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CHAPTER 8

Non-canonical Agent Marking in Agul[1]

1. INTRODUCTION[2]

This paper investigates the means of Agent encoding in Agul, a language from the Lezgic branch of the East Caucasian (Nakh-Daghestanian) family. Agul is spoken by approximately 30 thousand speakers in the Agul and Kurah districts of Southern Daghestan, Russia. Our study is based on the data from the *нирӣиq'* dialect (spoken by some 600 speakers).

Agul is an ergative language with predominantly agglutinative morphology and SOV basic word order. It is a clear example of a 'role-dominated' language in terms of Foley & Van Valin (1984): the marking of arguments is semantically motivated, and there are no syntactic mechanisms of changing this marking by means of any voice-like operations like the passive or the antipassive. The Agent of a transitive verb (A) is marked by the Ergative case, the core argument of an intransitive verb (S) and the Patient of a transitive verb (O) are marked by the Absolutive:

(1) ze dad mask̄aw.di-as χab aldarku-naa
my father.ABS Moscow-IN.ELAT back return-RES
'My father has come back from Moscow.'

(2) dad.a guni ʕut'u-ne
father.ERG bread.ABS eat-PST
'Father ate bread.'

The Ergative and the Absolutive can be regarded as 'canonical' means of encoding core arguments in the two major clause types. There are, however, some

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[2] Abbreviations: AD = location near a landmark, ELAT = motion from a landmark, IN = location inside a landmark, LAT = motion towards a landmark, POST = location behind a landmark, SUB/CONT = location under a landmark / in tight contact with a landmark, SUPER = location on a landmark. Singular and essive forms of nouns are not indicated (being formally unmarked).

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minor clause types in Agul where other means of marking core arguments are used. As the Absolutive argument is normally present in such clauses, they would be probably treated as 'extended intransitive' in R.M.W. Dixon's approach (see e.g. Dixon and Aikhenvald 2000:3). All other case forms that encode core arguments can be conventionally labelled 'non-canonical' means of argument marking.

First of all, it is the Dative that marks Experiencers with a number of sentience verbs like *ag̥as* 'see', *unxas* 'hear', *наа* 'know', *k̄andea* 'love, want, need' and others, for example:

(3) za-s we ruš agu-ne
I-DAT your daughter.ABS see-PST
'I saw your daughter.'

The Possessor is expressed by one of the two locative cases[3] – the Ad-essive (originally referring to location near a landmark) and the Post-essive (referring to location behind a landmark), which distinguish between actual and permanent possession respectively:

(4) za-w nis=na guni fa-a
I-AD cheese.ABS=and bread.ABS AD.be-PRS
'I have cheese and bread with me.' (So, we can take a snack now)

(5) za-q ʔu ruš=na sa gada qa-a
I-POST two daughter.ABS=and one son.ABS POST.be-PRS
'I have two daughters and one son.'

In fact, many other locative cases can be used as non-canonical means of core argument marking as well: in (6), for example, the Super-essive (originally referring to location on the upper surface of a landmark) is used to encode the participant of the situation 'fall asleep', expressed by the lexicalized compound *aχun alč aʕ̥as*:

(6) šünük̄.i-l aχun alčaj-ne
child-SUPER fall asleep-PST
'The child fell asleep.'

Note that in many cases the use of a locative form is correlated with the presence of a certain prefix on the verb (verbal prefixes in Lezgic languages usually have the same origin as locative case markers): cf. above *za-w f-aa* 'I have (with me)', *za-q q-aa* 'I have (permanently)', *šünük̄i-l al-čajne* 'child fell asleep'. It means that the use of locative cases for encoding of core arguments stems from the conceptual

[3] Like the majority of the Lezgic languages, Agul possesses a rich system of locative cases. Locative case markers consist of two parts, the first one specifies the localization of a trajector with respect to a landmark ('inside', 'above', 'below', 'near', 'behind', etc.), the second one points at the direction of movement ('to' vs. 'from') or absence of movement ('at rest', zero marked). In total, there are 25 case forms in Agul (Ergative, Absolutive, Dative, Comitative and Genitive, and 20 locative forms).

reinterpretation of the original locative construction (thus, in example (4) temporary possession is represented as location near the Possessor as the landmark).[4]

However, there are locative cases which have undergone a considerable extension of meaning and do not seem to show clear traces of original locative semantics. One can say that these cases are on their way from purely locative to 'grammatical', or 'syntactic' (like the Ergative or the Dative), using the terminology common to the East Caucasian studies. Among them, it is probably the Ad-elative that shows the widest distribution in the domain of non-locative arguments marking (its locative meaning being 'motion from location near a landmark'). Thus, in (7) below the Ad-elative NP encodes the participant who is involved in the situation unintentionally, in (8) it marks the participant who takes part in the action deliberately, but mistakenly, in (9) it introduces the participant who is capable of doing something, and in (10) it expresses the Causee (in the latter example, the Ad-essive case is also possible):[5]

(7) ruš.a-f-as berнem kura-se
girl-AD-ELAT dress.ABS get dirty-FUT
'The girl will unwittingly soil the dress.' (the little girl was told that she has to be careful, but she cannot remember about that all the time, and she will most probably soil the new dress while playing)

(8) za-f-as gi-s unaq'u-b xu-ne
I-AD-ELAT that-DAT call-MSD become-PST
'It so happened that I had to invite him.' (I did not plan to do this, but when I was inviting other people, he was near, and it would have been impolite not to invite him)

(9) za-f-as k'eʒ lik'a-s xu-ne
I-AD-ELAT letter.ABS write-INF become-PST
'I managed to write a letter.'

(10) baw.a ruš.a-f-as || ruš.a-w xed χa-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG girl-AD-ELAT girl-AD water.ABS bring-INF do-PST
'Mother made the girl bring water.'

Note that it is not the case that the Ad-elative encodes a particular participant according to the subcategorization frame of a given verb. Rather, the Ad-elative argument appears in particular constructions, having their own semantics and their own lexical restrictions. Each of the four constructions illustrated in (7)-(10) will be discussed below in more detail: the Involuntary Agent Construction in section 2, the Undesirable Action Construction in section 3, the Possibilitive Construction in section 4, and the Causative Construction in section 5.

[4] See also Schulze (to appear) for the discussion of the metaphorical potential of locative forms in Lezgic languages (especially Agul and Udi).

[5] Locative markers *-w* (in the Ad-essive) and *-f* (in the Ad-elative and in verbal prefix) are in complementary distribution and go back to one and the same historical source.

The fact that one and the same formal means, viz. the Ad-elative case, is employed in the constructions listed above does not seem to us accidental. We argue that the Ad-elative in Agul covers a coherent semantic domain, as the participants marked by this case are all agentive in nature. At the same time they are not real ('canonical') Agents, which are encoded by the Ergative. In contexts like those presented in (7)-(10) the participants in question lack some of the characteristic agentive features, or Proto-Agent entailments, using the terminology of Dowty (1991). Thus, in a sense, the Ad-Elative should be treated as a canonical means of 'non-canonical Agent' marking in Agul.

