Modal vs. non-modal un-agentive constructions in Laz

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1   What this paper is about

- Many natural languages have, what I will call, '**un-agentive constructions**'. These are constructions which seem to indicate that an agent "deviates from its prototypical properties".

- Abstracting away from what particular languages actually do, we may potentially expect un-agentive constructions to be licensed in situations like these:

    – A did not intend to do x but accidentally did x

    – A did not prefer to do x but was compelled to do x

    – A tried to do x and did x only by chance

- Two examples about *unintentional causation*

    (1)   ka-sek'w-s-as-a   ta=nk'wanusten'=a ta=tweww'et=a
           CIRC-break-CAUS-3ERG-CIRC DET=window=EXIS DET=boy=EXIS
           'The boy broke the window **accidentally**'   (*St'át'imcets*, Davis, et al. 2009: 212)

    (2)   mir   ist   der   Teller heruntergefallen
           I.DAT be.PRS.3SG the.NOM plate   fall.down.PARTC
           'I **accidentally** dropped the plate'   (*German*, Kittilä 2005: 414)

- In this paper, I investigate Laz, an endangered South Caucasian language spoken in Turkey, and argue that it has two varieties of un-agentive constructions:

    – modal

    – non-modal

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2   Background in linguistic typology

- Linguistic typologists have identified a construction called **Involuntary Agent Construction** (Haspelmath, 1993; Kittilä, 2005; Fauconnier, 2011, a.o).

  - With respect to surface forms, IAC involves some kind of non-canonical marking on the 'understood causer', or the verb, or both.

(3)   a.   zamara-di   get'e xa-na
                Zamira-ERG pot   break-AOR
                'Zamira broke the pot'

        b.   zamara.di-**waj** get'e xa-na
                Zamira-ADEL pot   break-AOR
                'Zamira broke the pot **accidentally**'   (*Lezgian*, Haspelmath 1993:292)

(4)   a.   Ngayu   galga nhanu   dumbi
                1SG.NOM spear 2SG.GEN break.PST
                'I broke your spear'

        b.   Ngadhun-**gal** galga nhanu   dumbi-**:dhi**
                1SG-ADESS   spear 2SG.GEN break.PST-ANTIC
                'I **accidentally** broke your spear.' (*Guugu Yimidhirr*, Haviland 1979: 125,149)

> Kittilä (2005) argues that IAC signals:
> "...the involuntary participation of agents in events, i.e. they have not intended nor wanted to be an agent in the event profiled." (p.382)

  - In addition, Kittilä argues that (constructions formally identical to) IAC often exhibit **polysemy** cross-linguistically.

    * In some languages, IAC also describes situations where an agent acts intentionally yet has "a lower degree of control", citing situations where the agent 'finally or unexpectedly **manages to do something**'.

(5)   *Japanese*, Kittilä 2005: 411
        a.   kodomo ga   isu o   kowashite shimatta
                child   NOM chair ACC break:**te**   come(AUX).PST
                'The child accidentally broke the chair.'

        b.   kodomo ga   otona o   mochiagete shimatta
                child   NOM adult ACC lift.up:**te**   come(AUX).PST
                'The child managed to lift the adult up (unexpectedly)'

* In some languages, IAC is licensed in situations in which an NP in the sentence is **adversely affected** from the event.

(6) *Finnish*, Kittilä 2005: 413

    a.   miehe-ltä puto-si   kuppi
        man-ABL fall.down-3SG.PST cup.NOM
        'The man **accidentally** dropped the cup.'

    b.   miehe-ltä kuol-i   koira
        man-ABL die-3SG.PST dog.NOM
   'The dog died **on the man**.'

3 Background in theoretical research

- Broadly, I am aware of two proposals on IAC that try to accommodate the polysemy issue.

