

SPLIT RECIPIENT MARKING? EVIDENCE FROM EAST CAUCASIAN

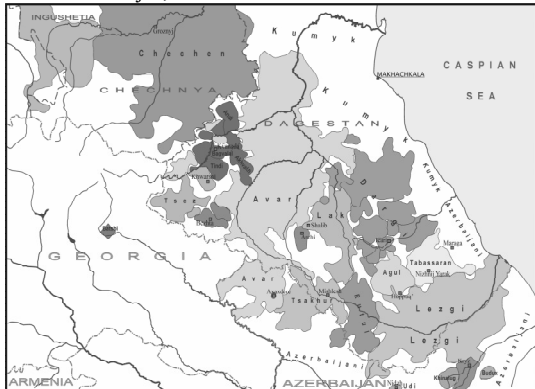
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**Abstract:** East Caucasian languages feature a cross-linguistically rare presence of two alternative ways to express Recipients with the verb ‘give’. This feature is consistently present throughout the family and displays amazingly subtle semantic parallels in all its languages. At first glance, the distinction between two Recipients seems to be a very elaborate semantic opposition that is more expected of a legal cobweb than of a linguistic system. I suggest that in fact the difference lies in two different conceptualizations of the Recipient - as Goal vs. Beneficiary (prospective Possessor).

1. BACKGROUND ON THE FAMILY

Over 40 languages, with a total population of about 4 to 5 mln. Branching as follows (boldfaced are languages with over 100,000; geographical location indicated if mostly spoken outside Daghestan):  
 NAKH – **Chechen** (Chechnia), **Ingush** (Ingushetia), Batsbi (Georgia)  
 AVAR-ANDIC – **Avar** and quite a few minor languages, some spoken by about 1,000 speakers  
 TSEZIC – minor languages  
 LAK - **Lak**  
 DARGWA – quite a few lects with an intermediate status between languages and dialects and a single standard language  
 LEZGIC – **Lezgian**, **Tabasaran** and many minor languages, three of them spoken only in Azerbaijan  
 KHINALUG – Khinalug (northern Azerbaijan)



**Time depth** of the family – similar to or deeper than Indo-European. No mutual intelligibility except between few pairs of closely related languages and lects (e.g. adjacent lects of the Dargwa branch); strong tendency to language endogamy, even for one-village languages. At the same time, a high level of structural homogeneity (probably typical of related languages in a compact geography with a strong level of mutual multilingualism).

**Typological profile:** rich consonant inventories, including ubiquitous ejectives. Rich verbal inflection, both synthetic (including suffixation, prefixation, often also infixation) and analytic (converbs are used as lexical verb forms in periphrastic constructions). Few languages with person agreement, but almost ubiquitous gender-number agreement; from three up to six noun classes (genders). Cf. Archi (Lezgitic) four class system:

Table 1. Noun Classes

	Sg	Pl	
1 (M)	w-	b-	HPL
2 (F)	d-	∅	NPL
3	b-		
4	∅	∅	

Table 2. Series of markers

	Prefix	Infix	Infix 1	Suffix
1	w-	-w-	-w-	-(t:u=)∅ (<*....u-w)
2	d-	-r-	-r-	-(t:u=)r
3/HPL	b-	-b-	-b-	-(t:u=)b (-ib)
4/NPL	∅	∅	-t'	-(t:u=)t (-ib)

“Nominal inflection galore” (Kibrik 2003): a very rich system of nominal inflection, including two subsystems, syntactic cases and spatial forms.

