Chapter 7

Case and agreement in Mehweb

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The chapter deals with patterns of case marking and agreement in Mehweb. On the basis of morphosyntactic coding and anaphoric binding, a system of five valency classes is described. The chapter covers basic monoclausal structures with verbs of the five valency classes as well as their interaction with several specific constructions, such as reciprocal, causative, and biabsolutive.

Keywords: case, personal agreement, gender, transitivity, experiential verbs, dative verbs, subject, reported speech, biabsolutive construction.

The present chapter deals with the morphosyntax of argument expression in Mehweb. In many respects, Mehweb is a fairly typical representative of the Dargwa branch of Nakh-Daghestanian, and of the Nakh-Daghestanian family in general. In certain respects, however, the language displays rare features only attested in a few other languages of the family. Three linguistic phenomena – argument case marking, gender agreement, and person agreement – are the focus of this chapter. The three coding properties are interrelated in many ways and together constitute major surface evidence about grammatical functions (including subjecthood), supported by other diagnostics, such as the binding of reflexive and reciprocal pronouns. They also generally determine how the Mehweb verbal lexicon can be broken down into verb (valency) classes. The notion of *core argument* will be key to capturing the system of valency classes. In this chapter, I define *core argument* as a clausal constituent expressed by a noun phrase that is able to determine at least one type of verbal agreement, either gender or person, or both. Depending on the number of core arguments and their morphosyntactic

Financial support from the Basic Research Program of the National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow) is gratefully acknowledged.

Dmitry Ganenkov. 2019. Case and agreement in Mehweb. In Michael Daniel, Nina Dobrushina & Dmitry Ganenkov (eds.), *The Mehweb language: Essays on phonology, morphology and syntax*, 189–234. Berlin: Language Science Press.
DOI:10.5281/zenodo.3402066

behavior with respect to coding properties, the Mehweb verbal lexicon is divided into the following valency classes:

(1) Mehweb valency classes
   a. *Intransitive verbs* have a single core argument in the absolutive that triggers both person and gender agreement.
   b. *Transitive verbs* feature two core arguments. One core argument, the subject, is in the ergative case and triggers person agreement on the finite verb. The other core argument, the direct object, is in the absolutive case and determines agreement features in the gender agreement slot.
   c. *Locative subject verbs* are also bivalent verbs with two core arguments. Instead of an ergative argument, as with transitive verbs, they possess a core experiencer argument in the spatial case called *inter-lative*, see Chechuro (2019) [this volume] for details of the nominal paradigm. Like the ergative subject of a transitive verb, the inter-lative (henceforth, locative) subject of a locative-subject verb also triggers person agreement.
   d. *Dative subject verbs* have one core argument in the absolutive, which triggers gender agreement only. No argument of a dative subject verb is able to determine person agreement on its own.
   e. The *inter-elative subject verb buhes* 'manage, be able' features one core argument in the inter-elative case which optionally triggers person agreement but cannot control gender agreement.

The rest of this chapter provides empirical evidence about the behavior of various types of verbal arguments that motivates the above classification. §1 describes patterns of case marking and provides evidence from reflexive binding about the relative structural prominence of verbal arguments. §2 and §3 deal with rules of gender and person agreement. §4 presents an overview of case marking and agreement in reciprocal constructions. §5 discusses causative constructions. §6 describes basic properties of the biabsolutive construction. The conclusion briefly summarizes the main issues covered in the paper.

1 Case marking and structural prominence

Mehweb is a morphologically ergative language where the sole argument (S) of intransitive verbs is grouped together with the direct object (P) of transitive verbs with regard to morphological case marking, but separately from the subject (A) of transitive verbs: S and P arguments are in the unmarked absolutive case, while A arguments bear the ergative case.

(2) *ʔali* *w-ak'-ib.*
Ali(ABS) M-come:PF-AOR
'Ali came.'

(3) *sinka-ni* *ʔali* *uc-ib.*
bear-ERG Ali(ABS) (M)catch:PF-AOR
'A bear seized Ali.'

(4) *ʔali-ini* *sinka* *b-aʕbʔ-ib.*
Ali-ERG bear(ABS) N-kill:PF-AOR
'Ali killed a bear.'

In (2), the DP *ʔali* 'Ali (a man's name)' is in its unmarked form and functions as the core argument of the intransitive verb *bak'es* 'come'. In (3), the same form is used to express the direct object (patient) of the transitive verb *buces* 'catch, seize'. In (4), however, the DP functions as the subject of the transitive verb *baʕbʔes* 'kill' and thus must be in the ergative case.

An absolutive case DP is present in almost every Mehweb clause. In intransitive clauses, the absolutive argument is the highest one from the structural point of view, as seen from the fact that it can bind reflexive pronouns in any other position, but cannot be bound itself by any other argument.[1] Example (5) shows the intransitive verb *ħule* CL-*izes* 'look' with an oblique argument which is diagnosed as structurally less prominent than the clause-mate absolutive argument.

[1]In this paper, to diagnose structural prominence, I employ sentences with *wh*-pronouns serving as antecedents of reflexive pronouns. This is necessary in order to exclude the possibility of the co-reference relation between the antecedent and the reflexive (Reinhart 1981). Co-reference is normally available with referential antecedents and works on pragmatic rather than strictly syntactic grounds in Mehweb. In particular, the "antecedent" can appear in a structurally lower position in co-reference, as in (i), which is not a grammatical option under semantic binding by non-referential antecedents (quantified, *wh*-pronouns), cf. (5b).

(i) *sune-la-l* *urši* *madina-če* *ħule* *w-iz-ur.*
self-GEN-EMPH son(ABS) Madina-SUPER(LAT) look M-LV:PF-AOR
'Her$_i$ son looked at Madina$_i$ (a woman's name).'

(5) *ħule* CL-*izes* 'look': absolutive > super-lative

a. *čija* *ħule* *d-iz-ur-a* *sune-la-l*
who(ABS) look F1-LV:PF-AOR-Q self-GEN-EMPH
urši-li-če?
son-OBL-SUPER(LAT)
'Who$_i$ looked at her$_i$ son?'

b. **sune-la-l* *urši* *hi-če* *ħule* *w-iz-ur-a?*
self-GEN-EMPH son(ABS) who-SUPER(LAT) look M-LV:PF-AOR-Q
'Who$_i$ did her$_i$ son look at?'

The linear order plays no role in acceptability of the "reversed" anaphoric binding, thus attesting to the relevance of weak crossover effects in reflexive binding, as shown in example (5c).

(5) *ħule* CL-*izes* 'look': absolutive > super-lative

c. **hi-če* *sune-la-l* *urši* *ħule* *w-iz-ur-a?*
who-SUPER(LAT) self-GEN-EMPH son(ABS) look M-LV:PF-AOR-Q
'Who$_i$ did her$_i$ son look at?'

The absolutive argument is not restricted to expressing any particular thematic role. It can denote an agentive participant, a patientive participant, or an experiencer. Unergative and unaccusative verbs in Mehweb are not distinguished by case marking. Some intransitive verbs are listed in (6).

(6) Intransitive verbs
a=izes 'stand up', *arces* 'fly', *aqas* 'raise, climb', *=alħ^{w}es* 'wake up', *=ebk'es* 'die', *=er?^{w}es* 'become dry', *=ises* 'cry', *=usa?^{w}as* 'fall asleep', *=urdes* 'become worn', *=ušes* 'die out (of fire)', *=uzes* 'work', *kal?es* 'remain', *uruχ =a^{ʕ}qes* 'get afraid'

Two-place verbs are those verbs that mark their structurally highest argument with a morphological case other than the absolutive. As suggested in (1) above, depending on the particular case of the highest argument, two-place verbs fall into three classes: transitive verbs with ergative subjects, locative subject verbs with inter-lative subjects, and dative subject verbs with dative subjects.

With transitive verbs, the ergative-marked argument is structurally the most prominent, as evidenced by its ability to bind a reflexive pronoun in any other position in the clause, including the absolutive argument, as in (7a-8a). The reverse binding of the ergative reflexive by an oblique or absolutive argument is impossible, as shown in (7b) and (8b).

(7) *haraq'e ih^{w}es* 'deceive': ergative > absolutive

a. *hinija haraq'e ih^{w}-es-a sune-la-l urši?*
who(ERG) forward throw:PF-FUT-Q self-GEN-EMPH son(ABS)
'Who$_i$ will deceive his$_i$ son?'

b. **sune-la-l urši-li-ni čija haraq'e ih^{w}-es-a?*
self-GEN-EMPH son-OBL-ERG who(ABS) forward throw:PF-FUT-Q
'Who$_i$ will his$_i$ son deceive?'

(8) *kumak baq'es* 'help': ergative > dative

a. *hinija sune-la-l urši-li-s kumak b-aq'-ib-a?*
who(ERG) self-GEN-EMPH son-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR-Q
'Who$_i$ helped his$_i$ son?'

b. **sune-la-l urši-li-ni hi-sa kumak b-aq'-ib-a?*
self-GEN-EMPH son-OBL-ERG who-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR-Q
'Who$_i$ did his$_i$ son help?'

Apart from agents, the ergative argument of a transitive verb can also denote a non-agentive causer (see also Chechuro 2019 [this volume] on the instrumental function of the ergative).

(9) *ʒab-li-ni mura d-aˤH^{w}-aˤq-ib.*
rain-OBL-ERG hay(ABS) NPL-become wet:PF-CAUS-AOR
'The rain made the hay wet.'

(10) *ʁ^{w}aˤl-li-ni ʁut'-be šiš d-uk'-aq-uwe le-r.*
wind-OBL-ERG tree-PL(ABS) move NPL-LV:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-NPL
'The wind is shaking the trees.'

(11) *c'a-li-ni qul-le ig-uwe le-r.*
fire-OBL-ERG house-PL(ABS) burn:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-NPL
'Fire is burning the houses.'

Ergative case is thus tightly associated with agentive and causative semantics and is not employed to express participants with other thematic roles. Almost every transitive clause contains an absolutive argument. Exceptions are very few and can be summarized as follows.

With verbs of contact like CL-*aʔaqas* 'hit (an inanimate object)' and CL-*aˤqas* 'hit (an animal)', the absolutive argument expresses the instrument. Generally, instruments are never obligatory and can be freely omitted from overt expression.

The absolutive argument in the instrumental function thus often does not appear overtly.

(12) *it-ini* *q'ʷaˤj-če* *(derxa)* *b-aˤq-ib.*
this-ERG cow+OBL-SUPER(LAT) stick(ABS) N-hit:PF-AOR
'She hit the cow (with a stick).'

(13) *ʔali-ni* *(χunk')* *unza-li-ze* *b-aʔ-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG fist(ABS) door-OBL-INTER(LAT) N-hit-LV:PF-AOR
'Ali hit the door with his fist (lit. his fist into the door).'

