Dobrovolsky: Chuvash Morphophonemics


In a paper delivered at the First Conference on non-Slavic Languages of the Soviet Union (Friedman 1979), I proposed a typology for the grammatical category of status on the basis of data drawn from Georgians, Avar, Tadjik, and Azerbaijanis, with references to Balkan Slavic, Turkish, and Albanian. In that paper, I accepted the definition of the term status as describing verbal categories marking the speaker's evaluation of the narrated event, i.e., in choosing a certain morphologically marked verbal form, the speaker is editorializing on the event in question. In my conclusion, I presented a table (reproduced below as Table IV) outlining a system for the comparative investigation of verb forms involving nonconfirmative status in the languages of the Soviet Union, the Balkans, and possibly elsewhere (Friedman 1979:346). In this article, I will expand the bases of comparison by examining data from Lak, a language spoken by over 80,000 people in the central highlands of Daghestan (Comrie 1981:197), which together with Dargwa and its related languages or dialects (e.g., Hubach) constitutes the Lak-Dargwa group of the Northeast Caucasian (Daghestanian) languages. After presenting an outline of some relevant portions of the Lak verbal system, I will show how they necessitate modifications in my 1979 typological schema.

Lak is one of the five literary Daghestanian languages (along with Avar, Dargwa, Lezgian, and Tabasaran). Its relation to Avar, the Daghestanian language I considered in my 1979 article, can be compared to that of English to Bulgarian, and in fact the two pairs of languages display some interesting parallels in their treatment of status, although a study of them must remain the task of a later work. The system of marking grammatical categories in the Lak verb is far more complicated than that of Avar or other Daghestanian languages, e.g., Dargwa, Tabasaran, and Udi (Kajdakov 1966:155), and the standard twentieth-century analyses (Zirkov 1955, Murdelinskij 1971, and also Kajdakov 1966, Burbuladze 1979) show significant differences. In this article, I will take Zirkov's analysis as my starting point but I will modify it with information based on the other sources.
The nondefective Lak verbal root can enter into a three-way superordinate aspectual distinction, i.e., it can form three stems, each with its own inflection and various finite and nonfinite forms, infinitive and various finite and nonfinite forms, e.g., unmarked (plain) δεξ- in 'to write,' progressive δεξ-ιν in 'I write,' and the subjunctive δεξ-ιν in 'I write IP. This inflectional paradigm is characterized by a greater number of synthetic tense forms (paradigmatic sets) of the plain stem (paradigmatic sets) than the aspectually or scorers (see Xajdakov 1975:156 and Mulkelinkskij 1971:176). (1) Na δεξάρα δαγάρ (common plain pres) 'I write a letter,' (2) Na δεξακάσαρ αγάρα (conf plain pres) 'I do writing a letter,' (3) Na δεξακάσαρ αρ ράγάρ (common prog pres) 'I am writing a letter,' (4) Na δεξακάσαρα δαγάρ (conf prog pres) 'I am writing a letter,' (5) Ta τικακ (common plain pres) 'He's there,' (6) Ta τικακ (conf plain pres) 'He is there.'

The Lak preterite system is characterized by a rich variety of synthetic and analytic tense forms. In addition to problems caused by inconsistencies in the inventory and nomenclature used in various descriptions (see Xajdakov 1975:156 and Mulkelinkskij 1971:176), where the same tense form is labeled imperfect and pluperfect, respectively, and by questions of agreement with subjects and objects, the Lak preterite system is complicated by a phenomenon labeled by Xajdakov (1975:155) heterogeneous paradigms. From a more or less diachronic point of view, Lak can be said to have one defective and seven complete synthetic indicative past tense forms; the perfect or confirmative perfect, with only first person forms, the aorist, archaic past, confirmative archaic past, imperfect, confirmative imperfect, pluperfect, and confirmative pluperfect. From a synchronic viewpoint, however, there are fewer sets of paradigms: aorist, confirmative archaic past, imperfect, and pluperfect. The perfect, aorist, and archaic past combine to form a single aorist paradigm—the source of any given form being determined by person and voice—while the synchronic imperfect and pluperfect can both combine forms from their respective common and confirmative paradigms. Table I gives examples of the preterite paradigms in diachronic terms using the verb 'write,' and Table II presents the sources of the synchronic heterogeneous paradigms.
paradigmatic and marked for nonconfirmativity. Some of these are clearly syntactic constructions involving lexical finite verb forms or particles used as clitics. Thus, for example, virtually any verb phrase can be made to render the meaning 'reported' by the addition of par, which can be written separately or attached to the last element on the verb phrase. The form is derived from par 'to say' and can be equated with the Geo quotative particle -ô or the Russ de, mol (< deskat, molvi) 'to say', although Murkelinskij translates with the Russ govorjat 'they say.' The following examples will suffice to illustrate that par is a particle and not a paradigm-defining element:

(7) Tanal dağar șiņaj (Murkelinskij 1971:195)
He writes a letter.

