From derivation to inflection and back: Variation and change in the Abaza caritive morphology

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Disclaimer

- Repetitio est mater studiorum
- This is a revised and updated version of the talk I gave at the online meeting of SLE in 2021.
- I apologise to those in the audience who might have heard the previous version.

Introduction

- **Caritive** (synonyms: privative, abessive):
  - a construction describing non-involvement of a participant in a situation;
  - expressed as a modifier of another situation.

  (Oskolskaya et al. 2020)

Introduction

- adnominal (caritive adjectives):

(1)   *a beard**less* *man*

Introduction

- adnominal (caritive adjectives):

(1) *a beardless man*

- adverbial (caritive adpositions or cases):

(2) *I came without money*.

  Estonian (Tamm 2011: 861):

(3) *Ta   läks   koju   mütsi-ta*.
  s/he   go.PST.3SG   home.ILL   hat-CAR
  'She went home without a hat.'

  CAR – caritive, ILL – illative, PST – past tense, SG – singular

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- Morphological expression of caritive semantics is well-attested in the languages of the world (e.g. Stolz et al. 2007).

- Caritive formations are reported to show peculiar constellations of properties striding the inflection-derivation divide:
  - Hamari 2014 on Mordvin < Uralic
  - Graschenkov 2015 on Turkic and Mongolic

Introduction

- In this talk:

- Caritive morphology in Abaza (Northwest Caucasian, Russia).

- A synchronic analysis of morphosyntactic variation based on fieldwork data.

- A window into a peculiar diachronic change in progress.

Abaza

- *abáza bəzŝá (абаза бызшва)*, ISO 639-3 abq
- Ca. 38 000 speakers in Russia (Karachay-Cherkess Republic), ca. 10 000 in Turkey

Abaza

- Northwest Caucasian (Abkhaz-Adyghe)
  - Circassian: West Circassian (Adyghe), Kabardian (East Circassian)
  - † Ubykh
  - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abaza, Abkhaz

