Specialized converbs
and adverbial subordination
in Axaxdǝrǝ Akhvakh

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Abstract
Northern Akhvakh, like other Nakh-Daghestanian languages, has a large inventory of converbs
specialized in the expression of various semantic types of adverbial subordination: locative, temporal,
conditional, concessive, simulative, gradual, and purposive. After outlining the general characteristics
of Akhvakh morphosyntax, this paper describes the morphology and the uses of the individual
converbs, and discusses the possibility to reconstruct their origin. Attention is drawn to the high
proportion of etymologically transparent converb, which suggests that the particular type of
morphosyntactic organization characteristic of Nakh-Daghestanian languages favors
grammaticalization processes that do not modify the overall organization of the adverbial
subordination system, but result in a constant and relatively rapid renewal of the inventories of
specialized converbs.

1. Introduction

Akhvakh (ašʷaṭi mič’i, Russian axvaxskij jazyk) belongs to the Andic (sub-)branch
of the Northeast Caucasian (or Nakh-Daghestanian) family.1 Like the other Andic
languages, Akhvakh has no writing tradition.2 According to Magomedova &
Abdulaeva 2007, Akhvakh has approximately 20 000 speakers. Four dialects are
traditionally recognized. One of them is designated as Northern Akhvakh, whereas
the other three are grouped under the label of Southern Akhvakh.

Northern Akhvakh is spoken in four villages of the Axvaxskij Rajon in the western
part of Daghestan (Tadmagit’, Lologonit’, Kudijab-Roso, and Izani), in recent
settlements in the lowlands of Daghestan, and in Axaxdǝrǝ near Zaqatala
(Azerbaijan), where I carried field work on Akhvakh. Axaxdǝrǝ Akhvakh (henceforth
AD Akhvakh) is a variety of Northern Akhvakh very close to those spoken in the
Axvaxskij Rajon of Daghestan (henceforth AR Akhvakh), presented in

1 The other Andic languages are Andi, Bagvalal, Botlikh, Chamala, Godoberi, Karata, and Tindi. None
of them has a particularly close relationship to Akhvakh. Andic languages are traditionally grouped
with Avar and Tsezic languages into a single branch of the Northeast Caucasian family. The other
branches of the Northeast Caucasian family are Lak, Dargi (or Dargwa), Lezgi, Khinalug (sometimes
considered a marginal member of the Lezgi branch), and Nakh.
2 The transcription used in this paper departs from the API conventions on the following points:
    alveolar voiceless affricate c; palato-alveolar fricatives š (voiceless) and ž (voiced); palato-alveolar
affricates č (voiceless) and ǯ (voiced); lateral voiceless affricate l; the macron is used for long vowels
and strong consonants.
Magomedbekova 1967 and Magomedova & Abdulaeva 2007. The Southern Akhvakh dialects are spoken in one village each (Cegob, Tljanub and Ratlub), all situated in the Šamil’skij Rajon of Dagestan.

The analysis of the specialized converbs of Akhvakh proposed in this paper is based on texts collected in Axaxdara between June 2005 and April 2008.

In accordance with Nedjalkov (1995), the term ‘converb’ is understood here as referring to non-autonomous verb forms (i.e., verb forms devoid of the ability to head independent clauses) that depart from other types of non-autonomous verb forms (infinitives, masdars, participles) by the fact that they do not occur in complement clauses or in relative clauses. This broad definition follows the Altaicist tradition from which the term ‘converb’ originally stems. In the description of Dagestani languages, a more restrictive definition according to which converbs are non-finite verb forms specialized in adverbial subordination (Haspelmath 1995a) may be problematic for the following two reasons:

– In the verbal system of Dagestani languages, the distinctions morphologically expressed in verb forms may show no simple correlation with finiteness as a feature of predicative constructions (section 2.4.6 provides a brief discussion of the morphological correlates of finiteness in Akhvakh; for a more detailed discussion, see (Creissels To appear)).
– The reference to adverbial subordination in the definition of ‘converb’ is not problematic for the specialized converbs that constitute the main topic of this paper, but it may be problematic for the ‘general converb’, which at least in some languages occurs in constructions analyzable as instances of clause coordination (see section 3).

The distinction between ‘contextual’ and ‘specialized’ converbs, put forward by Nedjalkov in a paper that appeared in 1990 in Russian and was later published in English in Haspelmath and König’s volume on converbs (Nedjalkov 1995), has been used among others by Haspelmath (1995b) for Lezgian: contextual converbs ‘leave the precise nature of the semantic link between the clauses open’, whereas specialized converbs carry ‘quite specific adverbial meanings’. Given the typological homogeneity of the Nakh-Dagestani language family, it is not surprising that this distinction proves useful for the description of Akhvakh too. As pointed out by Bisang (1995:156), generally speaking, the distinction between contextual and specialized converbs must certainly be conceived as gradual rather than discrete.

3 Judging from Magomedbekova 1967 and Magomedova & Abdulaeva 2007, the variety of Akhvakh spoken in Axaxdara does not differ significantly from the varieties of Northern Akhvakh spoken in the Axvaxskij Rajon, and this judgment was confirmed without any reservation by Indira Abdulaeva, co-author of the Akhvakh-Russian dictionary and a native speaker of Northern Akhvakh herself, who spent one week in Axaxdara while I was carrying field-work there in April 2008. I have been able to find no precision about the time when Akhvakh migrants began to settle in Axaxdara, but there are still in Axaxdara old people who were born in Daghestan, and whose parents migrated to Azerbaijan at the end of the second world war, when the economic situation in Daghestan was particularly difficult.

4 The analysis presented here has benefited from the comments and suggestions of Bernard Comrie, Misha Daniel, and Isabelle Bril. Any remaining faults are of course my own.

However, in Akhvakh, there is a clear-cut distinction between a multipurpose
converb assuming a variety of functions, and converbs specialized in particular types
of adverbial subordination.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 outlines the main characteristics of
Akhvakh morphosyntax: clause structure (section 2.1), nouns and noun phrases
(section 2.2), and verb inflection (section 2.3). Section 3 and 4 briefly present the
general converb and the progressive converb respectively. Section 5 discusses the
general properties of the specialized converbs. Sections 6 to 12 are devoted to
individual converbs or semantic groups of converbs: locative converb (section 6),
temporal converbs (section 7), conditional and concessive converbs (section 8),
similative converb (section 9), gradual converb (section 10), explicative converb
(section 11), and purposive converb (section 12). Each section or subsection includes
not only illustrations of the use of the converbs, but also a discussion of the
possibility to reconstruct their origin.

2. General remarks on Akhvakh morphosyntax

2.1. Clause structure

Akhvakh clause structure is characterized by flexible constituent order. Case
marking and gender-number agreement between the verb and its core arguments are
consistently ergative. In contrast, assertive agreement (see section 2.4) follows a split
intransitive pattern.

Arguments whose identity is recoverable from the context can freely be omitted,
and unexpressed arguments receiving an arbitrary interpretation are common too.

Causative is the only valency-changing mechanism systematically expressed via
verb morphology or grammaticalized periphrases.

2.2 Nouns and noun phrases

Three semantically transparent agreement classes of nouns are distinguished in
the singular: human masculine (M), human feminine (F), and non-human (N). In
the plural, the distinction masculine vs. feminine is neutralized, resulting in a binary
opposition human plural (HPL) vs. non-human plural (NPL). Noun morphology shows
only frozen vestiges of gender prefixes.

In canonical NPs, the head noun is in final position and is inflected for number
and case. Noun dependents other than adjectives show no agreement mark, and the
agreement morphology of attributive adjectives is reduced in comparison with AR
Akhvakh or the other Andic languages. In the absence of a head noun, the last word of the NP, whatever its nature, is
marked for gender, number and case.

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6 The only exceptions to the semantic rule of class assignment are œde ‘person’ and mik’e ‘child’, which
in the singular trigger N agreement, whereas the corresponding plural forms õdo and mik’el regularly
trigger HPL agreement.

7 In AR Akhvakh, all noun dependents in canonical NPs optionally take class suffixes agreeing with
the head noun, but in the data I collected in Axaxdar, noun dependents other than adjectives never
occur with agreement marks in canonical NPs, and suffixal agreement of adjectives never occurs in
classes other than HPL.
Number inflection of nouns is irregular and involves considerable free variation. The absolute form of nominals (used in the extra-syntactic function of quotation or designation and in S or P roles) has no overt mark. Case suffixes may attach to a stem identical with the absolute form, or to a special oblique stem. In the singular, the formation of the oblique stem is very irregular and involves considerable free variation. In the plural, the formation of the oblique stem is more regular. In particular, ‘oblique stem markers’ expressing class distinctions (M -šu-, F/N -ňi-, HPL -lo-, NPL -le- ~ -li-) are more systematically used in the plural than in the singular.

Case inflection includes the following cases:

- ergative (-de),
- dative (-la),
- genitive (Ø or -ľi),
- comitative (-k’ena),
- purposive (-bana),
- five series of spatial cases encoding different spatial configurations, with three cases in each series: essive -i or -e, lative -a, and elative -u(ne).

Personal pronouns have an irregular inflection but show the same case distinctions as nouns, and the distinction between three spatial cases applies to locative adverbs too.

There are two possible constructions for NP coordination: either “NP₁-k’ena NP₂”, where -k’ena is the suffix of the comitative case (also used for comitative or instrumental adjuncts), or “NP₁-la NP₂-la”, where -la is an additive particle (glossed ADD) also found in contexts in which it corresponds to English ‘also’, ‘in turn’, or ‘even’. See section 3 for more details on this particle.

2.3. Adjectives

Like verbs (see section 3.4.2), adjectives divide into those obligatorily including a class agreement prefix, and those devoid of it. Like nouns, they cannot bear TAM inflection and fulfill the predicate function by combining with the copula godi or with the verb bik’uru ‘be’.

