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Unmarked resultatives in Abaza (Northwest Caucasian) and the typology of passive lability

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JG|U

Roadmap

- Introducing passive lability
- Introducing Abaza
- Basics of the Abaza verbal system
- The Abaza resultative construction
- Passive lability again

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Introducing passive lability

- Lability is morphologically unmarked change of diathesis, i.e. the ability of verbs to occur in distinct valency patterns / argument structure constructions without any concomitant formal marking.

Haspelmath 1993, Drossard 1998, Letuchiy 2009, 2013

Introducing passive lability

- German and English:

(1) a. *Der Junge zerbrach die Vase*.
'The boy broke the vase.'

b. *Die Vase zerbrach*.
'The vase broke.'

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Anticausative lability or P-lability

Introducing passive lability

- Kakabe (Mande, Guinea; Vydrina 2011: 190):

(2) a. *Wùléè* *bati* *Séɛku* *kín*
dog.ART PRF Seeku bite
'The dog bit Seeku.'

b. *Séɛku* *bati* *kín*
Seku PRF bite
'Seeku has been bitten.'

ART – article
PRF - perfect

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Passive lability

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Introducing passive lability

- The distinction between anticausative lability and passive lability is not always clear-cut.
- With anticausatives, the event is construed as occurring on its own, without an agent.
- With passives, an agent is implied even if not expressed overtly.

Vydrina 2011: 198–202; Creissels 2014

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Introducing passive lability

- Mandinka (Mande, Senegal; Creissels 2015: 227)

(3) a. *kew-ó* *te* *kúlúŋ-o* *dádáa-la*
man-DEF INCMP.NEG.TR boat-DEF repair-INF
'The man will not repair the boat.'

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DEF – definiteness, INCMP – incompletive, INF – infinitive,
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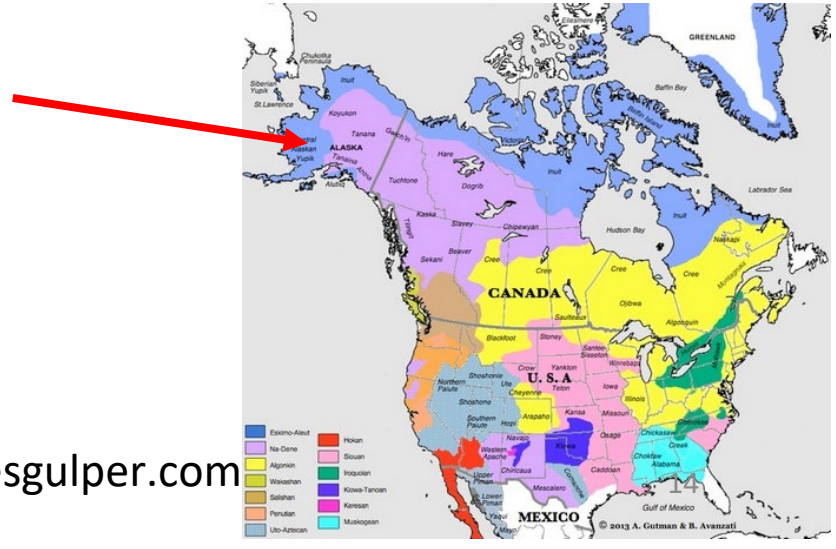
(4) a. *angute-m* *neqa* *ner-a-a*
man-ERG.SG fish.ABS.SG eat-TR-IND.3SG>3SG
'The man is eating the fish.'



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b. *neqa* *ner'-u-q* *ak'a*
fish.ABS.SG eat-INTR-IND.3SG IAM
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ABS – absolutive, IAM – iamitive 'already', IND – indicative, INTR – intransitive, TR – transitive

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- Passive lability is a subtype of lability where the transitive use of the verb corresponds to an active construction and the intransitive use to its passive counterpart.
- Morphologically unmarked passivisation, whereby the passive construction shows no extra formal marking compared to its active counterpart.

