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DERIVATIONAL VERBAL SUFFIXES IN ABAZA²

This paper describes a group of derivational verbal suffixes in Abaza, a polysynthetic language belonging to the Northwest Caucasian family. For each suffix I propose a short description of its most remarkable features. In particular, I discuss the polysemy of the refractive and assertive markers and their interaction with the event structure of the verb. Other suffixes such as the putative and inferential markers are interesting due to their peculiar morphological behavior. The diversity of the discussed affixes is tentatively explained by the different pathways of their morphological and semantic development.

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1. Introduction

This paper deals with a group of derivational verbal suffixes in Abaza (< Northwest Caucasian languages) which in reference grammars are traditionally called “particle-affixes” (Tabulova 1976: 204-215). The morphological status of these suffixes is not always clear because of the inner diversity in the degree of grammaticalization, and their semantic range can vary widely – from aspect and evidentiality to intensity and even quite narrow meanings such as ‘unfortunately’. Although it is not easy to unite all these suffixes in a single category, in this paper I consider them together as a group of morphemes located in the verb form between the root and the markers of tense.

Below I will discuss some of the most frequent “particle-affixes” in Abaza: reflexive affixes $-\chi$ and *ata-* ‘again,’ markers of verbal plurality *-la* and *-zapət*, the continuative marker *-rk^wa*, the suffix *-za-* with meanings of intensity, completion and assertion, the suffix-like element *-zəš’a* ‘seem, suppose’, the inferential marker *-za* and finally two suffixes with the semantics of compassion *-məf^wa* and *-g^wəš’a*.

2. Reflexive (‘again’)

The meaning of reflexive is a single repetition of the situation denoted by the predicate (‘again’, ‘once more’, etc.). Thus, reflexive markers function as triggers of presupposition: they add the presupposition that “the event was preceded by a similar event” to the assertion expressed by the predicate (Stoynova 2013: 1).

Most descriptions of Abaza mention two affixes which express the meaning of repetition: the prefix *ata-* and the suffix $-\chi$ (Tabulova 1976: 205; Lomtadze 2006: 152; Chkadua 1970: 276). The prefix *ata-* almost always appears only in combination with $-\chi$ (1b), while the suffix $-\chi$ can also be used independently (1c).

- (1) a. *a-š* *p-čə-t*
DEF-door LOC-break-DCL
‘The door broke.’
- b. *a-š* *j-ata-p-č-χ-t* / **j-ata-pč-t*
DEF-door 3SG.N.ABS-RE.EMP-LOC-break-RE-DCL
‘The door broke again.’
- c. *a-š* *j-p-čə-χ-t*
DEF-door 3SG.N.ABS-LOC-break-RE-DCL
‘The door broke again.’

Below I will consider the suffix $-\chi$ and the combination $ata-+\chi$ as two different reflexive markers.

2.1 Reflexive $-\chi$

The main property of the reflexive $-\chi$ is that it acquires various meanings depending on the semantics of the verb it combines with. Below, in order to identify particular functions of the Abaza reflexive, I employ the semantic classification proposed by Stojnova (2013) supplemented by the event-structure based account of Klein (2018).

Motion verbs with $-\chi$ show regular reditive/completive polysemy. The **reditive** meaning (‘return to the starting point’) is usually included in the reflexive semantic zone (Stojnova 2013) while the **completive** (‘finish’), is not. Nevertheless, both meanings can be accounted for under the view that only one part of the event structure (or one time variable in terms (Klein 2018)) may fall in the scope of the reflexive marker: the process of motion or the resulting state. Repetition of being in motion gives the completive meaning, repetition of being in a certain location yields a reditive meaning, cf. (2b).

- (2) a. *a-š'tanĉ daĉa ʕwara j-ta-l-t*
 DEF-snake other hole 3SG.N.ABS-LOC-crawl-DCL
 ‘The snake crawled into another hole.’
- b. *a-š'tanĉ a-ʕwara j-ta-l-χ-t*
 DEF-snake 3N.IO-hole 3SG.N.ABS-LOC-crawl-RE-DCL
 i. ‘The snake returned to its hole.’
 ii. ‘The snake finished crawling to its hole.’

With verbs of speech and transaction the reflexive marker has the **responsive** meaning (‘response to a similar action’) (3), which can be described as a repetition of the event with participants’ roles reversed. This subtype of the reflexive meaning can be seen as presupposing a previous situation of the same type but without a fixed linking between argument roles and referents.

- (3) a. *awəj a-hʷrapšza ʕa-sə-j-t-t*
 DIST DEF-flower DIR-1SG.IO-3SG.M.ERG-give-DCL
 ‘He gave me the flower.’
- b. *awəj a-hʷrapšza jə-s-t-χ-t*
 DIST DEF-flower 3SG.M.IO-1SG.ERG-give-RE-DCL
 ‘I returned the flower to him.’