The absolutive argument, when omitted from overt expression, is arguably still present in the sentence, as evidenced by the possibility of non-default (neuter plural) gender agreement.

(14) *ʔali-ni* *unza-li-ze* *d-aʔ-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG door-OBL-INTER(LAT) NPL-hit-LV:PF-AOR
'Ali hit the door (with his fists).'

In (14), the plural gender marking on the verb reflects the plurality of the instrumental DP in the absolutive.

With some transitive verbs of speech and thought, the absolutive argument denotes the content of speech/thought.

(15) *ħu-ni* *sija* *i-ra?*
you.sg-ERG what(ABS) say:PF+AOR-EGO+Q
'What did you say?'

(16) *nu-ni* *b-urh-iša* *ca* *χabar.*
I-ERG N-tell:PF-FUT.EGO one story(ABS)
'I will tell (you) one story.'

Likewise, many such verbs alternatively subcategorize for either an absolutive DP argument or a clausal argument. In the latter case, no absolutive argument is present in the clause.

(17) *rasuj-ni* *abzulaj-ze* *b-urh-ib* *murad-li* *mašina*
Rasul+OBL-ERG all+OBL-INTER(LAT) N-tell:PF-AOR Murad-ERG car(ABS)
as-ib *ile.*
take:PF-AOR COMP
'Rasul told everyone that Murat had bought a car.'

With some complex transitive verbs, a nominal constituent in the unmarked form functions as a non-verbal component.

(18) *mallarasbadij-ni* *žawab* *b-aq'-i-le* *le-b.*
Molla Nasreddin.OBL-ERG answer N-do:PF-AOR-CVB AUX-N
'Molla Nasreddin answered.' (lit. 'made an answer')

(19) *nu-ni* *di-la=l* *urši-li-s* *kumak* *b-aq'-i-ra.*
I-ERG I.OBL-GEN=EMPH son-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR-EGO
'I helped my son.'

The morphosyntactic status of such unmarked nominals is not clear. They can be analyzed either as absolutive-cased DPs or as (pseudo)-incorporated caseless NPs. More work is needed to decide on this question.

Some verbs are P-labile, that is, have both a transitive use and an intransitive use where the subject of the intransitive use corresponds to (i.e. expresses the same participant as) the direct object of the transitive use. The verbal lexicon has not been systematically studied for P-lability. The transitive use with an unspecified (omitted) subject of a P-labile verb and the intransitive use of the same verb are distinguished by: (i) different imperative marking (see Daniel 2019 [this volume]), and (ii) the ability of the absolutive argument to trigger person agreement on the finite verb (see §3.1 below).

Two other classes of two-place verbs are locative subject verbs and dative subject verbs. The locative subject class includes the verbs *arʁes* 'hear, understand', *bahes* 'know', *barges* 'find', *g^{w}es* 'see'.

(20) *ʔali-ze* *it* *deh^{w}* *arʁ-ib.*
Ali-INTER(LAT) this word(ABS) hear/understand:PF-AOR
'Ali heard/understood this word.'

(21) *rasuj-ze* *ʔali* *w-alh-an.*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) Ali(ABS) M-know:IPF-HAB
'Rasul knows Ali.'

(22) *ʔali-ze* *arc* *d-arg-ib.*
Ali-INTER(LAT) money(ABS) NPL-find:PF-AOR
'Ali found money.'

(23) *rasuj-ze* *ʔali* *g-ub.*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) Ali(ABS) see:PF-AOR
'Rasul saw Ali.'

The dative subject class includes the verbs *biges* 'want, love', *bikes* 'happen', *eba buhes* 'get bored', *určeb leb* 'remember', *urče bak'as* 'recall', *urče bikes* 'recall'.

(24) *madina-s rasul w-ig-an.*
Madina-DAT Rasul(ABS) M-love:IPF-HAB
'Madina loves Rasul.'

(25) *ʔali-s ʔaˤχ-il q'immat b-ik-ib.*
Ali-DAT good-ATR grade(ABS) N-happen:PF-AOR
'Ali got a good grade.'

(26) *madina-s rasul eba uh-ub.*
Madina-DAT Rasul(ABS) bore (M)become:PF-AOR
'Madina got bored with Rasul.'

(27) *madina-s ʔali urče-w le-w.*
Madina-DAT Ali(ABS) in.heart-M(ESS) be-M
'Madina remembers Ali.'

(28) *rasuj-s hel deh^{w} urče b-ak'-ib.*
Rasul+OBL-DAT this word(ABS) in.heart(LAT) N-come:PF-AOR
'Rasul recalled that word.'

The verb *qumartes* 'forget' alternatively allows for either locative or dative case marking on its subject.

(29) {*ʔali-ze* / *ʔali-s*} *deč' qum-art-ur.*
Ali-INTER(LAT) / Ali-DAT song(ABS) forget-LV:PF-AOR
'Ali forgot the song.'

The inter-lative (locative) and dative arguments are the highest arguments in their respective clauses. Again, this is evidenced by the ability of the locative/dative argument to bind any other argument (including the absolutive), while the reverse binding pattern is ungrammatical.

(30) *g^{w}es* 'see': inter-lative > absolutive

a. *hi-ze g-ub-a sune-la-l urši?*
who-INTER(LAT) see:PF-AOR-Q self-GEN-EMPH son(ABS)
'Who$_i$ saw her$_i$ son?'

b. **sune-la-l urši-li-ze čija g-ub-a?*
self-GEN-EMPH son-OBL-INTER(LAT) who(ABS) see:PF-AOR-Q
'Who$_i$ did her$_i$ son see?'

(31) *biges* 'love': dative > absolutive

a. *hi-sa* *ħa-d-ig-ul* *sune-la-l* *abaj?*
who-DAT NEG-F1-love:IPF-PTCP self-GEN-EMPH mother(ABS)
'Who$_i$ does not love his$_i$ mother?'

b. **sune-la-l* *abaj-s* *čija* *ħa-d-ig-ul?*
self-GEN-EMPH mother-DAT who(ABS) NEG-F1-love:IPF-PTCP
'Who$_i$ does his$_i$ mother not love?'

Again, while the absolutive argument generally must be present in a clause with a locative or dative subject verb, it may be absent in case the corresponding semantic argument is expressed by another constituent. Most locative and dative subject verbs allow a clausal complement instead of the absolutive argument.

(32) *arʁes* 'hear' with finite complement
ʔali-ze *arʁ-ib* [*abaj* *iz-uwe* *le-r*
Ali-INTER(LAT) hear:PF-AOR mother(ABS) be.sick:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
ile].
COMP
'Ali heard that mother was sick.'

(33) *biges* 'want' with infinitival complement
rasuj-s *dig-uwe* *le-b* [*anži-li*
Rasul+OBL-DAT want:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N Makhachkala-IN(LAT)
uʕq'-es].
(M)go:PF-INF
'Rasul wants to go to Makhachkala.'

(34) *bikes* 'happen' with a finite complement
abzulaj-s *b-ik-ib* [*ʔali* *w-ebk'-i-le*
everyone+OBL-DAT N-happen:PF-AOR Ali(ABS) M-die:PF-AOR-CVB
ile].
COMP
'Everyone thought (lit. it occurred to everyone) that Ali was dead.'

Finally, the verb *buhes* 'manage, be able' is the only verb in Mehweb that licenses a core argument in the inter-elative case.

(35) *rasuj-ze-la* *ajz-es* *ħa-b-urh-an.*
Rasul+OBL-INTER-EL (M)rise:PF-INF NEG-N-manage:IPF-HAB
'Rasul cannot stand up.'

(36) *rasuj-ze-la* *ħa-b-uh-ub* *ʁarʁa* *aq*
Rasul+OBL-INTER-EL NEG-N-manage:PF-AOR stone(ABS) up
b-aq'-as.
N-do:PF-INF
'Rasul did not manage to lift the stone.'

To summarize, Mehweb has five verb classes depending on the case of the structurally highest argument: (i) intransitive verbs with absolutive subject, (ii) transitive verbs with ergative subject, (iii) locative subject verbs with inter-lative subject, and (iv) dative subject verbs with dative subject, and (v) one inter-elative subject verb *buhes* 'manage, be able'. The argument structure of all verbs includes an absolutive argument. As will be shown below, the subject and the absolutive argument (when they are different) play a special role in gender and person agreement, and thus are called *core arguments*. All other arguments are *oblique*.

2 Verbal gender agreement

Two morphological slots for gender agreement are potentially available in the Mehweb clause. One is the prefixal gender agreement marker on lexical verbs. Every verbal stem is specified for whether it hosts the prefixal gender agreement slot. Most verbs are specified to host this agreement marker in their perfective stems. In imperfective stems, the slot is often absent. For more on agreement morphology and its relation to stems, see Daniel (2019) [this volume].

(37) a. *urši-li-ni* *kaʁar-t* *d-elk'-un.*
boy-OBL-ERG letter-PL(ABS) NPL-write:PF-AOR
'The boy wrote letters.'

b. *urši-li-ni* *kaʁar-t* *luk'-an.*
boy-OBL-ERG letter-PL(ABS) write:IPF-HAB
'The boy writes letters (every day).'

The verb 'write' has a prefixal slot for gender agreement in its perfective stem, as shown in (37a), but lacks any such slot in its imperfective stem, as in (37b). If a stem features gender agreement, it is obligatory in any verbal form based on this stem, be it finite or non-finite.

The other morphological slot for gender agreement in the verbal complex is the suffix on the auxiliary in periphrastic verbal forms.

(38) *urši-li-ni* *kaʁar-t* *luk'-uwe* *le-r.*
boy-OBL-ERG letter-PL(ABS) write:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-NPL
'The boy is writing letters.'

The rule of thumb for gender agreement in monoclausal structures is to agree with the clause-mate absolutive argument. With regard to gender agreement on lexical verbs, this means that agreement is always with the absolutive subject of an intransitive verb or with the absolutive direct object of other verb classes, as shown below.

(39) a. *urši* *w-ak'-ib.*
boy(ABS) M-come:PF-AOR
'The boy came.'

b. *dursi* *d-ak'-ib.*
girl(ABS) F1-come:PF-AOR
'The girl came.'

(40) a. *ʔali-ini* *sinka* *b-aˤbʔ-ib.*
Ali-ERG bear(ABS) N-kill:PF-AOR
'Ali killed a bear.'

b. *sinka-li* *ʔali* *w-aˤbʔ-ib.*
bear-ERG Ali(ABS) M-kill:PF-AOR
'A bear killed Ali.'

(41) a. *abaj-ze* *urši* *w-arg-ib.*
mother-INTER(LAT) boy(ABS) M-find:PF-AOR
'Mother found her son.'

b. *adaj-ze* *dursi* *d-arg-ib.*
father-INTER(LAT) girl(ABS) F1-find:PF-AOR
'Father found his daughter.'

