Time and time again
The evolution of 'time'-nouns into temporal clause markers in three Daghestanian languages

Nouns with the meaning 'time' are a common source for temporal clause marking (Heine & Kuteva 2004 (2002): 298). One of the possible strategies is with a relative clause headed by a participle (1).

(1) Andi (Alisultanova & Magamedova 2010)
     ƛer-di   **w-oqo-b=rihi,**
     near-LAT M-reach-PST.PTCP=time

     hege-šːu-<b>o   haɢo-dːu   b-eč'uχʷa   qala
     DEM-M-<INAN1>AFF see-PF   INAN1-big   palace
     '**When** he **came** closer, he saw a big palace.'

In Avar, Botlikh and Andi (three closely related Daghestanian languages), there are two competing strategies: with a borrowed noun *zaman* 'time' (originally from Arabic), and with a native word: *meχ* (Avar), *rihu* (Botlikh) and *rihi* (Andi). Based on the usage of these constructions in a modest collection of texts (for the unwritten Botlikh and Andi languages) and a fairly substantial corpus (for the literary language Avar),[1] I will show that the constructions are not synonymous. In Avar, the borrowed noun predominantly occurs in the locative, while the native noun is more frequently used in the ergative. The opposite situation, where *zaman* is in the ergative and *meχ* in the locative, is also possible, but significantly less frequent. The native noun is preferred for temporal subordinate clauses, while *zaman* more often occurs in regular temporal adverbials (e.g. 'one time'). In Andi and Botlikh, *zaman* (as a synonym of the native time words) has the same case marking as other nouns used in temporal adverbial clauses (absolutive in Andi, ergative in Botlikh). Here as well, the native word is preferred for temporal subordinate clauses.

Based on my data and comparison with Turkic languages, the *zamanalda* strategy in Avar seems likely to be borrowed. The *zaman* + locative strategy is typical of the Kipchak Turkic languages Kumyk and Nogai, with which Avar has been in contact. (In Turkish, *zaman* as the head of a temporal subordinate clause is in the absolutive case.) There is no evidence that the construction in general (i.e. a participial relative clause dependent on a time noun) is borrowed from Turkic. In my talk, I will show the division of labour among the different strategies for each language in more detail.

References

Alisultanova, Mesedu A. (transl.) & Patimat A. Magomedova (ed.). 2010. *Dunjalla baχunnirsːi χalɢiltɬol ɢʷanab mits'ːillasːol muχal* [World fairy tales in Andi]. Makhachkala: Nural iršad.

Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva. 2004 (2002). *World lexicon of grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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1 The Andi data consist of ~ 13.000 words (172 examples); the Botlikh data comprise ~ 8000 words (176 examples). For Avar, I counted the overall frequency of the strategies in a corpus containing around 2.000.000 tokens, after which I analyzed random samples of 100 occurrences for each strategy (400 in total).