Northwest Caucasian applicatives beyond the argument-adjunct division

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Introduction

- Northwest Caucasian languages (NWC):
  - polysynthesis
  - ergativity
  - a rich and variegated system of applicatives
- NWC applicatives:
  - introduce indirect objects
  - only rarely affect the base valency
  - interesting interactions with both lexicon and syntax

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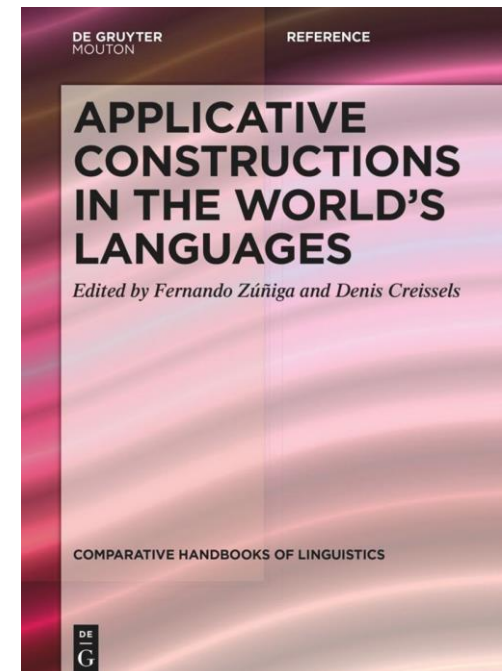   - interesting interactions with both lexicon and syntax

Introduction

- This talk is based on joint work with Jury Lander and Irina Bagirokova and also owes much to Jury Lander's own work and our long-term collaboration and discussions.

Peter Arkadiev, Yury Lander, and Irina Bagirokova

25 Applicative constructions in the Northwest Caucasian languages

Abstract: This chapter describes applicative constructions in the polysynthetic Northwest Caucasian languages, which are typologically unusual in several respects. First, these languages possess an extraordinarily rich system of applicatives whose semantic functions range from benefactive, comitative and malefactive to fairly specialized spatial meanings. Second, the Northwest Caucasian applicatives invariably introduce indirect objects, thus almost never affecting the ergative-absolutive alignment of core arguments and serving as important and often only means of integrating peripheral

DE GRUYTER MOUTON

REFERENCE

APPLICATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE WORLD'S LANGUAGES

Edited by Fernando Zúñiga and Denis Creissels

COMPARATIVE HANDBOOKS OF LINGUISTICS

Roadmap

1. Northwest Caucasian languages
2. Basics of NWC morphosyntax
3. Introducing NWC applicatives
4. Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division
5. Applicatives feed morphosyntactic operations
6. Summary

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  - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
  - Ubykh (extinct since 1992)

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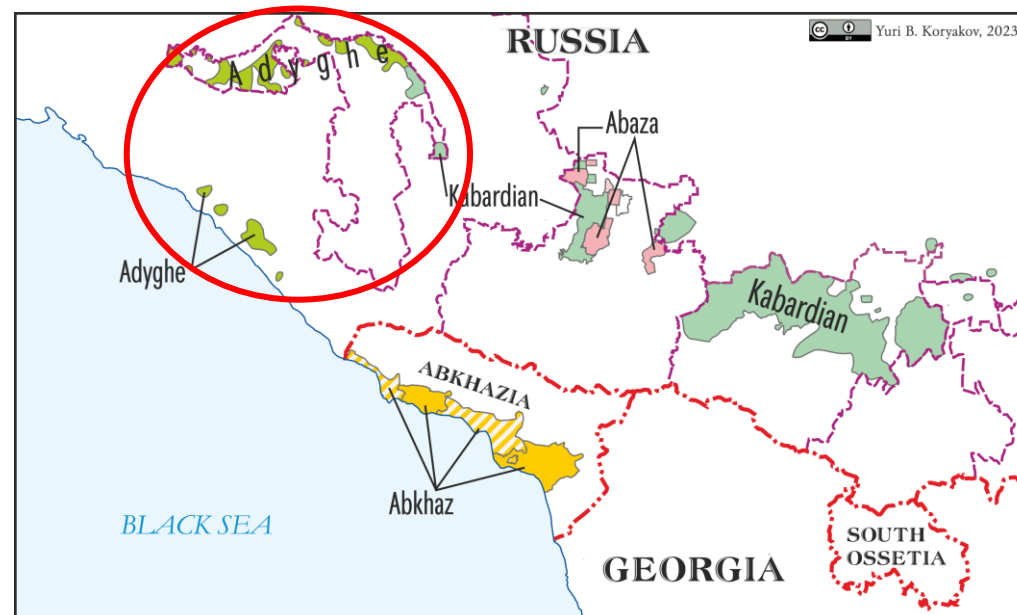 - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
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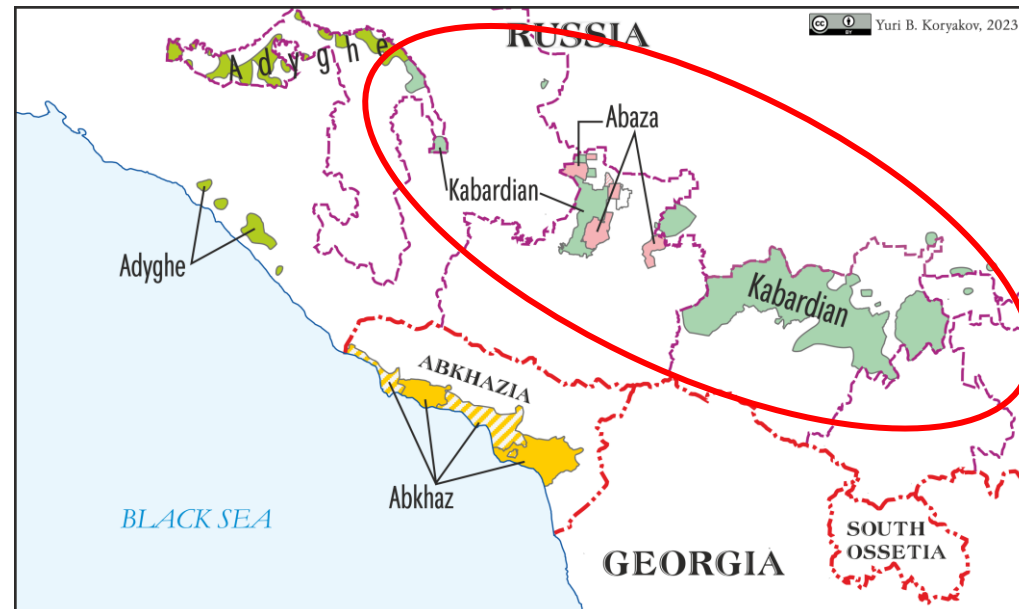 - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abkhaz, Abaza
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Northwest Caucasian languages

