

THE PECULIAR RESULTATIVE IN ADYGHE

AND WHAT IT CAN TELL ABOUT ASPECTUAL COMPOSITION IN THE LANGUAGE

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1. Introduction

① Adyghe (West Circassian) < Circassian < North-West Caucasian, Russian Federation
Existing sources: Paris 1989 (in French), Smeets 1984 (in English), Yakovlev & Ashkhamaf 1941, Rogava & Kerasheva 1966, Kumakhov 1971, Zekokh 2002 (in Russian).

Typological features of interest:

- ♣ (almost) no distinction between nouns and verbs (Lander & Testelets 2006);
- ♣ highly polysynthetic verb morphology (pronominal affixes expressing all syntactic arguments of the predicate, rich system of valency increasing operations);
- ♣ ergativity in both dependent marking (case on NPs) and head marking (pronominal affixes on verbs);
- ♣ rich system of locational preverbs;
- ♣ clausal syntax highly dependent on information structure (Sumbatova 2005);
- ♣ complex mechanisms of clause combining and sentential complementation (cf. Gerasimov 2004; 2006a,b; cf. also Kumakhov & Vamling 1998 for the closely related Kabardian).

② The data comes mainly from the fieldwork materials collected during field-trips to village Hakurino-habl, Republic Adygeya, organized by the Russian State University for Humanities in 2003–2006. Most of the examples cited in the talk were obtained through elicitation; however, in most cases informants were asked to describe a speech situation in which the utterance in question would be appropriate.

There were some informants who rejected the resultative construction altogether. It may be the case that the construction in question is dialectally limited. The question of the exact area within the Adyghe dialectal continuum to which the our findings are applicable is, however, beyond the scope of the current presentation.

2. The “Resultative construction”

① Adyghe possesses a **rather peculiar construction** that, to our knowledge, up to date has never been described in any published works on the language. It is formed by means of a prefix *zere-* attached to a finite verb form and expresses meaning that at the first approximation can be characterized as “resultative”:

- (1) pč̣e-r žərjə zere-ʔ_wəhə-Ɂ
door-ABS still ZERE-open-PST
‘The door is still opened’.

② The construction in question has the following **morphosyntactic properties**:

- ♣ formed by attaching the *zere-* prefix;
- ♣ can not attach case markers (like various nominalizations do);
- ♣ attaches tense-aspect-modality suffixes (1, 3);
- ♣ in the Present the last vowel of the base is omitted (2);
- ♣ in other respects has the same phonological shape as the corresponding finite form;
- ♣ negation is marked using the *mə-* prefix (i.e., characteristic of non-finite forms, see Lander & Sumbatova 2007 for details)(2);

- (2) qe-χ_wə-βe-r sabəjə-me zer-a-mə-ṣ̌
 DIR-become-PST-ABS child-PL.OBL ZERE-3PL-NEG-know
 ‘Children still don’t know what happened.’
- (3) tə-qə-k_we-ž’ə-me sabəj-xe-r žərjə zere-čəje-š’tə-x
 1PL-DIR-come-RFC-COND child-PL-ABS still ZERE -sleep-IRR-PL
 ‘When we come back the children will still be sleeping’

3. The semantics of the construction in question

① Compositional semantics

Closer examination, however, reveals that the meaning of the construction in question can not be characterized as simply resultative. Resultative interpretation arises from the combination of the actional properties of the predicate, the temporal/aspectual semantics of the Preterite marker *-β(e)*, and the semantics of the *zere-* prefix proper.

- (4) a. mə šežəje-xe-r č’anə-β
 this knife-PL-ABS sharp-PST
 ‘These knives were sharp’.
- b. mə šežəje-xe-r zere-č’anə-x
 this knife-PL-ABS ZERE-sharp-PST
 ‘These knives are still sharp’.
- c. mə šežəje-xe-r zere-č’anə-β
 this knife-PL-ABS ZERE-sharp-PST
 ‘These knives are still sharp (= as sharp as they were then)’.
- (5) a. tə-k_wa-β
 1PL-go-PST
 ‘We went (there)’.
- b. tə-zere-k_w
 1PL-ZERE-go-PST
 ‘We are still on our way there’.
- c. tə-zere-k_wa-β
 1PL-ZERE-go-PST
 ‘Having gone there then, we are still staying there’.