(42) a. *madina-s* *ʔali* *w-ig-ib.*
Madina-DAT Ali(ABS) M-love:IPF-IPFT
'Madina loved Ali.'

b. *ʔali-s* *madina* *d-ig-ib.*
Ali-DAT Madina(ABS) F1-love:IPF-IPFT
'Ali loved Madina.'

If a clause lacks an absolutive argument, as observed with some types of formally transitive verbs, gender agreement on the lexical verb appears as the default singular neuter agreement marker *b-*. This is also observed with intransitive impersonal predicates. See examples in §1 above.

The verb *buhes* 'manage, be able' subcategorizes for an inter-elative subject and an infinitival complement and thus does not have an absolutive argument. This verb, therefore, invariably appears with the default (singular neuter) marker *b-*, as in examples (35) and (36) above.

The second morphological slot for gender agreement appears on the auxiliary within periphrastic verbal forms like Present and Past Progressive, Present and Past Resultative. This slot cross-references the gender-number features of the highest absolutive argument or shows the default (neuter singular agreement) in clauses with no absolutive argument.

(43) a. *urši* *iz-uwe* *le-w.*
boy(ABS) be.sick:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M
'The boy is sick.'

b. *dursi* *iz-uwe* *le-r.*
girl(ABS) be.sick:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
'The girl is sick.'

(44) a. *madina-ze* *rasul* *w-alh-uwe* *le-w.*
Madina-INTER(LAT) Rasul(ABS) M-know:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M
'Madina knows Ali.'

b. *rasuj-ze* *madina* *d-alh-uwe* *le-r.*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) Madina(ABS) F1-know:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
'Rasul knows Madina.'

(45) a. *madina-s* *rasul* *w-ig-uwe* *le-w.*
Madina-DAT Rasul(ABS) M-love:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M
'Madina loves Rasul.'

b. *rasuj-s* *madina* *d-ig-uwe* *le-r.*
Rasul+OBL-DAT Madina(ABS) F1-love:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
'Rasul loves Madina.'

(46) *urši-li-ni* *i-le* *le-b …*
boy-OBL-ERG say:PF+AOR-CVB AUX-N
'The boy said that …'

In complex verbs that include an adjectival stem specified for prefixal gender agreement as a non-verbal component, the adjective always agrees with the absolutive argument.

(47) a. *adam-ule-ni huni b-aʕʔu b-aq'-ib.*
man-PL-ERG road(ABS) N-wide N-do:PF-AOR
'Men widened the road.'

b. *adam-ule-ni hun-be d-aʕʔu d-aq'-ib.*
man-PL-ERG road-PL(ABS) NPL-wide NPL-do:PF-AOR
'Men widened the roads.'

If a sentence contains two absolutive arguments, as attested in biabsolutive constructions, the auxiliary agrees with the subject (see §6).

3 Verbal person agreement

3.1 Intransitive, transitive, and locative subject verbs in synthetic indicative forms

In synthetic indicative tense-aspect forms (aorist, imperfect, habitual, future), person agreement operates on a nominative-accusative basis and cross-references the person of the subject: the absolutive argument of intransitive verbs, the ergative argument of transitive verbs, or the inter-lative argument of locative subject verbs.

(48) *nu usaʔ-un-na.*
I(ABS) (M)fall asleep:PF-AOR-EGO
'I fell asleep.'

(49) *nuša-jni qali b-aq'-i-ra.*
we-ERG house(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR-EGO
'We built a house.'

(50) *di-ze sinka g-ub-ra.*
I-INTER(LAT) bear(ABS) see:PF-AOR-EGO
'I saw a bear.'

Morphologically, person inflection only distinguishes two options. One is a form overtly specified for person (*-iša* in the Future, *-s* in the Habitual, *-ra* in other indicative tense-aspect forms), the other is a non-agreeing form. A peculiar

feature of Mehweb is that person agreement is sensitive to the illocutionary force of the utterance.[2] In declarative sentences, the overt person marker signals a first person subject, whereas non-agreeing forms are observed with second and third person subjects. By contrast, the same person marker indicates second person subject in interrogative sentences, while first and third person subjects do not trigger overt person marking on the verb. The following question-answer pairs illustrate.

(51) Q: *ħu* *dag* *kuda* {*w-aˤq'-un-na* /
you.sg(ABS) yesterday where M-go:PF-AOR-EGO+Q /
**w-aˤq'-un-a*}?
M-go:PF-AOR-Q
'Where did you go yesterday?'
A: *nu* *anži-li* {*w-aˤq'-un-na* / **w-aˤq'-un*}.
I(ABS) Makhachkala-IN(LAT) M-go:PF-AOR-EGO / M-go:PF-AOR
'I went to Makhachkala.'

(52) Q: *dag* *nu-ni* *sija* {*b-aq'-ib-a* / **b-aq'-i-ra*}?
yesterday I-ERG what(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR-Q / N-do:PF-AOR-EGO+Q
'What did I do yesterday?'
A: *ħu-ni* *poˤroˤm* {*b-uˤrʔ-aq-ib* /
you.sg-ERG glass(ABS) N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR /
**b-uˤrʔ-aq-i-ra*}.
N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO
'You broke a window.'

Example (51) shows that second person subjects in interrogatives and first person subjects in declaratives obligatorily require overt person marking, whereas subjects in reverse the combinations of person and illocutionary force – first person subjects in interrogatives and second person subjects in declaratives – can never trigger person marking, as example (52) demonstrates. (For discussion of one notable exception see §3.4 below.)

Person marking on synthetic tense-aspect forms is obligatory with intransitive absolutive subjects and transitive ergative subjects and cannot be omitted. Locative subject verbs display variation here. The verb *gʷes* 'see' patterns with the

[2] This type of agreement system is also referred to as *egophoric*, *conjunct/disjunct*, or *assertive agreement*, see Creissels (2008) who discusses assertive agreement in another Nakh-Daghestanian language, Akhwakh (Andic branch).

transitive and intransitive verbs in requiring person agreement, whereas with all other locative subject verbs, person marking is optional.

(53) *di-ze* *urx-ne* {*d-arg-i-ra* / *d-arg-ib*}.
I-INTER(LAT) key-PL(ABS) NPL-find:PF-AOR-EGO / NPL-find:PF-AOR
'I found the keys.'

(54) *di-ze* *rasu-wa* *t'ama* {*arʁ-i-ra* /
I-INTER(LAT) Rasul+OBL-GEN sound(ABS) hear:PF-AOR-EGO /
arʁ-ib}.
hear:PF-AOR
'I heard Rasul's voice.'

(55) *di-ze* *rasul* {*w-alh-as* / *w-alh-an*}.
I-INTER(LAT) Rasul(ABS) M-know:IPF-HAB.EGO / M-know:IPF-HAB
'I know Rasul.'

Similar to locative subject verbs, the inter-elative subject of the verb *buhes* 'manage, be able' triggers overt person marking only optionally.

(56) *di-ze-la* *ajz-es* {*ħa-b-urh-an* /
I-INTER-EL (M)rise:PF-INF NEG-N-manage:IPF-HAB /
ħa-b-urh-as}.
NEG-N-manage:IPF-HAB.EGO
'I cannot stand up.'

(57) *di-ze-la* *ħa-b-uh-ub(-ra)* *ʁarʁa* *aq* *b-aq'-as.*
I-INTER-EL NEG-N-manage:PF-AOR-EGO stone(ABS) up N-do:PF-INF
'I did not manage to lift the stone.'

Non-subjects, including absolutive direct objects, inter-lative indirect objects (addressee, causee), inter-elative arguments (including involuntary agents) and other oblique arguments can never trigger person agreement.

(58) *ʔali-ini* *nu* {*w-it-ib* / **w-it-i-ra*}.
Ali-ERG I(ABS) M-beat:PF-AOR / M-beat:PF-AOR-EGO
'Ali beat me up.'

(59) *madina-ze* *nu* {*g-ub* / **g-ub-ra*}.
Madina-INTER(LAT) I(ABS) see:PF-AOR / see:PF-AOR-EGO
'Madina saw me.'

(60) *rasuj-ni di-ze ca χabar* {*b-urh-ib* /
Rasul-ERG I-INTER(LAT) one story(ABS) N-tell:PF-AOR /
**b-urh-i-ra*}.
N-tell:PF-AOR-EGO
'Rasul told me a story.'

(61) *abaj-ni di-ze ʁadur-me* {*d-az-aq-ib* /
mother-ERG I-INTER(LAT) dish-PL(ABS) NPL-wash:PF-CAUS-AOR /
**d-az-aq-i-ra*}.
NPL-wash:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO
'Mother made me wash the dishes.'

(62) *di-ze-la guruška b-uˁrʔ-uˁb*(-**ra*).
I-INTER-EL cup(ABS) N-break:PF-AOR-EGO
'A cup broke on me.'

This strict subject orientation of agreement allows us to distinguish between transitive and intransitive uses of P-labile verbs, as shown in the following examples.

(63) a. *nu quli-w w-aˁld-un-na.*
I(ABS) house-M(ESS) M-hide:PF-AOR-EGO
'I hid in the house.'

b. *nu quli-w w-aˁld-un.*
I(ABS) house-M(ESS) M-hide:PF-AOR
'They hid me in the house.'

In (63a), the presence of the agreement marker on the verb indicates that the first person singular pronoun *nu* is in the subject position, and that the sentence therefore instantiates the intransitive use of the labile verb. The absence of agreement in (63b) can only indicate that the absolutive pronoun is in the direct object position and that we are thus dealing with the transitive use of the labile verb.

3.2 Dative subject verbs

Unlike subjects of intransitive, transitive, and locative subject verbs, dative subjects do not trigger overt person agreement.

(64) *nab rasul* {*w-ig-an* / **w-ig-as*}.
I(DAT) Rasul(ABS) M-love:IPF-HAB / M-love:IPF-HAB.EGO
'I love Rasul.'

(65) *nab ʔaʕχ-il q'immat {b-ik-ib /*
I(DAT) good-ATR grade(ABS) N-happen:PF-AOR /
**b-ik-i-ra*}.
N-happen:PF-AOR-EGO
'I got a good grade.'

(66) *nab rasul eba {uh-ub / *uh-ub-ra*}.
I(DAT) Rasul(ABS) bore (M)become:PF-AOR / (M)become:PF-AOR-EGO
'I got bored with Rasul.'

(67) *nab ʔali urče-w {le-w / *le-w-ra*}.
I(DAT) Ali(ABS) in.heart-M(ESS) be-M / be-M-EGO
'I remember Ali.'

(68) *nab hel dehʷ urče {b-ak'-ib /*
I(DAT) this word(ABS) in.heart(LAT) N-come:PF-AOR /
**b-ak'-i-ra*}.
N-come:PF-AOR-EGO
'Rasul recalled that word.'