- Northwest Caucasian peoples and languages have severely suffered from the Russian imperial policies during the Caucasian war (1763-1864) and the ensuing expulsions and resettlements.

- A number of varieties have become extinct, and the whole linguistic landscape has been disrupted.

- Currently spoken by ca. 700-800 thousand people in Abkhasia and the Russian republics of Adygeya, Karachay-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 (e.g. Boz 2021).

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Northwest Caucasian languages

Major typological traits (Hewitt 2005, Arkadiev & Lander 2020, Arkadiev 2023):

- rich consonantism and empoverished vocalism;
- weak distinction between major lexical classes;
- head-marking and polysynthesis;
- little (Circassian, Ubykh) or no (Abkhaz-Abaza) core case marking;
- ergativity;
- rich system of valency-increasing derivations, especially applicatives;
- rich system of spatial marking in the verb;
- complex system of clause-combining.

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Northwest Caucasian languages

Sources of data:

- descriptive work and specialist literature;
- published collections of texts;
- own fieldwork on West Circassian, Kabardian and Abaza in 2004-2021 + some remote "fieldwork" after 2022.

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- Nominals esp. free pronouns are optional
- Ergativity manifested in both head-marking and dependent-marking (Circassian, Ubykh)
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Besleney Kabardian polysynthetic predicate (own fieldwork, v. Ulyap, 2011-2013)

(1) *sə-q̇ə-zer-a-xʷə-č'erə-mə-ṭetə-č'ə-ž'-a-r*
1SG.ABS-CSL-REL.FCT-3PL.IO-BEN-LOC-NEG-tie-ELAT-RE-PST-ABS
'that they could not untie me from there'

ABS – absolutive, BEN – benefactive, CSL – cislocative,
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- The schematic template of the verbal complex (Arkadiev & Lander 2020: 404)

prefixes					root	suffixes				
argument structure zone				pre-stem elements	stem				endings	
abso-lutive	subord-inators	applicati-ves and indirect objects	erga-tive	preradical negation	causa-tive	root	event opera-tors	tense	suffixal nega-tion	force or subord-inators
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Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Polypersonalism, valency and ergativity
  - up to four (or even five) participants can be expressed by means of person-number(-gender) prefixes;
  - facilitated by applicatives.

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Polypersonalism, valency and ergativity

Abaza (Inzhich-Chukun, 2017, textual example):

(2) *j-ŝǝ-z-j-á-s-hʷ-ṗ*
      3SG.N.ABS-2PL.IO-BEN-3SG.M.IO-DAT-1SG.ERG-say-NPST.DCL
      'I will tell this to him about you.'

ABS – absolutive, BEN – benefactive, DAT – "dative" marker,
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- pronominal prefixes come in the order

  Absolutive – Indirect Object(s) – Ergative

- In Abaza, all prefixes are normally overt;

- In Circassian, 3rd person absolutive and some 3rd person indirect object prefixes are null.

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Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Polypersonalism, valency and ergativity
- Major valency classes of predicates

	I	II	III	example
monovalent intransitive	Abs			'live'
bivalent intransitive	Abs	IO		'hit'
bivalent transitive	Erg	Abs		'break'
bivalent inverse	IO	Abs		'forget'
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Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Ergativity in head-marking

Abaza (elicited)

(3) a.   *h-bzáza-ṭ*   monovalent intransitive
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               'we lived'

     b.   *hə-l-bá-ṭ*   bivalent transitive
               1PL.ABS-3SG.F.ERG-see-DCL
               'she saw us'

     c.   *j-ŝə́-s-t-ṭ*   trivalent transitive
               3SG.N.ABS-2PL.IO-1SG.ERG-give-DCL
               'I gave you it'

  ABS – absolutive, DCL – declarative

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IO – indirect object

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Ergativity in dependent-marking

West Circassian (elicited)

(4) a. *č'ale-r   me-čəje*   monovalent intransitive
       boy-ABS   PRS-sleep
       'The boy is sleeping.'

   b. *pŝaŝe-m č'ale-r   ə-ʎeʁʷə-ʁ*   bivalent transitive
       girl-OBL   boy-ABS   3SG.ERG-see-PST
       'The girl saw the boy.'

                                              trivalent transitive

   c. *č'ale-m   pŝaŝe-m txəʎə-r   r-jə-tə-ʁ*
       boy-OBL   girl-OBL   book-ABS 3SG.IO+DAT-3SG.ERG-give-PST
       'The boy is giving the book to the girl.'