In Axaxdara Akhvakh, adjectives in the role of noun dependent or in predicate function do not show suffixal inflection, whereas nominalized adjectives (i.e., adjectives occurring as the last word of a noun phrase) are inflected for plural and

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8 In principle, zero-marked genitive characterizes M and HPL NPs, whereas -ľi is used with F, N or NPL NPs, but this rule is not very strict, and variations are observed.
9 The system of spatial cases of Akhvakh departs from the typical Daghestanian pattern in that one of the series (the -g- series) is a default series that does not encode a particular spatial configuration, and spatial configurations tend to be encoded by combining NPs showing default spatial case marking with locative adverbs showing parallel spatial case inflection, rather than via ‘traditional’ case marking. Moreover, the characteristic consonant of the -g- series is not always apparent, due to morphophonological processes (for example, šaha-ľi-ga ‘to the town’ can optionally be realized šaha-ľ-a).
10 Magomedbekova (1967) identified -u has as ablative proper, and -une as perlative, but in AD Akhvakh, these two endings are in free variation.
11 In Akhvakh, non-verbal predications involving neither the copula nor the verb bik’uru ‘be’ are exceptional in statements. By contrast, the omission of the copula regularly occurs in questions.

2.4. Verb inflection

Independent verb forms are inflected for TAM, polarity, and gender-number agreement; TAM and polarity are conjointly expressed by portemanteau markers. Assertive agreement (see section 2.4.3 below) is morphologically distinct from gender-number agreement and occurs in one tense only.

In addition to the synthetic forms listed in section 2.4.1, AD Akhvakh has analytic verb forms with the copula godi or the verb bik’uru ‘be’ in auxiliary function.

2.4.1. TAM-polarity marking in independent verb forms

TAM/polarity inflection of verbs heading independent clauses includes the following possibilities:

- PF₁ (perfective₁): HPL -iri, other classes -ari
- PF₂ (perfective₂): HPL -idi, other classes -ada(-CL)
- PF.NEG (perfective negative): -ila (-CL)
- IPF₁ (imperfective₁): -iri
- IPF₂ (imperfective₂): HPL -idi, other classes -ida(-CL)
- IPF₁,NEG (imperfective₁ negative): -iki
- IPF₂,NEG (imperfective₂ negative): -ika(-CL)
- UW (past unwitnessed): M -u-wi(di), F -i-wi(di), N -a-wi(di) NPL -ari-wi(di)
- UW.NEG (past unwitnessed negative): M -uš-u-wi(di), F -iš-i-wi(di), N -uš-a-wi(di), NPL -ari-wi(di)
- MIR (mirative): M -u-wa, F -i-wa, N -a-wa, HPL -aji, NPL -ari-wa
- MIR.NEG (mirative negative): M -uš-u-wa, F -iš-i-wa, N -uš-a-wa, HPL -uš-aji, NPL -uš-ari-wa
- POT (potential): M/N -u-wa, F -i-wa, HPL -oji, NPL -uri-wa
- IMP (imperative): -a
- PROH (prohibitive): -uba
- OPT (optative): -a-j’a
- OPT.NEG (optative negative): -uba-j’a

This list of independent synthetic verb forms calls for the following remarks:

a. The forms labeled ‘perfective₁’ and ‘perfective₂’ carry distinctions in the involvement of the assertor (i.e., the speaker in assertive clauses, the addressee in questions) in the event referred to: in assertions, PF₂ is typically used with transitive verbs involving a 1st person A, or intransitive verbs representing controllable events involving a 1st person S, whereas in questions, PF₂ is

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12 In AR Akhvakh, attributive or predicative adjectives optionally show gender-number suffixes.
typically used with transitive verbs involving a 2nd person A, or in intransitive verbs representing controllable events involving a 2nd person S (see Creissels 2008a & 2008b for more details). This distinction is neutralized in the negative.

b. The distinctions PF₁ vs. PF₂ and IPF₁ vs. IPF₂ seem to be historically related, since the PF₁ and IPF₁ suffixes have in common the ending ri, contrasting with da common to the PF₂ and IPF₂ suffixes. Moreover, PF₂ and IPF₂ share the possibility to be used as participles, whereas PF₁ and IPF₁ are strictly finite verb forms. However, functionally, the choice between IPF₁ and IPF₂ in their use as independent verb forms clearly puts into play aspecto-modal distinctions, and has nothing to do with distinctions in assertor’s involvement, or more generally with person distinctions: both forms can express a habitual meaning, but there is a clear tendency (particularly strong in AD Akhvakh) to prefer IPF₂ as the marker of habitual aspect, whereas IPF₁ is used in modal contexts in which it is impossible to substitute IPF₂ for it. In AD Akhvakh, IPF₂ is particularly common as a narrative tense (historical present), whereas IPF₁ is never used in this function.

c. UW (past unwitnessed) is typically used to refer to events known by hearsay. It occurs in inferential contexts too, but this use is much less common. This tense has no HPL form, and in contexts in which it could be expected to occur with HPL agreement, Akhvakh speakers use the perfect (an analytic tense consisting of the general converb HPL of the auxiliated verb and the copula in auxiliary function).

d. MIR (mirative) is a verb form encountered mainly (but not exclusively) in questions. This form is particularly common (in fact, almost obligatory) in why-questions, which suggests analyzing it as expressing surprise.

2.4.2. Gender-number agreement

Gender-number agreement of verbs involves both prefixes and suffixes, with two different kinds of conditioning:

– The presence of gender-number prefixes in verb forms involves no grammatical conditioning. Verbs divide into two phonologically and semantically arbitrary morphological classes, those that cannot occur without a gender-number prefix indexing the S or P argument (i.e., to the argument encoded by an NP in the absolute form), and those that never take such a prefix.
– By contrast, the presence of gender-number suffixes indexing the S or P argument is conditioned by the grammatical nature of the verb form. The rules governing the presence and the phonological realization of gender-number suffixes in verb forms are complex. In some verb forms, gender-number suffixes do not occur at all; in others, obligatory gender-number agreement marks merge with TAM/polarity markers; in a third group of verb forms, gender-number suffixes are optional, and when they are present they may appear as distinct segments, or merge with TAM/polarity markers.

The presence of gender-number prefixes or suffixes in verb forms depends therefore on a complex combination of lexical and grammatical factors, but the agreement rule itself is very simple, at least in the general case: when gender-number marks are present in a verb form, they index the argument in S or P role, represented by an NP in the absolute form. Exceptions to this rule are however
observed in some complex constructions in which the suffixal agreement of dependent verb forms may be controlled ‘externally’. Such a construction is presented here in section 3.

2.4.3. Participles

AD Akhvakh has four participles. Each of them is characterized by a stem homonymous with one of the independent verb forms listed above: perfective₂ -ada, perfective negative -i, imperfective₂ -ida, and imperfective₂ negative -ika.

2.4.4. Dependent verb forms

Strictly dependent verb forms include an infinitive -u(r)u, a general converb (M -o(ho), F -e(he), N -e, HPL -i, NPL -ere), a progressive converb (M -ero, HPL -eri, other classes -ere), and several specialized converbs whose description constitutes the topic of this paper.

AD Akhvakh also has a verbal noun -e, which however is rarely found with dependents treated like dependents of a verbal head. Contrary to the verbal noun (or ‘masdar’) of most Caucasian languages, the verbal noun of Akhvakh tends to behave like a noun with respect to its internal syntax too.

2.4.5. Morphological manifestations of finiteness

A striking particularity of Akhvakh is that there is no simple correlation between the morphological characteristics of verb forms and the finiteness properties of the predicative constructions they head (i.e., their ability to be used as independent clauses with particular illocutionary values and/or to be involved in particular types of complex structures).

In particular, there is no simple relationship between the way Akhvakh verb forms behave with respect to class agreement with the absolutive argument, and their ability to head independent clauses, as can be seen from the classification of AD Akhvakh verb forms according to the presence / absence of suffixed class marks given in (2). In this chart, verb forms are divided into those that have the ability to head independent clauses, and those that are only found in complex clause constructions.

Table 1. Suffixed class agreement markers in Akhvakh verb forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent verb forms</th>
<th>Dependent verb forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Suffixes expressing obligatory class agreement with more than two possible values</td>
<td>potential past unwitnessed mirative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Suffixes including an obligatory HPL vs. other classes distinction, and compatible with additional suffixes optionally expressing</td>
<td>perfective₂ positive imperfective₂ positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
class agreement with other classes

c. Suffixes including no obligatory class agreement, but compatible with optional class marks

perfective negative
imperfective\textsubscript{2} negative
progressive converb
similative converb

d. Suffixes expressing an obligatory \textit{HPL vs. other classes} distinction, but without the possibility of optional class agreement with other classes

perfective\textsubscript{1} positive
conditional converb
posterior converb
inceptive converb

e. Suffixes that never include marks of class agreement

imperfective\textsubscript{1} positive
imperfective\textsubscript{1} negative
imperative
prohibitive

infinitive
verbal noun
verbal locative
simultaneous converb
imminent converb
anterior converb
non-posterior converb
concessive converb
gradual converb
explicative converb
purposive converb

3. The general converb

This section provides a brief account of the main characteristics of the general converb (glossed \textit{CVB}). A more detailed analysis can be found in (Creissels Submitted).

The uses of the general converb can be classified into three broad types:

(a) It may add a manner specification to an event encoded by an independent verb form, as in ex. (1).

(1) a. \textit{jaše q’e’i-a j-e t-e j-ini.} 
girl home-LAT F-run-CVB.F F-go.IPF\textsuperscript{13} 
‘The girl went home running.’

b. \textit{hu-be ſaq’ilo b-ešq-aj-e g-úč-ida.} 
DEM-N intelligence N-work-CAUS-CVB.N do-obl-CVB.N \textsuperscript{2} 
‘This must be done cleverly.’

\textsuperscript{13} In the glosses of the examples, the asterisk signals verb forms involving morphophonological processes, the underlying representation of which is given in an annex at the end of the article.
(b) It may encode an event viewed as the first stage of a complex event whose second stage is encoded by an independent verb form, as in ex. (2).

(2)  
\begin{align*}  
\text{a. } & \text{ak‘o-de ri‘i } b-iž-e \: q’-ěni.  
\text{wife-ERG meat N-cook-CVB.N eat-IPF,}^*  
\text{‘The wife cooked the meat and ate it.’}  
\end{align*}  
\begin{align*}  
\text{b. } & \text{molā-šw-e } tąχi-gunu \: īgora \: b-čx-e \: įhoro-ge \: gēl-i \: tūk-ini.  
\text{Molla-M-ERG pocket-EL bread N-take-CVB.N lake-ESS inside-ESS dip-IPF,}^*  
\text{‘Molla took some bread from his pocket and dipped it into the lake.’}  
\end{align*}  

(c) It combines with the copula or the verb bik‘urula ‘be’ in auxiliary function to give analytic tenses semantically similar to the English perfect, as in ex. (3).

