

**Multiple Exponence at ZAS (MultEx@ZAS 2021)**

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# **Multiple exponence in the Northwest Caucasian languages**

**Peter Arkadiev**

**Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of  
Science & Russian State University for the  
Humanities, Moscow**

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- One of the three indigenous language families of the Caucasus.
- Northwest Caucasian:
  - Circassian: West Circassian (Adyghe), Kabardian
  - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
  - Ubykh (extinct)

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  - Circassian: West Circassian (Adyghe), Kabardian
  - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
  - Ubykh (extinct)
- Arguably distantly related to the East Caucasian (Nakh-Daghestanian) family (Nikolaev & Starostin 1994).
- No discernible genealogical relationship with the South Caucasian (Kartvelian) family, *pace* Arnold Chikobava's school of "Ibero-Caucasian linguistics" in Georgia.

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- A number of varieties became extinct, and the whole linguistic landscape was disrupted.
- Currently spoken by ca. 700-800 thousand people in Abkhazia and the Russian republics of Adygeya, Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria, as well as neighbouring regions.
- A large Northwest Caucasian diaspora in Turkey and other countries of the Middle East, exact number of speakers unknown.

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- Major typological traits (Hewitt 2005, Arkadiev & Lander 2020):
  - rich consonantism and impoverished vocalism;
  - weak distinction between major lexical classes;
  - head-marking and polysynthesis;
  - ergativity;
  - complex system of spatial marking in the verb.

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- Abaza polysynthetic predicate (textual example, own fieldwork, 2017):

(1) *s-z-a-la-nəq<sup>w</sup>a-wa-ʒə-j-š'a-t*

1SG.ABS-POT-3SG.N.IO-PVB-pass-IPF-PVB-3SG.IO-seem(AOR)-DCL

'It seemed to him that I would be able to pass there.'

ABS – absolutive

IPF – imperfective

AOR – aorist

N – non-human

DCL – declarative

POT – potential

IO – indirect object

PVB – preverb



# Northwest Caucasian languages

Besleney Kabardian polysynthetic nominal (Yury Lander's fieldwork data; cf. Lander 2017 on the "nominal complex"):

- (2) *d-jə-[ɸ<sup>w</sup>əneɸ<sup>w</sup>-bzəλx<sup>w</sup>əɸe-daxe-dede]-m*  
1PL-POSS-neighbour-woman-beautiful-very-OBL  
'our very beautiful lady-neighbour'

OBL – oblique case

POSS – possessive marker

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- Morphotactics:
  - a mixture of templatic and layered ordering (e.g. Korotkova & Lander 2010, Lander 2016 on West Circassian);
  - predominantly adheres to the “one meaning ~ one form” principle;
  - but with some notable exceptions, among which a number of instances of multiple exponence (ME).

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- Multiple exponence in Northwest Caucasian:
  - virtually absent from the survey in Harris (2017) – in sharp contrast to the data of the other two indigenous families of the Caucasus;
  - present in all languages of the family;
  - in both nominal and verbal domains;
  - examples of almost all types from Harris' typology;
  - affects a variety of inflectional and derivational features;
  - offers some interesting and non-trivial cases.

# Northwest Caucasian languages

- Sources of data:
  - published materials on Abkhaz and Ubykh;
  - own fieldwork data and corpora on West Circassian, Kabardian and Abaza.

# ME in the nominal domain (1)

- ME of person and number of the possessor in co-compounds (Wälchli 2005; Harris 2017: 79-82):

West Circassian (AdCorp)

- (3) *w-jane-w-jate-xe-r*  
2SG-mother-2SG-father-PL-ABS  
'your parents'

Abkhaz (Hewitt 1979: 218, transcription and glosses adapted)

- (4) *jə-çə-jə-napə*  
3SG.M-face-3SG.M-hand  
'his face and hands'

# ME in the nominal domain (1)

- The two members of the co-compound separately inflected for the features of the possessor form a single morpho-syntactic word:

- shared suffixes of plural and case

(3) *w-jane-w-jate-xe-r* West Circassian

2SG-mother-2SG-father-PL-ABS

‘your parents’

- coordination of nouns is otherwise overtly marked:

(5) *s-jade-re*                      *s-jane-re*                      Kabardian

1SG-father-COORD 1SG-mother-COORD

‘my father and my mother’

