added to words of Mongolic and Chinese origin, and suffixes that have been specifically developed for Chinese borrowed verbs; b) 215 bilingual complex verbs that consist of a Chinese borrowed verb to which the helping verb *giə* ‘to do’ is adjoined. The following sections provide a detailed description of these two types.

In all the following example sentences, words of Chinese origin are in bold, while the borrowed Chinese verb is underlined>. When correspondences are found, we provide the Linxia Chinese form as we consider it is the main source of these Chinese borrowings.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4.1 *Dongxiang Inserted Verbs [VCN+SUF]*

The first section (4.1.1) deals with suffixes that can be combined with stems of both Mongolic and Chinese origin. The most common include *.da* and *.la*. The second section (4.1.2) deals with the derivational suffixes attested in other Mongolic languages that can derive Dongxiang verbs from roots of Mongolic or Chinese origin other than verbs. Suffixes *ji* and *.dzi* are used exclusively with Chinese borrowed verbs and are not attested in other Mongolic languages, hence they developed specifically for Chinese borrowed verbs in Dongxiang. The verbal form without the suffixes (bare verbs) is ungrammatical.

##### 4.1.1 Suffixes Used with Verbs Both of Mongolic and Chinese Origin

###### 4.1.1.1 *Derivational Suffix .la*

The suffix *.la* is primarily a denominal and deadjectival verb suffix added to nouns (5) and adjectives (6) of Mongolic origin. Exceptionally, it is used with verbs of Mongolic origin too (7),<sup>13</sup> e.g.:

- (5) *dao* ‘a song’ (< MMo SHM *dao’u(n)*) < *dao.la* ‘to sing’;  
 (6) *bajan* ‘rich’ (< MMo SHM *baiyan*) < *bajan.la* ‘to become rich’;

<sup>12</sup> For non-conventional abbreviations, please refer to the list below.

<sup>13</sup> There are only two occurrences of this type.

It is also occasionally found as a deverbal verb suffix, e.g.

- (7) *jawu* ‘to walk’ (< MMo SHM *yabu*) < *jawu.la* ‘to walk behind’ ‘to leave’

The suffix *.la* is also used with Chinese borrowed nouns (e.g. *piŋdzi.la* ‘to use a bottle to measure’ < *piŋdzi* < *piŋ*<sup>243</sup>*dzi* 瓶子 ‘bottle’). Dongxiang nouns (Mongolic and borrowed) as well as most borrowed adjectives do not bear any specific morphology and are used unmarked in Dongxiang. Therefore, Chinese borrowed stems are treated in the same manner as native words and the denominal/deadjectival verb suffix *.la* is a native suffix that can be used with stems of both Mongolic and Chinese origin.

When it is used as a denominal verb suffix, the meaning of the derived verb frequently involves an instrumental use of the noun. As a deadjectival verb suffix, the derived verb involves a transformation ‘to become xxx’. There is no particular category of verbs (intransitive, transitive, movement, etc.) to which the suffix *.la* is attached. There is no phonological restriction bound to the use of the suffix and no semantic value is added to the verb produced.

Many of the disyllabic Chinese borrowed verbs derived with *.la* have equivalent counterparts in constructions with the helping verb *giə* ‘to do’ (e.g. *tei-anpai.la* ~ *tei-anpe giə* ‘to drag’ < *tei-an*<sup>43</sup>*pe*<sup>43</sup> 强迫 ‘to drag’) (see section 4.2 below). Both monosyllabic and disyllabic verbs may be suffixed by *.la*:

e.g.: *dei.la* ‘carry’ < *te*<sup>43</sup> 带

- (8) *toŋgorai* *baŋa-ni* *dei.la*-*dene* *musirai-dzo*  
 wild.goose frog-ACC carry-SEQ fly-PROG  
 ‘The goose is carrying the frog while flying’ (Lefort 2023:11)

e.g. *datcin.la* ‘to enquire’ < Linxia Chinese *da*<sup>43</sup>*tcin*<sup>243</sup> 打听 ‘to enquire’

- (9) *laoŋsi* *tcianbao* *wida-ka-sən* *kun-ni* *datcin.la*-*dzi*  
 teacher wallet lose-CAUS-.P.NMLZ person-ACC ask.about-SIM  
*olu-wo*.  
 obtain-PFV  
 ‘The teacher asked around and found out about the owner of the lost wallet’ (Lefort 2023:17)

Once derived, the Chinese borrowed verb suffixed with *.la* can take all the markers other Mongolic verbs can, converbs in the case of the above examples. Therefore, the main function of the derivational suffix *.la* is to indicate that, after suffixation, the stem is a verb.

