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Caritive morphology in Abaza: from derivation to inflection and back

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Introduction

- **Caritive** (synonyms: privative, abessive):
 - a construction describing **non-involvement** of a participant in a situation;
 - expressed as a **modifer** of another situation.(Oskolskaya et al. 2020)

Introduction

- adnominal (caritive adjectives):

(1) *a beardless man*

Introduction

- adnominal (caritive adjectives):

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

- adverbial (caritive adpositions or cases):

(2) *I came ~~without~~ money.*

Estonian (Tamm 2011: 861):

(3) *Ta läks koju mütsi-~~ta~~.*
s/he go.PST.3SG home.ILL hat-CAR

‘She went home without a hat.’

Introduction

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

Introduction

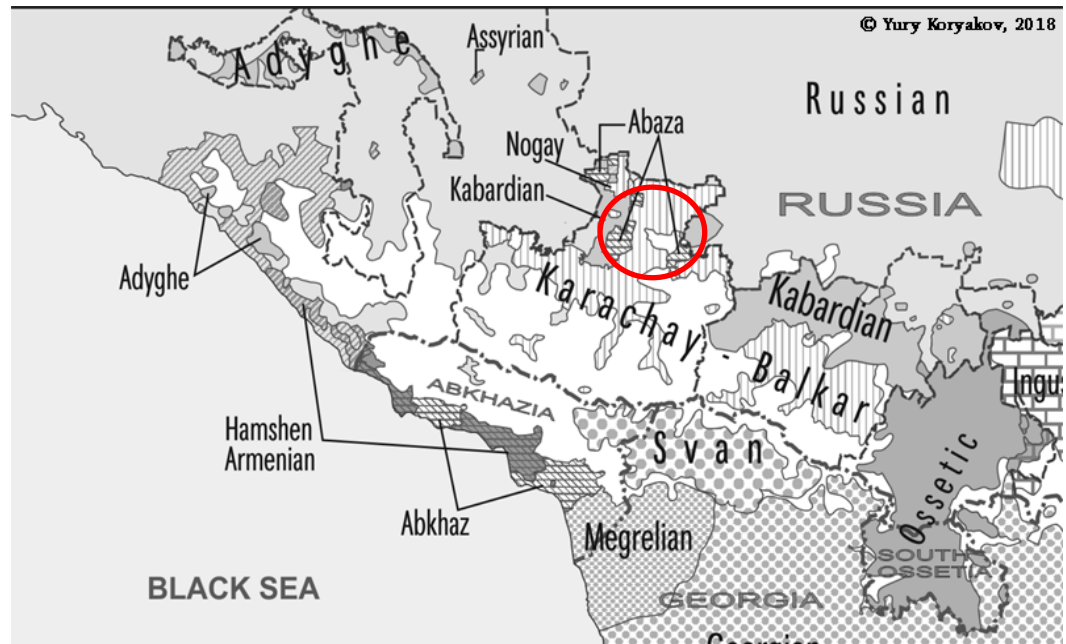
- Morphological expression of caritive semantics is well-attested in the languages of the world (e.g. Stolz et al. 2007).
- Caritive formations are reported to show peculiar constellations of properties striding the inflection-derivation divide:
 - Hamari 2014 on Mordvin < Uralic
 - Graschenkov 2015 on Turkic and Mongolic

Introduction

- In this talk:
- Caritive morphology in **Abaza** (Northwest Caucasian, Russia).
- A **synchronic** analysis of morphosyntactic variation based on fieldwork data.
- A window into a peculiar **diachronic change** in progress.