Table 3. Nominal inflection inventories: from rich (Khwarshi) to poor (Chechen)

Khwarshi	Khinalug	Chechen
Nominative	Nominative	Nominative
Ergative (Dative)	Ergative Dative	Ergative Dative
Genitive 1	Inalienable genitive	Genitive
Genitive 2	General genitive	Instrumental
Instrumental etc.	Comitative	Comparative
In	Ad } } Essive Poss } } Lative Cmpr } }	Locative
Super		Lative
Cont		Allative
Inter		Ablative
Sub		Terminative
Ad		
Apud		

Table 4. examples of locative forms

Bagvalal <i>roš-i-L'i</i>	Archi <i>q<sup>w</sup>en-ni-ñ-š</i>	Agul <i>karawut-i-q-di</i>
tree-OBL-SUB(-Ess)	cliff-OBL-SUPER-EL	bed-OBL-POST-LAT
‘under the tree’	‘from (the top of) the cliff’	‘to behind the bed’

2. INTRODUCING SPLIT RECIPIENTS: FIRST APPROXIMATION

Ditransitive constructions in East Caucasian (in what follows, I mostly provide examples with ‘give’, so better speak of ‘give’-constructions): a clear case of indirective strategy in Haspelmath’ terms (also dominant cross-linguistically):



(1) Tsakhur (Kibrik et al. 1999: 856)

<i>aχ<sup>w</sup>-in-id</i> 4.remain.PFV-ATR-PART.4(NOM)	<i>q'ış-i-k<sup>w</sup>a</i> butter-OBL-COMIT	<i>sana-d</i> together-PART.4	<i>har har</i> every every
<i>nafas-i-s,</i> soul-OBL-DAT	<i>žama?at-i-s</i> community-OBL-DAT	<i>it'al-a?-in</i> distribute-4.DO.PFV-ATR	

‘What was left was given away together with the butter **to every single soul (Dat), to the community (Dat).**’

(2) Archi (Archi Electronic Corpus)

<i>jella</i> thus	<i>wiš</i> you.pl.GEN	<i>ja-r</i> this-2	<i>laha</i> girl.OBL(ERG)	<i>pari</i> pari	<i>χanum-li</i> xanum-OBL(ERG)	<i>at'u-li</i> NPL.cut.PFV-CVB
<i>jeb</i> this.PL	<i>so-<i>or</i></i> bead-PL	<i>lo</i> NPL.give.PFV	<i>χir</i> behind	<i>da-qla-li</i> 2-come.PFV-EVID	<i>ez</i> NPL.I.DAT	<i>lo</i> NPL.give.PFV

‘Thus, your Pari Hanum tore off her necklace, ran after me and gave it **to me (Dat)**’.

However, an alternative way of marking the Recipient is also available:

(3) Tsakhur (Kibrik et al. 1999: 788)

<i>na<sup>h</sup>χu-r-ē</i> how-2-Q1	<i>il,or-zur,</i> 2.stop.PFV	<i>haša<sup>h</sup>χu-r</i> thus-2	<i>ilēz<sup>w</sup>ar-a-ǰ?2-i,</i> 2.stand-2.do-PFV	<i>t'ufli-bi</i> shoes-PL	<i>že-s-qa</i> self.OBL.2-AD-ALL
<i>hiwo,</i> give.PFV	<i>sumk'a-b</i> bag.3-PART.3	<i>giw-x-u</i> 3.put-PFV	<i>wo-b</i> COP-3	<i>žu-ni</i> self.OBL.1-AOBL	<i>k'aneqa.</i> near

‘He made her stand in the way she was standing (the other time), gave **her (Lat)** the shoes and put the bag next to her.’

(4) Archi (Archi Electronic Corpus)

<i>k'an</i> most	<i>harak-du-t</i> before-ATR-4	<i>iq-n-a</i> day-OBL-IN	<i>ja-r</i> this-2	<i>ǰanna</i> woman.OBL(ERG)
<i>č'ut</i> jug	<i>bo-lo-li</i> 3-give.PFV-EVID	<i>ju-w</i> this-1	<i>oq'er-mu-ra-k</i> pauper-OBL.1-CONT-LAT	<i>da-bχi-s</i> 3.hit-INF

‘On the (very) first day this woman gave **this pauper (Lat)** a jug {of butter} to churn.’