Abaza

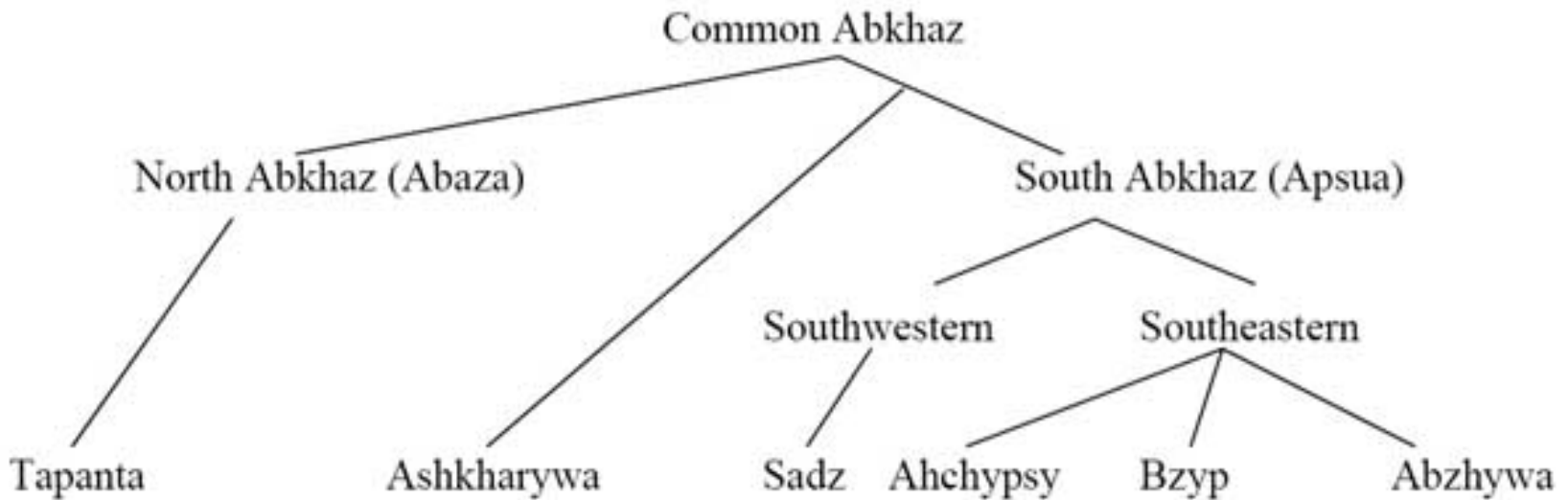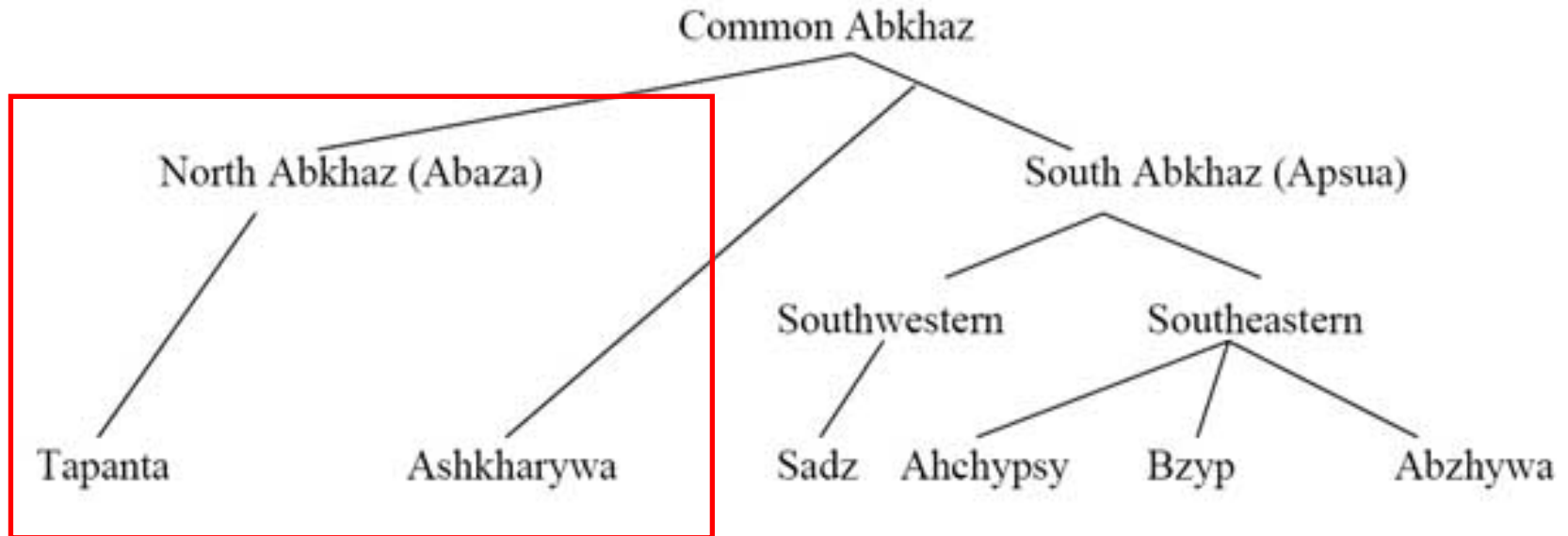- Northwest Caucasian (Abkhaz-Adyghe)
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Abaza