Cobbinah 2008; Letuchiy 2013: 136–145; Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019: 188–189

Introducing passive lability

- Periphrastic or inflectional markers of TAM, person or (in)transitivity should not be confused with markers of the passive.
- Cf. the distinction between direct and indirect encoding (Lehmann 2014) and the notion of conversion (Valera 2015).

Introducing passive lability

- Abaza (Northwest Caucasian, own fieldwork):

(5) a. *s-aʁá* *sará sə-j-χʷə́-d*
1SG.PR-enemy 1SG 1SG.ABS-3SG.M.ERG-wound/AOR-DCL
'My enemy wounded me.'

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ABS – absolutive, AOR – aorist,
DCL – declarative, ERG – ergative,
PR – possessor

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'My enemy wounded me.'

b. *sará* *s-χʷə-b*
1SG 1SG.ABS-wound/RES-NPST.DCL
'I am wounded.'

ABS – absolutive, AOR – aorist,
DCL – declarative, ERG – ergative,
NPST – non-past, PR – possessor,
RES – resultative

Introducing passive lability

- In this talk I shall:
  - describe the Abaza construction shown in (5) in greater detail;
  - argue that it can be considered an instance of passive lability;
  - show how it fits within a broader typology of passive lability.

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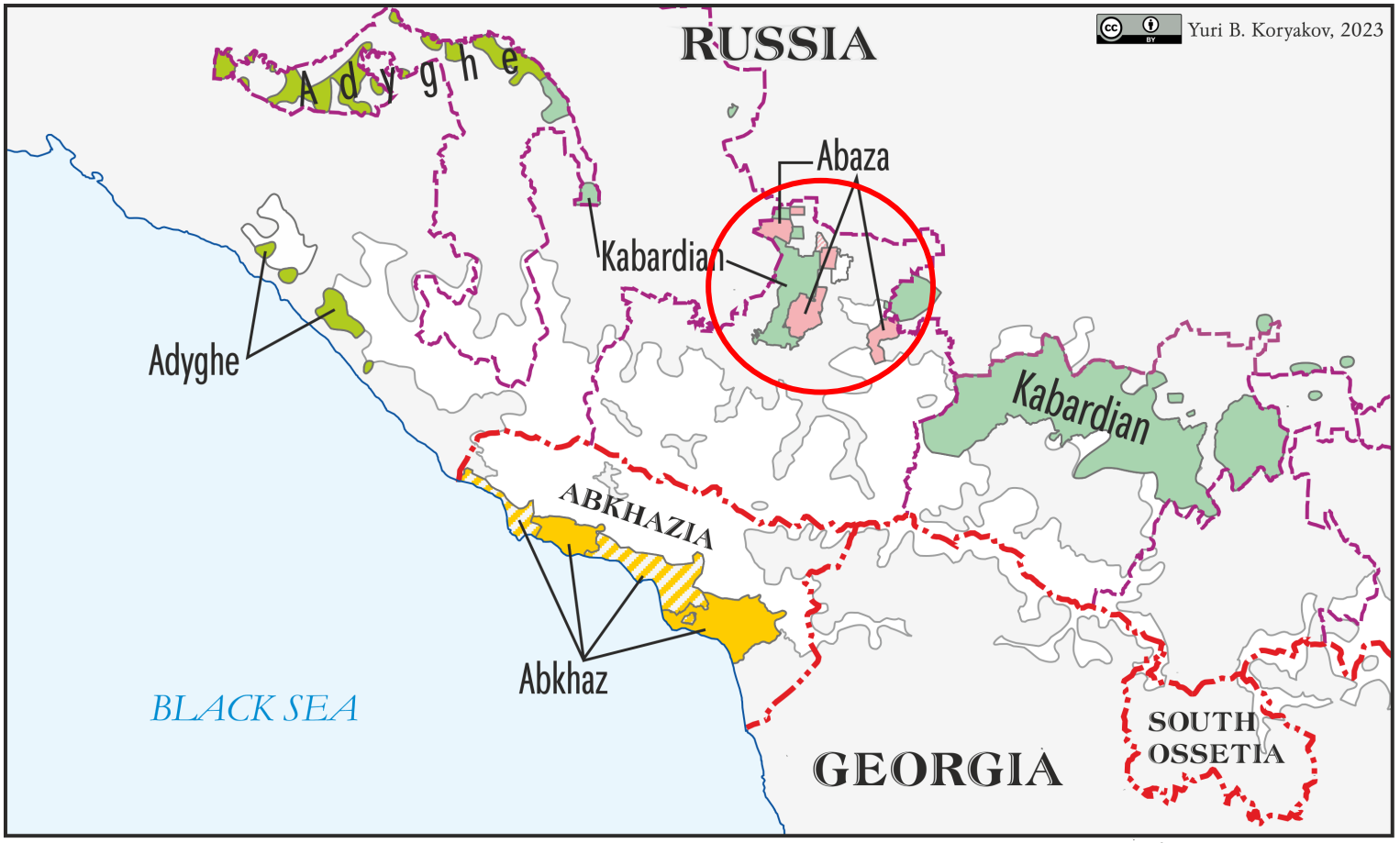
Introducing Abaza