  - Schäfer (2009) proposes an analysis for IAC[1] where

    * the event has to be an **intransitive VP denoting a change-of-state event**

    * and an NP relates to it not as a causer but as a **possessor**

(7) *German*, Kittilä 2005: 414

    a. | mir | ist   der   Teller heruntergefallen
        I.DAT be.PRS.3SG the.NOM plate fall.down.PARTC
        'I accidentally dropped the plate'   **accidental causation**

    b. | mir | ist   mein Hund gestorben
        I.DAT be.PRS.3SG my   dog   die.PARTC
        'My dog died on me.'   **adversative**

(8)   appl: this is what relates the NP to the event as a possessor

NP_possessor

appl VP_change-of-state
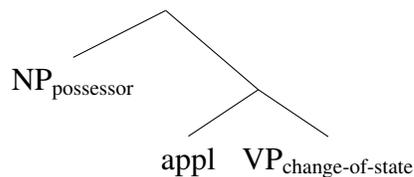
> Schäfer (2009) argues that the polysemy problem is addressed by the 'possessor' semantics, which is vague enough to accommodate various readings of the IAC.
>
> (9)   Mary**'s** movie: the movie that Mary wants to see, or the movie that Mary appeared in, etc.

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[1]Schäfer calls it Oblique Causer Construction. And to be fair, Schäfer (2009) argues against deriving the affectedness reading out of the vagueness of possessive semantics.

– Davis et al. (2009) propose that the so-called **out-of-control** circumfix ka-...-a in St'át'imcets, cited[2] as an example of IAC, expones a **circumstantial modal**.

* the 'unintentional causation' reading arises when the modal force is **universal**.

(10) **ka**-sek'w-s-as-**a**   ta=nk'wanusten'=a ta=tweww'et=a
     CIRC-break-CAUS-3ERG-CIRC DET=window=EXIS DET=boy=EXIS
     'The boy broke the window accidentally'   (Davis, et al. 2009: 212)
     ≈ It was **circumstantially necessary** for the boy to break the window.

* the 'manage-to' interpretation arises when the modal force is **existential**.

(11) **ka**-gwél-s=kan-**a**
     CIRC-burn-CAUS-1SG.SUBJ-CIRC
     'I managed to get it lit.'   (Davis, et al. 2009: 211)
     ≈ It was **circumstantially possible** for me to get it lit.

* That is, **ka**-EVENT-**a** has one of these interpretations:
  i. circumstances allow EVENT to unfold   [circumstantial possibility]
  ii. circumstances force EVENT to unfold   [circumstantial necessity]

• To recap, the polysemy problem has been addressed in two distinct ways:

– **the modal analysis:**
draws on the variation in the force of a circumstantial modal (Davis et al., 2009)

(12)

     circumstantial modal$_{\exists\,\text{or}\,\forall}$ EVENT
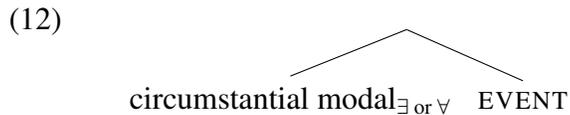
– **the non-modal analysis:**
draws on the vague role of possessors (Schäfer, 2009)

(13)

     NP$_{\text{possessor}}$

          appl$_{\text{possession-relation}}$ EVENT

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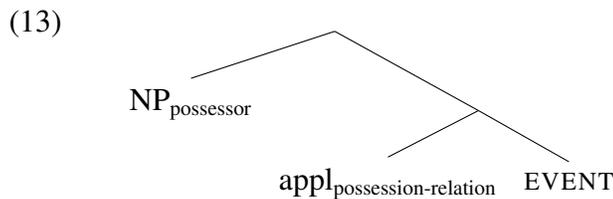
[2]See Fauconnier (2011), for example.

4 Taking stock

- Let us take the availability of the **unintentional causation** interpretation as the baseline for un-agentive constructions, henceforth UAC.

(14) **ka**-sek'w-s-as-**a**   ta=nk'wanusten'=a ta=tweww'et=a
     CIRC-break-CAUS-3ERG-CIRC DET=window=EXIS DET=boy=EXIS
     'The boy broke the window **accidentally**'   (*St'át'imcets*, Davis, et al. 2009: 212)

(15) mir ist   der   Teller heruntergefallen
     I.DAT be.PRS.3SG the.NOM plate fall.down.PARTC
     'I **accidentally** dropped the plate'   (*German*, Kittilä 2005: 414)

- These two constructions are licensed in very similar situations — apparently justifying translations that feature the adverb **accidentally**.