(3)  
\begin{align*}  
\text{a. } & \text{iš“adda-šw-e } lāgi \: b-iqw-e \: godi.  
\text{shepherd-M-ERG sheep N-kill-CVB.N COP,N}  
\text{‘The shepherd has killed a sheep.’}  
\end{align*}  
\begin{align*}  
\text{b. } & \text{iš“adda-šw-e } lāgi \: b-iqw-e \: b-ik‘-awi.  
\text{shepherd-M-ERG sheep N-kill-CVB.N N-be-UW,N}  
\text{‘The shepherd (reportedly) had killed a sheep.’}  
\end{align*}  

The status of constructions that constitute the translational equivalent of English clause coordination but involve non-autonomous verb forms, as in ex. (2) above, is notoriously difficult to establish with respect to the traditional notions of coordination and subordination. In the literature, at least three different types of analyses can be found for similar constructions:

- They may represent instances of co-subordination, with coordinate (parallel) and subordinate (asymmetrical) properties co-occurring within one and the same sentence.
- Depending on semantic factors, they may show variations in their syntactic properties that justify analyzing them as instantiating coordination in some of their uses, and subordination in some others. Among Daghistani languages, such an analysis has been advocated by Kazenin & Testelec (1999) for Tsakhur, and by Polinsky (2007) for Tsez.
- In spite of their translational equivalence with clause coordination, they may uniformly show a syntactic behavior consistent with a subordination analysis, as argued by Kazenin (2001) for Bagvalal, a close relative of Akhvakh.

In this respect, the situation of Akhvakh is similar to that described by Kazenin for Bagvalal. I came across no obvious case of a use of the general converb that would contradict the subordination analysis, whereas the texts I collected include many occurrences of the general converb in constructions in which the coreference relationships between full NPs and pronouns are organized in a way commonly considered incompatible with coordination. Additional observations incompatible
with a coordination analysis can be made on linear order, embedding, relativization, and negation, and a particularly strong argument in favor of the subordination analysis is that the general converb of Akhvakh may show ‘double agreement’, one of the agreement marks being then governed by the S/P argument of the main verb. As already explained, Akhvakh verbs may have two slots (a prefixal one and a suffixal one) for gender-number agreement. The availability of the prefixal slot is lexically determined, whereas the availability of the suffixal slot depends on the TAM value of the verb form. Prefixal agreement is invariably controlled ‘internally’, i.e., by the S/P argument of the verb. In most constructions, the same rule applies to suffixal agreement, but in complex constructions, it may happen that a dependent verb form shows ‘external agreement’, i.e. agreement controlled by an NP that does not belong to the clause headed by the dependent verb form. In particular, the suffixal agreement of the general converb may be controlled by the S/P agreement of the main verb, as illustrated by ex. (4).

(4) \(\text{mol}\text{a rasadi} \ w-u.\text{'-i} \ \text{ṣ̌ela-Ła} \ m-\text{åne} \ ba-k\text{'-i} \ \text{goli}.\)

Molla Rasadi  M-die-CVB.HPL  graveyard-ILLAT  HPL-go.PROG*  HPL-be-CVB.HPL  COP₁,HPL

‘Molla Rasadi died, and they were going to the graveyard.’

In this sentence, the masculine singular prefix of \(w-u.\text{'-i} \) ‘having died’ expresses agreement with the S argument \(\text{mol}\text{a rasadi} \), whereas the only possible explanation of the human plural suffix is that it expresses agreement with the understood S argument of the main verb.

4. The progressive converb

The progressive converb is characterized by a suffix -ere, glossed PROG, with optional class agreement in classes M and HPL: the form -ere can be used for all classes, and this is the only possible form in classes F, N and NPL, whereas M and HPL agreement can optionally be expressed via the forms -ero and -eri respectively. Apart from its use in the formation of analytic tenses (see below), this converb occurs exclusively in combination with the copula or the verb \(\text{bik}'\text{uruwa} \) ‘be’ in existential function, or one of the following three verbs: \(\text{biχ}'\text{uruwa} \) ‘remain’, \(\text{hariguruwa} \) ‘see’, and \(\text{mičunuwa} \) ‘find’. Note that \(\text{hariguruwa} \) and \(\text{mičunuwa} \) both imply an experiencer in the dative case.

The only possible construction for the progressive converb is a control construction in which the S / A argument of the progressive converb cannot be expressed and is obligatorily identified to the absolutive argument of the main verb, as illustrated by ex. (5) to (8).

Note that, with the progressive converb of transitive verbs, if suffixed agreement marks are present, they reflect the class of the A argument identified to the S

\[\text{mol}\text{a rasadi} \ w-u.\text{'-i} \ \text{ṣ̌ela-Ła} \ m-\text{åne} \ ba-k\text{'-i} \ \text{goli}.\]

Molla Rasadi  M-die-CVB.HPL  graveyard-ILLAT  HPL-go.PROG*  HPL-be-CVB.HPL  COP₁,HPL

‘Molla Rasadi died, and they were going to the graveyard.’

14 The analysis of external agreement in the converbal construction of Akhvakh constitutes the main topic of (Creissels Submitted). External agreement is also observed in the participial construction, in which verb forms in participle function agree both with their S/P argument and with the noun they modify.
argument of the higher verb, whereas class prefixes reflect the class of the P argument.

(5) a. če ruša-li-ge l’a če uot’okiro b-ik’-awi [ruša-li-ge č’or-ere].
    one tree-N-ESS on-ESS one woodpecker N-be-UW.N tree-N-ESS knock-PROG
    ‘On a tree there was a woodpecker knocking on the tree.’

    b. hulə [lāga ūk-āno] išʷada w-uk’-uwi.
    up.there.ESS sheep.PL eat-CAUS.PROG.M* shepherd M-be-UW.M*
    ‘Up there, there was a shepherd feeding his sheep.’

(6) a. di-la mik’e [ʕ-āre] m-ič-ani.
    1SG-DAT baby cry-PROG* N-find-PF*
    ‘I found the baby crying.’

    b. di-la hudu-we w-ūč-ani [ʕeleko b-iqʷ-ero].
    1SG-DAT DEM-M M-find-PF* cock N-kill-PROG.M
    ‘I found him killing the cock.’

(7) a. di-la bač’a harigʷ-ari [hema ʔ-āne].
    1SG-DAT wolf see-PF cow eat-PROG*
    ‘I saw the wolf eating the cow.’

    b. di-la hudu-we harigw-ari [tuda b-uqʷ-ero].
    1SG-DAT DEM-M see-PF firewood N-cut-PROG.M
    ‘I saw him cutting wood.’

(8) mik’e [ʕ-āre] b-iqʷ-ari.
    baby cry-PROG* N-remain-PF
    ‘The baby kept crying.’

But, as already mentioned above, the progressive converb is mainly found in analytic tenses expressing a progressive meaning, as illustrated by ex. (9).

(9) a. hudu-ʃʷ-e tuda b-uqʷ-ere godi.
    DEM-M-ERG wood N-cut-PROG COP₁.N
    ‘He is cutting firewood.’

    b. hudu-ʃʷ-e tuda b-uqʷ-ere b-ik’-awi.
    DEM-M-ERG wood N-cut-PROG N-be-UW.N
    ‘He was (reportedly) cutting firewood.’

These analytic tenses quite obviously result from the grammaticalization of the construction in which the progressive converb is subordinated to the copula or the verb bik’urulu in existential predicate function. Note the following three differences between the progressive tenses and the construction from which they originate:
The copula or the verb *bik’uru* in auxiliary function must be immediately preceded by the progressive converb of the auxiliated verb, whereas in the construction in which the progressive converb is subordinated to the copula or the verb *bik’uru* in existential predicate function, the verb phrase headed by the progressive converb has no fixed place within the matrix clause.

In progressive tenses, with transitive verbs, the agreement of the progressive converb can reflect the class of the P argument, whereas the progressive converb of transitive verbs subordinated to the copula or the verb *bik’uru* in existential predicate function shows suffixal agreement with A.

In progressive tenses, with transitive verbs, the NP representing the A argument can be in the ergative case, as in ex. (9), but when the progressive converb of transitive verbs is subordinated to the copula or the verb *bik’uru* in existential predicate function, the A argument must be in the absolute form, as in ex. (7b), since it is expressed as the S term of an intransitive predication.

I have no etymological hypothesis to put forward for this converb. Its syntactic distribution could suggest a participial origin, but there does not seem to exist any concrete evidence supporting this hypothesis.

5. The specialized converbs: introductory remarks

5.1. The expression of core arguments in converbal clauses

A general property of the specialized converbs described in the following sections is that their arguments can always be expressed exactly in the same way as in an independent clause, irrespective of the fact that converbs may behave very differently with respect to agreement with the absolutive argument. This is illustrated in ex. (10) by complex sentences involving the negative form of the posterior converb (a), the immediate converb (b), the imminent converb (c), and the conditional converb (d).

(10) a. [mahmašali-de rel’a dan-iš-elɨ] imo-de ezi’awi, “w-āʔ-ā!”
   Mehmet-Ali-ERG hand draw.away-NEG-POST father-ERG say-UW.N M-go-IMP
   ‘As Mehmet-Ali insisted (lit. did not draw away his hand), his father said, “Go!”.’

b. [lē ȧx’ik’ena] ści-k’a šagi-ga t’am-a!
   water boil-IMMED dumpling.PL cooking.pot-LAT put-IMP
   ‘As soon as the water boils, put the dumplings in the cooking-pot!’

c. [č’ari ɬ’ėdařa] č’am-e b-oč’il-āri.
   rain fall-IMMIN* mow-VN N-end-PF1*
   ‘The hay-harvest was up just before it rained.’

d. [me-de ɬ’o-ge l’a ɬādirɨ ɬin-aj-e m-ič-ala],
   2SG-ERG door-ESS on.ESS sickle hang-CAUS-CVB.N N-be-COND*
   ‘If you have hung a sickle on the door,'
5.2. Missing arguments in clauses headed by specialized converbs

A missing argument in a clause headed by a specialized converb may be identified to an argument of the main verb, but the identification of missing arguments in the construction of specialized converbs is a purely pragmatic phenomenon, which does not put syntactic constraints into play. Depending on the context, a missing argument in the construction of a converb can always be identified to a speech act participant, or to any other salient referent.

