ON THE TERMINOLOGY FOR LAK SYNTHETIC PAST PARADIGMS

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In his book on the Dagestani verb, Xajadakov (1975) characterizes the Lak verb as the most complicated in the Northeast Caucasian family. These complications extend to the grammatical terminology used for Lak indicative synthetic past tense forms, as anyone who reads more than one description of the Lak verbal system will quickly learn (cf., e.g., Buruladze 1979; 1987, Murkelinskij 1971, Murqulinski 1980, Uslar 1880, Xajadakov 1966; 1975, Zirkov 1955). In an earlier article (Friedman To appear) I proposed that the status opposition in finite verbal forms usually marked by the morpheme -ss[a]-, e.g., marked present čălap ‘writes, does write’ (as opposed to the unmarked present ččap) be described by the English term assertive where Russian uses utverditel’nyj ‘affirmative,’ podverditel’nyj ‘confirmative,’ kategoricheskoe ‘categorical,’ and Georgian uses m’kicebiti ‘affirmative, assertive’ (Friedman To appear). My central argument rested on the fact that the assertive forms are stylistically neutral in formal written contexts but marked as emphatic in ordinary conversation. I therefore concluded that they are marked for ‘objective assertion,’ which is the most common style in formal communication but becomes emphatic in everyday speech, where some degree of subjectivity is the norm.

While purely formal or traditional labels may be used for various screeses as long as all participants in the discussion agree on the forms to which they refer, some type of consistency is essential for any coherent discussion. In the case of the Lak assertive, descriptive clarity as well as consistency could be sought, since the distinction itself did not have a traditionally established label. In the case of the Lak past tenses, however, traditional labels such as aorist, perfect, imperfect, and pluperfect are already in use and can, if consistently defined, function as usefully as any. The problem is that different authors use the same label for different forms so that, for example, Murkelinskij’s (1971) pluperfect is Xajadakov’s (1975) imperfect, Buruladze’s (1979) pluperfect is Zirkov’s (1955) past (preterite), etc. I shall attempt, therefore, to propose and justify a consistent terminology for the indicative

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synthetic past tense forms in Lak. Tables One and Two summarize the terminological differences in seven articles and monographs concerned in whole or in part with the description of the Lak verb. Table One gives the Russian and Lak terminology, and Table Two gives English equivalents. Examples use the transitive verb ččin ‘write’ and, where appropriate, the intransitive verb jagan ‘go.’ Class One markers are used in those forms requiring class markers (screeses 4-7).

There are three screeses based on the present stem (ččin-). Screeses 1/2 oppose the first two persons (marked by -w) to the third (marked by -o). Screeve 3 occurs only in the first and second persons of transitive verbs. There are five screeses based in the past stem (ččiwa-). Numbers 7/8, like 1/2, distinguish the first two persons by means of -w as opposed to -o in the third. The other three screeses all have a three-way opposition of the type 1, 2s, 1, 2p -3 marked by -a, -a, and -o, respectively. With the exception of Uslar (1890), the sources of these terms are all relatively modern works describing the literary language (Gumuč [Kumux] dialect). Although Uslar’s work describes the Viqi [Vixi] dialect of a century ago, his terminology is included here not only because his is a pioneering work of Lak linguistics that has influenced and served as a source for generations of subsequent studies, but also because the Viqi dialect does not differ significantly from Gumuč with respect to verbal conjugation (Murkelinskij 1949:100). With the exception of Murqulinski (1980), which is in Lak, the terminology is all in Russian, which has been the language of publication for the majority of studies of the Lak verb.

When lined up and compared to one another, these terminologies manifest a variety of inconsistencies and lacunae. Only Zirkov (1955), Xajadakov (1966), and Murkelinskij (1971) mention all eight of the Lak synthetic past screeses, and only Zirkov (1955) has distinct terms for all of them. In the case of Xajadakov (1975), the lacunae are explained by the fact that he was not attempting a complete description. In the other cases, the reasons for these gaps are not always clear, but it is worthy of note that no two authors omit the same screeses. The use of identical terms for different screeses in Xajadakov, Murkelinskij, and Uslar is explained by the phenomenon of heterogeneous conjugations. This term, taken from Xajadakov (1975), is used to describe the neutralization of (or failure to distinguish) status oppositions in screeses 1/2, 7/8 and
3/4/5. In the case of 1/2 and 7/8 in colloquial Lak, the assertive is ordinarily used in the the first person and the nonassertive in the other two persons, due to the semantics of the assertive (Burculadze 1979). In the case of 3/4/5 we have a diachronic process of relatively recent origin to be discussed in greater detail below. I shall return to these points shortly.