It can be readily observed that in all examples given above (apart from (10)) the non-canonically marked NP corresponds to grammatical subject in the English translation (the same would be true if the Russian translations were given). However, in the overview given above we prefer to speak about (canonical or non-canonical) 'core arguments marking', and not about 'subject marking'. The reason for this is that the notion of grammatical subject as such (or pivot, in Dixon's terms) is problematic in Agul. Being a typical role-dominated Daghestanian language, Agul tends to encode clause arguments consistently with their semantic roles, and it is possible that the very notion of syntactic relations is not applicable to languages of this type (as argued, e.g., in Kibrik 1997, among other works).

Nevertheless it seems important to understand whether it is possible to treat the Ad-elative argument as a grammatical subject on the basis of its syntactic behaviour (the alternative may be that it is a sort of 'external' clause argument, like the agentive adjunct in passives). In section 6 below we compare syntactic properties of the Ad-elative argument with that of 'canonical' Ergative and Absolutive NPs (in A, S and O functions). The conclusion that can be drawn from the comparison is that the Ad-elative argument (especially expressing the Involuntary Agent) does not show different behaviour from the most 'subject-like' NPs in Agul.

Finally, the general discussion in section 7 concludes the paper.

2. THE INVOLUNTARY AGENT CONSTRUCTION

The Involuntary Agent Construction has been previously described for the Lezgian language by Haspelmath (1993:291-293) as the construction "in which the Agent is in the Adelative case and the additional meaning is 'involuntarily, unwittingly, or in a very indirect manner.'" Such a construction is attested in virtually all East Caucasian languages, including Lezgic, Avar-Andic, Tsezic and Lak. The only work dealing with the Involuntary Agent Construction in a typological perspective is Kittilä (2005).

Semantically, the Involuntary Agent is an Agent-like participant, but in contrast to the Agent in standard transitive clauses it exhibits a very low degree of control and volitionality. Morphologically, the Involuntary Agent is usually expressed in East Caucasian languages by means of a locative case, which denotes motion from a

landmark.[6] The same situation is found in Agul, where the actor of the Involuntary Agent Construction is encoded by the Ad-elative case, which in its spatial use describes motion from location near a landmark, cf. (11):

(11) cil.i-f-as ha$\overline{\text{t}}$-u čuwal!
wall- AD-ELAT take away-IMP sack.ABS
'Take away the sack from the wall!'

The following examples illustrate a canonical transitive clause in Agul (12) and the Involuntary Agent Construction with the same verb (13):

(12) baw.a ne$\overline{\text{k}}$ a$\overline{\text{t}}$uzu-ne
mother.ERG milk.ABS pour out-PST
'Mother poured out the milk.'

(13) baw.a-f-as ne$\overline{\text{k}}$ a$\overline{\text{t}}$uzu-ne
mother-AD-ELAT milk.ABS pour out-PST
'Mother accidentally spilled the milk.'

The general interpretation of the Involuntary Agent Construction 'to do something accidentally, unintentionally' can come out in three different variations:

(i) The participant affects the Patient accidentally, without noticing what s/he is doing,
(ii) The participant involuntarily lets something happen by overlooking and not making enough efforts to prevent the situation,
(iii) The participant finally (as a result of efforts) succeeds in doing something, although it is not quite expected.

These three readings of the Involuntary Agent Construction are illustrated in the following example:

(14) ruš.a-f-as ra$\overline{\text{k}}$ daqu-ne
girl-AD-ELAT door.ABS open-PST
a. The girl accidentally opened the door (because she pushed it with her elbow while playing with her toys on the floor).
b. (Father told the girl to hold the door so that the wind could not open it, but her efforts were not enough) The girl accidentally opened the door // let the door open.
c. (All the children tried but no one could open the tightly closed door, however it so happened that) The girl managed to open the door.

What the three interpretations have in common is that in all of them the actor is not in complete control of the situation, but the lack of control affects different parts of events: in case of the first two readings it is obviously the initiation of an event,

[6] Only Lak and Bagwalal possess distinct case markers whose main function is to mark the Involuntary Agent.

which is out of control, while in the third reading it is the completion of an event. The difference between the first two readings concerns a degree to which an instigator's attention is focused on the event instigated. According to the first reading, the Involuntary Agent is a participant who acts fully unintentionally (s/he even may be not aware of the situation taking place), while in the second reading the focus is on the fact that the participant tries to prevent the initiation of an event, but fails to do this.

Note that the last reading stands slightly apart from the first and the second, since in this case the action is not involuntary in the strict sense; on the contrary, the participant's will and efforts are aimed at achieving the result. However, the polysemy found in Agul seems to be quite widespread cross-linguistically. Kittilä (2005) reports that it is also characteristic of similar constructions in a number of languages including, for example, Bagwalal, Finnish and Thompson River Salish.

There are quite strong restrictions on the lexical verb and on the Adelative argument in the Involuntary Agent Construction. First of all, not every verb can appear in this construction. The set of verbs that allow the Involuntary Agent includes:

(i) intransitive verbs denoting a change of state, cf. Table 1 and example (15), and
(ii) labile verbs (that is, S=O ambitransitives), cf. Table 2 and examples (13)-(14) above.

(15) a. kitab gulu-ne
book.ABS get lost-PST
'The book got lost.'
b. gada.ji-f-as kitab gulu-ne
boy-AD-ELAT book.ABS get lost-PST
'The boy lost the book.'
c. *gada.ji kitab gulu-ne
boy.ERG book.ABS get lost-PST
'The boy lost the book.'

Table 1. Examples of intransitive change-of-state verbs in Agul

ac'as	'fill (intr)'
alaʕ̥as	'boil over (about milk)'
gulas	'get lost'
ket'as	'awake'
kuras	'get dirty'
q'ešas	'get wet'
ruq̄as	'get dry'
ruʁas	'get cold'
rutas	'curdle (about milk)'
t'aнas	'swell'

Table 2. Examples of labile verbs in Agul

arʕas	'break (tr, intr)'
a̅tuzas	'spill (tr, intr)'
at'usas	'stop burning (tr, intr)'
daqas	'open (tr, intr)'
čurqas	'explode (tr, intr)'
č'urχas	'tear apart (tr, intr)'
č'ut'as	'bend (tr, intr)'
k'es	'kill/die'
rüxes	'boil, cook (tr, intr)'
uc'as	'melt (tr, intr)'
ugas	'burn (tr, intr)'

On the contrary, ordinary transitive and non-change-of-state intransitive verbs cannot appear in the Involuntary Agent Construction, cf. (16) and (17):

Transitive verb

(16) a. ruš.a k'eʒ lik'i-ne
girl.ERG letter.ABS write-PST
'The girl wrote a letter.'

b. *ruš.a-f-as k'eʒ lik'i-ne
girl-AD-ELAT letter.ABS write-PST
'The girl accidentally wrote a letter.'