First approximation: temporary R vs. permanent R. Indeed, clear correlation with e.g. the nature of the Theme: some items are usually given for good, some other items are usually NOT given for good:

‘HAND’ is given only temporarily (otherwise horror-interpretation – the hand is secured away) ‘GIRL’ – only permanently (otherwise awkward interpretation; or a ‘hold me my baby’ interpretation), but:

(5) Agul (Agul Electronic Corpus) – “apprentice-ship” context

<i>zun</i> I(ERG)	<i>gada</i> son	<i>qaje-guna,</i> post.be-TEMP	<i>fajš-u-na</i> fetch-PFV-CVB	<i>c'-a-a</i> give-IPFV-PRS	
<i>ze</i> my	<i>gada</i> son	<i>malla-jar-i-l-di</i> molla-PL-OBL-SUPER-LAT	<i>mi-s</i> THIS.OBL-DAT	<i>dars-ar</i> lesson-PL	<i>ħarq'-a-s.</i> teach-IPFV-INF

‘And I have a son, so I fetch (him) and give my son **to the mullahs (Lat)**, for them to teach him.’

FOOD is typically given for good, but:

(6) Akhvakh (Denis Creissels, example from a corpus)

<i>wašo-de</i> boy.OBL-ERG	<i>ha-di</i> this-SAME.LEVEL	<i>mił'aradi</i> fruit.stone.PL	<i>ila-ǰi-ēira</i> mother-OBL.F-AD.LAT	
<i>e-ǰ-awi,</i> NPL-give-EVID.NPL	“ <i>ila,</i> mother	<i>di-la</i> I.OBL-DAT	<i>ha</i> this	<i>mił'aradi,</i> fruit.stone.PL
<i>r-iq'w-aj-a,</i> NPL-crack-CAUS-IMP	<i>hani</i> kernel	<i>q'-ōnuwa</i> eat-INF	<i>di-la</i> I.OBL-DAT	<i>e-ǰ-a.”</i> N-give-IMP

‘The boy handed the fruit stones **to his mother (Lat)**, “Mother, crack these stones for me, and give them **to me (Dat)** (so that I) eat the kernel”’

Abstract ‘Themes’ are typically coded by a dative strategy:

(7) Kryz (Authier, in preparation)

<i>zi-ǰa-z</i> I-you.pl-DAT	<i>čič-ǰa-r</i> what-SUPER-EL	<i>χabar vu-dam?</i> news give-HORT
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‘What am I going to talk (to give the news) **to you (Dat)** about?’

(8) Hinuq (Diana Forker, p.c.)

<i>assalamu</i> assalam	<i>ǰalajkum-len</i> alaykum-QUOT	<i>ħaral'-no</i> voice-and	<i>b-iǰer-no</i> 3-raise-CVB	<i>salam</i> greeting
<i>tol-iš</i> give-PST	<i>q'iliqan-i</i> drummer-OBL(ERG)	<i>zarmaqan-e-z,</i> zurna.player-OBL-DAT		
<i>k<sup>w</sup>ezej</i> hand	<i>r-uχ-a</i> 5-take-INF	<i>igor</i> nearer	<i>aq'e-ū'o</i> come-SIM	

‘“Hello”, said the drummer, raising his voice, and given the greeting **to the zurna player (Dat)**, he approached him to shake his hand.’

NB: although in those few cases when it is discussed, the distinction is dubbed ‘temporary’ vs. ‘permanent’ Recipient, it could just as well be dubbed ‘temporary’ vs. ‘permanent’ Theme, because it actually deals with the nature of transfer, not with the nature of the Recipient. The reason why it is associated with the Recipient is the locus of marking. The distinction is pervasive in the languages of the family:

Table 5. Formal means of lative vs. dative strategies of Recipient marking in East Caucasian

Language	Lative strategy	Dative strategy
Batsbi	ALL -eg	DAT -en
Chechen	ALL -ga	DAT -na
Avar	APUD-LAT -q-e	LAT -e
Akhvakh	AD-LAT -īra	DATIVE -a
Bagvalal	HUMLOC -ā	DAT (SUPER) -ha (-la)
Tsez	POSS-LAT -qo-r POSS -qo	LATIVE -r
Khwarshi	APUD-LAT -ba-l	LATIVE -l
Hinuq	POSS-LAT -qo-r POSS -qo	DATIVE -z
Hunzib	AD -g	DATIVE -i
Akusha Dargwa	IN(LAT) -zi	DAT -s
Icari Dargwa	IN(LAT) -či	SUPER(LAT) -j
Khinalug	POSS -š	DATIVE -u
Lezgian	AD	DAT -s
Agul	SUPER-LAT -l-di APUD-LAT -w-di	DAT -s
Archi	CONT-LAT -ra-k	DAT -s
Kryz	AD -v	DATIVE -z
Budukh	AD (alias GEN 2) -u	DATIVE -z
Udi	absent	DATIVE -a (-χ)