② Bi-situational nature

While the *zere-*construction is apparently mono-clausal, it obligatorily refers to two distinct situations. Use of this construction implies that both the Speaker and the Addressee share the knowledge that at some moment of time prior to *the reference time* a situation *S* described by the predicate took place. The construction is used to inform the Addressee that some situation *S’* is in effect at the reference time, the exact character of *S’* being left to the Addressee’s interpretation. Being in a sense a derivate of *S*, situation *S’* can be reconstructed on the basis of the character of *S*, its actional properties, and various discourse-pragmatic considerations available to the Addressee.

- (6) djərekt_wer-əm zeʔ_weč’-er zere-rjəβežə-β
 director-OBL meeteing -ABS ZERE -begin-PST
 ‘Having open the meeting, the director still hasn’t finished it’

If the predicate is atelic, *S* is perceived as not having reached its final endpoint at the reference time and so *S’* is merely a continuation of *S* (2-4). If the predicate is telic, *S’* is taken to be a post-final state of *S* (i.e. the situation that emerges after the final endpoint of *S* is reached; 1, 5-6).

Note that in the “telic” case the identity of *S’* is rather arbitrary and dependent on pragmatic factors, preceding discourse, etc. Naturally, different states may be regarded as post-final states of the same situation. Two informants, when presented with (7), readily gave back two quite different translations:

- (7) šak_we-m məše-r zer-jə-wəč’ə-β
 hunter-OBL bear-ABS ZERE-3SG-kill-PST
 ‘After the hunter has killed that bear, he doesn’t kill bears any more’.
 ‘After the hunter has killed the bear, that bear doesn’t trouble us any more’.

Apparently, (7) states that some resulting state of certain event already known to the Addressee (namely, the hunter having killed the bear) is in effect; what this resulting state actually is is left to the Addressee. Therefore the Adyghe “resultative” exhibits somewhat paradoxical nature: it is used to refer to some situation (S’), but it doesn’t mention it; another situation (S), already known to the speech act participants is mentioned instead.

☞ *Looks like an overwhelming triumph of economy over iconicity.*

③ Interaction with tense-aspect markers (and temporal adverbials)

As has already been mentioned in ②, the *zere*-construction is able to attach various tense-aspect suffixes. It is worth noting, however, that while Present, Imperfective and Future/Irealis markers have scope over the “derivative” situation (S’), the Preterite suffix *ʁ(e)* modifies the “initial” situation (S):

- (8) a. *sabəj-xe-r* *zere-ʒ’eg_wə-x*
 child-pl-abs ZERE-play-PL
 ‘The kids are still playing’.
- b. *sabəj-xe-r* *zere-ʒ’eg_wə-ʁe-x*
 child-PL-ABS ZERE-play-PST-PL
 ‘The kids, after they have played, are not playing any more’.
- c. *sabəj-xe-r* *zere-ʒ’eg_wə-štə.ʁe-x*
 child-PL-ABS ZERE-play-IPF-PL
 ‘[The kids were playing at some moment; when we called on them later] the kids were still playing’.

This notable difference in semantic behaviour can shed some light on the relations between scopes of different tense-aspect markers in Adyghe.

Cf. also example (9), where the combination of Preterite and Irealis has scope over the initial situation, and (10), where the simulative suffix *-š_wə* allows both interpretations:

- (9) *hazret* *ə-šhe* *zere-wəzə-ʁe-š’t*
 Hazret 3SG-head ZERE-ache-PST-IRR
 ‘Perhaps Hazret still has a headache’ (=it is known that she had at some point)
 *‘It is still possible that Hazret has a headache’ (=she still displays the same symptoms).
- (10) *č’ale-m* *pšaše-r* *š_wə* *zer-jə-λeʁ_wə-š_wə*
 boy-OBL girl-ABS good ZERE-3SG-see-SML
 ‘It seems that the boy is still in love with the girl’.
 ‘It still seems that the boy is in love with the girl’.