4.1.1.2 *Derivational Suffix .da*

The suffix *.da* is the one of the most productive derivational suffixes, used with stems of both Mongolic and Chinese origin. It is primarily a denominal and deadjectival verb suffix used with Mongolic stems (e.g. *dzaʁasun.da* ‘to eat fish’ < *dzaʁasun* ‘fish’; *gunɖu.da* ‘become heavy’ < *gunɖu* ‘heavy’). It is not attested as a deverbal verb suffix with Mongolic stems. When it is used as a denominal verb suffix, the meaning of the derived verb often involves an instrumental use of the noun or the action of eating it. It can be combined with Chinese nouns and adjectives, with the same added lexical value (e.g. *ʂodzi.da-* ‘to eat with a spoon’ < *ʂodzi* ‘spoon’ < *ʂuə*<sup>243</sup>*dzi* 勺子).

In addition, it is occasionally used to derive Chinese borrowed verbs, both monosyllabic (7) and disyllabic (10):

*dziŋ.da* ‘to panic’ < *dziŋ*<sup>43</sup> 紧 ‘panic’

- (10) *dziədäi*      *dzin.da*-*dzi* “*amin-ni dziu.ji ja!*” *giə-dzi warada-dzo*.  
grandfather panic-SIM life-ACC save FP say-SIM shout-PROG  
‘Panicking, Grandpa shouted, “Save me!”’ (Lefort 2023:23)

e.g.: *shanlian.da* ‘to discuss’ < *shan*<sup>243</sup>*lian*<sup>243</sup> 商量 ‘to discuss’

- (11) *χufəijə Fatumə χədzizə ənə-la Ajinşə oŋɕian giə-sən-ni*  
PROP.N PROP.N PROP.N DEM-PL PROP.N hope HV-P.NMLZ-ACC  
*mədziə shanlian.da-zhi baymaj giə-nə giə-dzo*  
know discuss-SIM help HV-IPFV say-PROG  
‘Hufeiya, Fatima and Hejizhe knew about Ayinshe’s hope, so they discussed together to find a way to help her.’ (Lefort 2023:9)

Chinese borrowed verbs derived with *.da* are mostly action verbs or verbs of action in which at least one other person is involved (e.g. *haqi.da-* ‘to quarrel’, *pien.da* ‘to trick someone’), with no clear semantic value added to the produced verb.

From the above, the suffix *.da* can be identified as 1) a denominal/deadjectival verb suffix for both Mongolic and borrowed nouns and adjectives and 2) a Chinese borrowed verb suffix.

#### 4.1.1.3 Other Non-Productive Borrowed Verb Suffixes (.lo, .liə, .tci, .rə)<sup>14</sup>

There are 23 instances where the Chinese borrowed verb is integrated with a suffix other than the above-cited. Those include .lo, .liə, .rə, rəi, ra, ro and .tci. Those suffixes do not seem to respond to any particular semantic or phonological rules, but could be reminiscences of a lost vowel and consonant harmony for .lo, .liə, .rə, rəi, ra, ro (corresponding to the above suffix .la). There is only one instance of a Chinese borrowed verb with the suffix .tci. Examples are provided here:

*tʂanɣo.lo* ‘to blend’ < *tʂanɣuo* 掺和 ‘to blend’  
*mian.liə* ‘avoid’ < *miē*<sup>43</sup> 免 ‘to avoid’  
*ʂuai.tci* ‘to throw’ < *ʂue*<sup>43</sup> 甩 ‘to throw’  
*minbə.rə* ‘to understand’ < *mij*<sup>243</sup>*bɛ*<sup>243</sup> 明白 ‘to understand’

#### 4.1.2 Suffixes Used Exclusively with Chinese Borrowed Verbs

There are two suffixes in Dongxiang that are used exclusively with Chinese borrowed verbs: .ji and .dzi. They are by far the most productive suffixes found with monomorphemic suffixed verbs (306 verbs) and are not found with any other class of words. The suffix .dzi might be related to Middle Mongol verbaliser .ʒi,<sup>15</sup> but it is quite difficult to establish an etymology for .ji. As they are not used with endemic stems at all, they could be innovations as well. They do not bear specific semantic value and are phonologically distributed according to the word’s ending. The suffix .ji is added after monosyllabic verbs ending with vowels while .dzi is used with verbs ending with consonants and nasals:

E.g. *tciu.ji* < *tciou*<sup>243</sup> 救 ‘to save’ / *ci.ji* < *ci*<sup>42</sup> 惜 ‘to pity’

- (12) *dziədəi*      *həndə*      *ubali* *ci.ji*-*zhi*      *tciu.ji* *qudzə-wo*.  
 grandfather DEM.LOC pity pity-SIM save get.out-IPFV  
 ‘The grandfather felt sorry for it and took it out to save it.’ [i.e. took pity on it] (Lefort 2022:23)

E.g.: *baŋ.dzi* ‘to help’ < 帮 *baŋ*<sup>243</sup> ‘to help’

14 It should be noted that .lo and .rə are also used as deadjectival verb suffixes with Mongolic stems, .liə as a denominal verb suffix with Mongolic stems, and .tci only with the Chinese borrowed verb, as shown in the example above.