For example, the sentence in (11) is given with the translation corresponding to its interpretation in the context in which I found it, but the same sentence in different contexts could equally be interpreted as ‘While sleeping, I saw a ghost’, ‘While I slept, he saw a ghost’, ‘While he slept, I saw a ghost’, ‘While he slept, he saw a ghost’, etc. The only constraint is that the missing argument of ‘sleep’ must be masculine singular, since the converbal form ṭūk’ideši shows masculine singular argument; the interpretation of the missing argument of ‘see’ is totally open, since the form harig”iri shows no agreement marking, and there is no co-reference or disjoint reference constraint between the missing argument of the converb and any of the arguments of the main verb.

(11) [ra.tə ṭūk’ideši], e b-ašida šā’e-la ič’-ada čotala harig”-iri.
\quad at.night M-sleep-SIMULT one N-white cloth-ADD wear-IPF₁ ghost see-IPF₁

‘At night while sleeping, he saw a ghost wearing a white cloth.’

5.3. Linear order in constructions involving specialized converbs

5.3.1. Converbal clauses preceding the main verb

Most of the time, in complex constructions involving a converb, the converbal clause precedes the main verb. Converbal clauses in sentence initial position, followed by all other phrases belonging to the construction of the main verb, are particularly common. However, terms belonging to the construction of the main verb may precede the converbal clause, as in ex. (12).

\quad donkey-ERG Molla-M-ERG say-SIMIL do-UW,N*

‘The donkey did as Molla had said.’

b. hadi aḵ’a-še [hadi-we w-ūk’ena] dakumate b-’ex-e
\quad DEM woman-F-ERG DEM-M M-go.IMMED* document N-take-CVB.F

‘This woman, as soon as this man went, took her documents’
and went directly to visit her sons in Russia.’

As illustrated by ex. (13), an NP representing an argument common to the two verbs may precede the converb and at the same time show the case mark required by the main verb. In sentence (a), beq’idi ādo is in the absolute form required by the main verb mīni (\(< \text{mīnu}_a \text{ ‘go’}\)), and not in the dative case that would justify its status as an argument of āük’ena (\(< \text{āunu}_a \text{ ‘hear’}\)). In sentence (b), dede is in the ergative case required by the main verb maq’ida g’eda (\(< \text{maq’un}_a \text{ ‘dig’}\)), and not in the dative case that would justify its status as an argument of mičalaq’o (\(< \text{mičun}_u \text{ ‘find’}\)). In sentence (c), ek’āšwe is in the ergative case required by the main verb g’iże bik’ari (\(< \text{gūru}_a \text{ ‘do’}\)), and not in the absolute form that would justify its status as an argument of wu.’ideši (\(< \text{bū’uru}_u \text{ ‘die’}\)).

(13) a. b-eq’idi ādo [ha req’a āi-ik’ena] eša m-ini.
   HPL-come-PF₂ HPL.person.PL DEM word.PL hear-IMMED away HPL-go.IPF₁*
   ‘As soon as they heard these words, the visitors went away.’

b. de-de [mišidi m-ič-alaq’o] m-aqʷ-ida g’eda.
   1SG-ERG gold N-find-ANT* N-dig-IPF₂* COP₂ N*
   ‘I will dig until I find gold.’

c. hudu ek’ʷašwe [w-u.’-ideši] wasijati gwiž-e b-ik’w-ari,
   DEM man-M-ERG M-die-SIMULT* will do-CVB.N N-be-PF₁
   ‘This man, when dying, expressed the will
   “b-eχ-e ači o-x-a’ e’-e.
   N-take-CVB.N money N-give-IMP say-CVB.N
   that I should give you the money.’

Note however that a shared NP occurring sentence-initially may also have its case determined by the dependent verb, being thus presumably a constituent of the dependent clause, as in ex. (14).

(14) a. [hudu-šwe mašina b-ičʷ-irt-eli]
   DEM-M-DAT car M-find-NEG-POST
   ‘As he didn’t find any car,
   aki imayxa-ge dijk’aj-e q’eš-a j-et-ari.
   wife donkey-ESS F-sit-CAUS-CVB.F home-LAT F-take.away-PF₁
   he took his wife home on his donkey.’

b. [dene rošo-ľa w-ideši] ťwe āi’o b-et-ide.
   1SG forest-ILLAT M-go.SIMULT* dog together N-take.away-IPF₂ N
   ‘When I will go to the forest, I will take the dog with me.’
5.3.2. Converbal clauses following the main verb

Although converbal clauses usually precede the main verb, the reverse order is possible too, as illustrated by ex. (15).

(15) a. mene w-u.’-ida gʷido [du  imiči  loda miqi’-li  i’e o-t-či].
   2SG  M-die-IPF₂ COP₂,M  2SG(GEN) donkey three time-N.ESS fart  N-let.out-POST
   ‘You will die at the third fart of your donkey.’

   b. č’un-e-de  č’ar-awi  [b-eč’-alaq’a].
      dog-ERG  drink-UW,N  N-be.full-ANT
      ‘The dog drank until it slaked its thirst.’

   c. šoda b-ik’-ide  [hage-še-lo-gu  rāč’-ala].
      good  N-be-IPF₂,N  here-ADJZ-HPL-EL  ask-COND
      ‘It would be better if you asked local people.’

   d. de-de  huštə  gʷ-ère  gʷeda  [q’imate  talačo  b-ik’-wana].
      1SG-ERG  so  do-PROG* COP₂,N  price  up  N-be-PURP
      ‘I am doing so in order to keep the price high.’

This alternative order is however not equally usual for all converbs. Some of them (for example, the immediate converb) never follow the main verb in the data I collected. The semantics of the individual converbs probably plays a role, since for example the order main verb – converb is more common for the purposive converb than for the conditional converb, but the decisive factor seems to be the discourse function of the converbal clause.

6. The locative converb (or ‘verbal locative’)

The locative converb is marked by a suffix -iɬ̄- (glossed VLOC ‘verbal locative’) followed by one of the three spatial case suffixes -i (essive, glossed ESS), -a (lative, glossed LAT), or -u(ne) (elative, glossed EL). Its meaning can be rendered as ‘at / to / from the place where V-ing occurs’. In other words, the locative converb shows exactly the same case inflection as locative adverbs, and a clause headed by the locative converb is entirely equivalent to a locative adverb with respect to its relation to the main verb. Ex. (16) to (18) illustrate the use of the locative converb in the essive, lative, and elative case, respectively.

(16) a. de-de  tūhi  [b-ik’-w.iɬ̄-i]  b-či-ada.
      1SG-ERG  gun  N-be-VLOC-ESS  N-put-PF₂
      ‘I put the gun to its place.’
b. *k’eda reše-ɬi dene [čê o-x-ɪɬ-i] w-ošq-ada.  
   two year-N.ESs 1SG tea N-sell-VLOC-ESS M-work-PF₂*  
   ‘I worked two years in a tea-house.’

(17) a. *w-ãʔ-a [ɪgora o-x-ɪɬ-a].  
   M-go-IMP bread N-sell-VLOC-LAT  
   ‘Go to the baker’s.’

b. *molã [ak’o-de q’ohula gʷ-ɪɬ-a] w-ũwi.  
   Molla wife-ERG food do-VLOC-LAT* M-go.UW.M*  
   ‘Molla went to the place where his wife was preparing the meal.’

   boy M-sit-VLOC-EL move-PF.NEG  
   ‘The boy did not move from the place where he was seated.’

b. dene [baʃinaci-de Ḳe c’ar-ɪɬ-une] w-oq’-ero gʷiɬ.  
   1SG deer-ERG water drink-VLOC-EL M-come-PROG.M COP₂,M  
   ‘I am coming from the place where the deer drinks.’

As illustrated by several of the preceding examples, the locative converb by itself does not imply a particular temporal or aspectual meaning, but it constitutes the usual way of referring to places dedicated to professional activities (tea house, baker’s, etc.).

Etymologically, a possible explanation for the locative converb is the contraction of a synonymous sequence consisting of a participial relative clause headed by the imperfective participle (suffix *-ida) modifying miša ‘place’ (or another noun with the same meaning, or perhaps a locative adverb) inflected in one of the three spatial cases. Ex. (19) illustrates the synonymy between the locative converb (a) and the participial construction which constitutes its probable origin (b).

(19) a. baʃinaci-de Ḳe c’ar-ɪɬ-i  
   deer-ERG water drink-VLOC-ESS  
   ‘at the place where the deer drinks’

b. baʃinaci-de Ḳe c’ar-ida miša-ɬi  
   deer-ERG water drink-IPF₂ place-N.ESs  
   ‘at the place where the deer drinks’

7. Temporal converbs

7.1. The temporal reference of the temporal converbs

The temporal converbs express temporal relations between the event they denote and the event denoted by the main verb, but do not specify past, future or habitual
reference by themselves: this precision entirely depends on the tense of the main verb, and has no incidence on the morphological characteristics of the temporal converbs. Ex. (20) illustrates the use of the same simultaneous converb, marked by the suffix -ide\̣i, in sentences with different temporal reference (a: future, b: habitual, c: past).

(20) a. ušt-e [šeropula-ge wad-a-k’-ide\̣i], hirida knopka ič’-uba!
     2PL-ERG plane-ESS HPL-sit-SIMULT red knob push-PROH
     ‘When you will be sitting in the plane, don’t push the red knob!’

b. [č’-ide\̣i] gua mene, [m-aq’-ide\̣i] gua mene,
     sow-SIMULT* COP.NEG.M 2SG N-dig-SIMULT* COP.NEG.M 2SG
     ‘You are not here when we sow, you are not here when we dig the ground,
     q’-ōnuwa čugu w-oq’-uwa?
     eat-INF* why M-come-MIR.M
     why are you coming to eat?’

c. [eč’ada tuda b-εχ-o w-oq’-ide\̣i],
     back firewood N-take-CVB.M M-come-SIMULT
     ‘While he was returning with the wood,
     b-ašl-ēri imixi e’e o-t-uwu.a.
     N-begin-IPF₁ donkey fart N-let.out-INF
     the donkey started farting.’

7.2. The posterior converb

The posterior converb (glossed POST) is formed by means of a suffix showing the following three variants: HPL -ide\̣i, other classes -e\̣i (non-alternating stems) ~ -ade\̣i (alternating stems). It expresses that the event encoded by the main verb follows the event encoded by the posterior converb.