The Scheme of Abkhaz Dialectal Division

Chirikba (2003: 14)
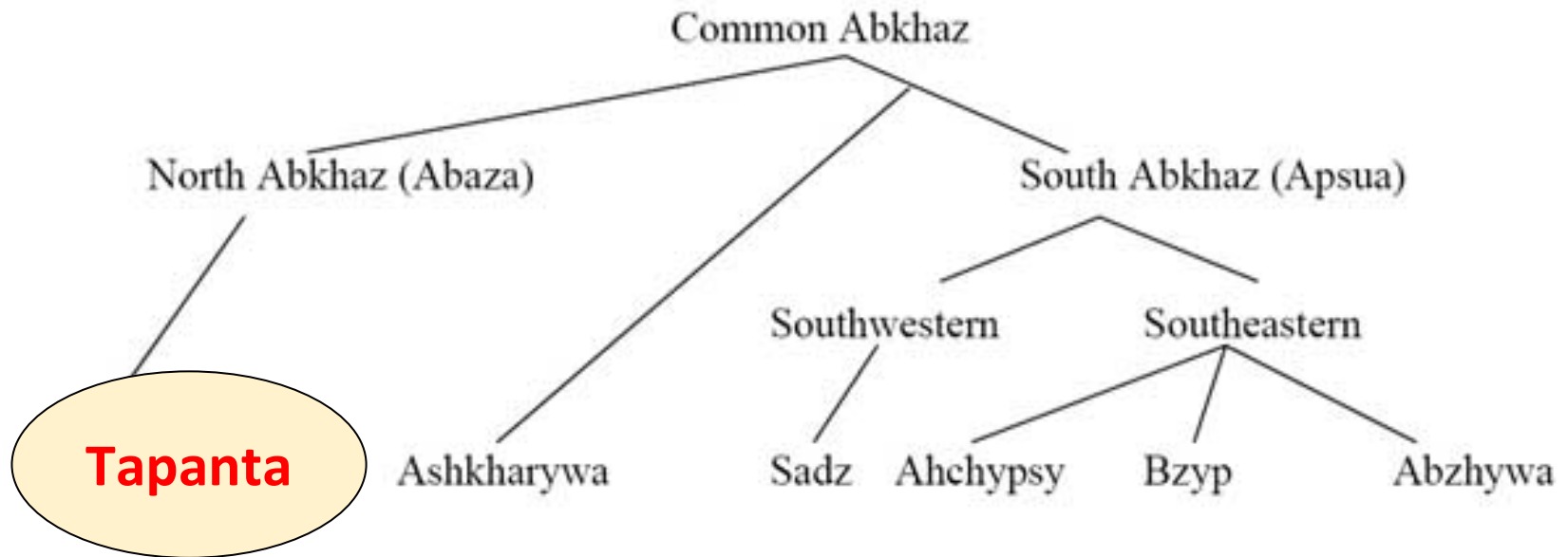
Abaza

The Scheme of Abkhaz Dialectal Division

Common Abkhaz

North Abkhaz (Abaza)   South Abkhaz (Apsua)