15 Cf. Khalkha *bayan* ‘rich’ < *bayan.ʒi*- ‘to become rich’, Middle Mongolian *dayin* ‘war, quarrel’; *dayi.ʒi*- ‘to rebel’; *ebül* ‘winter’–*ebül.ʒi*- ‘to spend winter’ (Gruntov, personal communication 2024).

- (13) *madə ban.dzi-dzi koŋ bu waka.*  
 1.LOC help-SIM foot NEG wash  
 'No need to wash my feet'. (Lefort 2023:5)

Out of the 179 Dongxiang verbs suffixed with *ji* found in the dictionary, 162 are unambiguously of Chinese origin, and 17 are not classified as Chinese, but probably are. All of the 127 verbs suffixed with *dzi* are Chinese borrowed verbs, except 1 verb of unknown origin. No Mongolic verb is suffixed by either *ji* or *dzi*. Therefore, *ji* and *.dzi* are native suffixes dedicated to the adaptation of Chinese borrowed verbs which allow the stem to take further native verbal markers. They differ from other native suffixes in that they indicate that the stem is 1) a borrowing, and 2) a verb, before and after suffixation. As far as we know, the Mongolic languages that developed suffixes specific to the adaptation of borrowed verbs are rare. One other example is the Qinghai Bonan suffix *-ge* (Bùhé 1982; Wu 2003) added to Chinese and Tibetan borrowed verbs, but we think that it is probably a reanalysis of the (helping) verb 'to do' that has then cliticised. This development is thus closer to the process described in the section below, related to bilingual complex verbs built with the helping verb *giə* 'to do' in Dongxiang and DMCL.

#### 4.1.3 Summary on Dongxiang Bilingual Inserted Verbs

Some of the suffixes that can derive Chinese borrowed verbs can be added to other classes of words, while others are distributed according to the origin of the stem.

Of the four suffixes, *.ji* and *.dzi* are by far the most productive (306 verbs), followed by *.la* (37 verbs) and *.da* (15 verbs). Furthermore, we can now distinguish several processes allowing the integration of a Chinese stem in Dongxiang to assign it a verbal status in the lexicon.

The suffix *.la* can be added to nouns, adjectives, and verbs of either Mongolic or Chinese origin. Therefore, with stems of Chinese origin, it must be considered as a native affix used on nativized borrowed stems to derive verbs (Muysken 2000:185).

The case of the suffix *.da* is a little different because it is not used in the same manner with Chinese and Mongolic stems: while it can be used with Chinese borrowed stems belonging to any word class, it can only suffix Mongolic nouns. A possible explanation for the fact that not only Chinese borrowed nouns, but also adjectives and verbs can be suffixed by *.da* is that the Chinese borrowed stem is treated as a noun in all cases, regardless of its initial word class: as, just like (Mongolic and Chinese) nouns, Chinese verbs do not bear any specific derivational suffix that enables them to be identified as verbs, Dongxiang

TABLE 12.1 Suffixes forming Chinese borrowed verbs

Suffix	Class					
	Mongolic nouns	Mongolic verbs	Mongolic adjectives	Chinese nouns	Chinese verbs	Chinese adjectives
<i>.da</i>	+	-	-	+	+	+
<i>.la</i>	+	+ (limited)	+	+	+	+
<i>.ji</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-
<i>.dzi</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-

speakers may therefore have processed Chinese verbs as nouns. As mentioned above, this is a hypothesis that has been formulated for other languages such as Hungarian-English bilingual variety (Moravcsik 1978).

Suffixes *.ji* and *.dzi* are dedicated to Chinese borrowed verbs: they only suffix verbal stems of the donor language, allowing them to bear endemic verbal morphology so that the Chinese verb can be treated as the equivalent of a Mongolic one.

Therefore, we have two subtypes of suffixes that can be added to Chinese borrowed verbs: 'nativizer' suffixes *.la* and *.da* and Chinese borrowed verb suffixes *.ji* and *.dzi*.

The results produced by using a 'nativizer' suffix or a Chinese borrowed verb suffix are also very different. Native suffixes enable full nativization of Chinese borrowed verbs in the Dongxiang language, so that they can function as any Mongolic stem would and cannot be identified as 'alien'. On the other hand, Chinese borrowed verb suffixes overtly mark the alien nature of the stem.

The reason behind this dual behaviour may be that most of the verbs of Mongolic origin in the Dongxiang language are disyllabic, therefore the addition of a suffix to a monosyllabic stem of Chinese origin could also be phonologically motivated. As for the suffixes *.la* and *.da*, the use of a native suffix to derive verbs from nouns, adjective or verbs of Chinese origin, could indicate that they have been borrowed since the earliest stage of contact and thus are no longer perceived as foreign.

#### 4.2 *Dongxiang Bilingual Complex Verbs*

In this section, we will examine those Chinese borrowed verbs that are built with a helping verb to form bilingual complex verbs in Dongxiang. We will also try to understand to what extent the helping verb *giə* 'to do' can be analysed as a borrowed auxiliary verb.