As for the interaction with temporal adverbials, almost no data is available, due to the fact that such constructions would be rather unnatural with respect to pragmatics. We have a few examples, however, to which our informants provided, with some hesitations and without much enthusiasm, translations implying that *zere*- has a scope over temporal adverbials:

- (11) *č’ale-m* *taqjəq-jə-t_wə-č’e* *č’ewə-r* *zer-jə-ʁela-ʁ*
 boy-OBL minute-INF-2-INS fence-ABS ZERE-3SG-paint-PST
 ‘The fence is still standing [badly painted] after the boy has painted it in two minutes’.

More investigation is needed, however, as various other factors may be in effect here.

④ A note on negation

As has already been mentioned in ②, the *zere*-construction attaches the negative prefix *-mə-*, which is traditionally connected to non-finite forms. A few examples where the “finite” negative suffix *-əp* is attached have also been recorded.

Further investigation in this direction is required. Since, as has been shown in (Lander & Sumbatova 2007), the distribution of *-mə-* and *-əp* is motivated not by finite/non-finite distinction, but rather by the semantic scope of negation, it may be the case that the two operators negate different components of the bi-situational structure expressed by the *zere*-construction.

4. A cognate biclausal construction

① General basics

Another construction with the same prefix exists in Adyghe, which seems to be directly related semantically. It is a biclausal construction in which the head of the subordinate clause is marked by both the prefix *zere-* and the adverbial suffix *-əw*. The meaning expressed is again crucially dependent on the telicity of the predicate: with atelic predicates the construction in question denotes simultaneity of events, while with atelic predicates it denotes immediate precedence of the event denoted by the subordinate clause:

(12) a. č'ale-r zere-səmaž'-ew, šk_welə-m k_wa-Ɂe.
 boy-ABS ZERE-ill-CNV school-OBL go-PST
 'The boy, still being ill, went to school. || *The boy went to school as soon he became ill.'

b. šak_we-m pšaše-r š_wə zer-jə-λeg_w-ew qə-š'a-Ɂ.
 hunter-OBL girl-ABS good ZERE-3SG.A-see-CNV DIR-marry-PST
 'The hunter married the girl as soon as he fell in love with her || *still being in love with her.'

This latter use of the *zere- ... -əw* has been briefly mentioned in (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 117) and (Zekokh 2002). Some informants tend to further interpret the simultaneity of events in the “atelic” use as concession, e.g., giving to (12) the translation ‘Although the boy was still ill, he went to school’.

Most informants suggest a paraphrase of this construction using an auxiliary:

(13) a. č'ale-m č'ewə-r zer-jə-Ɂal-ew, weš_wə q-je-xə-Ɂ.
 boy-OBL fence-ABS ZERE-3SG.A-paint-CNV hail DIR-LOC-come.down-PST

b. č'ale-m č'ewə-r zer-jə-Ɂala-Ɂe-m tjet-ew weš_wə q-je-xə-Ɂ.
 boy-OBL fence-ABS ZERE-3SG.A-paint-PST-OBL LOC-stand -CNV hail DIR-LOC-come.down-PST
 'Just as the boy finished painting the fence, it started to hail. || *While the boy was still painting the fence, it started to hail.'

(13b) is mostly preferred to (13a).

② Interaction with tense-aspect markers

There are not enough data yet to draw any firm conclusions. Some informants altogether reject introduction of tense-aspect markers in the position before *-əw*. Yet those examples that are available suggest that semantic effects similar to those observed with respect to the “resultative” construction are present:

(14) č'ale-m č'ewə-r zer-jə-Ɂela-Ɂ-ew, zerə-dax-ew š'ə-t
 boy-OBL fence-ABS ZERE-3SG.A-paint-PST-CNV ZERE-beautiful-CNV LOC-stand
 'The fence has been standing so beautiful since the very time the boy have painted it.'

③ Constraints on relativization and *wh*-extraction

Adyghe is notable for allowing extraction from most types of subordinate clauses, including most adverbial clauses, without displaying any island effects (15a-b). Extraction out from the *zere- ... -əw* construction is, however, impossible (16 b).

(15) a. maš_we-m aslan je-pλe-ze jə-aχš'aλe š_w-a-təɁ_wə-Ɂ
 fire-OBL Aslan 3SG-look-SIM 3SG-purse MAL-3PL-steall-PST
 'While Aslan was watching the fire, his purse was stolen'.

b. sədə-m aslan z-je-pλe-ze jə-aχš'aλe š_w-a-təɁ_wə-Ɂ-a
 what-OBL Aslan 3SG-look-SIM 3SG-purse MAL-3PL-steall-PST-FOC
 'While Aslan was watching *what*, was his purse stolen?'