(69) *nab {b-ik-ib / *b-ik-i-ra} ʔali*
I(DAT) N-happen:PF-AOR / N-happen:PF-AOR-EGO Ali(ABS)
w-ebk'-i-le ile.
M-die:PF-AOR-CVB COMP
'I thought (it occurred to me) that Ali was dead.'

The contrast between locative and dative subject verbs is clearly seen in sentences with the verb *qumartes* 'forget'. Recall that this verb allows both locative and dative subjects. With a first person locative subject, the verb has optional person agreement, as with other locative subject verbs. With a first person dative subject, the verb cannot show overt person marking, as is usual with dative subject verbs.

(70) a. *di-ze ʔali qum-art-ur(-ra).*
I-INTER(LAT) Ali(ABS) forget-LV:PF-AOR-EGO
b. *nab ʔali qum-art-ur(-*ra).*
I(DAT) Ali(ABS) forget-LV:PF-AOR-EGO
'I forgot Ali.'

In sentences with dative subjects, absolutive direct objects do not trigger person agreement either, as shown in examples (71) to (74).

(71) *madina-s nu {w-ig-an / *w-ig-as}.*
Madina-DAT I(ABS) M-love:IPF-HAB / M-love:IPF-HAB.EGO
'Madina loves me.'

(72) *madina-s nu eba {uh-ub / *uh-ub-ra}.*
Madina-DAT I(ABS) bore (M)become:PF-AOR / (M)become:PF-AOR-EGO
'Madina got bored with me.'

(73) *madina-s nu urče-w {le-w / *le-w-ra}.*
Madina-DAT I(ABS) in.heart-M(ESS) be-M / be-M-EGO
'Madina remembers me.'

(74) *rasuj-s nu urče {b-ak'-ib / *b-ak'-i-ra}.*
Rasul+OBL-DAT I(ABS) in.heart(LAT) N-come:PF-AOR / N-come:PF-AOR-EGO
'Rasul recalled me.'

The absence of agreement with the absolutive argument is unexpected given the fact that many of the dative subject verbs clearly go back to intransitive structures where absolutive arguments diachronically go back to intransitive subjects, and thus could act as agreement triggers, contrary to fact.

(75) a. *X Y eba b-uh-es.*
DAT ABS bore N-become:PF-INF
'For X, Y becomes boring.'

b. *X Y urče-b le-b.*
DAT ABS in.heart-N(ESS) be-N
'To X, Y is on heart.'

c. *X Y urče b-ak'-as.*
DAT ABS in.heart(LAT) N-come:PF-INF
'To X, Y comes to heart.'

The clear contrast between intransitive and dative subject constructions with respect to person agreement is observed in a construction with the verb *haraq'e bak'as* (lit. 'come forward'), which denotes "illusionary seeing", as in dreams or hallucinations, as in (76).

(76) *rasuj-s* *tamaša-l* *si-k'al-t* *haraq'e*
Rasul+OBL-DAT surprising-ATR what-INDEF-PL forward
d-ik'-uwe *le-r.*
NPL-come:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-NPL
'Rasul sees something bizarre.' (lit. 'Something bizarre is coming forward to Rasul.')

As in other dative subject structures, neither of the two arguments, the dative subject or the absolutive direct object, is able to trigger person agreement on the verb.

(77) a. *nab* *tamaša-l* *si-k'al-t* *haraq'e* {*d-ak'-ib*
I(DAT) surprising-ATR what-INDEF-PL forward NPL-come:PF-AOR
/ **d-ak'-i-ra*}.
/ NPL-come:PF-AOR-EGO
'Something bizarre appeared to me.'

b. *rasuj-s* *nu* *haraq'e* {*w-ak'-ib* /
Rasul+OBL-DAT I(ABS) forward M-come:PF-AOR /
**w-ak'-i-ra*}.
M-come:PF-AOR-EGO
'I appeared to Rasul (in a hallucination).'

Overt person marking on the verb *bak'as* 'come' in the latter example is grammatical only in the literal sense of physical movement.

(78) *rasuj-s* *nu* *haraq'e* {*w-ak'-i-ra* /
Rasul+OBL-DAT I(ABS) forward M-come:PF-AOR-EGO /
**w-ak'-ib*}.
M-come:PF-AOR
'I came forward to Rasul.' (not: 'I appeared to Rasul (in a hallucination).')

We therefore have a minimal pair: in the same construction with *haraq'e bak'as* 'come forward', person agreement with the first person absolutive argument is obligatorily required when denoting physical movement and completely prohibited when referring to imaginary visions.

To sum up, neither of the two arguments of a dative subject verb – the dative subject or the absolutive direct object – can control person agreement on their own. Strikingly enough, overt person marking on a finite dative subject verb is nevertheless possible in constructions where both the dative subject and the

absolutive direct object are first person (i.e. in reflexive constructions with a first person subject).

(79) *nab* *nu=wal* *w-ig-as.*
I(DAT) I(ABS)=EMPH M-love:PF-HAB.EGO
'I love myself.'

The syntax of dative subject constructions and the way they interact with person agreement require further syntactic analysis.

3.3 Agreement in the Present Progressive

Present Progressive forms exhibit a different pattern of person agreement in sentences with transitive and locative subject verbs. Unlike other indicative forms, not only the person feature of the subject is taken into account here, but also the person feature of the direct (absolutive) object.

The descriptive generalization is that overt person agreement with the first person subject is only possible (and obligatory) when the absolutive direct object is a locutor (first or second person). Otherwise, with third person direct objects, person agreement is ungrammatical, and the finite verb is in the unmarked form.[3]

(80) a. *nu-ni* *kung* *luč'-uwe* *le-b*(**-ra*).
I-ERG book(ABS) read:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N-EGO
'I am reading a book.'

b. *nu-ni* *ħu* *ulc-uwe* *le-w-**(*ra*).
I-ERG you.sg(ABS) (M)catch:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'I am catching you (male).'

(81) a. *di-ze* *sinka* *irg-uwe* *le-b*(**-ra*).
I-INTER(LAT) bear(ABS) see:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N-EGO
'I can see a bear.'

[3]In transitive clauses with third person direct objects, such as (80a), first person marking is marginally accepted by some native speakers. It is not clear where such marginal acceptability stems from. One option could be that optional person agreement in these configurations is actually a part of Mehweb grammar. Another option, however, is that it arises from confusion with biabsolutive constructions where person agreement with the subject is obligatory in the Present Progressive (see §6). Indeed, many speakers, when accepting person agreement in examples like (80a), tend to rephrase the ergative construction of (80a) into the corresponding biabsolutive construction with the absolutive subject, with subject-controlled person and gender agreement on the auxiliary. Note that with locative subject verbs, which are not easily allowed in biabsolutive constructions, person agreement in the Present Progressive is definitely rejected by all speakers, see (81a).

b. *di-ze* *ħu* *irg-uwe* *le-w-*(ra).*
I-INTER(LAT) you.sg(ABS) see:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'I can see you.'

Examples (80a) and (81a) show that agreement with first person subjects is impossible in the presence of a third person absolutive direct object. By contrast, agreement is obligatory when the direct object is also a locutor. Relative specification of the subject and the direct object for number plays no role in the availability of person agreement.

(82) a. {*nu-ni* / *nuša-jni*} *ħuša* *b-ulc-uwe*
I-ERG / we-ERG you.pl(ABS) HPL-catch:IPF-CVB.IPFV
le-b-(ra).*
AUX-HPL-EGO
'{I am / we are} catching you all.'

b. *nuša-jni* *ħu* *ulc-uwe* *le-w-*(ra).*
we-ERG you.sg(ABS) (M)catch:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'We are catching you.'

(83) a. {*nu-ni* / *nuša-jni*} *ul-e* *b-ulc-uwe*
I-ERG / we-ERG child-PL(ABS) HPL-catch:IPF-CVB.IPFV
*le-b(-*ra).*
AUX-HPL-EGO
'{I am / we are} catching the kids.'

b. *nuša-jni* *qazam* *b-iz-uwe* *le-b(-*ra).*
we-ERG cauldron(ABS) N-wash:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N-EGO
'We are washing the cauldron.'

3.4 Matrix infinitival questions

One exception to the generalization that only second, but not first, person subjects trigger person agreement in interrogative sentences concerns agreeing Future forms, which may co-occur with first person subjects in interrogatives, yielding questions with modal semantics.

(84) *nu-ni* *ħad* *sija* *g-iša?*
I-ERG you.sg(DAT) what(ABS) give:PF-FUT.EGO+Q
'What should I give you?' (not: 'What will I give you?')

(85) *nu* *uˤq'-iša?*
I(ABS) (M)go:PF-FUT.EGO+Q
'Should I go?' (not: 'Will I go?')

Examples like (84) and (85) are remarkable in two respects. First, they are only available in the Future, and not in other tense-aspect forms.

(86) **nu-ni* *ħad* *sija* *g-i-ra?*
I-ERG you.sg(DAT) what(ABS) give:PF-AOR-EGO+Q
intended: 'What should I have given you?' (or 'What did I give you?')

Second, the modal interpretation of the questions in (84) and (85) only arises with first person subjects, but never with second person subjects, cf. the contrast between (87) and (88).

(87) *nu* *kuda* *uˤq'-iša?*
I(ABS) where (M)go:PF-FUT.EGO+Q
'Where should I go?' (not: 'Where will I go?')

(88) *ħu* *kuda* *uˤq'-iša?*
you.sg(ABS) where (M)go:PF-FUT.EGO+Q
'Where will you go?' (not: 'Where should you go?')

This contrast raises the question whether the two sentences in (87) and (88) contain the same or two different verb forms. This question is especially relevant in the light of the fact that the infinitive in Mehweb is formally identical to non-agreeing future forms, which appear, for example, in declarative sentences with second/third person subjects, as shown in (89).

(89) a. *ʔali* *šaˤ-baˤH* *uˤq'-es.*
Ali(ABS) village-DIR (M)go:PF-FUT
'Ali will go to the village.'

b. *ʔali-s$_i$* [pro$_i$ *šaˤ-baˤH* *uˤq'-es*] *dig-uwe* *le-b.*
Ali-DAT ABS village-DIR (M)go:PF-INF want:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'Ali wants to go to the village.'

The infinitive and the future are normally distinguished in contexts with overt person marking (e.g. declarative sentences with first person subjects). The Future takes overt person marking, while the infinitive never does so, as shown in (90).

(90) a. *nu* *ša^{ʕ}-ba^{ʕ}$_H$* *u^{ʕ}q'-iša.*
I(ABS) village-DIR (M)GO:PF-FUT.EGO
'I will go to the village.'

b. *nab$_i$* [pro$_i$ *ša^{ʕ}-ba^{ʕ}$_H$* *u^{ʕ}q'-es]* *dig-uwe* *le-b.*
I(DAT) ABS village-DIR (M)GO:PF-INF want:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'I want to go to the village.'

