

## PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES IN ADYGHE POLYSYNTHETIC WORDFORM: TYPES OF INTERACTIONS

### 1. Introduction

Adyghe (West Circassian) < North-West Caucasian, Russian Federation (also spoken in Turkey)  
Existing sources: Paris 1989 (in French), Smeets 1984 (in English), Погава & Керашева 1962, Ку-  
махов 1971, Тестелец (ред.) 2009 (in Russian).

Outstanding typological features:

- (almost) no distinction between nouns and verbs (Lander & Testelecs 2006);
- polysynthesis: pronominal affixes expressing all syntactic arguments of the verb (Smeets 1992);
- rich system of valency increasing operations, including causative (кe-), benefactive (fe-), malefactive (š<sub>w</sub>e-) and other applicatives (Летучий 2009а,б); by contrast, valency-decreasing operations such as anticausative or antipassive either remain unmarked or are expressed by non-productive morphological devices; thus, Adyghe is a ‘transitivizing’ language in terms of Nichols et al. (2004);
- rich system of locational preverbs also functioning as applicatives (Paris 1995);
- ergativity in both head- and dependent-marking (Smeets 1992, Кумахов & Вамлинг 2006), coupled with an impoverished case system comprising only Absolutive (-r, marks intransitive subjects (1a) and direct objects (1b)) and Oblique (-m/-š', marks transitive subjects (1b), all types of indirect objects (1b), and adnominal possessors (1c);

- (1) a. č'ale-r Ø<sup>1</sup>-me-čəje                      c. çəfə-m jə-wəne  
boy-ABS    3SG.ABS-DYN-sleep                      man-OBL    3SG.POSS-house  
'The boy is sleeping.'
- b. č'ale-m pšaše-m txələ-r Ø-r-j-e-tə  
boy-OBL    girl-OBL    book-ABS    3SG.ABS-3SG.IO-3SG.A-DYN-give  
'The boy is giving the book to the girl.'

The data comes mainly from the fieldwork materials collected during field-trips to village Нақwerinehabl (Хақуринохабль), Republic Adygeya, organized by the Russian State University for Humanities (РГУ) in 2003–2006.

### 2. The structure of the Adyghe verbal complex

The verbal word in Adyghe may include both prefixes and suffixes; fig. 1 represents the overall structure in terms of ‘positions’ or ‘slots’, cf. Smeets (1984: Ch. 2) and Paris (1989: 196–198). The ‘slots’ in fig. 1 are given for convenience and do not always imply that any position can be filled by only one morpheme at a time.

The organization of the prefixal and suffixal divisions of the Adyghe word follow quite different principles:

- The order of the suffixes, especially of the so-called ‘propositional operators’ comprising expressions of various aspectual, temporal, modal and related meanings, varies according to their relative scope, see Korotkova & Lander 2008; cf. (2) (ibid.: 5) and (3):

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth we will not mark and gloss zero morphemes.

Fig. 1. Structure of the Adyghe verbal complex

Prefixes							
Argument structure zone						Pre-stem elements	
Absolutive	Directional prefix	Temporal	Applicatives	Indirect object	Agent	'Dynamic' prefix	
						Optative	Negation
-9	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2

Prefixes		Root	Suffixes			
Stem			'Endings'			
Causative	Root	Directional, inceptive, antipassive	Propositional operators	Plural	'Dynamic' suffix	Negation, Illocutionary force
-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5

- (2) a. waš<sub>w</sub>e-m ž<sub>w</sub>aβ<sub>w</sub>e qə-tje-s-xə-š<sub>w</sub>ə-š<sub>w</sub>e  
sky-OBL star DIR-LOC-1SG.A-take-HBL-SML  
'I pretend as if I could take a star from the sky.' (similative > habilitive)
- b. waš<sub>w</sub>e-m ž<sub>w</sub>aβ<sub>w</sub>e qə-tje-s-xə-š<sub>w</sub>e-š<sub>w</sub>ə  
sky-OBL star DIR-LOC-1SG.A-take-SML-HBL  
'I can pretend as if I were taking a star from the sky.' (habilitive > similative)
- (3) a. a-r qe-k<sub>w</sub>e-š't  
DEM-ABS DIR-go-FUT  
'He will come.'
- b. a-r qe-k<sub>w</sub>a-β  
DEM-ABS DIR-go-PST  
'He came.'
- c. a-r qe-k<sub>w</sub>e-š'tə-β  
DEM-ABS DIR-go-FUT-PST  
'He would come.' (past > future)
- d. a-r qe-k<sub>w</sub>e-βe-š't  
DEM-ABS DIR-go-PST-FUT  
'He might have come.' (future > past)