The last remarkable group is change-of-state verbs, where the suffix $-\chi$ contributes the **restitutive** meaning (repetition of an earlier state). Many change-of-state verbs with the suffix $-\chi$ are lexicalized and do not occur without the refractive marker, see (4)-(5).

(4) *a-č'kʷən d-bzəj-χa-χ-ʔ / ʔd-bzəj-χa-ʔ*
 DEF-boy 3SG.H.ABS-good-INC-ʔ(RE)-DCL
 'The boy recovered.'

(5) *awəj d-ʕa-bzagəl-χ-ʔ / ʔd-ʕa-bzagəl-ʔ*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-revive-ʔ(RE)-DCL
 'He was resurrected.'

Perhaps the most widespread subtype of the refractive – the **repetitive** ('do one more time') – was illustrated in (1) above, and this meaning can apply to almost all verbs regardless of their semantics.

There are some frequent uses of the suffix $-\chi$ in combination with other elements whose semantic links to the refractive proper are not immediately clear. First, the suffix $-\chi$ with negation markers does not form a negative refractive ('not (again P)'), but a negative continuative ('not (still P)') – 'no more', 'no longer' (6).

(6) a. *sara apχ'arta s-g'-a-pχ'-wə-m*
 I DEF.school 1SG.ABS-NEG.EMP-3N.IO-study-IPF-NEG
 'I do not study at school.'

b. *sara apχ'arta s-g'-a-pχ'a-χ-wa-m*
 I DEF.school 1SG.ABS-NEG.EMP-3N.IO-study-RE-IPF-NEG
 'I no longer study at school.'

Second, the suffix $-\chi$ often appears in combination with reflexive (7) and reciprocal (8) markers, but in both cases it lacks its own semantics, i.e. does not presuppose a previous situation of the same type. Examples below illustrate the absence of any contrast between the semantics of verbs with and without $-\chi$ in such contexts.

(7) *awəj l-qa j-a-l-hʷ-χ-ʔ / j-a-l-hʷ-ʔ*
 DIST 3F.IO-head 3SG.N.IO-DAT-3SG.F.ERG-say-(RE)-DCL
 'she told herself'

(8) *awat j-aba-qa-štəl-χ-ʔ / j-aba-qa-štəl-ʔ*
 DIST.PL 3PL.ABS-REC.IO-LOC-forget-(RE)-DCL
 'They forgot each other.'

The use of the refractive suffix in reflexive and reciprocal contexts can be explained diachronically. Both reflexive and reciprocal metaphorically denote an action directed ‘backwards’ at its participant, which recalls the reditive meaning. According to Stoynova (2013: 76), reditive is the most common origin for the development of other refractive meanings, therefore some of the uses of the reditive $-\chi$ could be partly bleached semantically.

2.2 Refractive *ata-+-χ*

The only meaning of the combination *ata-+-χ* is **repetitive**, i.e. exact repetition of the entire event (9).

- (9) a. *aʒbert a-tawp j-a-wə-j-š't-t*
 Albert DEF-ball 3SG.N.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC-3SG.M.ERG-throw-DCL
 ‘Albert threw the ball.’
- b. *aʒbert a-tawp j-at-a-wə-j-š't-χ-t*
 Albert DEF-ball 3SG.N.ABS-**RE.EMP**-3SG.N.IO-LOC-3SG.M.ERG-throw-**RE**-DCL
 ‘Albert threw the ball again.’

Most notably, if the verb’s event structure comprises more than one time variable, *ata-+-χ* yields the repetitive meaning and at the same time it preserves one of the subtypes of the refractive within the scope of the repetitive meaning. Thus, in (10c) the reditive meaning of the refractive marker $-\chi$ - (10b) can fall within the scope of the repetitive meaning of the *ata-+-χ*, even though $-\chi$ - occurs only once.

- (10) a. *mwəhamad jə-g^wla-ĉa r-pnə d-ʕa-j-t*
 Muhamed 3SG.M.IO-neighbor-PL.H 3PL.IO-at 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-DCL
 ‘Muhamed came to his neighbors.’
- b. *mwəhamad jə-g^wla-ĉa r-pnə d-ʕa-j-χ-t*
 Muhamed 3SG.M.IO-neighbor-PL.H 3PL.IO-at 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-**RE**-DCL
 ‘Muhamed returned to his neighbors.’ (reditive)
- c. *mwəhamad jə-g^wla-ĉa r-pnə*
 Muhamed 3SG.M.IO-neighbor-PL.H 3PL.IO-at
d-ata-ʕa-j-χ-t
 3SG.H.ABS-**RE.EMP**-DIR-go-**RE**-DCL
 i. ‘Muhamed came to his neighbors again.’ (pure repetitive)
 ii. ‘Muhamed returned to his neighbors again.’ (reditive + repetitive)

Thus, the main difference between the two reflexive markers in Abaza is that the marker $-\chi$ “sees” the internal structure of an event and can have scope over any part of it (just the resultant state, or just the process, with or without arguments), while the marker *ata-+- χ* is “blind” to the internal structure of the situation and can only “copy” the whole event with its arguments.