Intransitive non-change-of-state verb

(17) a. ruš χul.a-s ušu-ne
girl home-DAT go-PST
'I went home.'

b. *ruš.a-f-as χul.a-s ušu-ne
girl-AD-ELAT home-DAT go-PST
'The girl accidentally went home.'

These examples show that the alternation between the Ergative and the Adelative marking is possible only for labile verbs, cf. *a̅tuzas* 'pour out' with a transitive valence pattern in (12) and an intransitive pattern with the Involuntary Agent in (13). In fact, this also shows that the Involuntary Agent does not just 'replace' the canonically marked Agent, but instead is introduced in an event as an 'external' instigator of the whole event, described by the verb. However, even in this case the Involuntary Agent cannot appear in clauses with transitive and non-change-of-state intransitive verbs in any of the three readings, cf. examples (16c) and (17c):

(16) c. *za-f-as ruš.a k'eʒ lik'i-ne
I-AD-ELAT girl.ERG letter.ABS write-PST
'I accidentally made the girl write a letter.'

(17) c. *za-f-as ruš χul.a-s ušu-ne
I-AD-ELAT girl.ABS home-DAT go-PST
'I accidentally made the girl go home.'

At the same time, the Involuntary Agent Construction was judged possible by native speakers at least with one transitive verb – *ʕut'as* 'eat'. In this case the construction is possible only with the third reading ('manage to do'), cf. example (18):

(18) za-f-as ruš.a guni ʕut'u-ne
I-AD-ELAT girl.ERG bread.ABS eat-PST
'I managed to feed the girl with bread.'

One can suppose that the acceptability of (18), unlike examples like (16c) and (17c), is due to the fact that the Involuntary Agent with the verb *ʕut'as* 'eat' is not just an instigator of the event, but is involved in the caused event as well.

The Involuntary Agent is a participant that affects the Patient accidentally and unintentionally. Therefore, it is no surprise that it can be expressed only by NPs denoting human beings. Nouns denoting animals – like cats or dogs – are in principle possible, but less felicitous, as it is hard to say whether an animal does something intentionally or not. Cf. the following example:

(19) ??kitan.i-f-as / *ʒaq̥'.ala-f-as dak'ar arʕu-ne
cat-AD-ELAT bird-AD-ELAT window.ABS break-PST
'The cat / bird accidentally broke the window.'

In contrast to the standard transitive pattern, the Involuntary Agent Construction does not allow to add adjuncts presupposing a controlling and deliberately acting Agent, such as Instruments or Benefactives (cf. (20)) and adverbs of manner like *qülias* 'for spite; to spite smb', *ʔašq̄unaldi* 'willingly, readily', *teʕdidi* 'quickly' (cf. (21)).

(20) gada.ji (*gada.ji-f-as) χew ʁ̥an.di-l-di[7] / za-s arʕu-ne
boy.ERG boy-AD-ELAT nut.ABS stone-SUPER-LAT I-DAT break-PST
'The boy broke the nut with a rock / for me.'

(21) ruš.a (*ruš.a-f-as) teʕdidi / qülias / ʔašq̄unaldi berнem č'urχu-ne
girl-ERG girl-AD-ELAT quickly / for spite / readily dress.ABS tear-PST
'The girl quickly / for spite / readily tore the dress in pieces.'

[7] The Super-lative case is a regular means of the Instrument encoding in Agul.

On the other hand, an NP expressing Force (22) or external circumstances (23) can appear in the construction. Usually, in this case the construction gets the second reading – 'the participant lets something happen by overlooking and not doing what should be done' (cf. (22)).

(22) gada.ji-f-as kurušk̄a kulak.i-q-as arʕu-ne
boy-AD-ELAT mug.ABS wind-POST-ELAT break-PST
'The boy unwittingly broke the cup because of the wind.' (e.g. a strong wind blew suddenly, and the boy lost hold of the cup)

(23) gada.ji-f-as baw gašila k'i-ne
son-AD-ELAT mother.ABS of starvation kill/die-PST
'Mother died of starvation because of her son.' (e.g., he didn't looked after her)

All these restrictions seem to be clear evidence of low agentivity of a participant marked by the Ad-elative and prove that the behavior of the Involuntary Agent differs to a considerable extent from the behavior of the prototypical Agent. One can conclude from these differences that the Involuntary Agent Construction is a means of decreasing the degree of agentivity. In other words, it is a means of presenting the situation as occurring with the participation of an Agent, but an Agent with attenuated agentivity. Note that this construction is relevant only for prototypical Agents, which are human beings. So, it can be used in case when it is indicated explicitly that a participant can be considered as a true Agent according his/her inherent parameters, but at the same time in this particular situation s/he lacks one of the most important features of Agents, that is the total control of the situation.

Thus it turns out that the 'Involuntary Agent' is not, strictly speaking, an Agent as such (cf. (13) and interpretations i-ii), and it is not necessarily unintentional (cf. interpretation iii above). It is rather a particular participant with a low degree of control which can be introduced in an intransitive event.

3. THE UNDESIRABLE ACTION CONSTRUCTION

Another construction which is in some respect similar to the Involuntary Agent Construction, is formed with the deverbal noun (Masdar) of a verb and the auxiliary *xas* 'become; happen'.[8] Example (24b) illustrates this construction, which in contrast

[8] The verb *xas* 'become; happen' is used as an inchoative copula, which is illustrated in (i)-(ii):

(i) ze gada müʕelim xa-se
my son.ABS teacher.ABS become-FUT
'My son will become a teacher.'

(ii) če ʕümür četin xu-ne
our.INCL life.ABS hard become-PST
'Our life became hard.'

As one of the main auxiliary verbs (along with the stative copulas *e* 'be' and *a* 'be located'), *xas* also forms a number of periphrastic tenses, e.g. the Future Imperfective and the Future Perfective – cf.

to its basic counterpart (24a) has a connotation of an undesirable event, that should have been prevented. The structure of (24b) can be translated literally as 'the girl's seeing of a gift happened'.

