Non–spatial functions of spatial cases in Lak

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One of the striking typological features of the East Caucasian language family is the presence of spatial cases that are mainly used to describe spatial configurations, e.g. 'inside', 'under', 'moving from behind', etc. (Ganenkov, Maisak 2020). Despite the long-standing interest of researchers in the system of spatial cases of the East Caucasian languages, in particular, in their morphology and purely spatial semantics (Kibrik 1970; Comrie, Polinsky 1998; Daniel, Ganenkov 2008), non-spatial functions, which can be developed by some combinations of localization and orientation markers, still remain relatively poorly studied and systematized. An attempt at a typological classification of non-spatial meanings «from function to form» was made in (Testelets 1980/2019: 41-51), and it was proposed to separate syntactic (related to the expression of certain roles) and semantic uses of spatial cases. Meanwhile, the most complete description of the abstract meanings of almost all locative forms is presented only for Tsezic languages in (Cysouw, Forker 2009; Forker 2010).

The aim of this research is to partially fill in this gap by systemizing nonlocal functions of spatial forms of Lak, a language that constitutes a separate branch among East Caucasian languages. The main source of the data comes from various grammatical descriptions (Žirkov 1955; Murkelinskij 1971; Gajdarova 1977; Kazenin 2013), a dictionary (Abdullaev 2018), several texts annotated by Victor A. Friedman (2003, 2006), and Lak fairy tales about animals. I also used Lak data contributed to BivalTyp, a typological database of bivalent verbs and their encoding frames (Say ed. 2020-), by Daniel et al. (2025). While assigning labels to functions and building their classification, I consulted the inventory of semantic roles presented in (Fillmore 1968; Kibrik 1977), as well as other studies devoted to East Caucasian spatial markers (Testelets 1980/2019; Ganenkov 2005; Daniel, Ganenkov 2008; Forker 2010).

Lak spatial forms (Table 1), as well as the spatial forms of the majority of East Caucasian languages, are built from the combination of two separately coded categories, localization and orientation, occupying two different morphological slots. Localization refers to a certain domain defined regarding a Landmark. Orientation indicates the direction of motion of the Figure relative to the spatial domain, e.g. 'from the Landmark', 'to the Landmark'. "#" stands for a gender-agreeing slot which is an obligatory part of some markers.

Table 1. Lak spatial markers

	'in'	'on'	'under'	'behind'	'near-1'	'near in contact with'	'near-2'
essive	-wu	-j	-lu	-χ(č'in)	-č'a	-c'	-x
elative	-w-a(tu)	-j-a(tu)	-l-a(tu)	-χ-a(tu)	-č'a-tu	-c'-a(tu)	–
lative	-wu-n	-j-n	-lu-n	-χu-n	-č'a-n	-c'-un	-x:un
directive	-wu-n-#-aj	-j-n-#-aj	-lu-n-#-aj	-χu-n-#-aj	-č'a-n-#-aj	-c'-un-#-aj	–
translative	-wu-χ(č'in)	-j-χ	-lu-χ	-χu-χ	–	-c'-uχ	–

Example (1a) illustrates the purely spatial usage of Post-essive marker -χ 'behind', while in (1b) this very suffix marks the instrument.

(1)

(a) *na* *nizq'un-t:u-χ* *lai<w>k'-ra*
    1SG door-OBL-**POST** <3>hide-PST
    'I hid behind the door' (Murkelinskij 1971: 132)
(b) *Maħammad-u-l* *q'u<w>q'u-s:a-r* *č'ri* *čart'i*
    'Mohammad-OBL-GEN <3>cut-ATTR-PRS.3P beard shave
    b-aj-s:a *č'il-du-χ*
    3-do.PTCP-ATTR knife-OBL-**POST**
    'Mohammad cut himself with a razor.' (Daniel et al. 2025)

Apud1 expresses predicative possessor; this function is connected to the notion of proximity that is conveyed by Apud1-series in its spatial uses. Marginally, Apud1 may code causee in causative constructions derived from transitive predicates. **Apud2** is more grammaticalized and extremely rarely occurs in purely spatial contexts; its main functions are the marking of addressee of speech, causee, predicative possessor and (temporal) recipient. **Ad** demonstrates only two abstract functions, marking the object of deprivation in constructions 'X lost Y' and locus of strong contact; the motivation under the first one is unclear while the latter links to the fact that in its spatial uses Ad implies the contact between Figure and Landmark. **In** in its spatial uses indicates a general location 'inside'. More abstract extensions of this localization include various temporal meanings featuring a time point or a time span, physical and abstract source, partitive and stimulus of 'look at'. **Super** and **Post** occur in overlapping sets of context and there is no clear pattern of their distribution between them. Both of these localizations can mark stimulus, instrument, locus of affect and addressee, although Post codes instrument more frequently and Super is found as a stimulus marker with more predicates. Post gravitates towards instrumental functions, as it also encodes object of exchange and accompaniment, but there is no direct link between purely spatial meaning 'behind' and this cluster of functions. Super, on the other hand, is associated with various kinds of sources, theme of speech, undergoer, addressee and temporal recipient. **Sub** does not develop any nonspatial uses and has purely spatial semantics.

The contribution of orientation markers to the resulting nonspatial extension of the form seems to be more opaque. Two major clusters, elative and lative-allative, have well known connections to genitive and dative functions; translative is associated with the metaphorization of Path, and essive demonstrates a rather nonhomogeneous set of functions. **Essive** forms, in comparison to elative and lative, develop quite a few nonspatial meanings, mainly stimulus, instrument, object of exchange, causee, possessor and addressee. **Elative** indicates the locative Source which metaphorically extends to other various kinds of sources, either physical or abstract, e.g. source of undesirable effects, source object in transformative constructruction. The development of elative into cause, temporal marker 'since', partitive, material and causee marker is also widely attested cross-linguistically (Narog & Ito 2007; Kuteva et al. 2019: 38-39). **Lative** designates an orientation to or towards a Goal. In Lak, forms of this localization have cross-linguistically typical extensions to temporal meanings, purpose, undergoer, recipient and addressee (Kuteva et al. 2019: 50, 52-53); locus of affect seems to be an intermediate pathway between lative and undergoer. From 33 grammaticalization paths of allative identified in Rice & Kabata's typological study (2007), Lak lative forms follow 8. **Translative** occurs in contexts that are typical to lative, marking undergoer, locus of affect and stimulus. The unique extension of translative is the source of information ('to know through something or someone') that is clearly a metaphorization of a Path expressed by this orientation.

In the talk, I will discuss other non-spatial functions of Lak spatial cases, and present a semantic map along the lines of (Haspelmath 2003; Narrog & Itto 2007; Narrog 2010).

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3, 4 - genders, 3P - 3rd person, ATTR - attributive, GEN - genitive, OBL - oblique stem, POST - 'behind', PRS - present, PST - past, PTCP - participle, SG - singular

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