

Chapter 3

Tense and insubordination in Uilta (Orok)

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The paper describes the tense category in Uilta, a critically endangered Tungusic language, from a functional and diachronic perspective. The functional analysis, based on the author's fieldwork, provides a comprehensive typological description of the Uilta tense system. Similarly to other Tungusic languages, the diachronic development of this system and its current shape and complexity are largely the result of the processes of insubordination (replacement of finite verbal forms by non-finite forms in predicative use).

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose and scope of this paper

The paper offers a comprehensive functional analysis of the tense system of the Tungusic language Uilta (Orok), based largely on the author's own fieldwork, and partially on existing descriptions.¹ The previous descriptions of the Uilta tense system are either incomplete or contradicting, partially due to dialectal differences, as well as diachronic changes. The present analysis aims to account for those differences through different degrees and stages of the processes of insubordination (cf. Evans 2007).

Insubordination, the development of non-finite (participial) into finite (verbal) forms, is a prominent factor in the development of the TAM systems of Tungusic

¹Uilta is the endonym and is strongly preferred by the community over the exonym Orok. Both terms are used in the literature.



languages, which underwent repeated cycles of renewal of finite verbal forms through participles (Malchukov 2013). It will be shown that similar diachronic processes account for the current shape and peculiarities of the Uilta tense system.

1.2 Basic information about Uilta

While there is no universally accepted internal classification of Tungusic, most authors agree on placing Northern Tungusic (represented by Even and Evenki) and Southern Tungusic (the Jurchen/Manchu group) in separate branches, with the remaining groupings, Udegheic and Nanaic, variously assigned to one of the two branches, to a separate (Southeastern) branch, or to branches of their own (Whaley & Oskolskaya 2020). Uilta is a member of the Nanaic (sub-)branch. It is spoken exclusively on the island of Sakhalin, in the Russian Federation. This relative isolation from the rest of the family led to the development of a number of innovations not attested in the languages spoken on the mainland (Pevnov 2016).

The two Uilta dialects, Northern and Southern, are mutually intelligible and historically formed a dialect continuum. The language is critically endangered, with five fluent speakers remaining, all in their seventies, of which four are speakers of the Northern dialect, centered on the village of Val in the Nogliki raion, and one of the Southern dialect, in the city of Poronaysk.²

Uilta has been in close areal contact with Sakhalin Nivkh for at least 300 years (Yamada 2010a), and shares numerous features in the lexical and, to a lesser degree, grammatical domain (Pevnov 2016). Much later, from the mid-19th century onwards, it came into contact with Sakhalin Evenki, a later entrant in the northern part of Sakhalin (Yamada 2010a). Contact with Sakhalin Evenki accounts for a number of distinct features of the Northern dialect compared to the Southern dialect of Uilta (Ikegami 2001 [1994]).

1.3 Insubordination in Tungusic

“Canonical” insubordination, as introduced into linguistic typology by Evans (2007), involves “conventionalized main clause use of what, on prima facie grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans 2007: 367). A variant

²Historically, different Uilta clans lived as reindeer herders along different rivers on the east coast of central and northern Sakhalin, and migrated yearly between the coast and the mountains in the central part of the island. They were forcibly settled in the 1950s, around a collective farm in Val, Nogliki raion, and Yuzhnyj ostrov, Poronaysk.

of this process, labelled “verbalisation” in Malchukov (2013), involves reanalysis of a nominal (participial) predicate into a verbal predicate. Both scenarios are illustrated below for Even (Northern Tungusic), after Malchukov (2013).

Insubordination “proper”: Reanalysis of a sentential argument as a main clause:

[S PART-AGR.POSS] [COP] → [S PART-AGR.POSS] ∅ → [S] [V-AGR.POSS]

(1) Even

- a. *[Bej-il hör-ri-ten] bi-d'i-n.*
 man-PL go-NFUT(PART)-3PL(POSS) be-FUT-3SG
 ‘The men probably left.’ (Literally: ‘The men’s leaving will be.’)
- b. *Bej-il hör-ri-ten.*
 man-PL go-PST-3PL(POSS)
 ‘The men left.’ (Malchukov 2013: 182)

Verbalization: Reanalysis of a nominal predicate into a verbal predicate:

[S] [N/PART] [COP] → [S] [V2 AUX] (→ [S] [V]).

(2) Even

- a. *Bej [hör-če] [bi-si-n].*
 man go-PFV be-PST-3SG
 ‘The man was gone.’
- b. *Bej [hör-če bi-si-n].*
 man go-PFV be-PST-3SG
 ‘The man had left.’ (Malchukov 2013: 181)

In the first scenario, the subject complement clause followed by the existential verb is reanalysed as an independent clause. Typically for Tungusic, the non-finite complement clause has the form of a nominal possessive phrase. Possessive agreement on the participle indicates the subordinate subject. In (1b), the same participial form now forms the predicate of the verbal clause, but retains the (nominal) possessive subject agreement. In the second scenario, the nominal (participial) predicate followed by the existential verb is reanalysed as a periphrastic verbal (pluperfect) construction.

The two processes exemplified above for Even led to gradual replacement of finite TAM forms by forms of participial origin in the verbal paradigms of all branches of Tungusic, and account for a number of peculiarities in their grammatical structures: weak distinction between nominal and verbal forms; inherent

ambiguity of certain tense forms despite rich inventories of distinct markers; the presence of nominal (possessive) agreement paradigms in the (finite) verbal domain (Malchukov 2013).

Furthermore, as demonstrated by Robbeets (2009, 2015) and Malchukov & Czerwinski (2020), the process of replacement of finite forms by participles in repeated cycles of insubordination is prevalent in all “Macro-Altaic”³ languages, and its preponderance can be viewed as one of their characteristic features.