(16) a. maš_we-m aslan zer-je-pλ-ew jə-aχš'aλe š_w-a-təɁ_wə-Ɂ
 fire-OBL Aslan ZERE-3SG-look-CNV 3SG-purse MAL-3PL-steall-PST
 'Just as Aslan has taken a look at the fire, his purse was stolen'.

b. *sədə-m aslan zer-je-pλ-ew jə-aχš'aλe š_w-a-təɁ_wə-Ɂ-a
 what-OBL Aslan ZERE-3SG-look-CNV 3SG-purse MAL-3PL-steall-PST-FOC
 'Just as Aslan has taken a look at *what*, was his purse stolen?'

5. Actuality in Adyghe

① Non-aprioristic typologically-oriented theory of actuality (Tatevosov 2002):

- ♣ **universal actional meanings**: state (S), process (P), multiplicative process (M), entry-into-a-state (ES), entry-into-a-process (EP), quantum-of-a-multiplicative-process (Q);
- ♣ **actional characteristic** of a tense-aspect form: the set of actional meanings a tense-aspect form of a given verb may have;
- ♣ **empirical procedure** for the discovery of actional classes in a particular language: two verbal lexemes belong to one actional class iff their combinations with tense-aspect morphemes representing the universal aspectual viewpoints (perfective and imperfective) show identical actional characteristics;
- ♣ **cross-linguistic actional classes**: classes which recur in different languages; **NB** the set of cross-linguistic actional classes does not coincide with the set of classes proposed for English by Vendler (1967).

② Aspectual classes in Adyghe

Aspectual classes were determined on the basis of the actional meanings of (Progressive) Present and Preterite forms of predicates from a representative sample, see Table 1 (Arkadiev 2006a, b).

Table 1. Actional classes in Adyghe

Class	Actional characteristic of the Present	Actional characteristic of the Preterite	Number of predicates	Examples
Stative	S	S	33	<i>š'əlan</i> 'to lie', <i>psewən</i> 'to live'
Strong Inceptive-Stative	S	ES	10	<i>šen</i> 'to know', <i>lək_wən</i> 'to see'
Weak Inceptive-Stative	S	ES,S	1	<i>čəjen</i> 'to sleep'
Processual	P	P	15	<i>žeg_wən</i> 'to play', <i>txen</i> 'to write' (intransitive)
Strong Ingressive-Processual	P	EP	4	<i>k_wen</i> 'to go', <i>bəbən</i> 'to fly'
Strong Multiplicative	M	Q	10	<i>k_wəwen</i> 'to shout', <i>wəž_wəntxen</i> 'to spit'
Weak Multiplicative	M	Q,M	1	<i>psken</i> 'cough'
Punctual	—	ES	8	<i>žən</i> 'to throw', <i>qewen</i> 'to explode'
Strong Telic	P	ES	49	<i>lən</i> 'to die', <i>jetən</i> 'to give', <i>ʔən</i> 'to dig', <i>qebegən</i> 'to swell'

♣ **Stative:**

- (17) a. *rasul ə-šhe me-wəzə.*
 Rasul 3SG.POSS-head DYN-ache
 'Rasul has headache.'
 b. *rasul ə-šhe wəzə-ke.*
 Rasul 3SG.POSS-head ache-PST
 'Rasul had headache (for some time).'

♣ **Strong Inceptive-Stative:**

- (18) a. *č'ale-m pšaše-r š_wə j-e-lək_wə.*
 boy-OBL girl-ABS good 3SG.A-DYN-see
 'The boy loves the girl.'
 b. *č'ale-m pšaše-r š_wə ə-lək_wə-ke.*
 boy-OBL girl-ABS good 3SG.A-DYN-see-PST
 'The boy fell in love with the girl ||
 *loved the girl (for some time).'

♣ **Weak Inceptive-Stative:**

- (19) a. *č'ale-r me-čəje.*
 boy-ABS DYN-sleep
 'The boy is sleeping.'
 b. *č'ale-r čəja-ke.*
 boy-ABS sleep-PST
 'The boy slept (for some time) || fell asleep.'

