

Accessive/decessive polysemy of Adyghe benefactive-like derivations

Introductory

Adyghe is a polysynthetic language of West Caucasian family (Adyghe brach). Some characteristic features:

- a lot of relations can be expressed into the verbal form
- a system of slots for derivational markers (see in detail Smeets 1984);
- each derivational marker (except causative) is attached together with the correspondent object marker, cf. *w-a-de-s-fa-k_we* 2SG.S-3PL.IO-COMIT-1SG.IO-BEN-go ‘You go with them for me’, where the comitative marker immediately follows the marker of the comitative object *a-* and the benefactive marker follows the marker of the benefactive object *s-*;
- **important:** Adyghe is almost exclusively a transitivizing language in terms of (Nichols et al. 2004).
 - A lot of increasing derivations: causative, benefactive, malefactive, comitative, locative derivations, and so on;
 - No productive marker of decreasing derivations: anticausative is marked with the reflexive marker *ze-* for a small group of verbs; antipassive is marked with change of the stem vowel, also for a few verbs.

We analyze one of means of marking decreasing derivations in an increasing language.

Decreasing uses of increasing markers

In (Rogava, Kerasheva 1966), a number of decreasing uses of derivational markers is listed. We cite them in Table 1, both from (Rogava, Kerasheva 1966) and from our field data:

Derivational marker	“Increasing” meaning	“Decreasing” meaning
<i>fe-</i>	benefactive	possibilitive
<i>š_we-</i>	malefactive	‘accidentally’
<i>ʔeč^ʔe-</i>	‘unexpectedly’	‘accidentally’

In our talk, we address several questions:

- Why these and not other markers acquire decreasing uses?
- How do they behave in these uses with different verb classes?
- Why in general does Adyghe use accessive/decessive polysemy so broadly?

Increasing uses: normal constructions

To examine our questions, we must first show how the increasing uses act. In (1a) the verb ‘to buy’ is bivalent: it has an ergative agent, cross-referenced by the prefix *s-* and an absolutive patient, which is marked by the plural suffix *-x* on the verb. An addressee can be expressed by a *paje* postpositional phrase, which is not cross-referenced in the verb:

(1) a. *se* *txəλ-xe-r* (*we-š^ʔ* *paje*) *qə-s-š^ʔefə-ʔe-x*
 I book-PL-ABS you-ERG for DIR-1SG.AG-buy-PST-PL
 ‘I bought books (for you)’.

In (1b), the benefactive derivation adds the addressee argument to the valency of the verb, which now is trivalent. The addressee is an indirect object, also marked with ergative and cross-referenced by the prefix *p-*:

b. *se* ***we¹*** *txəλ-xe-r* *qə-p-fe-s-š^ʔefə-ʔe-x*
 I you(ERG) book-PL-ABS DIR-2SG.IO-BEN-1SG.AG-buy-PST-PL
 ‘I bought books for you’.

The same mechanism acts for other benefactive-like derivations, which add an indirect object.

¹ Personal pronouns have different ergative forms in postpositional phrases (*-š^ʔ*) vs. in all other cases (unmarked form). This fact is outside the scope of our paper.

Several benefactive-like derivations can combine in the verb form; the only restriction is that the same marker cannot repeat in the increasing use: forms like *qə-p-f-a-fe-š'efə-ɛ* ('I bought it for them and (make it) for you') with two benefactive markers are impossible. It can result from the prohibition for doubling semantic roles.

Usually locative prefixes are situated before bene- and malefactive ones – however, these two classes cannot be strictly distinguished, since non-locative markers historically go back to locative ones.

Increasing uses: constructions with a prepositional phrase

However, in Abdzakh dialect of Adyghe benefactive phrases show a peculiar option, which is not cited in (Kumakhov 1964), (Rogava, Kerasheva 1966) and (Zekox 2002). Even if the benefactive marker is applied and the addressee is cross-referenced in the verb, **the benefactive NP** can be modified by a postposition:

- (2) se *s-šə* *paje* txəλ qə-Ø-fe-ʔə-s-xə-ɛ bibliotek-əm
 I 1SG-brother for book DIR-3SG.IO-BEN-LOC-1SG.A-take-PST library-OBL
 'I took a book from the library for my brother'.

Examples like (2) obviously contradict to "usual" rules of benefactive constructions: usually, if the verb contains a derivational prefix, the corresponding nominal phrase must get an argument (i.e. ergative) marking.

Two possible hypotheses:

- the postpositional phrase controls the 3SG.IO prefix;
- the postpositional phrase does not control the 3SG.IO prefix

BUT: if the first is true, why is not (3) possible:

- (3) se *s-šə* *paje* txəλ qə-we-ʔə-s-xə-ɛ bibliotek-əm
 I 1SG-brother for book DIR-2SG.IO-LOC-1SG.A-take-PST library-OBL
 'I took a book from the library for my brother'.