(24) a. ruš.a-s p̄adark̄a agu-ne
girl-DAT gift.ABS see-PST
'The girl saw a gift.'
b. ruš.a-s p̄adark̄a agu-b xu-ne
[girl-DAT gift.ABS see-MSD] become-PST
'It so happened that the girl saw a gift.' (although she was not supposed to do so)

There are two variants of the Undesirable Action Construction, with difference in argument marking. In the first variant, the main participant is encoded by the case that is required by the lexical verb: cf. the Absolutive with the intransitive verb *uʁas* 'to fall down (of rain or snow)' in (25), the Ergative with the transitive verb *ʕut'as* 'to eat' in (26), or the Dative with the sentience verb *agₒas* 'to see' in (24b) above. In this case the construction has an impersonal reading '(independenly of anyone's will) it so happened that', and is usually used to explain why something that had been previously planned didn't take place:

(25) Context: – Have you managed to build your new house this year?
– No, we didn't manage to do this:
ixp̄-ar uʁu-b xu-ne
[snow-PL.ABS fall-MSD] become-PST
'It so happened that it snowed (so we had to stop building).' {= lit. Falling of snow happened.}
(26) Context: – Father was keeping the fast, but one day he forgot this, and
dad.a guni ʕut'u-b xu-ne
[father.ERG bread.ABS eat-MSD]become-PST
'It so happened that he ate bread.' {= lit. Father's eating bread happened.}

From the syntactic point of view, this variant of the construction can be probably represented as a one-place predicate *xas* 'become; happen' with a sentential complement (see the bracketing in examples above). There seem to be no restrictions on the semantic or syntactic class of the lexical verb and the semantic role of its main argument with this reading. The only restriction concerns the temporal reference: as the construction in question describes situations which run against the speaker's expectations, it is most appropriate in the past tense. Present or future time reference is doubtful for the Undesirable Action Construction:

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ruχaj xase 'will be reading' (with the Imperfective converb of the main verb) and *ruχuna xase* 'will have read' (with the Perfective converb of the main verb).

(27) ??ruš.a-s p̄adark̄a agu-b xa-se
[girl-DAT gift.ABS see-MSD] become-FUT
'It will happen so that the girl will see a gift.'

In the second variant of the Undesirable Action Construction the core argument is marked by the Ad-elative. In this case the construction describes an action in which the participant takes part deliberately, but mistakenly. This is possible in two cases:

(i) the participant does not know that s/he should not do something, cf. (28):

(28) dad.a-f-as kurušk̄a arʕu-b xu-ne
father-AD-ELAT mug.ABS break-MSD become-PST
'Father (deliberately) broke the cup.' (it turned out later that another cup should have been broken, but father did not know that) {= lit. From father breaking the cup happened.}

(ii) the participant does know that s/he should not do something, but the circumstances are such that s/he has to do this, cf. (29):

(29) za-f-as ušu-b xu-ne ge-wur.i-n χul.a-s
I-AD-ELAT go-MSD become-PST that-PL-GEN house-DAT
'I went to their place.' (I knew that I should not visit them, but it so happened that I had to do this) {= From me going to their house happened.}

In contrast to the first type of encoding, here the construction becomes more 'personal', in the sense that there is a particular participant responsible for the situation. While in the first case (cf. exx. (24)-(26)) the situation as a whole is in focus, construction with the Ad-elative case focuses on the participant who is 'guilty' of the situation and regrets it.

The second strategy of argument marking imposes considerable restrictions both on the lexical verb and on the participant's semantic role. First of all, only agentive verbs can appear in this variant of the construction (which is in clear contrast to the Involuntary Agent Construction, as shown above). Cf. example (30), which is ungrammatical, since the verb *alurq'as* 'fall down, tumble down' does not allow a controlled interpretation:

(30) *gada.ji-f-as alurq'u-b xu-ne
boy-AD-ELAT fall down-MSD become-PST
'It so happened that the boy fell down.' (although he was not supposed to do so)

As for restrictions on the participant, only NPs denoting human beings can appear in the Undesirable Action Construction; animals are highly doubtful in this context (cf. (31)), and inanimate objects are ruled out altogether:

(31) ?? kitan.i-f-as ne$\overline{k}$ uχu-b xu-ne
cat-AD-ELAT milk.ABS drink-MSD become-PST
'It so happened that the cat drank the milk.'

The Ad-elative marking is possible neither for the Experiencer of sentience verbs (cf. (32)), nor for other types of non-canonically marked arguments:

(32) *ruš.a-f-as $\overline{p}$adar$\overline{k}$a agu-b xu-ne
girl-AD-ELAT gift.ABS see-MSD become-PST
'It so happened that the girl saw a gift.' (although she was not supposed to do so)

In sum, the Ad-elative argument in the Undesirable Action Construction is used to express a participant, who controls the situation and can be regarded as a typical Agent according his/her inherent properties. At the same time, its evaluation as a true Agent is attenuated as the participant in question has to act not following his/her own will, but being forced by the circumstances, or s/he does not realize the consequences of his/her action.

As the examples given above show, the semantics of the Undesirable Action Construction is rather similar (albeit not identical) to that of the Involuntary Agent Construction. However, lexical restrictions on the verb in the Involuntary Agent Construction and the Undesirable Action Construction seem to be in complementary distribution: in the former case only non-agentive verbs can appear in the construction, in the latter case agentive ones. This may point at the possibility of interpreting both constructions as variants of one and the same basic construction.[9] It can be, for example, that the difference in interpretation stems from the difference in the meaning of the verb: while non-agentive change of state verbs favour the involuntary reading (like in 'accidentally pour out the milk'), it is not available for agentive verbs with which the action is rather presented as intentional but inappropriate. Note the same effect with the use of adverbials like the English *accidentally* or the Russian *slučajno* 'accidentally, by accident': with verbs denoting non-controlled situations they emphasize the involuntary involvement, and the preferred reading with agentive verbs is 'do something on purpose but mistakenly'. It is also possible for an agentive verb to have both readings, cf. the following examples from Russian:

(33) a. Ja slučajno razbil etu čašku
I have accidentally broken this cup. {I did not notice it standing there.}

[9] Martin Haspelmath seems to be close to this decision in his description of Lezgian data. Pointing that the Lezgian Adelative appears in the Involuntary Agent Construction, he continues with the following observation: "When the involuntary action is expressed by a transitive verb, a periphrastic construction with *xun* 'become, happen' and the Masdar has to be used" (Haspelmath 1993: 91). Unfortunately, apart from three examples no discussion is provided that could clarify this point.

b. Ja slučajno pročital eto pis'mo
'I have accidentally read this letter.' {I thought it was addressed to me.}
c. Ja slučajno otkryl etu dver'
'I have accidentally opened this door.' {a. I touched it with my elbow while passing by; b. I deliberately opened the door, but it turned out later that it should have been kept closed.}

Still, it does not seem appropriate to treat the Involuntary Agent Construction and the Undesirable Action Construction in Agul as variants because of two reasons. Firstly, verb classes that are allowed by the two constructions are not complementary in the strict sense. It is possible to use some verbs both in the Involuntary Agent Construction and in the Undesirable Action Construction with slight difference in meaning:

(34) a. za-f-as berнem č'urχu-ne
I-AD-ELAT shirt.ABS tear-PST
'I accidentally tore the shirt.'
b. za-f-as berнem č'urχu-bxu-ne
I-AD-ELAT shirt.ABS tear-MSD become-PST
'It so happened that I tore the shirt.' (e.g., I needed to dress a wound and used my shirt for this)

In the second place, even if the distribution of verbs in both constructions was strictly complementary, the formal relation between the two constructions is idiomatic. In particular, it is not quite clear why it is the combination of the Masdar with the verb *xas* 'become; happen' that is used for the Undesirable Action Construction (and why it is not the case, for example, that the Ad-elative argument of the Involuntary Agent Construction is extended to all types of verbs instead). Thus, is seems reasonable to keep the two constructions apart, although they both certainly belong to a wider family of 'Agent-attenuating' means in Agul.

