

Phasal Polarity suffixes in a polysynthetic language: Evidence from Abaza

Evgeniya Klyagina (Russian State University for the Humanities; Higher School of Economics, Moscow) & Anastasia Panova (Higher School of Economics, Moscow)

Introduction

- ❑ Phasal polarity (PhP) is a cross-linguistic category including (at most) four expressions: ALREADY, NOT YET , STILL and NO LONGER (van Baar 1997; Kramer 2017).
 - ❑ Most often, these meanings are expressed lexically, cf. *phasal adverbials* in the languages of Europe (van der Auwera 1998).
 - ❑ Behaviour of morphologically bound PhP markers in “grammatically oriented” languages (van Baar 1997: 326) has never received special attention.
- ❖ **Purposes of the study**
- ❑ to investigate PhP expressions in Abaza, a polysynthetic Northwest Caucasian language
 - ❑ to discuss whether PhP affixes can form a clearly distinguished category from TAM affixes and morphologically bound event operators

Basics of Abaza

- ❑ < Abkhaz-Abaza < Northwest Caucasian
- ❑ spoken by some 50 thousand people
- ❑ morphologically ergative
- ❑ consistently head-marking
- ❑ polysynthetic



❖ **Tense system (finite forms)**

	positive	negative		positive	negative
Stative Pres.	-p̌	g'-Π-Σ-m	Stative Past	-n	g'-Π-Σ-mə-z-ɬ
Present	-əj-ɬ	g'-Π-Σ-wa-m	Imperfect	-wa-n	g'-Π-Σ-wa-mə-z-ɬ
Aorist	-ɬ	g'-Π-m-Σ-ɬ	Retro-aorist	-n	g'-Π-m-Σ-z-ɬ
Future I	-wa-š-ɬ	g'-Π-m-Σ-s-ɬ	Subjunctive I	-wa-šə-n	g'-Π-m-Σ-wa-šə-z-ɬ
Future II	-p̌	g'-Π-Σ-wa-šə-m	Subjunctive II	-rə-n	g'-Π-m-Σ-rə-z-ɬ

Σ — base; Π — preverbal zone.

❖ **Phasal polarity “system”**

ALREADY	NO LONGER	STILL	NOT YET
-χ'a	-χ + negation	-rk'a	-s + negation

- (1) [When I was going home]
- a. a-k'a řa-k'a-χ'-wə-n c. a-k'a g'-řa-m-k'a-χ-wa-z-ɬ
DEF-rain DIR-rain-IAM-IPF-PST DEF-rain NEG.EMP-DIR-NEG-rain-RE-IPF-PST.NFIN-DCL
'it was already raining.'
- b. a-k'a řa-k'a-rk'-wə-n d. a-k'a g'-řa-m-k'a-sə-z-ɬ
DEF-rain DIR-rain-CNT-IPF-PST DEF-rain NEG.EMP-DIR-NEG-rain-NONDUM-PST.NFIN-DCL
'it was still raining.'

External Paradigmaticity: interaction with TAM

PhP expressions are not supposed to constitute a part of the TAM paradigm. Nevertheless, Abaza PhP affixes demonstrate quite a few restrictions on combinations with TAM forms.

	ALREADY -χ'a	NO LONGER -χ + negation	STILL -rk'a	NOT YET -s + negation
Stative Present	+	+	+	*
Stative Past	+	+	+	*
Present	*	+	+	*
Aorist	+	in specific contexts	*	+
Retro-Aorist	+	in specific contexts	*	+
Imperfect	variability	+	+	*
Future I	*	+	+	*
Future II	*	+	+	*

❖ **Linear position in the wordform**

Cf. the position of PhP markers in the suffixal part of the Abaza verbal template:

root	directional suffixes	event operators	plural	aspect, tense	finite negation	past tense, mood	subordination, force
		↑ -χ'a, -χ, -rk'a		↑ -s			

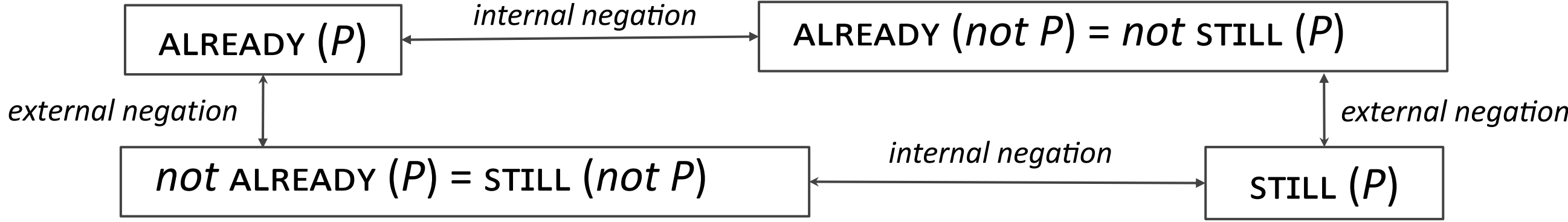
- (2) a. s-an jə-l-řřa-χ'a-k'a-z / *jə-l-řřa-k'a-χ'a-z a-č'řwəč'a-k'a
1SG.IO-mother REL.ABS-3F.ERG-wash-(*PL)-IAM-*(PL)-PST.NFIN DEF-laundry-PL
'clothes which have already been washed by my mother'
- b. s-an j-lə-m-řřa-k'a-s / * j-lə-m-řřa-s-k'a a-č'řwəč'a-k'a
1SG.IO-mother REL.ABS-3F.ERG-NEG-wash-*(PL)-NONDUM-(*PL) DEF-laundry-PL
'clothes which have not been washed by my mother yet '