Tapanta   Ashkharywa

Southwestern   Southeastern

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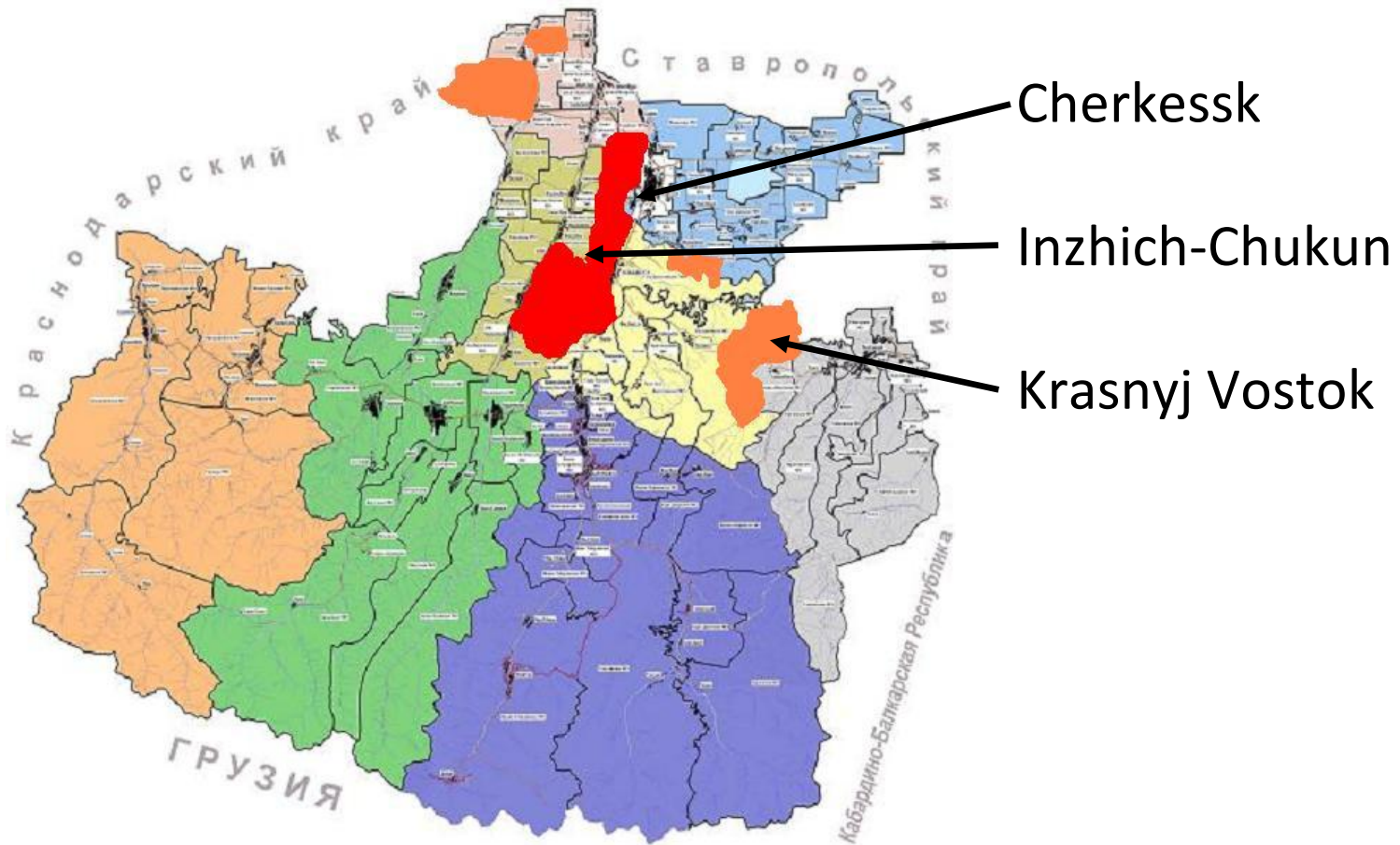
Chirikba (2003: 14)

Abaza

- The least-described language of the Northwest Caucasian family

- Descriptive works exist (e.g. Genko 1955, Tabulova 1976, Lomtatidze et al. 1989, O'Herin 2002), but are insufficient

Abaza

- This work is part of the collective project on the documentation and description of Abaza

- https://ling.hse.ru/abazagrammar/

- Fieldtrips to the villages Inzhich-Chukun in 2017-2019 and Krasnyj Vostok in 2021, as well as work with a number of speakers from different villages in Cherkessk in 2021 and online in 2022.

Karachay-Cherkess Republic

Cherkessk

Inzhich-Chukun

Krasnyj Vostok

Abaza

Abaza

- rich consonantism and empoverished vocalism
- polysynthesis and consistent head-marking
- ergativity
- no core case marking
- weak distinction between parts of speech

Caritive in Abaza: overview

The suffixes *-da* and *-d(a)ʔa*:

- according to dictionaries, *-da* forms caritive adjectives (*bž'ə* 'voice': *bž'ə-da* 'silent'), while *-ʔa* forms adverbials from them (*bž'ə-da-ʔa* 'silently');

- in fact, things are much less straightforward and evidently in flux.