More broadly, as demonstrated by Malchukov (2013) and Malchukov & Czerwinski (2021), this tendency is not limited to “Macro-Altaic”, and instead constitutes an areal feature (diachronic isogloss) of Siberian languages generally, including Paleosiberian (Chukotko-Kamchatkan, Eskimo-Aleut, Nivkh, Yeniseian and Yukaghir) and Uralic languages.

The gradual replacement of finite (verbal) through non-finite (participial) forms leads to competition between old and new forms, often resulting in functional shifts in the relevant verbal categories. This is well documented for South-eastern Tungusic languages (i.e. Udegheic and Nanaic, see §1.2 above), which all retain forms of both finite and participial origin, to varying degrees. As the imperfective and perfective participles acquire predicative function and general present/past meaning respectively, the erstwhile finite forms are pushed out from general present/past use and acquire direct evidential, and later affirmative-emphatic, meaning through a process known as markedness reversal (Croft 2002 [1990]). In the past domain, the development from resultative through perfect to (indirect evidential) past is a universal grammaticalisation path, well-attested cross-linguistically (Bybee et al. 1994). Competition between forms at each stage leads to further development from perfect to (non-witnessed) past to general past, and the parallel development of erstwhile finite forms from (unmarked) indicative first into direct evidential, and later into affirmative-emphatic. Different Tungusic languages display different stages of this development. This is illustrated below for Southeastern Tungusic (Udegheic and Nanaic; Figure 1, adapted from Malchukov 2000: 454).⁴

This competition between forms, with the resulting functional shifts, occurred in Uilta in all three temporal domains, past, present and future, and is a key factor in understanding both the diachronic development and the current shape of the Uilta tense system.

³Here and elsewhere, “Macro-Altaic” is used as an areal-typological label, without any claims regarding genetic relatedness of the families in question (Turkic, Mongolic, Tungusic, Koreanic and Japonic).

⁴The figure in Malchukov (2000) listed Uilta as representing the final, fourth stage, based on a previous description. It was modified to reflect the fact that the finite past form is marginally retained in Uilta, as per other descriptions and as confirmed by the present author (see §3.3 below).

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	1 st stage		2 nd stage		3 rd stage		4 th stage
Participial:	(Resultative)	>	Perfect/indirect evid.	>	Preterite	>	General past
Finite:	General past	>	Imperfect/direct evid.	>	Validational	>	∅
			Udihe		Nanai		

Figure 1: Evolution of past tense forms in Southeastern Tungusic (adapted from Malchukov 2000: 454)

§2 of the paper outlines the Uilta tense system. §2.2 lists previous descriptions, with the relevant information on the attested forms, the period of data collection and the dialect they pertain to. §3, §4 and §5 provide functional analysis of the past, present and future tense forms respectively, as well as their diachronic development through different scenarios of insubordination. §6 provides a summary and conclusions.

2 Uilta tense system

2.1 Overview

The contemporary Uilta tense system consists of nine (Northern dialect) or eight forms (Southern dialect; the general future form in *-li* is attested only in the Northern dialect). They are listed below according to their origin. The forms in the right-hand column are the old finite forms. They are mono-functional, i.e. can be used exclusively as the predicate of a main clause, and take subject agreement of the verbal type (see below). The forms in the left-hand column, grammaticalised from the perfective, imperfective and future participles, are poly-functional (retain their function as participles/nominalisations on top of their function as the main clause predicate), and take agreement of the nominal (possessive) type.

2.2 Existing descriptions

Existing descriptions of tense in Uilta go back over a hundred years (see Yamada 2013 for a comprehensive overview). Table 2, adapted from Yamada (2013: 90), lists them all, specifying which dialect they pertain to, the period of data collection, and the forms attested.

Table 1: Tense forms in Uilta

	Participial	Finite
Past	general past in <i>-xAn</i> pluperfect in <i>-xA- bi-čči</i>	direct evid./affirm.-emph. past in <i>-tAA</i>
Present	general present in <i>+RI</i>	direct evid./emph./mirative present in <i>+RAkkA</i>
Future	general future in <i>-li</i> (N dialect) probable future in <i>+Rlli</i>	immediate spontaneous future in <i>+RlIA</i> likely/anticipated future in <i>+RAηA</i>

Table 2: Existing descriptions of tense in Uilta (adapted from Yamada 2013: 90)

Author	Period	Dialect	Past	Present	Future
Piłsudski (Majewicz 2011)	1900	S	<i>-xAn</i>	<i>+RI</i>	–
Nakanome 1917	1910	S	<i>-xAn</i>	<i>+RI</i>	–
Magata 1981	1920–1930	S	<i>-xAn</i> <i>-tAA</i>	<i>+RI</i> <i>+RAkkA</i>	<i>+RlIA</i>
Petrova 1967	1930–1940	N	<i>-xAn</i>	<i>+RI</i>	<i>-llee</i> <i>+RlIA</i>
Ikegami 2001 [1959]	1940–1950	S	<i>-xAn</i> <i>-tAA</i>	<i>+RI</i> <i>+RAkkA</i>	<i>+RlIA</i> <i>+RAηA</i> <i>+Rlli</i>
Tsumagari 2009	1940–1980	S	<i>-xAn</i> <i>-tAA</i>	<i>+RI</i> <i>+RAkkA</i>	<i>+RlIA</i>
Ozolinja 2013	1990–2000	N	<i>-xAn</i>	<i>+RI</i>	<i>+RlIA</i>

The next three sections describe the category of tense in Uilta from a functional perspective, based on the author's own fieldwork.⁵ The analysis by the author will be reconciled with existing descriptions, particularly with regard to diachronic development. It will be shown that this development is best explained through the processes of insubordination. This part is based on and expands on the work on insubordination in Tungusic by Malchukov (2000, 2013).