## ME in the nominal domain (2)

- ME of plural in West Circassian (cf. a discussion in Arkadiev 2014a,b and Harris 2017: 237-8):

'girl'	Sg	Pl
Abs	<i>pšaše-r</i>	<i>pšaše-xe-r</i>
Obl	<i>pšaše-m</i>	<i>pšaše-xe-m</i>

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- ME is optional and in free variation with cumulative and separative exponence

## ME in the nominal domain (3)

- ME of plural in Ubykh possessed nouns in the oblique case (Fenwick 2011: 49):

(6) a. *ʁ-ew-ž'eg'e-ne*  
3SG-PL-thigh-OBL.PL  
'its thighs'  
(ibid.)

b. *ʁe-ze-ž'eg'e*  
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'one of her thighs'  
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More on ME of plurality in Ubykh in the section on verbs.

## ME in the nominal domain (4)

- Optional ME of oblique case in Kabardian demonstratives (cf. a discussion in Arkadiev 2014a):
- Standard Kabardian (Kumakhov ed. 2006: 119–120): in the plural only:

	'girl'		'that'	
	Sg	Pl	Sg	Pl
Abs	<i>p̂sâe-r</i>	<i>p̂sâe-xe-r</i>	<i>a-r</i>	<i>a-xe-r</i>
Obl	<i>p̂sâe-m</i>	<i>p̂sâe-xe-m</i>	<i>a-bə</i>	<i>a-xe-m</i> ~ <i>a-bə-xe-m</i>

# ME in the nominal domain (4)

- Optional ME of oblique case in Kabardian demonstratives (cf. a discussion in Arkadiev 2014a):
- Besleney Kabardian (own fieldwork, 2011): both in the singular and in the plural:

	'girl'		'that'	
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- Cf. the East Caucasian oblique stems (Kibrik 1991).

# ME in the nominal domain (5)

- ME of nominal plural in Abaza (Tabulova 1976: 47–48) and Abkhaz (Chirikba 2003: 25):
  - the default plural suffix  $-k^w a$ ;
  - the human plural suffix  $-\hat{c}a / -\hat{c}^w a$ ;
  - the young animal suffix  $-ra$ .



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  - the young animal suffix  $-ra$ .
- The default suffix can attach to the other two suffixes:

- (7) a.  $j-aj\check{s}'-\hat{c}a-k^w a$  'his brothers' Abaza  
b.  $a-h^w a-ra-k^w a$  'the lambs'

# ME in the nominal domain (5)

- The plural suffixes differ in their morphosyntactic scope:
  - the lexically restricted suffixes attach directly to the nominal stem;
  - the default suffix  $-k^w a$  is a kind of edge inflection that occurs to the right of postnominal adjectival modifiers at the very end of the nominal complex.

# ME in the nominal domain (5)

Abaza (textual examples)

- (8)            [taba-dəw]-k<sup>w</sup>a  
pan-big-PL  
'big pans'

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'big pans'

(9) a. a-[bəzšadərəʕ<sup>w</sup>-ĉa-dəw]-k<sup>w</sup>a  
DEF-linguist-HPL-big-PL  
'the great linguists'

b. a-[ʒa-ra-maʒ'an-χ<sup>w</sup>əc]-k<sup>w</sup>a  
DEF-goat.kid-AnPL-naughty-small-PL  
'the small naughty goat's kids'

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- The plural suffixes differ in their morphosyntactic scope:
  - thus, ME of the reinforcement type actually arises due to the concord-like co-occurrence of stem-based and phrase-based inflectional markers;
  - a case of “periodic” ME with a null “carrier”?

# ME in the verbal domain

- Multiple exponence in verbal morphology seems to be lacking in the Circassian languages.
- By contrast, Abkhaz, Abaza and Ubykh show a considerable number of different cases of ME in their verbs.