In the case of screenes 1/2, all of the authors except Uslar and Murkelinskij (1979:201) are more or less consistent in using a term translatable by the English 'imperfect.' Examples (1)-(3) are typical:

(1) Ca-ca čumal durčal čsannawa rťaw xaś-xaśir ĭj čarse kṣaru lagaiwa. (Zirkov 1955:148)
From time to time, from under the horses' hooves, stones went rolling rumble-rumble into the gorge.

(2) Qunīwx-umi zuzählalguma, qănū biwkun učaiwa; ... (Markelinskij 1971:200)
Even the older workers, laughing, said: ...

(3) Na haśquin ŝawa useljav, win qašsalx-ura. (Uslar 1890:84)
I today at home was, but you didn’t see.

Uslar’s use of the simple term ‘past’ for screen 1 is explained by the fact that he assigns this screen not to the unmarked aspect but rather to the iterative aspect (type čičäwau). Aside from the fact that the stem in screenes 1/2 is clearly the aspectually unmarked čič-ś- and not the aspectually iterative čič-ś-aw-, the iterative aspect, like the progressive, forms an analytic screen 1/2, i.e., čičawaj (us)ja[w] (cf. progressive čičaj (us)ja[w]).

Murkelinskij (1971:201) uses the term ‘plerperfect’ when he is contrasting screenes 1/2 with screen 7/8 as noncompletive vs completive. Elsewhere, however, he uses the term ‘imperfect’ for screen 1/2 (Murkelinskij 1971:190-91). Uslar, too, uses the term ‘imperfect,’ but only for the forms of the auxiliary meaning ‘be,’ i.e., ja[w]. Both Uslar’s use of ‘distanced’ and Murkelinskij’s use of ‘plerperfect’ appears to be an attempt to convey the idea that screen 1/2 function as the imperfect equivalents of all the remaining synthetic past screenes. In other words, screenes 3-8 all denote single completed actions and only 1/2 of the unmarked aspect do not. In view of these considerations, the standard term imperfect seems entirely adequate.

In the case of screenes 3/4/5 there are two chief issues. The first is whether to convey the fact that synchronically they can be described as forming a single heterogeneous screen, as reflected in Xajjakov’s and Murkelinskij’s terminologies, or to keep them distinct as do Burculadze and Zirkov, or to tread a middle ground, as does Uslar. According to Uslar (1890:90-91), 3 and 4 were used only for events the speaker witnessed or was at least aware of at the time they took place. The difference between 3 and 4 was that 3 was limited to transitive verbs, while 4 was used for intransitives. On the other hand 5 was used for other types of past events. Thus, according to Uslar, the first person of screen 5 was used only in situations when the speaker did not personally remember the events, e.g., something that happened to the speaker in infancy or early childhood. Another feature differentiating 3/4 from 5, according to Uslar, is that the former denote events completed in the past whereas the latter is used for states continuing into the present as in (4):

(4) Wäksa naalaj ŝawa ivkumni! (Uslar 1890:91)
How much time he has been at home! (implication: and he is still there)

In the course of the past century, according to the modern linguists, a situation has developed which parallels to some extent that in screenes 1/2 and 7/8. Screenes 3/4/5 form a single heterogeneous screen in which 4 has become archaic except in the first person intransitive (elsewhere screen 4 occurs only in folklore, among older speakers, etc.), 3 is used for the first person transitive and 5 is used for the other two persons. It is clearly the case that screen 5 is not invariably nonconfirmative, etc., as can be seen from examples (5) and (6) (cf. also Burculadze 1979:207):

(5) Ina haśquin bullalissa čakgů biličan buwnu, mizitrawa uwkošan, jalaqu kura awnu, quran kašaln ivkumnaaša (Xalilov 1976:204).
You today, having interrupted the prayers in progress and gone out of the mosque, then having returned, began [again] to read the Quran!
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(6) Qa‘atsummi cukunčaw šinnawun. Tsun mu tsula jarunnin kawmumni, — kunu. [Xalilov 1976:214]
It has not fallen in the water at all. I have seen it with my own eyes, — he said.