Indeed, if PPs can control agreement markers, why do we need derivational markers?

The second hypothesis is conform to the pronominal argument theory (see Jelinek 1995, Baker 1986): **the argument NPs and PPs are not really arguments and don't "control" agreement markers. The morphological markers and the argument noun phrases are rather autonomous from each other.**

Benefactive derivation operates **argument markers inside the verb** and not argument markers. We can present (1b) and (2) in the following way:

- (1b) I took a book (for the brother) brother-ERG buy DIR-3SG.IO-BEN-LOC-1SG.A-take-PST
 (2) I took a book for the brother (brother-ERG) buy DIR-3SG.IO-BEN-LOC-1SG.A-take-PST

Usually we suppose that benefactive-like derivations eliminate the initial peripheral nominal phrase. In Adyghe, the derivation only **adds** a new argument (and a new ergative phrase) to the valency of verbs.

Decreasing uses

1. Examples of decreasing uses

(3) exemplifies the decreasing use of the benefactive marker:

- (3) a. č'ale-xe-m bukva-xe-r a-λeɁ_wə-re-p
 boy-PL-ERG letter-PL-ABS 3SG.AG-see-DYN-NEG
 'The boys do not see letters'
 b. čale-xe-m bukva-xe-r a-fe-λeɁ_wə-re-p
 boy-PL-ERG letter-PL-ABS 3SG.IO-BEN-see-DYN-NEG
 'The boy cannot see letters'.

In (3b) a new argument do not introduced: the verb still has two arguments, the agent and the patient. Moreover, the verb ceases to be transitive. For example, the initial verb *λeɁ_wən* 'see', which is transitive, takes the "transitive" reciprocal prefix *zere-*, whereas the potential derivatives can only take the "intransitive" variant *ze/zə-*:

- (4) a-xe-r **zere**-λeκ_wə-xe-r-ep
 he-PL-ABS REC-see-PL-DYN-NEG
 ‘They don’t see each other’.
- (5) a-xe-r **ze**-fe-λeκ_wə-xe-r-ep
 he-PL-ABS REC-BEN-see-PL-DYN-NEG
 ‘They cannot see each other’.

Note that the situation with the inadvertitive derivatives is somewhat more complex: they can both take *zere*- and *ze*-:

- (6) aməʃaxew ʔeç'e-**zere**-wəç'a-ke-x
 accidentally INADV-REC-kill.AP-PST-PL
 ‘They killed each other accidentally’.²
- (7) ç'ale-xe-m **z(e)**-a-ʔeç'e-wəʔe-ž'ə-κ
 boy-PL-ERG REC-3SG(IO)-INADV-wound-RFC-PST
 ‘The boys wounded each other accidentally’;

However, the number of arguments do not change. The same is true for decreasing uses of other derivations:

- (8) šofjorə-m cʔəfə-r Ø-ŝ_we-wəç-əκ
 driver-ERG person-ABS 3SG.IO-MAL-kill-PST
 ‘The car driver killed a man accidentally’.
- (9) se səməʃaxew s-jə-š'eweκ_wə-xe-r s-ʔeç'e-wəʔa-ke-x
 I accidentally 1SG-POSS-friend-ABS 1SG.IO-INADV-wound-PST-PL
 ‘I wounded my friend accidentally’.

As we can see, in (7) the verb form contains the plural absolutive marker *-x*, and the indirect object marker *s-*, which show that it has two arguments, just as the base verb ‘wound’.

2. Syntactic restrictions

A strange property of decreasing uses: **compatible only with transitive verbs**:

- (10) *a-š' Ø-fe-κwe-re-p
 HE-ERG 3SG.IO-BEN-GO-DYN-NEG
 ‘He cannot go’;
- (11) *se we wə-s-ʔeç'e-wənç'a-κ
 I(ERG) you 2SG.S-1SG.IO-BEN-push-PST
 ‘You pushed me (unexpectedly for me)’.

In fact, potential is **the main test for distinguishing between transitive and intransitive verbs** (which is rather unusual for modal categories). However, nothing in semantics of potential or inadvertitive prevents them from modifying intransitive verbs (cf. (10) and (11), which are semantically perfect).

On the other hand, non-agentive events are compatible with the potential marker (which is not very usual, since potential meaning is related to agentivity):

- (12) čəxə-r maŝ_we-m Ø-fe-ke-stə-š't-ep
 tree-ABS fire-ERG 3SG.IO-BEN-CAUS-burn-FUT-NEG
 ‘The fire will not be able to burn this tree’.

The situation with inadvertitive is not the same: inadvertitives are incompatible with patientive events because of semantic restrictions.

Does the transitivity restriction result from properties of the increasing uses?