- But they have received different analyses.

  – the event-possessor analysis   = **non-modal analysis**

  – the circumstantial modal analysis   = **modal analysis**

- So then, it is a genuine question if natural languages do indeed allow both of these compositional paths to unintentional/accidental causation.

  – In other words, is there a semantic typology for UACs?

- In what follows, I bring in linguistic data from Laz and argue that Laz has two distinct UACs, each compatible with one of the analyses.

Preview of what's coming.
Laz morphosyntactically distinguishes two kinds of UACs:

non-modal UAC

(16) t'abaği   m- i - t'rox   -u
     plate.NOM 1   APPL break$_{intrns}$ PST
     'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'

modal UAC

(17) t'abaği   m- a - t'ax   -u
     plate.NOM 1   MODAL break$_{trans}$ PST
     'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'

We will talk about
    – their internal structures (e.g. what do they structurally build on?)
    – the issue of polysemy (in what contexts are they felicitously used?)

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5 Compositional structures of UACs in Laz

- There is a fundemantal structural difference between the two UACs in Laz:
  <u>their baseline structures are different.</u>

    – ⏐**non-modal UAC**⏐ i.e. the prefix *i-*, occurs with an **intransitive verb**

    (18)   t'abaǧi   m- ⏐**i**⏐-   t'rox   -u
           plate.NOM 1   APPL break_intrns   PST
           'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'   verb root → t'rox

    – ⏐**modal UAC**⏐, i.e. the prefix *a-*, occurs with a **transitive verb**.

    (19)   t'abaǧi   m- ⏐**a**⏐-   t'ax   -u
           plate.NOM 1   MODAL break_trans   PST
           'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'   verb root → t'ax

    – Here is how we know *t'ax* is transitive and *t'rox* is intransitive

    (20)   a.   bere-k   t'abaǧi   ⏐t'ax⏐   -u
                child-ERG plate.NOM break_trans -PST
                'The child broke the plate.'   transitive/causative

           b.   *bere-k   t'abaǧi   ⏐t'rox⏐   -u
                child-ERG plate.NOM break_intrns -PST
                Intended: 'The child broke the plate.'

    (21)   a.   t'abaǧi   ⏐t'rox⏐   -u
                plate.NOM break_intrns -PST
                'The plate broke.'   intransitive/anticausative

           b.   *t'abaǧi   ⏐t'ax⏐   -u
                plate.NOM break_trans -PST
                Intended: 'The plate broke.'

TAKE-AWAY: The non-modal UAC (the prefix i-) wants an intransitive VP

(22)   a.   Ma tabaǧi   m- ⏐**i**⏐-   t'rox   -u
            I   plate.NOM 1   APPL break_intrns   PST
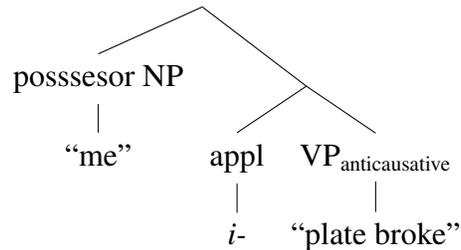   'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'

       b.   *Ma tabaǧi   m- ⏐**i**⏐-   t'ax   -u
            I   plate.NOM 1   APPL break_trans   PST
            Intended: 'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'

5.1 The decomposition of the non-modal UAC

- Following Schäfer (2009), let us take the non-modal UAC to be built by an applicative head that combines with an 'anticausative' VP (a VP which lacks any kind of agent, causer, etc.)

(23) non-modal UAC

Recall that the appl relates an NP to this anticausative event as a **possessor.**

```
        non-modal UAC
          /\
         /  \
  posssesor NP
        |      appl   VP_anticausative
      "me"      |         |
               i-    "plate broke"
```

(24) a. t'abaği   t'rox   -u
          plate.NOM break_intrns -PST
          'The plate broke.'   simple anticausative

      b. Ma   tabaği   m- i - t'rox   -u
          I.DAT plate.NOM 1 APPL break_intrns PST
          'I **accidentally** broke the plate.'   non-modal UAC

- Since this appl requires an intransitive VP to combine with, overt causativizers are ruled out in non-modal UAC.