- Northwest Caucasian language family:
  - Circassian: West Circassian (Adyghe), Kabardian
  - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
  - Ubykh (extinct since 1992)

Introducing Abaza



Introducing Abaza

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

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Introducing Abaza

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

Introducing Abaza

- Sources of data:
  - fieldwork in Karachaevo-Cherkessia on the Tapanta dialect of Abaza (2017-2019, 2021).
  - Elicited as well as corpus examples.


ДОБРО ПОЖАЛОВАТЬ!

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Abaza verbal system

The Abaza verbal template:

		“preverbs” (П)								“stem” (Σ)					“endings”				
–12	–11	–10	–9	–8	–7	–6	–5	–4	–3	–2	–1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7
absolutive	subordinators, negation	repetitive	potential, involuntative	applicatives	directional preverbs	locative preverbs	indirect object	ergative	negation	causative	sociative	root	directional suffixes	event operators	plural	aspect, tense	negation	past tense, modality	subordinators, force, emphasis

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The absolutive S/P prefix

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The ergative A prefix

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TAM suffixes

Abaza verbal system

	Absolutive	**Oblique**
1Sg	*s(ə)-*	*s(ə)-/z-*
2SgM	*w(ə)-*	*w(ə)-*
2SgF	*b(ə)-*	*b(ə)-/p-*
3SgM	*d(ə)-*	*j(ə)-*
3SgF		*l(ə)-*
3SgN	*j(ə)- ~ Ø*	*ɑ-/nɑ-*
1Pl	*h(ə)-*	*h(ə)-/ʕ-*
2Pl	*ŝ(ə)-*	*ŝ(ə)-/ẑ-*
3Pl	*j(ə)- ~ Ø*	*r(ə)-/d(ə)-*

Abaza verbal system

- Ergativity in head-marking (textual examples)

(6) a. *d-ҫ̣ə́w-əj-d*
3SG.H.ABS-cry-PRS-DCL
‘[The child] is crying.’

b. *d-ʕa-r-g-χ-d*
3SG.H.ABS-CSL-3PL.ERG-carry/AOR-RE-DCL
‘They brought [the child] back.’

AOR – aorist, CSL – cislocative ‘hither’, DCL – declarative
H – human, PRS – present, RE – refactive

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Abaza verbal system

- Omission of the *j-* 3Sg non-human and 3 plural absolutive prefix (textual examples):

(7) a. *a-sabə́j-kʷa-gʼəj* *bzəj* *jə-ʕ-b-ə́j-ṭ*
DEF-child-PL-ADD good 3PL.ABS-1PL.ERG-see-PRS-DCL
'We love (lit. see well) the children, too.'

b. *piróg-gʼəj* *[j-]s-čʼp-əj-ṭ*
pie-ADD [3SG.N.ABS-]1SG.ERG-do-PRS-DCL
'I also make pies.'