3 Past domain

In the past domain, Uilta has three forms, general past in *-xAn*, pluperfect in *-xA- bi-čči* [-PST-AGR be-PFV], and direct evidential/affirmative-emphatic in *-tAA*. The forms in *-xAn* and *-xA- bi-čči* grammaticalised from the perfective participle in *-xAn*, and retain the person/number agreement paradigm of the nominal (possessive) type, in contrast with the form in *-tAA* which takes person/number agreement of the (finite) verbal type (Table 3).⁶

Table 3: Person/ number agreement paradigms of Uilta past tense forms.

Number	Person	<i>-xAn</i>	<i>-tAA</i>
Singular	1 st	<i>-xA-mbi</i>	<i>-tA-mmee</i>
	2 nd	<i>-xA-si</i>	<i>-tA-ssee</i>
	3 rd	<i>-xA-ni</i>	<i>-tAA</i>
Plural	1 st	<i>-xA-pu</i>	<i>-tA-ppOO</i>
	2 nd	<i>-xA-su</i>	<i>-tA-ssOO</i>
	3 rd	<i>-xA-či</i>	<i>-tAA-l</i>

3.1 General past in *-xAn*

The general past form in *-xAn* is by far the most frequent past form, with the other two forms limited to specific contexts (see §3.2 and §3.3 below). In some conjugational classes the perfective participle/general past tense takes the form *-či*. It is unclear whether the forms in *-xAn* and *-či* are cognate or heteroclitic (Malchukov 2000). The form in *-xAn* is used in recent (3) and remote past contexts (4), and with punctual (5), durative (6) and habitual meanings (7):

⁵Unless otherwise stated, Uilta data and findings come from the author's own fieldwork.

⁶Unlike most Tungusic languages, Uilta has no inclusive/exclusive first person plural distinction.

- (3) *Pakčira-du-xa-ni. Siweeskə-bi dagjita.*
 get.dark-REITER-PST-3SG candle-1SG.POSS burn(TRANS)+1SG.HORT
 ‘It got dark. Let me light a candle.’
- (4) *Bii nuuč-i-jji ηələ-xə-mpi ηinda-l-ji.*
 1SG little-INSTR.REFL fear-PST-1SG dog-PL-INSTR
 ‘When I was little, I was afraid of dogs.’
- (5) *Ča-du bi-čči-ndulə-ni bii əigə-təkki gumaaska*
 that-LOC be-PFV(PST)-LOC-3SG 1SG older.sister-ALL.REFL money
buu-xə-mpi.
 give-PST-1SG
 ‘Because he had lived there, I gave my sister money.’
- (6) *Tari ənu-či narree goroo daputa-xa-či okči-či-kku*
 this fall.ill-PFV man+ACC long.time+EMPH hold-PST-3PL heal-DUR-place
duku-du.
 house-LOC
 ‘They kept this sick man in the hospital for a long time.’
- (7) *Niməri-ηəssəə-wwee, mittəi aptauli-mba tøyə-xə-či.*
 visit-CONCUR.PST.CONV-1SG 1SG.ALL tasty-ACC treat-PST-3PL
 ‘When I visited [them], they always treated me to something tasty.’

It is also the form most often used in narratives, as in (8):

- (8) *Niiwənikəən balji-xa-ndulli xaali=ddaa suunəə*
 Niiwənikəən(PN) grow(INTR)-PFV(PST)-LOC.REFL how=FOC sun+ACC
ə-čči-ni ittəə.
 NEG.AUX-PST-3SG see+CONN
 ‘When he was growing up, Niiwənikəən never saw the sun.’

On top of its predicative use, the form in *-xAn* retains its original use as the perfective participle (which in all Tungusic languages has double adnominal/nominal function; example 9, cf. also examples 6, 23 and 29).⁷

- (9) *Tari puttə iiwu-xə-mbə-ni sundattaa əni-ni təldə-xə-ni.*
 that child bring.in-PFV-ACC-3SG fish+ACC mother-3SG.POSS fillet-PST-3SG
 ‘The mother filleted the fish that the son brought.’

⁷As in other Tungusic languages, participles are also the main strategy for relative clauses, both pre-nominal (cf. 42) and internally headed (9, 49), complement clauses (32) and, with oblique cases, one of the two strategies for adverbial clauses (5, 8, 12, 15, 39, 45).

In line with its origin as the perfective participle, while firmly established as a general past tense form in predicative use, in a limited number of cases the meaning of *-xA_n* is closer to the resultative or perfect than a pure tense form (Yamada 2013: 98):

- (10) *Nu, əsi=ləkə dəgdə-xə-či əmbee.*
 INTJ now=TOP burn-PST-3PL of.course
 ‘Well, now they have burnt of course.’ (Yamada 2013: 99)

3.2 Pluperfect in *-xA- bi-čči*

The perfective participle form in *-xA_n* followed by the copula/existential verb in the past tense forms the periphrastic pluperfect, similar to other Tungusic languages:

- (11) *Buu gasa-ttai-ppoo gubernator sinda-xa-ni bi-čči.*
 1PL village-ALL-1PL.POSS governor come-PST-3SG be-PFV
 ‘A governor had come to our village. [He had already left.]’

In Uilta, with atelic verbs, the same form can also be used to express past progressive meaning:

- (12) *Bii gyauli-du-wwee bii mapa-ŋu-bi eekkuta-xa-ni*
 1SG row+IPFV(PRES)-LOC-1SG 1SG old.man-AL-1SG.POSS steer-PST-3SG
bi-čči.
 be-PFV
 ‘While I was rowing, my husband was steering.’

Either the lexical verb or the copula can take subject agreement marking, i.e. both *sinda-xa-ni bi-čči* [come-PST-3SG be-PFV] and *sinda-xa bi-čči-ni* [come-PFV be-PST-3SG] are correct (but not **sinda-xa-ni bi-čči-ni* or **sinda-xa bi-čči*).