(Shibatani 1996), (Peterson 2007): applicatives and benefactives modify primarily transitive verbs (whereas causatives modify primarily intransitive verbs): in some languages these two meanings are expressed by the same marker, but with different groups of verbs.

² Another intriguing fact is that the inadvertitive marker *ʔeç'e-* with some verbs uses the intransitive (antipassive) verb stem, like *-wəç'a-* in (7) which does not exist independently for verbs like ‘kill’.

In Adyghe, benefactives, malefactive and inadvertitives in their increasing uses can modify both transitive and intransitive verbs:

- (13) se lə-r fe-s-š'əḅwə-ḅ → se a-š' lə-r Ø-fe-s-š'əḅwə-ḅ
 I(ERG) meat-ABS BEN-1SG.A-salt-PST I(ERG) he-ERG meat-ABS 3SG.IO-BEN-1SG.A-salt-PST
 'I salted meat' 'I salted meat for him'.
- (14) se s-e-k_we → se a-š' s-Ø-fa-k_we
 I(ABS) 1SG.S-DYN-go I(ABS) he-ERG 1SG.S-3SG.IO-BEN-go
 'I go' 'I go for him/instead of him/to him'

The sole explanation can be given in syntactic terms: valency derivations in Adyghe can make only a limited set of operations:

Possible operations:

- absolutive argument of two-place verb is eliminated; the base agent is marked with absolutive (antipassive; A-lability)
- ergative argument is eliminated (resultative; P-lability)
- ergative agent turns into ergative indirect object (decreasing derivations)
- new ergative argument is added (benefactive-like derivations)

Impossible operations:

- *new absolutive argument is added (no canonical applicative in Adyghe)
- *absolutive argument turns into an ergative argument; the ergative argument turns into an absolutive argument (no decreasing derivations from bivalent intransitive verbs)
- *absolutive argument is eliminated, the verb has no absolutive argument (no decreasing derivations from monovalent verbs)

In general, almost all operations with absolutives are prohibited (except antipassivization, which does not really eliminates the semantic argument).

If potential modified monovalent intransitive verbs, the derived verb would not have an absolutive argument.

- (15) *č'ale-m Ø-fa-k_we
 boy-ERG 3SG.IO-BEN-go
 'The boy can go'.

The situation with intransitive bivalent verbs like *bewən* 'kiss' and *wənč'en* 'push' is more complex:

- (16) č'ale-r pšaše-m j-e-wənč'a-ḅ
 boy-ABS girl-ERG 3SG.IO-DYN-push-PST
 'The boy pushed the girl'.

- (17) (=11) *se we wə-s-?eč'e-wənč'a-ḅ
 I(ERG) you 2SG.S-1SG.IO-BEN-push-PST
 'You pushed me (unexpectedly for me)'.

In fact if this group of verbs took the potential marker, this wouldn't be prohibited by Adyghe grammar, cf. antipassives:

- (18) se psə-r jə-s-š_wə-ḅ
 I water-ABS LOC-1SG.AG-drink-PST
 'I drank the water up';
- (19) se psə-m s-jə-š_wa-ḅ
 I water-ABS 1SG.S-LOC-drink.AP-PST
 'I drank the water' (maybe a part).

However, antipassive is prototypically monovalent (most verbs cannot take the second argument in the antipassive form). For two verbs which admit bivalent pattern (*š_wen* 'drink' and *ježen* 'read') this is not a grammatical process proper, therefore, it can violate the rules.

Sources of decreasing uses

Increasing uses of **benefactive** marker:

- goal (14)
- addressee
- benefactive (13)
- external possessor
- stimulus
- “instead” (14)
- “dativus ethicus”³:

(20) se s-**fe**-čəje-re-p

I 1SG.IO-**BEN**-sleep-DYN-NEG

‘He does not sleep’ (although I am trying to make him sleep);

(21) s.jane x’adedem pçe qə-wə-s-jə-**ke**-xə, aw se qə-**fe**-wə-s-xə-re-p

1SG.mother now door DIR-LOC-1SG-3SG-CAUS-open but I DIR-**BEN**-LOC-1SG.AG-open-DYN-NEG

‘My mother causes/asks me to open the door, but I do not open it’ (literally: ‘for her’).

The possible sources for the potential use can be benefactive proper or “dativus ethicus”:

(i) **Benefactive/“dativus ethicus”** → **decreasing of the status of agent ‘for me I do not write’**
→ **potential.**

The situation with malefactive and inadvertitive is much simpler:

Meanings of the **malefactive** marker:

- locative (synchronically very far from malefactive)
- malefactive
- experiencer

(22) se a-š’ j-ə-š’aj s-jə-š_we-š_wa-**κ**

I (s)he-ERG 3SG-POSS-tea 1SG.SO-3SG.IO-MAL-drink-PST

‘I drink his tea (to his spite)’ (malefactive).