4. THE POSSIBILITIVE CONSTRUCTION

In a number of Lezgic languages (e.g. Lezgian, Agul, Tabassaran, or Udi) there are no modal verbs corresponding in meaning to *can* or *may* in English. Possibility is usually described by means of a special construction with the verb 'become; happen', in which the sentential complement is headed by the Infinitive and the main participant is encoded by one of the locative cases from the 'elative' series – that is, 'he could do it' is expressed literally as 'it became/happened from him to do it'.

In Agul it is the Ad-elative case that marks the main participant of the Possibilitive Construction. Examples (35) and (36) show that this construction can be used to express both participant-internal ('can, be able') and participant-external

possibility ('may, be allowed'), using the terms introduced in Auwera & Plungian 1998.[10]

(35) ze gada.ji-f-as wa-s kümek aq'a-s xa-se
my son-AD-ELAT [you.SG-DAT help.ABS make-INF] become-FUT
'My son will be able to help you.'

(36) ilsan.di-f-as allah.t̄i-qaj dua-s xa-fe-wa?
person-AD-ELAT [Allah-COMIT compete-INF] become-GENER-Q
'Is it possible (permitted) for a human being to compete with Allah?'

The Ad-elative argument of the Possibilitive Construction is not obligatory: when it is absent the sentence is normally interpreted as agentless ('it is possible that'):

(37) a. ruš.a-f-as kitab ruχa-s xu-ne
girl-AD-ELAT [book.ABS read-INF] become-PST
'The girl managed to read the book.'

b. kitab ruχa-s xu-ne
[book.ABS read-INF] become-PST
It became possible to read the book.' (e.g. written in an unknown language)

The main participant of the Possibilitive Construction does not have to be human (cf. acceptable sentences like 'the cow managed to jump over a fence', etc.); however, inanimate participants are definitely ruled out.

Thus, there is no alternation of argument marking in the Possibilitive Construction: if present, the main participant is invariably marked by the Ad-elative. There is a formal similarity between the Possibilitive Construction and the Involuntary Agent Construction in that the low agentive animate participant can be omitted from the sentence. However, in this case the situation is not presented as happening autonomously (without any Agent), but is interpreted impersonally – 'it is possible for someone/anyone to fulfill an action'.

5. THE CAUSATIVE CONSTRUCTION

We now pass to another use of the Ad-elative (and the Ad-essive)[11] which is a bit different from those described so far. At the same time, the semantic contrast which

[10] Epistemic possibility ('the proposition is judged by the speaker to be probable') cannot be expressed by means of this construction in Agul; in this case the Future tense of the verb must be used.

[11] The Ad-essive differs from the Ad-elative in that the former describes the location near a landmark (sometimes the motion toward the goal), not the motion from it. An example of the Ad-essive marking of core non-locative argument was given in (4) above, where it encodes the temporary Possessor. Apart from the temporary Possessor and the Causee, there seem to be no other non-locative uses of this case.

is associated with the Ad-elative/Ad-essive in the Causative Construction also deals with the degree of agentivity and provides further evidence for treating the Ad-elative as a specialized 'Agent-attenuating' device.

The only productive causativization pattern in Agul is a construction with the auxiliary verb *(a)q'as* 'do, make' and the Infinitive of the main verb. Semantically, 'do'-causatives normally express indirect, or 'distant' causation (a more detailed description is provided in Daniel *et al.* 2004). The Causer is invariably marked by the Ergative; as for the Causee, there are two strategies for its encoding. According to the first one, the actor keeps the case marking assigned by the main predicate; this is illustrated in exx. (38) through (40), where sentences in (b) are periphrastic causatives of sentences in (a):

Intransitive verb

(38) a. kitan hiši-ne
cat.ABS run away-PST
'The cat ran away.'

b. baw.a kitan hiša-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG [cat.ABS ran away-INF] do-PST
'Mother made the cat run away.' (e.g. she made a noise and the cat woke up)

Sentience verb

(39) a. dad.a-s wuri unxu-ne
father-DAT everything.ABS hear-PST
'Father heard everything.'

b. baw.a dad.a-s wuri unx.a-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG [father-DAT everything.ABS hear-INF] do-PST
'Mother made father hear everything.'

Transitive verb

(40) a. gada.ji šurpa ʕut'u-ne
boy.ERG soup.ABS eat-PST
'The boy ate the soup.'

b. baw.a gada.ji šurpa ʕut'a-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG [boy.ERG soup.ABS eat-INF] do-PST
'Mother made the boy eat the soup.' (e.g. she threatened not to let him go for a walk)

There is, however, a possibility of encoding the Causee by means of the Ad-essive and the Ad-elative cases. Both of them can mark the Causee when an agentive intransitive or a transitive verb appear in the Causative Construction (there seem to be no evident semantic difference between the two cases here):

Intransitive verb

(41) baw.a gada.ji-w // gada.ji-f-as hiša-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG boy-AD boy-AD-ELAT run away-INF do-PST
'Mother made the boy run away.'

Transitive verb

(42) baw.a gada.ji-w // gada.ji-f-as šurpa ʕut'a-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG boy-AD boy-AD-ELAT soup.ABS eat-INF do-PST
'Mother made the boy eat the soup.'

The second strategy of the Causee marking is not possible for verbs with non-canonical marking of core arguments – e.g. for sentience verbs with the Experiencer in the Dative:

(43) baw.a *dad.a-w // *dad.a-f-as wuri un x.a-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG father-AD father-AD-ELAT everything.ABS hear-INF do-PSG
'Mother made father hear everything.'

It is also not allowed for verbs denoting uncontrolled situations, especially when the Causee is not human. While the first, 'neutral' strategy is perfectly available here, the Ad-essive and the Ad-elative are impossible or at best questionable:

(44) dad.a ruš // ??ruš.a-w // *ruš.a-f-as īʕarxa-s
father.ERG daughter.ABS daughter-AD daughter-AD-ELAT fall ill-INF
q'u-ne
do-PST
'Father made the daughter fall ill.'

(45) gada.ji dar // *dar.ala-w // *dar.ala-f-as adarxa-s q'u-ne
boy.ERG tree.ABS tree-AD tree-AD-ELAT fall-INF do-PST
'The boy made the tree fall down.'

The use of the Ad-elative is even more restricted than that of the Ad-essive, as only the latter is allowed when the Causee is an animal (cf. (41) above):

(46) baw.a kitan.i-w // *kitan.i-f-as hiša-s q'u-ne
mother.ERG cat-AD cat-AD-ELAT run away-INF do-PST
'Mother made the cat run away.'