Abaza

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



Abaza

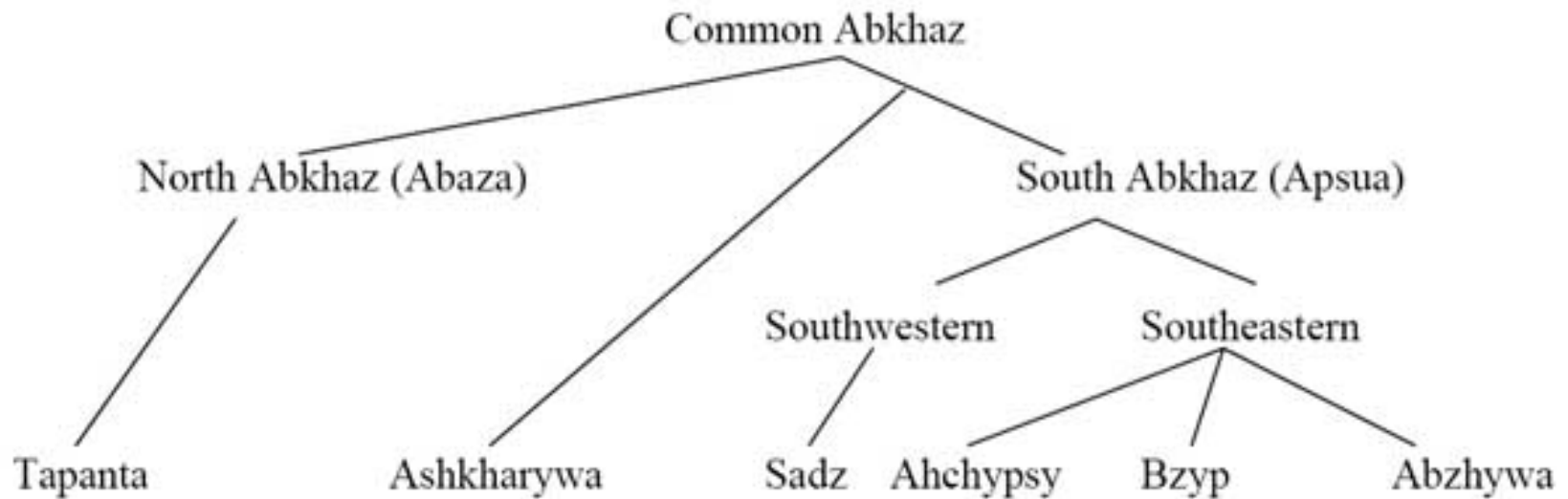
- Northwest Caucasian (Abkhaz-Adyghe)
 - Circassian: West Circassian (Adyghe), Kabardian (East Circassian)
 - † Ubykh
 - Abkhaz-Abaza: Abaza, Abkhaz

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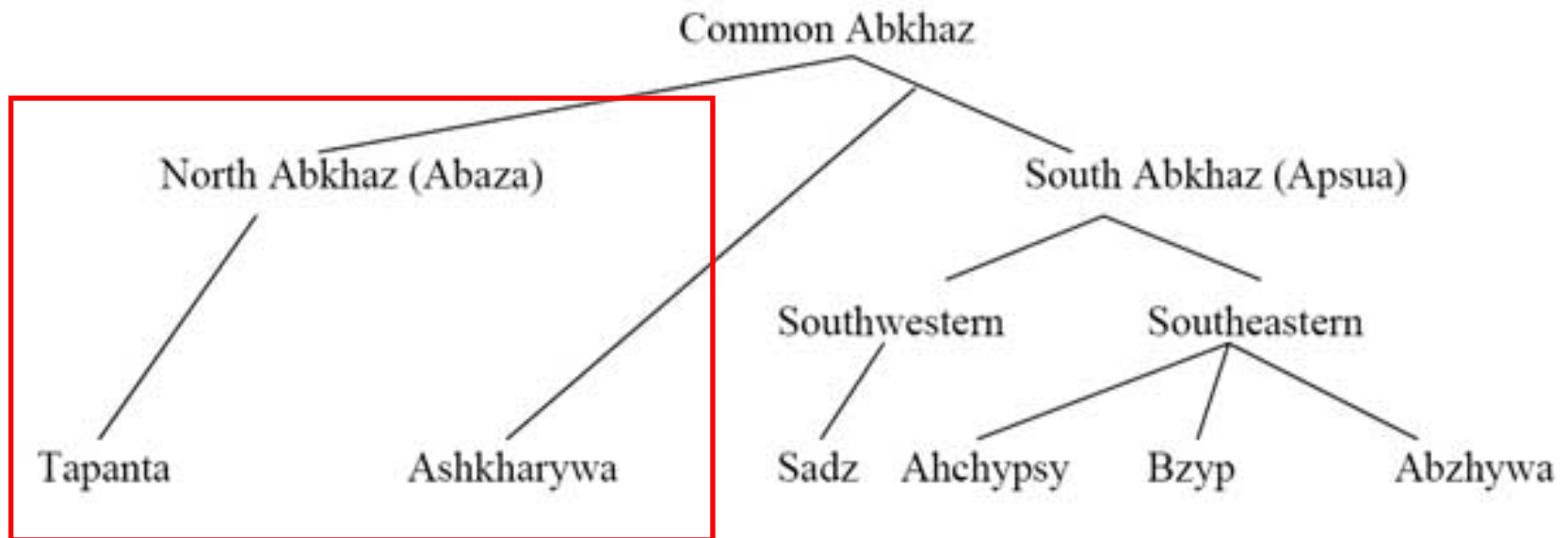
The Scheme of Abkhaz Dialectal Division