Given its highly constrained compatibility with tenses and its unusual position in the verb, we consider suffix -s to be an aspectual (negative Perfect?) marker.

Internal Paradigmaticity

❖ **Duality hypothesis (Löbner 1989)**

Semantically, PhP meanings are negatives of one another, cf. schema:



Particular PhP systems are often derived following the principles above, cf. Russian adverbs *uže* 'already', *uže ne* 'no longer', *eščë* 'still', *eščë ne* 'not yet'.

In Abaza, none of the PhP expressions is formed by the negation of the other.

- ❑ the negated ALREADY is prohibited in most forms, e.g. (3b)
- (3) a. sara waχ'ć'wa apχ'arta s-a?a-χ'a-n
1SG today DEF.school 1SG.ABS-be-IAM-PST
'I have already been at school today.'
- b. *sara waχ'ć'wa apχ'arta s-g'-a?a-χ'a-mə-z-ɬ
1SG today DEF.school 1SG.ABS-NEG.EMP-be-IAM-NEG-PST.NFIN-DCL
- ❑ the negated STILL is judged as a marginal form
- (4) ?hara h-g'ə-n-χa-rk'-wə-m
1PL 1PL.ABS-NEG.EMP-LOC-work-CNT-IPF-NEG
'We are no longer working.' / 'We are not working yet.'
- ❑ the positive NO LONGER is a repetitive marker
- (5) a-k'a řa-k'a-χ-wə-n
DEF-rain DIR-rain-RE-IPF-PST
'It was raining again.'
- ❑ the positive NOT YET is prohibited
- (6) a. sara macaw-ra s-g'-a-la-m-ga-s-ɬ
1SG cook-MSD SG.ABS-NEG.EMP-3N.IO-LOC-NEG-start-NONDUM-DCL
'I haven't started cooking yet.'
- b. *sara macaw-ra s-a-la-ga-s-ɬ
1SG cook-MSD SG.ABS-3N.IO-LOC-start-NONDUM-DCL

Discussion

- ❑ Morphologically oriented (particularly, polysynthetic) languages tend to express adverbial meanings by affixes. Does it mean that these markers are grammatical?

❖ **A case of ALREADY**

Grammatical ALREADY = lamitive (Olsson 2013). Grammaticalization is clear from high frequency (Dahl & Wälchli 2016), cf. natural process (7) and experiential (8) contexts, not typical for lexical ALREADY.

- (7) [A: Your brother is very nice.]
B: mamaw, awəj d-b-q-ra-štəl. awəj d-řa-j-g-χ'a-ɬ
no DIST 3H.ABS-2F.IO-LOC-CAUS-forget DIST 3H.ABS-DIR-3M.ERG-marry-IAM-DCL
'No, forget about him. He is married.'
- (8) ananas karazən j-b-fa-χ'a-ma?
pineapple ever 3N.ABS-2F.ERG-eat-IAM-Q
'Have you ever eaten pineapples?'

To sum up,

- ❑ -χ'a is apparently a lamitive marker,
- ❑ -s seems to be a negative Perfect marker, though more semantic analysis is needed.

What about grammaticalization of STILL and NO LONGER in Abaza?

Conclusion

- ❑ The set of PhP affixes in Abaza is closely connected with TAM
 - ❑ morphologically the suffix -s NOT YET is incorporated into the TAM system
 - ❑ suffix -χ'a ALREADY covers some meanings associated with the perfect domain
- ❑ PhP affixes in Abaza are not organized into an autonomous system related via negation, instead most affixes constitute a part of a broader class of markers — event operators with typical adverbial meanings
 - ❑ the positive counterpart of NO LONGER is a repetitive marker

This poses questions regarding the possibility of clear distinction of phasal polarity from related categories in Abaza.

Abbreviations

1 — 1st person; 2 — 2nd person; 3 — 3rd person; ABS — absolutive; CAUS — causative; DCL — declarative; DEF — definite; DIR — directional preverb; DIST — distal demonstrative; EMP — emphatic; ERG — ergative; CNT — continuative; F — feminine; H — human; IAM — iamitive; IO — indirect object; IPF — imperfective; LOC — locative preverb; M — masculine; MSD — masdar; N — neuter; NEG — negation; NFIN — non-finite; NONDUM — 'not yet' marker; NPST — nonpast; PL — plural; PRS — present; PST — past; Q — question; RE — repetitive; REL — relativization; SG — singular.

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