With verbs that allow both types of the Causee encoding, the following semantic contrast can be observed: while the original Ergative or Absolutive marking leaves the opportunity for the autonomous acting of the Causee (making even the permissive reading possible), the choice of the Ad-essive/Ad-elative clearly reduces his/her independence and underlines the dominant role of the Causer. Cf. the following examples, where in sentences under (b) the causee displays less control of the situation than those under (a) (for short, only the Ad-essive variants are given):

Transitive verb

(47) gi ze šünük̄-ar.i wak̄.a-n jak̄ ʕut'a-s q'u-ne
that.ERG my children-PL.ERG pig-GEN meat.ABS eat-INF do-PST
a. 'S/he let my children eat pork.' (e.g. s/he forgot that they were not supposed to do that and cooked pork for them)
b. 'S/he permitted my children to eat pork.'

(48) gi ze šünük̄-ar.i-w wak̄.a-n jak̄ ʕut'a-s q'u-ne
that.ERG my children-PL-AD pig-GEN meat.ABS eat-INF do-PST
'S/he made my children eat pork' (although they did not want to)

Intransitive verb

(49) dad.a ruš raʁ.una-k ʁut'a-s q'.u-ne
father.ERG daughter.ABS sun-SUB/CONT stand-INF do-PST
a. 'Father made daughter stand under the sun.' (e.g. he had forgot to leave her the key and she could not enter the house)
b. Father permitted daughter to stand under the sun.

(50) dad.a ruš.a-w raʁ.una-k ʁut'a-s q'.u-ne
father.ERG daughter-AD sun-SUB/CONT stand-INF do-PST
'Father put daughter under the sun.' (e.g. as a punishment)

The two strategies of the Causee marking (one keeping original encoding of the argument, the other changing its case to the Ad-essive/Ad-elative) differ with respect to the preferences of their distribution among types of verbs. Transitive verbs prefer the Ad-essive/Ad-elative marking, exemplified in (42) above, [12] while intransitives prefer original encoding, as shown in (38b). This may have a syntactic explanation: the occurrence of two Ergative NPs in sentences like (40b) clearly shows that we deal with two transitive clauses here, and the Ad-essive/Ad-elative marking of the Causee reflects a natural change of the Causative Construction from biclausal to monoclausal structure (like in (42)).

However, a semantic explanation seems to us more illuminating: as exx. (44)-(46) show, the Ad-essive/Ad-elative marking is dispreferred when the Causee shows low agentivity. The Ergative arguments of transitive verbs in Agul are always (real) Agents, so it is quite appropriate to mark them by the Ad-essive/Ad-elative in the Causative Construction. On the contrary, only those intransitives allow this strategy, whose participants are highly agentive (which is not the case in (44) and (45)). The

[12] The Ad-essive marking is possible even for the inanimate Causee. Transitive verbs do not normally allow inanimate Ergative NPs in Agul. However, we are aware of one example of such kind: cf. (i), where the same metaphorical conceptualization of 'catching fire' is used, as in English:

(i) a. k'ur-ar.i c'aj facu-ne
firewood-PL.ERG fire.ABS catch-PST
'The firewood caught fire.'

b. baw.a naf t̄ lat'u-na,
mother.ERG kerosene.ABS pour-CONV
k'ur-ar.i // k'ur-ar.i-w c'aj faca-s q'u-ne
[firewood-PL.ERG firewood-PL-AD fire.ABS catch-INF] do-PST
'Having poured the kerosene, mother made the firewood catch fire.'

impossibility of the Ad-essive/Ad-elative encoding with sentience verbs also favors this explanation.

Summarizing, the Ad-essive and the Ad-elative cases can both mark the Causee in the Causative Construction; however, this is possible only in cases when the Causee is highly agentive. The Ad-elative seems to be associated with even higher degree of agentivity, as hinted by native speaker judgments in examples like (44) and (46).

Thus, in the case of the Causative Construction the use of the Ad-essive/Ad-elative shows that we deal with an inherently agentive participant. At the same time, the choice of this type of marking (and not the original Ergative or Absolutive encoding) points at the agentivity decrease, as the role of the Causee in the situation becomes more subordinate.

6. SYNTACTIC STATUS OF AD-ELATIVE NPS MARKING AGENTS

As a typical role-dominated language, Agul tends to encode clause arguments consistently with their semantic roles. So, by and large the marking of core arguments is clearly motivated by their semantics.

It is nevertheless interesting to find out whether the Involuntary Agent and other Ad-elative NPs are true syntactic subjects (like, e.g., A marked by the Ergative in transitive clauses), or not. However, many of the traditional syntactic tests for subjecthood (for a list of the tests see, e.g., Onishi 2001) do not apply in Agul. For example, the criterion of antecedent control over reflexive pronouns and relativization do not show even the difference between A/S and O in Agul, and thus cannot shed light on the status of the Ad-elative argument. Some other criteria are applicable only to the verb *xas* 'become; happen', whose core argument is invariably marked by Ad-elative in the Possibilitive Construction (see section 4 above).

Following Onishi 2001, we divide subject properties into coding properties and behavioral properties. The former include case marking, constituent word order of core arguments and verbal agreement, while the latter include various syntactic phenomena, such as the ability to control reflexivization, deletion in second conjuncts and controlled infinitives, etc. Now let us look at these tests in more detail.

6.1 Coding properties

6.1.1 Case marking

The Ad-elative is a morphologically peripheral case, so it is not expected to code the grammatical subject. But it is not obvious whether either of the two core cases that canonically mark S, A and O (i.e. the Absolutive and the Ergative) always identify the grammatical subject.

It is noteworthy that the Absolutive argument is almost always present in canonical clauses (both transitive and intransitive). This might suggest that the Absolutive is a case of grammatical subject. However, even this criterion fails, since

there are a number of verbs that do not select for arguments in the Absolutive at all. These non-canonical valence patterns are mainly exhibited by sentience predicates, cf. the following examples:

(51) za-s mik'eldi-a
I-DAT be cold-PRS
'I am cold.'

(52) ze čučU-s bengiš-ar.i-q-as guč'a-adawa
my brother-DAT bear-PL-POST-ELAT be afraid-PRS.NEG
'My brother is not afraid of bears.'

Another piece of evidence comes from the valence pattern of the verb *jarHas*. This verb has an Absolutive argument which denotes the Instrument, as example (53) demonstrates:

(53) dad.a degi-s ʁ̥an jarHu-ne
father.ERG donkey-DAT stone.ABS hit-PST
'Father hit the donkey with a rock.'

However, this Absolutive argument can be freely omitted (just as the Instrumental NPs in English or Russian) and the following pattern seems to be statistically predominant:

(54) dad.a degi-s jarHu-ne
father.ERG donkey-DAT hit-PST
'Father hit the donkey.'

All these examples show that the Absolutive cannot be considered as the case of the grammatical subject nor even as an obligatory argument. Thus, in general, we can say that there is no such thing as 'the case of the grammatical subject' in Agul, so this criterion does not help us.