Now note that across Dargwa languages, the modal semantics found in the Mehweb examples in (84), (85), (87) is commonly expressed by a special form with a first person marker added on top of the infinitive, as seen in (91) from Chirag Dargwa.

(91) Chirag Dargwa
di-c:e *χabar-e* *d-urs-i-da-j?*
I-ERG story-PL(ABS) NPL-tell:PF-INF-EGO-Q
'Should I tell the stories?'

The same modal semantics is cross-linguistically characteristic of matrix infinitival questions (cf. English *Where to go?* or German *Wohin gehen?*, Bhatt 2006: 108, 110).

It is natural to propose that Mehweb modal questions as in (84) and (85) actually involve a combination of the infinitive and overt person marking rather than the formally identical agreeing form of the Future, as suggested by (i) the formal identity between the infinitive and the future in non-agreeing forms and (ii) the morphological evidence that the combination of infinitive with first person marking may yield the modal semantics of 'should' in other Dargwa languages.

3.5 Indexical shift and agreement shift in embedded reports

Person agreement as described above is only available in finite clauses: no non-finite clause can feature a person agreement marker. The following examples show that person agreement is unavailable in complements headed by nominalizations.

(92) *rasuj-ze* *b-alh-an …*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) N-KNOW:IPF-HAB
'Rasul knows …'

a. *nu-ni* *kung* {*b-elč'-un-deš* / **b-elč'-un-na-deš*}.
I-ERG book(ABS) N-read:PF-AOR-NMLZ / N-read:PF-AOR-EGO-NMLZ
'… that I read (past) the book.'

b. *nu-ni ħu ulc-uwe {le-w-deš /*
I-ERG you.sg(ABS) (M)catch:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-NMLZ /
**le-w-ra-deš}.*
AUX-M-EGO-NMLZ
'… that I am catching you.'

c. *nu-ni kung-ane {luč'-an-deš / *luč'-as-deš}.*
I-ERG book(ABS) read:IPF-HAB-NMLZ / read:IPF-HAB.EGO-NMLZ
'… that I read (habitual) books.'

Apart from the independent finite clauses described above, Mehweb also features finite complement clauses with the complementizer *ile*. Etymologically, the complementizer stems from (and is still synchronically identical) the perfective converb of the verb *es* 'say'. It is used with verbs of speech and thought to introduce reported speech (attitude reports).

(93) a. *abaj-s b-ik-ib ca insan w-ak'-ib*
mother-DAT N-happen:PF-AOR one person(ABS) M-come:PF-AOR
ile.
COMP
'Mother thought that someone had come.'

b. *abaj-ni b-urh-ib ca insan w-ak'-ib ile.*
mother-ERG N-tell:PF-AOR one person(ABS) M-come:PF-AOR COMP
'Mother said that someone had come.'

c. *abaj uruχ d-aʕq-ib ca insan*
mother(ABS) be.afraid F1-LV:PF-AOR one person(ABS)
w-ak'-ib ile.
M-come:PF-AOR COMP
'Mother feared that someone had come.'

Personal pronouns and person agreement in embedded reports under the complementizer *ile* are subject to *PERSON SHIFT* (*INDEXICAL SHIFT* and *AGREEMENT SHIFT*, respectively), see Schlenker (2003), Anand & Nevins (2004), Nikitina (2012), Shklovsky & Sudo (2014) on indexical shift in a theoretical and typological perspective.

Indexical shift affects the interpretation of first and second person pronouns and is always optional. Personal pronouns in embedded reports may refer not only to the participants of the actual speech act, as in independent finite clauses, but also to the participants of the speech act denoted by the matrix clause. In

the latter case, the first person pronoun refers to the reporter (attitude holder) expressed as the subject of the matrix clause, while the second person pronoun denotes the addressee of the matrix reporter.

(94) *rasuj-ni* *ib* *di-la* *mašin* *b-uˤrʔ-uˤb* *ile.*
Rasul+OBL-ERG say:PF+AOR I-GEN car(ABS) N-break:PF-AOR COMP

a. 'Rasul$_i$ said that my$_j$ car was broken.' (unshifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

b. 'Rasul$_i$ said that his$_i$ car was broken.' (shifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

(95) *madina-ini* *rasuj-ze* *ib* *ħa-la* *mašin*
Madina-ERG Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) say:PF+AOR you.sg-GEN car(ABS)
b-uˤrʔ-uˤb *ile.*
N-break:PF-AOR COMP

a. 'Madina said to Rasul$_i$ that your$_j$ car was broken.' (unshifted reading of the 2nd person pronoun)

b. 'Madina said to Rasul$_i$ that his$_i$ car was broken.' (shifted reading of the 2nd person pronoun)

With matrix verbs selecting for a complement clause with *ile* but lacking an addressee, such as matrix verbs of thought, only first person pronouns can be shifted, while second person pronouns only denote the addressee of the actual speech act.

(96) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *di-la* *mašin* *b-uˤrʔ-uˤb*
Rasul(M) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR I-GEN car(ABS) N-break:PF-AOR
ile.
COMP

a. 'Rasul$_i$ fears that my$_j$ car was broken.' (unshifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

b. 'Rasul$_i$ fears that his$_i$ car was broken.' (shifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

(97) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *ħa-la* *mašin* *b-uˤrʔ-uˤb*
Rasul(M) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR you.sg-GEN car(ABS) N-break:PF-AOR
ile.
COMP

'Rasul$_i$ fears that your$_j$ car was broken.' (only unshifted reading of the 2nd person pronoun)

Person agreement in finite embedded clauses is subject to obligatory *agreement shift*. Only arguments denoting the participants of the reported speech act can control person agreement, while other arguments including those representing the participants of the actual speech act can never trigger agreement. In declarative embedded clauses, only embedded subjects denoting the closest reporter / attitude holder trigger overt agreement on the verb. One possibility is that the embedded subject is expressed by the shifted first person pronoun.

(98) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *nu-ni* *mašin*
Rasul(ABS) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR I-ERG car(ABS)
b-uˤrʔ-aq-i-ra *ile.*
N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO COMP
'Rasul$_i$ feared that he$_i$ had broken the car.'

In (98), the subject is expressed by the first person pronoun that undergoes indexical shift; that is, it does not refer to the speaker of the actual speech act, but rather to the attitude holder (Rasul) expressed as the subject of the matrix clause. The embedded verb thus shows obligatory overt agreement for person.

Another possibility is that the embedded subject is expressed by the long-distance reflexive pronoun bound by the matrix subject representing the attitude holder. The long-distance reflexive thus ends up being co-referent with the attitude holder, and the verb obligatorily shows overt person marking.

(99) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *sune-jni* *mašin*
Rasul(ABS) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR self-ERG car(ABS)
b-uˤrʔ-aq-i-ra *ile.*
N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO COMP
'Rasul$_i$ feared that he$_i$ had broken the car.'

No other argument can trigger person agreement on the finite verb in embedded reports, including unshifted first person pronouns denoting the speaker of the actual speech act. Example (100) illustrates.

(100) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *nu-ni* *mašina*
Rasul(ABS) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR I-ERG car(ABS)
{*b-uˤrʔ-aq-ib* / **b-uˤrʔ-aq-i-ra*} *ile.*
N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR / N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO COMP
'Rasul$_i$ feared that I$_j$ had broken the car.'

Kozhukhar (2019) [this volume] reports that overt person marking with an unshifted first person pronoun is also possible in examples like (100). Indeed, consultants sometimes judge such sentences to be acceptable. I maintain, however, that overt person agreement with an unshifted first person pronoun is ungrammatical, and the judgments must stem from confusion. First person pronouns strongly tend to shift their reference in embedded reports, and consultants usually struggle to recognize that the pronoun could refer to the actual speaker. So, when presented with a sentence containing a first person pronoun and overt person marking on the verb, some consultants judge it acceptable due to the fact that they have a different reading in mind. Instead of the reference to the speaker of the actual speech act, they interpret the pronoun as denoting the attitude holder. However, if a suitable example is constructed where the confusion is not possible because of overt morphological marking, overt person marking with unshifted first person pronouns is uniformly judged unacceptable. Consider the following examples.

(101) *abaj-s* *b-ik-ib* *nu* *usaʔ-uwe*
mother-DAT N-happen:PF-AOR I(ABS) (M)fall asleep:PF-AOR.CVB
le-w(-**ra*) *ile.*
AUX-M-EGO COMP
'Mother$_i$ thought that I$_j$ had fallen asleep.'

(102) *abaj* *uruχk'-uwe* *le-r* *nu* {*arik-es* /
mother(ABS) be.afraid:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F I(ABS) (M)fall:PF-FUT /
**arik-iša*} *ile.*
(M)fall:PF-FUT.EGO COMP
'Mother$_i$ is afraid that I$_j$ am going to fall down.'

In (101) and (102), the first person pronoun in the embedded clause is unambiguously interpreted as denoting the actual speaker, since masculine gender marking appears on the embedded verb (both on the converb of the lexical verb and the auxiliary), indicating that the referent of the first person pronoun is a man. Since the attitude holder ('mother') is unambiguously female, the embedded first person pronoun may only receive a disjoint reference, and thus denote the speaker of the actual speech act. In this configuration, overt agreement was unanimously considered grossly ungrammatical.

Agreement shift thus makes possible various mismatches between the "lexical" person feature of an argument and verbal person agreement. On the one hand, third person reflexive pronouns trigger overt person marking, as in (99). On the other hand, first person pronouns referring to the actual speaker can never trigger overt person agreement, as in (100) through (102).

The examples above show that the attitude holder can be lexically expressed in the embedded clause by either a shifted first person pronoun or a long-distance reflexive pronoun. However, these two options cannot co-occur within the same embedded clause. In the presence of a long-distance reflexive bound by the matrix subject, first person pronouns are obligatorily interpreted as referring to the speaker of the actual speech act.

(103) *rasul* *uruχ* *w-aˤq-ib* *nu-ni* *sune-la* *mašina*
Rasul(ABS) be.afraid M-LV:PF-AOR I-ERG self-GEN car(ABS)
b-uˤrʔ-aq-i-ra *ile.*
N-break:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO COMP

i. *'Rasul$_i$ feared that he$_i$ broke his$_i$ car.'
ii. 'Rasul$_i$ feared that he$_i$ broke his$_j$ car.'
iii. *'Rasul$_i$ feared that I$_j$ broke his$_i$ car.'

In (103), the embedded clause includes both the first person pronoun in the ergative subject position and the possessive reflexive pronoun that modifies the direct object. The two cannot be interpreted as denoting the same participant, as shown by the ungrammaticality of reading (i). Two further options are logically possible: either the first person pronoun or the reflexive is interpreted as denoting the attitude holder. In the former case, the reflexive must have disjoint reference (long-distance bound by an even higher subject or a free logophor, see Kozhukhar 2019 [this volume]), as indicated in interpretation (ii). In the latter case, the first person pronoun must refer to the actual speaker, which is not possible in this sentence, since unshifted first person pronouns do not trigger verbal person marking, hence the ungrammaticality of reading (iii). Should the finite verb in the embedded report be in the unmarked form *buˤrʔaqib*, reading (iii) becomes available.

