

Direction markers across Dargwa

Like most Nakh-Daghestanian languages, the languages of the Dargwa group show rich and branched systems of nominal forms including a complex paradigm of spatial (locative) forms. The structure of locative forms varies across the lects of the Dargwa group. The most basic difference is the number of grammatical categories expressed in such a form. In some languages, the locative forms are marked for two spatial categories: localization and orientation. The former marks a certain zone with respect to a reference point, the latter expresses movement with respect to this zone, cf. example (1a) from Sanzhi Dargwa (Forker 2020: 74): the suffix *-c:e* encodes the spatial zone ‘inside [the sack]’, while the elative suffix *-r* marks the motion from this zone (‘out of the sack’). The position (essive) is marked by a gender suffix (non-human singular in 1b), the movement ‘towards’ (lative) is unmarked (1c):

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|-----|----|-------------------|----|-----------------------|----|---------------------|
| (1) | a. | q:ap.li-c:e-r | b. | q:ap.li-c:e-b | c. | q:ap.li-c:e |
| | | sack.OBL-INTER-EL | | sack.OBL-INTER-N(ESS) | | sack.OBL-INTER(LAT) |
| | | ‘out of the sack’ | | ‘in the sack’ | | ‘into the sack’ |

At the same time, there are languages that express an additional category, that is *direction*. It encodes the direction of a movement with respect to the speaker (hither = to the speaker, thither = from the speaker, upwards, downwards), cf. the forms (2a–d) from Tsugni Dargwa (data from Sulajbanov 2021):

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|-----|----|---------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|
| (2) | a. | wac’a-c:e-r-ka | b. | wac’a-c:e-r-ha |
| | | forest-INTER-EL-DOWN | | forest-INTER-EL-UP |
| | | ‘out of the forest down(wards)’ | | ‘out of the forest up(wards)’ |
| | c. | wac’a-c:e-r-ca | d. | wac’a-c:e-r-de |
| | | forest-INTER-EL-HITHER | | forest-INTER-EL-THITHER |
| | | ‘out of the forest hither’ | | ‘out of the forest thither’ |

In most cases, direction only appears in the elative (sometimes also in the allative and lative forms, but never in the essives). In Dargwa, direction seems to be a relatively new category: it is absent in many languages; there is a lot of morphological variation in its marking; the markers of direction are in many cases optional; their origin is transparent: the direction markers are cognate to some spatial preverbs and locative adverbs, cf. (3) from Tanti Dargwa.

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|-----|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| (3) | | ‘down’ | ‘up’ | ‘hither’ | ‘thither’ |
| | direction (nominal suffix) | <i>-ka(le)</i> | <i>-ha(le)</i> | <i>-se(le)</i> | <i>-de(le)</i> |
| | verbal prefix | <i>ka-</i> | <i>ha-</i> | <i>sa-</i> | <i>CL-it-</i> |

On the other hand, in some lects, the category of direction seems to have been decayed: former direction markers have been fossilized as functionally empty parts of elative markers, cf. the elative suffixes in Meusisha: *-rbit*: (< **-r-CL-it*: ‘EL-DOWN’; Chechuro 2016: 51); Kadar: *-ka* (< **-ka* ‘DOWN’; Chechuro 2016: 46-47).

In this talk, I will try to formulate and discuss some hypotheses concerning the origin and development of direction across Dargwa. In particular, I will try to show that the variation in the presence and expression of direction correlates with the genetic subgroupings within the Dargwa group, though this correlation is not direct. In some cases, the contacts within the Dargwa group and with the neighboring non-Dargwa languages also play a role. Besides, it can be shown that the development of the direction markers is closely connected to the choice of the elative suffix.