6.1.2 Constituent word order of core NPs

The Ad-elative NP expressing the Involuntary Agent in most neutral contexts precedes other NPs and the verb. The same is true about other arguments corresponding to subjects in English, such as the Ergative expressing A, the Absolutive expressing S, the Dative expressing the Experiencer, the Post-essive expressing the Possessor. But in general, word order in Agul is flexible, and the first position of all these NPs is rather due to the topicality of corresponding semantic roles. As Haspelmath (1993:301) suggests discussing the same situation in Lezgian, word order is determined by information structure rather than by grammatical relations. All variants of basic word order in Agul are in principle possible, so this

criterion does not determine the grammatical subject. Cf. examples (55a)–(55f) illustrating all variants of word order in a transitive clause:

(55) a. timur.a guni ʕut'a-a SOV
Timur.ERG bread.ABS eat-PRS
b. timura ʕut'aa guni SVO
c. guni timura ʕut'aa OSV
d. guni ʕut'aa timura OVS
e. ʕut'aa timura guni VSO
f. ʕut'aa guni timura VOS
'Timur is eating bread.'

Thus with respect to word order the Involuntary Agent is close to A/S (being most frequent in sentence-initial position), but the criterion itself is weak due to the discourse-pragmatic nature of word order rules.

6.1.3 Verbal agreement

Unlike the vast majority of the East Caucasian languages, Agul as well as Lezgian has no agreement on the verb at all (neither noun class agreement, like in most languages of the family, nor person and number agreement like in Tabassaran, Dargi, Lak, Udi, and Akhvakh).

6.2 Behavioral properties

6.2.1 Antecedent control over reflexive pronouns

This parameter is often used to determine subjecthood. However, in Agul the criterion cannot be used for identifying subjects, as it is not necessarily the subject or even a core argument that controls the reflexive pronoun. In general, it seems that the ability of an argument to control reflexive pronouns in Agul is not syntactically determined, but rather depends on pragmatics (particularly the topicality of the corresponding NP).

(56) a. gada.ji$_i$ uč$_i$ k'i-ne
boy.ERG REFL.ABS die/kill-PST
b. gada$_i$ uč.i$_i$ k'i-ne
boy.ABS REFL.ERG die/kill-PST
'A boy has killed himself.'

(57) a. gada.ji-f-as$_i$ uč$_i$ k'i-ne
boy-AD-ELAT REFL.ABS die/kill-PST

b. gada$_i$ uč.i-f-as$_i$ k'i-ne
boy.ABS REFL-AD-ELAT die/kill-PST
'A boy has accidentally killed himself.'

(58) a. dad.a$_i$ uč.i-q-$\bar{t}$i$_i$ unaq'u-ne gada.ji-s
father.ERG REFL-POST-LAT call-PST boy-DAT

b. dad.a-q-$\bar{t}$i$_i$ uč.i$_i$ unaq'u-ne gada.ji-s
father-POST-LAT REFL-ERG call-PST boy-DAT
'Father$_i$ called the boy (to himself$_i$).'

As examples (56)–(58) show, any argument including the Ad-elative can control a reflexive pronoun in its own clause. The only important constraint is that the reflexive pronoun must follow the full NP.

6.2.2 Relativization

In Agul, participles are used to form relative clauses. The criterion cannot be used for identifying subjecthood, as every core and virtually every non-core argument (incl. locative adverbials) can be relativized.

(59) A (Ergative)
a. [šünü$\bar{k}$.i-s $\bar{q}$enfet i] xir
child-DAT candy give.PFPART woman
'a woman who gave a candy to a child'
O (Absolutive)
b. [xir.a šünü$\bar{k}$.i-s i] $\bar{q}$enfet
woman.ERG child-DAT give.PFPART candy
'candy which a woman gave to a child'

(60) Experiencer (Dative)
a. [šahar agu] šünü$\bar{k}$
city.ABS see.PFPART child
'a child who saw a city'
Stimulus (Absolutive)
b. [šünü $\bar{k}$.i-s agu] šahar
child-DAT see.PFPART city.ABS
'a city which was seen by a child'

(61) S (Absolutive)
a. [dar.a-l uq'unaje] ǯaq̥'
tree-SUPER sit.RESPART bird.ABS
'a bird which sits on a tree'

Locative (Super-essive)

b. [ʒaq̥’ uq’unaje] dar
bird.ABS sit.RESPART tree.ABS
‘a tree on which a bird sits’

6.2.3 *Controller of coreferential omission*

This test is applicable only to the verb *xas* ‘become’ in the Possibilitive Construction, and in this case the control is not only admissible but obligatory (cf. examples (35)–(37) above). Other verbs with the Ad-elative argument do not take complement clauses. That is, the criterion points at a subject-like behaviour of the Ad-elative NP, but it is somewhat weak, being applicable only to one verb governing this case.

6.2.4 *Target of coreferential omission*

The test is again applicable only to the verb *xas* ‘become’ in the Possibilitive Construction (62), since omission of subject NP leads to the default agentive reading with labile verbs (63) and to the default agentless reading with other verbs (64). It is impossible to get an involuntary reading in examples (63) and (64):[13]

(62) gada.ji-s_i agu-ne $Ø_i$ dar.ala-l alʁuč’a-s xu-f
son-DAT see-PST AD-ELAT tree-SUPER climb up-INF become-PART]
‘The boy_i saw that (he_i) could climb up a tree.’

(63) gada.ji-s_i agu-ne $Ø_i$ dak’ar arʕu-f
son-DAT see-PST ERG/*AD-ELAT window.ABS break-PART]
‘The boy_i saw that (he_i) broke the window.’

(64) a. gada.ji-s_i agu-ne ne$\overline{k}$ rutu-f
son-DAT see-PST [milk.ABS curdle-PART]
‘The boy_i saw that the milk curdled.’

b. *gada.ji-s_i agu-ne $Ø_i$ ne$\overline{k}$ rutu-f
son-DAT see-PST [AD-ELAT milk.ABS curdle-PART]
‘The boy_i saw that the milk curdled (on him_i).’

6.2.5 *Controller of ‘same subject’ constraints*

As true coordinated clauses are almost absent in Agul, we shall look at the syntactic behaviour of arguments in a construction with the perfective converb *-na* expressing a sequence of actions carried out by the same participant. Whereas high priority

[13] The same is true for another potential subject property, viz. the possibility of being used as the addressee of the imperative.

arguments – the Absolutive NP of an intransitive clause (65a), the Ergative NP of a transitive clause (65b), and the Experiencer marked by the Dative (65c) – can all control omission of a coreferential argument in a linked clause, O cannot do so (65e). The Involuntary Agent in this respect is an argument with high priority (65d).

