

AUXILIARIES IN ADYGHE¹

Adyghe is a polysynthetic language, so its morphology is very rich. It also has many predicative constructions with different sophisticated subordinative strategies (Serdobolskaya & Motlokhov 2010). However, a device intermediating syntax and morphology, namely auxiliaries, is well represented in Adyghe, too. Until now only some of the Adyghe auxiliaries have been described (Kerasheva 1995), so our research question was to get a bigger picture on auxiliaries in Adyghe: to describe the system of meanings, their properties and the criteria of identification. From a theoretical perspective we tried to explain the diversity of their formal properties.

1. **Criteria of identification.** An auxiliary and a main verb constitute a complex so we expect to see signs of complex integration. In order to identify auxiliaries in Adyghe we used several criteria showing integration. 1) Word order: whether an auxiliary can be moved or separated from the main verb by another constituent. 2) Agreement: whether an auxiliary is agreeing (hence, whether it has argument structure). 3) Plural suffix: whether the complex is marked once or twice for plurality and whether the suffix intervenes between the main verb and the auxiliary. 4) Negation: whether an auxiliary and the main verb can be negated separately. 5) Tense: whether both members of the complex can be marked for tense separately (therefore, whether there are two separate situations) and whether tense affixes can intervene between the auxiliary and the main verb. We also paid attention to the form of the main verb in the complex: the bare stem form² was considered to be a sign of integration. The criteria showed that auxiliaries differ in their properties: the most integrated such as *zepət*³ ‘regularly’, *pet*, *tjet* ‘almost/in process’ show integration according to all criteria, while other, such as $\chi^wə$ + converb (‘happen’) only to one or two. However, this criteria in corroboration with other properties of the auxiliaries allow to distinguish them from full-fledged lexical verbs.

2. **System of meanings.** Auxiliaries in Adyghe are mainly used to express meanings in two domains: aspect and modality. Aspectual meanings expressed by auxiliaries are habitual (*zepət* and $\chi^wə$ + converb), progressive and proximative (*pet*, *tjet*), inceptive ($\chi^wə$ + bare stem) and qualitative (*š’ət* + converb). Modal meanings include simulative (*fed* + finite form, *tjewē*, *zətarekawē*, *zješə*), deontic obligation ($\chi^wə$ + supine, *š’ət* + supine, *faj* + infinitive) and possibility ($\chi^wə$), and epistemic possibility ($\chi^wə$ + instrumental, *faj* + infinitive, *š’ət* + supine) and obligation (*faj* + finite form). It should be noticed that simulative auxiliaries are used in combination with the main verb marked by the simulative suffix *-š’wē*, so they do not express, but support the simulative semantics. Interestingly, tense semantics seems never to be expressed by auxiliaries in Adyghe and is always expressed by morphological means.

3. **Explanation of diversity.** Auxiliaries from the typological point of view are a vague category, because they cannot be universally defined based on any formal criteria, and this is even true with respect to different auxiliaries in one language. However, auxiliaries can be defined diachronically: they originate from full lexical verbs and are in process of grammaticalization (Heine 1993). Adyghe auxiliaries show very diverse formal properties and are to various extents integrated into the complex with the main verbs. This could be explained by the fact that they are on different stages of grammaticalization which manifests itself in complex integration (both (morpho)syntactic and semantic). Auxiliaries do not grammaticalize in isolation: the whole construction (=complex) is grammaticalized. This explains why one auxiliary can have different meanings and formal properties depending on the construction in

¹ The data were collected in the linguistic expedition to the aul Hatazhukaj, resp. Adyghe, organized by the Institute of Linguistics of Russian State University for the Humanities in 2010.

² The form that cannot attach tense affixes or dynamicity markers (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966, Kerasheva 1995).

³ Adyghe words are given in a transcription used in Arkadiev et. al. 2010 which is different from the IPA standard. The form of the main verb is specified because one auxiliary can have different meanings and properties in combination with different forms of the main verb. If the form is not mentioned, it is the bare stem.

which it is used. For example, the auxiliary $\chi^w\text{ə}$, which as a full verb means ‘happen/succeed’, can be used in combination with a converb meaning ‘happen’ (1), with the instrumental form meaning ‘maybe’ (2), with the supine form meaning ‘have to’ (3) and with the bare stem meaning ‘to begin’ (4) or ‘to be allowed’ (5) (depending on the tense marking). According to the formal properties, the first construction is the least grammaticalized, and the last one – the most, while the others are in-between. The meaning in some of these constructions is computed compositionally from the meaning of the auxiliary and the form of the main verb. For example, in combination with a converb $\chi^w\text{ə}$ means ‘to happen’ and the converb marker *-ew* is used to express the simultaneity of the actions denoted by the main verb and the auxiliary. However, in other cases, such as $\chi^w\text{ə}$ + bare stem, the meanings (inceptive and deontic possibility) do not come directly from the meanings of the auxiliary and the main verb. This construction is more grammaticalized which becomes apparent both from the formal properties and the non-compositional semantics.

Examples⁴:

- (1) se šk^welə-m sək^w-ew me- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 I school-ERG 1SG.ABS-go-ADV DYN- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 ‘Sometimes I go to school (but not all the time)’
- (2) se šk^welə-m sək^we-n-ew me- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 I school-ERG 1SG.ABS-go-POT-ADV DYN- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 ‘I have to go to school’
- (3) se šk^welə-m sək^we-n-č-jə me- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 I school-ERG 1SG.ABS-go-POT-INS-ADD DYN- $\chi^w\text{ə}$
 ‘Maybe I will go to school’
- (4) se šk^welə-m sək^we $\chi^w\text{ə}$ - be
 I school-ERG 1SG.ABS-go $\chi^w\text{ə}$ -PST
 ‘I began to go to school’
- (5) se šk^welə-m sək^we $\chi^w\text{ə}$ -š’t
 I school-ERG 1SG.ABS-go $\chi^w\text{ə}$ -IRR
 ‘I am allowed to go to school’

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⁴ Glosses used: ABS – absolutive, ADD – additive, ADV – adverbial, DYN – dynamicity, ERG – ergative, INS – instrumental, IRR – irrealis, POT – potential, PST – past, SG – singular.