In the context of (5), the congregation is asking the mullah to explain actions that they had just witnessed. Example (6) likewise concerns a clearly personally confirmed action. The second question is the use of the term ‘aorist’ as opposed to the term ‘perfect.’ In practice, these terms can mean whatever the describer chooses, and in fact the meanings do vary considerably among language descriptions. Thus, for example, the term aorist is used in descriptions of Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Georgian for non-durative or punctulative pasts while in descriptions of Turkish it refers to a type of gnomic present. Similarly the term perfect is used for a present resultative, an unmarked past that developed from: a present resultative, etc. Nonetheless, some type of consistency must be established for any given language under consideration. In connection with these two problems, the relationship of screeves 3/4/5 to 6, 7, and 8 should also be considered. Burčuladze, Xajdakov and Murkelinskij all treat 7/8 as distinguished only on the basis of assertive/nonassertive. Zirkov, however, makes this same distinction for 7 and 6. Burčuladze and Murkelinskij (1979) likewise use the term ‘pluperfect’ for screeves 7/8. Zirkov uses it only for screave 8, Xajdakov uses it for screave 6, while Murqfilinskij (1980) implies that 6, 7, and 8 are all some type of pluperfect. Uslar omits 7 and 8 and treats 6 as the assertive of 3/4.

While the heterogeneous unity of 3/4/5 is clear, it is necessary for both morphological and descriptive reasons to distinguish among them. I therefore propose using the cover term ‘perfect’ to refer to all three and the terms ‘transitive,’ ‘archaic’ and ‘unmarked’ to distinguish among them. The use of ‘transitive’ for screave 3 is justified by the fact that it is indeed limited to transitive verbs. Examples (7) and (8) are typical:

(7) Harcannal canma canmadsa kasak butan ńirkinsa xaj, nagu ca kasak butaw. [Xalilov 1976:210]
It seemed that each person was supposed to put in a piece, so I have put in a piece, too.

(8) Tsun ina kičirawa xal x-unaw. [Zirkov and Xajdakov 1962:276]
I have seen you on the street.

The use of ‘archaic’ for screave 4 is preferable to the use of, e.g., ‘intransitive’ because it is indeed archaic in most of its uses (a fact I have been able to confirm with my native informant) and because transitive uses are still possible, albeit uncommon.8

(9) Na haqqinu kūrūsai lavtaka iktri (Uslar 1890:90)
I was at home this morning [but not now].

(10) ... zana biwku lawgri kijagu ussu (Burčuladze 1979:203)
Having returned, the two brothers have left.

(11) Tanal cu bawxsurisw? (Burčuladze 1979:205)
Has he sold the horse?

By contrast with screaves 3 and 4, screave 5 is unmarked. Cf. examples (4)-(6) above also:

(12) Žul aįjurtl ḥahebu kunu, zul kaacrā tājīrnsbunni. Mij tājīrda bulara, mij žulli! [Xalilov 1976:207]
Our stallions having neighed, your mares have born colts.
Give those colts, they are ours!

(13) Tsun xasijma kawmumni, ganal ťanç čajni, maq lahsan duma wa šinajma šuna. [Xalilov 1976:214]
I have seen it well, when it jumped, it let its tail down and touched the water.

The choice of the term ‘perfect’ over ‘aorist’ is motivated by the fact that 3/4/5 are not narrative advancing screeves. They are used for statements of fact, very often — but not always — with some sense of present relevance or state. The term perfect, therefore, is used advisedly, with the caveat that it is not identical to the perfect in other languages but shares with at least some of them the qualities of denoting completion without necessarily denoting plot-advancing action.
The relationships among screeves 6, 7, and 8 are as problematic as the table indicates. It is clear on the basis of usage, e.g., examples (14)-(16) that 7 is best labeled ‘aorist’ in the sense of ‘plot-advancing past tense denoting completed acts’ and that it is not a ‘pluperfect’ or ‘distant past.’

There were too few cars today. We didn’t send the goods.

(15) Čak bulal la, taw čañan biwkuna miziril čira čapal balilisla kašaši. Allahnaal qaasa čapur x-un qašitan, na ta liqan ban lawqsimaw. (Xalilov 1976:204)
While I was praying, I saw a dog befouling the wall of the mosque. Not to let Allah’s house be defiled, I went out to make it run away.