(65) a. gada$_i$ Ø$_i$ adi-na ʁarxu-ne
boy.ABS [ABS come-CONV] fall asleep-PST
'The boy came and fell asleep.'

b. gada.ji$_i$ Ø$_i$ adi-na ruš.a-s jarHu-ne
boy.ERG [ABS come-CONV] girl-DAT hit-PST
'The boy came and hit the girl.'

c. gada.ji-s$_i$ Ø$_i$ adi-na ruš agu-ne
boy-DAT [ABS come-CONV] girl.ABS see-PST
'The boy came and saw the girl.'

d. gada.ji-f-as$_i$ Ø$_i$ adi-na šüše arʕu-ne
boy-AD-ELAT [ABS come-CONV] bottle.ABS break-PST
'The boy came and accidentally broke the bottle.'

e. *gada.ji hüni$_i$ Ø$_i$ qaj-na uzu-ne
boy.ERG cow.ABS [ABS come back-CONV] milk-PST
'The cow came back and the boy milked it.'

6.2.6 Antecedent control over demonstrative pronouns

This test gives a sort of 'inverse' result: only O can be referred to anaphorically by a demonstrative pronoun, whereas high priority arguments manifest stronger restrictions: in a subordinate clause, they must be anaphorically referred to by a reflexive pronoun.[14] The Involuntary Agent as well as another non-canonical subject marked by the Dative, were judged as hardly acceptable controllers, although not impossible altogether.

(66) a. ʔajšat$_i$ adi-ne uč.i-s$_i$ / *gi-s$_i$ fat'im.i kümek q'u-b
Aishat come-PST REFL-DAT that-DAT Fatima.ERG help do-MSD
badala
in order to
'Aishat came so that Fatima would help her.'

b. ʔajšat.a$_i$ i-ne dad.a-l-di kitab ti uč.i-s$_i$ /
Aishat.ERG give-PST father-SUPER-LAT book.ABS this.ERG REFL-DAT
*gi-s$_i$ ge ruχu-b badala
that-DAT that read-MSD in order to
'Aishat gave a book to father so that he would read it to her.'

[14] This property of demonstrative pronouns is discussed in more detail in Cardinaletti & Starke (1999). We are grateful to Yakov Testelec for bringing this criterion to our attention.

c. ʔajšat.a-s$_i$ agu-ne uč.i-s$_i$ / ??gi-s$_i$ fajnaje kitab
Aishat-DAT see-PST REFL-DAT that-DAT bring.RESPART book.ABS
'Aishat saw the book which was brought to her.'

d. ʔajšat.a-f-as$_i$ gulu-ne uč.i-s$_i$ / ??gi-s$_i$ fajnaje kitab
Aishat-AD-ELAT lose-PST REFL-DAT that-DAT bring.RESPART book.ABS
'Aishat lost the book which was brought to her.'

e. ʔajšat.a hatu-ne ruš$_i$ fat'im.i uči.-s$_i$ / gi-s$_i$
Aishat.ERG send-PST daughter.ABS Fatima.ERG REFL-DAT that-DAT
berнem ag˚arq'u-b badala
dress.ABS show-MSD in order to
'Aishat sent her daughter so that Fatima would show to her the dress.'

Thus, according to two behavioral criteria, the Involuntary Agent is a high priority argument like A and S (and not like O in transitive clauses). The second (patientive) argument in the Involuntary Agent Construction according to these criteria seems to pattern syntactically as O rather than as A/S: in contrast to A/S, it is very doubtful as a controller of coreferential omission (cf. (65f)), but it can be an antecendent of a demonstrative pronoun in dependent clause (cf. (66f)):

(65) f. ??gada.ji-f-as kitan$_i$ χula-s Ø$_i$ adi-na k'i-ne
boy-AD-ELAT cat.ABS [house-DAT ABS come-CONV] kill/die-PST
'The cat came into the house and the boy accidentally killed it.'

(66) f. нüni$_i$ gulu-ne uč$_i$ / ge$_i$ ʁušu-nde gada.ji-f-as
cow.ABS get lost-PST [REFL / that take-RESPART] boy-AD-ELAT
'The cow was lost by the boy who bought it.'

The results of the syntactic tests for S, A, and O, as well as for experiential Datives and Involuntary Agents are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Syntactic properties of core arguments and the Involuntary Agent[15]

	S (Abs)	*A (Erg)*	*Exp (Dat)*	*IA (Ad-El)*	*O (Abs)*
Word order (first position)	+	+	+	+	+
Antecedent control over reflexive nouns	+	+	+	+	+
Antecedent control over demonstrative pronouns	-	-	±	±	+
Relativization	+	+	+	= A	+
Controller of coreferential omission	+	n/a	+	+ (PC)	n/a
Target of coreferential omission	+	+	+	= A	-
Controller of 'same subject' constraints	+	+	+	+	-

7. CONCLUSION

We have discussed a number of uses of the Ad-elative and, to a lesser degree, Ad-essive cases in Agul. Both of these cases are originally locative, however in the constructions described above they have non-locative uses, viz. they encode one of the main (and predominantly human) participants of the situation.

What all these constructions have in common is that one of the 'Ad' cases denotes a participant which is inherently agentive, but which in a given situation lacks some important Agent properties. The Involuntary Agent takes part in the situation accidentally and unintentionally, that is s/he does not control it (totally or in part). The Causee in the Causative Construction is also agentive, however s/he acts not by his/her own free will, but being forced but the Causer (the choice of one of the strategies of the Causee encoding reflects the degree of agentivity). The Agent of the Undesirable Action Construction is a bit different as s/he acts deliberately; however, his/her acting is regarded as inappropriate and the whole situation is presented as being forced by 'the circumstances'. And the participant of the Possibilitive Construction is close to this broad 'low agentivity' zone in that it is presented as only potentially capable of doing something (or as one that is allowed to do it). In sum, all these participants seem to have some problems with 'volitional involvement in the event or state', which is the main Proto-Agent entailment in Dowty's (1991) influential approach.

Thus the two 'Ad' cases in Agul (in particular the Ad-elative) can be considered as a general means of expressing low agentivity of a participant, a means of encoding a participant who is 'not agentive enough' to be regarded as a real Agent.

[15] Abbreviations: 'n/a': not applicable; '=A': is identical to A; 'PC': only relevant for the Possibilitive Construction.

The strategy of expressing semantic contrasts in 'degree of Agentivity' by means of "an alternation between canonically-marked subjects and other more oblique encodings" (Ackerman & Moore 2001:141) is well represented in the languages of the world, cf. the data discussed by Ackerman & Moore in chapter 6 ('Subject alternations') of their book, among other works.

Note also that the arguments marked by one of the 'Ad' cases have different status in different constructions. In the case of the Causative Construction and the Undesirable Action Construction we deal with a true 'paradigmatic alternation' in Ackerman & Moore's terms (as there is a contrast between two types of marking). However, the Involuntary Agent is a sort of 'extra' participant of the situation that can occur spontaneously without it and includes at least one S-like participant. As to the Possibilitive Construction, the Ad-elative case is the only means to encode its main participant.

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