4.2.1 Helping Verb (HP) *giə* 'do'

Among the helping verbs used with borrowed Chinese verbs, *giə* 'to do' < MMo SHM *ki-* 'to do' is by far the most productive.<sup>16</sup> When adjoined to borrowed Chinese verbs, it is used only with Chinese bimorphemic and thus disyllabic words, and not with monosyllabic ones. As mentioned above, the Chinese borrowed verb bears the lexical meaning while the helping verb takes all the verbal morphology a regular verb would. Out of the 430 verbs built with the helping verb, 274 are of Chinese origin, 25 are of other origin (Arabic, Turkic and Persian), and 131 are endemic stems.

Endemic stems include mostly ideophones (often onomatopoeic words) to which the helping verb *giə* 'to do' is adjoined to produce verbs, e.g.:

- (14) *ururu giə-* 'to run very fast' (verb) < *ururu* 'something done very quickly' (ideophone).
- (15) *riri guagua giə-* 'squawk in fear' (verb) < *riri guagua* 'the sound of surprised chickens' (onomatopoeia).

Exceptionally (20 instances out of 131), the helping verb *giə* is used to produce verbs with endemic nouns, e.g.: *dzəvu giə*<sup>17</sup> (lawsuit + do) 'to make a lawsuit'. Other [V + *giə*] compounds are based on child speech words which are very close to ideophones, e.g.: *a giə* lit.: to do "a" 'to eat', based on the mouth open and the sound produced when children are fed; *badan giə* lit.: to do "badam" 'to fall', based on the onomatopoeia used for someone falling, equivalent of English "kaboom", etc. Therefore, we consider that, when it is adjoined to native stems, the helping verb *giə-* is primarily a productive verb used to produce verbs from ideophones.

What concerns us here is that the helping verb *giə-* is used with nouns and verbs of Chinese origin too. In fact, the majority of the verbs built with *giə-* in our corpus are based on Chinese stems belonging to all categories of words (274 out of 430).<sup>18</sup> Among those, only a few verbs are built on Chinese adject-

16 Other verbs that can be considered as helping verbs which can be combined with Chinese borrowed verbs include *əvu* 'to hit' and *olu* 'to become, to do', but they often form calques of the Chinese bimorphemic verbs, hence they calque the Chinese and are not productive.

17 The same association is found in Chakhar Mongolian  $\text{ᠳᠵᠢᠪᠦ ᠵᠢᠭᠢ}$  *dzarǰy xi-* 'to make a lawsuit'.

18 Interestingly, the HV *gie* 'to do' is formally identical to the verb *gie* 'to say'. As with the HV *gie* 'to do', its use with onomatopoeia and child speech suggests it might have come into the language as part of the initial contact between DX and Chinese speakers.

ives, e.g.: *jəutʂəu giə-* ‘to worry’ < *jəutʂəu* 忧愁 ‘sad’ (adjective); *dayi giə-* ‘to be careless’ < *daji* 大意 ‘careless’ (adjective).

Of the 275 verbs formed with the helping verb *giə-*, 215 are built with Chinese borrowed verbs. Chinese compound verbs can be of two types, separable [V+O] (e.g. *shuō//huà* 说话 ‘talk, speak’) and inseparable [V+V] (e.g. *gòumǎi* 购买 ‘to buy’). However, Dongxiang borrows Chinese verbs without distinguishing the original type of verb, that is to say that both types are borrowed as one inseparable unit (16, 17):

Chinese [V+V] inseparable compound verb constructions, e.g. *baoxu giə* ‘to protect’ < *baoxu* 保护 ‘to protect’

- (16) *mataŋ gojə dzidziəvan xoŋdzin-ni      baoxu giə-ku      wo.*  
 1PL self be.aware environment-ACC protect HV-I.NMLZ COP  
 ‘We should take care of the environment ourselves’ (Lefort 2022)

Chinese [V+O] separable compound verbs constructions, e.g. *kaidə giə* ‘to perform an operation’ < *kɛ<sup>243</sup>dɔ<sup>243</sup>* 开刀 ‘to perform an operation’

- (17) *hela fuzubu      udziəsiliən hə-ni      kaidə      giə-wo*  
 3PL yesterday evening      3-ACC operation HV-PFV  
 ‘They operated him yesterday evening’ (Bühé 1986:24)

This strategy is opposed to the ‘calquing’ strategy where the stems are identified as objects and verbs, and reflected in the reversed word order (Mongolic OV instead of Sinitic VO), but replace the Chinese lexical material by Mongolic one by keeping the original word category of each stem (see section 3.2 above for calque mechanism).