Caritive in Abaza: overview

- Controversial treatment in the descriptions (if mentioned at all):
  - "caritive case" (Genko 1955: 118, 120–121)
  - derivational marker of nouns and adjectives (Tabulova 1976: 60–61, 79)
  - "postposition" (Lomtatidze 2006: 122)

Current research

- Based almost exclusively on elicitation
  - available texts do not contain enough representative examples of the caritive

- 20 native speakers
  - 7 men, 13 women
  - aged 18-73, but most over 50
  - originate from at least five different places
  - most with university education (e.g. teachers)
  - considerable, but not unsystematic, variation

Three types of system

- "conservative" system:
  - *-da* and *-dʔa* are distinguished
  - *-da* forms caritive adjectives and behaves as a derivational marker
  - *-dʔa* forms caritive adverbials and behaves rather as a case marker

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- "innovative" system:
  - only *-dʔa* is productively used, *-da* vestigially (if at all)
  - *-dʔa* functions both as a case marker and as an adjectivaliser

Three types of system

- The third system can be considered "transitional" between the "conservative" and the "innovative ones:
    - speakers with different degrees of consistency allow free variation between the caritive suffixes *-da* and *-dʔa* in the adjectivalising function;
    - apart from one of the youngest speakers, no such variation is observed in the case-marking function, where only *-dʔa* is allowed.

Three types of system

- The choice of the system shows a weak correlation with age and location:
    - the mean age of the "conservative" speakers is 62;
    - the mean age of the "innovative" speakers is 50;
    - no "conservative" speakers younger than 55;
    - the "transitional" system is especially well-attested in Krasnyj Vostok (even with the youngest speakers), which is geographically an outlier.
- Inconclusive, because the sample is too small and unbalanced.
- Of the two oldest speakers, one is "transitional" and the other "innovative".

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - attaches only to common nouns (no pronouns, no proper names);
  - not very productive;
  - cannot take in its scope any modifiers or determiners, including the definite prefix *a-*, the indefinite suffix *-ḳ*, and possessive prefixes;
  - the resulting forms occur both as adnominal modifiers and as predicates.

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - adnominal modifier

(4) *a-ẑ*   *č̣ʕʷa-da*
     DEF-cow   horn-CAR
     'the cow without horns'   (kv1954f)

  - Cf. a regular adjective:

(5) *h-an*   *rǝcha*
     1PL.PR-mother   poor
     'our poor mother'   (txt_IC)

DEF – definite, PL – plural, PR – possessor

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

Abaza adjectives form N-A compounds with nouns, which are inflected as a whole.

The suffixes of indefiniteness, general plural, and oblique cases are attached to the rightmost member of the compound.

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - indefinite marker

(6) [ʕʷəč̣ʕʷə́s   *pč̣á-da*]-ḳ   d-ʕa.j-d
     man   beard-CAR-INDF   3SG.H.ABS-come-DCL
     'A beardless man came.'   (kv1961m)

   Cf. a regular adjective:

(7) jə-[nbž'áʕʷ   *bzəj*]-ḳ
     3SG.M.PR-friend   good-INDF
     'a good friend of his'   (txt_IC)

ABS – absolutive, DCL – declarative, H – human, INDF – indefinite, M – masculine
SG – singular

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - plural marker

(8) *a-[cəgʷ qʷə́-da]-kʷa g'-pšʒa-m*
    DEF-cat   fur-CAR-PL   NEG-beautiful-NEG
    'Cats without fur are ugly.'   (ps1953f)

  - instrumental case marker

(9) *aslán j-[čə   c̣əqʷá-da]-la d-ʕa.j.χ-d*
    Aslan   3SG.M.PR-horse   tail-CAR-INS   3SG.H.ABS-return-DCL
    'Aslan returned on his tailless horse.'   (ps1953f)

INS – instrumental, NEG – negation

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

Abaza adjectives (like other simple and complex nominals) can occur as predicates and take stative verbal morphology.