In interrogative embedded clauses, a similar distribution is observed: only arguments co-valued with the addressee of the reporter (expressed as the addressee argument of the matrix verb) show overt person marking on the embedded verb, whereas unshifted second person pronouns cannot trigger overt person marking.

(104) *rasuj-ni* *madina-ze* *xarba-ib* *ħu* *kuda*
Rasul-ERG Madina-INTER(LAT) ask:PF-AOR you.sg(ABS) where
{*d-aš-as-a* / **d-aš-an-a*} *har* *barħi* *ile.*
F1-walk:IPF-HAB.EGO-Q / F1-walk:IPF-HAB-Q every day COMP
'Rasul asked Madina$_i$ where she$_i$ goes every day.'

(105) *rasuj-ni* *madina-ze* *xarba-ib* *ħu* *kuda*
Rasul-ERG Madina-INTER(LAT) ask:PF-AOR you.sg(ABS) where
{*w-aš-an-a* / **w-aš-as-a*} *har* *barħi* *ile.*
M-walk:IPF-HAB-Q / M-walk:IPF-HAB.EGO-Q every day COMP
'Rasul asked Madina where you go every day.'

Again, in examples like (105), the second person pronoun in the embedded clause may only be interpreted as disjoint from the matrix addressee argument, due to a gender mismatch between the feminine gender of the matrix addressee and the masculine gender agreement on the embedded verb. When this is the case, overt person agreement is ungrammatical with a second person pronoun in interrogative embedded clauses.

For the sake of completeness, a few words are in order about the availability of indexical shift and agreement shift. As mentioned above, both are only possible in finite complement clauses with the complementizer *ile* under verbs of speech and thought, but not in other types of complements. The examples below demonstrate that indexical shift and agreement shift are possible in the finite complement of the verb *arʁes* 'hear', but not in the factive non-finite (nominalized) complement with the same verb.

(106) *rasuj-ze* *arʁ-ib* *di-la* *mašin*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) understand:PF-AOR I-GEN car(ABS)
b-uˁrʔ-uˁb *ile.*
N-break:PF-AOR COMP

a. 'Rasul$_i$ realized that my$_j$ car was broken.' (unshifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

b. 'Rasul$_i$ realized that his$_i$ car was broken.' (shifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

(107) *rasuj-ze* *arʁ-ib* *di-la* *mašin*
Rasul+OBL-INTER(LAT) understand:PF-AOR I-GEN car(ABS)
b-uˁrʔ-uˁb-deš *ile.*
N-break:PF-AOR-NMLZ COMP

a. 'Rasul$_i$ realized that my$_j$ car was broken.' (unshifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

b. *'Rasul$_i$ realized that his$_i$ car was broken.' (shifted reading of the 1st person pronoun)

Whether or not a matrix verb combines with *ile*-complements is not lexically determined, but rather depends on the semantics of the matrix verb (speech or thought report). This is clearly seen in cases like those shown in the following examples.

(108) *rasuj-ze* *b-ah-ur* *abaj* *iz-uwe*
Rasul-INTER(LAT) N-know:PF-AOR mother(ABS) be.sick:IPF-CVB.IPFV
{*le-r-deš* / **le-r* *ile*}.
AUX-F-NMLZ / AUX-F COMP
'Rasul found out that his mother was sick.'

(109) *madina-ini* *rasuj-ze* *b-ah-aq-ib* *abaj*
Madina-ERG Rasul-INTER(LAT) N-know:PF-CAUS-AOR mother(ABS)
iz-uwe {*le-r-deš* / *le-r* *ile*}.
be.sick:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F-NMLZ / AUX-F COMP
'Madina let Rasul know that their mother was sick.'

Example (108) shows that the factive matrix verb *bahes* 'know' does not combine with finite *ile*-complements. In (109), the causative *bahaqas* of the same verb is normally understood as denoting a speech act ('let know, inform'), and is therefore compatible with an *ile*-complement.

4 Reciprocals

Reciprocal pronouns consist of two instances of the numeral *ca* 'one' adjacent to one another.

(110) *uz-be-ni* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-če* *b-a?-aq-ib.*
brother-PL-ERG one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-SUPER(LAT) N-hit-LV:PF-AOR
'The brothers hit each other.'

As can be seen in the example above, the two components of the reciprocal bear independent case marking. One component is always in the case of the subject, while the other component bears the case of the second argument of the reciprocal construction. The distribution of case marking on the two components of the reciprocal pronoun depends on the particular argument/case combination.

Absolutive case, whether it corresponds to the subject or to the direct object, is always marked on the second component of the reciprocal. The first component therefore bears the case of the other argument participating in the reciprocal construction.

(111) *uz-be* *ca-li-če* *ca* *ħule* *b-iz-ur.*
brother-PL(ABS) one-OBL-SUPER(LAT) one(ABS) look HPL-LV:PF-AOR
'The brothers looked at each other.'

(112) *uz-be-ni* *ca-li-ni* *ca* *b-aʕb̄-ib.*
brother-PL-ERG one-OBL-ERG one(ABS) HPL-kill:PF-AOR
'The brothers killed each other.'

In (111), the intransitive verb *ħule* CL-*izes* 'look' is used in the reciprocal construction. The absolutive case of the subject is marked on the second part of the reciprocal, whereas the case of the oblique argument is marked on the first part. In (112), the transitive verb *baʕb̄as* 'kill' participates in the reciprocal construction. Again, the absolutive case, which is the case of the direct object here, is marked on the second part of the reciprocal pronoun, while the ergative case of the transitive subject is marked on the first part.

When no absolutive argument participates in a reciprocal construction, the case marking on the reciprocal pronoun is determined by structural prominence. The first component is in the case of the higher argument, while the second component is in the case of the lower argument, as in (110) above and in the following examples.

(113) *ul-e-jni* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-s* *kumak* *b-aq'-ib.*
child-PL-ERG one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR
'The children helped one another.'

(114) *ul-e-jni* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-ze-la* *arc*
child-PL-ERG one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-INTER-EL money(ABS)
ar-is-an.
away-take:IPF-HAB
'The children take money from one another.'

The case of the overt antecedent NP also depends on the presence of an absolutive argument in the construction. As a rule, the overt antecedent bears the case of a more structurally prominent argument. Examples (110), (112), (113), and (114) above show that in the reciprocal construction with transitive verbs, the overt antecedent is in the ergative case. Example (111) shows that the reciprocal construction with intransitive verbs requires an overt antecedent in the absolutive case. Example (115) below illustrates the reciprocal construction with locative subject verbs.

(115) *uz-be-ze* *ca-li-ze* *ca* {*g-ub* /
brother-PL-INTER(LAT) one-OBL-INTER(LAT) one(ABS) see:PF-AOR /
b-ah-ur / *b-arg-ib* / *qum-art-ur*}.
HPL-know:PF-AOR / HPL-find:PF-AOR / forget-LV:PF-AOR
'The brothers {saw / recognized / found / forgot} each other.'

The only exception to this rule comes with dative subject verbs, where absolutive marking of the overt antecedent is preferred over dative marking.

(116) {*it-ti* / ?? *it-ti-li-s*} *ca-li-s* *ca*
this-PL(ABS) / this-PL-OBL-DAT one-OBL-DAT one(ABS)
b-ig-uwe *le-b.*
HPL-love:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-HPL
'They love each other.'

(117) {*it-ti* / ?? *it-ti-li-s*} *ca-li-s* *ca* *eba*
this-PL(ABS) / this-PL-OBL-DAT one-OBL-DAT one(ABS) bored
b-uh-ub.
HPL-become:PF-AOR
'They got bored with each other.'

The absolutive marking of the overt antecedent is also possible in reciprocal constructions with two core arguments of two-place verbs.

(118) *uz-be* *ca-li-ni* *ca* *b-aʕb-ib.*
brother-PL(ABS) one-OBL-ERG one(ABS) HPL-kill:PF-AOR
'The brothers killed each other.'

(119) *uz-be* *ca-li-ze* *ca* {*g-ub* /
brother-PL one-OBL-INTER(LAT) one(ABS) see:PF-AOR /
b-ah-ur / *b-arg-ib* / *qum-art-ur*}.
HPL-know:PF-AOR / HPL-find:PF-AOR / forget-LV:PF-AOR
'The brothers {saw / recognized / found / forgot} each other.'

Therefore, we have two possibilities for antecedent marking in constructions featuring the two core arguments of two-place verbs. The antecedent can be marked for the morphological case of the higher argument (i.e. the subject) or for the absolutive case, even though the absolutive is the morphological case of the lower argument (i.e. the direct object) in such configurations. With dative subject verbs, the first option is severely disfavored and the second option is pre-

ferred, while with other two-place verbs (transitive and locative subject), the two options are equally acceptable.

No other reciprocal construction allows the overt antecedent in the case of a lower argument. Example (120) illustrates this for a combination of the intransitive subject and an oblique argument, cf. (111). Example (121) shows a reciprocal construction with a transitive subject and a dative recipient, cf. (113).

(120) **uz-be-če* *ca-li-če* *ca* *ħule*
brother-PL-SUPER(LAT) one-OBL-SUPER(LAT) one(ABS) look
b-iz-ur.
HPL-LV:PF-AOR
'The brothers looked at each other.'

(121) **ul-e-s* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-s* *kumak* *b-aq'-ib.*
child-PL-DAT one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR
'The kids helped one another.'

In transitive constructions where the absolutive direct object does not participate in the reciprocal relation, the absolutive case cannot be used to mark the overt antecedent either.

(122) **ul-e* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-s* *kumak* *b-aq'-ib.*
child-PL(ABS) one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:PF-AOR
'The kids helped one another.'

Gender agreement in reciprocal constructions functions according to the general rule of agreement with the absolutive argument. In structures with an overt absolutive NP this is straightforward, as shown in examples (111) and (116) through (119). In structures with no overt absolutive NP, as in (112) and (115), the verb shows the gender and number features of the overt antecedent.

Person agreement also works as usual in constructions where the overt antecedent is in the morphological case of the subject; that is, first person intransitive absolutive, transitive ergative, and locative subjects trigger overt person marking on the finite verb.

(123) *nuša* *ca-li-če* *ca* *ħule* *b-iz-ur-ra.*
we(ABS) one-OBL-SUPER(LAT) one(ABS) look HPL-LV:PF-AOR-EGO
'We looked at each other.'

(124) *nuša-jni* *ca-li-ni* *ca* *b-iˤbʔ-iša.*
we-ERG one-OBL-ERG one(ABS) HPL-kill:IPF-FUT.EGO
'We will kill each other.'