(21) a. [č’ili-gune minašl-ide\̣i], ši-la esé-k’ena b-eq’-ari.
     house-EL separate-POST.NPL bear-ADD 1PLE-COM N-come-PF₁
     ‘When we left the house, the bear came with us too.’

b. [raš’a-le-ge l’a-še kama harig”-e\̣i],
     bone.PL-NPL-ESS on.ESS-ADJZ belt see-POST
     ‘When I saw the belt that was on the bones,
     di-la āu’oda hula bič’il-āri.
     1SG-DAT all thing understand-PF₁,*
     I understood everything.’
The meaning of posteriority can be emphasized by putting *qedo* ‘after’ immediately after the posterior converb, as in (22).

(22) a. [rošo-ɬ̄-a gвуč’-eři] *qedo,*
forest-N-LAT *reach-POST* after
‘After arriving at the forest,
če ɪk’a ruša-ɬ̄-a ɭ’ada ɭer-iri.
one big tree-N-LAT on-LAT climb-IPF₁
he climbed a big tree.’

b. [hudu ek’w-a w-ādeři] *qedo,* mořa rasadi w-uc-o w-ini.*
DEM man M-go.POST* after Molla Rasadi M-fall-CVB.M M-go.IPF₁*
‘After the man had left, Molla fell down.’

The variations in the formation of the posterior converb are reminiscent of those in the formation of the variant of the perfective that can be used as a participle, which suggests that this form may result from the contraction of a sequence consisting of the perfective in participle function followed by a noun in the essive case, probably *riňi* ‘at the moment’. As illustrated in (23), a meaning exactly identical to that of the posterior converb can be expressed by a construction in which *riňi* is modified by a relative clause with the verb in the perfective.

(23) a. *dene ušku-ɬ̄-a w-oq’-eři* ‘When I arrived at school, …’
1SG school-N-LAT M-come-POST

= *dene ušku-ɬ̄-a w-oq’-ada ri-ři*
1SG school-N-LAT M-come-PF₂ moment-N.ESS

b. *işi ušku-ɬ̄-a b-eq’-idiři* ‘When we arrived at school, …’
1PLE school-N-LAT HPL-come-POST.HPL

= *işi ušku-ɬ̄-a b-eq’-idi ri-ři*
1PLE school-N-LAT HPL-come-PF₂ moment-N.ESS

c. *wašo-de dene ź-ādeři* ‘When the boy called me, …’
boy-ERG 1SG call-POST*

= *wašo-de dene ź-āda ri-ři*
boy-ERG 1SG call-PF₂* moment-N.ESS

d. *wašo-de işi žab-idiři* ‘When the boy called us, …’
boy-ERG 1PLE call-POST.HPL

= *wašo-de işi žab-idi ri-ři*
boy-ERG 1PLE call-PF₂,HPL moment-N.ESS
This analysis is supported by the fact that forms with the suffix -ėli ~ -adėli ~ -idėli do not appear in Magomedova & Abdulaeva’s dictionary, which however includes many examples of sentences in which the same meaning is carried by forms with suffixes -a(da)r̃i̇li and -idir̃i̇li. These ‘suffixes’, in which r̃i̇li ‘at the moment’ is still clearly recognizable, quite obviously represent a less advanced stage in the grammaticalization process:

- a(da)r̃i̇li → ėli
- ādari̇li → ādėli
- idir̃i̇li → idi̇li

7.3. The negative form of the posterior converb

The posterior converb is characterized by the complex suffix -i̇-ėli. A possible meaning of this form is to denote a habitual or virtual event whose consequences are described by the main verb. In this use, the negative form of the posterior converb is practically synonymous with the negative form of the conditional converb.

(24) a. [doroži t’-ėli], aťaři ėli̇-ike.
   yeast put-NEG-POST* dough rise-IPF₂.NEG.N
   ‘When one does not put yeast, the dough does not rise.’

   b. [kʷani go-êli] televizor b-ešq-ike.
   light COP.NEG.N-POST TV.set N-work-IPF₂.NEG.N
   ‘When there is no light, the TV does not work’

However, the negative form of the posterior converb may also refer to specific past events, and when this is the case, it more commonly expresses a causal rather than strictly temporal meaning (‘as V-ing did not happen, ...’).

(25) a. [hudu-sʷ-a mašina b-i̇χʷ-i̇-êli]
   DEM-M-DAT car M-find-NEG-POST
   ‘As he didn’t find any car,

   ak’i imaxa-ge d-ik’-aj-e q’ė-i̇ j-et-ari.
   wife donkey-ESS sit-CAUS-CVB.F home-LAT F-take.away-PF₁
   he took his wife home on his donkey.’

   b. [q’ačali q’ė-a b-eq’-i̇-êli], raši ėxa r-ȯ-ari
   dragon home-LAT N-come-NEG-POST young.PL out NPL-set.out-PF₁
   ‘As the dragon did not come back home, the young set out

   ī-di-i̇-da ila ėged-ōru.a.
   ANA-NPL-GEN-INT mother look.for-INF*
   to look for their mother.’
The choice between the two possible interpretations of the posterior converb entirely depends on the context. The form itself gives no clue to the choice. For example, in (24a), *mašina b-\textit{i}xʷ\textit{-i}-\textit{e}\textit{̣i} is interpreted as ‘As he didn’t find any car, …’, but in a different context, *mašina b-\textit{i}xʷ\textit{-i}-\textit{e}\textit{̣i} could equally mean ‘When one doesn’t find any car, …’.

As illustrated by ex. (26), the etymological hypothesis put forward for the positive form of the posterior converb can account for the negative form too.

(26) \textit{di-}\textit{la} \textit{mašina b-\textit{i}xʷ\textit{-i}-\textit{e}\textit{̣i}} ‘As I didn’t find any car, …’
\begin{tabular}{ll}
1SG-DAT & car \ M-find-NEG-POST \\
\end{tabular}

\textlt{di-}\textit{la} \textit{mašina b-\textit{i}xʷ\textit{-i}-\textit{a}} \textit{ri-}\textit{li} & \begin{tabular}{ll}
1SG-DAT & car \ M-find-PF-NEG moment-N.ESS \\
\end{tabular}

\textlt{lit. ‘At the moment when I found no car...’}

7.4. The simultaneous converbs

Simultaneity is commonly expressed by means of a converb characterized by the suffix -\textit{id\textit{e}\textit{̣i}}, glossed \textit{SIMULT}. The event denoted by this converb is presented as a temporal frame within which the event denoted by the main verb occurs.

(27) a. \textit{[dene rošo-\textit{la} w-\textit{id\textit{e}\textit{̣i}] xʷe ā\textit{̣o} b-e\textit{l-ide}.}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
1SG & forest-ILLAT & M-go.SIMULT & dog \ together \ N-take.away-IPF₂.N \\
\end{tabular}

‘When I go to the forest, I will take the dog with me.’

b. \textit{[miq̄o-ge ãdo \ harigʷ-\textit{id\textit{e}\textit{̣i}] naš-\textit{ero} w-uk̄-uwi.}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
road-ESS & person.PL & see-SIMULT & insult-PROG.M \ M-insult-UW.M \\
\end{tabular}

‘Whenever he saw people on the road, he kept insulting them.’

Similarly to the posterior converb, this form probably results from the contraction of a synonymous sequence consisting of the imperfective in participle function followed by \textit{ri\textit{li}} ‘at the moment’.

(28) a. \textit{waša ušku-\textit{a} w-oq̄-\textit{id\textit{e}\textit{̣i}}} ‘While the boy was arriving at school, …’
\begin{tabular}{llll}
boy & school-N-LAT & M-come-SIMULT \\
\end{tabular}

\textlt{= waša ušku-\textit{a} w-oq̄-\textit{i}da \textit{ri-}\textit{li}} & \begin{tabular}{llllll}
boy & school-N-LAT & M-come-IPF₂ & moment-N.ESS \\
\end{tabular}

b. \textit{i\textit{̣e} ri\textit{̣i} q̄-\textit{id\textit{e}\textit{̣i}}} ‘While we were eating the meat, …’
\begin{tabular}{llll}
1P\textit{li}-ERG meat \ eat-SIMULT* \\
\end{tabular}

\textlt{= i\textit{̣e} ri\textit{̣i} q̄-\textit{eda} \textit{ri-}\textit{li}} & \begin{tabular}{llllll}
1P\textit{li}-ERG meat \ eat-IPF₂* & moment-N.ESS \\
\end{tabular}
Here again, this hypothesis is supported by the fact that the suffix -ide does not appear in Magomedova & Abdulaeva’s dictionary, which however includes many examples of sentences in which the same meaning is carried by verb forms with the ‘suffix’ -idaridi.

An apparently synonymous converb formed by means of a suffix -adada sporadically occurs in some of my texts – ex. (29), but most of my informants do not use it productively.

(29) \[ w-ošq-ero w-uk'-adada \] če ek’twa w-oq'-ari.  
M-work-PROG.M* M-be-SIMULT* one man M-come-PF₁*  
‘A man arrived while I was working.’

This converb seems to result from the combination of the perfective suffix -ada with the intensifying particle -da. However, this etymological analysis is semantically problematic.

7.5. The inceptive converb

The inceptive converb (‘from the moment when V-ing began / begins onwards’), glossed INCEP, is characterized by a suffix -ari. The main verb denotes an activity, and the event encoded by the inceptive converb marks the initial boundary of the time interval within which this activity takes place.

(30) \[ kʷã b-iqʷ-ari \] ɬ̄ oχ̄ a [rašile t'-āloq’o],  
ligh N-cut-INCEP whiteness throw-ANT*  
‘From the moment when the light was cut up to dawn,  
\[ r-ešq-ere r-ikʷ-ari \] ɬ̄ oχ̄ a ʃerepula-di.  
NPL-work-PROG NPL-be-PF₁ plane-PL  
the planes kept flying.’

The probable origin of this converb is again the contraction of a synonymous construction involving an inflected form of ri ‘moment’ modified by a relative clause, as indicated in (31).