(10) *d-gə́la-ṗ*   stative verb
         3SG.H.ABS-stand-NPST.DCL
         's/he stands'

(11) *d-pšʒa-ṗ*   adjective
         3SG.H.ABS-beautiful-NPST.DCL
         's/he is beautiful'

NPST – non-past

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
    - in the predicative position:

(12) *sə-n.χa.rtá-da-ṗ*
      1SG.ABS-work-CAR-NPST.DCL
      'I am jobless.'   (ic1968f)

- also as part of an N-A compound

(13) *s-pa*   *d-[sabə́j*   *zʕʷá-da]-b*
      1SG.PR-son   3SG.H.ABS-child   illness-CAR-NPST.DCL
      'My son is a healthy child.'   (kv1968f)

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - Can attach verbal affixes with aspectual and evaluative meanings:

(14) *s-a.pχ'á.ga-da-məʕʷa-rḳʷa-b*
     1SG.ABS-textbook-CAR-DPR-CNT-NPST.DCL
     'Unfortunately, I still don't have textbooks.' (kv1961m)

CNT – continuative, DPR – depreciative

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:
  - Can serve as input to inchoative and causative derivations:

(15) *ar=a-ʕʷəč̣ʕʷə́s   də-[ʕʷ-pcə́-da]-χa-d*
   PROX=DEF-man   3SG.H.ABS-two-tooth-CAR-INC-DCL
   'This man lost two of his teeth.'   (kv1974f)

(16) *wə-z-r-[aχč'ə́-da]-da?*
   2SG.M.ABS-REL.ERG-CAUS-money-CAR-QH
   'Who made you pennyless?'   (ps1953f)

CAUS – causative, ERG – ergative, INC – inceptive, PROX – proximate demonstrative
QH – question about humans, REL – relativisation

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
    - historically a combination of the caritive adjectivaliser *-da* with the no longer productive locative suffix *-ʔa*:

(17) *bž'ə* 'voice' : *bž'ə-da* 'silent' : [*bž'ə-da*]-*ʔa* 'silently'

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(17) *bž'ə* 'voice': *bž'ə-da* 'silent' : [*bž'ə-da*]*-ʔa* 'silently'

  - however, not a mirror-image of the caritive adjectivaliser and no longer a combination of morphemes

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - apparently productive;
  - no longer analysable:

    e.g., in the subdialect of Kransyj Vostok this suffix is sometimes pronounced as *-tʔa* or even *-ṭa*;
  - attaches to noun phrases rather than stems.

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - forms adverbial modifiers

(18) *a-phʷəspa*   *karandaš-dʔa*   *d-ʕʷ-əj-ṭ*

    DEF-girl   pencil-CAR   3SG.H.ABS-write-PRS-DCL

    'The girl draws without a pencil.'   (ic1957f)

  - Cf. the instrumental case in *-la*:

(19) *a-bacạcaχʷa-kʷa-la*   *s-a-gʷ-lə-r.cə-d*

    DEF-rod-PL-INS   1SG.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC-3SG.F.ERG-beat-DCL

    'She beat me with rods.'   (txt_IC)

F – feminine, IO – indirect object, LOC – locative preverb, N – non-human, PRS - present

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - attaches to proper names and pronouns:

(20) *aslan   muradin-dʔa   d-ʕa.j-ṭ*
     Aslan   Muradin-CAR   3SG.H.ABS-come-DCL
     'Aslan came without Muradin.'   (kv1974f)

(21) *sara-dʔa   ŝə-m-ca-n!*
     1SG-CAR   2PL.ABS-NEG-go-PROH
     'Don't go without me!'   (kv1974f)

PROH - prohibitive

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - attaches to special plural forms of demonstratives and human nouns:

(22) *awa.t-dʔa*
     DIST.PL-CAR
     'without them'   (txt_AbRu)