(9) Tanal dağar șiņaj par (Murkelinskij 1971:195)
They say he writes a letter.

(10) șin dep șiņuni (Murkelinskij 1971:201)
The boy began to laugh.

(11) șin dep șiņuni par (Murkelinskij 1971:196)
They say the boy began to laugh.

(12) Nov par, novu par/ Coğan manpar/ șiņaj, viz javu/ đakkan șiņaj par (Kalilov 1969:106)
Let's go, she says, let's go, she says/ Quickly let's go, she says/ He's dying, for you thirsting/ to see he wants, he says. (i.e., He says he is thirsting to see you) [Context: This is taken from the beginning of a ballad. The heroine is singing, reporting the words of the hero's mother who is in turn reporting the words of her dying son.]

Murkelinskij (1971:177, 199, 205) also cites what he calls a dubitative suffix, -kkar, which he says renders the effect of Russ kašetaja 'it seems' (Geo tvere; cf. also Xajdakov 1966:191). This suffix is actually a criticized finite verb form, however, as can be seen from the following examples from Murkelinskij (1971:177, 199) which show person-number agreement:

(13) Ina stiši unukkara
Apparently, you are working

(14) Zu manaj unukkara
Apparently, you'll are walking

(15) Tanal dağar șiņuni
Apparently, he wrote a letter

(16) șir şeņušiți unukkar
Apparently, the boy is playing

(17) șir şeņušiți șiņuni
Apparently the boy was playing
The construction is based on the past gerund in -nu. In the case of plain verbs, the clitic is added directly to the gerund (15). In the case of progressive verbs, which cannot form a past gerund, the past gerund of 'be,' -wa, serves as the auxiliary base, which can be used with the present gerund to render a present and with that gerund plus the past gerund of -tjan ‘be’ (the nondefective verb whose forms fill in where forms of -ur are lacking) to render a past.

Another construction treated by Murkelinskij (1571:159-200, 205) as paradigmatic is formed by means of a verbal adjective in -esa and the phrase xxaj ura ‘It seems to me’ (Russ mně kašetaľa). As can be seen from the following examples, however, this is simply a syntactic construction with the common present or imperfect of the progressive verb xxan ‘to seem,’ viz. present gerund xxaj and present or past auxiliary -ur ‘is’ agreeing in person and number with the one to whom the narrated event seems:

(18) Na duľ durulaj busa xxaj ura (Murkelinskij 1971:199)

It seems to me that the girl is sewing.

(19) Na duľ durulaj busa xxaj bur (Murkelinskij 1971:200)

It seems to us that the girl is sewing.

(20) Garal ziždalan kaľ suntuđu bkṭesu gurrašal hala-utti hala zala ola bašnamahanssa xxaj bija (Žirkov 1955:149)

In his imagination it seemed to him that these very mountains along with a malicious force at any moment would fall on his head.

The constructions which have been considered thus far, viz. those with tar, -kcar, and xxan all really convey nonconformativity lexically and cannot be treated as paradigmatic. However, Murkelinskij also cites a number of constructions with -ur and -tjan which are, in essence, periphrastic perfect-like constructions at least some of which appear to convey nonconformativity (translated by Russ ekzyvvaťaľa, Geo surme) without recourse to lexical support and which must, therefore, be treated as periphrastic, paradigmatic constructions rendering status oppositions (Murkelinskij 1971:195-99, 206, also Xajjakov 1966:53, 73). Table III illustrates the principal types of combinations which render various types of aspectual, temporal, and taxic meanings together with status marking, and appended to it is a list containing at least one example of each type.

### Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerund of Main Verb</th>
<th>Past Gerund of -tjan (t:toł́)</th>
<th>Present Participle Present Verb -ur</th>
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<td>1 - ----</td>
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<td>2 prog pres</td>
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<td>4 prog pres</td>
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<td>5 past</td>
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<td>7 past</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 past</td>
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(21a) Tanil uren bazalluflun lagajsa ur (Murkelinskij 1971:155)

His brother is going to the market (it turns out).

(21b) Buğil likkural majnľar vit qinsea ofəav daqqaśa dur (Murkelinskij 1967:506)

Apparently there is no better medicine than the marrow of a wolf's shin-bone.

(22) Garal lašľaj busa dur (Murkelinskij 1971:198)

It's raining, apparently.

(23) Garal lašľaj dırkun dur (Murkelinskij 1971:205)

It was raining (it turns out).

(24) Qami mə biţən busa bur (Murkelinskij 1971:196)

The women had been working (it turns out).

(25) Tanil oviklu ovuxunu bur (Žirkov 1955:141)

She [the wolf III] asked the fox:

(26a) Omar qin z’unu uren ur (Murkelinskij 1971:205)

Omar has gotten well, it turns out.

(26b) Ta dıqunu uren ur (Murkelinskij 1971:205)

He has made a mistake, it turns out.

(27) Ta laqun ovun ur (Murkelinskij 1971:205)

He had left, it turns out.

(28) Can z’unu dırkun dura dur (Murkelinskij 1971:136)

It had gotten dark, it turns out.

Even from the abbreviated outline of part of the Lak verbal system given here, it can be seen that the status oppositions of Lak display significant differences from those of the languages I have considered in my earlier work. Starting with the concluding outline alluded to earlier (Friedman 1979:346) and reproduced here as Table IV, it is possible to make a number of meaningful comparisons and modifications. In doing so, I will follow the numbering system given in Table IV.
perfect in the second and third persons rather than
the perfect functioning as an aorist in the first.
Based on the available data and my informant work,
however, I would argue rather that the Lak synthetic
perfect has been absorbed by the simple preterite
(aorist), as has the archaic past. The perfect
may retain a resultative nuance contextually.
To this can be added the fact that the confirmative
archaic past is not archaic at all but functions as
the confirmative aorist (in the expanded sense of
the term aorist). The confirmative nuance in the syn-
thetic perfect posited by Žirkov can be said to be
carried by the person rather than by the form. This
phenomenon is explicitly manifested in the (analytic)
progressive imperfect, where the first person always
has the confirmative form while an opposition common/
confirmative occurs in the other two persons, and to
a lesser extent to the pluperfect, where the confirm-
ative predominates in the first person.
I.B. The analytic perfects described in Table
III vary in their degree of nonconfirmativeness. Type
5 (past gerund plus -ur) appears to be virtually un-
marked for status, and functions as the unmarked past
in certain genres, e.g., folk tales (cf. Žirkov 1955:
1940-42).
II. There do not appear to be any perfects used
with nonpast meanings, but the existence of noncon-
firmative presents (Table III, Types 1 and 2), which,
should be noted, are formed in a manner similar to
that of the analytic perfects, must be taken into ac-
count here. In any case, this category requires fur-
ther research.
III. Lak has a well developed system of both
clitic and independent resultative particles. In addi-
tion to the form žar, which was already mentioned,
Lak can mark reported speech with the present gerund
of žan, viz. žij (in many respects, the uses of this
form resemble those of Turkish diye ‘saying’), as well
as the past gerund of the plain verb of speaking wažan,
viz. wawan. Lak renders indirect speech by direct
quotation followed by a verb or particle of reporting,
as can be seen from the following example:

(29) Tuwar bakintural mutifar qinees daru bagqaseer
wekunut, —kun uur cukul (Murkelinskij 1967:
506)
The doctors told me (that) there is no better
medicine than this—said the fox.

IV. Lak displays the tendency to create new per-
fects (analytic) which push the old perfect (synthetic)
into the unmarked past (aorist), but the multiplicity
of analytic perfect-like forms has also created competition among them. Additional nonconfirmative competition is provided by the cliticized forms such as those in tar, -kkar, and x2q. Both resultativity and nonconfirmativity are factors in the competition among forms, but Lak does not appear to have developed a pure resultative.

V.A. As has been mentioned, the old perfect has been absorbed by the simple as a result of the relationship of marked confirmative to common (unmarked) preterite is complicated by the interactions of person, aspect, and voice.