One criterion for understanding whether or not the helping verb is an auxiliary, is the separability of the Chinese borrowed verb and the helping verb *giə*, which appears to be irregular in Dongxiang: the negation can be inserted between the borrowed verb and the helping verb (18) or before the construction (19):

- (18) *ɕiaŋɕin əsə      giə-wo*  
 believe NEG HV-PFV  
 ‘(She) did not believe’ (Lefort 2012:539)

- (19) *ənə əsə      ts<sup>h</sup>uoguo giə-wo*  
 DEM NEG mistake HV-PFV  
 ‘This was not a mistake’ (Lefort 2012:327)

Again, the initial separable or inseparable features of the Chinese borrowed verb is not reflected in Dongxiang. In (18), the Chinese borrowed verb and the helping verb are treated as two separated stems; the lexical borrowed verb is the object of the auxiliary. In (19) the compound borrowed verb and the auxiliary are treated as a single unit, and is lexicalised in an intransitive verbal structure. The auxiliary is treated as the head, while the lexical verb provides the semantic meaning. Therefore, the separability of the Chinese borrowed verb and the auxiliary is not related to the Chinese verb structure, but rather to the transitive or intransitive nature of the verb.

When combined with verbs of Chinese origin, we consider that the helping verb *giə* is a Chinese helping verb added to bimorphemic verbs (as opposed to the suffixes *.ji* and *.dzi* described above that are mainly combined with monomorphemic verbs). Therefore, there is a clear distribution between the two types of verb formatives. However, they do not completely function in the same manner, as the Chinese borrowed verbs formed by auxiliation in [V<sub>CN+</sub> *giə*<sub>do</sub>] can be separated from the auxiliary *giə*<sub>do</sub> if the compound forms a transitive verb, which of course is not the case with Chinese borrowed verbs formed by suffixation.

#### 4.3 *Summary*

Dongxiang has developed specific morphology for Chinese borrowed verbs, that is to say the derivational suffixes *.ji* and *.dzi*, and a helping verb *giə*. The other endemic suffixes *.da* and *.la* are primarily derivational suffixes used with other categories of words (nouns and adjectives) but may occasionally be used with borrowed verbs. This can be interpreted in two different manners, either that the suffixes have extended their functions so to derive specifically Chinese borrowed verbs, or that the Chinese borrowed verbs are treated as stems belonging to another category of words.

As most of the verbs in Linxia Chinese are monosyllabic (Liú et al. 1996:160), it is probable that Dongxiang borrowed these first. With the increasing contact of Linxia Chinese with Northwestern Mandarin and Standard Chinese, it can be assumed that the number of bisyllabic verbs in Linxia Chinese increased. Dongxiang may have later developed the use of the helping verb *giə* 'to do' because new integration tools were needed for those bisyllabic verbs.

One interesting point is that Dongxiang [N + 'to do'] compound verb constructions (where the noun is an endemic stem), and [V + 'to do'] compound verbs (where the verb can only be a borrowed verb) partially corroborate results found in bilingual contexts involving other languages (see the above-cited Muysken 2016; Moravcsik 1978; Nishimura 1985, etc.). However, unlike these types of situations, Dongxiang does not replace the nominal item by a verbal

one, as borrowed nouns can also be combined with the helping verb to build new verbs. Therefore, the auxiliary *giə* is 1) mainly an ideophone and occasionally a noun verbaliser for Mongolic material and 2) a device that integrates Chinese bisyllabic verbs into Dongxiang.

## 5 Bilingual Verbs in the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language (DMCL)

In this section, we provide an overview, based on Bāo Liánqún's description (2011), of the contact-induced phenomena in the Dörbed language and the Dörbed Mongolian Community Language. The DMCL is a highly mixed variety of language in which syntax and grammatical components are based on the Dörbed Mongolian language and the lexicon component consists of an extensive number of Chinese elements. This process can be considered as a kind of 'relexification'. Therefore, although it does not completely fit the canonical definitions of a mixed language given in Bakker and Mous (1994), it may still be regarded as one (Bāo 2011:307–365). However, as already stated, the DMCL is not stable. In fact, the degree of 'mixing' greatly varies from one individual to another and is related to the age group the speakers belongs to and the speaker's knowledge of Dörbed Mongolian, Standard Mongolian, Northeastern Chinese and Standard Chinese. A higher rate of Mongolian verbs is found in the speech of those with good knowledge of Mongolian, whereas higher rates of Chinese verbs are found in the speech of those with lower proficiency in Mongolian. In her corpus, Bao (Bāo 2011: 159–161) records 273 verbs in the speech of 6 speakers, aged 17 to 64, and, using her intuition as a native speaker for her analysis, finds 81 bilingual verbs. Thus, bilingual verb use in the DMCL is closely related to the speaker's age.