   ABS – absolutive

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Ergativity in dependent-marking

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(4) a. *č'ale-r   me-čəje*   monovalent intransitive
         boy-ABS   PRS-sleep
         'The boy is sleeping.'

     b. *pŝaŝe-m č'ale-r   ə-ƛeʁʷə-ʁ*   bivalent transitive
         girl-OBL   boy-ABS   3SG.ERG-see-PST
         'The girl saw the boy.'

                                                    trivalent transitive

     c. *č'ale-m pŝaŝe-m txəƛə-r   r-jə-tə-ʁ*
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ABS – absolutive, ERG – ergative, OBL – oblique case

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      girl-OBL   boy-ABS   3SG.ERG-see-PST
      'The girl saw the boy.'

                                                                  trivalent transitive

  c. *č'ale-m   pŝaŝe-m txəʎə-r   r-jə-tə-ʁ*
      boy-OBL   girl-OBL   book-ABS 3SG.IO+DAT-3SG.ERG-give-PST
      'The boy gave the book to the girl.'

ABS – absolutive, DAT – dative applicative, ERG – ergative,
IO – indirect object, OBL – oblique case

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Ergativity in dependent-marking

West Circassian (elicited)

> Oblique case marks both agents and indirect objects

(4) a.   *č'ale-r*   *me-čəje*   monovalent intransitive
        boy-ABS   PRS-sleep
        'The boy is sleeping.'

    b.   *pŝaŝe-m* *č'ale-r*   *ə- λeʁʷə-ʁ*   bivalent transitive
        girl-OBL   boy-ABS   3SG.ERG-see-PST
        'The girl saw the boy.'

                                          trivalent transitive

    c.   *č'ale-m*   *pŝaŝe-m* *txəλə-r*   *r-jə-tə-ʁ*
        boy-OBL   girl-OBL   book-ABS   3SG.IO+DAT-3SG.ERG-give-PST
        'The boy gave the book to the girl.'

ABS – absolutive, DAT – dative applicative, ERG – ergative,
IO – indirect object, OBL – oblique case

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Non-transitive bivalent predicates: head-marking

Abaza (elicited)

(5) a. *h-bzáza-ṭ*   monovalent intransitive
1PL.ABS-live-DCL
'we lived'

  b. *hə-l-pšá-ṭ*   bivalent intransitive
1PL.ABS-3SG.F.IO-look-DCL
'we looked at her'

  c. *hə-l-q-áštəl-ṭ*   bivalent inverse
1SG.ABS-3SG.F.IO-LOC-forget-DCL
'she forgot us'

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

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LOC – locative applicative

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

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West Circassian (elicited)

(6) a. *č'ale-r* *me-čəje*   monovalent intransitive
       boy-ABS   PRS-sleep
       'The boy is sleeping.'

   b. *č'ale-r* *pŝaŝe-m je-ža-ʁ*   bivalent intransitive
       boy-ABS   girl-OBL   3SG.IO+DAT-wait-PST
       'The boy waited for the girl.'

   c. *pŝaŝe-m č'ale-r* *š'ə-ʁʷəpša-ʁ*   bivalent inverse
       girl-OBL   boy-ABS   LOC-forget-PST
       'The girl forgot the boy.'

Basics of NWC morphosyntax

- Non-transitive bivalent predicates: dependent-marking

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           'The boy is sleeping.'

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           boy-ABS   girl-OBL   3SG.IO+DAT-wait-PST
           'The boy waited for the girl.'

       c.   *pŝaŝe-m č'ale-r   š'ə-ʁʷəpša-ʁ*   bivalent inverse
           girl-OBL   boy-ABS   LOC-forget-PST
           'The girl forgot the boy.'

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         girl-OBL   boy-ABS   LOC-forget-PST
         'The girl forgot the boy.'

LOC – locative applicative

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Roadmap

1. Northwest Caucasian languages
2. Basics of NWC morphosyntax
3. Introducing NWC applicatives
4. Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division
5. Applicatives feed morphosyntactic operations
6. Summary

Roadmap

Introducing NWC applicatives

- NWC languages possess rich inventories of applicatives
  - up to several dozen elements;
  - prefixes in the argument structure zone;
  - combine with both transitive and intransitive verbs;
  - introduce indirect objects;
  - semantically, range from underspecified to highly specialised;
  - most of the NWC applicatives are simultaneously locative preverbs, i.e. encode spatial meanings.

Lomtatidze 1976a, Smeets 1992, O'Herin 2001, Letuchiy 2009, Fell 2012, Arkadiev et al. 2024, Arkadiev submitted

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Introducing NWC applicatives

West Circassian (Letuchiy 2009: 331)

(7) a. *txəλ-xe-r*   *s-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
    book-PL-ABS   1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
    'I bought books.'

   b. *č̣ʼale-xe-m*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *a-fe-s-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
    boy-PL-OBL   book-PL-ABS   3PL.IO-BEN-1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
    'I bought books for the boys.'

Introducing NWC applicatives

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         'I bought books.'

     b. *č̣'ale-xe-m*   *txǝλ-xe-r*   *a-fe-s-š'efǝ-ʁe-x*
         boy-PL-OBL   book-PL-ABS   3PL.IO-BEN-1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
         'I bought books for the boys.'

Applicative prefix

Introducing NWC applicatives

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         boy-PL-OBL   book-PL-ABS   3PL.IO-BEN-1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
         'I bought books for the boys.'

Applicative prefix

IO prefix

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(7) a. *txəλ-xe-r*   *s-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
     book-PL-ABS   1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
     'I bought books.'

   b. *čʼale-xe-m*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *a-fe-s-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
     boy-PL-OBL   book-PL-ABS   3PL.IO-BEN-1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
     'I bought books for the boys.'