V.B. The Lak pluperfect is remarkable, in comparison to the pluperfects of languages considered in my earlier work, in that it does not appear to sharpen the status or other oppositions seen elsewhere in the Lak verbal system. On the contrary, the sharpening of the confirmative/common distinction seen in the heterogeneous paradigm of the analytic progressive imperfect is less distinctly expressed in the pluperfect. The extent to which taxis is a marked category of the forms we have been calling pluperfect also requires further study, insofar as many taxic relationships in Lak are rendered by means of participial forms.

VI, VII. With regard to volition, uncertainty, and modality, I can offer the following comments on their relationship to the status oppositions being considered here. The combination of confirmative status with future modality renders a meaning of volition. Also, there appears to be a nuance of uncertainty which can be communicated in interrogative forms by means of the choice of interrogative particle (Merkelinsky 1971:177-78).

In my earlier article (Friedman 1979:347), I suggested three possible correlations between the presence and absence of various phenomena outlined in Table IV: (1) between the presence of clitic quotative particles (III.A) and the absence of the use of a perfect form in folk tale narratives (I.B.2), (2) between the presence of a marked confirmative simple preterite (V.A.1) and the presence of a pure reported pluperfect (V.B.2), and (3) between the presence of a dubitative use of the perfect (II.B.1) and a lack of clitic quotative particles (III.A).

The data from Lak contradicts the first correlation. The data are ambiguous with regard to the second, i.e., both such forms may exist in Lak, but not necessarily as the result of opposition sharpening. Lak data supports the inverse of the third correlation with its presence of clitic quotative particles and absence of dubitative perfect usage. Typologically, one of the most important contributions of Lak data is the synthetic present confirmative. In the languages I considered previously, all status oppositions have related in some way to a synchronic or diachronic perfect. Confirmative status has arisen in opposition to or in correlation with other developments within such perfect forms and has been limited to the preterite system, while status oppositions in nonpast indicative forms (e.g., the Albanian admira- tive) have been perfect-derived nonconfirmatives. The Lak confirmative is of a significantly different nature, as it can be both past and nonpast and does not appear to be connected with the perfect-type developments found both in Lak and the other languages, although further investigation may reveal some association. Based on the Lak data considered in this paper, I am proposing Table V as a revised outline for the comparative investigation of verbal systems with morphologically marked indicative status categories in the Balkan-Pontic-Casian area, and perhaps elsewhere.

Table V

I. Perfect as pure resultative vs Perfect as nonconfirmative vs Perfect as unmarked past or confirmative
   A. First person
   B. Connected narratives
      1. With definite past-time adverbs
      2. In folk tales

II. Perfect with apparently nonpast meanings
   A. Resultative
      1. Admimative
      2. Stative
      3. Performative
      4. Other emotive
   B. Nonconfirmative
      1. Dubitative

III. Quotative particles
   A. Clitic
   B. Independent

IV. Competing forms
   A. Resultative
   B. Confirmative
   C. Nonconfirmative

V. Relation of perfect to neighboring forms
   A. Simple preterite
      1. Marked confirmative
      2. Unmarked
      3. Other
Table V (continued)

B. Pluperfect
1. Pure reported
2. Pure taxic
3. Marked Confirmative
4. Modal
C. Nonpreterite (present)
1. Unmarked
2. Confirmative
3. Nonconfirmative

VI. Influence of other generic categories
A. Aspect
B. Voice

VII. Volition, Uncertainty, Interrogation

VIII. Synthetic vs Analytic construction

(IX. Modality)

NOTES

I wish to thank the University of North Carolina Research Council for a grant which aided me in the research necessary for this article. I also wish to thank the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the Georgian SSR for regularly sending me materials essential to this work. Most of all, I wish to thank my Lak informant, Ms Elena Margomedova. Ms Margomedova was raised in the sul of Kafa (Ciumi) but educated in the literary dialect, viz. Kumax (Kumbl). 1

The orthography used in this article follows current Lak orthographic practice in using doubled consonants for the pharyngealized stops, affricates, and fricatives (but & for the glottalized pharyngealized fricative), v for [v] and [v], and no marks for length/stress. Glottalization is indicated by a subscript or superscript dot, the uvular series are represented by ã and z, the velar series by k and z”. The diacresis is used for front vowels (pharyngealized in initial position).