3. Markers of verbal plurality

There are two markers of verbal plurality – habitual *-la* and frequentative *-zapət*, cf. (11).

- (11) a. *sara s-aχš'a l-pnə s-c-əj-d*
 I 1SG.IO-sister 3F.IO-at 1SG.ABS-go-PRS-DCL
 ‘I go to my sister.’
- b. *sara s-aχš'a l-pnə*
 I 1SG.IO-sister 3F.IO-at
s-ca-zapət-əj-d / s-ca-l-əj-d
 1SG.ABS-go-FREQ-PRS-DCL / 1SG.ABS-go-HAB-PRS-DCL
 ‘I often go to my sister.’

The two suffixes can occur together within a single wordform, and our consultants easily rearrange the suffixes without any tangible semantic contrast.

- (12) *aza a-qəš d-kə-l-pš-zapət-l-əj-t /*
 Aza DEF-window 3SG.H.ABS-LOC-LOC-look-FREQ-HAB-PRS-DCL /
d-kə-l-pš-la-zapət-əj-t
 3SG.H.ABS-LOC-LOC-look-HAB-FREQ-PRS-DCL
 ‘Aza often looks out of the window.’

3.1 Habitual *-la*

Since the suffix *-la* is used not only to express the regularity of occurrence of an event but also to present an iterative event as a characteristic of a participant, cf. (13), I consider *-la* to be a marker of habituality, rather than iterativity.

- (13) *s-aba a-pqa-la twətan*
 1SG.IO-father 3SG.N.IO-before-INS tobacco
š'arda j-ča-l-wə-n
 many 3SG.N.ABS+3SG.ERG-suck-HAB-IPF-PST
 ‘My father used to smoke a lot.’

Dynamic verbs admit the suffix *-la* only in imperfective tenses, cf. present (14a) and imperfect (14b).

- (14) a. *rasul sas-ra d-ca-l-əj-t*
 Rasul visit-MSD 3SG.H.ABS-go-**HAB**-PRS-DCL
 ‘Rasul visits (his friends).’
- b. *a-pqa rasul sas-ra d-ca-l-wə-n*
 3SG.N.IO-before Rasul visit-MSD 3SG.H.ABS-go-**HAB**-IPF-PST
 ‘Rasul used to visit (his friends) earlier.’

Adding the suffix *-la* to verbs in other aspectual forms leads to ungrammaticality, cf. aorist (15a) and iamitive (15b).

- (15) a. *rasul sas-ra d-ca-t / *d-ca-la-t*
 Rasul visit-MSD 3SG.H.ABS-go-DCL / 3SG.H.ABS-go-**HAB**-DCL
 ‘Rasul visited (his friends).’
- b. *rasul sas-ra d-ca-χ’a-t / *d-ca-la-χ’a-t*
 Rasul visit-MSD 3SG.H.ABS-go-IAM-DCL / 3SG.H.ABS-go-**HAB**-IAM-DCL
 ‘Rasul has already visited (his friends).’

Stative verbs do not allow the suffix *-la*, instead they express habituality with the suffix *-zla* which simultaneously transforms stative verbs to dynamic ones. Consider the dynamic temporal suffixes in (16b).

- (16) a. *a-č’kʷən=χʷəc a-čarta d-š’ta-p̣*
 DEF-boy=little DEF-bed 3SG.H.ABS-lie-NPST
 ‘The boy is lying on the bed.’
- b. *a-č’kʷən=χʷəc a-čarta*
 DEF-boy=little DEF-bed
*d-š’ta-zl-əj-t / *d-š’ta-la-p̣*
 3SG.H.ABS-lie-**DYN-PRS-DCL** / 3SG.H.ABS-lie-**HAB-NPST**
 ‘The boy often lies on the bed.’

3.2 Frequentative *-zapət*

The suffix *-zapət* means that the event is frequently repeated, cf. (17); therefore, I call it a frequentative, a subtype of iterative meaning.

- (17) *sara s-andwə twəɾəχ ʁa-s-a-l-h^w-zapət-wa-n*
 I 1SG.IO-grandmother legend DIR-1SG.IO-DAT-3SG.F.ERG-say-FREQ-IPF-PST
 ‘My grandmother used to tell me legends quite often.’