# ME in the verbal domain

The schematic verbal template (Arkadiev & Lander 2020: 404)

prefixes				root	suffixes					
argument structure zone			pre-stem elements	stem ( $\Sigma$ )				endings		
absolutive	subordinators	applicatives and indirect objects	ergative	preradical negation	causative	root	aspectual, modal and evaluative operators	temporal operators	suffixal negation	illocutionary operators or subordinators
1	1	>1	1	1	1 or 2	may be complex	>1	>1	1	>1



# ME in the verbal domain (1)

- Abkhaz periodic ME in reflexive forms (Chirikba 2003: 38, transcription and glossing adapted):

(10) /-čə-/-š'-wa-jt

3SG.F-RFL-3SG.F.ERG-kill-IPF-DCL

'she is killing herself'

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- Cf. the cognate construction in Abaza without ME (Arkadiev & Durneva, to appear):

(11) čə-/-žž-əj-t  
RFL-3SG.F.ERG-wash-PRS-DCL  
'She is washing herself.'

# ME in the verbal domain (1)

- The Abkhaz and Abaza reflexive forms clearly originate from incorporation of an independent reflexive element (probably a body-part noun) with a possessor prefix doubling the features of the ergative agent, cf. Abaza:

(12) *s-qa*                    *sə-r-q<sup>w</sup>anč'-əj-ṭ*  
1SG-head            1SG.ERG-CAUS-guilty-PRS-DCL  
'I accuse myself.' (Arkadiev & Durneva, to appear)

## ME in the verbal domain (2.1)

- Abaza (and Bzyp Abkhaz) ME of negation in declarative and polar interrogative forms (cf. Lomtadze et al. 1989: 111–2).

'come', 3SG.H.ABS	non-finite	declarative
<b>Present</b>	<i>d-ʕa-mə-j-wa</i>	<i>d-g'-ʕa-j-wa-m</i>
<b>Imperfect</b>	<i>d-ʕa-mə-j-wa-z</i>	<i>d-g'-ʕa-mə-j-wa-z-ʔ</i>
<b>Aorist</b>	<i>d-ʕa-mə-j</i>	<i>d-g'-ʕa-mə-j-ʔ</i>
<b>Future I</b>	<i>d-ʕa-mə-j-wa-š</i>	<i>d-g'-ʕa-j-wa-šə-m</i>

# ME in the verbal domain (2.1)

- Cf. Standard Abkhaz (Chirikba 2003: 44).

'carry', 3PL.ERG>3SG.H.ABS	non-finite	declarative
<b>Present</b>	<i>jə-rə-m-ga-wa</i>	<i>də-r-ga-wa-m</i>
<b>Imperfect</b>	<i>jə-rə-m-ga-wa-z</i>	<i>də-r-ga-wa-mə-z-ɬ</i>
<b>Aorist</b>	<i>jə-rə-m-ga</i>	<i>d-rə-m-ga-jɬ</i>
<b>Future I</b>	<i>jə-rə-m-ga-ša</i>	<i>də-r-ga-ša-m</i>

## ME in the verbal domain (2.1)

- The prefix *g'(ə)-* in declarative and polar interrogative negative forms is originally an emphatic additive element (Gvanceladze 2010, Pazov 2019), cf. its (archaic) use in non-negated coordinated verbs:

(13) *a-š'qa*                      *d-g'əj-qalə-n*                      Abaza  
DEF-mountain                      3SG.H.ABS-ADD-go.up-PST  
*d-g'əj-ʃa-tal-χ-d*  
3SG.H.ABS-ADD-CSL-go.down-RE(AOR)-DCL  
'He both climbed the mountain and descended back.'  
(Pazov 2019: 221)

ADD – additive, CSL – cislocative, H – human, RE – reflexive

## ME in the verbal domain (2.1)

- A clear case of reinforcement in accordance with the so-called Jespersen's cycle (Jespersen 1917, van Gelderen 2008), often leading to double negation in the languages of the world (cf. Dryer 2013).
- Did not however affect all verbal forms in Abaza, non-declarative and non-finite forms retaining the more archaic pattern.

## ME in the verbal domain (2.2)

- A special case of ME of negation in both Abaza and Abkhaz: prohibitive forms (cf. Gvanceladze 2010: 31-32):

(14)  $\hat{s}^w\partial$ -*m-ca-n*  
2PL.ABS-NEG-go-NEG.IMP  
'(you all) don't go!'

Abkhaz



## ME in the verbal domain (2.2)

- The etymology of the prohibitive suffix *-n* is unclear, however, Gvanceladze (2010: 32) gives the following example from earlier records of some varieties of Abaza:

(15) *s-wə-m-šə-m*

1SG.ABS-2SG.M.ERG-NEG-kill(IMP)-NEG

‘Don’t kill me!’