(16) Graždan dažwilul čumal ... ukunasa iš x-usar. ... partizannan maqunnaaj x-un bahasar. Partizannal haukmu buwsar arxu zunsawumaj han. Amma ƙalamin na ciwal ala mergaj ƙasur. Partizannan cala qplitiirtaasal, rixqijusuasal zunsawun han balaq biwksear. Bawtun mašwara balilissa čumal, iwsun ca ƙalilissa partizannal uwkuna. ... — ƙalami na ƙalilissa ƙini baqan banna ... — Wil maq žun ƙulsar, —kunu, partizantal baqin hadur qana biwkuna. Cinjw lawguna, ƙalilissa partizannan gikwuwa liwčuna.
During the Civil War ... such an event happened. ... the Partisans had to pull back. The Partisans decided to go into the mountains. But the Whites intended to pursue them. The Partisans had to go into the mountains with all their families and cattle. During the council meeting a young Partisan stood up and said: ... — I will hold off the Whites all day. ... — Your word is known to us, — saying the partisans began to get ready to go. Everybody left, the young partisan stayed there. (Murqšilinskij 1980:22)

On the basis of their morphology, 6 and 8 are clearly both marked for assertive status. The difference between the two is that the endings of screeve 6 are not marked for tense (the stem itself is markedly past) whereas both the stem and the endings in screeve 8 are markedly past (the latter are identical with the imperfect of ‘be’). In Murqšilinskij (1980) example (17) is given as the formal equivalent of the colloquial (14). If we examine the first part of example (16), cited below as (18), it appears that screeve 6 is a type of scene setting providing the background for narrative-advancing screeve 7:

(17) ɗarkinsaka mašinaartu baqaswiirij buwnu, cila čumal qus tajla ƙadursas. (Murqšilinskij 1980:117)
Due to the absence of the necessary cars, the goods have not been sent in time.

(18) Graždan dažwilul čumal ... ukunasa iš x-usar. ... partizannan maqunnaaj x-un bahasar. Partizannal haukmu buwsar arxu zunsawumaj han. Amma ƙalamin na gajin ƙirin lajan ƙasur. Partizannan cala qplitiirtaasal, rixqijusuasal zunsawun han balaq biwksear. Bawtun mašwara balilissa čumal, iwsun ca ƙalilissa partizannal uwkuna. ... — ƙalami na ƙalilissa ƙini baqan banna ... — Wil maq žun ƙulsar, —kunu, partizantal baqin hadur qana biwkuna. Cinjw lawguna, ƙalilissa partizannan gikwuwa liwčuna. (Murqšilinskij 1980:22)
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Screeve 8 is illustrated by examples (19) as well as in example (15) cited again here as (20):

(19) Pau īwkussa čumal na açwa tuman xarž buwsisja. ... Tsul ussil jiim: ṭajiisar. Pau īwkussa čumal, munal açwa tuman xarž buwsisja. Amma xu ḳirai ƙadursas, mi — ḳi baqin ɗarkinsa. (Xalilov 1976:204)
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At the time farther died I spent 10 tumans. ... What my brother says is true. At the time father died he spent 10 tumans. But we did not make an agreement that it was necessary to divide it in half.

(20) Čak bullaj una, sun ēlan biwkuna mizirtal čira čapal bullalisa kačisi. Allahnaš qa'tsa čapur x-un qa'bitan, na ta liqan ban lawgaijaw. (Xalilov 1976:204)

While I was praying, I saw a dog befouling the wall of the mosque. Not to let Allah's house be defiled, I went out to make it run away.

Although example (19) could be taken as illustrating a type of pluperfect or distant past, such an interpretation seems forced for example (20), where lawgaijaw appears to be functioning according to Burčuladze's and Murkelinskij's descriptions, i.e., as the assertive equivalent of the aorist.

It is clear on the basis of function and form that both screeve 8 and screeve 6 are assertive. The question is, how do they relate to one another and to the aorist? In example (17) tažla qa'durkssar describes the result of a lack of vehicles while in (18) x-ussar and the following forms in that screeve describe the state of affairs relating to and resulting in the main action of the story. In (19) and (20), on the other hand, lawgaijaw, xarž buwaaiya, and qa'durussiya describe actions completed in the past without referring to their results in the present or using them to set a scene. In the case of (20) the event described by lawgaijaw follows on that described by ēlan biwkuna, whereas in (17) tažla qa'durkssar is a resultative equivalent of tažla dulated qa'x-una in (14). Consider also the fact that the various perfect screeves in Lak are called cana largsa 'present past' and that screeve 6 has a present-derived desinence while screeve 8 has a past tense-derived desinence.