Abaza verbal system

- Transitive verbs constitute a distinct formal class in Abaza:
  - only transitive verbs index their agentive argument in the ergative slot –4;
  - only transitive verbs omit the singular ergative prefix in the imperative.

Abaza verbal system

- Lexically restricted P-lability (elicited):

(8) a. *a-sabə́j-kʷa a-qə́ŝ pə-r-čə́-ṭ*
DEF-child-PL DEF-window LOC-3PL.ERG-break/AOR-DCL
'The children broke the window.'

b. *a-qə́ŝ p-čə-ṭ*
DEF-window LOC-break/AOR-DCL
'The window broke.'

LOC – locative preverb (here lexicalised)

Abaza verbal system

- Static vs. dynamic verbs:
  - a division attested in all NWC languages;
  - lexical as well as morphological;
  - static: posture, location, possession, modality + nominals when used predicatively;
  - dynamic: all other verbs, notably all transitives;
  - distinct TAM paradigms and morphology;
  - stativising vs. dynamicising derivations.

Abaza verbal system

basic			**retrospectivised**		
	finite	non-finite		finite	non-finite
Static verbs					
Present	*-ṗ/b*	*-əw*	Past	*-n*	*-z*

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Present	*-ṗ/b*	*-əw*	Past	*-n*	*-z*
Dynamic verbs					
Present	*-əj-ṭ/d*	*-wa*	Imperfect	*-wa-n*	*-wa-z*
Aorist	*-ṭ/d*	*Ø*	R-Aorist	*-n*	*-z*
Future I	*-wa-š-ṭ*	*-wa-š*	Subj-ve I	*-wa-šə-n*	*-wa-šə-z*
Future II	*-ṗ/b*	*-ra*	Subj-ve II	*-rə-n*	*-rə-z*

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Abaza verbal system

- Present tense of static verbs = Future II of dynamic verbs

(9) a. *d-ҫ̂a-ṗ*
3SG.H.ABS-sit-NPST.DCL
‘He is sitting.’ (Tabulova 1976: 179)

b. *hə-j-ҫʕá-ṗ*
1PL.ABS-3SG.M.IO-ask-NPST.DCL
‘We shall ask him.’ (textual example)

IO – indirect object, M – masculine

Abaza verbal system

- The forms of static verbs that cannot be built directly are formed by means of the dynamicising suffix *-zl(a)*:

(10) *ársa* *h-šʼṭá-zl-əw-š-ma?*
PROX.ADV 1PL.ABS-be_down-DYN-IPF-FUT-Q
'Are we going to lie down in this way?' (textual example)

ADV – adverbial, DYN – dynamicising suffix, IPF – imperfective,
PROX – proximate demonstrative, Q – interrogative suffix

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Abaza resultative construction

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DEF-girl DEF-door CSL-3SG.F.ERG-open/AOR-DCL
'The girl opened the door.' (elicited)

b. *sə-ŝ-kʷa* *w-zə-ṭ-ṗ*
1SG.PR-door-PL 2SG.M.IO-BEN-open/RES-NPST.DCL
'My doors are open for you.' (textual)

BEN – benefactive, CSL – cislocative, F – feminine, PR - possessor

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Intransitivisation through elimination of the ergative prefix

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Conversion from the dynamic to the static class

BEN – benefactive, CSL – cislocative, F – feminine, PR - possessor

Abaza resultative construction

- Evidence for stativisation:
  - interpretation of the *-ṗ/b* form (present, not future) (11b);
  - lack of any dynamic TAM forms;
  - past tense in *-n* (12);
  - static allomorph of the permissive (13);
  - dynamicisation by *-zl(a)* (15), (16).