Applied IO

Applicative prefix

IO prefix

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Introducing NWC applicatives

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(7) a. *txəλ-xe-r*　　　*s-š'efə-ʁe-x*
　　　　　book-PL-ABS　　1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
　　　　　'I bought books.'

　　　b. *č'ale-xe-m*　　*txəλ-xe-r*　　*a-fe-s-š'efə-ʁe-x*
　　　　　boy-PL-OBL　　book-PL-ABS　　3PL.IO-BEN-1SG.ERG-buy-PST-PL
　　　　　'I bought books for the boys.'

Applied IO

OBL case

Applicative prefix

IO prefix

Introducing NWC applicatives

- Applicative constructions are not always as neat as shown in (7):

  - AppP often not expressed overtly;

  - no overt case-marking in Abaza and Abkhaz;

  - oblique case-marking not always overt in Circassian;

  - no overt cross-reference for 3SG IO in Circassian;

  - 3SG IO in Abaza and Abkhaz not always overtly cross-referenced;

  - cross-referencing prefix not always immediately precedes the applicative prefix in Circassian.

Introducing NWC applicatives

- Applicative constructions are not always as neat as shown in (7):
    - AppP often not expressed overtly;
    - no overt case-marking in Abaza and Abkhaz;
    - oblique case-marking not always overt in Circassian;
    - no overt cross-reference for 3SG IO in Circassian;
    - 3SG IO in Abaza and Abkhaz not always overtly cross-referenced;
    - cross-referencing prefix does not always immediately precede the applicative prefix in Circassian.

Introducing NWC applicatives

- Semantic functions of applicatives:
    - benefactive (7) and malefactive;
    - comitative;
    - instrumental;
    - various locative meanings;
    - "dative" (semantically underspecified);
    - potential and inadvertitive (non-valency-increasing).

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: "grammatical" applicatives

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

   b. *j-s-ĉə-j-ʁəč'-d*   malefactive
    3SG.N.ABS-1SG.IO-MAL-3SG.M.ERG-steal-DCL
    'He stole it from me.' (O'Herin 2001: 480)

BEN – benefactive, NPST – non-past, PR – possessor, RES – resultative

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: "grammatical" applicatives

(8) a. *sə-ŝ-kʷa*   *w-zə-ṭ-ṗ*   benefactive
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      3SG.N.ABS-1SG.IO-MAL-3SG.M.ERG-steal-DCL
      'He stole it from me.' (O'Herin 2001: 480)

BEN – benefactive, MAL – malefactive, NPST – non-past, PR – possessor, RES – resultative

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: "grammatical" applicatives

(8) c.   *d-sá-cə-n.χ-əj-ṭ*   comitative
          3SG.H.ABS-1SG.IO-COM-work-PRS-DCL
          'She works with me.' (txt)

  d.   *a-ĉərʁʷá   a-zernó a-lá-ʕa-ċa-r-g-əj-ṭ*   instrumental
          DEF-spade   DEF-grain 3SG.N.IO-INS-CSL-LOC-
                                        3PL.ERG-carry-PRS-DCL
          'people gather the grain with a spade' (txt)

COM – comitative

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: "grammatical" applicatives

(8) c. *d-sə́-cə-n.χ-əj-ṭ*   comitative
       3SG.H.ABS-1SG.IO-COM-work-PRS-DCL
       'She works with me.' (txt)

     d. *a-ĉərʁʷə́*   *a-zernó* *a-lá-ʕa-ça-r-g-əj-ṭ*   instrumental
       DEF-spade   DEF-grain 3SG.N.IO-INS-CSL-LOC-
                               3PL.ERG-carry-PRS-DCL
       'People gather the grain with a spade.' (txt)

CSL – cislocative, COM – comitative, DEF – definiteness, INS – instrumental,
LOC – locative preverb

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: spatial applicatives

(9) a. *phʷəs-ḳ d-ʕa-rə-l-s-χə-n*
wife-INDF 3SG.H.ABS-CSL-3PL.IO-LOC:among-1SG.ERG-take-PST
'I chose a wife among them.' (txt)

b. *d-na-sá-š'ta-lə-n*
3SG.H.ABS-TRL-1SG.IO-LOC:behind-go-PST
'He followed (lit. went behind) me.' (txt)

Lomtatidze 1983, Avidzba 2017, Klychev 1994, 1994, Arkadiev submitted

INDF – indefiniteness

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: spatial applicatives

(9) a. *phʷəs-ḳ d-ʕa-rə-l-s-χə-n*
         wife-INDF 3SG.H.ABS-CSL-3PL.IO-LOC:among-1SG.ERG-take-PST
         'I chose a wife among them.' (txt)

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         3SG.H.ABS-TRL-1SG.IO-LOC:behind-go-PST
         'He followed (lit. went behind) me.' (txt)

Lomtatidze 1983, Avidzba 2017, Klychev 1994, 1994, Arkadiev submitted

INDF – indefiniteness, TRL – translocative

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza: highly specific applicatives (Klychev 1995: 274, 88)

(10) a. *a-χ'apš'–gʷplaça*   *lə-qʷda-ḳḳ-əw-n*
DEF-gold–brooch   3SG.F.IO-LOC:neck-glitter-IPF-PST
'A golden brooch glittered on her neck.'

   b. *a-klub* *jə-ʕʷna-n.χ-əj-ṭ*
DEF-club 3PL.ABS-LOC:building-work-PRS-DCL
'They work in the club.'