3.3 Direct evidential/affirmative-emphatic past in *-tAA*

The direct evidential/affirmative-emphatic past form in *-tAA* is marginal in present-day Uilta. It does not appear naturally in narratives or dialogue, and all attestations were obtained through elicitation. It is used overwhelmingly in the third, occasionally in the second, and very rarely in the first person. In the third person, its main use is direct visual evidential as in (13):

- (13) *Sii ŋinda-si bii nakku-ŋŋoo-wwee puktuu-təə.*
 2SG dog-2SG.POSS 1SG chicken-AL+ACC-1SG carry.away-DIREVID.PST.3
 ‘Your dog carried away my chicken.’ [The hearer cannot retort ‘it wasn’t my dog’ because the speaker saw it.]

It can also combine direct evidential with emphatic meaning as in (14):

- (14) *Ərəə, aya bara nari-sal. Əsi sinda-taa-l ulaa-ji.*
 INTJ very many people-PL now come-DIREVID.PST.3-PL reindeer-INSTR
 ‘Wow, how many people. They just came by reindeer.’

Rarely, it can be used purely emphatically, without clear evidential connotation (although not incompatible with it), as in (15):

- (15) *Seryozha uumbu-čči-du-ni sundatta tarttəə*
 Seryozha(PN) fish-PFV(PST)-LOC-3SG fish suddenly
iktəmə-təə.
 bite-DIREVID.PST.3
 ‘When Seryozha was fishing, a fish suddenly bit.’

It is overwhelmingly used in immediate past (just witnessed) contexts, with adverbs like *tarttəə* ‘there (emphatic), right now’. It is incompatible with indirect reported speech, only with direct reported speech as in (16):

- (16) *Sergei mittəi uč-či-ni: “Attaa, tari nari pastuuxi-tai*
 Sergei(PN) 1SG.ALL say-PST-3SG grandmother this man herder-ALL
ŋənə-təə”.
 go-DIREVID.PST.3
 ‘Sergei said to me: “Grandma, he left to join the reindeer herders”.’

In the second person, the form in *-tAA* has affirmative-emphatic meaning as in (17), typically reinforced by the emphatic use of the adverb *goči* ‘again, indeed’.

- (17) *Sii dəptu-tə-ssee goči!*
 2SG eat-DIREVID.PST-2SG EMPH
 ‘You have already eaten though!’

Finally, very rarely, the form in *-tAA* can also be used in the first person, also with affirmative-emphatic meaning as in (18).

- (18) *Buu təə-wu-tə-ppəə goči čaa duwa-du kartooskkaa.*
 1PL sit-TRANS-DIREVID.PST-1PL EMPH that summer-LOC potato+ACC
 ‘We did plant potatoes that summer.’

3.4 Diachronic development of Uilta past tense forms

Earlier descriptions of Uilta past tense forms (Ikegami 2001 [1959]; Tsumagari 2009) describe the finite form in *-tAA* as fully productive, with a complete person/number paradigm. Already at that stage it was restricted to direct evidential contexts (Ikegami 2001 [1959]), and as is clear from the above description, it has become even more restricted in present-day Uilta, with the participial form in *-xAn* used predicatively in almost all contexts.

Together with the fact that the form in *-xAn* retains resultative/perfect meaning (cf. example 10 above), this points to a diachronic development where the perfective participle gradually replaced the erstwhile finite form, through resultative and perfect stages. This mirrors the development observed in other Tungusic languages (cf. Malchukov 2000: 447), along a well-attested grammaticalisation path (Bybee et al. 1994: 105).

4 Present domain

In the present domain Uilta displays competition between two forms, the general present form in *+RI*,⁸ and the direct evidential/emphatic/mirative in *+RAkkA*. The form in *+RI* grammaticalised from the imperfective participle, while *+RAkkA* is the original finite form.⁹ The person/number agreement paradigms for both forms are shown in Table 4 (the form in *+RAkkA* is only attested in the 3rd person in my data).

⁸The form in *+RI* has irregular conjugation and alternates between *-ri*, *-si*, *-ji* and consonant reduplication and/or vowel reduplication and/or alternation. See Ikegami (2001 [1959]) for a full breakdown of alternations by conjugational class of the verb stem. For this and other forms, irregular inflection is marked by a plus sign and capital letters throughout this paper (capitalised vowels indicate vowel harmony).

⁹*+RA* is cognate with the Tungusic aorist form in *-rA*. *-rA* in combination with the emphatic particle in *=k(k)A* is attested as an (emphatic) confirmative mood form in a number of Tungusic languages (Malchukov 2000: 458). In Uilta the bare form in *+RA* marks the lexical verb (glossed as connegative) in negative constructions with the inflected negative auxiliary in *ə* (cf. examples 8, 34, 38, 41 and 43). In combination with other morphemes, it forms the direct evidential/mirative/emphatic in *+RAkkA* (cf. §4.2), the likely/anticipated future in *+RAŋA* (§5.3), and the different-subject imperfective conditional converb in *+RAi* (cf. examples 34, 41). All forms in *+RA* in Uilta have irregular conjugations and alternate between *-rA*, *-si* and vowel reduplication and/or alternation and/or consonant reduplication. See Ikegami (2001 [1959]) for details.

Table 4: Person/number agreement paradigms of Uilta present tense forms

Number	Person	+RI	+RAkkA
Singular	1 st	+RI- <i>wi</i>	–
	2 nd	+RI- <i>si</i>	–
	3 rd	+RI- <i>ni</i>	+RAkkA
Plural	1 st	+RI- <i>pu</i>	–
	2 nd	+RI- <i>su</i>	–
	3 rd	+RI- <i>či</i>	+RAkkA- <i>l</i>

4.1 General present in +RI

The form in +RI is the most frequent present tense form, used in all present contexts except for direct evidential, emphatic and mirative, where the form in +RAkkA is used instead (see below). It is used for events occurring at the moment of speaking as in (19), events occurring in the present generally (generic present) as in (20), habitual events (21), and general statements (22).

