

COMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN CIRCASSIAN AND DAGHESTANIAN.

The presentation focuses on complementation strategies as well as factors determining their distribution in Circassian and Daghestanian languages. Complementation systems of Adyghe and Kabardian are compared to those of eight languages belonging to different groupings within East Caucasian language family, namely Avar, Bagwalal, Godoberi, Icar Dargwa, Khinalug, Lak, Tsakhur and Tsez. The data on particular languages are drawn from existing published sources, save for Adyghe, the account of which is based on our own fieldwork.

The study focuses on morphological encoding of complement relations (complementizers, non-finite verb forms, etc.), syntactic issues such as agreement, case marking, constituent order, extractability, etc. are not addressed. Tentative semantic maps of complement constructions in spirit of (Cristofaro 2003a) are proposed for individual languages. Distribution patterns neatly fall into the predictions of complement types hierarchies presented in typological literature (Givón 1980; Cristofaro 2003b; Van Valin 2005 and others).

While certain similarities are observed between complementation systems of Circassian and Daghestanian languages, apparent differences are found which seem to be of greater importance. The principal contrasts are as follows:

1. Sentence-like (or “zero”) strategy of complement encoding, which is widespread in Daghestanian, is virtually non-attested in Circassian, contrary to Noonan’s (1985: 49) assumption about the universality of this complement type.

2. Circassian languages make no use of complementizers, which are abundant in most Daghestanian languages.

3. Daghestanian languages usually employ special means of encoding indirect speech with utterance predicates (citation particles, complementizers). No such devices are found in Circassian languages where indirect speech shares encoding strategies with complement clauses of other semantic types.

4. Most important, sharing/non-sharing of participants may determine the choice of complementation strategy in Daghestanian, but not in Circassian languages. The latter instead are very sensitive to the speaker’s degree of commitment to the truth of proposition expressed by the complement clause: thus, complements of factive predicates are always encoded by special forms, different in behavior from those encoding non-factive complements and resembling headless relatives morphosyntactically (see Gerasimov & Lander, in press, for details). On the contrary, it is typical for Daghestanian languages to have a single strategy that can be used for complements of both factive and non-factive matrix predicates.

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