☞ All actional classes observed in Adyghe are cross-linguistic actional classes.

☞ The fact that the 'weak' (actionally ambivalent) predicates are almost absent in Adyghe is typologically peculiar (but see next section).

③ **Interaction with temporal adverbials** (Arkadiev 2006a,b; 2007)

Two cross-linguistic types of temporal adverbials:

- ♣ adverbials of temporal duration: *səhatnəq_we* ‘for half an hour’, *taqjəqjət_we* ‘for two minutes’ etc.;
- ♣ adverbials of temporal extent: ‘Instrumental’ suffix *-č’e*: *səhatnəq_we-č’e* ‘in half an hour’, *taqjəqjət_we-č’e* ‘in two minutes’.

➤ Adverbials of temporal extent more or less freely combine with all predicates whose Preterite has an ‘entry-into’ actional meaning, viz. with Strong Inceptive-Stative, Weak Inceptive-Stative, Strong Ingressive-Processual, Strong Multiplicative, Punctual, and Strong Telic. They never combine with Stative predicates and are usually not felicitous with Processual predicates.

➤ Adverbials of temporal duration freely combine with atelic predicates, i.e., those whose Preterite allows durational interpretation: Stative, Weak Inceptive-Stative, Processual, and Weak Multiplicative.

➤ However, adverbials of temporal duration no less freely combine with those predicates whose Preterite in isolation does not allow durational reading, viz. Strong Inceptive-Stative (20a), Strong Ingressive-Processual (20b), Strong Multiplicative (20c) and some Strong Telic (20d) predicates:

- (20) a. č’ale-m pšaše-r jəles-jə-tfe š_wə ə-λeβ_wə-β.
 boy-OBL girl-ABS year-INF-five good 3SG.A-see-PST
 ‘The boy was in love with the girl for five years.’
- b. samoljwetə-r səhat-jə-t_wə krasnwedar bəbə-βe.
 airplane-ABS hour-INF-two Krasnodar fly-PST
 ‘The airplane flew in the direction of Krasnodar for two hours.’
- c. çəfə-m čəgə-r taqjəq-jə-š’e ə-βe-səsə-β.
 man-OBL tree-ABS minute-INF-three 3SG.A-CAUS-shake-PST
 ‘The man shook the tree for three minutes.’
- d. mələ-r mef-jə-tfe t_k_wə-βe.
 ice-ABS day-INF-five melt-PST
 ‘The ice melted for five days.’
- e. *txamate-m taqjəq-jə-š’e ze[?]_wəč’e-r r-jə-βe-ž’a-β.
 director-OBL minute-INF-three meeting-ABS 3SG.IO-3SG.A-CAUS-begin-PST
 ‘*The director opened the meeting for three minutes (i.e. he tried to open the meeting for three minutes, but failed, e.g. because the people were too loud.’

➤ The only actional class whose members normally do not combine with durational adverbials is the Punctual class (21a); however, in appropriate contexts recategorization is possible (21b):

- (21) a. *?eg_wawe-r taqjəq-jə-t_we qe-we-β.
 balloon-ABS minute-INF-two DIR-explode-PST
 ‘*The balloon exploded for two minutes.’
- b. ?eg_wawe-xe-r taqjəq-jə-t_we qe-we-βe-x.
 balloon-PL-ABS minute-INF-two DIR-explode-PST-PL
 ‘The balloons exploded (one after another) for two minutes.’

④ How to explain the behaviour of the adverbials of temporal duration?

➤ Two possible accounts:

- ♣ **The ‘lexical’ account** (cf. Tatevosov 2002 and especially Tatevosov 2005 for Bagwalal, Mari and Tatar): Adyghe ‘Strong’ predicates are in fact ‘Weak’, i.e. inherently actionally ambiguous: their Preterite forms always allow both telic (ES, EP, Q) and atelic (S, P, M) interpretations, but the latter requires special context which is provided precisely by the durational adverbials.
- ♣ **The ‘compositional’ account** (cf. Depraetere 1995, Smith 1995, de Swart 1998): Adyghe actional classes are as in Table 1; the actional properties of the predicate may be subject to change when it is combined with adjuncts of various kinds.