(9) Khinalug (Khinalug Electronic Corpus) – wrong strategy choice with consequent self-repair

li, as muxw-att-i-mä, hinä-ga kwi ašix-i  
say I.DAT knowing-become-NEG-IND that.OBL-TIME that singer-GEN  
saz tä-k'-ä i-š /// asir  
saz SAME.LEVEL.LAT-give-IMP I.OBL-POSS HES I.DAT

‘(He) said: none of my problems (I know nothing), in that case {i.e. if you can’t give me back my sheep} give **me (Lat)** ... give **me (Dat)** this singer’s saz’

The only language that seems to lack it is Udi – maybe due to strong contacts with genetically unrelated languages and isolation from other East Caucasian languages.

### 3. SECOND APPROXIMATION

But what about the following examples:

(10) Hunzib (van den Berg 1995: 260) - expectable

kanwert-li-i əg-no gul-un, kanwert niš-an  
envelope-OBL-DAT that-and put.5-CVB envelope give-CVB  
li ož-di-g, “r-ež-o,” le niš-a-n  
be.5 boy-OBL-AD 5-take-IMP QUOT say-CVB

‘He put it (the letter just written) in an envelope, gave the envelope **to the boy (Lat)** and said ‘Deliver it’.’

(11) Archi (Archi Electronic Corpus)

un daki lo-t'u d-is ĩanna-ra-k  
you.sg(ERG) why 4.give.PFV-NEG 2-me.GEN woman.OBL-CONT-LAT  
is amanat bo-li  
4.me.GEN pawn say.PFV-EVID

‘Why didn’t you give **my wife (Lat)** the thing that I gave (to you for her) – he asked.’

(12) Agul (Agul Electronic Corpus)

me ruš š-u-ne fac-u-na qa-i-ne  
this girl why go-PFV-PF catch-PFV-PF RE-give.PFV-PF  
šahguli aḫās-a-l-di ḥajwan.  
Shakhguli Abbas-OBL-SUPER-LAT horse

‘This girl went there, caught the horse and gave it back **to Shakhguli Abbas (Lat)**.’

(13) Chechen (Aishat.56; Chechen Pears Stories Collection)

juχa v-uod-i i šliapa cunga dʔa-lo.  
then 1-go-CVB.IMM.ANT this hat he.ALL away-give.PRS

‘Then (he) went back and gave the hat back **to him (Lat)**.’

(14) Akusha Dargwa (van den Berg 2001: 132)

meh-la usta-ni-ra unra-zi il-a-la urši w-ed-i-li sa,y  
iron-GEN master-ERG-AND neighbour-IN(LAT) this-OBL-GEN boy M-give-AOR-CVB be.M

‘And the blacksmith brought the boy back **to the neighbour (Lat)**’

(15) Khwarshi – ‘bring’ with the lative strategy

j-ot'ok'-un butuq aq<sup>z</sup>za ise uša-va-l  
5-take-UW box mouse.pl.obl.erg this.OBL boy.OBL-APUD-LAT

‘The mice brought the box back **to the boy (Lat)**.’

The difference seems to be between +/-transfer of possession. In both situations of giving back or mediated transfer (either stage) the Giver does not transfer possession to the (immediate) Recipient, either because the Giver does not own the Theme, or because the Recipient already owns the Theme, or because the Theme is intended for someone else.

(16) Archi (Archi Electronic Corpus)

*un bo-li la-ra-k os baḱ-ur oq'i bo-li*  
 you.sg(ERG) say.PFV-EVID we.OBL-CONT-LAT(EXCL) one side-PL NPL.give.IMP say.PFV-EVID

'And you, they said, give us the dried meat.' {The meat is intended for the husband of the woman to whom the imperative is directed, and the speaker offers to be a mediator in the transfer}.