Lomtatidze 1983, Avidzba 2017, Klychev 1994, 1994, Arkadiev submitted

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza valency-rearranging applicatives: potential

(11) a. *ẑ-za.ǯə-ḳ*   *ʕa-h-χʷʕa-n*
        cow-one-INDF CSL-1PL.ERG-buy-PST
        'We bought a cow.' (txt)

   b. *knigá*   *g'-s-zə́-m-χʷʕ-əw-z-ṭ*
        book   NEG.EMP-1SG.IO-POT-NEG-buy-IPF-PST.NFIN-DCL
        'I could not buy books.' (txt)

Lomtatidze 1976b

EMP – emphatic, INDF – indefiniteness, NFIN – non-finite, POT – potential

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza valency-rearranging applicatives: potential

(11) a.　*ẑ-za.ẑ̌ə-ḳ*　　*ʕa-h-χʷʕa-n*
　　　　cow-one-INDF　CSL-1PL.ERG-buy-PST
　　　　'We bought a cow.' (txt)

　　b.　*knigá*　　*g'-s-zə́-m-χʷʕ-əw-z-ṭ*
　　　　book　　　NEG.EMP-1SG.IO-POT-NEG-buy-IPF-PST.NFIN-DCL
　　　　'I could not buy books.' (txt)

Lomtatidze 1976b

The same marker as the benefactive

EMP – emphatic, INDF – indefiniteness, NFIN – non-finite, POT – potential

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza valency-rearranging applicatives: potential

(11) a. *ẑ-za.ẑ̂ə-ḳ* *ʕa-h-χʷʕa-n*
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Demotes the agent from ERG to IO

Lomtatidze 1976b

EMP – emphatic, INDF – indefiniteness, NFIN – non-finite, POT – potential

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza valency-rearranging applicatives: inadvertitive

(12) a.   *a-sabəj-kʷa*   *a-qəŝ*   *pə-r-čə-ṭ*
            DEF-child-PL   DEF-window   LOC-3PL.ERG-break-DCL
            'The children broke the window.' (el)

      b.   *a-sabə́j-kʷa*   *a-qə́ŝ*   *rə-mqa-p-č-ṭ*
            DEF-child-PL   DEF-window   3Pl.IO-INADV-LOC-break-DCL
            'The children unintentionally broke the window.' (el)

Introducing NWC applicatives

Abaza valency-rearranging applicatives: inadvertitive

(12) a. *a-sabəj-kʷa* *a-qə̂s* *pə-r-čə-ṭ*
DEF-child-PL   DEF-window   LOC-3PL.ERG-break-DCL
'The children broke the window.' (el)

b. *a-sabə́j-kʷa* *a-qə́s* *rə-mqa-p-č-ṭ*
DEF-child-PL   DEF-window   3Pl.IO-INADV-LOC-break-DCL
'The children unintentionally broke the window.' (el)

Demotes the agent from ERG to IO

Roadmap

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2. Basics of NWC morphosyntax
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Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Applicatives normally modify predicates in a fashion similar to adjuncts in syntax (e.g. Lander 2015 on West Circassian):
  - optionality;
  - semantically compositional interpretation;
  - (not in all languages) stacking;
  - one of the principal ways to express "adverbial" meanings;
  - sometimes alternate with unequivocal adjuncts.

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

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  - sometimes alternate with unequivocal adjuncts.

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

Besleney Kabardian optional applicatives

(13) a. *mwe* *mel* *q̇ə-t-xʷe-wəč̣ʼ*
         this sheep CSL-1PL.IO-BEN-kill/IMP
         'Slaughter this sheep for us!' (txt)

    b. *tučʼanə-m* *ʔʷexʷ* *šʼə-z-ew-ṣe*
         shop-OBL work LOC-1SG.ERG-PRS-do
         'I work in the shop.' (txt)

IMP – imperative

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

West Circassian (WCCorp) applicative stacking

(14) *t-jə-wəram*   *asfal't*
    1PL.PR-POSS-street   asphalt
    qə-t-fə-∅-tər-a-r-jə-ʁe-λha-ʁ
    CSL-1PL.IO-BEN-3.SG.IO-LOC:on-3PL.IO-DAT-3SG.ERG-CAUS-put-PST
    'He made them put asphalt on our street for us.'

Lander & Letuchiy 2010, Lander & Arkhangelskiy 2015

CAUS – causative, POSS – possessive marker, PR – possessor

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Applicative vs. adjunct alternations

Abkhaz (Hewitt 1979: 114): peripheral case-marker

(15) a. *a-ž'ahʷa-la*   *sə-jə-sə-jṭ*
         DEF-hammer-INS   1SG.ABS-3SG.M.IO-hit-DCL

   b. *a-ž'ahʷa*   *s-a-la-jə-sə-jṭ*
       DEF-hammer   1SG.ABS-3SG.IO.N-INS-3SG.M.IO-hit-DCL
       a=b 'I hit him with the/a hammer.'

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Applicative vs. adjunct alternations

Abkhaz (Hewitt 1979: 114): peripheral case-marker

(15) a.   *a-ž'ahʷa-la*   *sə-jə-sə-jṭ*
          DEF-hammer-INS   1SG.ABS-3SG.M.IO-hit-DCL

    b.   *a-ž'ahʷa*   *s-a-la-jə-sə-jṭ*
          DEF-hammer   1SG.ABS-3SG.IO.N-INS-3SG.M.IO-hit-DCL

       a=b 'I hit him with the/a hammer.'

> The case and the applicative markers are obviously cognate

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Applicative vs. adjunct alternations

West Circassian (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 879): postposition

(16) a. *a-xe-m*   *a-dež'*   *ḳʷa-ʁe*
      that-PL-OBL   3PL.PP-at   go-PST

    b. *a-xe-m*   *a-fe-ḳʷa-ʁ*
      that-PL-OBL   3PL.IO-BEN-go-PST
      a=b: 'S/he went to their place.'