  – regular causative alternation: add suffix *-in*

    (25) a. k'oğoni   do- ğur -u
              mosquito.NOM PV die PST
              'The mosquito died.'   intransitive

          b. Bere-k   k'oğoni   do- ğur -**in**   -u
              child-ERG mosquito.NOM PV die CAUS PST
              'The child killed the mosquito.'   regular causative

  – non-modal UAC doesn't tolerate this *-in* suffix.

    (26) a. Ma k'oğoni   do- m- i - ğur -u
              I   mosquito.NOM PV 1 APPL die PST
              'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'   non-modal UAC

          b. *Ma k'oğoni   do- m- i - ğur -**in**   -u
              I   mosquito.NOM PV 1 APPL die CAUS PST
              'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'

- There is also evidence that the NP that appl relates to the VP is **not** an "external argument" (e.g. 'unspecified' cause)

    - (orthogonal point: when the NP is third person, the prefix is u-, not i-.)

        (27) Arte-s   tabaği $\boxed{\textbf{u}}$-   t'rox   -u
              Arte-DAT plate.NOM 3.APPL break$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
              'Arte **accidentally** broke the plate.'

    - The possessor NP cannot be an instrument or force.

        (28) #Zelzele-s   tabaği $\boxed{\textbf{u}}$-   t'rox   -u
              earthquake-DAT plate.NOM 3.APPL break$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
              Intended: 'The earthquake broke the plate.'

        (29) #Burç'uli-s tabaği $\boxed{\textbf{u}}$-   t'rox   -u
              ax-DAT   plate.NOM 3.APPL break$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
              Intended: 'The ax broke the plate.'

    - This is unlike in regular causatives/transitives.

        (30) Zelzele-k   tabaği   t'ax   -u
              earthquake-ERG plate.NOM break$_{\text{trans}}$ PST
              'The earthquake broke the plate.'

        (31) Burç'uli-k tabaği   t'ax   -u
              ax-ERG   plate.NOM break$_{\text{trans}}$ PST
              'The ax broke the plate.'

- Non-modal UAC cannot combine with just any intransitive VP. The VP needs to denote a change-of-state event ($\approx$ anticausative verb)

    - Reporting cross-linguistic data, Fauconnier (2011) writes about involuntary agent constructions "... *only possible when the verb in question can have anticausative semantics,... an event that seems to take place spontaneously, without the involvement of an instigator (e.g. The glass broke).*" (p.312)

    - This is also true for non-modal UAC in Laz.

        (32) a. Bere-k   barbal -u
                  child-ERG speak   PST
                  'The child spoke.'
              b. *Bere-s $\boxed{\text{u-}}$ barbal -u
                  child-DAT 3.APPL speak   PST
                  Intended: 'The child accidentally spoke.' (e.g. in a context where a group of kids were playing a game of remaining silent)

## 5.2 The decomposition of the modal UAC

- The basic property of modal UAC is that it *can* build on transitive VPs.

(33)   a.   Arte-**k**   ist'ik'anepe t'ax -u
             Arte-ERG glasses   break PST
             'Arte broke the glasses.'   baseline: transitive!

       b.   Arte-**s**   ist'ik'anepe [**a**]-   t'ax -u
             Arte-DAT glasses   MODAL- break -PST
             'Arte **accidentally** broke the glasses.'   modal UAC
             (Arte tripped while carrying a tray full of glasses)