According to Tabulova (1976: 207), the suffix *-zapət* was borrowed from Circassian languages, where it is a morphologically complex verb meaning ‘be joined together’. In West Circassian *zepət* is orthographically presented as an independent word but in fact has almost grammaticalized into a suffix (see Kimmelman 2008): consider its interaction with the verb ‘run’ in (18), where the marker of the past tense appears on *-zapət* rather than on the lexical verb.

- (18) West Circassian (Kimmelman 2008)
a-xe-r se qə-s-č'e.rə-λede zepətə-Ɂe-(x)
 he-PL-ABS I DIR-1SG.IO-LOC-run constantly-PST(-PL)
 ‘(All evening) they had been running up to me.’

In Abaza some consultants still use *-zapət* independently as an adverb (19), but normally it is morphologically bound and occurs in the suffixal chain of the verbal complex.

- (19) *ʔfatima zapət l-andwə*
 Fatima often 3SG.F.IO-grandmother
l-pnə d-ca-l-wə-n
 3SG.F.IO-to 3SG.H.ABS-go-HAB-IPF-PST
 ‘Fatima often went to her grandmother.’

Interestingly, although the suffix *-zla* is not used with dynamic verbs (20b), its suffixation to *-zapət* in combination with dynamic verbs is possible (20c).

- (20) a. *a-č'k^wən=χ^wəc apχ'aga d-a-pχ'-əj-t*
 DEF-boy=little DEF.book 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-read-PRS-DCL
 ‘The boy reads a book.’
- b. **a-č'k^wən=χ^wəc apχ'aga d-a-pχ'a-zl-əj-t*
 DEF-boy=little DEF.book 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-read-DYN-PRS-DCL
- c. *a-č'k^wən=χ^wəc apχ'aga d-a-pχ'a-zapət-əj-t /*
 DEF-boy=little DEF.book 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-read-FREQ-PRS-DCL /
d-a-pχ'a-zapətə-zl-əj-t
 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-read-FREQ-DYN-PRS-DCL
 ‘The boy often reads a book.’

The possibility of such a combination can be interpreted as a lingering trace from the time when *-zapət* was a stative verb, which needed to be made dynamic by the addition of the marker *-zl(a)*.

4. Continuative *-rk^wa*

The suffix *-rk^wa*, which is glossed as continuative, roughly means ‘still’ and denotes that a situation continues and that its continuation may contradict the speaker’s expectations, thus belonging to the domain of phasal polarity (van Baar 1997).

- (21) *ahmad d-š-ʕa-mə-j-wa-š* *šə-r-h^wa-wa-g’əj*
 Ahmed 3SG.H.ABS-REL.MNR-DIR-NEG-go-IPF-FUT REL.MNR-3PL.ERG-say-IPF-ADD
sakinat a-qəš d-pšə-rk^w-əj-t
 Sakinat DEF-window 3SG.H.ABS-look-CNT-PRS-DCL
 ‘Though they say Ahmed will not come, Sakinat is still looking out the window.’

Similarly to the habitual, the continuative *-rk^wa* is used only in imperfective forms, see, for example, the present (22a) and the imperfect (22b). Other aspectual forms like the aorist (22c) and the iimitive (22d) do not allow the continuative marker.

- (22) a. *a-paχ’ k^wa ʕa-k^wa-rk^w-əj-t*
 DEF-yard rain DIR-rain-CNT-PRS-DCL
 ‘It is still raining outside.’
 b. *a-paχ’ k^wa ʕa-k^wa-rk^w-wə-n*
 DEF-yard rain DIR-rain-CNT-IPF-PST
 ‘It was still raining outside.’
 c. **a-paχ’ k^wa ʕa-k^wa-rk^wa-t*
 DEF-yard rain DIR-rain-CNT-DCL
 d. **a-paχ’ k^wa ʕa-k^wa-rk^wa-χ’a-t*
 DEF-yard rain DIR-rain-CNT-IAM-DCL

Unlike the habitual, the suffix *-rk^wa* does not need to be modified to be used with stative verbs; consider examples with the stative verb *pšʕa* ‘be beautiful’ in the present (23a) and the preterite (23b).

- (23) a. *awəj pšʕa-rk^wa-p*
 DIST beautiful-CNT-NPST
 ‘S/he is still beautiful.’

- b. *awəj pšʒa-rkʷa-n*
 DIST beautiful-CNT-NPST
 ‘S/he was still beautiful.’

According to Tabulova (1976: 206), the suffix *-rkʷa* originated as the existential verb *akʷ* ‘be’. Although the motivation of its phonological change is not clear, in one aspect *-rkʷa* still behaves as an independent verb: sometimes it is added to a non-finite verb form in the present tense (this fact was first noted in Genko 1955: 140). As shown in (24), the imperfective suffix *-wa* occurring in the present tense in the non-finite verbal paradigm can appear before *-rkʷa*; therefore, it modifies the verbal stem while the finite tense markers at the end of the verb modify *-rkʷa*.