PP – postpositional series of cross-reference prefixes

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Applicative vs. adjunct alternations

West Circassian (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 879): secondary predicate

(17) a. *tə-w-jə-ʁʷəs-ew*   *tə-šxe-š'tə-ʁ*

         1PL.ABS-2SG.IO-POSS-attendant-ADV   1PL.ABS-eat-IPF-PST

     b. *tə-qə-b-da-šxe-š'tə-ʁ*

         1PL.ABS-CSL-2SG.IO-COM-eat-IPF-PST

         a=b: 'We were eating together with you.'

ADV – adverbial, IPF – imperfective, POSS – possessive marker

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- The extent of such alternations appears to be limited.
- Their semantic/pragmatic motivations are unclear.
- In many cases alternative expressions are not available.
- Applicatives are often obligatory.
  - This concerns not only the cases where the applicative+stem combination is lexicalised, but also some of the compositional uses.
  - In particular, in Circassian, locative applicatives are obligatory with verbs expressing position and directed motion.

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- The extent of such alternations appears to be limited.
- Their semantic/pragmatic motivations are unclear.
- In many cases alternative expressions are not available.
- Applicatives are often obligatory.
  - This concerns not only the cases where the applicative+stem combination is lexicalised, but also some of the compositional uses.
  - In particular, in Circassian, locative applicatives are obligatory with verbs expressing position and directed motion.

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Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Obligatory locative applicatives

Standard Kabardian posture verbs (Kumakhov 1964: 165):

(18) a.   *tjepŝeč'ə-m*   *jə-λə-n*
        plate-OBL   LOC:container-lie-MSD
        'to be on a plate'

    b.   *škamṗə-m*   *de-λə-n*
           cupboard-OBL LOC:area-lie-MSD
           'to be in a cupboard'

    c.   *daʁe-m*   *xe-λə-n*
           oil-OBL   LOC:mass-lie-MSD
           'to be in oil'

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Obligatory locative applicatives

Standard Kabardian posture verbs (Kumakhov 1964: 165):

(18) a. *tjepŝeč'ə-m*   *jə-λə-n*   / *λə-n*
       plate-OBL   LOC:container-lie-MSD
       'to be on a plate'

   b. *škaṁṗə-m*   *de-λə-n* / *λə-n*
       cupboard-OBL LOC:enclosure-lie-MSD
       'to be in a cupboard'

   c. *daʁe-m*   *xe-λə-n* / *λə-n*
       oil-OBL   LOC:mass-lie-MSD
       'to be in oil'

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Obligatory locative applicatives

Standard Kabardian posture verbs (Kumakhov 1964: 165):

(18) d.   *ŝə-λə-n / *λə-n*
      LOC-lie-MSD
      'to lie' (location unspecified or irrelevant)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Obligatory locative applicatives

Besleney Kabardian directed motion verbs:

(19) a. *psəne-m*   *jə-h-a*
      well-OBL   LOC:inside-enter-PST
      'He went down into the well.' (txt)

b. *psə-m*   *q̇ə-xe-č̣ʼə-ž̌ʼ-r-wə*
      water-OBL   CSL-LOC:mass-exit-RE-CVB-ADV
      'getting out of the water…' (txt)

ADV – adverbial, CSL – cislocative, CVB – converb, RE – refactive

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Obligatory applicatives with inverse verbs:

Kuban Kabardian

(20) *se   s-ŝə-mə-gʷəpŝe-ž'ə-r*
     1SG   1SG.IO-LOC-NEG-forget-RE-ABS
     'What I do not forget (lit. what is not forgotten at me).' (txt)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian

  - "the thematic relation of a dative indirect object is determined by the semantics of the stem" (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 892)

  - co-occurs with a specific (even if broad) class of verbs, and consititutes the only way to express their second participant;

  - in general is obligatory, but with some qualifications;

  - NB idiosyncratic allomorphy.

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Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian

Besleney Kabardian: recipient of 'give'

(20) a.   *fe-r*   *q̇ə-z-e-t*
    skin-ABS   CSL-1SG.IO-DAT-give/IMP
    'Give me the skin.' (txt)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian

Besleney Kabardian: indirect object of bivalent intransitives

(20) b.   *stakan–pštərə-m*   *ġ-je-mə-ʔab-əw*

        glass–hot-OBL   CSL-DAT-NEG-touch-ADV

        'without touching the hot glass' (txt)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian

Besleney Kabardian: causee of causatives of transitive verbs

(20) c. *ǯ'a-bə* *q̇-a-r-j-e-ʁa-ŝe-xe-r*
DEM-OBL CSL-3PL.IO-DAT-3SG.ERG-PRS-CAUS-know-DYN
'He teaches them (lit. causes them to know).' (txt)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian
- Can sometimes be omitted

West Circassian 'give' (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 894):

(21) *qe-s-tə-š' t-ep*   *zə αχš'-jə*
  CSL-1SG.ERG-give-FUT-NEG one money-ADD
  'I will give no money.'

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian
- Can sometimes be omitted

Besleney Kabardian 'bite' (Arkadiev & Letuchiy 2021: 494)

(22) a. *ha-r   ġə-š'ə-w-e-ʒaġe-č'e*
         dog-ABS   CSL-TEMP-2SG.IO-DAT-bite-INS
         'If a dog bites you…'

INS – instrumental, TEMP – temporal subordination

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　　　 dog-ABS　CSL-TEMP-2SG.IO-DAT-bite-INS
　　　 'If a dog bites you…'

　　 b.　*ha-r*　　*me-ʒaq̇e*
　　　 dog-ABS　PRS-bite
　　　 'The dog bites.'