The plain infinitive of ‘say’ is შორ, past gerund შორებ (I).

The iterative aspect has the smallest number of synthetic tense forms and presents virtually no irregularities. As it does not present any unique peculiarities germane to the discussion of status in this article, the remainder of the discussion will be limited to the plain and progressive aspects (cf. Xajdakov 1966:163, Eirkov 1955:95-100).

Some verbs also take prefixed class markers: ã (I sg), ã- (III sg, I-III pl), ã- (II, IV sg, IV pl). Such verbs will be preceded by a hyphen when being cited, e.g., -ur ‘is’. The forms ãur, ãur, ur, ãur, ãur, ãur, ãur depending on the class, number, and person of the referent (subject or object).

There are, in addition, a large number of participial and gerundive forms which can be derived from these three bases. The complete details are beyond the scope of this article (see Eirkov 1955:95-99, Murkelinskij 1971:218-232).

The English term affirmative is used by Burčuladze (1979: 244), but I have ascribed it in the context of this article due to its possible confusion with affirmative in the meaning of ‘non-negative declarative.’ 8 For complex historical reasons, the plain confirmative transitive present agrees with the object, while the progressive, like the plain common present, agrees with the subject (see Burčuladze 1979:188-93).

The progressive has reduplication of the second root consonant in confirmative and some participial forms based on the root.

One notable example of the use of the Lak confirmative occurs in proverbs (Xajdakov 1961:116). In contrast to, e.g., Georgian, which ordinarily suffices the quotative particle ñ to proverbs, Lak ordinarily uses the confirmative, as can be seen from the following example:

(i) შორები წყალმა კართლი წყალი წყალი წყალმა წყალმა (Xajdakov 1961:116)
Having gone to the Kafa, garlic does not come back sweet.

Cf. დაჯაპინი ნანამ მაქ დაჯაპი ნანამ ოხურ ქარქარი დაჯაპი ნინა (Ovarjolake and Ilaruevili 1976:173)
They sent the garlic to Jerusalem it came back and still stank.

It is interesting to note that in the languages of the Balkans with marked confirmative status categories, it is generally the unmarked verb form ( Macedonian and Bulgarian -l, Turkish -el) which is generally used in proverbs, although the complete picture is much more complex. (Thus, for example, while Georgian usually uses the aorist, it will use the perfect in sayings which involve talking animals or inanimate objects, whereas Turkish will use the confirmative past (-el) in certain types of gnomic proverbs.)

The nomenclature here follows that of Burčuladze (1979), which is the most consistent and takes all the previous literature into account.

Some authors include the iterative imperfect of the type რადგოლა–, -Officials– in their general accounts of the Lak system, but these forms are not germane to the discussion here (see Burčuladze 1979:188-99, also Xajdakov 1966:166, 1975:155, 167).

The rules for the choice of referent for person-number-class marking are beyond the scope of this paper. Verbs with infinitives in ñan, ñan have the third person marker -l in the common archaic past as well as in the aorist.

The second and third person forms of the archaic past are in fact archaic. They occur primarily in folk tales and epic
According to Širkov (1955:108), par is the third present of pun but does not occur in the speech of Kumux. The use of whi/par is additionally complicated by the fact that it is used to form compound verbs, e.g., pun/par 'to play,' as well as in a variety of syntactic and even grammatical constructions (see Širkov 1955:108-109).

Table III is limited to constructions with a present participle, present gerund, or past gerund. Other possibilities include the durative progressive present participle, e.g.,

(11) Čaral lağlajwa duasa par (Mulkelinskij 1971:195)

Apparently it keeps raining.

In this, Lak behaves like Turkish, which uses the perfect-in-origin mæ-past, rather than like Georgian, which uses the aorist, cf. the standard opening equivalent of the English 'Once upon a time,' which translates literally 'Once there was,' and there wasn't:

Lak: Atte-ti beriam ber
Turk: Bir zaman, bir yemek
Geo: Iço da ara içe

As was noted at the beginning of this article, the Lak confirmative can be compared to the English assertive in do. However, Lak differs significantly from English not only due to the fact that the Lak confirmative can occur in a wider variety of tense forms (synthetic and analytic) and sentence types (affirmative, negative, interrogative), but also because Lak has nonconfirmative tense forms of the type found in the Balkan-Front-Caspian area but not in Western Europe.

REFERENCES