Chirikba 2003: 14

Abaza

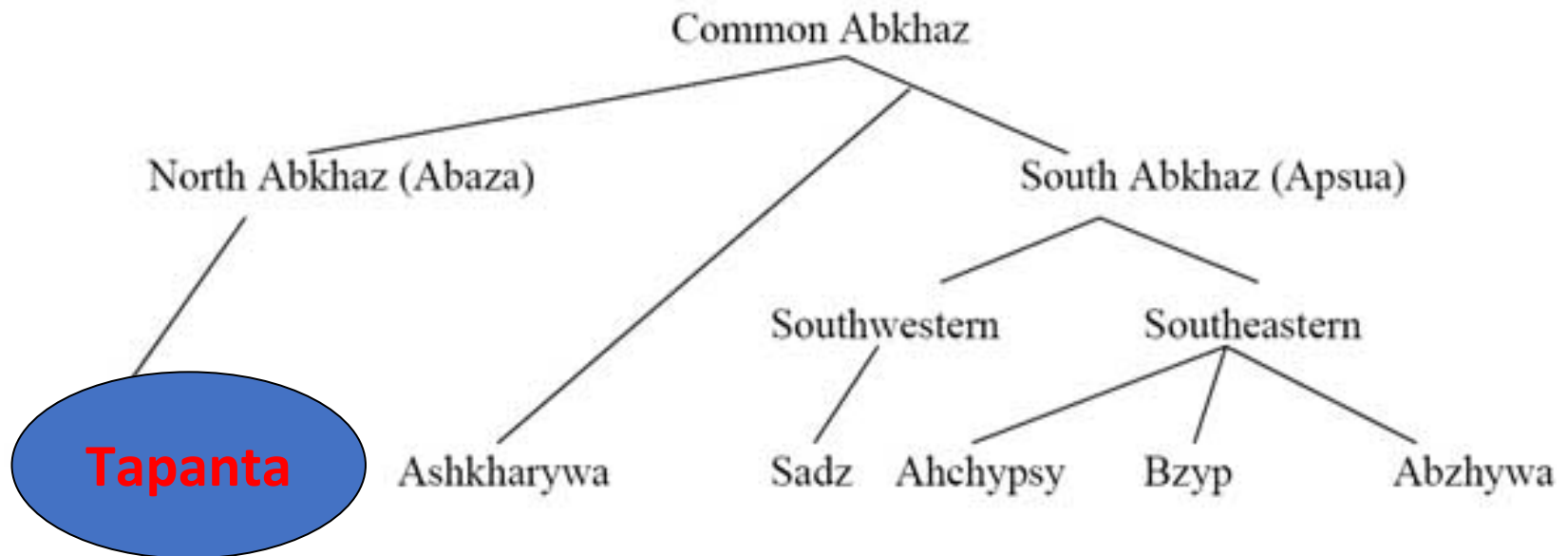