Example (20) below is a typical instance of a DMCL sentence including Chinese borrowed verbs. The Mongolic SOV word order, the main grammatical morphemes and the Mongolic verbal morphology are conserved, but most of the lexical elements (content morphemes) are Chinese. In other words, Mongolian syntax and inflexion patterns (genitive and accusative case markers, converbs, etc.) are conserved, while the lexicon is almost purely Chinese. Therefore, the DMCL both differs from Mongolian proper, and also sets itself apart from Chinese. Note that the Chinese lexical elements are realized without tones and stressed on the first syllable, thus following Dörbed Mongolian phonological rules:

- (20) *ʂuɕyǝ-nɛ: kǝ-gi: tɛ:n dzunbǝi-jix xǝrǝg-tɛ:*  
 math-GEN class-ACC good prepare-FUT need-COM  
 'I must prepare for the math class'

*ʂuɕyǝ* < *shùxué* 数学 'mathematics' / *kǝ* < *kè* 课 'class' / *dzunbǝi* < *zhǔnbèi* 准备 'prepare'

In the DMCL we find the same two kinds of bilingual verbs built with Chinese borrowed verbs as in Dongxiang: a) inserted verbs, illustrated in (21) and (22), and b) bilingual complex verbs (23) (see Bão 2011: 155).

*dɛ:nχʊa* < *diànhuà* 电话 *da-* < *dǎ* 打, from the expression *dǎ diànhuà* 打电话 lit.: hit telephone 'make a call'.

- (21) *bi: dɛ:nχʊa da-na*  
 1SG telephone hit-FUT  
 'I will make a call'

*anmǝtɕi* < *anmoqi* 按摩器 'massager' / *anmǝ* < *anmo* 按摩 'to massage'

- (22) *toŋɛye-tɛ:-ya:n ʂanliǝŋ.ǝl-na:*  
 classmate-COM-R discuss-PRS  
 '(I) would like to discuss with my classmate'

- (23) *bi: anmǝtɕi-ger anmǝ χi-ne:*  
 1SG massage.machine-INST massage do-PRS  
 'I will have a massage with the machine'

The verb *da-* 'to hit' in example (21) is a direct borrowing suffixed by the present-future tense marker *-na:* without the addition of a derivational suffix in between. In example (22), the borrowed verb *ʂanliǝŋ* is derived with the suffix *.ǝl*<sup>19</sup> and further suffixed with the present-future tense marker *-na:*. The insertion of *na:* is entirely conditioned by the ending of the borrowed verb: when the Chinese borrowed verb ends with a nasal *ŋ*,<sup>20</sup> it has to bear the suffix *.ǝl* before taking a native tense or aspectual (T/A) marker, but in other cases,

19 The suffix *.ǝl* might be related to the denominal 'infinitive' verb suffix *.la*, but further investigations should be conducted.

20 According to Janhunen (2003:183), final *\*ŋ* and *\*n* have merged into a single neutralized nasal in all the Northeastern Mongolian dialects.

this is not necessary. The suffix *.əl* enables the stem to adapt phonologically and has crystallized in one unique form *.əl* that is not responding to vowel harmony.

Therefore, DMCL inserted verbs can be further divided into two subcategories:

Type 1.a)  $V_{CN} + T/A$

Type 1.b)  $V_{CN}$  with *-ŋ* ending +  $SUF + T/A$

As the suffix *.əl* does not act as a morphological device, we consider that the verbs are borrowed as both lexical labels (signifiers) and predicate-initiating devices (verbs).

In (23), the verb structure is more complex and is composed of the borrowed verb *anmo* and the helping verb *xi* 'to do' in a complex compound structure:

Type 2)  $V_{CN} + \chi i$ - 'do'

The distribution between bare borrowed verb  $[V_{T/A}]$  and  $[V + V_{to\ do\ T/A}]$  constructions is fuzzy and can vary according to the speaker, indicating that the process has not completely stabilized. However, monosyllabic borrowed verbs tend to be used without further adaptation (except when they end with a nasal and should bear the suffix *.əl*) while disyllabic verbs can either have tense and aspectual markers added directly, or be used with a helping verb in  $[V + V_{to\ do}]$  constructions. For both monosyllabic and disyllabic verbs with a nasal coda, the suffix *.əl* is compulsory if they are to receive further morphological markers, and most of the verbs ending with a nasal are of Chinese origin. Therefore, depending on their type, Chinese borrowed verbs 1) can be directly suffixed by verbal markers of Mongolian origin (including tense, aspect, nominalizers, etc.) if they end with any phoneme other than  $[ŋ]$ , 2) have to be suffixed by a derivational suffix before receiving further flexional morphology, or 3) can be followed by the Mongolian helping verb *xi* 'to do' before receiving further flexional morphology. Chinese borrowed verbs cannot receive any type of derivational suffixes other than the suffix *.əl*.