Abaza resultative construction

- past tense in *-n* with a durative reading:

(12) *sará s-an-ʕá.j* *a-ŝ* *ṭə-n*
1SG 1SG.ABS-REL.TMP-come DEF-door open/RES-PST
'When I came, the door was open.' (elicited)

REL.TMP – temporal relativisation

Abaza resultative construction

- static vs. dynamic allomorphs of the permissive:

(13) *a-ŝ* *ṭə-zd*
DEF-door open/RES-PRM.ST
'Let the door be open.' (elicited)

(14) *awə́j* *a-ŝ* *sə-z-ʕə́-l-ṭə-rʕad*
DIST.SG DEF-door 1SG.IO-BEN-CSL-3SG.F.ERG-open-PRM.DYN
'Let her open the door for me.' (elicited)

BEN – benefactive, DIST – distal demonstrative, PRM – permissive

Abaza resultative construction

- dynamicisation with future and masdar:

(15) *s-an-ʕá.j-ra* *a-ŝ*
1SG.ABS-REL.TMP-come-FUT.NFIN DEF-door
ṭá-zl-əw-š-d
open/RES-DYN-IPF-FUT-DCL
'When I come, the door will be open.' (elicited)

(16) *waqə́n-la* *a-ŝ* *j-a.r.ḳə́-zla-ra*
night-INS DEF-door 3SG.N.ABS-close/RES-DYN-MSD
j-a-taqə́-b
3SG.N.ABS-3SG.N.IO-need-NPST.DCL
'At night the door must be closed.' (elicited)

Abaza resultative construction

- The Abaza construction is an objective resultative in terms of Nedjalkov & Jaxontov (1988: 9, 15-17):
  - denotes a state brought about by the event encoded by the verb stem;
  - its subject corresponds to the patient (direct object) of the base verb;
  - is only attested with transitive change-of-state verbs;
  - only combines with adverbials and operators that modify states.

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  - denotes a state brought about by the event encoded by the base verb;
  - its subject corresponds to the patient (direct object) of the base verb;
  - is only attested with transitive change-of-state verbs;
  - only combines with adverbials and operators that modify states.

Abaza resultative construction

adverbials of temporal localisation	simultaneity	(17)
adverbials of temporal duration	yes	(19a)
adverbials of temporal extent	no	(19b)
continuative suffix	yes	(20)
‘quickly’	no	(22)
purpose clauses	no	(23)
agent expression in the instrumental	marginal	(24)

Abaza resultative construction

- temporal adverbial clause:

(17) *s-an-ʕá.j* *a-ŝ* *ṭə-n*
1SG.ABS-REL.TMP-come DEF-door open/RES-PST
'When I came, the door was open.' (elicited)

(18) *osmán* *d-an-ps-g'əj*
Osman 3SG.H.ABS-REL.TMP-die-ADD
jará *awáʔa* *də́-ça-r-ça-χ-ṭ*
3SG.M DIST.LOC 3SG.H.ABS-LOC-3PL.ERG-put/AOR-RE-DCL
'When Osman died, they buried him there, too.' (textual)

Abaza resultative construction

- temporal adverbial clause:

(17) *s-an-ʕá.j*
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Simultaneous reading with the resultative

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3SG.M DIST.LOC 3SG
'When Osman died, they buried him there, too.' (textual)

Sequential reading with the aorist of a dynamic verb

Abaza resultative construction

- duration vs. extent adverbials (elicited):

(19) a. *a-qə́ŝ* *sahat–bžə́-ḳ* *j-ṭə-n*
DEF-window hour–half-NUM 3SG.N.ABS-open/RES-PST
'The window was open for half an hour.'

b. **a-qə́ŝ* *sahat–bžə́-ḳ-la* *j-ṭə-n*
DEF-window hour–half-NUM-INS 3SG.N.ABS-open/RES-PST
intended 'The window got open in half an hour.'