(31) \[ kʷã b-iqʷ-ari \] ɬ̄ oχ̄ a ‘From the moment when the light was cut onwards, ...’  
ligh N-cut-INCEP  
\[ = kʷã b-iqʷ-ada ri-ũ-u eχa \] ɬ̄ oχ̄ a  
ligh N-cut-PF₂ moment-N-EL away

7.6. The immediate converbs

Two forms can be designated as immediate converbs (‘as soon as V-ing occurred / occurs’), and are equally glossed IMMED. Their characteristic suffixes are -ik’ena and
-ula. The event encoded by an immediate converb is presented as immediately preceding the event encoded by the main verb, both events being conceived as telic.

(32) a. \([q'e\text{̄}-a \quad gw'č'-ik'ena] \, ak'ɔ'-ga \, eį'-iri \ldots\]
    home-LAT \, \, reach-IMMED \, \, wife-LAT \, \, tell-IPF

    ‘As soon as he arrived at home, he told his wife …’

    b. \([duna \quad gʷal-ik'ena], \, ĭlalxo \, heę'-ada.\]
    world \, \, get.lit-IMMED \, \, up \, \, rise-PF₂

    ‘I rose at dawn (lit. as soon as the world got lit).’

(33) a. \([mola \, eša \, w-ũla], \, hāki-šʷ-e \, ŭk'a \, ʔor-e\]
    Molla \, \, away \, \, M-go.IMMED* \, \, judge-M-ERG \, \, finger \, \, thrust-CVB.N

    ‘As soon as Molla went away, the judge thrust his finger

    ĭxʷa-gune \, čāčada-be \, q'-ēni.
    butter-EL \, \, little-N \, \, eat-IPF₁*

    and ate a little butter.’

    b. \([hudu \, ak'a \, hida-šqe \, ŕor-ũla],\]
    DEM \, \, woman \, \, there-DIR \, \, turn-IMMED

    ‘As soon as the woman went away,

    čuduka \, mik'e-ge \, ʟa \, gо-e'-awi.
    eagle \, \, child-ESS \, \, on.ESS \, \, N-bump-UW.N

    the eagle attacked the baby.’

-ik'ena probably includes a second formative cognate with the suffix of the comitative case -k'ena, but I have no hypothesis to propose with respect to its first formative.

-ula probably results from the combination of the short variant of the infinitive suffix -u with the additive particle -la ‘and, also, in turn, even’. This etymological analysis is supported by the semantic proximity between the comitative suffix and the additive particle.

7.7. The anterior converb

This converb may correspond to English ‘before V-ing occurs / occurred’, as in ex. (34), or ‘until V-ing occurs / occurred’, as in ex. (35). Its characteristic suffix, glossed ANT, is -alaq'o or -aloq'o (commonly realized -alaʔo or -aloʔo).

(34) \(me-de \, [iši \, b-eq'-alaq'o] \, č'ila-ţi \, kuq'ala \, gʷij-a!\]
    2SG-ERG \, \, 1PLE \, \, N-come-ANT \, \, house-GEN \, \, work.PL \, \, do-IMP

    ‘Do the housework before we come back!’
(35) a. [w-ua.-alaq’o] hidīč-ike du šołe.
   M-die-ANT* forget-IPF₂.GN 2SG(GEN) kindness
   ‘Until I die I will not forget your kindness.’

b. [dene w-oq’-alaq’o] hage w-os-a!
   1SG M-come-ANT here M-stay-IMP
   ‘Stay here until I come!’

miq’walaq’o, lit. ‘until it grows’, ‘until it is sufficient’ (anterior converb of miq’unuua ‘grow, be sufficient’), has been lexicalized with the non-temporal meaning ‘enough’.

(36) di-be [m-qi’-alaq’o] šoda šai’e gʷeda.
   1SG(GEN)-N N-grow-ANT good cloth COP₂.N
   ‘I have good clothes in sufficient quantity.’

I have no etymological hypothesis to put forward for this converb.

7.8. The imminent converb

The imminent converb expresses the meaning ‘just before V-ing occurs / occurred’. Its characteristic suffix, glossed IMMIN, is -ida or -idaqeqe.

(37) a. [iš’ada gw-eq’-ida]a, ši-l-e čelada làgi b-εχ-e m-āwi.
   shepherd M-arrive-IMMIN bear-N-ERG another sheep N-take-CVB.N N-go.UW.N*
   ‘Just before the shepherd arrived, the bear took another sheep away.’

b. [mola lapatka-la b-εχ-o w-oq’-ida]e, Molla spade-ADD N-take-CVB.M M-come-IMMIN*
   ‘Just before Molla brought a spade,

    ĩk’ot’i če ĩk’o kat’i gʷeda miša-l-a gei-a m-āwi.
    mouse one small hole COP₂.N place-N-LAT inside-LAT N-go.UW.N*
    the mouse went into a place where there was a small hole.’

The immediate converb of mūnula ‘go’, whose literal meaning is ‘just before going’, has postposition-like uses with the meaning ‘before a particular length of time has passed’ (‘within’).

(38) [ištuda ūvida žo m-ida]a gʷ-ëda mik’e-la
   five six day N-go.IMMIN* make-IPF₂.GN child-ADD
   ‘A child born (lit. made) within five or six days

   [ištuda ūvida žo m-ida]a maktaba-l-a-la m-ida-be.
   five six day N-go.IMMIN school-N-LAT-ADD N-go.IPF₂.GN
   will certainly go to school within five or six days too.’
Etymologically, this is probably a complex suffix with the imperfective suffix -ida as its first formative. Consequently, a possible origin of V-ida is the contraction of a sequence V-ida ri-ɬ̄a, with the imperfective participle V-ida modifying the allative form of ri ‘moment’.

As for -idaɬ̄oe, it probably results from the addition of the similitative particle -oq ‘like, as’ to -idaɬ̄a.

7.9. The non-posterior converb

The suffix of the non-posterior converb, illustrated by ex. (39), is -iɬ̄eda, glossed NPOST. It expresses that the event encoded by the main verb occurs so quickly that the event encoded by the converb does not occur before (and possibly does not occur at all, as in sentence (c).

(39) a. [mola-šʷ-e q'-iɬ̄eda], ak’o-de i-ɬ̄-e-da ɬe šikʷa č’ar-iri.
   Molla-ERG eat-NPOST* wife-ERG ANA-F-ERG-INT one spoon drink-IPF₁
   ‘Before Molla started eating, his wife ate a spoonful [of soup] herself.’

b. [če balahé-ɬ̄-gə w-uš-iɬ̄eda], sadi-ga w-uš-a!
   one misfortune-N-LAT M-fall-NPOST down-LAT M-come.together-IMP*
   ‘Calm down before something unpleasant happens to you!’

c. [k’eda gali w-iɬ̄eda], k’ebi.ɬa če āde-ɬ̄-e šān’e harigʷ-e rāč’-ini …
   two step M-go,NPOST* second one person-N-ERG cloth see-CVB.N ask-IPF₁*
   ‘Before he walked two steps, a second person noticed his cloth and asked …’

The non-posterior converb of muq’u̵nula ‘close (an eye)’ occurs in the idiom če k’e̵hə muq’u̵nula lit. ‘before closing an eye’ → ‘in the twinkling of an eye’.

The suffix -iɬ̄eda probably results from the combination of the negative form of the general converb (-iɬ̄e) with the intensifying particle -da, lit. ‘without even V-ing’. However, the fact that -iɬ̄eda does not express class agreement provides evidence that it has grammaticalized as a distinct suffix.

8. Conditional and concessive converbs

8.1. The conditional converb

8.1.1. The positive form of the conditional converb

The conditional converb is marked by a suffix -ala (with the long variant -alaʃi̵ga ~ -alaʃi̵gə) or -ačala, glossed COND.

Ex. (40) illustrates the use of the conditional converb referring to conditions whose realization can be considered in the future.
The same construction is used in conditional sentences referring to the present, if the speaker is not in a position to know whether the condition is realized or not.

(41) a. [ha be ri’i m-ič-ala] keto haii?
DEM-N meat N-be-COND* cat where.ESS
‘If this is the meat, where is the cat?’

b. [mene hušte šadada w-ūč-ala],
2SG thus mad M-be-COND*
‘If you are as mad [as you pretend to be],

du-.§i-gune ek’o-ši-ga čugu t’ōš-awa?
2SG(GEN)-N-EL another’s.property-N-LAT why put-NEG-MIR.N* why don’t you put [wheat] from your [bag] into [the bag] of other people?’

In conditional sentences with present reference but mentioning a non-realized condition, the same form of the conditional converb is used in the subordinate clause. The main verb is in an analytic form imperfective of the auxiliated verb + perfective of bik’uru’a ‘be’. This form is similar to the future, from which it differs by the use of the perfective of ‘be’ instead of the copula.

(42) [du-ge hei’ar-i-še čilo di-ge hei’ar-i b-ik’m-āčala],
2SG-ESS in.the.mouth-ESS-ADJZ tooth 1SG-ESS in.the.mouth-ESS N-be-COND
‘If the tooth that is in your mouth were in my mouth,

ha q’ada-ši-ge-la eža b-eq-u t’ēda b-ik’m-ada.
DEM moment-N-ESS-ADD out N-take.out-INF throw-IPF₂ N-be-PF₂ I would have it out immediately.’

Ex. (43) illustrates the contrast between conditional sentences referring to a condition that may come true in the future, and a construction in which the conditional perfect (conditional converb of bik’uru’a ‘be’ preceded by the general converb of the auxiliated verb), combined with a main verb in the form perfective of the auxiliated verb + imperfective of ‘be’ is involved in the expression of the same counterfactual meaning as English conditional clauses in the past perfect.
Ex. (44) provides another illustration of the use of the conditional perfect.

(44) [žiži q-āda-sʷ-a o-š-e b-ikʷ-āčala], e a c h a s k - PF₂ M-DAT N-give-CVB.N N-be-COND
‘If I had given to every person who asked for it, there would be none of it left now.’

More generally, analytic forms of the conditional converb are used to express aspectual shades of meaning. Note that, in the conditional, the use of mičunuma ‘find’, ‘be found’, ‘be’ in auxiliary function (rather than bik’uru.a ‘be’) is particularly common.

The conditional converb may also be involved in constructions expressing a concessive meaning.