➤ By contrast, the order of prefixal elements is rigid, which gives rise to scope ambiguities (4):

- (4) a. mwərat jəβ<sub>w</sub>əsew lə-r d-j-e-βa-ž<sub>w</sub>e  
Murat together meat-ABS COM-3SG.A-DYN-CAUS-roast  
'He is roasting meat together with Murat.' (comitative applicative > causative)
- b. lə-m kartwefə-r d-j-e-βa-ž<sub>w</sub>e  
meat-OBL potatoes-ABS COM-3SG.A-DYN-CAUS-roast  
'He is roasting potatoes with meat' (causative > comitative applicative) (IIIaob 1975: 56)

The aforementioned peculiarities of the Adyghe morphology legitimate the enquiry about the possible types of interaction between prefixes and suffixes, and on possible morphosyntactic and semantic constraints on these interactions.

### 3. Hard and soft morphological constraints

There is a number of instances when an element on the one side of the root requires (categorically or optionally) the presence of some element on the opposite side thereof. It must be noted that none of such situations can be properly treated as involving **circumfixes**, i. e. unanalyzable prefix+suffix combinations, since the relevant morphemes are able to occur independently, and though semantically the prefix+suffix combinations show varying degrees of idiomatization, the occurrence of their components is never completely unmotivated.

#### ❶ Inceptive

Perhaps the most circumfix-like prefix+suffix combination in Adyghe is the Inceptive, consisting of the suffix -ž'e and of the obligatory Indirect Object prefix je- (5). The latter does not contribute either to the semantics or, more importantly, to the argument structure.

- (5) a. a-ɾ            ča-ɤe  
DEM-ABS    run-PST  
‘He ran.’
- b. a-ɾ            je-če-ž’a-ɤ  
DEM-ABS    3SG.IO-run-INC-PST  
‘He started running.’

This morphological means of expressing inceptivity is, however, not productive (Say 2006); usually, a periphrastic construction with a non-finite form governed by the verb jež'en ‘start, begin’ (6a) or its causative counterpart jekež'en (6b) is employed:

- (6) a. s-je-pλ-ew                      s-je-ž’a-ɤ  
1SG.ABS-3SG.IO-look-AVD    1SG.ABS-3SG.IO-begin-PST  
‘I began to look at it.’ (Say 2006: 2)
- b. se      we      wə-s-š’e-new                      je-s-e-ɤa-ž’e  
1SG      2SG      2SG.ABS-3SG.A-lead-INF    3SG.IO-1SG.A-DYN-CAUS-begin  
‘I begin to lead you.’ (ibid.: 6)

The affixal and periphrastic expressions of inceptivity are obviously related: the former is the morphological counterpart of the latter, employing syntactic clause union and formal ‘incorporation’ of the dependent verb into the matrix and containing the same ‘inert’ Indirect Object prefix.

## ② Locative expressions

Locative preverbs often, especially in combination with verbs not bearing a locative component in their lexical meaning, require presence of one of the directional suffixes (Paris 1995: 351–352):

- (7) a. q<sub>w</sub>e-teq<sub>w</sub>-e-n                      a'. q<sub>w</sub>e-teq<sub>w</sub>-ə-n  
LOC-pour-LAT-POT                      LOC-pour-ELAT-POT  
‘to pour smth. into the corner’                      ‘to pour smth. out of the corner’ (IIIaob 1975: 171)
- b. pə-thač’ə-č’ə-n                      b'. pə-thač’ə-ha-n  
LOC-wash-ELAT-POT                      LOC-wash-CIRCUM-POT  
‘to wash something away’                      ‘to wash something all around’ (ibid.: 266)
- c. də-n                      c'. k<sub>w</sub>eçə-d-e-n  
sew-POT                      LOC-sew-LAT-POT  
‘to sew smth.’                      ‘to sew smth. into smth.’ (ibid.: 177)