Abaza resultative construction

- continuative suffix *-rḳʷ(a)*:

(20) *a-qə́ŝ* *p-čə-rḳʷə́-ṗ*
DEF-window LOC-break/RES-CNT-NPST.DCL
'The window is still broken.' (elicited)

- with dynamic verbs, only with imperfective forms:

(21) *a-č'mazaʕʷtara* *də-n.χa-wa-rḳʷ-əw-n*
DEF-hospital 3SG.H.ABS-work-IPF-CNT-IPF-PST
'S/he was still working in a hospital.' (Panova 2021: 49)

Klyagina & Panova (2019, 2021), Panova (2021: 48–52)

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Klyagina & Panova (2019, 2021), Panova (2021: 48–52)

Abaza resultative construction

- “quickly” (elicited):

(22) a. *saɮʒámsʔa* *lasə́-ta* *jə-z-ʕʷə́-d*
letter quick-ADV 3SG.N.ABS-1SG.ERG-write/AOR-DCL
‘I wrote the letter quickly.’

b. **saɮʒámsʔa* *lasə́-ta* *j-ʕʷə-b*
letter quick-ADV 3SG.N.ABS-write/RES-NPST.DCL
intended ‘The letter has been written quickly.’

Abaza resultative construction

- purpose clauses (elicited):

(23) *a-tʒə́* *r-blə-ṭ*
DEF-house 3PL.ERG-burn/AOR-DCL
a-straχófʃka *ʕa-rə́-r-t-ra* *á.qaz.la*
DEF-insurance CSL-3PL.IO-3PL.ERG-give-MSD for
'They burnt the house in order to get insurance.'

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- purpose clauses (elicited):

(23’) **a-tʒə́* *blə-ṗ*
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DEF-insurance CSL-3PL.IO-3PL.ERG-give-MSD for
intended: ‘The house is burnt in order (for them) to get insurance.’

Abaza resultative construction

- agent phrases in the instrumental (elicited):

(24) *%a-ɕapχa-kʷá* *čʼḳʷə́n-ḳ-la* *j-ʕá-w-ṗ*
DEF-key-PL boy-INDF-INS 3PL.ABS-CSL-find/RES-NPST.DCL
'The keys have been found by some boy.'

- Examples like (24) are accepted by some speakers, but so far have not been attested in texts.

Abaza resultative construction

- Resultative is stative, hence suppresses the components of the event structure related to the agent's activity.
- Nevertheless, the Resultative is often formed from verbs denoting events whose resultant states cannot come about spontaneously without an agent being involved.

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- Agentive activity implied (textual examples):

(25) *a-ĉ-kʷa* *a-ça-hʷa-ta* *h-ĉaʁʷa-ṭ*
DEF-ox-PL 3SG.N.IO-LOC-yoke/RES-ADV 1PL.ABS-plough/AOR-DCL
'We ploughed with the oxen yoked in.'

(26) *awəj* *a-garod*
DIST.SG DEF-orchard
gʼ-ḳʷə-r-ša-mə-z-ṭ
NEG.EMP-LOC-CAUS-surround/RES-NEG-PST.NFIN-DCL
'The orchard was not fenced.'

CAUS – causative, EMP – emphatic, NEG – negation

Abaza resultative construction

Canonical passives	Abaza resultative construction
agent demotion	yes
patient foregrounding	yes
applies to all transitive verbs	no (lexically restricted)
describes the same situation	no (resultant state)
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- The Abaza resultative construction can be considered a statal passive (Zustandspassiv), cf. Nedjalkov & Jaxontov (1988: 45).

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See Nedjalkov 1988, Litvinov & Nedjalkov 1988 on the relations between resultative and passive in German.

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Abaza resultative construction

- The Abaza resultative construction can be considered an instance of passive lability of the statal subtype.

Roadmap

- Introducing passive lability
- Introducing Abaza
- Basics of the Abaza verbal system
- The Abaza resultative construction
- Passive lability again

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Passive lability again

- Passive lability is best represented in the Mande language family (cf. Creissels 2018: 745).
- Lüpke 2005, Cobbinah 2008, Vydrina 2011, Cobbinah & Lüpke 2012, Creissels 2014, 2015, Vydrin 2018, Khachaturyan 2021.
- Passive lability is also sporadically attested elsewhere (Cobbinah 2008; Letuchiy 2013: 136–145; Zúñiga & Kittilä 2019: 188–189).