  – surface changes

     * ERG subject changes to DAT

     * we add a prefix a-, glossed MODAL

- Building on Öztürk (2013); Demirok (2018), I argue that the modal UAC in Laz features a modal that combines with an **unsaturated voiceP** (Kratzer, 1996).
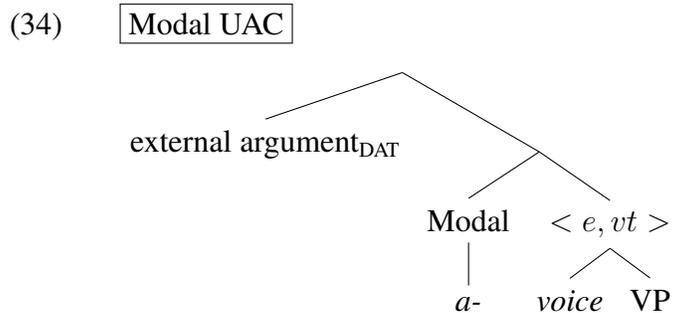
(34) | Modal UAC |

- A piece of evidence for this claim is that modal UAC is incompatible with anticausative VPs.

(35)   a.   Ditsxiri   do- kort   -u
             blood.NOM PV clot$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
             'The blood clotted.'   anticausative

       b. *Ma   ditsxiri   do- m- [**a**]- kort   -u
         I.DAT blood.NOM PV 1SG APPL clot$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
         Intended: 'I **accidentally** let the blood clot.'   attempt at modal UAC
         (I failed to prevent the blood from clotting.)

(36) a. t'abaği | t'rox | -u
       plate.NOM break_intrns -PST
       'The plate broke.'   anticausative

    b. *Arte-**s**   ist'ik'anepe | **a** |-   t'rox   -u
       Arte-DAT glasses   MODAL- break_intrns -PST
       Intended: 'Arte **accidentally** broke the glasses.'   attempt at modal UAC
       (Arte tripped while carrying a tray full of glasses)

- Since the modal in Modal UAC cannot combine with an anticausative VP, overt causativizers are **required**. (this is just the opposite of what we see in non-modal UAC.)

   – recall the regular causative alternation: add suffix *-in*

    (37) a. k'oğoni   do- ğur -u
        mosquito.NOM PV die PST
        'The mosquito died.'   intransitive

       b. Bere-k   k'oğoni   do- ğur -**in**   -u
        child-ERG mosquito.NOM PV die CAUS PST
        'The child killed the mosquito.'   regular causative

   – modal UAC requires the suffix *-in*.

    (38) a. *Ma k'oğoni   do- m- | **a** |-   ğur -u
        I   mosquito.NOM PV 1   MODAL die PST
        Intended: 'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'

       b. Ma k'oğoni   do- m- | **a** |-   ğur -**in**   -u
        I   mosquito.NOM PV 1   MODAL die CAUS PST
        'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'   modal UAC

   – recall: non-modal UAC doesn't tolerate that suffix *-in*.

    (39) a. Ma   k'oğoni   do- m- | **i** |-   ğur -u
        child-ERG mosquito.NOM PV 1   APPL die PST
        'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'   non-modal UAC

       b. *Ma   k'oğoni   do- m- | **i** |-   ğur -**in**   -u
        child-ERG mosquito.NOM PV 1   APPL die CAUS PST
        'I accidentally killed the mosquito.'

- The DAT NP in modal UAC *is* an external argument, unlike in non-modal UAC.