5. Aspectual composition in constructions with *zere-*

☞ Semantic behaviour of the constructions described in sections 2-3 and 4 with respect to aspectual classes provides a strong argument in favour of the “compositional” account. Predicates of ‘Weak’ classes allow both ‘telic’ and ‘atelic’ interpretations when used in these constructions. Predicates of ‘Strong’ classes, however, do not allow ‘atelic’ interpretation, despite the fact that they allow it with durational adverbials.

❶ The monoclausal construction with *zere-*

- (22) a. $\check{c}'ale-r \check{c}əja-ɕ$ boy-ABS sleep-PST
 ‘The boy fell asleep’.
 ‘The boy has taken a sleep’.
- b. $\check{c}'ale-r zere-\check{c}əja-ɕ$ boy-ABS ZERE-sleep-PST
 ‘The boy is still sleeping (= after he has fallen asleep)’.
 ‘The boy is no more sleeping (= after he has taken a nap)’.
- (23) a. $mələ-r \hat{z}_wə-ɕ$ ice-ABS melt-PST
 ‘The ice has melted’.
 ‘*The ice melted for some time’
- b. $mələ-r zere-\hat{z}_wə-ɕ$ ice-ABS ZERE-melt-PST
 ‘There’s no more ice (= after it has melted)’.
 ‘*The ice still melts (= as it once did)’

❷ The biclausal construction with *zere-...-ew*

➤ Strong Inceptive-Stative predicates do not allow atelic interpretation of the *zere-...-ew* form (12b); however, the Weak Inceptive-Stative predicate *čəfen* ‘to sleep’, **does allow** the atelic interpretation, cf. (24a), (24b) and (24c):

- (24) a. $\check{c}'ale-r zere-\check{c}əj-ew, p\check{c}'əhəpə ə-\lambda eɕ_wə-ɕ.$
 boy-ABS SBD-sleep-CNV dream 3SG.A-see-PST
 ‘As soon as the boy fell asleep, he saw a dream.’
- b. $\check{c}'ale-r zere-\check{c}əj-ew, qarəwə-m qə-xe-\chi_w a-ɕ.$
 boy-ABS SBD-sleep-CNV strength-OBL DIR-LOC-become-PST
 ‘As soon as the boy had slept (for a while), he acquired strength.’
- c. $\check{c}'ale-r zere-\check{c}əj-ew, wəne-m r-a-xə-ɕ.$
 boy-ABS SBD-sleep-CNV house-OBL 3SG.IO-3SG.A-carry-PST
 ‘While the boy was still sleeping, they carried him out of the house.’

➤ Those Telic predicates which allow atelic interpretation with durational adverbials, do not allow it in the *zere-...-ew* construction, cf. (28a) and (28b):

- (25) a. $\check{c}'ale-m \check{c}'ewə-r səhat-nəqwe ə-ɕela-ɕ.$
 boy-OBL fence-ABS hour-half 3SG.A-paint-PST
 ‘The boy has been painting the fence for half an hour.’
- b. $\check{c}'ale-m \check{c}'ewə-r zer-jə-ɕal-ew, we\hat{s}_wə q-je-xə-ɕ.$
 boy-OBL fence-ABS SBD-3SG.A-paint-CNV hail DIR-LOC-come.down-PST
 ‘Just as the boy finished painting the fence, it started to hail. || *While the boy was still painting the fence, it started to hail.’

☞ The non-finite *zere-...-ew* forms preserve the independently established distinction between the Strong and Weak Inceptive-stative predicates, but fail to reveal any contrast between those Telic predicates which co-occur with the durational adverbials and those which do not.

Abbreviations

A – agent, ABS – absolutive, AFF – affective, CAUS – causative, CNV – converb, COH – coherence clitic, COND – conditional, DAT – dative, DIR – directional preverb, DYN – dynamic prefix, FOC – focus, INF – interfix, INS – instrumental, IO – indirect object, IPF – imperfect, LOC – locative preverb, MAL – malefactive, N – neuter, OBL – oblique, PL – plural, POSS – possessive, PST – preterite, S – single core argument of intransitive predicate, SBD – subordinator, SG – singular, SML – simulative, SOC – sociative.

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