(17) Archi (Archi Electronic Corpus)

*ja č'aq<sup>w</sup> āc'a-lli oq'i, χo-t'o-mč'iš, ja*  
 or spoon 4.fill-IMP.CVB 4.give.IMP 4.find-NEG-COND or

*ača-lli že-ra-k asin-ni oq'i bo-li*  
 4.pour-IMP.CVB self.NON1-CONT-LAT measure-IMP.CVB 4.give.IMP say-EVID

'Pour a spoonful {of honey} and give {it to me}, if you haven't got {enough honey}; or {if you got enough} pour, measure and give it **to me (Lat)** {for money}, she said.'

(18) Budukh (Talibov 2007: 256)

*kaḡaz serḥatče-r-u jiva-ži*  
 paper guard-PL-AD 3/4.give.PFV-PF

'(He) gave the letter **to the guards (Lat)**.'

In the following table, the component of the situation that blocks the use of the dative strategy is in the boldface:

Table 6. Blocking of the dative

	Giver	Recipient
'giving permanently'	owns T	comes into possession of T
'giving temporarily'	owns T	<b>does not come into possession of T</b>
'giving back'	<b>does not own T</b>	owns T already
'transfer to the mediator'	owns T	<b>does not come into possession of T</b>
'transfer from the mediator'	<b>does not own T</b>	comes into possession of T

4. THIRD APPROXIMATION

Are we happy now? Yes but... why would East Caucasian languages do such an exquisite thing? Consider what happens in the following examples.

(19) Khinalug (Khinalug Electronic Corpus)

*yoz-i= m, ma, <...> ašy-i saz*  
 that.HPL.OBL-ERG = AND well singer-GEN saz

*tenč-qχu-jä c'imir-iš lä-k'u-i*  
 take.away-4.LV-CVB sparrow-POSS SAME.LEVEL.EL-give-PTCP(AOR)

'And they, well, had to, after many disputes, to give the saz **to the sparrow (Lat)**.'

(20) Bagvalal (Kibrik et al. 2001: 775)

*hatu-b hü'aχ awtobus-la b-iḡ-ē-b-o, ibraška,*  
 a.little-N under bus-and N-stop-CAUS-N-CVB Ibrashka

*w-aχa-la w-ā-w-o, ga?išnik-šū-tā*  
 M-outside-PART M-come-M-CVB road.policeman-OBL.M-HUMLOC

*inštu-ra azar šard-āla w-eḡi.*  
 five-CARD thousand hand-CAUS.POT-INF M-go

'Some way down the road Ibrashka stopped the bus, got out and went (back) to give **the road policeman (Lat)** five thousand roubles.'

(21) Hunzib (van den Berg 1995: 246)

*lač'i šil'e.l-en, ka-y-n sa.sa.sid-go*  
 clothes put.on-CVB hand-DAT-and each.OBL-AD

*hās = č'it' q'uruš okro nil-ən li;*  
 one.hundred rouble money give-CVB be.5

*hās = č'it' dibi, hās = č'it' dibi, hās = č'it' otu-u*  
 one.hundred you.DAT, one.hundred you.DAT, one.hundred that.OBL-DAT

'When she had dressed them, she gave **them (Lat)** each one hundred rubles in their hands; 'one hundred **for you (Dat)**, one hundred **for you (Dat)** and one hundred **for him (Dat)**.'

Lative encodes Goal, dative encodes Beneficiary. Usually, giving includes both transfer (change of possessor) and movement, so Lat is also available when transfer of possession occurs. Essentially, 'give' + lat = 'hand' (rather than 'give temporarily').

Table 7.