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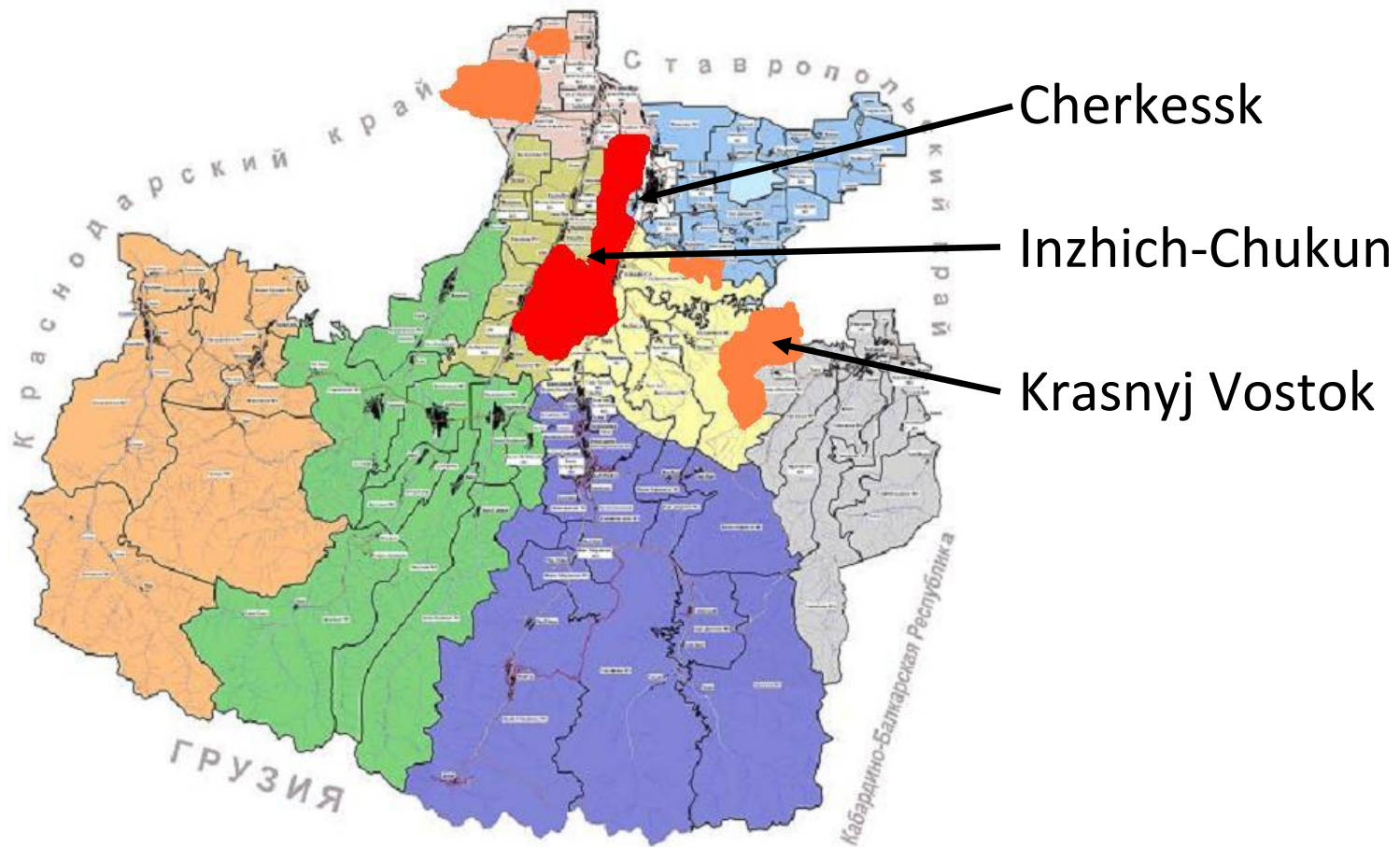
Abaza