Some of such combinations of locative prefix + directional suffix have been idiomaticized and are employed as ‘circumfixes’, cf. de-...-je ‘upwards’:

- (8) a. de-pλə-n                      a'. de-pλə-je-n  
LOC-look-POT                      LOC-look-UP-POT  
‘look through smth.’                      ‘look up’
- b. de-pč’e-n                      b'. de-pč’e-je-n  
LOC-jump-POT                      LOC-jump-UP-POT  
‘jump between smth.’                      ‘jump upwards’ (ibid.: 87)

Note that in contrast to both simple locative prefixation and other locative + directional combinations, de-...-je does not behave like an applicative introducing a new Ground argument with reference to which the spatial configuration of the event is construed.

## ③ Inadvertitive

The Inadvertitive prefix ʔeč’e- denotes unintentional actions and usually combines only with transitive verbs; the resulting combination behaves like an intransitive verb, the former agent being demoted to the indirect object position. This detransitivization is achieved via obligatory suffixation of the Circumference suffix -ha (9) or the Antipassive/Lative suffix -e (10); with some verbs, both options are available, cf. (11). Note that the Inadvertitive construction requires antipassivization even with those verbs which do not have a regular Antipassive derivative, cf. (10c).

- (9) a. se      məʔere-se-xe-ɾ      s-šxə-ɤe  
1SG      apple-PL-ABS      1SG.A-eat-PST  
‘I ate the apples.’

- b. se məʔerəse-xe-r s-ʔeç'e-šxə-ha-Ɂ  
1SG apple-PL-ABS 1SG.IO-INADV-eat-CIRCUM-PST  
'I unintentionally ate the apples.'
- (10) a. se s-jə-š'ewek<sub>wə</sub>-r sə-wəç'ə-Ɂ  
1SG 1SG-POSS-friend-ABS 1SG.A-kill-PST  
'I killed my friend.'
- b. se səməšaxew s-jə-š'ewek<sub>wə</sub>-r s-ʔeç'e-wəç'-a-Ɂ  
1SG unintentionally 1SG-POSS-friend-ABS 1SG.IO-INADV-kill-AP-PST  
'I unintentionally killed my friend.'
- c. \*se sə-wəç'-a-Ɂ  
1SG 1SG.A-kill-AP-PST  
intended meaning: 'I killed.'
- (11) a. pisme ç'e s-txə-ke  
letter many 1SG.A-write-PST  
'I wrote a lot of letters.'
- b. pisme ç'e s-ʔeç'e-tx-a-Ɂ  
letter many 1SG.IO-INADV-write-AP-PST  
'I wrote a lot of letters (though I didn't intend to write so many)'
- c. pisme ç'e s-ʔeç'e-txə-ha-Ɂ  
letter many 1SG.IO-INADV-write-CIRCUM-PST  
'=11b'

The only verbs which on the surface do not show obligatory suffixation in the Inadvertitive construction are those whose stem ends in -e (12); with these the Antipassive suffixation of -e would be phonologically vacuous.

- (12) a. se s-jə-š'ewek<sub>wə</sub>-r sə-wəʔa-Ɂ  
1SG 1SG-POSS-friend-ABS 1SG.A-wound-PST  
'I wounded my friend.'
- b. se səməšaxew s-jə-š'ewek<sub>wə</sub>-r s-ʔeç'e-wəʔa-Ɂ  
1SG unintentionally 1SG-POSS-friend-ABS 1SG.IO-INADV-wound(?AP)-PST  
'I unintentionally wounded my friend.'