- (19) *Bii dægjitə pukki-mbi. Ĵij nalmakta see-ri-či.*
 1SG burn+HORT.1SG fire-1SG.POSS very mosquitoes bite-PRES-3PL
 ‘Let me start a fire. Mosquitoes are biting really bad.’
- (20) *Bəyø-mbø uĵi-pissəə waa-ri-či.*
 bear-ACC rear-COND.CONV.SS.PL kill-PRES-3PL
 ‘They rear the bear and then kill it.’
- (21) *Nooni purə-ttəi puli-si-ni waa-ŋda-su-si-ni.*
 3SG taiga-ALL walk-PRES-3SG kill-VEN-ITER-PRES-3SG
 ‘He regularly goes into the taiga and hunts.’
- (22) *Suwəə-ĵĵee suunə agbi-ŋĵi-ni, pərxi-ĵĵee tuu-ĵĵi-ni.*
 east-side sun appear-PRES-3SG west-side fall-REITER+PRES-3SG
 ‘The sun rises in the east and sets in the west.’

The form in +RI also appears in narratives as in (23), although less frequently than the general past form in -xAn.

- (23) *Wədadə-ptu-xə əəktə peeččila-gáčči təə-si-ni moo*
 lose-INTR-PFV woman lean-ANT.CONV sit-PRES-3SG tree
pəjje-du-ni.
 under-LOC-3SG.POSS
 ‘The lost woman sat down leaning against the tree.’

In the Southern dialect, which lacks the general future form in *-li* (see §5.2 below), the form in *+RI* is also used for both near (24) and distant future events (25).

- (24) *Ələ-pee sittəi buu-ri-wi, ələ-pula sundattaa.*
 cook-COND.CONV.SS 2SG.ALL give-NPST-1SG cook-PASS.PFV fish+ACC
 ‘I will cook and give [it] to you, the cooked fish.’ (Southern dialect)
- (25) *Bii mərə-čči-wi xaali=ddaa daayi naa-tai ɣənnəe-wi.*
 1SG think-DUR+NPST-1SG when=FOC big land-ALL go+NPST-1SG
 ‘I am thinking, I will go to the mainland someday.’ (Southern dialect)

On top of its predicative use as the main verbal present form, the form in *+RI* retains its participial (adnominal)/nominal function, as in (26); cf. also example (32).

- (26) *Pəččə-nə-si-l=ddəə, mičči-l=ddəə, naa-wa*
 jump-ITER-IPFV-PL=FOC crawl+IPFV-PL=FOC earth-ACC
xullee-l=ddəə.
 burrow+IPFV-PL=FOC
 ‘Those [insects and worms] that jump, those that crawl, and those that burrow in the ground.’

4.2 Direct evidential/emphatic/mirative present in *+RAkkA*

The direct evidential/emphatic/mirative present form in *+RAkkA*, while far more restricted than the general present in *+RI*, is more frequent than the past evidential/affirmative-emphatic form in *-tAA*, and occurs naturally in everyday speech (Yamada 2013: 114). Previously, it was reported to have 1) direct evidential and 2) experiential meaning, and a full person/number paradigm (Ikegami 2001 [1959]). In present-day Uilta, it is restricted to third person use, and to events witnessed by the speaker, at the moment of speech as in (27):

- (27) *Xəwəɾə-kki bəyətəθ daurakka. Pauri-mi*
 lagoon-PROL bear.cub cross+DIREVID.PRES.3 swim-CONV
aaptu-li-ni=yyuu, xai=yyuu?
 reach-FUT-3SG=Q what=Q
 ‘A bear cub is swimming across the lagoon. Is it going to make it or not?’

Very occasionally, it is used in non-visual direct evidential contexts as in (28).

- (28) *Tarree, čoorə ui-sikkə. Nari-sal*
 that+EMPH bell ring-DIREVID.PRES.3 man-PL
sindaakka-lee.
 come+DIREVID.PRES-PL+EMPH
 ‘There, I can hear a bell. People are coming.’

Typically, it combines direct evidential and emphatic meaning as in (29).

- (29) *Əθ, sindaakka tari nari, sokto-xo čipal!*
 INTJ come+DIREVID.PRES.3 this man get.drunk-PFV completely
 ‘There, this man is coming, completely drunk!’

In some instances, the emphatic meaning is clearly more prominent, and the evidential function secondary at best, as in (30) and (31).

- (30) *Nooni mittəi čii puli-sikkə, čii*
 3SG 1SG.ALL constantly walk-DIREVID.PRES.3 constantly
puli-sikkə.
 walk-DIREVID.PRES.3
 ‘He constantly comes to me [won’t leave me alone].’
- (31) *Bii ulbaaxxoo-wwee taitəkkə goči ai suddəəki tari*
 1SG dress+ACC-1SG.POSS wear+DIREVID.PRES.3 EMPH INTJ shameless this
əəktə.
 woman
 ‘She’s wearing my dress, how shameless, this woman.’

Finally, the form in +*RAkkA* is used to express mirative meaning (the speaker’s surprise at unexpected revelation or new information), as in (32).

- (32) *Ərəəi, tari nurreekka goči ləədənji-wə-ppə!*
 INTJ this write+DIREVID.PRES.3 EMPH talk+IPFV-ACC-1PL
 ‘Oh, it is recording what we are saying!’ [The informants realised that the recording device was on.]

4.3 The effect of insubordination on the Uilta present tense forms

Similar to what we observe in the past domain, the functional distribution of the two present forms in present-day Uilta is consistent with the new form of participial origin gradually replacing the old finite form in most contexts, limiting it to direct evidential, emphatic and mirative uses. This mirrors the development in other languages of the Udegheic and Nanaic groups, where the participial forms, semantically neutral, pushed out the old verbal forms into direct evidential, validational and affirmative-emphatic uses, to varying degrees (markedness reversal). This process is typically further advanced in the past domain than in the present (Tense Hierarchy; Malchukov 2000).¹⁰ This is borne out by the fact that the present finite form in *+RAkkA* is more frequent than the corresponding past form in *-tAA* in present-day Uilta.