- If (15) is archaic, then the prohibitive *-n* originates from the ordinary negative *-m* by dissimilation.
- In this case the prohibitive originally involved doubling of the negative affix.

## ME in the verbal domain (2.3)

- ME of negation in negated perfect/iamitive (“nondum”, ‘not yet’, Veselinova & Devos 2021) forms in Abaza and Abkhaz (cf. Klyagina & Panova 2019 on phasal polarity in Abaza):

Abkhaz (Chirikba 2003: 44)

- (16) a. *də-r-ga-χ'a-jt*  
3SG.H.ABS-3PL.ERG-carry-PRF-DCL  
'They have taken him/her.'
- b. *də-rə-m-ga-c-ɬ*  
3SG.H.ABS-3PL.ERG-NEG-carry-PRF.NEG-DCL  
'They haven't taken him/her yet.'

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- A borderline case?

## ME in the verbal domain (2.4)

- ME of negation in special negative converbs with the suffix  $-k^w a$  in Abaza and Abkhaz:

Abaza (textual example)

(17) *də-m-psə-s-k<sup>w</sup>a*

3SG.H.ABS-NEG-die-PRF.NEG-CVB.NEG

‘while he was still alive’, lit. ‘when he had not died yet’

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- Another borderline case?

## ME in the verbal domain (3)

- Abaza: periodic ME of imperfective aspect in continuative forms (Tabulova 1976: 207; Panova 2021: 48-52):

- (18) a. *də-n.χ-əw-n*  
3SG.H.ABS-work-IPF-PST  
'S/he was working.' (simple Imperfect)
- b. *də-n.χa-wa-rk<sup>w</sup>-əw-n*  
3SG.H.ABS-work-IPF-CNT-IPF-PST  
'S/he was still working.' (continuative Imperfect)

## ME in the verbal domain (3)

- The imperfective suffix (optionally) precedes the continuative in all forms:

- (19) a. *də-n.χa-wa-rk<sup>w</sup>-əj-ɬ*  
3SG.H.ABS-work-IPF-CNT-PRS-DCL  
'S/he is still working.' (continuative present)
- b. *də-n.χ-əj-ɬ*  
3SG.H.ABS-work-PRS-DCL  
'S/he is still working.' (simple present)

## ME in the verbal domain (3)

- The second occurrence of the imperfective suffix is a regular part of the Imperfect form.
- The first part must be a remnant of the former analytic construction with an auxiliary (> continuative) attaching to the lexical verb.
- NB The “bare” imperfective is a regular non-finite form in Abaza:

(20) *h-3ca-wá*                      *h-á-la-ga-ṭ*  
1PL.ABS-swim-IPF    1PL.ABS-3SG.N.IO-PVB-carry(AOR)-DCL  
'We started swimming.' (textual example)



# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- ME of number of the absolutive argument in Ubykh (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 161–162; Smeets 1997; Fenwick 2011: 135–136).
- Involves numerous elements:
  - absolutive cross-reference prefixes;
  - plural suffixes *-a* and *-n(e)*;
  - Retrospective suffixes *-jɬ* SG ~ *-jλ(e)* PL;
  - causative prefixes *də-* SG ~ *ʁe-* PL;
  - root suppletion with a considerable number of verbs.

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh stative verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 86) in the present tense:

'be good'	Sg Abs	Pl Abs
1	<i>sə-če</i>	<i>š'a-če-n</i>
2	<i>wə-če</i>	<i>š<sup>w</sup>a-če-n</i>
3	<i>(a)-če</i>	<i>a-če-n</i>

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh dynamic intransitive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 86) in the present tense:

'go'	Sg Abs	Pl Abs
1	<i>s-k'e-n</i>	<i>š'-k'-a-n</i>
2	<i>w-k'e-n</i>	<i>š<sup>w</sup>-k'-a-n</i>
3	<i>(a)-k'e-n</i>	<i>a-k'-a-n</i>

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh dynamic transitive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 88) in the present tense, 3 plural ergative subject:

'see'	Sg Abs	Pl Abs
<b>1</b>	<i>s-a-bje-n</i>	<i>š'-a-bj-a-n</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>w-a-bje-n</i>	<i>š<sup>w</sup>-a-bj-a-n</i>
<b>3</b>	<i>a-bje-n</i>	<i>a-bj-a-n</i>