- The least-described language of the Northwest Caucasian family
- Descriptive works exist (e.g. Genko 1955, Tabulova 1976, Lomtaticidze et al. 1989, O'Herin 2002), but are insufficient

Abaza

- This work is part of the on-going project on the documentation and description of Abaza organized by scholars from the HSE University and RSUH
- <https://ling.hse.ru/abazagrammar/>
- Fieldtrips to the villages Inzhich-Chukun in 2017-2019 and Krasnyj Vostok in 2021, as well as work with a number of speakers from different villages in Cherkessk in 2021.

Karachay-Cherkess Republic



Abaza



Abaza

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

Caritive in Abaza: overview

The suffixes *-da* and *-d(a)?a*:

- according to dictionaries, *-da* forms caritive adjectives (*bž'ə* 'voice': *bž'ə-da* 'silent'), while *-?a* forms adverbials from them (*bž'ə-da-?a* 'silently');
- in fact, things are much less straightforward and evidently in flux.

Caritive in Abaza: overview

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

Current research

- Based almost exclusively on elicitation
 - available texts do not contain enough representative examples of the caritive
- 16 native speakers
 - 6 men, 10 women
 - ages 22-72, but most over 50
 - originate from at least five different places
 - most with university education (teachers)
 - considerable, but not unsystematic, variation

Two types of system

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

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- “innovative” system:
 - only *-dʔa* is productively used, *-da* vestigially (if at all)
 - *-dʔa* functions both as a case marker and as an adjectivaliser (at least with a subset of speakers)

Two types of system

- The choice of the system shows a weak correlation with age:
 - the mean age of the “conservative” speakers is 60
 - the mean age of the “innovative” speakers is 52
 - no “conservative” speakers younger than 45
- Inconclusive, because younger ages are underrepresented.
- Of the two oldest speakers one is “conservative” and the other “innovative”.

The conservative system

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

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

- adnominal modifier

(4) *a-ž* *čʁ^wa-da*

DEF-cow horn-CAR

‘the cow without horns’

(kv1954f)

- Cf. a regular adjective:

(5) *h-an* *rəcha*

1PL.IO-mother poor

‘our poor mother’

(txt_IC)

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

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

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

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

- indefinite marker

(6) [ʃʷəçʃʷəs *pçá-da*]-*k* *d-ʃa.j-d*
man beard-CAR-INDF 3SG.H.ABS-come(AOR)-DCL
'A beardless man came.' (kv1961m)

Cf. a regular adjective:

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

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

- plural marker

(8) *a-[cəg^w q^wǎ-da]-k^wa* *g'-pšʒa-m*
DEF-cat fur-CAR-PL NEG-beautiful-NEG
'Cats without fur are ugly.' (ps1953f)

- instrumental case marker

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

The conservative system

- *-da* as a derivational adjectivaliser:

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

(10) *d-góla-p̣* stative verb

3SG.H.ABS-stand-NPST.DCL

‘s/he stands’

(11) *d-pšza-p̣* adjective

3SG.H.ABS-beautiful-NPST.DCL

‘s/he is beautiful’

The conservative system

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

(12) *sə-nχartá-da-ḥ*

1SG.ABS-work-CAR-NPST.DCL

‘I am jobless.’

(ic1968f)

- also as part of an N-A compound

(13) *s-pa d-[sabáj zɿʷá-da]-b*

1SG.PR-son 3SG.H.ABS-child illness-CAR-NPST.DCL

‘My son is a healthy child.’