(46) a. [beko-de qali išʷičʷ-ala], ʕama išʷičʷ-ike.
snake-ERG skin change-COND character change-IPF₂.NEG.N
‘Although the snake changes its skin, it does not change its character.’

b. [haštuda-la īk’a w-ukʷ-ala],  warani-gu īk’a w-ukʷ-iko.
so.much-ADD big M-be-COND* camel-EL big M-be-IPF₂.NEG₄₆*N
‘Tall as he may be, he is not taller than a camel.’

Another possible use of the conditional converb is the expression of unrealized wishes, in sentences looking like the first part of conditional sentences whose main verb would be missing: they are headed by the conditional converb, but no main
verb is present. This use of the conditional converb can therefore be analyzed as an instance of ‘insubordination’ (Evans 2007).

(47) a. *di ima w-uk’-ãčala!
   1SG(GEN) father M-be-COND*
   ‘If only he could have been my father!’

b. mitaq’ali du-ga dadi w-ux-ada miša-Ł-e,
   in.the.morning 2SG-LAT across M-remain-PF₂* place-N-ESS
   ‘This morning instead of meeting you, (lit. at the place where I met you)
   di-be ſūk’a b-iq”-e b-ik”-ãčala,
   1SG(GEN)-N leg N-cut-CVB.N N-be-COND
   I would better have cut my leg,
   du-be-la mič’i b-uq”-e b-ik”-ãčala!
   1SG(GEN)-N-ADD tongue N-dry-CVB.N N-be-COND
   and my tongue would better have dried!’

It is tempting to decompose the conditional suffix -ala into -a ‘imperative’ and -la ‘additive particle’, since the protasis of conditional sentences may be an imperative clause, as in (48).

(48) heresí-k’ena di-la šahiditila g”ij-a, du-la ač’ada suruši o-ξ-uwa.
    lie-COM 1SG-DAT testimony do-IMP 2SG-DAT ten ruble N-give-POT.N
    ‘Give a false testimony for me, and I’ll give you ten rubles.’

This hypothesis is consistent with the fact that the conditional suffix -ala and the imperative suffix -a show the same phonological interaction with the verbal stem. However, the fact that the HPL marker -ij- can be inserted before the conditional suffix, whereas no agreement mark can be inserted before the imperative suffix, is a piece of evidence against this hypothesis.

As regards the -ãčala variant, it seems reasonable to assume that it results from the contraction of an analytic form including mĩčala, conditional converb of mĩčunula ‘find, be found, be’ in auxiliary function.

8.1.2. The negative form of the conditional converb

There are two variants of the negative form of the conditional converb. One of them results from the insertion of the negative marker -i- between the stem and the conditional suffix -ala, the other one, marked by a suffix -ičala, lends itself to the same etymological explanation as the -ãčala variant of the positive conditional suffix.
(49) a. [jaše j-eq’-i-ala],  
    me-de č’i g”-ida g”e-da?
    girl  F-come-NEG-COND 2SG-ERG  what do-IPF₂  COP₂,  
    ‘If the girl does not come, what will you do?’

b. [hu-be di ʃaq’ilo-li-ga b-eq’e  m-ič-i-ala],
    DEM-N 1SG(GEN) mind-N-LAT N-come-CVB.N N-be-NEG-COND*  
    ‘If it did not come to my mind, 
    hu-šu ʃaq’ilo-li-ga-la b-eq’ike.
    DEM-M(GEN) mind-N-LAT-ADD N-come-IPF₂ NEG.N  
    it will not come to his mind either.’

Ex. (50) illustrates the possibility of a contextual interpretation of the negative form of the conditional converb ‘except that …’.

(50) [warani ʃib-ēl-ala]  koša ʃaza b-ik’-i-ala.
    camel.pl be.afraid-CAUS.NEG-COND*  bad pain N-be-PF.NEG  
    ‘Apart from the fact that the camels frightened me, nothing bad happened.’

The meaning ‘whether … or not’ can be expressed in Akhvakh by putting the negative form of the conditional converb immediately after the positive form of the conditional converb of the same verb.

(51) du-la ču-bi, [di raq’oīi  b-oī’-i-ala  b-oī’-i-ala]?
    2SG-DAT what-N 1SG(GEN) back N-ache-COND N-ache-NEG-COND  
    ‘What does it matter to you, whether my back is aching or not?’

8.2. The concessive converbs

Two suffixes, equally glossed CONC, can be used to form a concessive converb: -alala (resulting from the adjunction of the additive particle -la to the conditional suffix -ala), and -alowolana ~ -alowonana.

(52) a. [w-ošq-alowolana]  şegaza  şe b-oī-i-ala.
    M-work-CONC* nothing profit N-occur-PF.NEG  
    ‘Although I worked, I got no result.’

b. [b-ix-alowonana]  imixi zor-e b-oī-ere b-ik’-i-ala.
    N-hold-CONC donkey slip-CVB.N N-move.forward-PROG N-be-PF.NEG  
    ‘Although we held it, the donkey slipped and did not move forward.’

An etymological analysis of this suffix can be imagined on the basis of the observation of its variations. In addition to the forms -alowolana and -alowonana I have found in AD Akhvakh, the variants -erowonana and -erowbana also occur in Magomedova & Abdulaeva’s dictionary. The crucial observation is that the last two syllables of the variant -erowbana are identical with -bana, the suffix of the purposive case. It seems
therefore reasonable to consider that the suffix of the concessive converb was originally a complex suffix with -bana as its second formative, and that, given the semantic proximity, the forms -alobona and -alobola developed as hybrids of -erowana and -alala. Concerning the first formative of the complex suffix -ero-wana, the hypothesis of a relationship with the verbal noun is contradicted by the selection of the short allomorph of alternating stems, but I have no other etymological hypothesis to put forward.

9. The simulative converb

This converb can be translated as ‘in the same way as ...’. It is characterized by a suffix -eroq ~ -ereq, glossed SIMIL.

(53) a. [šuni gʷ-eroq] žel-a-la gʷi̊-al!
yesterday do- SIMIL* today-ADD do-IMP
‘Do today as you did yesterday!’

b. [di-gune ači q-éroq] de-de-la mašina q-āda.
1SG-EL money ask-SIMIL* 1SG-ERG-ADD car ask-PF₂*
‘As he asked me for money, I myself asked him for the car.’

Etymologically, the suffix of the simulative converb quite obviously includes the simulative particle -oq ‘like’ as its second formative. As for the first formative of this suffix, the selection of the short allomorph of alternating verb stems contradicts an otherwise possible etymological analysis according to which the simulative converb would originate from the verbal noun, and rather points to a relation with the suffix of the progressive converb -ere.

10. The gradual converb

This converb, marked by a suffix -ūda ~ -ūdale (glossed GRAD), expresses the meaning rendered in English as ‘in proportion as ...’, ‘the more ..., the more ...’.

(54) a. [hudu-we Ḩ'-ūdale] ṭal-ari.
DEM-M dance-GRAD* get.tired-PF₁
‘The more he danced, the more he got tired.’

b. [heč’at-ūda] w-uč-o w-īda gʷida.
rise-GRAD M-fall-CVB.M M-go.IPF₂* COP₂,M
‘The higher you rise, the more likely it is that you will fall.’

I have no suggestion of any possible etymology for this converb.
11. The explicative converb

11.1. The positive form of the explicative converb

The explicative converb (‘because ...’) is marked by a suffix -erogu ~ -eregu, glossed EXPLIC. The identification of this form as a converb is somewhat problematic in the sense that it often occurs in constructions that might be analyzed as involving complementation rather than adverbial subordination (for example, with lürüa ‘be afraid’, or reči gürüa ‘thank’). However, ex. (55a) shows that it also occurs in contexts unambiguously involving adverbial subordination.

(55) a. [molā makʷač-o w-uk’-erogu],
    Molla be.hungry-CVB.M M-be-EXPLIC*
    ‘Because Molla was hungry,

    k’eda rel’a-ži-k’ena q’-āne b-ik’-awi.
    two hand-N-COM eat-PROG* N-be-UW.N
    he ate with both hands.’

b. dene l-ero gudi [mik’e rešaero-ge di-ga,
    1SG be.afraid-PROG.M* COP₁,M baby beauty-ESS 1SG-LAT
    ‘I am afraid that the baby will resemble me as regards beauty,

    ᵊaš’ilo-ge du-ga ₑ̇-erogu].
    intelligence-ESS 2SG-LAT resemble-EXPLIC*
    and you as regards intelligence.’

c. [ši-de q’alaq’ala e xa e-q-erogu] dene damatil-āri.
    bear-ERG often out look-EXPLIC 1SG be.surprised-PF₁
    ‘I was surprised that the bear often looked outside.’

Morphologically, the explicative converb can be identified as the elative form of the verbal noun, and the meaning it expresses is consistent with its morphological make-up, but there are three reasons for treating it as a converb distinct from the inflected form of the verbal noun it originates from:

– in the inflection of the verbal noun, the original oblique stem formative -ro- tends to be replaced by the standard oblique stem formative -li-, whereas the suffix of the explicative converb is never found with -li- instead of -ro- or -re-;
– the verbal noun is rarely found with its core arguments in the ergative or absolute cases, and tends to behave syntactically like ordinary nouns, whereas the explicative converb consistently shows a verbal behavior with respect to its modifiers.
– the explicative converb has a synthetic negative form (see section 11.2), whereas the verbal noun only has an analytic negative form.
11.2. The negative form of the explicative converb

The negative suffix -i₂̄- can be inserted between the verb stem and the suffix of the explicative converb.

(56) a. [me-de ači  o-x-i₂̄-erogu] šazi  b-eq-ere godi.
    2SG-ERG money  N-give-NEG-EXPLIC complaint  N-take.off-PROG COP₁,N
    ‘He is complaining that you do not give him money.’

b. hu-ši-șana  reči  gʷ-ère gʷeda,
    DEM-N-PURP  thanks  do-PROG* COP₂,N
    ‘The reason why I am thanking [God],
    [imaχa-ge l’a  w-uk’-i₂̄-erogu  [b-uq-ide]].
    donkey-ESS on.ESS  M-give-NEG-EXPLIC*  N-disappear-SIMULT
    is that I was not sitting on the donkey when it disappeared.’

Note also that -erogu can attach to the negative form of the copula.

(57) mola  [q’eĩ- i  čegaza goi-erogu]  damašil-eri.
    Molla  home-ESS  nothing COP.NEG.N-EXPLIC  be.surprised-IPF₁
    ‘Molla was surprised that there was nothing at home.’