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh dynamic transitive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 148) in different tenses, 1Sg ergative subject:

'see'	2Sg Abs	2Pl Abs
Present	<i>wə-z-bje-n</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bj-a-n</i>
Imperfect	<i>wə-z-bje-n-ejɬ</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bj-a-n-ejɭ</i>
Future I	<i>wə-z-bje-w</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bje-n-ew</i>
Preterite	<i>wə-z-bje-ɬe</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bje-ɬe-n</i>
Pluperfect	<i>wə-z-bje-ɬe-jɬ</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bje-ɬe-jɭ</i>
Future-in-the-Past	<i>wə-z-bje-wə-jɬ</i>	<i>ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-z-bje-n-ewə-jɭ</i>

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh causatives from intransitive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 176), Erg = Causer, Abs = Causee:

- (20) a. *wə-sə-m-də-ḱ'e-n*  
2SG.ABS-1SG.ERG-NEG-CAUS.SG-go-PRS  
'I don't make you go.'
- b. *ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-sə-m-βa-ḱ'-a-n*  
2PL.ABS-1SG.ERG-NEG-CAUS.PL-go-PL-PRS  
'I don't make you all go.'

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh causatives from transitive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 176), Erg= Causer, Abs = object, IO = Causee:

- (21) a. *a-w-sə-m-də-bje-n*  
3.ABS-2SG.IO-1SG.ERG-NEG-CAUS.SG-see-PRS  
'I don't show it to you.'
- b. *a-w-sə-m-ɸa-bj-a-n*  
3.ABS-2SG.IO-1SG.ERG-NEG-CAUS.PL-go-PL-PRS  
'I don't show them to you.'

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh suppletive verbs (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 38-48; Fenwick 2011: 135):

(22) a. *sə-g'ə-wə-n*

1SG.ABS-LOC-enter.SG-PRS

'I go in.'

b. *š'ə-g'ə-ḱ'-a-n*

1PL.ABS-LOC-enter.PL-PL-PRS

'We go in.' (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 42)



## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Ubykh complex verb stems with suppletive components (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 38-48):

(23) a. *sə-t<sup>w</sup>e.sə-n*

1SG.ABS-sit.down.SG-PRS

‘I sit down.’

b. *š’ə-t<sup>w</sup>e.ž<sup>w</sup>-a-n*

1PL.ABS-sit.down.PL-PL-PRS

‘We sit down.’ (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 41)

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- A single verb form can contain multiple loci of number marking (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 173, 165):

- (24) a. *š'ə-w-ve-ǰ<sup>w</sup>e.χe-ǰe-n*  
1PL.ABS-2SG.ERG-CAUS.PL-stop.PL-PST-PL  
'You (sg) made us stop.'
- b. *š'-k'-a-ne-jle-me*  
1PL.ABS-go-PL-DYN-RETRO.PL-NEG  
'We were not doing.'

DYN – dynamic marker

RETRO – retrospective marker

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Absolutive number marking in Ubykh is not completely redundant:
  - nouns do not distinguish number in the absolutive;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> person absolutive prefixes in most cases do not distinguish number, either:

- (25) a.     *a-ĉ<sup>w</sup>*           *a-j-ḵ'e-n*  
          DEF-ox           3.ABS-CSL-go-PRS  
          ‘The ox is coming.’ (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 162)
- b.     *a-ĉ<sup>w</sup>*           *a-j-ḵ'-a-n*  
          DEF-ox           3.ABS-CSL-go-PL-PRS  
          ‘The oxen are coming.’ (ibid.)

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- The system is further complicated by the tendency, especially in the speech of Tevfik Eсенç, the last speaker of Ubykh, to use the plural suffixes whenever the verb contained a 2<sup>nd</sup> plural affix in any argument position, not just the absolutive (Dumézil & Eсенç 1975: 162; Smeets 1997; Fenwick 2011: 101-102).

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- ME of plural with 2Pl ergative arguments (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 88):

- (26) a. *wə-ž'-bje-n*  
2SG.ABS-1PL.ERG-see-PRS  
'We see you (sg).'
- b. *sə-ž<sup>w</sup>-bj-a-n*  
1SG.ABS-2PL.ERG-see-PL-PRS  
'You (pl) see me.'