Endemic nouns can also be used in  $[N + \text{'to do'}]$  compounds:

- (24) *Bi dasgāl χi-ne:*  
 1SG homework do-PRS  
 'I am doing homework'

In [N + V<sub>do</sub>] constructions where the noun is Mongolic, the nominal stem is often replaced by a borrowed verb in [V<sub>CN</sub>+V<sub>do</sub>] in equivalent constructions, which corresponds to the universal pattern described by Muysken (2016):

(25) a. *bi dabtɜlɜy ɣi-ne:*  
 1SG revision do-PRS  
 ‘I am doing revision’

b. \**bi dabtɜlɜy-na*  
 1SG revision-PRS  
 ‘I am doing revision’

(26) a. *bi fuci ɣi-ne:*  
 1SG revision do-PRS  
 ‘I am revising’

b. *bi fuci-ne:*  
 1SG revise-PRS  
 ‘I am doing revision’

The replacement of endemic nouns in [N + HV] patterns by borrowed verbs illustrated here for the DMCL is a frequent phenomenon found cross-linguistically (Muysken 2000, 2016; Medina 2020; Purmohammad et al. 2022, etc.). From the examples above, we see that borrowed verbs do not react in the same manner as native nouns do (25b). The borrowed verb is directly suffixed with tense (26b) and hence treated like a verb. It is plausible that, depending on how the speaker processes the information, the borrowed verb is interpreted as a noun or a verb, and therefore one or the other strategy (direct suffixation or previous accommodation through a helping verb) is chosen.

Another sign that the borrowed verb is not always interpreted as a verb in the DMCL is that it can be negated either by inserting the negation between the borrowed verb and the helping verb, or before the borrowed verb:

(27) a. *bu anmo ɣi*  
 NEG<sub>IMP</sub> message do  
 ‘Don’t get a massage!’

b. *anmo bu ɣi*  
 message NEG<sub>IMP</sub> do  
 ‘Don’t get a massage!’

Both structures in the example above are acceptable<sup>21</sup> and not restricted to the transitivity of the borrowed verb.

Although different strata of verb borrowings are probably observable in the DMCL, we do not have sufficient data to establish different periods of contact and borrowings for the time being. Again, as great variation is observed within the group of speakers of the DMCL, the phonological form of the borrowed verb (closer to Northeastern Mandarin or to Standard Chinese) may be related to the speaker's knowledge of the different Chinese varieties, as well as to the interlocuter addressed and to the context of the interaction. The only hints for assessing the period of introduction of a lexical item are from the meaning of the verb itself, that is to say, the historical, political or social context, or from the introduction of a new technology or concept likely to have motivated a borrowing (e.g. *dadi xi* < *dǎdǐ* 打的 'take/call a taxi'; *dagong xi* < *dǎgōng* 打工 'get a part-time job', etc.).

## 6 Discussion

We have shown that both the Dongxiang language and the Dörbed Mongolic Community Language, two Mongolic varieties spoken by bilingual communities fluent in a Mongolic variety and in a Chinese variety, frequently use verbs of Chinese origin integrated through various means into the native Mongolic language and bearing native (Mongolic) flectional morphology. In both varieties, these Chinese morphemes lose their original prosodic (tonal) features. Both in Dongxiang and in the DMCL, bilingual verbs fall into two main types, a) the inserted stems type, and b) the bilingual complex verbs type using a helping verb.

There are, however, several differences between the verbs that fall in the type a) (inserted verb):

1. In Dongxiang, all borrowed verbs need to be adapted with a morphological device (suffix or helping verb) regardless of their morphological template (monomorphemic, bimorphemic, nasal ending or vowel ending). On the other hand, Chinese verbs borrowed in the DMCL can be used in their bare form as they are found in Chinese, and directly suffixed by tense and aspectual markers if they end with a vowel. The suffix *.əl* is

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21 The reader may refer for more information to Bào (2011), who gave DMCL bilingual verbs detailed treatment.

only needed for verbs ending with the nasal  $\eta$  and is used as a phonological adapter.

2. The suffixes added to Dongxiang bilingual verbs function both in terms of phonological adaptation *and* morphological derivation, whereas the DMCL suffix *.əl* functions only as a phonological adapter. Therefore, we are dealing with two types of suffixes: a phonological adapter in the DMCL and a morphonological adapter in Dongxiang. In the DMCL verbs are borrowed both as lexical labels (signifiers) and as predicate-initiating devices (verbs) as per Matras' terms (2009:182), whereas in Dongxiang they are only borrowed as lexical labels (otherwise, they would not need further suffixation).
3. Dongxiang has developed specific suffixes dedicated to the integration of borrowed verbs that adapt them according to their phonological type (*.ji* and *.dzi*). These suffixes cannot be used on verbs of Mongolic origin. DMCL does not need further adaptation other than in the case of Chinese verbs with a nasal ending, according to a general rule applying to native verbs as well.
4. In Dongxiang, certain derivational suffixes of Mongolic origin can be applied to Chinese borrowed verbs, nouns, and even adjectives, without any phonological or morphological restriction. In the DMCL, the use of Mongolic derivational suffixes is restricted to Mongolian stems and they cannot be added to Chinese borrowed verbs. Therefore, there is a clear distribution between native and alien items in the DMCL, whereas in Dongxiang, the line is blurred when native suffixes are added.