- (24) *j-kka-wa-rkʷ-əj-t*
 3SG.N.ABS-shine-IPF-CNT-PRS-DCL
 ‘It still shines.’

Even more often we find the two occurrences of the imperfective *-wa* in the imperfect tense (25).

- (25) *awəj a-č’əmazafʷtara də-n-χa-wa-rkʷ-wə-n*
 DIST DEF-hospital 3SG.H.ABS-LOC-work-IPF-CNT-IPF-PST
 ‘He was still working in a hospital.’

In examples like (25) the first *-wa* can be considered a non-finite marker of the present tense while the second *-wa* is part of the imperfect tense marker.

5. Assertive *-ʒa*

The suffix *-ʒa* has several meanings. One of them is intensity (26b).

- (26) a. *awəj də-l-gʷapχa-t*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-3F.IO-like-DCL
 ‘She liked him.’
- b. *awəj də-l-gʷapχa-ʒa-t*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-3F.IO-like-ASS-DCL
 ‘She liked him very much.’

The other meaning of *-ʒa* is completeness: it indicates that the action has been carried out to completion.

- (27) a. *mwəhamad a-š j-tə-t*
 Muhamed DEF-door 3SG.M.ERG-open-DCL
 ‘Muhamed opened the door.’
- b. *mwəhamad a-š jə-t-ʒa-t*
 Muhamed DEF-door 3SG.M.ERG-open-ASS-DCL
 ‘Muhamed opened the door completely.’

The last meaning of *-ʒa* is the assertion of the truth of the proposition (‘really’, ‘indeed’). For example, (28b) is a possible way to assure someone who doubts that the boy is lying on the bed if one has double-checked and is sure that this is indeed the case.

- (28) a. *a-č’kʷən a-čarta a-pnə d-š’ta-p*
 DEF-boy DEF-bed 3SG.N.IO-at 3SG.H.ABS-lie-NPST
 ‘The boy is lying on the bed.’
- b. *a-č’kʷən a-čarta a-pnə d-š’ta-ʒa-p*
 DEF-boy DEF-bed 3SG.N.IO-at 3SG.H.ABS-lie-ASS-NPST
 ‘The boy is really lying on the bed.’

Without context, verb forms with *-ʒa* are often polysemous, cf. (29b).

- (29) a. *fatima čʷa l-fa-t*
 Fatima apple 3SG.F.ERG-eat-DCL
 ‘Fatima ate an apple.’
- b. *fatima čʷa l-fa-ʒa-t*
 Fatima apple 3SG.F.ERG-eat-ASS-DCL
 i. ‘Fatima ate an apple completely.’
 ii. ‘Fatima really ate an apple.’

I hypothesize that the interpretation of *-ʒa* at least partly depends on its scope (similarly to what has been argued for the reflexive *-χ*, see section 2.1 above). For instance, in examples like (27b) and (29b-i) the meaning of completeness occurs when the scope of *-ʒa* includes only the resultant state, while the meaning of assertion like in (28b) and (29b-ii) becomes possible when the scope of *-ʒa* encompasses the whole situation described in the sentence. The meaning of intensity as in (26b) and (30b) can be regarded as a case when the scope of *-ʒa* includes only the verb stem itself.

- (30) a. *a-sabəj-k^wa j-apšə-p̄*
 DEF-child-PL 3PL.ABS-be.similar-NPST
 ‘The children are similar to each other.’
- b. *a-sabəj-k^wa j-apš-za-p̄*
 DEF-child-PL 3PL.ABS-be.similar-ASS-NPST
 ‘The children are very similar to each other.’

It seems reasonable to propose that the original use of *-za* is the verb *zara* ‘reach,’ which is commonly used in the modern language as well (31). However, the exact development of the semantics of the suffix *-za* remains unclear.

- (31) *a-bna h-na-za-rnəs*
 DEF-forest 1PL.ERG-TRLC-**reach**-PURP
 ‘to reach the forest’ (Tabulova 1976: 169)

6. Putative *zəš’a*

There is a putative marker *zəš’a* (‘seem’, ‘suppose’) which in Tabulova’s grammar (1976: 209-210) is described as a verbal suffix. My investigation, however, has shown that wordforms with *zəš’a* in fact contain two separate predicates (for details see Panova 2018): the matrix verb *zəš’a*, which consists of the unproductive preverb *z(ə)-* and the root *š’(a)*, and the head of the complement clause (32).

- (32) [*awəj d-ʕa-j-wa-š*]-*z-wə-š’-əj-t̄*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-IPF-FUT-LOC-2SG.M.IO-seem-PRS-DCL
 ‘You think he will come.’