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- ME of plural with 2Pl indirect object arguments (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 88):

- (26) a. *wə-ž'-be-χ<sup>w</sup>eč'e-n*  
2SG.ABS-1PL.IO-LOC-search-PRS  
'You (sg) are looking for us.'
- b. *sə-ž<sup>w</sup>-be-χ<sup>w</sup>eč'-a-n*  
1SG.ABS-2PL.IO-LOC-search-PL-PRS  
'I am looking for you (pl).'

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- 2PL does not trigger the plural forms of the causative prefix and of suppletive verbal roots:

(27) *a-ŝ<sup>w</sup>ə-m-də-k'e-ne-be*                      *š'-ew<mə>t*  
3.ABS-2PL.ERG-NEG-CAUS.SG-go-PL-COND      become-FUT<NEG>  
'You (pl) must send it (there).' (Fenwick 2011: 188)

(28) *š<sup>w</sup>we*                      *ŝ<sup>w</sup>-q̣a-mə-ɓə-ne-ŝ?*  
matter                      2PL.IO-LOC-NEG-be.hanging.SG-PL-Q  
'Have you (pl) no work?' (Fenwick 2011: 133)

COND – conditional, Q – question marker

## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Variation with the retrospective suffixes (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 162; Fenwick 2011: 123):

(29) a. *pč'e-nə*      *sə-ŝ<sup>w</sup>-χ'e-š'-qe-jλ*  
guest-ADV      1SG.ABS-2PL.IO-BEN-be-PST-RETRO.PL

b. *pč'e-nə*      *sə-ŝ<sup>w</sup>-χ'e-š'-qe-ne-jt̚*  
guest-ADV      1SG.ABS-2PL.IO-BEN-be-PST-PL-RETRO.SG

a=b 'I had been your guest.'

ADV – adverbial marker, BEN – benefactive applicative



## ME in the verbal domain (4)

- Variation with the retrospective suffixes (Dumézil & Esenç 1975: 162; Fenwick 2011: 123):

- (29) a. *pč'e-nə*    *sə-ŝ<sup>w</sup>-χ'e-š'-qe-jλ*  
guest-ADV    1SG.ABS-2PL.IO-BEN-be-PST-RETRO.PL
- b. *pč'e-nə*    *sə-ŝ<sup>w</sup>-χ'e-š'-qe-ne-jt̚*  
guest-ADV    1SG.ABS-2PL.IO-BEN-be-PST-PL-RETRO.SG
- a=b 'I had been your guest.'

ME of number of two  
different arguments

ADV – adverbial marker, BEN – benefactive applicative

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- ME of number in Ubykh verbs technically falls under the label of “accidental” ME according to Harris (2017: 64) but is in fact a highly systematic and pervasive feature of Ubykh morphology – even if unique to the family.
- NB subject to considerable variation observed in the extant records of the language (Smeets 1997):
  - across locations and speakers;
  - in time.

# ME in the verbal domain (4)

- An effect of language death?
- Smeets (1997: 59):

“Between 1955 and 1975 rapid changes took place in the marking of plurality in Ubykh predicates, or, shall we say, in the treatment by Tevfik Esenç of the marking of plurality in predicates. <...> At the same time, to all appearances, a meaningful system of optionalities was replaced by the rigid and automatic presence of pluralizing suffixes, mostly in forms in which the indication of plurality was largely or totally redundant.”

# ME in the verbal domain

- A number of patterns of apparently multiple marking of derivational functions.
- Although Caballero & Harris (2012: 165) and Harris (2017: 8) explicitly include derivational categories into the domain of ME, such cases may be more problematic than those concerning inflectional features.

# ME in the verbal domain (5)

- Abaza: ME of repetitive (Panova 2018: 6-7; 2019):

- (30) a. *d-ata-ʕa.j-χ-t̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-REP-come-RE(AOR)-DCL  
'S/he came again.'                      repetitive
- b. ??*d-ata-ʕa.j-t̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-REP-come-(AOR)-DCL  
'S/he came again.' – admitted only in certain cases  
and in certain varieties
- c. *d-ʕa.j-χ-t̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-come-RE(AOR)-DCL  
'S/he came back.'                      reflexive

# ME in the verbal domain (5)

- The refractive (Stoynova 2013) is cross-linguistic derivational category expressing such meanings as reditive ('back'), restitutive, repetitive and some others.
- Available in all Northwest Caucasian languages.
- Highly polysemous in Abaza (Panova 2018: 3-6; 2019) and Abkhaz (Avidzba 1968).