(kv1968f)

The conservative system

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

(14) *s-apχ'ága-da-məŋ^wa-rk^wa-b*

1SG.ABS-textbook-CAR-DPR-CNT-NPST.DCL

‘Unfortunately, I still don’t have textbooks.’ (kv1961m)

The conservative system

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

- (15) *ar = a-ŋ^wəčŋ^wəs də-[ŋ^w-pcə-da]-χa-d*
PROX=DEF-man 3SG.H.ABS-two-tooth-CAR-INC(AOR)-DCL
'This man lost two of his teeth.' (kv1974f)
- (16) *wə-z-r-[aχč'á-da]-da?*
2SG.M.ABS-REL.ERG-CAUS-money-CAR(AOR)-QH
'Who made you pennyless?' (ps1953f)

The conservative system

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

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

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

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
 - apparently productive;
 - no longer analysable:
in the subdialect of Kransyj Vostok this suffix is often pronounced as *-tʔa* or even *-ṭa*;
 - attaches to noun phrases rather than stems.

The conservative system

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

(18) *a-ph^wəspa karandaš-dʔa d-ɬ^w-əj-t*
DEF-girl pencil-CAR 3SG.H.ABS-write-PRS-DCL
'The girl draws without a pencil.' (ic1957f)

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

(19) *a-bacaçaχ^wa-k^wa-la* *s-a-g^w-lə-r.cə-d*
 DEF-rod-PL-INS 1SG.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC-3SG.F.ERG-
 beat(AOR)-DCL
 ‘She beat me with rods.’ (txt_IC)

The conservative system

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

(20) *aslan* *muradin-dʔa* *d-ʕa.j-t*
Aslan Muradin-CAR 3SG.H.ABS-come(AOR)-DCL
'Aslan came without Muradin.' (kv1974f)

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

The conservative system

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

(22) *awa.t-dʔa*

DIST.PL-CAR

‘without them’

(txt_AbRu)

(23) *ŝə-ʕ^wza-ĉa-dʔa*

2PL.PR-friend-HPL-CAR

‘Don’t come without your friends!’

ŝ-ʕá-m-jə-n

2PL.ABS-CSL-NEG-go-PROH

(ps1962f)

The conservative system

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

(24) [*h^waspa* *ɕará*]-*dʔa* ɕ'áq^wa g'-s-zá-pq-wa-m
knife sharp-CAR bread NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
'I can't slice bread without a sharp knife.' (kv1954f)

The conservative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive case marker:
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(25) [*sə-h^waspa*]-*tʔa* č'áq^wa g'-s-zə-pq-wa-m
1SG.PR-knife-CAR bread NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
'I can't slice bread without my knife.' (kv1954f)

(26) [*arəj a-h^waspá*]-*tʔa* č'áq^wa g'-s-zə-pq-wa-m
PROX DEF-knife-CAR bread NEG-1SG.IO-POT-cut-IPF-NEG
'I can't slice bread without this knife.' (kv1954f)

The conservative system

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

(27) [*s-an* *j-ʃa-sá-l-tə-z*]
1SG.PR-mother REL.ABS-DIR-1SG.IO-3SG.F.ERG-give-PST.NFIN
a-mŝ-čár-χ^wəc]-*dʔa* *sə-g'-z-a.ča.ĉ-wa-m*
DEF-bear-kid-little-CAR 1SG.ABS-NEG-POT-fall.asleep-IPF-NEG
'I can't fall asleep without the teddy-bear my mother
gave me.'
(kv1954f)

The conservative system

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

(28) % *aslán* [j-č-*çqʷá-da*]-*dʔa* *d-ʕa.j.χ-t*

Aslan 3SG.M.PR-horse-tail-CAR-CAR 3SG.H.ABS-return(AOR)-DCL

‘Aslan returned on his tailless horse.’ (kb1964m)

The conservative system

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

(29) **h-sabáj-k^wa-dʔa* č.pša.rá *h-ca-d*
1PL.IO-child-PL-CAR vacation 1PL.ABS-go(AOR)-DCL
'We went on a vacation without our children.'

(30) **arápχ'aɣ^w bzáj-k-dʔa* *abáza-bəzšá*
teacher good-INDF-CAR Abaza-language
g'ə-w-zə-r-dár-wa-šə-m
NEG-2SG.M.IO-POT-CAUS-know-IPF-FUT-NEG
'You can't learn Abaza without a good teacher.'