The fact that the form in *+RAkkA* is restricted to third person use in present-day Uilta is probably motivated by the fact that the third person is more congruous with direct evidential and mirative semantics.

5 Future domain

The Uilta future tense domain displays the clearest example of insubordination at work. There are three future tense forms in the Southern dialect, two of finite and one of participial origin. The present-day Northern dialect additionally features another participial form. It will be shown, through comparison with previous descriptions, that this new form replaced the old finite forms in most functional domains, to become the most productive future form in the Northern dialect.

The four forms are: general future in *-li* (Northern dialect only), immediate spontaneous future in *+RILA*, likely/anticipated future in *+RAηA*, and probable future in *+Rili*. *+RILA* and *+RAηA* are pure verbal forms, i.e. can only be used as predicates of a main clause. They take person/number agreement of the verbal type. The forms in *-li* and *+Rili* are of participial origin, and retain their function as participles/nominalisations. They take agreement of the nominal (possessive) type, also in predicative use. The agreement paradigms for all four forms are presented in Table 5.

¹⁰Malchukov (2000: 450) postulates the Markedness Hierarchy according to which the process of replacement of unmarked finite forms through marked participial forms is further advanced in the past than the present domain, in the plural further than in the singular, and in the 3rd further than in the 1st and 2nd person.

Table 5: Person/number agreement paradigms of Uilta future tense forms

Number	Person	-li (N dialect)	+Rili	+RILA	+RAŋA
Singular	1 st	-li-wi	+Rili-wi	+RILA-mi	+RAŋŋii
	2 nd	-li-si	+Rili-si	+RILA-si	+RAŋA-si
	3 rd	-li-ni	+Rili-ni	+RILAA	+RAŋŋAi
Plural	1 st	-li-pu	+Rili-pu	+RILA-pu	+RAŋA-pu
	2 nd	-li-su	+Rili-su	+RILA-su	+RAŋA-su
	3 rd	-li-či	+Rili-či	+RILAA-l	+RAŋŋA-l

5.1 Immediate spontaneous future in +RILA

The immediate spontaneous future form in +RILA, from the imperfective participle in +RI plus -LA (< *-lan, of unknown origin; Pevnov 2016), is the most productive future form in the Southern dialect, and the second most productive in the Northern dialect, where it competes with the general future form in -li.

In the Northern dialect, +RILA is restricted to immediate future spontaneous contexts, as in (33), (34) and (35).

- (33) *Sii čaa bičixxəə tauuta-ssee, bii sittəi kampeetka*
 2SG that book+ACC read+COND.PFV.CONV.DS-2SG 1SG 2SG.ALL candy
buu-rilə-mi.
 give-NEARFUT-1SG
 ‘If you read this book, I will give you a candy.’
- (34) *Sii noo<mba>ni ə-siyi-si sommee nooni*
 2SG 3SG<ACC> NEG.AUX-COND.IPFV.CONV.DS-2SG close+CONNeg 3SG
pukči-lləə.
 jump-NEARFUT.3
 ‘If you don’t close it [the door], it [the cat] will run around.’
- (35) *Kooppee umi-gačči, gayai-ŋjila-mi.*
 coffee+ACC drink-ANT.CONV stay.awake-NEARFUT-1SG
 ‘Having drunk coffee, [as a result] I won’t be able to sleep.’

In the most detailed previous description (Ikegami 2001 [1959]) the form in +RILA was characterised as expressing 1) near future, 2) future of which the speaker is sure, and 3) spontaneous action in the future. In all attestations of this form

in my data, both conditions 1) and 3), namely short temporal distance and spontaneity, are met. Furthermore, the form is limited to very near, or immediate, future contexts. “Spontaneous” does not imply agent’s own volition, cf. example (35). The relevant distinction is between spontaneous, as in decided/realised on the spot, and planned, or otherwise predicted or predictable events. The form in +*RIIA* is compatible with durative verbs as in (34) and (35), but for actions and states extending into the future, which conflict with its immediate future semantics, the form in *-li* will be used instead (see below). Similarly, for the epistemic modal function reported previously, future that the speaker is sure of, the forms in *-li* or +*Rlli* (see §5.2 and §5.4 below) will normally be used unless the use of the form in +*RIIA* is specifically conditioned by immediate and spontaneous context.

5.2 General future in *-li*

In the Northern dialect of Uilta, the form in *-li* is the most productive, general future form, with the other forms limited to their specific functions. It is used in all contexts that do not warrant the use of any of the other forms, immediate spontaneous future in +*RIIA*, or the two marginal forms with epistemic modal semantics, +*Rlli* and +*RAŋA* (see §5.3 and §5.4 below). For example, it is used for all planned future events, whether near (36) or distant (37).

(36) *Igəri sindauta-nnee, buu Naxulakka-tai ŋənə-li-pu.*
 Igor(PN) come+COND.PFV.CONV.DS-3SG 1PL Nogliki-ALL go-FUT-1PL
 ‘When Igor comes, we will go to Nogliki.’ [already planned]

(37) *Ərkəə nooni xotto-du isu-li-ni duku-takki.*
 next.year 3SG city-ABL come.back-FUT-3SG house-ALL.REFL
 ‘Next year he will return home from the city.’

It is also used for predicted or expected future outcomes (38), (39), or statements about the future that hold generally (40).

(38) *Məənə boččoo-bi əxəktə-mi, tari andu-l-bi*
 own face+ACC-REFL.POSS take.care-CONV this work-PL-REFL.POSS
ə-mi=ddəə xoŋŋee o-li-si taani.
 NEG.AUX-CONV=FOC finish+CONNeg do-FUT-2SG likely
 ‘If you are preoccupied with your own face [looks], you won’t finish these works.’