INS – instrumental, TEMP – temporal subordination

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Dative applicative in Circassian
- Omission is often possible only under antipassivisation expressed by stem-final vowel alternation (Arkadiev & Letuchiy 2021)

Kuban Kabardian "indirect antipassive" (ibid.: 493)

(23) a.   *se*   *ṣale-m*   *s-je-ʔʷənṣə-ne*
        1SG boy-OBL   1SG.ABS-DAT-push-FUT
        'I will shove that guy.'

    b.   *sabəj-xe-r*   *me-ʔʷənṣe*
        child-PL-ABS   PRS-push.ANTIP
        'The children are jostling.'

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Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- On the other hand, applicatives do not always "promote" the participant they introduce to the core argument status:
  - in some cases, the AppP retains postpositional marking;
  - in Abaza and Abkhaz, AppPs of certain applicatives are not cross-referenced in the verb (Avidzba 2017: 115–122).

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Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

West Circassian "non-promoting" applicatives:

(24) a. *se-š'*   *paje*   *s-fe-w-e-ʁe-ŝʷe-ž'ə*
        1SG-OBL   for   1SG.IO-BEN-2SG.ERG-PRS-CAUS-good-RE
        '[When you see beautiful and sweet things,] you keep (them) for me.' (Lander 2015: 21)

   b. *Asλan*   *Anton*   *dež'*   *ʔʷə-h-jə*
        Alsan   Anton   at   LOC:near-enter-ADD
        'Aslan approached Anton and…'
              (Rogava & Kersaheva 1966: 383)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

Abaza non-cross-referenced applied objects:

(25) a. *a-wasa-kʷa*   *a-ḳʷar*   *j-bžʼa-r-ḳʷab-əw-n*
         DEF-sheep-PL   DEF-canyon   3PL.ABS-LOC:middle-3PL.ERG-
                                        bathe-IPF-PST

     'They were bathing sheep in the canyon.'
                                        (Klychev 1995: 57)

     b. *a-divan*   *də-kʷ-naʕa-ṭ*
         DEF-sofa   3SG.H.ABS-LOC:top-recline-DCL
     'S/he reclined on the sofa.' (ibid.: 112)

Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division

- Only 3SG non-human AppPs can be left non-cross-referenced (Avidzba 2017: 115).

Abaza (Klychev 1995: 57, 117)

(26) a. *a-hamač'-əj* *a-ʕʷn-əj* *də-r-bž'a-nəq̇ʷa-ṭ*
DEF-barn-& DEF-house-& 3SG.H.ABS-3Pl.IO-LOC:middle-walk-DCL

'He was walking between the barn and the house.'

b. *a-ʒə* *ʕa-sə-kʷ-χʷχʷa-ṭ*
DEF-water CSL-1SG.IO-LOC:top-splash-DCL
'Water splashed on me.'

Roadmap

1. Northwest Caucasian languages
2. Basics of NWC morphosyntax
3. Introducing NWC applicatives
4. Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division
5. Applicatives feed morphosyntactic operations
6. Summary

Roadmap

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

- "[A]t least in Circassian, reflexivization, reciprocalization and relativization of an AppP marked in the predicate are preferred over similar operations with a parallel element of a [base construction]." (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 882)

Letuchiy 2007, Ershova 2019 on reciprocals and reflexives

Lander 2012, Lander & Daniel 2019 on relativisation

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

- In Circassian, reflexivisation, reciprocalisation and relativisation is consistently expressed by substituting the regular cross-referencing prefixes by special reflexive / reciprocal / relative prefixes (often looking as *zV-*) in the appropriate slot of the verbal complex.

Letuchiy 2007, Ershova 2019 on reciprocals and reflexives

Lander 2012, Lander & Daniel 2019 on relativisation

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: reflexivisation of transitive patients

(27) a.   *wə-sə-wəpsə-ʁ*
2SG.ABS-1SG.ERG-shave-PST
'I shaved you.'

b.   *zə-sə-wəpsə-ʁ*
RFL.ABS-1SG.ERG-shave-PST
'I shaved myself.'

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Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: reflexivisation of obliques

(28) a.　*ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*　*a-paje*　　　*txəλ-xe-r*
　　　　student-PL-OBL.PL　3PL.PP-for　　book-PL-ABS
　　　　q-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x
　　　　CSL-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
　　　　'They bought books for the students.'
　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 374)

　　b.　*ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*　*txəλ-xe-r*　　　*q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
　　　　student-PL-OBL.PL　book-PL-ABS　　CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　buy-PST-PL
　　　　'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

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             CSL-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
             'They bought books for the students.'
                          (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 374)

    b.   *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
                                     buy-PST-PL
         'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

> There is no way to reflexivise the postpositional phrase

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    b. *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
        student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
                                          buy-PST-PL

        'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

> Applicativisation comes to help

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: reflexivisation of AppPs

(28) b. *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
                                             buy-PST-PL

   'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

   c.   *txəλ-xe-r*   *qə-zə-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
        book-PL-ABS   CSL-RFL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
        'They bought books for themselves.' (constructed)

> Applicativisation comes to help

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: reflexivisation of AppPs

(28) b. *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
     student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
     buy-PST-PL

   'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

c. *txəλ-xe-r*   *qə-zə-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
    book-PL-ABS   CSL-RFL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL

    'They bought books for themselves.' (constructed)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: reflexivisation of AppPs

(28) b.   *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
                                           buy-PST-PL

       'They bought books for the students.' (constructed)

    c.   *txəλ-xe-r*   *qə-zə-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
        book-PL-ABS   CSL-RFL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
        'They bought books for themselves.' (constructed)