The synchronic motivation of antipassivization with the Inadvertitive is transparent: the ʔeç'e- prefix acts as an applicative introducing the indirect object denoting the unintentional agent; hence, the original agent must be eliminated, and this is precisely what Antipassive -e does. However, the motivation for the Circumference -ha in this construction is far from clear and anyway cannot be parallel to that of the Antipassive for the simple reason that -ha does not normally affect transitivity.

#### ④ Reciprocal / Reflexive + Refactive

Reciprocal and Reflexive in Adyghe are expressed by prefixes zə-/ze- and zere- occupying the slots of the relevant arguments (see Letuchiy 2007). In addition, reflexive and especially reciprocal forms usually contain the Refactive (≈ repetitive) suffix -ž'ə- (see Аркадьев & Короткова 2005).

By itself, the Refactive can denote motion backwards (13a) and repetition of the event (13b); these meanings are evidently responsible for the occurrence of the Refactive in Reflexive (14) and Reciprocal (15) forms (see Stoyanova 2009 for a typology of reflexive ~ reflexive polysemy).

- (13) a. a-r k<sub>w</sub>a-ke a'. a-r k<sub>w</sub>e-ž'ə-ke  
DEM-ABS go-PST DEM-ABS go-RE-PST  
'He went.' 'He went back.'
- b. pče-r q<sub>w</sub>əta-ke b'. pče-r q<sub>w</sub>əte-ž'ə-ke  
door-ABS break-PST door-ABS break-RE-PST  
'The door broke.' 'The door broke again.'

- (14) a. s-jə-κ<sub>w</sub>əneκ<sub>w</sub>ə-m      a-r      ə-wəç'ə-κ  
1SG-POSS-neighbour-OBL    DEM-ABS    3SG.A-kill-PST  
'My neighbour killed him.'
- b. s-jə-κ<sub>w</sub>əneκ<sub>w</sub>ə-m      z-jə-wəç'ə-ž'ə-κ  
1SG-POSS-neighbour-OBL    RFL.ABS-3SG.A-kill-RE-PST  
'My neighbour killed himself.' (Letuchiy 2007: 781)
- (15) a. č'ale-m      pšaše-r      j-e-λeκ<sub>w</sub>ə  
boy-OBL      girl-ABS      3SG.A-DYN-see  
'The boy sees the girl.'
- b. zeč'e      çəf-xe-r      zer-e-λeκ<sub>w</sub>ə-ž'ə-x  
all            man-PL-ABS    REC.A-DYN-see-RE-PL  
'All the people see each other.' (ibid.: 785)

The Refactive, is, however, not obligatory in Reflexive (16) and Reciprocal (17) constructions:

- (16) a. se      a-r      sə-wəpsə-κ  
1SG    DEM-ABS    1SG.A-shave-PST  
'I shaved him.'
- b. se      zə-sə-wəpsə-(ž'ə)-κ  
1SG    RFL.ABS-1SG.A-shave-(RE)-PST  
'I shaved (myself).'
- (17) a. a-r      a-š'      d-e-ʔepəʔe  
DEM-ABS    DEM-OBL    COM-DYN-help  
'He helps him.'
- b. a-xe-r      ze-d-e-ʔepəʔe-(ž'ə)-x  
DEM-PL-ABS    REC.IO-COM-DYN-help-(RE)-PL  
'They help each other.' (Letuchiy 2007: 799)

As is noted by Gerasimov & Lander 2008, the use of Refactive in Reciprocal and Reflexive constructions shows considerable and sometimes quite idiosyncratic inter-speaker variation.

#### 4. Scope restrictions

There are situations when a prefix and a suffix can stand only in a uniquely determined scope relation to each other. This is nicely exemplified by the interaction between the Causative and the Antipassive (see Аркадьев & Летучий 2008 for a discussion of the Adyghe Antipassive).

➤ The Antipassive suffix -e can attach to certain transitive verb roots ending in -ə, triggering the elimination of the Absolutive direct object and the shift of the Oblique subject to Absolutive (18):

- (18) a. č'ale-m      pisme-r      j-e-txə  
boy-OBL      letter-ABS    3SG.A-DYN-write  
'The boy is writing a letter.'
- b. č'ale-r      ma-tx-e  
boy-ABS      DYN-write-AP  
'The boy is writing.'