- (39) *Tari xoosa-ηu-l-bari* *to-ŷji-ndulli,*
 this reindeer.leg.hide-AL-PL-REFL.POSS.PL do-REITER+IPFV(PRES)-LOC.REFL
asi=ləkə utta-lu o-li-pu.
 now=TOP boot-POSS become-FUT-1PL
 ‘As we process these reindeer leg hides, now we are going to be in possession of boots.’
- (40) *Nəηnə boo-du nama-li-ni.*
 spring outside-LOC be.warm-FUT-3SG
 ‘In the spring it is going to be warm outside.’

It is also used instead of the form in +*RIL*A for unplanned, spontaneous events if these are not temporally limited to the immediate future, as in (41).

- (41) “*Sii gaandu-ittaayi-si* *məənə puttə-bi,* *bii*
 2SG go.after-VOL+COND.IPFV.CONV.DS-2SG own child-REFL.POSS 1SG
sindu gəsə ə-li-wi bee”, unŷi-ni nooni sitəu
 2SG.LOC together NEG.AUX-FUT-1SG be+CONNEX say+PRES-3SG 3SG new
mama-ηu-ni.
 wife-AL-3SG.POSS
 “‘If you want to go and bring your child, I won’t live with you”, says his new wife.’

Finally, as with the forms in *-xAn* and *+RI*, the form in *-li* retains its participial (attributive/nominal) function as in (42).

- (42) *Nooči sinda-li-či ulaa-l-ba uidu-xə-či.*
 3PL come-FUT-3PL reindeer-PL-ACC send-PAST-3PL
 ‘They₁ dispatched the reindeer by which they₂ are coming.’

5.3 Likely/anticipated future in +*RAη*A

The form in +*RAη*A (cf. footnote 9) combines temporal and epistemic/deontic modal meaning, expressing future that the speaker considers very likely, for example through inference from past experience or common knowledge. In a previous description (Ikegami 2001 [1959]) it was characterised as follows: 1) distant future, 2) possible future, 3) action in the future the doer is compelled or obliged to perform. In present-day Uilta, this form has no inherent temporal distance value, its use being conditioned exclusively by its epistemic/deontic modal

function.¹¹ It is exemplified below in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person use, expressing likelihood based on inference from circumstances (43), common knowledge (44), and past experience (45). Example (46) shows the use of the form in +*RAŋA* in the deontic modal function (obligatoriness). As is clear from the below examples, it is not limited to distant future contexts.

- (43) *Gəə, balaa, gata-mari ə-ŋə-pu*
 INTJ fast+EMPH pick-CONV.PL NEG.AUX-DISTFUT-1PL
kulpee. Kusal-ji gitu-mari ɲənneesu.
 make.it.in.time+CONNeg fast-INSTR walk-CONV.PL go+HORT.1PL
 ‘Come on, faster, we won’t finish picking in time. Let’s walk faster.’
- (44) *Čii tagda-na-mi, čii tagda-na-mi,*
 constantly be.angry-ITER-CONV constantly be.angry-ITER-CONV
ənu-lləəŋə-si.
 be.ill-INCH+DISTFUT-2SG
 ‘If you are angry all the time, you will fall ill.’
- (45) *Dolbo puttə-ni soŋŋee-du-ni əni-ni*
 night child-3SG.POSS cry+IPFV(PRES)-LOC-3SG mother-3SG.POSS
əmu-mi toŋŋai. Əmu-siŋŋai.
 rock-CONV do+DISTFUT.3 rock-DISTFUT.3
 ‘During the night, when her child cries, the mother will be rocking him.
 She will rock him.’
- (46) *Bii xotto-ttoi ɲənnəəŋŋii, puyə-bi ittəu-ndəəŋŋii.*
 1SG city-ALL go+DISTFUT.1SG wound-1SG.POSS show-VEN+DISTFUT.1SG
 ‘I ought to go to the city and have my wound looked at.’

5.4 Probable future in +*Rlli*

Similar to the form in +*RAŋA*, the form in +*Rlli* (from imperfective participle +*RI* plus future participle *-li*) combines temporal and epistemic modal meaning, expressing future that the speaker considers probable (cf. also Ikegami 2001 [1959]). It is usually accompanied by the adverb *taani* ‘likely, probably’, as in (47) and (48).

¹¹I gloss this form as “distant future” throughout this paper in line with previous descriptions, and to distinguish it from other future forms.

- (47) *Upa-ŋu-bi dabgu-xa-ni, ləpeeskə-buŋji*
 flour-AL-REFL.POSS prepare-PST-3SG make.flatbread-PURP.REFL
to-i-ni. Isu-pee to-ŋjeeli-ni taani.
 do-PRES-3SG come.back-COND.CONV.SS do-REITER+PROBFUT-3SG likely
 ‘She prepared the flour, intends to make flatbread. She will probably
 resume making it when she comes back.’
- (48) *Yə uilə-bi xoŋi-gačči, goi uilə-bi čai-wa*
 this work-REFL.POSS finish-ANT.CONV other work-REFL.POSS tea-ACC
umi-pee otokoo to-ŋjeeli-wi taani.
 drink-COND.CONV.SS later do-REITER+PROBFUT-1SG likely
 ‘Having finished this work, after having tea, I will likely go back to doing
 the other work later.’

Like the forms in *-xAn*, *+RI* and *-li*, the form in *+Rlli* is ultimately of participial origin, and retains its attributive/nominal function, as in (49).

- (49) *Nooni aduli-bi atu-ŋjeeli-wa-ni tari-sal*
 3SG fishing.net-REFL.POSS remove-REITER+PROBFUT-ACC-3SG that-PL
sinda-xa-či, tulə-du-xə-či.
 come-PST-3PL set-REITER-PST-3PL
 ‘They came and set again the fishing nets that he wanted to remove.’