		Spatial transfer	
		-	+
Transfer of possession	-	(dative?)	lative
	+	dative	dative/lative

## 5. TYPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

So far, the distinction seems to be almost unique to East Caucasian. Exceptions:

**Ossetic** (Iranic) which shows exactly the same distinctions (Belyaev, Daniel 2014)

(22) d3 = χ3d3g = mən sə rat:aj, wəj ra-jš-zən-3n  
thy self me.DAT what give.PFV-SBJV.2SG that.Dem PV-take-FUT-1SG  
[The heroes are distributing the booty from a raid.]

'I will take whatever you give me (dat.)' (Miller 1887: 173, *The Nameless Son of Uruzmag*)

(23) 3rba-χašt-a = š3 sav3r-d3r matros // m3n-m3 = š3  
PV-bring-PST.3SG they.GEN which-INDEF sailor me-ALL they.GEN

rad-ta klavdio, m3 = χ3d3g // n3 fed-ton wəj  
give.PFV-PST.3SG Claudio my self NEG see.PFV-PST.1SG that.Dem

'Some sailor brought them (the letters); Claudio gave them to me (lat.), but I haven't seen him (the sailor) myself.' [Shakespeare's (con)text: "MESSENGER: Letters, my lord, from Hamlet: // This to your majesty; this to the queen. // KING CLAUDIUS: From Hamlet! who brought them? // MESSENGER: **Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not: // They were given me by Claudio; he received them // Of him that brought them.**"] (ONC: Šeksipir Uil'æm. *Hamlet, daniag princ*. Mality Vasojoy tælmac, 1963–2007)

'**Daghestanian Russian**': дай мне vs. дай ко мне.

**Tamil** (Dravidian), cf. the following data from Hugo Cardoso following a lingtyp query about marking of temporary vs. permanent transfer on the Recipient:

message 1: "Dear Michael, the meaning is not quite the same you're looking for, but this could be interesting for your comparison. Schiffman (1999: 31-32) reports that, in Tamil, the recipient arguments of 'to give' can take either dative case or what he terms an "animate locative marker". While the dative marker indicates a simple (and irrevocable) change of ownership, with the animate locative marker the meaning is that of restoring previous ownership (i.e., 'return, give back'). REF: Schiffman, Harold. 1999. *A reference grammar of spoken Tamil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press."  
(22) *avar-kiṭṭe / avar-ukku muttu maaleye kudutteen* (p. 32)  
'I gave the pearl necklace back to him / to him for good'

message 2: "Dear Michael, as a follow-up on my previous message, I have found another source (Lehmann 1993: 31-32) which describes the opposition between dative-marking and animate locative-marking in exactly the terms of your original query: dative for permanent recipients, and locative for temporary recipients. REF: Lehmann, Thomas. 1993. *A grammar of Modern Tamil*. Pondicherry."

## 6. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A common path of grammaticalization: Goal > Recipient > Beneficiary. Recipient is intermediate and combines both spatial and benefactive component.

But even better; cf. from Levin & Rappaport-Hovav 2005 (Argument realization): "Culicover and W. Wilkins (1984) propose there are two sets of roles, with dual role assignments always involving one role from each set. These two sets of roles are referred to as the extensional or perceptual roles and the intensional or action roles. The perceptual or extensional roles are so-named because they can be assigned to arguments of a verb by looking at the event in the world that is being described; these roles are source, goal, location, and theme in the Gruber/Jackendoff sense (see also section 4.1). The action or intensional roles are agent, patient, instrument, and benefactive; these roles "categorize objects according to their status as actors in an action" (Culicover and W. Wilkins 1984: 212). They

are referred to as intensional roles because, unlike the perceptual roles, they must be assigned "based on our natural theories of human action" (Culicover and W. Wilkins 1984: 212)."

This framework is an ideal fit for what we see in the case of East Caucasian Recipients. The situation of giving involves what is observed on the physical level (caused motion towards a Goal) and what is assumed to happen on the interpersonal level (transfer of possession to the Beneficiary). The quasi-unique property of East Caucasian is that they do not combine these two roles into single Recipient marking but code them separately, using the dative of the lative strategy, respectively.

## 7. PROSPECTS

- other verbs of transfer ('send', 'bring', 'throw')
- EC languages with spatial preverbs (e.g. Nakh, Ossetic, Khinalug)
- further typological parallels

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