That the construction with *zəš’a* is a single wordform is proven by morphological operations applying to the prefixal and/or the suffixal parts of the word. One such operation is negation, which in the finite forms is marked jointly by the prefix *g’ə-* occurring right after the absolutive prefix and the variable-position marker *-m*, cf. (33). When negation applies to a construction with *zəš’a* (34), the prefix *g’-* appears in the prefixal part of the whole construction, even though only its second part (the main clause) is negated.

- (33) *sara [d-ʕa-j-ta] g’-qa-s-ç-wə-m*
 I 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-ADV NEG-LOC-1SG.ERG-believe-IPF-NEG
 ‘I don’t believe he came.’

- (34) [awəj d-g'-ʕa-j]-ʒə-s-š'-wə-m
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-NEG.EMP-DIR-go-LOC-1SG.IO-seem-IPF-NEG
 'I don't think he came.'

The second diagnostic is temporal relativization – the formation of normally headless relative clauses with temporal reference. Relativization is marked with prefixes on the verb (see Hewitt 1979a, Lander 2012 on relativization in the Northwest Caucasian languages); when a dependent clause contains a complementation construction, the relative prefix *an(ə)-* appears on the matrix predicate, cf. (35).

- (35) *d-š-psə-z* *anə-l-ba*
 3SG.H.ABS-REL.MNR-die-PST.NFIN **REL.TMP**-3SG.F.ERG-see
d-ĉ^wəwa *d-a-la-ga-t*
 3SG.H.ABS-cry.IPF 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC-begin-DCL
 'When she saw he had died, she started crying.'

In the construction with *ʒəš'a*, as shown in (36), the relative prefix *an(ə)-* appears on the dependent verb even though it modifies the matrix verb. If the construction had consisted of two separate wordforms, the relative prefix would rather have appeared between the matrix and the dependent verbs, as in (35).

- (36) [*d-an-psə*]-ʒə-l-š'a
 3SG.H.ABS-**REL.TMP**-die-LOC-3SG.F.IO-think
d-ĉ^wəwa *d-a-la-ga-t*
 3SG.H.ABS-cry.IPF 3SG.H.ABS-3SG.N.IO-LOC-begin-DCL
 'When she thought he had died, she started crying.'

Although the two predicates in the construction with *ʒəš'a* behave as a single wordform, they retain their syntactic and semantic independence. This is manifested in the fact that each of the predicates has its own tense markers, argument structure, and can be separately modified by adverbs (37)-(38).

- (37) *sara pasata* [*wara šabəžta w-ʕ^w-wa*]-ʒ-s-š'-wə-n
 I **earlier** you **fast** 2SG.M.ABS-run-IPF-LOC-1SG.IO-seem-IPF-PST
 'Earlier, I thought you run fast.'

- (38) *sara* [apx'aga *fatima*
 I DEF.book Fatima
j-l-wə-t-wa-š]-z-s-š'-wə-n
 3SG.N.ABS-3SG.F.IO-2SG.M.ERG-give-**IPF-FUT-LOC**-1SG.IO-seem-**IPF-PST**
 'I thought you would give the book to Fatima.'

Both predicates can also have their own derivational morphology: see the habitual suffix *-l(a)* on the main verb and the refractive suffix *-χ* on the dependent verb in (39).

- (39) [*fatima* *wara* *a-h^wrapšza*
 Fatima you DEF-flower
ʕa-wə-l-t-χ]-zə-s-š'a-l-wə-n
 DIR-2SG.M.IO-3SG.F.ERG-give-**RE-LOC**-1SG.ERG-seem-**HAB-IPF-PST**
 'I often thought that Fatima had returned flowers to you.'

Thus, *zəš'a* has some properties of a verbal derivational suffix and behaves as a matrix verb at the same time. In (Maisak 2016: 837-838) such type of constructions was named "morphologically bound complementation".

7. Inferential *-za*

Another example of morphemes suffixed to non-finite verbal forms is markers *-zap* and *-zarən*. The cognate suffixes in Abkhaz are considered markers of inferentiality (Hewitt 1979b; Chirikba 2003).

Although in the reference grammars by Tabulova (1976: 166-170) and Lomtadze (2006: 172-173) these suffixes are described as two separate markers, they clearly consist of the marker *-za* and markers of tense *-p* NPST (future II) and *-rə-n* FUT.NFIN-PST (conditional II); see Lomtadze (2006: 155-163) and Klyagina (2017) on the tense system in Abaza. The temporal characteristic of a dynamic verb in the inferential is formed by unifying the information from two slots: various non-finite suffixes before *-za* together with *-p* after it result in the present, aorist, iative, and future I (i.e. simple temporal forms); and the same non-finite suffixes together with *-rə-n* result in the imperfect, preterite, pluperfect, and conditional I (i.e. retrospectivized temporal forms). For instance, in (40a) the suffix *-χ'a* -IAM and *-p* -NPST produce the inferential iative, and in (40b) the same suffix with *-rə-n* produces the inferential pluperfect. Inferential forms of the future II and conditional II are impossible.