As for bilingual complex verbs, the processing is similar in both languages: they can negate the whole compound [BV + HV] or only the helping verb. However, they also demonstrate several differences:

5. The separability of the Chinese borrowed verb and the helping verb is subject to transitivity conditions in Dongxiang, while in the DMCL, it seems to be more flexible and subject to the speaker's interpretation.
6. A [N + V<sub>do</sub>] pattern with a native noun is found in the DMCL and seems easily replaceable by borrowed verbs, as is the case in the bilingual communities described in Muysken (2016). There are no cases of a pattern [N + V<sub>do</sub>] with native nouns that can be replaced by borrowed verbs in Dongxiang.
7. Finally, the distribution between disyllabic [V + HV<sub>do</sub>] and monosyllabic [V-SUF] in Dongxiang is more rigid than in the DMCL, where the integration strategy depends on the speaker's choice.

## 7 Conclusion

In this paper, we have described the integration strategies of Chinese borrowed verbs in the Dongxiang language and the DMCL. Our comparative analysis has shown that, although the donor and receiving languages involved in the contacts described are similar (Mongolic and Chinese), the sociolinguistic context and environment in which each language evolves has an effect on the production of bilingual verbs. For the time being, no common pattern can be established.

The Dongxiang derivational process is obligatory, and verbs cannot be used in their bare forms while in the DMCL, borrowed verbs can be used without further morphological adaptation. In this, Dongxiang is more 'conservative' in terms of morphological derivation than the DMCL, and its borrowed verbs are treated as lexical labels rather than predicate-initiating devices. In the DMCL, Chinese borrowed verbs can be inserted without further suffixation, which means they are processed as predicate-initiating devices, that is, exactly as Mongolic verbs are. Moreover, Dongxiang demonstrate a clear monosyllabic/disyllabic borrowed verb suffix distribution and a large set of suffixes that can be added to Chinese borrowed verbs whereas the DMCL morphology is restricted to a single phonological adapter. Finally, DMCL bilingual complex verbs seem to mirror endemic nominal constructions, whereas in Dongxiang, bilingual complex verbs are largely lexicalised. This partially contradicts Muysken's (2016) conclusions on the universality of an endemic [N + helping verb] pattern shift to [V + helping verb] in bilingual speech introduced above in section 3.1.

If we accept that borrowed verb integration forms a continuum, as per Matras' (2009:176) hypothesis, speakers of the DMCL use strategies found at the two extremes. Further research should focus on the speakers' profile to see if the choice of one strategy or another is conditioned by a speaker's social profile. On the other hand, the strategies used by Dongxiang speakers are quite consistent and are closer to each other in the continuum.

These discrepancies can partially be explained by the difference in the types of contact the two communities underwent. Dongxiang is a stable bilingual community that has been in prolonged contact with Linxia Chinese for many centuries whereas the DMCL is a newly emerged variety which demonstrates great variation.

The varieties of Chinese the two Mongolic languages have been in contact with are also very different, and this may have had an effect on the development of specific morphology for Chinese borrowed verbs. As monosyllabic verbal forms prevail in Linxia Chinese, Dongxiang has developed specific morpho-

logy to adapt the monosyllabic borrowed verbs to produce disyllabic verbs in order to better match disyllabic Mongolic verbal forms. On the other hand, the Northeastern Mandarin variety spoken in Heilongjiang features more disyllabic verbs which can be directly borrowed as they already match the Dörbed Mongolian language disyllabic word template. Therefore, it is easier for Dörbed speakers to identify Northeastern Chinese verbs as predicate-initiating devices than for Dongxiang speakers confronted with Linxia verbs. The choice of the type of bilingual verbs in the DMCL greatly depends on the speaker and does not respond to strict rules other than phonological adaptation, which indicates that speakers have different way to process the verbs.

In Dongxiang, these verbs have been completely integrated through morphophonologic means and can be considered *lexical borrowings* as per Matras's terms (Matras 2009:175–187) rather than typical bilingual verbs found in bilingual speech as per Muysken's definition (Muysken 2000).

In the DMCL, the way verbs are processed is closely linked to the speaker's knowledge of the Chinese language, whether a dialectal variety or Standard Chinese, and is also conditioned by a series of social factors (age, family background, education, etc) (Bāo 2011: 159–161). Hence the process is closer to code-mixing.

In Dongxiang, the process seems to be related to word *integration*, that is to say to morphophonologically adapt the verb so it becomes 'Dongxiang-nised', whereas in the DMCL it is related to word *replacement*, that is to say to borrow a verb in such a way that it becomes grammatically acceptable as a verb, but is formally Chinese, although with a clear awareness that the word has a Mongolian equivalent remaining. This can be explained by the fact that Dongxiang speakers do not have a genetically related prestigious language in their close environment to refer to, whether used in written form or in formal contexts. On the other hand, Dörbed Mongols have Standard Mongolian as a reference and their use of bilingual verbs is not motivated by the need to enrich a Mongolian lexicon from which some items are lacking. Instead, bilingual verbs have emerged to replace native Mongolic verbs in the speech of speakers losing fluency in their own language.

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