(40) | Modal UAC |

```
                        ╱‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾╲
          external argument_DAT
                              ╱‾‾‾╲
                          Modal    < e, vt >
                            │        ╱‾╲
                           a-      voice  VP
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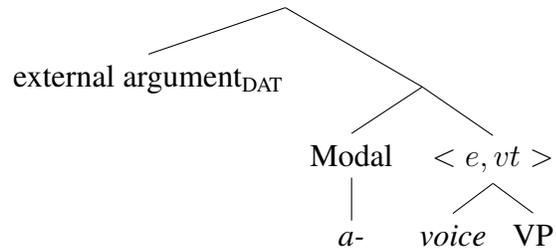
  – inanimate 'subjects' are also licensed!

  (41) Burç'uli-s tabaği   [a]-   t'ax   -u
        ax-DAT   plate.NOM MODAL break_trans PST
        'The ax "accidentally" broke the plate.'   modal UAC
        (consultant's comment: I might have accidentally dropped the ax on the plates)

  – recall: non-modal UAC is bad!

  (42) #Burç'uli-s tabaği   [u]-   t'rox   -u
        ax-DAT   plate.NOM 3.APPL break_intrns PST
        Intended: 'The ax "accidentally" broke the plate.'   non-modal UAC

- Modal UAC has no problem combining with agentive VPs that do not have a causative change-of-state semantics whatsoever (unergatives)

(43) (e.g. in a context where a group of kids were playing a game of remaining silent)
      a. Bere-k   barbal -u
          child-ERG speak PST
          'The child spoke.'

      b. Bere-s   [a-]   barbal -u
          child-DAT MODAL speak PST
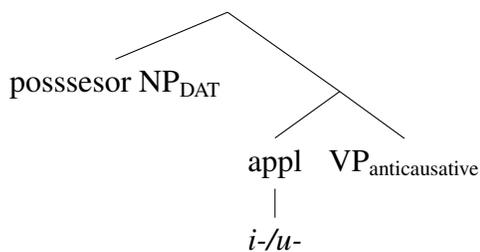   'The child accidentally spoke.'   ✓ modal UAC

      c. *Bere-s   [u-]   barbal -u
          child-DAT 3.APPL speak PST
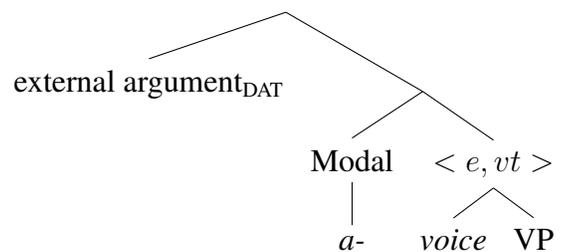   Intended: 'The child accidentally spoke.'   ✗ attempt at non-modal UAC

5.3 Interim Summary

	non-modal UAC	modal UAC
combines with transitive VPs	✗	✓
combines with anticausative VPs	✓	✗
co-occurs with overt causativizers	✗	✓
licenses inanimate "subjects"	✗	✓
combines with non-causative agentive VPs	✗	✓

(44) non-modal UAC   (45) modal UAC

posssesor NP$_{\text{DAT}}$ external argument$_{\text{DAT}}$

appl   VP$_{\text{anticausative}}$ Modal $< e, vt >$

i-/u-   *a-*   *voice*   VP

- This investigation has revealed that in terms of their structural properties, modal and non-modal UACs in Laz exhibit **complementarity**!

- This overall picture makes it an even more interesting question

  – whether we are dealing with two different kinds of semantics for UACs (i.e. possession vs. modal)

  – or we have one kind of semantics and its morphosyntactic realization is contingent on event structure

- In the next section, I try to answer this question drawing on the attested typology of polysemy in UACs in Laz

  – I argue that a modal vs. non-modal dichotomy is justified.

6 Polysemy in UACs in Laz

6.1 Readings common to both UACs

'Unintentional Causation' interpretation

- By definition, both UACs in Laz allow unintentional causation readings.

(46)　non-modal UAC ✓

 a. Ditsxiri do- kort -u
   blood.NOM PV clot$_{intr}$ PST
   'The blood clotted.'

 b. Ma ditsxiri   do- m- $\boxed{\text{i}}$- kort -u
   I.DAT blood.NOM PV 1SG APPL clot$_{intr}$ PST
   'I **accidentally** let the blood clot.'
   (I failed to prevent the blood from clotting.)

(47)　modal UAC ✓

 a. Arte-k ist'ik'anepe t'ax -u
   Arte-ERG glasses break PST
   'Arte broke the glasses.'

 b. Arte-**s** ist'ik'anepe $\boxed{\text{a}}$ -t'ax -u
   Arte-DAT glasses MODAL- break -PST
   'Arte **accidentally** broke the glasses.'
   (Arte tripped while carrying a tray full of glasses)

'Unexpectedly Manage-to' interpretation

- Both modal and non-modal UACs are also licensed under the so-called 'manage-to' readings.

Context: a group of kids try to break a big stone. after multiple unsuccessful attempts, Arte tries for one last time, and unexpectedly the stone breaks. Arte, then, can utter:

(48)　(didi kva)   m- $\boxed{\text{a}}$- t'ax -u!
   big stone.NOM 1 MODAL break$_{trans}$ PST
   'I managed to break it! (the big stone)'   ✓ modal UAC

(49)　(didi kva)   m- $\boxed{\text{i}}$- t'rox -u!
   big stone.NOM 1 APPL break$_{intrns}$ PST
   'I managed to break it! (the big stone)'   ✓ non-modal UAC

6.2 Readings only available to non-modal UAC

'Adversative' reading

- This reading is licensed in non-modal UAC but not licensed in modal UAC.

    – Context: As I am walking on a big frozen lake, the sun comes out and some thin layer of ice melts. I find my foot in cold water. I can say (50b):

    (50)   a.   ini do- ndğul -u
                ice PV melt   PST
                'The ice melted.'   anticausative

              b.   ma   ini do- m- $\boxed{\text{i}}$ - ndğul -u
                  I.DAT ice PV 1   APPL melt   PST
                  'The ice melted **on me**.'   non-modal UAC

    – modal UAC is ungrammatical without a causative suffix

    (51)   *ma   ini do- m- $\boxed{\text{a}}$ - ndğul -u
              I.DAT ice PV 1   APPL melt   PST
              Intended: 'The ice melted **on me**.'   attempt at modal UAC

    – When we fix that by adding the causativizer, it is not felicitious in the context where it is the sun melting the ice.

    (52)   ma   ini do- m- $\boxed{\text{a}}$ - ndğul -in   -u
              I.DAT ice PV 1   APPL melt   CAUS PST
              unavailable: 'The ice melted **on me**.'
              available: 'I unintentionally caused to the ice to melt.'   modal UAC

    – This contrast follows from the structural difference between the two UACs.

        * The DAT noun phrase is the external argument in modal UAC, so it can only be a cause, not an 'affectee'

        * The DAT noun phrase is a possessor in non-modal UAC. Apparently, an adversative relation counts as a possible kind of 'possessive' relation between an event and an individual.

    (53)   &boxed{non-modal UAC}

14
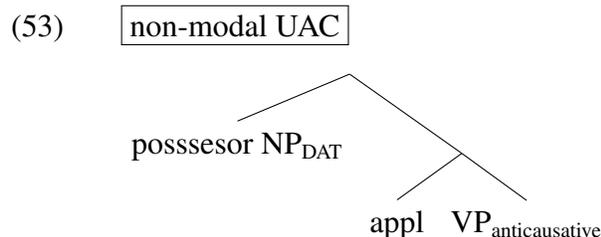
6.3 Readings only available to modal UAC

‘Dis-preferred Action’ reading

- Modal UAC can describe a dispreferred but intentional action taken by an agent.

  - Context: The beggar seemed genuinely in need. Although I didn't have a lot of money:

    (54) Ma   mak'vande-s para   me- m- |a|-   ç   -u
          1SG.DAT beggar-to   money.NOM PV- 1SG- MODAL- give -PST
          'I couldn't but give money to the beggar.'   modal UAC

  - there is no way to express this kind of agentive actions in non-modal UAC.

    (55) *Ma   mak'vande-s para   me- m- |i|- l   -u
          1SG.DAT beggar-to   money.NOM PV- 1SG- APPL- 'go' -PST
          Intended: ≈ 'I let money go to the beggar.'   attempt at non-modal UAC

‘Irressitable Urge’ reading

- All kinds of actions taken under **irresistible urge** can be expressed by Modal UAC:

  (56) Bere-**s** çik'oleta |a|-   şk'om -u
        child-DAT chocolate MODAL eat   PST
        The child couldn't but eat the chocolate.'

  (57) Bere-**s** |a|-   dits'in -u
        child-DAT   MODAL laugh   PST
        The child couldn't but laugh.'

‘Agentive Ability’ reading

- Finally, modal UAC most naturally expresses **agentive ability** (e.g. skills).

  - complex events that require skill:

    (58) Şana-s   coxo-muşi |a|-   nç'ar -u
          Şana-DAT name-her   MODAL write -PST
          'Şana was able to write her name.' (Context: Şana is a 4-year-old.)

    (59) Tanura-s   kapça |a|-   t'iğan -u
          Tanura-DAT anchovy MODAL fry   -PST
          'Tanura was able to fry the anchovies.'   modal UAC