(23) a-š’ š_we-kən sumkə-r hən-ew

(s)he-ERG MAL-heavy bag-ABS carry-CONV

‘This bag is too heavy for him’ (lit. ‘To carry the bag is heavy for him’, experiencer).

The rare meaning ‘accidentally’ can result from the malefactive meaning:

(ii) **Malefactive** → **“reflexive malefactive”**: **in spite of the agent** → **unvolitionally**

Inadvertitive has only the meaning ‘unexpectedly’:

(24) s-jə-kompjuter Ø-s-ʔeč’_e-k_wesa-**κ**

1SG-POSS-computer 3SG.S-1SG(IO)-INADV-die.out-PST

‘My computer switched off unexpectedly for me’.

This meaning is in fact much more rare than the inadvertitive one. The decreasing use comes just from “reflexivization” of the increasing one:

(iii) **‘my computer switched off unexpectedly for me’** → **‘I wounded my friend unexpectedly for me (i.e. ‘accidentally’)**.

Cf. the common property of three semantic paths:

decreasing uses are “unmarked reflexives” from increasing ones.

In fact this explains occurrence of decreasing derivations in an (almost) exclusively increasing languages: they do not in fact increase the valency or transitivity of the verb.

Adyghe and typology of accessive/decessive polysemy

In (Nedjalkov 2001), (Galiamina 2001) the notion of accessive/decessive polysemy applies primarily to passive/causative polysemy, see Khakas (my field data):

³ This list is rather similar to the list of meanings of Svan version, cited in Bergelson 1998.

(25) *ajdo xaryndaz-y-na porčo-ny sap-t(ə)r-š'a*
 Ajdo brother-3SG-DAT Porcho-ACC beat-CAUS-PRS
 'Ajdo lets his brother beat Porcho';

(26) *ol sap-t(ə)r-š'a*
 (s)he beat-CAUS-PRS
 'He is being beaten'.

In Adyghe, other types of polysemy are attested. Note, however, that the same mechanism of re-analysis of markers is used:

- 1) increasing derivation ('I made Ajdo beat Porcho'; 'They eat all my apples **unexpectedly for me**');
- 2) "reflexive" increasing derivation: the new argument is co-referent to one of the base arguments ('I_i made/let Ajdo beat me_i'; 'I_i eat all apples unexpectedly for me_i');
- 3) transitivity decrease: one of the co-referent arguments is eliminated ('I was beaten by Ajdo'; 'I eat all apples unvolitionally').

On the other hand, the nature of decreasing derivations is different:

- in Turkic languages the last stage (3) is purely syntactic derivation (passive);
- in Adyghe, the last stage is semantically-relevant processes (modal meanings; features of the participant), which do not necessarily affect syntactic transitivity.

Another parallel is polysemy of indirect object markers:

Russian: **dative case** marks benefactive and "decreased subjects":

(27) *Ja otkry-l starik-u dver'-Ø.*
 I.NOM open-PST.M old.man-DAT door-ACC
 'I opened the door for/to the old man';

(28) *Mne ne spi-t-sja.*
 I.DAT not sleep-3SG-REFL

'I cannot sleep' (literally 'It does not sleep to me') (← the base verb *spat* 'sleep' with a nominative subject).

(Some) Turkic languages: **dative case** marks benefactive, addressee etc. and the agent in passive constructions.

Possible explanation: dative case is the form of the argument, which is neither the prototypical patient, nor the prototypical agent.

Summary

In Adyghe, we observe accessive/decessive polysemy of benefactive-like derivations. This polysemy is much like canonical causative/passive polysemy in that it uses the unmarked **reflexive derivation** on the middle stage of re-analysis.

Note that for this language accessive/decessive polysemy is almost the sole means to decrease the valency of the verb.

Adyghe case is interesting, since it shows that types of derivations reflect more general restrictions which can be observed in the language. These restrictions can lead to "strange" rules of derivation (i.e., compatibility only with transitive verbs).

Finally, it is unusual that only benefactive-like derivations show this type of polysemy. This must be related to more general properties of indirect object in the languages of the world.

This presupposes two possible directions of research:

- non-canonical accessive/decessive polysemy
- syntactic restrictions on derivations, which are not motivated semantically
- non-verbal phenomena, parallel to accessive/decessive polysemy (cf. uses of dative)

Abbreviations

ABS – absolutive	ACC – accusative
AG – agent	BEN – benefactive
DAT – dative	DIR – directional marker
DYN – marker of dynamic verb	ERG – ergative
FUT – future tense	LOC – locative prefix
INADV – inadvertitive	IO – indirect object
MAL – malefactive	PL – plural
POSS – alienable possessive marker	PRS – present tense
PST – past tense	S – subject of an intransitive verb
SG – singular	1,2,3 – first, second, third person

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