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- Kakabe (Vydrina 2011: 190–193):
  - admitted with all types of transitive verbs;
  - clearly actional, not statal;
  - however, agent expression is prohibited.
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Passive lability again

- Kakabe (Vydrina 2011: 190):

(28) a. *Fánta bi Sέεku kéle-la*
Fanta IPFV Seeku call-IPFV
'Fanta is calling Seeku.'

b. *Sέεku bi kéle-la*
Seeku IPFV call-IPFV
'Seeku is being called.'

Passive lability again

- Bambara (Mande, Mali; Creissels 2014: 920):

(29) a. *wùlu* *má* *sògo* *dún*
dog.DEF PFV.NEG meat.DEF eat
'The dog has not eaten the meat.'

PFV – perfective

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b. *sògo* *má* *dún* *wùlu* *fɛ̀*
meat.DEF PFV.NEG eat dog.DEF by
'The meat has not been eaten by the dog.'

PFV – perfective

Passive lability again

- Manggarai (Austronesian, Indonesia; Arka & Kosmas 2005: 100–102):
- agent phrases in the unmarked passive are close to obligatoriness, since “otherwise no passive structure would be recognised”, although they can be omitted if the identity of the agent is either inferrable from the context or unimportant.

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Passive lability again

- Manggarai (Austronesian, Indonesia; Arka & Kosmas 2005: 95):

(30) a. *aku* *cero* *latung=k*
1SG fry corn=1SG
'I fry / am frying corn.'

b. *latung* *hitu* *cero* *l=aku=i*
corn that fry OBL=1SG=3SG
'The corn is (being) fried by me.'

OBL – oblique case

Passive lability again

- Languages with passive lability of the statal type seen in Abaza are also reported in the literature.
- Cf. Letuchiy (2013: 139–141) on the “stative” type of passive lability.
  - Berber (Mettouchi 2004; Gutova 2013)
  - Coptic (Cobbinah 2008: 18–20)
  - Songhay (Galiamina 2006: 367–368)
  - Sanuma (Borgman 1990: 201–202)

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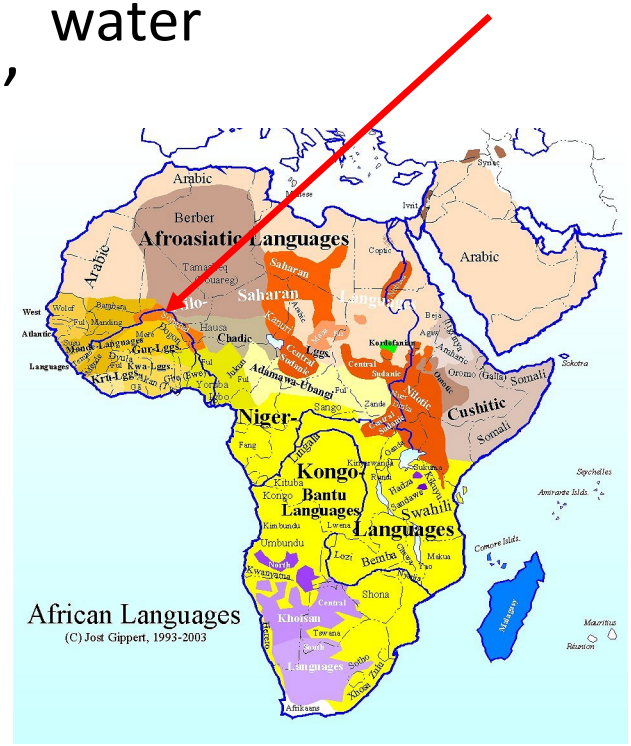
Passive lability again

- Koyraboro Senni (Songhay, Mali; Heath 1999: 163)

(31) a. *ay* *na* *kus-oo* *too* *hari*
1SG.SBJ TR jar-DEF.SG fill water
'I filled the jar with water.'