5.5 The effect of insubordination on the Uilta future tense forms

The general future form in *-li*, the most productive future form in the present-day Northern dialect of Uilta, is not attested in the previous descriptions before the 2000s (cf. Table 2). Moreover, it is not attested in the Southern dialect, where the finite form in *+RlIA* is the most productive future tense form, with the form in *+RI* also extended to future use. The most comprehensive description of the Northern dialect, by Petrova (1967), does not mention the form in *-li*, but briefly describes another future form in *-lee*, not mentioned anywhere else. It is unclear whether the forms in *-lee* and *-li* are related, but consonant gemination with vowel lengthening is a prominent feature in Uilta, frequently used for emphasis (cf. example 28), but also for marking grammatical categories like accusative (cf. e.g. examples 6 and 33). With some markers, e.g. the connegative form in *+RA* (from Tungusic aorist in *-rA*, cf. footnote 9), there is free variation between geminated and ungeminated forms in some conjugations.

Nevertheless, the form in *-li* features prominently in the most recent descriptions of the Northern dialect (Pevnov 2016; Yamada 2010b; 2013), as well as the

data from fieldwork in recent years by the present author. It accounts for 60% of all future forms in my data, with the form in *+RIIA* at 40%, and the other two forms being marginal. It apparently developed relatively recently in the Northern dialect, and pushed out the older, finite forms in most functional domains: the old distant future form in *+RAηA* no longer displays the temporal distance value, and is limited to epistemic modal uses; the form in *+RIIA* is restricted to immediate future, spontaneous events. While tail-end languages are known to undergo substantial grammatical changes (Harrison & Anderson 2008),¹² this rather dramatic shift seems to be another manifestation of the tendency of Tungusic languages (and more broadly, languages of the “Macro-Altaic” areal-typological profile) to renew verbal forms through participles, through the processes of insubordination and verbalisation.

6 Summary and conclusions

As is clear from the above description, the processes of insubordination and verbalisation played a prominent role in the development of the Uilta tense system. The gradual replacement of finite verbal forms through forms of participial origin, with the resulting functional shifts between old and new forms in the relevant verbal categories, is evident across all three temporal domains. In the past domain, the development of the perfective participle in *-xAn* into the general past tense form, through resultative, perfect, and indirect evidential stages, mirrors the development in other Tungusic languages (Malchukov 2000: 447). Uilta represents the last stage of this process as the form in *-xAn* has no discernible evidential meaning; it functions as the general past tense form, with the resultative meaning only partially retained. The erstwhile finite form in *-tAA* is marginally retained, with direct evidential and affirmative-emphatic (particularly in the first and second person, the third person being naturally more congruous with evidential meaning) functions, reflecting its development through the direct evidential and affirmative-emphatic stages, in competition with the finite form. Again, this mirrors the development in other languages of the Nanaic and Udegheic groups: as the participial forms replace the erstwhile finite forms, first in resultative/perfect, then indirect evidential use, the old past forms are restricted to the direct evidential function, and further develop affirmative-emphatic (validational) meaning (stages 2 and 3 in Figure 1 above).

¹² “[L]ast generation speakers of endangered languages [...] can and do introduce grammatical and phonological innovations, [...] including changes resulting in both simplification and in greater complexity. It is often difficult to disentangle whether a particular change is driven by internal restructuring, contact induced change, obsolescence effects, or some combination of these.” (Harrison & Anderson 2008: 243 ff.).

Similarly, in the present domain, the participial form in *+RI* replaced the old verbal form in *+RAkkA* as the general present form, with the old form restricted to third person direct evidential, emphatic and, by extension, mirative uses. The fact that the form in *+RAkkA*, although marginal and restricted to third person use, is still more frequent than the equivalent past form in *-tAA* conforms to the Tense Hierarchy of the patterns of replacement of old verbal forms postulated in Malchukov 2000: 450).

Finally, in the future domain, the participial form in *-li* pushed out the old finite forms in *+RIIA* and *+RAŋA* to become the most productive, general future tense form. This recent development, less advanced than in the past and present domains and limited to the Northern dialect, is yet another example of the tendency of Tungusic languages to renew finite verbal forms through insubordination. It represents the most recent one in the history of repeated cycles of renewal of verbal forms through participles in Tungusic, with most finite forms, including the above forms in *+RA*, ultimately of participial origin (Robbeets 2009).

In fact, this tendency is not limited to Tungusic, with all languages of the “Macro-Altaic” areal-typological type repeatedly undergoing similar development, with some apparent parallels at the proto-languages stage as postulated by Robbeets (2009; 2015), some evident in the diachronic development of individual families, and some still observed in the individual languages (Malchukov & Czerwinski 2020). Note, however, that this tendency is not limited to “Macro-Altaic”, and instead constitutes a general areal feature of Siberian languages, including the Paleosiberian and Uralic languages (Malchukov 2013; Malchukov & Czerwinski 2021). In Uilta, this process played a prominent role in the development, and is largely responsible for the current shape of the Uilta tense system.

Abbreviations

1	1 st person	CONCUR	concurrent
2	2 nd person	COND	conditional
3	3 rd person	CONNEG	connegative
ABL	ablative (case)	CONV	converb
ACC	accusative (case)	COP	copula
AGR	(person/number) agreement	DIREVID	direct evidential
AL	alienable (possession)	DISTFUT	distant future
ALL	allative (case)	DS	different subject
ANT	anterior	DUR	durative
AUX	auxiliary	EMPH	emphatic

3 Tense and insubordination in Uilta (Orok)

FOC	focus	PN	proper name
FUT	future	POSS	possessive
HORT	hortative	PRES	present
INCH	inchoative	PROBFUT	probable future
INTR	intransitiver	PST	past
INSTR	instrumental (case)	PURP	purposive
INTJ	interjection	Q	question particle
IPFV	imperfective	REFL	reflexive
ITER	iterative	REITER	reiterative
LOC	locative (case)	S	subject
N	nominalisation	SG	singular
NEARFUT	near future	SS	same subject
NEG	negative	TOP	topic
NFUT	non-future	TRANS	transitive
NPST	non-past	V	verb
PART	participle	VEN	venitive
PASS	passive	VOL	volitive
PFV	perfective		
PL	plural		

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