## ME in the verbal domain (5)

- The Abaza reflexive can express the repetitive meaning alone (31a), but is usually reinforced by the repetitive prefix *ata-* (31b) in this function:

- (31) a.     *a-ŝ*            *j-p.čə-χ-ṭ*  
          DEF-door     3SG.N.ABS-break-RE(AOR)-DCL
- b.     *a-ŝ*            *j-ata-p.čə-χ-ṭ*  
          DEF-door     3SG.N.ABS-REP-break-RE(AOR)-DCL  
          ‘The door broke again.’ (Panova 2018: 3)

## ME in the verbal domain (5)

- In Abkhaz, the cognate prefix and suffix can express the repetitive either alone or in combination (Spruit 1986: 136):

- (32) a. *d-ajta-ca-jt̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-REP-go(AOR)-DCL
- b. *d-ca-χ-t̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-go-RE(AOR)-DCL
- c. *d-ajta-ca-χ-t̚*  
3SG.H.ABS-REP-go-RE(AOR)-DCL  
a=b=c 'S/he went once more.'



# ME in the verbal domain (5)

- According to Panova (2019), the expression of repetitive in Abaza involves co-occurrence of a “light” and a “heavy” ‘again’-markers (Wälchli 2006), which by itself is fairly common cross-linguistically.
- What makes the Abaza (and Abkhaz) situation special is the fact that the “heavy” reflexive marker is also an affix and not a free-standing word.

## ME in the verbal domain (6)

- In all NWC languages, reflexive suffixes are (optionally, but frequently) used in reflexive and reciprocal constructions (again a cross-linguistically common pattern, see Stoyanova 2009, 2010), see e.g. Letuchiy (2007), Arkadiev & Letuchiy (2010: 504-7) on West Circassian.

# ME in the verbal domain (6)

- West Circassian (Letuchiy 2007: 781):

- (33) a. *s-jə-ʁ<sup>w</sup>əneʁ<sup>w</sup>ə-m*      *a-r*      *ə-wəç'ə-ʁ*  
1SG-POSS-neighbour-OBL DEM-ABS      3SG.ERG-kill-PST  
'My neighbour killed him.'
- b. *s-jə-ʁ<sup>w</sup>əneʁ<sup>w</sup>ə-m*      *z-jə-wəç'ə-ž'ə-ʁ*  
1SG-POSS-neighbour-OBL RFL.ABS-3SG.ERG-kill-RE-PST  
'My neighbour killed himself.'

## ME in the verbal domain (6)

- West Circassian (Letuchiy 2007: 785):

- (34) a.    *č'ale-m*    *pšâšê-r*    *j-e-λeβ<sup>wə</sup>*  
boy-OBL    girl-ABS    3SG.ERG-DYN-see  
'The boy sees the girl.'
- b.    *zeč'e çəf-xe-r*    *zer-e-λeβ<sup>wə</sup>-ž'ə-x*  
all    man-PL-ABS    REC.ERG-DYN-see-RE-PL  
'All the people see each other.'

# ME in the verbal domain (6)

- West Circassian (Arkadiiev & Letuchiy 2010: 505):

- (35) a.     *a-r*           *ḱ<sup>w</sup>e-ž'ə-ʁe*  
          DEM-ABS    go-RE-PST  
          'He went back.'
- b.     *pče-r*       *q<sup>w</sup>əte-ž'ə-ʁe*  
          door-ABS   break-RE-PST  
          'The door broke again.'

# ME in the verbal domain (6)

- Should this be considered a case of ME of reflexive and reciprocal?
- Probably not:
  - reflexive suffixes do not express reflexivity/reciprocity by themselves;
  - the reditive 'back' meaning of the reflexive is apparent in such constructions;
  - the reflexive also appears with non-morphological reflexives.