SBJ – subject, TR – transitivity marker

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'I filled the jar with water.'

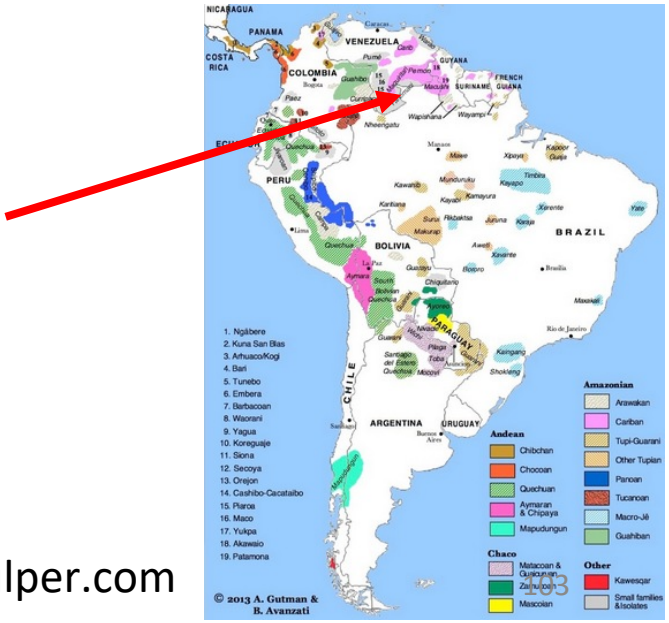
b. *bidoŋ-oo* *ga* *too* *hari*
jug-DEF.SG IPFV be_full water
'The jug is full of water.'

SBJ – subject, TR – transitivity marker

Passive lability again

- Sanumá (Yanomamic, Venezuela; Borgman 1990: 202)

(32) *sama* *a* *pa-ki* *ke*
tapir 3SG lie_on_ground-FOC IMMED.PST
i. '(He) laid the tapir (on the ground).'
ii. 'The tapir lay down (on the ground).'



FOC – focus, IMMED.PST – immediate past

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Passive lability again

- The role of lexical restrictions:
  - Sanumá: “certain verbs” allow passive lability (Borgman 1990: 201-202).
  - Songhay: the group of verbs exhibiting passive lability is “much smaller” than the group showing anticausative lability (Galiamina 2006: 367).
  - By contrast, in Tarifiyt Berber any transitive change-of-state verb apparently shows passive lability (Gutova 2013: 10–12).
  - The situation in Abaza is closer to Berber than to Songhay.

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  - The situation in Abaza is closer to Berber than to Songhay.

Passive lability again

- Preliminary typology of passive lability:

Language	Lexical restrictions	Semantic type	Agent expression
Bambara, Manggarayi	none	dynamic	yes
Kakabe, Mandinka	none	dynamic	no
CA Yupik	telic	dynamic	no
Abaza	telic	stative	marginal
Berber	telic	stative	no
Koyraboro Senni, Sanumá	non-productive	stative	no

Summary

- The peculiar unmarked resultative construction in Abaza can be considered
  - a highly non-canonical instance of passive;
  - a cross-linguistically rare instance of lability.

Summary

- Within the domain of passive lability there is a cline from lexically severely restricted statal passives (Songhay, Sanumá) to highly productive actional passives (Mande, Manggarayi).
- Various intermediate cases are also attested, and Abaza (probably together with some Berber varieties) provides an example of a fairly productive unmarked statal passive.

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Summary

- Rare and “non-canonical” phenomena such as passive lability and its various subtypes can be studied within typology.
- “Comparative concepts” of typology should be defined in such a way that phenomena like this are accommodated and their peculiarities are highlighted.

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ŝə-zʕʷada-χa-ṭ!

2PL.ABS-healthy-INC-DCL

Thank you for your attention!

Danke für ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

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