In Lak, the temporal relationships of anteriority described by the English term pluperfect are rendered by a complex set of non-finite forms, while the other screeves of the Lak perfect — the transitive (screeve 3), the archaic (screeve 4), and the unmarked (screeve 5) — are not marked for the assertive feature carried by the -sea- in screeve 6. On the basis of all the foregoing, I propose the terms assertive aorist and assertive perfect for screeves 8 and 6, respectively.
### Table One

LAK Past Paradigms: Russian & LAK Terminology

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### Table Two

LAK Past Paradigms: English Translations

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Zirkov, L. I. 1955. Lakkij jazyk Moscov: AN SSSR.
Zirkov, L. I. and S. M. Xajakov, 1962. Lokaw mazl wä örus mazral slovar'. Moscow: AN SSSR.

NOTES

1I wish to thank the Central Library of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, which has sent me many of the materials that helped me in this work. I am also indebted to the University of North Carolina Research Council, which funded some of my original research on Lak. Finally, I wish to thank my Lak informant, Ms. Eleonora Magomedova.

2Unfortunately, I received Burçuladze1987, too late for inclusion in this article. It will no doubt provide many valuable insights for future investigation.

3I shall concentrate on the unmarked aspect (type čičin 'to write') since the marked aspects (progressive and iterative: types čičan, čičaxan, respectively), lack the past stem and synthetic screes based on the past stem in the unmarked aspect are replaced by analytic pasts in the marked aspects.

4Proleše can be translated as 'past' or 'preterite,' and I have chosen 'past' as the more convenient and flexible of the two. Both predeproleše and davnoproleše can be translated by 'plerperfect,' which I have done, but it should be borne in mind that the literal translations are 'pre-past' and 'distant-past,' respectively, which are meanings that some of the scholars take literally (e.g., Burçulajle 1979). I have distinguished between [ne]joverlostnoe and [ne]jakončennoe by using the standard translation 'in[perfective] for the former while translating the latter as 'non-completive.' These terms refer to essentially the same phenomena. The difference appears to be that Merkelnis is emphasizing the fact that the Lak distinction is not to be taken as being identical with Russian superordinate aspect, which is described by the term[s] [ne]joverlostnoe in Russian grammatical description. I have discussed my reasons for using the English term 'assertive' where Russian uses
DANCING IN FRONT OF A MIRROR: ORTHOGLOSSY AS A MEANS OF SALVATION FROM THE 'TRADUTTORE — TRADITORE' DEVIATIONISM

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'Peace will reign among men when words will have the same meaning for all.' Confucius

Scripta volant, verba manent.

This study of the textual—and mental—translation process from a native ('first') into a 'second' mother tongue (acquired through acculturation) and vice-versa is meant to illustrate key aspects of the Soviet 'Linguistic Policy' toward minorities languages.¹ It is based on the linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of two official Kirghiz texts, but the author is thoroughly convinced that similar conclusions could be reached for almost any of the other Soviet minority languages.

The first text (I) is an article on literary criticism written directly in Kirghiz by a Russian-educated native speaker (Jumadylov 1970:42) and the second one (II), the translation into Kirghiz of a TASS press release initially written in Russian and published in Sovetnyk Kyrgyzstan, 9 September 1983. These texts are given below in both Kirghiz and Russian versions, with a textual translation into English.

It is a well-known fact that a 'faithful' translation, stricto sensu, from language A into language B is feasible only inasmuch as both A and B have in common, on the basis of linguistic (genetic or typological) and/or of extralinguistic similarities a minimal set of common syntactic and referential (semantic/cultural) features. Thus, practically all the stylistic features, cultural references, and semantic 'winks' of an English novel can be translated into any other European language, including Hungarian and Finnish.

When these intra- and extralinguistic conditions are not met (as in translations of, say, Proust into Japanese, sacred or epic 'Third World texts into some European language or in the case of Bible translation), one should rather speak—whether we regret or welcome the ensuing 'respect' of the original—of adaptation and even of rewriting. What then migrates from one system to the other merely is what could be called 'the plot.' One can even say that the transfer process is successful despite the loss of a whole set of original stylistic features and semantic and cultural connotations.

¹See note 5.