## ME in the verbal domain (6)

- Refactive with a non-morphological reflexive in Abaza (Arkadiev & Durneva, to appear):

- (36) a.    *j-an*                      *də-l-c-qrɑʕ-əj-t̚*  
          3SG.M-mother        3SG.H.ABS-3SG.F.IO-COM-help-PRS-DCL  
          ‘He helps his mother.’
- b.    *j-qa*                      *d-a-c-qrɑʕa-χ-əj-t̚*  
          3SG.M-head 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-COM-help-RE-PRS-DCL  
          ‘He helps himself.’

COM – comitative applicative

# ME in the verbal domain (7)

- ME of relative orientation in Abaza and Abkhaz.

Abaza

- (36) a. *d-a-la-k<sup>w</sup>ər-t*  
3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC:mass-crawl(AOR)-DCL  
'S/he crawled into it.' (Klychev 1995: 143)
- b. *d-a-l-k<sup>w</sup>ər-ʒa-t*  
3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC:mass.ELAT-crawl-ELAT(AOR)-DCL  
'He crawled out of it.' (Klychev 1972: 84)



# ME in the verbal domain (7)

- NWC languages have rich and complex systems of spatial marking in the verb (see Arkadiev & Lander 2020: 412-415 for an overview and references):
  - locative prefixes (preverbs), ca. 150 in Abaza and Abkhaz;
  - directional suffixes (lative vs. elative).

## ME in the verbal domain (7)

- Many locative preverbs in Abkhaz and Abaza have basic forms in *-a* and relative forms in *-ə/zero* (Klychev 1994, Avidzba 2017):

(37) a. *waça-bləg'a-ra* 'roll into something'  
b. *waç-bləg'a-ra* 'roll out of something'  
(Klychev 1995: 238, 246)

## ME in the verbal domain (7)

- Most verbs combine with relative forms of preverbs directly, but some require the relative suffix *-ʃa* as well.
- In some cases, the suffix is optional (Klychev 1972: 82-88):

(38) *j-qə-j-β<sup>w</sup>əç(-ʃa)-t̚*

3SG.N.ABS-LOC:top.ELAT-3SG.M.ERG-cut.off(-ELAT)(AOR)-DCL

‘He cut it off from above.’ (ibid.: 84)

# ME in the verbal domain (7)

- By contrast, the relative suffix is never used alone without an appropriate preverb, apart from a small number of lexicalised instances (Klychev 1972: 80-82):

- (39) a. *pšʕa* 'search' < *pšə* 'look' + ELAT  
b. *χ<sup>w</sup>ʕa* 'buy' < *χ<sup>w</sup>ə* 'take' + ELAT  
c. *çʕa* 'ask' < ?? + ELAT

# Summary

- Northwest Caucasian languages actually present a rich and diverse set of ME patterns:
  - in both nouns and verbs;
  - in both inflection and derivation;
  - from all classes of Harris (2017)'s typology but one.

# Summary

type	example
periodic	person in co-compounds; person in Abkhaz reflexive; Abaza imperfective in continuative forms
reinforcement	Abaza and Abkhaz nominal plural; Kabardian oblique case; Abaza negation; Abaza repetitive; Abaza and Abkhaz elative
accidental	West Circassian and Ubykh oblique plural; Ubykh verbal number; Abaza nondum and negative converb

# Summary

- ME in Northwest Caucasian languages shows considerable variation:
  - cross-linguistic, even between closely-related varieties (Abkhaz vs. Abaza, West Circassian vs. Kabardian etc.);
  - inter-linguistic, e.g. optionality of many ME patterns.

# Summary

- While some examples of ME found in Northwest Caucasian languages may seem “trivial” from a cross-linguistic perspective, others are not:
  - a novel source of periodic ME (incorporated nominal reflexives);
  - ME of rare categories (elative, repetitive);
  - ME of the nominal plural in Abaza and Abkhaz looks like a case of reinforcement but in fact has morphosyntactic underpinnings pointing towards a different analysis;
  - the exuberant ME of number in Ubykh verbs is probably a result of (sub)conscious “self-standardisation” effected by the last fluent speaker of a dying language.



***tha š<sup>w</sup>-j-e-be-psew!***

**god 2PL.ABS-3SG.ERG-DYN-CAUS-live**

***šə-zʃ<sup>w</sup>ada-χa-ʈ!***

**2PL.ABS-healthy-INC(AOR)-DCL**

**Thank you for your attention!**

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