(23) *ŝə́-ʕʷza-ĉa-dʔa*   *ŝ-ʕá-m-jə-n*
     2PL.PR-friend-HPL-CAR   2PL.ABS-CSL-NEG-go-PROH
     'Don't come without your friends!'   (ps1962f)

CSL – cislocative, DIST – distal demonstrative, HPL – human plural

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - takes scope over adjectives, possessive prefixes and demonstratives:

(24) [*hʷaspa* *c̣ará*]-*dʔa*   *č'áq̇ʷa*   *g'-s-zə́-p̣-wa-m*
     knife   sharp-CAR   bread   NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
     'I can't slice bread without a sharp knife.'   (kv1954f)

IPF – imperfective, POT – potential

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The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - takes scope over adjectives, possessive prefixes and demonstratives:

(25) [sə́-hʷaspa]-*tʔa*   č'áq̇ʷa   g'-s-zə́-pq̇-wa-m
    1SG.PR-knife-CAR   bread   NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
    'I can't slice bread without my knife.'   (kv1954f)

(26) [arə́j   a-hʷaspá]-*tʔa*   č'áq̇ʷa g'-s-zə́-pq̇-wa-m
    PROX   DEF-knife-CAR   bread   NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
    'I can't slice bread without this knife.'   (kv1954f)

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - takes scope over nouns modified by relative clauses:

(27) [[*s-an*   *j-ʕa-sə́-l-tə-z*]
     1SG.PR-mother REL.ABS-CSL-1SG.IO-3SG.F.ERG-give-PST.NFIN
     a-mŝ-čə́r-χʷəc]-*dʔa*   *sə-gʼ-z-a.c̣a.ĉ-wa-m*
     DEF-bear-kid-little-CAR   1SG.ABS-NEG-POT-fall.asleep-IPF-NEG
     'I can't fall asleep without the teddy-bear my mother
     gave me.'   (kv1954f)

NFIN – non-finite, PST – past tense, REL – relativisation

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - some speakers even allow it to attach to caritive adjectives in *-da*:

(28) *%aslán*　[*j-č-ꞔqʷá-da*]-*dʔa*　　　*d-ʕa.j.χ-ṭ*
　　　Aslan　　3SG.M.PR-horse-tail-CAR-CAR　3SG.H.ABS-return-DCL
　　　'Aslan returned on his tailless horse.'　　　(kb1964m)

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
  - however, is usually disallowed in combination with the general plural and the indefinite suffixes

(29) **h-sabə́j-kʷa-dʔa*   *č.pša.rá* *h-ca-d*

      1PL.PR-child-PL-CAR   vacation   1PL.ABS-go-DCL

      'We went on a vacation without our children.'

(30) **arə́pχ'aʕʷ*   *bzə́j-ḳ-dʔa*   *abáza-bəzŝá*

      teacher   good-INDF-CAR   Abaza-language

      g'ə-w-zə-r-də́r-wa-šə-m

      NEG-2SG.M.IO-POT-CAUS-know-IPF-FUT-NEG

      'You wonn't learn Abaza without a good teacher.'

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
    - not allowed in adnominal position
    - not allowed in predicative position

    Cf. the formulation of one of my consultants:

    "When the word denotes a property, *-da* is used;
    -dʔa is used to describe an action carried out without something or somebody".

The innovative system

- The former caritive adjectivaliser *-da* is no longer productive and attested only in lexicalised combinations such as *zʕʷa.da* 'healthy' (< illness-CAR).

- Consultants often do not recognize caritive adjectives in *-da* listed in the dictionary ("no such word exists").

- However, the caritive derivation is still in use, but instead of *-da*, *-dʔa* is employed as an adjectivaliser.