The conservative system

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

Cf. the formulation of one of my consultants:

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

The innovative system

- The former caritive adjectivaliser *-da* is no longer productive and attested only in lexicalised combinations such as *zɿ^wa.da* ‘healthy’ (< illness-CAR).
- Consultants often do not recognize caritive adjectives in *-da* listed in the dictionary (“no such word exists”).
- However, the caritive derivation is still in use, but instead of *-da*, *-dʔa* is employed as an adjectivaliser.

The innovative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive adjectivaliser:
 - in the adnominal use (not all speakers allow it, though):

(31) *s-aχš'á* *χ-[cəg^w q^wǎ-dʔa]-k* *lǎ-ma-p̣*
1SG.PR-sister three-cat fur-CAR-UNIT 3SG.F.IO-have-NPST.DCL
'My sister has three furless cats.' (el1999m)

(32) *s-[wasá çɿ^wǎ-dʔa]-k^wa* *z-ba-ṭ*
1SG.PR-sheep horn-CAR-PL 1SG.ERG-see(AOR)-DCL
'I saw my hornless sheep.' (el1999m)

The innovative system

- *-dʔa* as a caritive adjectivaliser:
 - in the predicative use (allowed by all speakers):

(33) *sə-n.χa.rta-dʔa-p̣*

1SG.ABS-work-CAR-NPST.DCL

‘I am jobless.’

(ic1949m)

- this is usually disallowed with regular adverbials:

(34) **j-bzəj-ta-p̣*

3SG.N.ABS-good-ADV-NPST.DCL

intended ‘It is well’.

The innovative system

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

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

(el1999m)

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

(ic1961f)

A diachronic account

- The synchronic variation of the Abaza caritive morphology is suggestive of at least two relevant stages of diachronic development.

A diachronic account

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

(37) $X-da + -ʔa \rightarrow X-daʔa \rightarrow X-dʔa$

A diachronic account

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

(37) $X-da + -ʔa \rightarrow X-daʔa \rightarrow X-dʔa$

- This process must have been facilitated by the fact that the locative/adverbial suffix *-ʔa* itself has largely fallen into misuse.
- Most interestingly, this development has resulted in the reanalysis of a combination of a derivational suffix and an unproductive inflectional suffix as a new productive inflectional suffix with phrasal scope.

A diachronic account

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

A diachronic account

- Further, in the “innovative” system the caritive case marker *-dʔa* has been gradually encroaching into the domain of the original caritive adjectivaliser *-da*.
 - Some conservative speakers allow *-dʔa* alongside *-da* in the function of caritive adjectivaliser, the two thus becoming allomorphs in apparently free variation.
 - For the innovative speakers, *-dʔa* has become the preferable or even the only option in this domain.

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

A diachronic account

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

A diachronic account

- As a result of these developments, the caritive marker *-dʔa* in Abaza shows a peculiar combination of properties not fitting well into the taxonomy of morphosyntactic categories of the language:
 - a case marker with phrasal scope forming adverbial expressions;
 - a derivational marker with lexical scope forming adjectives that can serve as input to further predicate formation.

Conclusions

- The Abaza caritive morphology presents a rare case of morphological change in progress that can be studied in apparent time by variationist methods – the only possibility given the lack of historical records.

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Conclusions

- The Abaza caritive morphology presents a rare case of morphological change in progress that can be studied in apparent time by variationist methods – the only possibility given the lack of historical records.
- The processes involved in this change are both familiar (reanalysis and extension) and non-trivial (derivation > case marker and vice versa).
- The result of the change is also non-trivial, i.e. creation of Janus-like marker with both derivational/stem-based and inflectional/phrase-based characteristics.

ŝə-zɪ^wá-da-Da-t̚

2PL.ABS-illness-CAR-INC(AOR)-DCL

‘Thank you!’



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