

The Abaza Masdar:
One marker, four strategies

Abaza

- Polysynthetic language
- Abkhaz-Adyghe group (the closest one is Abkhaz)
- Rich system of verbal TAM suffixes
- Prefixal marking of participants

Complementation strategies in Abaza

- Relative tense forms
- Purposive forms
- Forms with the marker of manner and factive relativization
- The citation marker $-h^w a$
- **Masdar**

Masdar in Abaza

- One specialized marker of nominalization: the suffix *-ra*
- .

Types of masdars

- No personal prefixes, no definiteness marking
- No personal prefixes, definiteness is marking
- Possessive personal prefixes
- 'Verbal' / 'argument' personal prefixes

Example: masdar with no personal / definiteness markers

- and^wǎ š'ardaná r-pnə našǎl-ra (*jə)-l-taqǎ-ṗ.
- grandmother often 3PL.IO-at come-MSD 3N.ABS-3F.IO-want-DCL
- 'The grandmother wants the relatives to visit her often.'

Example: masdar with definiteness marking

- and^wǎ š'ardaná r-pnə a-našǎl-ra (*jə)-l-
taqǎ-p.
- grandmother often 3PL.IO-at DEF-come-MSD 3N.ABS-
3F.IO-want-DCL
- 'The grandmother wants that someone visit them often.'

Example: masdar with argument marking

- And^wé š'ardaná r-pnə d-našəl-ra
- granny often 3PL.PP-to 3M .ABS-come-MSD
- 'The granny wants to visit them often.'

***d-* marks 3SG.F/M.ABS in the argument series.**

Examples: masdar with possessive marker

- Azamát r-pnə j-ʕájχ-ra d-aj-g^wərg'əj-ṭ.
- Azamat 3PL.IO-at 3M .IO-come-MSD 3M .ABS-be.glad-DCL
- 'Azamat is glad that he has come home.'

***j-* marks 3SG.M.ABS in the possessive series.**

Typology of nominalization

- Semantic: result / process / state / various modifications of process nominalizations (e.g., *discussion* ‘one definite discussion’ vs. *discussion* ‘the process of discussion as such’);
- Syntactic: degree of affinity to the verb / predicate vs. to the NP.
 - Complex event nominals with obligatory argument structure
 - Simple event nominals as generalizations of the action (e.g., *nominalization* ‘the process of nominalization, it is not important of what’)
 - Result nominals (closest to NPs). No argument structure. The result of action, either physical (*examination* ‘the paper with the results of examination’) or abstract (*discovery* ‘the content that someone discovered’).

Syntactic factor

- The explicit expression of the argument makes

• And^{wə} Azamát r-pnə j-ʕájχ-ra / *ʕájχ-ra

• granny Azamat 3PL.IO-at 3M.IO-come-MSD / *come-MSD

d-aj-g^{wə}rg'əj-ʔ.

3F.ABS-be.glad-DCL

- 'The granny is glad that Azamat has come home.'

Matrix verb agreement

- and^{wə} š'ardanə r-pnə j-našəl-ra
 - grandmother often 3PL.IO-at 3PL.ABS-come-MSD
- *(jə)-l-taqə-p.

3N.ABS-3F.IO-want-DCL

- 'The grandmother wants the relatives to visit her often.'

(43) and^{wə} š'ardanə r-pnə a-našəl-ra

 grandmother often 3PL.IO-at DEF-come-MSD

(*jə)-l-taqə-p.

3N.ABS-3F.IO-want-DCL

- 'The grandmother wants that someone visit them often.'

Under the most 'verbal' masdar type (= with the argument pattern), the matrix verb tends to agree with the subject. Under the non-verbal type (= with the definiteness marking), the subject does not control matrix verb agreement.

Synonymy of the argument vs. possessive type

- Aph^wéspa d-ɣáj-ra / l-ɣáj-ra a-taqé-n.
- girl 3F.ABS-come-MSD 3F.IO-come-MSD 3N.IO-must-PST
- ‘The girl had to come.’

Adverbials as nominalization type markers

- With adverbials, the ‘verbal’ (argument) marking is preferred over the possessive one:

aph ^w əspa	lasə / lasəta	d-ʕaj-ra	/*l-ʕaj-ra
girl	quickly	3F.ABS-come-MSD	3F.IO-come-MSD

a-taqə-n.

3N.IO-must-PST

‘It was necessary for the girl to come quickly / soon’.

Abaza and typology of nominalization

- Complex event nouns tend to be incompatible with definiteness marking. Result nouns are compatible with them.
- Complex event nouns are more compatible with argument marking than result nouns.

Conslusions

- The four masdar types in Abaza are not freely distributed.
- However, several factors are responsible for their use.
- The situation in Abaza is unusual in that it combines features of two systems:
 - The system of situation nouns is not reach (the canonical situation in Abkhaz-Adyghe languages);
 - However, the relevant features of the situation allows the speakers to vary the agreement patterns.

Conclusions: relevant factors

- Control (obligatory vs. non-obligatory);
- Prospective vs. retrospective orientation;
- The dynamic vs. static features of nominalization;