The innovative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive adjectivaliser:
  - in the adnominal use:

(31) *s-aχšʼá*   *χ-[cəgʷ*   *qʷə́-dʔa]-ḳ*   *lə́-ma-ṗ*
     1SG.PR-sister   three-cat   fur-CAR-NUM   3SG.F.IO-have-NPST.DCL
     'My sister has three furless cats.'   (el1999m)

(32) *s-[wasá*   *ĉʕʷá-dʔa]-kʷa*   *z-ba-ṭ*
     1SG.PR-sheep   horn-CAR-PL   1SG.ERG-see-DCL
     'I saw my hornless sheep.'   (el1999m)

NUM – marker of numeral phrases

The innovative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive adjectivaliser:
  - in the predicative use:

(33) *sə-n.χa.rta-dʔa-ṗ*
     1SG.ABS-work-CAR-NPST.DCL
     'I am jobless.'   (ic1949m)

  - this is usually disallowed with regular adverbials:

(34) **j-bzəj-ta-ṗ*
     3SG.N.ABS-good-ADV-NPST.DCL
     intended 'It is well'.

The innovative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive adjectivaliser:
  - as input to causative and inchoative derivations:

(35) *sə-[n.χa.rta-dʔa]-χa-ṭ*
    1SG.ABS-work-CAR-INC-DCL
    'I became jobless.'   (el1999m)

(36) *sə-j-rə-[n.χa.rta-dʔa]-ṭ*
    1SG.ABS-3SG.M.ERG-CAUS-work-CAR-DCL
    'He made me jobless.'   (ic1961f)

A diachronic account

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    1) *-da* caritive adjectivaliser vs. *-d.ʔa* caritive case marker (the conservative system);

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    1) *-da* caritive adjectivaliser vs. *-d.ʔa* caritive case marker (the conservative system);
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  2) *-d.ʔa* caritive case marker and an allomorph of *-da* in the adjectivalising function (the transitional system);
  3) *-d.ʔa* the general and the only productive caritive marker in all functions (the innovative system).

A diachronic account

- The caritive case marker *-dʔa* is obviously a product of affix telescoping (Haspelmath 1995, Stump 2022):

(37)   X-*da* + *-ʔa* → X-*daʔa* → X-*dʔa*

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  - This process must have been facilitated by the fact that the locative/adverbial suffix *-ʔa* itself has largely fallen into misuse.

  - Most interestingly, this development has resulted in the reanalysis of a combination of a derivational suffix and an unproductive inflectional suffix as a new productive inflectional suffix with phrasal scope.

A diachronic account

- Further, the caritive case marker *-dʔa* has been gradually encroaching into the domain of the original caritive adjectivaliser *-da.*

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    - Many speakers (those with the transitional system) allow *-dʔa* alongside *-da* in the function of caritive adjectivaliser, the two thus becoming allomorphs in apparently free variation.

    - For the innovative speakers, *-dʔa* has become the preferable or even the only option in this domain.

        Cf. similar developments reported for Uralic languages in Hamari (2011: 51).

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- As a result of these developments, the caritive marker -*dʔa* in Abaza shows a peculiar combination of properties not fitting well into the taxonomy of morphosyntactic categories of the language:

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- As a result of these developments, the caritive marker *-dʔa* in Abaza shows a peculiar combination of properties not fitting well into the taxonomy of morphosyntactic categories of the language:

  - a case marker with phrasal scope forming adverbial expressions;

  - a derivational marker with lexical scope forming adjectives that can serve as input to further predicate formation.

Conclusions

- The Abaza caritive morphology presents a rare case of morphological change in progress that can be studied in apparent time by variationist methods – the only possibility given the lack of historical records, the scarcity of the textual corpora and the markers' low frequency.

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- The processes involved in this change are both familiar (reanalysis and extension) and non-trivial (derivation > case marker and vice versa).

- The result of the change is also non-trivial, i.e. creation of Janus-like marker with both derivational/stem-based and inflectional/phrase-based characteristics.

ŝə-zʕʷá-da-χa-ṭ!

2PL.ABS-illness-CAR-INC-DCL

Thank you!

Vielen Dank!

Köszönöm szépen

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