(125) *nuša-ze* *ca-li-ze* *ca* {*g-ub-ra* /
we-PL-INTER(LAT) one-OBL-INTER(LAT) one(ABS) see:PF-AOR-EGO /
b-ah-ur-ra}.
HPL-know:PF-AOR-EGO
'We {saw / recognized} each other.'

In structures with the overt antecedent in the absolutive case, as in (116) through (119), first person pronouns also trigger obligatory person marking.

(126) *nuša* *ca-li-ni* *ca* *b-iˤbʔ-iša.*
we(ABS) one-OBL-ERG one(ABS) HPL-kill:IPF-FUT.EGO
'We will kill each other.'

(127) *nuša* *ca-li-ze* *ca* {*g-ub-ra* /
we(ABS) one-OBL-INTER(LAT) one(ABS) see:PF-AOR-EGO /
b-ah-ur-ra}
HPL-know:PF-AOR-EGO
'We {saw / recognized} each other.'

The reciprocal construction with the absolutive marking of the antecedent thus behaves like an intransitive structure with respect to person agreement.

5 Causative construction[4]

Morphologically, the causative construction is formed by means of the suffix *-aq-* (*-aχaq-*) attached to an aspectual stem of the causativized verb, as described by Daniel (2019) [this volume]. Syntactically, the causative morpheme introduces an additional participant which is interpreted as the causer of the event described by the lexical stem. The causer is always marked by ergative case. Case marking of the causee depends on the class of the causativized verb. Absolutive subjects of intransitive verbs always remain in the absolutive case. The causative construction based on an intransitive verb thus features two arguments: the ergative causer and the absolutive causee, as with regular transitive verbs.

(128) a. *ʔali* *w-alħ-un.*
Ali(ABS) M-wake.up:PF-AOR
'Ali woke up.'

[4]The description of case marking in causative constructions in this section is based on Ageeva (2014).

b. *pat'imat-ini ʔali w-alħ-aq-ib.*
Patimat-ERG Ali(ABS) M-wake.up:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Patimat woke up Ali.'

Ergative subjects of transitive verbs obligatorily receive locative (inter-lative) marking in the causative construction. Case marking of the causee with transitive causativized verbs does not depend on the degree of agentivity. Both agentive and non-agentive transitive causees are in the inter-lative.

(129) a. *ʔali-ni ʁarʁa b-alc'-un.*
Ali-ERG stone(ABS) N-pick.up:PF-AOR
'Ali picked up a stone.'

b. *pat'imat-ini {ʔali-ze / *ʔali-ni} ʁarʁa*
Patimat-ERG Ali-INTER(LAT) / Ali-ERG stone(ABS)
b-alc'-aq-ib.
M-pick.up:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Patimat made Ali pick up a stone.'

(130) a. *ħark'^{w}-i-ni urculi d-erʁ-ib.*
river-OBL-ERG wood(ABS) NPL-sweep.away:PF-AOR
'The river swept away the wood.'

b. *rasuj-ni {ħark'^{w}i-ze / ???ħark'^{w}-ini} urculi*
Rasul+OBL-ERG river-INTER(LAT) / river-ERG wood(ABS)
d-erʁ-aq-ib.
NPL-sweep.away:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Rasul floated the wood down the river.' (literally: 'Rasul made the river sweep away the wood.')

Locative subjects of the verbs 'see', 'hear, understand', 'find', 'know', and 'forget' are marked with inter-lative case when they occur as a causee in the causative construction. This is the same marking as in the baseline construction.

(131) *rasuj-ni di-ze sune-la-l qali*
Rasul+OBL-ERG I-INTER(LAT) self-GEN-EMPH house(ABS)
g^{w}-aχaq-ib.
see:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Rasul showed me his house.'

(132) *t'ahil-li di-ze χabar b-ah-aq-ib.*
Tahir-ERG I-INTER(LAT) news(ABS) N-know:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Tahir let me know the news.'

(133) *rasuj-ni* *di-ze* *dars* *arʁ-aq-ib.*
Rasul+OBL-ERG I-INTER(LAT) lesson(ABS) understand:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Rasul explained the lesson to me.'

(134) *ʔali-ni* *di-ze* *urx-ne* *d-arg-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG I-INTER(LAT) key-PL(ABS) NPL-find:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Ali made me find the keys.'

(135) *ʔali-ni* *di-ze* *hel* *deh^{w}* *qum-art-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG I-INTER(LAT) this word(ABS) forget-LV:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Ali made me forget that word.'

It is not quite clear whether the locative case of the causee in causative constructions with locative subject verbs reflects the inter-lative subject marking assigned by the lexical verb or the inter-lative causee marking assigned in the causative construction.

Causatives of two locative subject verbs exhibit special behavior as they can denote a situation with no additional causer of the event. Instead, the experiencer subject acquires a higher degree of agentivity and is marked by ergative case, cf. examples (21) and (29) above.

(136) *ʔali-ni* *q'urʔan* *b-alh-aq-uwe* *le-b.*
Ali-ERG Qur'an(ABS) N-know:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'Ali is studying the Qur'an.'

(137) *ʔali-ni* *uzi* *qum-art-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG brother(ABS) forget-LV:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Ali forgot his brother (as a result of a conscious intention to do so).'

When a dative subject verb is causativized, the experiencer participant can either remain in the dative, as in the original construction, or bear inter-lative marking assigned to the causee in the causative construction.

(138) a. *nab* *it* *deh^{w}* *urče* *b-ik-ib.*
I(DAT) this word(ABS) in.heart(LAT) N-happen:PF-AOR
'I recalled that word.'

b. *abaj-ni* {*di-ze* / *nab*} *it* *deh^{w}* *urče*
mother-ERG I-INTER(LAT) / I(DAT) this word(ABS) in.heart(LAT)
b-ik-aq-ib.
N-happen:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Mother reminded me of that word.'

The difference in interpretation between the two variants of causee marking relates to the degree of control exhibited by the causer over the caused situation. Dative marking implies a lesser degree of involvement of the causer, while inter-lative marking indicates a more direct causation on the part of the causer.

The causative form of the verb *biges* 'want, love' does not normally have a causative interpretation. Neither the number of arguments nor their case marking changes. The semantics is usually conveyed as 'like' rather than 'love' (as is the case with the underived forms of *biges*).

(139) *nab* *it* *dursi* *d-ig-aq-uwe* *le-r.*
I(DAT) this girl(ABS) F1-love:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
'I like this girl.'

The causative reading of the causative form of the verb *biges* 'want, love' is also accepted by many speakers, though not by all of them, and often not without hesitation. As in causatives of other dative subject verbs, the causee can be marked by either dative or inter-lative case (with no sharp interpretational differences between the two variants).

(140) *adaj-ni* {*di-ze* / *ʔnab*} *it* *dursi*
father-ERG I-INTER(LAT) / I(DAT) this girl(ABS)
d-ig-aq-uwe *le-r.*
F1-love:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-F
'Father makes me love this girl.'

Gender and person agreement in the causative construction follows the rules operative in transitive clauses. Gender agreement on the lexical verb is always with the absolutive argument. Gender agreement on the auxiliary in progressive verb forms is also with the absolutive argument.

(141) a. *pat'imat-ini* *ʔali* *w-alħ-aq-ib.*
Patimat-ERG Ali(ABS) M-wake.up:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Patimat woke up Ali.'

b. *ʔali-ni* *pat'imat* *d-alħ-aq-ib.*
Ali-ERG Patimat(ABS) F1-wake.up:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Ali woke up Patimat.'

(142) a. *nu-ni urši-li-ze* *inc* *b-uk-aq-uwe* *le-b.*
I-ERG boy-OBL-INTER(LAT) apple(ABS) N-eat:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'I am making the boy eat an apple.'

b. *nu-ni urši-li-ze inc-be*
I-ERG boy-OBL-INTER(LAT) apple-PL(ABS)
d-uk-aq-uwe le-r.
N.PL-eat:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-N.PL
'I am making the boy eat apples.'

Person agreement is controlled by the ergative causer according to the rules described above in §3.1 and §3.3. This includes the restriction on overt marking in the Present Progressive, as shown in (142). The inter-lative causee or the absolutive argument can never control person agreement.

(143) *nu-ni c'a {d-uš-aq-i-ra /*
I-ERG fire(ABS) NPL-die.out:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO /
**d-uš-aq-ib}.*
NPL-die.out:PF-CAUS-AOR
'I extinguished the fire.'

(144) *pat'imat-ini nu {w-alħ-aq-ib /*
Patimat-ERG I(ABS) M-wake.up:PF-CAUS-AOR /
**w-alħ-aq-i-ra}.*
M-wake.up:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO
'Patimat woke me up.'

(145) *pat'imat-ini di-ze ʁarʁa {b-alc'-aq-ib /*
Patimat-ERG I-INTER(LAT) stone(ABS) N-pick.up:PF-CAUS-AOR /
**b-alc'-aq-i-ra}.*
N-pick.up:PF-CAUS-AOR-EGO
'Patimat made me pick up a stone.'

Note, however, that despite the absence of an overt ergative argument in causative constructions based on transitive verbs, it is possible to show that they do contain an unexpressed ergative subject of the lexical verb. This is seen from case marking that appears on reciprocal pronouns. As explained in §4 above, the two parts of the reciprocal pronoun always bear two different morphological cases corresponding to the case marking of the arguments in the reciprocal relation. When used in a causative construction describing a reciprocal relationship between the causee and the absolutive direct object, one part of the reciprocal pronoun shows up in the ergative case, even though no overt ergative argument appears on the surface.

(146) *madina-jni* {*ul-e* / *ul-e-ze*} *ca-li-ni*
Madina-ERG child-PL(ABS) / child-PL-INTER(LAT) one-OBL-ERG
ca *b-az-aq-ib.*
one(ABS) HPL-wash:PF-CAUS-AOR
'Madina made the kids wash one another.'

Note that in example (146), the causee in the causativized reciprocal construction of the transitive verb can be expressed by the absolutive or by the inter-lative. This corresponds to two possibilities observed in non-causativized reciprocals: (i) the overt subject is marked by the absolutive, and the whole construction behaves as an intransitive structure, or (ii) the overt subject is marked by the ergative, and the whole reciprocal construction is a transitive structure. Under causativization, the intransitive variant (i) of the reciprocal construction yields absolutive marking of the causee, whereas the transitive variant (ii) of the reciprocal construction yields inter-lative marking of the causee.

6 The biabsolutive construction

Periphrastic verbal forms with durative semantics (present and past progressive) allow for an alternative layout of argument case marking with transitive verbs. Instead of the standard transitive pattern with an ergative subject and an absolutive object, transitive verbs can participate in the *biabsolutive construction*, where both the subject and the direct object are expressed in the absolutive case.[5] Changes in argument case marking are accompanied by a change in gender agreement on the auxiliary, which is controlled by the absolutive subject; gender agreement of the lexical verb is invariably controlled by the absolutive direct object.