> Applicativisation is obligatory

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of ERG

(29) a.   *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me   a-paje   txəλ-xe-r*
student-PL-OBL.PL   3PL.PP-for   book-PL-ABS
q-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x
CSL-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
'They bought books for the students.'
                (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 374)

b.   *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me   a-paje   txəλ-xe-r*
student-PL-OBL.PL   3PL.PP-for   book-PL-ABS
qe-zə-šʼefə-ʁe-xe-r
CSL-REL.ERG-buy-PST-PL-ABS
'those who bought books for the students.'
                (constructed)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of ERG

(29) a. *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me   a-paje   txəλ-xe-r*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   3PL.PP-for   book-PL-ABS
         q-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x
         CSL-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
         'They bought books for the students.'
                         (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 374)

   b. *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me   a-paje   txəλ-xe-r*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   3PL.PP-for   book-PL-ABS
         qe-zə-šʼefə-ʁe-xe-r
         CSL-REL.ERG-buy-PST-PL-ABS
         'those who bought books for the students.'
                                 (constructed)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of AppP (constructed)

(30) a.　*ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*　　*txəλ-xe-r*　　*q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
　　　　student-PL-OBL.PL　book-PL-ABS　CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　buy-PST-PL

　　　'They bought books for the students.'

　　b.　*txəλ-xe-r*　　　*qə-z-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-xe*
　　　　book-PL-ABS　　CSL-REL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
　　　　ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me
　　　　student-PL-OBL.PL
　　　　'the students for whom they bought books'

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of AppP (constructed)

(30) a.   *ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me*   *txəλ-xe-r*   *q-a-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-x*
         student-PL-OBL.PL   book-PL-ABS   CSL-3PL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-
                                             buy-PST-PL

      'They bought books for the students.'

   b.   *txəλ-xe-r*   *qə-z-f-a-šʼefə-ʁe-xe*
        book-PL-ABS   CSL-REL.IO-BEN-3PL.ERG-buy-PST-PL
        ježʼaḳʷe-xe-me
        student-PL-OBL.PL
        'the students for whom they bought books'

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of PP vs. AppP

(31) a.   *zə-dež'*   *sə-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *bzəλfəʁe-r*

         REL.PP-at   1SG.ABS-go-PST   woman-ABS

         'the woman to whom I went' (WCCorp)

   b.   *č'ale-r*   *pseλəχʷe*   *zə-fe-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *pŝaŝe-r*

         youth-ABS   bridegroom   REL.IO-BEN-go-PST   girl-ABS

         'the girl to whom the young man went to ask in marriage.' (WCCorp)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of PP vs. AppP

(31) a. *zə-dež'*   *sə-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *bzəλfəʁe-r*
       REL.PP-at   1SG.ABS-go-PST   woman-ABS
       'the woman to whom I went' (WCCorp)

   b. *č'ale-r*   *pseλəχʷe*   *zə-fe-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *pŝaŝe-r*
       youth-ABS   bridegroom   REL.IO-BEN-go-PST   girl-ABS
       'the girl to whom the young man went to ask
       in marriage.' (WCCorp)

Relativisation of the PP is at best marginal

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of PP vs. AppP

(31) a.   *zə-dež'*   *sə-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *bzəλfəʁe-r*
          REL.PP-at   1SG.ABS-go-PST   woman-ABS
          'the woman to whom I went' (WCCorp)

   b.   *č'ale-r*   *pseλəχʷe*   *zə-fe-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *pŝaŝe-r*
        youth-ABS   bridegroom   REL.IO-BEN-go-PST   girl-ABS
        'the girl to whom the young man went to ask
        in marriage.' (WCCorp)

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of PP vs. AppP

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        REL.PP-at   1SG.ABS-go-PST   woman-ABS
        'the woman to whom I went' (WCCorp)

     b.   *č'ale-r*   *pseλəχʷe*   *zə-fe-ḳʷe-ʁe*   *pŝaŝe-r*
        youth-ABS   bridegroom   REL.IO-BEN-go-PST   girl-ABS
        'the girl to whom the young man went to ask
        in marriage.' (WCCorp)

Applicativisation is nearly obligatory

Applicatives feed syntactic operations

West Circassian: relativisation of PP vs. AppP

- WCCorp (almost 11 million tokens):

  - less than 100 occurrences of (different forms of) postpositions *dež'* 'at' and *paje* 'for' with the relativisation prefix;

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West Circassian: "last resort" applicativisation for the purposes of relativisation (Arkadiev et al. 2024: 900-902):

(32) a. *qelemə-m-č'e*   *s-e-txe*
        pencil-OBL-INS   1SG.ABS-PRS-write
        'I write with the pencil.' (constructed)

   b. *sə-ze-rə-txe-re*   *qelemə-m*
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      'Because of this they gave him a communist name.' (txt)

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- Given the polysynthetic predicate-centered morphosyntax of NWC, it is not surprising that applicativisation is productively employed for such processes as anaphora, relativisation and interclausal relations.

Roadmap

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2. Basics of NWC morphosyntax
3. Introducing NWC applicatives
4. Applicatives and the argument vs. adjunct division
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Summary

- The applicative systems of the Northwest Caucasian languages:
  - large inventories
  - an impressive variety of semantic functions
  - interaction with the expression of spatial meanings

Summary

- Non-trivial relation to the argument vs. adjunct distinction:
  - applied participants are treated as a specific grammatical function, i.e. indirect objects;
  - in the canonical case, overtly indexed in the verb and lack (non-core) case-marking;
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god 2PL.ABS-3SG.ERG-DYN-CAUS-live

ŝə-zʕʷada-χa-ṭ!
2PL.ABS-healthy-INC-DCL

Thank you for your attention!

Danke für ihre Aufmerksamkeit!

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