- (40) a. *awəj d-ʕa-j-χ'a-za-p̄*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-IAM-INFR-NPST
 ‘Apparently he has already come.’
- b. *a-telefon an-ʕa-s*
 DEF-telephone REL.TMP-DIR-beat
awəj d-ʕa-j-χ'a-za-rə-n
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-DIR-go-IAM-INFR-FUT.NFIN-PST
 ‘When the phone began to ring, he had apparently already come.’

Despite the fact that the inferential forms have two slots for temporal morphology, suggesting that the first part of the construction is a non-finite verbal form, the negation of a dynamic verb with an inferential marker is formed as it would be formed with a regular finite verb. Although negation of non-finite forms is marked only by the prefix *m-*, inferential negative forms also contain the prefixal marker of negation *g'*-, as in (41).

- (41) a. *awəj də-g'-ʕa-mə-j-s-za-p̄*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-NEG.EMP-DIR-NEG-go-NONDUM-INFR-NPST
 ‘Apparently he has not come yet.’
- b. *awəj də-g'-ʕa-mə-j-s-za-rə-z-t̄³*
 DIST 3SG.H.ABS-NEG.EMP-DIR-NEG-go-NONDUM-INFR-FUT.NFIN-PST.NFIN-DCL
 ‘Apparently at that time he had not yet come.’

Stative verbs in inferential forms do not have non-finite suffixes, so they are completely morphologically bound with inferential markers.

The origins of the inferential suffix *-za* are not very clear; according to (Hewitt 1979b; Chirikba 2003), the cognate markers of inferential in Abkhaz originally had future temporal meaning.

8. Markers of compassion *-məʕʷa* and *-gʷəʂ'a*

The last two suffixes described in this paper are *-məʕʷa* and *-gʷəʂ'a*. Both suffixes have semantics of compassion and regret which apply either to a certain participant (42) or to the whole situation (43).

- (42) a. *awəj moskva d-ca-t̄*
 DIST Moscow 3SG.H.ABS-go-DCL
 ‘He went to Moscow.’

³ *-rə-z-t̄* is a negative form of conditional II.

b. *awəj Moskva d-ca-məʃʷa-t / d-ca-gʷəʃʷa-t*
 DIST Moscow 3SG.H.ABS-go-PITY-DCL / 3SG.H.ABS-go-PITY-DCL
 ‘He, a poor man, went to Moscow.’

(43) a. *a-pša ʃa-s-t*
 DEF-wind DIR-blow-DCL
 ‘The wind blew.’

b. *a-pša ʃa-s-məʃʷa-t / ʃa-s-gʷəʃʷa-t*
 DEF-wind DIR-blow-PITY-DCL / DIR-blow-PITY-DCL
 ‘Unfortunately, the wind blew.’

As shown in (44), the suffixes can be combined with each other in any order.

(44) *an l-pa a-tamšʷakʷ š-pə-j-čə-z*
 mother 3SG.F.IO-son DEF-plate REL.MNR-LOC-3SG.M.ERG-break-PST.NFIN
j-ʃa-l-ba-məʃʷa-gʷəʃʷa-t /
 3SG.N.ABS-DIR-3SG.F.ERG-see-PITY-PITY-DCL /
j-ʃa-l-ba-gʷəʃʷa-məʃʷa-t
 3SG.N.ABS-DIR-3SG.F.ERG-see-PITY-PITY-DCL
 ‘It’s a pity that mother saw that her son had broken a plate (I would not like her to scold him).’

The crucial difference between *-məʃʷa* and *-gʷəʃʷa* is that only the former can serve not only as a suffix but as an independent stem as well: *məʃʷa* can be used as a stative verb ‘to be in a bad condition’ (45).

(45) a. *a-cgʷə=čʷkʷən məʃʷa-p*
 DEF-cat=little **be.poor**-NPST
 ‘The little cat feels bad.’

b. **a-cgʷə=čʷkʷən gʷəʃʷa-p*
 DEF-cat=little **PITY**-NPST

The suffix *-məʃʷa*, but not *-gʷəʃʷa*, can also be a part of a noun phrase, behaving as an adjective and modifying both common (46b) and proper nouns (46c).

(46) a. *rašʷəjd a-cgʷə=čʷkʷən fatima j-lə-j-t-t*
 Rashid DEF-cat=little Fatima 3SG.N.ABS-3SG.F.IO-3SG.M.ERG-give-DCL
 ‘Rashid gave a little cat to Fatima.’