12. The purposive converb (or ‘supine’)

12.1. The positive form of the purposive converb

The meaning of purpose expressed by this converb (‘in order to …’) can also be expressed by the infinitive, and it is always possible to replace the purposive converb by the infinitive without changing the meaning.¹⁵ The difference between these two forms is that the infinitive has a variety of uses, whereas the purposive converb is more specialized, occurring in adverbial clauses of purpose exclusively.

The suffix of the purposive converb is -u₃₄ana (glossed PURP).

(58) a. raqeq  ūk-i  č’ar-i  qedo,  [E’šok’-ušana]  reĩʷwa  t’-eni.
    at.night  eat-CVB.HPL  eat-CVB.HPL  after  <HPL>sleep-PURP  bed  put-IPF₁*
    ‘At night after eating and drinking, they made the bed in order to sleep.’

b. [hudu  miša-λ-unu  ḳeni  b-č-ṣwana],
    DEM  place-N-EL  water  N-take-PURP
    ‘In order to (be allowed to) take water from this place,

¹⁵ For a general discussion of the possible historical connections between purposive and infinitive, see Haspelmath 1989.
The sporadic occurrence of synonymous forms with a suffix -urul'wsana confirms that, etymologically, -wsana is a complex suffix consisting of the infinitive marker -u(ru)a and the purposive case marker -sana. However, within the frame of a synchronic analysis at least, this converb cannot be described as an inflected form of the infinitive, since the infinitive cannot combine with any other case suffix. The explanation is that the status of -sana as a case suffix is probably recent. In AD Akhvakh, -sana occurs in the same morphosyntactic slot as the other case suffixes, but in AR Akhvakh, sana is a postposition combining with nouns in the dative case. In addition to that, although a precise etymological analysis of the infinitive suffix -uru ra does not seem possible, a connection with the dative case suffix -la is probable. Consequently, historically, the purposive converb results from the evolution of a construction involving the derived nominal form in the dative case that gave rise to the infinitive of present-day Akhvakh, followed by the postposition from which the purposive case suffix originates.

12.2. The negative form of the purposive converb

The purposive converb has a negative counterpart marked by the complex suffix -iũ-uk'wsana, which results from the contraction of -ile bik'usana, i.e., the suffix of the negative form of the converb -ile followed by the purposive converb of bik'uru a 'be' in auxiliary function.

(59) [kʷẽt-iũ-uk'wsana] molašw-e le ruša-l-a k'ar-aj-e b-ik'-awi.
run.away-NEG-PURP Molla-M-ERG calf tree-N-LAT be.fixed-CAUS-CVB.N N-be-UW.N

‘Molla had tied the calf to a tree so that it would not run away.’

12.3. The emergence of a new purposive converb

When the infinitive is used in adverbial clauses of purpose, but not in its other uses, it may combine with ẽ'e, reduced form of the general converb eĩ'e of eĩ'urula 'say', as in ex. (60).

(60) a. šodak'a harigʷ-etũ, [ẽ-be b-iũ-urula] ẽ'ẽ ĩhʷara-ka geĩ-a kas-iri.
duck.PL see-POST one-N N-catch-INF say-CVB.N lake-LAT inside-LAT jump-IPF₁

‘When he saw the ducks, he jumped into the lake to catch one of them.’

b. riũ'ẽ čab-e b-it-ada isto-ũ-ge ẽ'ẽ [ẽ'ẽ k'on-urula] ẽ'ẽ.
meat wash-CVB.N N-put-IPF₂ table-N-ESS on.ESS fire light-INF say-CVB.N

‘I washed the meat and put it on the table to light the fire.’

In such constructions, ẽ'e is optional in the sense that it can always be deleted, and its deletion does not modify the meaning, but its presence underscores the
purposive function of the infinitive. Syntactically, this use of ī’e can be grouped with other complementizer-like uses of the same converb, either in its full form ēē’e or in its reduced form ī’e – ex. (61).

(61) a. ēē’-uba [de-de ēē’-ixə] ī’-e!
say-PROH 1SG-ERG say-PF.NEG say-CVB.N
‘Don’t say that I didn’t tell you!’

b. j-ēχʷ-ere gida [mik’e b-ik’ʷ-ida gʷeda] ī’e.
F-rejoice-PROG COP₂, F baby N-be-IPF₂ COP₂,N say-CVB.N
‘I am happy that we are going to have a baby.’

Consequently, in the present state of the system, there are arguments for describing this use of ī’e as a particular aspect of the syntax of the infinitive. But the same facts could equally be described by positing a second purposive converb characterized by a complex suffix -uru.a-ī’e.

13. Conclusion

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this survey of the specialized converbs of AD Akhvakh is the high proportion of etymologically transparent converbs. In addition to that, the available data on AR Akhvakh suggests that there are interesting differences between the specialized converbs of these two Akhvakh varieties, in spite of their remarkable closeness in most areas of the grammar. Since massive recourse to rich inventories of specialized converbs to express various semantic types of adverbial subordination is probably ancient among Nakh-Daghestanian languages, this observation confirms that, in languages of this type, grammaticalization processes such as those recognized above for AD Akhvakh are constantly at work, resulting in a relatively rapid renewal of the inventories of specialized converbs. A possible consequence of this situation is the proliferation of synonymous forms. We have seen for example that, in AD Akhvakh, a construction involving the infinitive and a converbal form of ēet’uru.a ‘say’ is grammaticalizing into a new purposive converb, in spite of the fact that two forms (the infinitive and the purposive converb) are already available as heads of adverbial clauses of purpose.

Abbreviations

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<td>complementizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONC:</td>
<td>concessive converb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COND:</td>
<td>conditional converb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP:</td>
<td>copula</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVB:</td>
<td>general converb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT:</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM:</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIR:</td>
<td>directional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL:</td>
<td>elative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG:</td>
<td>ergative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESS:</td>
<td>essive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLIC:</td>
<td>explicative converb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex: Underlying representation of verbal forms involving morphophonological processes, signaled by an asterisk in the glosses of the examples

(1)  j-ini < |j-ĩ-iri|, 16 g-uũ-ida < |g*ũ(j)-uũ-ida|
(2)  q'-ēni < |q'ã(b)-iri|, tũk-ini < |tũk-iri|
(4)  m-āne < |b-ān-ere|
(5)  w-uk'ũwi < |w-ik'ũ-uni|, ūk-āno < |ūk(a(j))-ero|
(6)  ũ-āre < |ã(a)-ere|, m-ič-ani < |b-ĩč-ari|, w-uũ-ani < |w-ĩč-ari|
(7)  q'-āne < |q'ã(b)-ere|
(8)  ũ-āre < |ã(a)-ere|
(10) eč'-ēda< |eča(b)-ida|, b-ōč'il-āri < |b-ōč'il(a)-ari|, m-ič-ala < |b-ĩč-ala|, m-ida < |b-ũ-ida|
(12) gʷ-éwi < |gʷi(j)-aï|, w-ũk'ena < |w-ũk'ena|, j-it'āhe < |j-it'a(j)-che|, j-ĩni < |j-ĩ-iri|
(14) m-ĩni < |b-ũ-iri|, m-ič-alaq'o < |b-ĩč-alaq'o|, m-āqʷ-ida < |b-āqʷ-ida|, w-uũ-ideři < |w-ũ-ideři|
(20) eč'-ideři < |eč(b)-ideři|, m-āqʷ-ideři < |b-āqʷ-ideři|, q'-oňu< |q'ã(b)-urru|a, b-āšl-ěri < |b-āšl(a)-iri|
(21) b-čś-il-āri < |b-čś-il(a)-ari|
(22) w-ādeři < |w-ādeř|, w-ũni < |w-ũ-iri|
(23) ţ-ādeři < |ţa(b)-adeř|, ţ-āda < |ţa(b)-ada|
(24) t'-čś-ēři < |t'ãčś-ēři|
(25) ečđ-ūru< |ečđa(j)-urru|a
(27) w-ideři < |w-ũ-ideři|
(28) q'-čś-ēd< |q'ã(b)-ideři|, q'-čśa< |q'ã(b)-ida|
(29) w-ũq'-ero < |w-ũq'-eri|, w-uk'-ada< |w-ik'-ada|, w-ũq'-ari < |w-eq'-ari|
(30) t'-ćś-ašq< |t'ãčś-ašq|
(33) ţ-ula < |w-ũ-ula|, q'-ěni < |q'ã(b)-iri|
(35) w-ũq'-alaq'o < |w-ũq'-alaq'o|
(37) w-oq'-idaq< |w-oq'-idaq|e, m-awi < |b-ũawi|
(38) m-ida< |b-ũ-ida|, gʷ-čśa< |gʷi(j)-ada|, m-ida-be < |b-ũ-ida-be|
(39) q'-čśeda< |q'ã(b)-ida|, w-uũ< |w-ũ-ada|, w-ũeda< |w-ũ-eda|, rāč'-ini < |rāč'-iri|
(40) w-ida < |w-ũ-ida|
(41) m-ič-ala < |b-ĩč-ala|, w-ǔč-ala < |w-ǔč-ala|, t'-ōš-awa < |t'ã(b)-ũš-awa|
(42) t'-čś< |t'ãčś|
(43) gʷ-ida< |gʷi(j)-ida|
(44) q'-oňu< |q'ã(b)-urru|a, ţ-āšu-ga|

16 ỹ represents the unspecified nasal vowel which constitutes one of the allomorphs of the root of mĩnu< a 'go'.

F: feminine singular  LAT: lative  POT: potential
GEN: genitive  M: masculine singular  PROG: progressive converb
GRAD: gradual converb  MIR: mirative  PROH: prohibitive
HPL: human plural  N: non-human singular  PURP: purposive case /
ILLAT: illative  NEG: negation  converb
IMMED: immediate converb  NPL: non-human plural  SIMIL: similative converb
IMMIN: imminent converb  NPOST: non-posterior  SIMULT: simultaneous
IMP: imperative  OBLG: obligative
INCEP: inceptive converb  OPT: optative  converb
INF: infinitive  PF: perfective
INT: intensifying particle  PL: plural  VLOC: verbal locative
IPF: imperfective  POST: posterior converb  VN: verbal noun
References


Creissels, D. 2008b. Remarks on so-called “conjunct/disjunct” systems. Paper delivered at the conference Syntax of the world’s languages III. Berlin.