(147) Q: *sija* *b-iq'-uwe* *le-w-a* *rasul?*
what(ABS) N-do:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-Q Rasul(ABS)
'What is Rasul doing?'
A: *rasul* *kung* *luč'-uwe* *le-w.*
Rasul(ABS) book(ABS) read:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M
'Rasul is reading a book.'

[5] See Forker (2012) for an overview of the biabsolutive across Nakh-Daghestanian. Gagliardi et al. (2014) present a minimalist analysis of the biabsolutive construction in the Nakh-Daghestanian languages Lak and Tsez. Harris and Campbell discuss the diachrony of the biabsolutive construction (1995: 187–189).

Unlike ergative constructions with periphrastic forms, the biabsolutive construction shows no restrictions on person agreement of the absolutive subjects. Overt person marking with the absolutive subject is obligatory, as shown in (148a), cf. the minimally different example (148b), where the ergative subject cannot agree with the finite verb.

(148) a. *nu* *kung* *luč'-uwe* *le-w-ra.*
I(ABS) book(ABS) read:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'I am reading a book.'

b. *nu-ni* *kung* *luč'-uwe* *le-b*(**-ra*).*
I-ERG book(ABS) read:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'I am reading a book.'

Unlike what is attested in related languages (Forker 2012), there seem to be no observable differences in semantics between the ergative and biabsolutive alignment of the transitive clause. In fact, the biabsolutive construction is often resorted to when person agreement with the subject fails in certain subject-object combinations in periphrastic forms, see §3.3.

Synthetic verbal forms with imperfective semantics do not allow the biabsolutive construction.

(149) {*nu-ni* / **nu*} *kung-ane* *luč'-as.*
I-ERG / I(ABS) book-PL(ABS) read-HAB.EGO
'I read books (every day).'

(150) {*nu-ni* / **nu*} *kung-ane* *luč'-iša.*
I-ERG / I(ABS) book-PL(ABS) read-FUT.EGO
'I will be reading books.'

Only clauses with agentive subjects normally participate in the biabsolutive construction, whereas clauses with non-agentive subjects are either considerably degraded or completely ungrammatical.

(151) *??ʁʷaʕr* *ʁut'-be* *šiš* *d-uk'-aq-uwe* *le-b.*
wind(ABS) tree-PL(ABS) move NPL-LV:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'The wind is shaking the trees.'

(152) **c'a* *qul-le* *ig-uwe* *le-b.*
fire(ABS) house-PL(ABS) burn:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'A fire is burning the houses.'

(153) *zab mura d-aʕlʜʷ-aʕq-uwe le-r.
rain(ABS) hay(ABS) NPL-become wet:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-NPL
'The rain is making the hay wet.'

Similarly, non-agentive subjects of locative-subject verbs are not allowed to participate in the biabsolutive construction for many speakers, though some sentences are judged to be more acceptable than others. The acceptability of locative-subject verbs in the biabsolutive construction may depend on semantic and pragmatic factors and requires further investigation.

(154) *nu sinka irg-uwe le-w-ra.
I(ABS) bear(ABS) see:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-M-EGO
'I see a bear.'

(155) ?*urši d-aʕld-un-i arc d-urg-uwe
boy(ABS) NPL-hide:PF-AOR-PTCP money(ABS) NPL-find:IPF-CVB.IPFV
le-w.
AUX-M
'The boy is finding the hidded money.'

(156) ??rasul het dehʷ b-alh-uwe le-b.
Rasul(ABS) this word(ABS) N-know:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-N
'Rasul knows that word.'

The dative subject verb *biges* 'love, want' can occasionally participate in the biabsolutive construction.

(157) nu het urši w-ig-uwe le-l-la.
I(ABS) this boy(ABS) M-love:IPF-CVB.IPFV AUX-F-EGO
'I love this boy.'

Despite initial appearances, the biabsolutive construction contains an unexpressed ergative argument of the lexical verb which can be seen in reciprocal constructions. Similar to what is found in causative constructions, one of the two components of the reciprocal pronoun in the biabsolutive always bears the ergative case licensed by the lexical verb, despite the phonological absence of an ergative argument, compare (158) with (113) above.

(158) *ul-e* *ca-li-ni* *ca-li-s* *kumak* *b-iq'-uwe*
child-PL(ABS) one-OBL-ERG one-OBL-DAT help(ABS) N-do:IPF-CVB.IPFV
le-b.
AUX-HPL
'The kids help one another.'

Syntactically, the biabsolutive construction may thus be analyzed as consisting of two layers. The lower layer is headed by the lexical verb and contains the lexical verb itself and all of its arguments in their respective cases. The higher layer is headed by the copula and contains the absolutive subject. The biabsolutive construction thus has two important properties: (i) it requires the subject to have the agent theta-role, and (ii) it includes an unexpressed ergative argument which is obligatorily interpreted as having the same reference as the overt absolutive subject. These two properties make the biabsolutive construction look like an obligatory control construction. A schematic representation of the syntactic structure of the biabsolutive construction is given in (159).

(159) a. [*rasul*$_i$ [PRO$_i$ *kung* *luč'-uwe*] *le-w*].
Rasul(ABS) ERG book(ABS) read:IPF-CVB.IPFV COP-M
'Rasul is reading a book.'

b. [$_{\text{CopP}}$ NP$_{\text{ABS}}$ [$_{\text{vP}}$ PRO$_{\text{ERG}}$ NP$_{\text{ABS}}$ V] COP]

The causative construction may also be transformed into a biabsolutive construction. With causatives of intransitive verbs, the biabsolutive construction works the same way as with biabsolutives of ordinary transitive verbs: both the causer and the causee are in the absolutive case. The former controls gender and person agreement on the copula, while the latter controls gender agreement on the lexical verb.

(160) *rasul* *c'a* *d-uš-aq-uwe* *le-w.*
Rasul(ABS) fire(ABS) NPL-die.out:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV COP-M
'Rasul is extinguishing the fire.'

With causatives of transitive verbs, there are three case marking options in the biabsolutive construction. One option is to mark the causer with absolutive case, as with causatives of intransitive verbs above. Gender and person agreement on the copula are determined by features of the higher absolutive, in this case the causer. Example (161) shows the baseline causative construction in (a) and the biabsolutive construction with absolutive marking of the causer in (b).

(161) a. *abaj-ni* *urši-li-ze* *kung*
mother-ERG boy-OBL-INTER(LAT) book(ABS)
luč'-aq-uwe *le-b.*
read:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV AUX-N

b. *abaj* *urši-li-ze* *kung*
mother(ABS) boy-OBL-INTER(LAT) book(ABS)
luč'-aq-uwe *le-r.*
read:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV COP-F
'Mother makes the boy read the book.'

The second option is to mark the causee with the absolutive case, whereas the causer bears its usual ergative case. Again, gender and person agreement on the copula are determined by features of the higher absolutive, which is the causee in this case.

(161) c. *abaj-ni* *urši* *kung* *luč'-aq-uwe* *le-w.*
mother-ERG boy(ABS) book(ABS) read:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV COP-M
'Mother makes the boy read the book.'

Finally, the third option is to mark both the causer and the causee with absolutive case. We therefore have three absolutive arguments in the same clause. Again, gender and person agreement on the copula is determined by the highest absolutive, that is, the subject causer.

(161) d. *abaj* *urši* *kung* *luč'-aq-uwe* *le-r.*
mother(ABS) boy(ABS) book(ABS) read:IPF-CAUS-CVB.IPFV COP-F
'Mother makes the boy read the book.'

The possibilities of case marking shown in (161c–d) require further investigation. In standard biabsolutive constructions as described in this section, the absolutive marking of the transitive subject apparently becomes available due to the presence of a second clausal layer headed by the copula. It is not quite clear how the copula in the progressive could license absolutive marking of the transitive causee in (161c) and, especially, the absolutive marking of both the ergative causer and the transitive causee in (161d). Any syntactic speculation on this question, however, requires more specific assumptions about the clause structure and mechanisms of case licensing which lie outside the scope of the present work. I therefore leave this issue for another occasion.

7 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the major morphosyntactic properties of monoclausal sentences in Mehweb, including case marking, gender and person agreement. The paper describes the system of Mehweb verbal (valency) classes on the basis of their arguments' morphosyntactic behavior and ability to bind reflexive pronouns. I distinguish (i) intransitive verbs with absolutive subjects, (ii) transitive verbs with ergative subjects, (iii) verbs with inter-lative subjects, (iv) verbs with dative subjects, and (v) one verb with inter-elative subject. Gender agreement operates on an ergative–absolutive basis, whereas person agreement has nominative–accusative syntax.

Mehweb person agreement is unique within Nakh-Daghestanian in that it is sensitive to the illocutionary force of the utterance. As in other Daghestanian languages with person agreement, verbal person marking is also sensitive to the syntactically introduced logophoric center, as in finite logophoric clauses with the complementizer *ile*. In such environments, personal pronouns undergo optional indexical shift, whereas person marking is obligatorily shifted to the perspective of the syntactic logophoric center.

Although traditionally Mehweb person agreement is considered to be purely subject-oriented, this chapter argues that several constructions, such as agreement in sentences with dative subject verbs and agreement in the Present Progressive, reveal the sensitivity of person agreement to the person feature of the absolutive direct object.

I also describe case marking and agreement in causative and biabsolutive constructions. Despite overall semantic and syntactic differences between the two, they demonstrate similar behavior with respect to the ergative subject of the lexical verb, which can still be diagnosed when it is absent from the phonological expression, by means of case marking on reciprocal pronouns. Finally, I identify a previously unattested construction with three absolutive arguments.

List of abbreviations

ABS	absolutive
DIR	motion directed towards a spatial domain
AOR	aorist
ATR	attributivizer
AUX	auxiliary
CAUS	causative

CL	gender (class) agreement slot
COMP	complementizer
COP	copula
CVB	converb
DAT	dative
EGO	egophoric
EL	motion from a spatial domain
EMPH	emphasis (particle)
ERG	ergative
ESS	static location in a spatial domain
F	feminine (gender agreement)
F1	feminine (unmarried and young women gender prefix)
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
HAB	habitual (durative for verbs denoting states)
HPL	human plural (gender agreement)
INDEF	indefinite particle
INF	infinitive
INTER	spatial domain between multiple landmarks
IPF	imperfective (derivational base)
IPFT	imperfect
LAT	motion into a spatial domain
LV	light verb
M	masculine (gender agreement)
N	neuter (gender agreement)
NEG	negation (verbal prefix)
NMLZ	nominalizer
NPL	non-human plural (gender agreement)
OBL	oblique (nominal stem suffix)
PF	perfective (derivational base)
PL	plural
PTCP	participle
Q	question (interrogative particle)
SUPER	spatial domain on the horizontal surface of the landmark

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