➤ The Antipassive forms can be further causativized:

- (19) a. hač'e-xe-r      ma-šx-e-x  
guest-PL-ABS      DYN-eat-AP-PL  
'The guest are eating.'
- b. a-š'      hač'e-xe-r      j-e-ka-šx-e-x  
DEM-OBL    guest-PL-ABS    3SG.A-DYN-CAUS-eat-AP-PL  
'He is feeding the guests.'

➤ Certain Antipassives are unmarked on the surface – they are formed from transitive verbs whose stems end in -e (20):

- (20) a.  $\text{ɤ}_w\text{əneɤ}_w\text{ə-m}$      $\text{xate-r}$      $\text{j-e-p}\check{\text{c}}\text{e}$   
neighbour-OBL    orchard-ABS    3SG.A-DYN-weed  
'The neighbour is weeding the orchard.'
- b.  $\text{ɤ}_w\text{əneɤ}_w\text{ə-r}$      $\text{ma-p}\check{\text{c}}\text{e}$   
neighbour-ABS    DYN-weed(AP)  
'The neighbour is weeding.'

➤ However, Antipassive cannot be applied to the Causative derivatives:

- (21) a.  $\text{haləɤ}_w\text{əkaʒe-m}$      $\text{haləɤ}_w\text{ə-r}$      $\text{j-e-ka-}\hat{\text{z}}\text{e}$   
baker-OBL    bread-ABS    3SG.A-DYN-CAUS-bake  
'The baker is baking bread.'
- b. \* $\text{haləɤ}_w\text{əkaʒe-r}$      $\text{ŋjɛpɛ}$      $\text{rjɛn-ew}$      $\text{mɛ-ka-}\hat{\text{z}}\text{e}$   
baker-ABS    today    whole-ADV    DYN-CAUS-bake  
intended meaning: 'The baker bakes the whole day.' (Аркадьев & Летучий 2008: 92)

The only way to express the meaning of (21b) is by omission of the object NP without any other change in the morphosyntax; note the Oblique case-marking of the Subject and the Agentive rather than Absolutive agreement on the verb in (21c):

- (21) c.  $\text{haləɤ}_w\text{əkaʒe-m}$      $\text{ŋjɛpɛ}$      $\text{rjɛn-ew}$      $\text{j-e-ka-}\hat{\text{z}}\text{e}$   
baker-OBL    today    whole-ADV    3SG.A-DYN-CAUS-bake  
'The baker bakes the whole day.' (ibid.: 93)

The motivation for this restriction is not clear, but we might speculate about at least two (perhaps not unrelated) ways of explanation:

- Adyghe generally does not favour derivations affecting case marking of arguments; the Antipassive is 'exceptionally' allowed to apply to bare verbal roots, but is excluded with morphologically derived causatives.
- Antipassive is a derivation with the most dramatic effect on the verb's argument and event structure: it affects the internal argument (patient) and telicity (see e. g. Cooreman 1994); the causative, however, is a derivation applying to the situation as a whole, introducing a new subevent "on top of" the original one (see e. g. Ramchand 2008), and this might underlie the restriction that the Causative invariably has scope over the Antipassive.

## 5. No scope restrictions

As we have already noted above, prefixal operators such as Causative and various applicatives follow a strict surface order but allow for different semantic scopes, cf. (3). This phenomena is so prominent that it even got reflected in the dictionaries of Adyghe, cf. Шаов 1975.

Similar situations can be observed with certain prefix + suffix combinations (see Letuchiy 2008 for a more detailed discussion of some of these).