- b. *raš'əjd* *a-cg^{wə}=č'k^{wən}=məŋ^{wə} / *a-cg^{wə}=č'k^{wən}=g^{wə}əš'a*
 Rashid DEF-cat=little=**poor** / DEF-cat=little=**PITY**
fatima *j-l-əj-t-ɬ*
 Fatima 3SG.N.ABS-3SG.F.IO-3SG.M.ERG-give-DCL
 'Rashid gave a poor little cat to Fatima.'
- c. *raš'əjd* *a-cg^{wə}=č'k^{wən}*
 Rashid DEF-cat=little
*fatima=məŋ^{wə} / *fatima-g^{wə}əš'a* *j-lə-j-t-ɬ*
 Fatima=**poor** / Fatima=**PITY** 3SG.N.ABS-3SG.F.IO-3SG.M.ERG-give-DCL
 'Rashid gave a little cat to poor Fatima.'

That *-məŋ^{wə}* and *-g^{wə}əš'a* in some cases behave differently may be related to their origins. The etymology of the suffix *-g^{wə}əš'a* is not clear, aside from the evidence from West Circassian (Rogava, Kerasheva 1966: 306-307) and Kabardian (Kumakhov 2006: 361), where it is also used and from where it seems to have been borrowed. The suffix *-məŋ^{wə}* must have been originally used as an adjective before it grammaticalized into a verbal suffix.

9. Conclusion

In this paper I have described elements which are located between the root and the markers of tense in the Abaza verb. Many other suffixes were not discussed in this paper due to a lack of data, including, for example, the suffix *-êa* ('too much') and the marker of plurality *-k^{wə}* which occurs both on nominals and on verbs (Tabulova 1976: 209). Nevertheless, the examples presented above provide a general picture of the semantics as well as of the putative diachronic development of this type of morpheme.

Presumably, the diversity of the discussed affixes reflects their possible paths of grammaticalization (which I understand here primarily as semantic bleaching).

The one suffix which has fully preserved its semantics through the process of morphologization is *zəš'a* 'seem', which is derived from a matrix verb and, despite a degree of morphologization, largely retains its original syntactic independence. The suffixes *-za* and *-məŋ^{wə}* expanded their semantics: in the modern language *-za* has meanings of intensity, completion and assertion while the verb *za* means 'reach'; *-məŋ^{wə}* 'poor, bad' as a verbal suffix can modify not only a certain participant but also a whole situation with the meaning 'unfortunately, P'. There are also suffixes borrowed from the Circassian languages: *-zapət* 'often' and *-g^{wə}əš'a* 'poor, bad'. Finally, the etymologies of the inferential suffix *-za* and the continuative suffix *-rk^{wə}* is still subject for discussion in the literature. Whatever their origins, both these suffixes seem to have changed

their meanings in grammaticalization. Finally, the reflexive marker *-χ* and the habitual marker *-la* seem to be fully grammaticalized – at least we do not see any traces of their lexical origins in the modern language. The history of *-χ* is even more intriguing because, as was shown in section 2.2, it is often used with the additional repetitive prefix *ata-*. From the fact that *ata-* cannot be used on its own I assume that this prefix first appeared not as a morpheme with its own meaning, but to support the suffix *-χ*, whose meaning has become bleached in the process of lexicalization of many combinations of this suffix with verbs⁴.

To conclude, I wish to emphasize that grammaticalization of verbal suffixes in Abaza seems to be a common path of development for both native and borrowed lexical items, and what we see as a very diverse group of morphemes can be a reflection of different stages of this ongoing process.

Abbreviations

1 – 1st person; 2 – 2nd person; 3 – 3rd person; ABS – absolutive; ADD – additive; ADV – adverbialis; ASS – assertive; CNT – continuative; DAT – dative; DCL – declarative; DEF – definite article; DIR – directive; DIST – distal demonstrative; DYN – dynamic; EMP – emphatic; ERG – ergative; F – feminine; FREQ – frequentative; FUT – future; H – human; HAB – habitual; IAM – imitative; INC – inceptive; INFR – inferred evidentiality; INS – instrumental; IO – indirect object; IPF – imperfective; LOC – locative; M – masculine; MNR – manner; MSD – masdar; N – non-human; NEG – negation; NFIN – non-finite; NONDUM – ‘not yet’ marker; NPST – nonpast; PITY – ‘pity’ marker; PL – plural; PRS – present; PST – past; PURP – purpose; RE – reflexive; REC – recent past; REL – relativizer; SG – singular; SOC – sociative; TMP – temporal relativization; TRLC – translocative.

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⁴ Such development is known as Jespersen’s Cycle (van der Auwera 2009), which is well-described for markers of negation but has also been mentioned for double reflexive markers (Stoynova 2016: 55).

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