P-Labile verbs in Andi : a two-phase emergence

Key words: lability, Nakh-Daghestanian, radical P-alignment, diachrony, causative

This paper discusses the emergence of P-labile verbs in Andi, a barely documented language belonging to the Avar-Andic-Tsezic branch of the Nakh-Daghestanian family. Based on first-hand elicited data of the Zilo dialect, I will argue that there are two groups of P-labile verbs in Andi, and that these arose at different time points and under different circumstances. This split is suggested by the difference in behavior under causative derivation. Verbs of the first group (A), which constitute the vast majority, can only be causativized in their transitive use (cf. (1)), while those of the second group (B) can undergo causativization in both their transitive and intransitive uses (cf. (2)).

Developing an idea by Kibrik (1996: 122-125), I consider compatibility with causativization an indication of the degree of lexicalization. Using evidence from related languages such as Godoberi (Kibrik 1996), Bagvalal (Ljutikova 2001), Avar (Charachidzé 1981), Hinuq (Forker 2013), I suggest that verbs of group A are originally transitives, lending themselves to lability since after the rise of the causative marker and not lexicalized enough to be compatible with it, while those of group B are more anciently labile, probably dating back to proto-Andic or earlier stages.

Labile verbs of group A seem to have arisen from typological features demonstrated by Creissels (2014) to correlate with syntactic transitivity being based upon the realizations of the arguments. This definition of transitivity implies that the formal absence of an A-term equals its syntactic absence, and is therefore enough to make a construction intransitive. The typological features involved are, first, radical P-alignment, which means that transitive and intransitive constructions differ in no other way than the presence vs. absence of an A-term (cf. (3)), second, the absence of restriction to the use of null A's with arbitrary reading (cf. (4)). The loss of any transitivity-decreasing derivation, argued to have existed in proto-Daghestanian (Authier 2012), completed the picture, sparking off a process which resulted in the current situation: a predication without an expressed A-term is by default syntactically intransitive. Consequently, all primary transitive verbs can be used intransitively as P-labile (cf. (5)). This was substantiated by four lability tests which, applied to the transitive verbs in my data, consistently failed to disambiguate syntactic intransitivity from transitive constructions with an unrealized A-term.

As for labile verbs of group B, the comparison with related languages shows that their cognates are labile as well, which is evidence of the correlation between compatibility of both uses of a labile verb with causativization and its early emergence. These labile verbs can be traced back either to transitive or intransitive verbs. Indeed, their direction of derivation can be determined by specific tests which do not apply to Andi but have evidential results in related languages. I thus argue that some labile verbs have emerged from verbs of different transitivity patterns as early as before the Avar-Tsezic-Andic split, while the majority have appeared later, under the pressure of specific typological circumstances, and have not lexicalized enough to be able to undergo causativization.

(1) *a. hints'ːu   roq'-on.*
     door.NOM   close-PST(AOR)
     'The door has closed'.

b. *pat'imati-di   roq'-on   hints':u.*

Patimat-ERG   close-PST(AOR)   door.NOM

'Patimat closed the door.'

c. *pat'imati-di   roq'-<u>onł</u>-i   hints':u.*

Patimat-ERG   close-<u>CAUS</u>-PST(AOR)   door.NOM

'Patimat closed the door.'

^{OK}'Patimat made someone close the door.'

(2)   a. *vedro   b-its'-i-j   łen-di*

bucket[INAN₁].NOM   INAN₁-fill-PST-PF   water-INST

'The bucket has filled up with water.'

b. *joʃu-di kʷeru   b-its'-i-j   łen-di*

girl-ERG jug[INAN₁].NOM   INAN₁-fill-PST-PF   water-INST

'The girl filled the basin with water.'

c. *joʃu-di kʷeru   b-its'-<u> oł</u>-i-j   łen-di*

girl-ERG jug[INAN₁].NOM   INAN₁-fill-<u>CAUS</u>-PST-PF   water-INST

(*i*) 'The girl filled the basin with water.' /

(*ii*) 'The girl made someone fill the basin with water.'

d. *joʃu-di di-bo   kʷeru   b-its'-oł-i-j   łen-di*

girl-ERG I-.INAN₁.AFF   jug[INAN₁].NOM   INAN₁-fill-CAUS-PST-PF   water-INST

'The girl had me fill the basin with water.'

(3)   a. *den-ni ingur   arχ-on.*

I-ERG   window.NOM   open-PST(AOR)

'I opened the window.'

b. *ingur   arχ-on.*

window.NOM   open-PST(AOR)

'The window opened.'

(4)   a. *den-ni joʃi   qamm-i.*

I-ERG   girl.NOM   capture-PST(AOR)

'I captured the girl.'

b. *∅   joʃi   qamm-i.*

A∅   girl.NOM   capture-PST(AOR)

(*i*) 'I/you/(s)he/we/they captured the girl.' /

(*ii*) '**The girl was captured**'

(5)   *gaga   ʒi-r=gu   r-etł'-esːa*

bone[INAN₂].NOM   RFL-INAN₂-PL=EMPH   plant-FUT.NEG

'The seed isn't going to plant itself.' [meaning: you have to do it.]

(litt. 'The seed isn't going to plant *by itself*')

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