### ❶ Causative + Refactive

When Causative and Refactive co-occur in one wordform, any scope relation is possible:

- (21)  $\text{jɛ-}\text{ɤ}\text{-k}_w\text{ə-}\hat{\text{z}}'\text{ə-n}$   
3SG.IO-CAUS-go-RE-POT  
i. 'make come back' (causative > refactive)  
ii. 'again make go' (refactive > causative) (Шаов 1975: 104)
- (22)  $\text{jate}$      $\check{\text{c}}'\text{ale-m}$      $\text{pisme-r}$      $\text{r-jə-}\text{ɤ}\text{-txə-}\hat{\text{z}}'\text{ə-}\text{ɤ}$ .  
father    boy-OBL    letter-ABS    3SG.IO-3SG.A-CAUS-write-RE-PST  
i. 'Father made the boy reply to the letter.' (causative > refactive)  
ii. 'Father once again made the boy write the letter.' (refactive > causative)

② Causative + Negation

Normally, negation expressed by the suffix *-ep* takes scope over the whole proposition; in particular, no suffix can take scope over negation, cf. (23) (Ландер & Сумбатова 2007)

- (23)      *nə-r*                      *g<sub>w</sub>əmeč'ə-š<sub>w</sub>e-r-ep*  
mother-ABS                  worry-SML-DYN-NEG  
i. 'Mother does not pretend to be worrying'. (negation > similative)  
ii. \*'Mother pretends not to be worrying.' (\*similative > negation)

However, this restriction does not extend to the prefixal zone, where at least the Causative can have scope both below (24a) and above (24b) negation:

- (24) a.    *se a-š' paje zjəmjə qə-s-jə-ɤe-ʔ<sub>w</sub>ete-š't-ep.*  
1SG DEM-OBL for nobody:ERG DIR-1SG.IO-3SG.A-CAUS-talk-FUT-NEG  
'Nobody will make me talk about it.' (negation > causative)  
b.    *se a-š' q-je-z-ɤe-ʔ<sub>w</sub>eta-ɤ-ep.*  
1SG DEM-ABS DIR-3SG.IO-1SG.A-CAUS-talk-PST-NEG  
'I made him not to tell it.' (causative > negation) (Letuchiy 2008)

Examples like (24b) seem to occur rarely, but they are definitely not altogether excluded.

**6. Summary**

The relations between the prefixes and suffixes discussed above are summarized in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2. Relations between selected prefixes and suffixes in Adyghe

Prefixes \ Suffixes	Inceptive -ž'e	Directional	Antipassive -e	Refactive -ž'ə	Negation -ep
Indirect Object <i>je-</i>	obligatory				
Locative		often obligatory			
Inadvertitive <i>ʔeč'e-</i>		obligatory -ha	obligatory		
Reciprocal/Reflexive				optional	
Causative <i>ɤe-</i>			Caus>Anti, *Anti>Caus	Caus~Rfc	Caus~Neg

- Though only a few of the possible prefix-suffix interactions have been dealt with, and though we do not have relevant data on some potentially interesting combinations (e. g., Causative + Inceptive and especially Causative + Directional), on the basis of the data at hand it is possible to conclude that the prefixes and suffixes in Adyghe do not follow any uniform pattern of interaction.
- While some of the prefix-suffix combinations are restricted (either by obligatory co-occurrence or non-co-occurrence or by invariable scope assignment), others display various degrees of freedom of interaction, be it optional co-occurrence or ambiguous scope assignment.
- Thus Adyghe shows that a polysynthetic language may exhibit a dramatically non-uniform morphological makeup, whereby prefixal and suffixal parts of the word are organized by fairly divergent principles of form-to-function mapping, and where, moreover, different prefixes and suffixes interact in individual and not always predictable ways.

### Abbreviations

A – agent, ABS – absolute, ADV – adverbial, AP – antipassive, APPL – applicative, CAUS – causative, CIRCUM – circumferential, COM – comitative, DEM – demonstrative, DIR – directional, DYN – ‘dynamic’ (≈ present tense), ELAT – elative, FUT – future, HBL – habilitive, INADV – inadvertive, INC – inceptive, INF – infinitive, IO – indirect object, LAT – lative, LOC – locative, NEG – negation, OBL – oblique, PL – plural, POSS – possessive, POT – potential, PST – past, RE – refactive, REC – reciprocal, RFL – reflexive, SG – singular, SML – simulative, UP – ‘upwards’ directional

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