  - There is also no way to build corresponding agentive ability forms in non-modal UAC because non-modal UAC requires an anticausative base.

7 Wrapping up: why can't we have the same semantics?

- Summary of the attested typology of polysemy in modal and non-modal UACs.

	non-modal UAC	modal UAC
unintentional causation	✓	✓
manage-to reading	✓	✓
adversative reading	✓	✗
agentive actions		
dispreferred intentional actions	✗	✓
irresitable urge	✗	✓
agentive ability (skills)	✗	✓

7.1 Agents vs. Possessors

- Non-modal UAC is unique in allowing a reading where the causer is not even part of the sentence, i.e. the adversative reading.

- Importantly, when modal UAC and non-modal UAC are licensed in the same situation, there is a difference in the possibility of ascribing an **agentive credit** to the DAT noun phrase.

(60) a. Arte-s   didi kva $\boxed{\text{u}}$- t'rox   -u
     Arte-DAT big stone.NOM 3.APPL break$_{\text{intrns}}$ PST
     'Arte managed to break the big stone.'   non-modal UAC
     ≈ 'The big stone somehow broke, when Arte tried to break it."

    b. ✓ ... ama va   t'ax   -u
         but NEG break$_{\text{trans}}$ PST
     '... but he didn't break it.'

(61) a. Arte-s   didi kva $\boxed{\text{a}}$- t'ax   -u
     Arte-DAT big stone.NOM APPL break$_{\text{trans}}$ PST
     'Arte was able to break the big stone'   modal UAC

    b. ✗ ... ama va   t'ax   -u
         but NEG break$_{\text{trans}}$ PST
     '... but he didn't break it.'

- This contrast suggests that we need an agent in modal UAC and a possessor (or something else?) in non-modal UAC, **arguing against a unification under one type of semantics.**

7.2 Modal vs. non-modal: what happens under negation?

- The readings that I grouped under '**agentive actions**' can be subsumed under **circumstantial modality**, constituting circumstantial possibility and circumstantial necessity claims (Kratzer, 1989; Davis et al., 2009).

    – Take (62).

    (62)   Bere-**s**   çik'oleta $\boxed{\text{a}}$-   şk'om -u
                child-DAT chocolate MODAL eat   PST
                The child couldn't but eat the chocolate.'   modal UAC

    – Here, we can think of the relevant circumstances to be an internal temptation, urge, feeling etc.

    – And the sentence is reporting that the those circumstances made it necessary that the child eat the chocolate.

    – Similarly, from this perspective, unintentional causation/accidents , too, could be understood as circumstancing forcing an event to unfold.

    (63)   Arte-**s**   ist'ik'anepe $\boxed{\text{a}}$-   t'ax -u
                Arte-DAT glasses   MODAL- break -PST
                'Arte **accidentally** broke the glasses.'   modal UAC
                (Arte tripped while carrying a tray full of glasses)

    – $\boxed{\text{Then, why can't we extend the modal analysis to non-modal UAC?}}$

- A data point in favor of the modal analysis in modal UAC comes from the **loss of force variability under negation.**

(64)   a.   Bere-**k**   opşa şk'om -u
                 child-ERG a lot eat   PST
                 'The child ate a lot.'

        b.   Bere-**s**   opşa $\boxed{\text{a}}$-   şk'om -u
                 child-DAT a lot MODAL eat   PST
                 i . 'The child was able to eat a lot.'   ✓ circumstantial possibility
                 ii. 'The child couldn't *not* eat a lot.'   ✓ circumstantial necessity

        c.   Bere-**s**   opşa **var** $\boxed{\text{a}}$-   şk'om -u
                 child-DAT a lot NEG MODAL eat   PST
                 ✓'The child wasn't able to eat a lot.'   ✓ ¬ circumstantial possibility
                 ✗'It isn't the case that
                   the child couldn't *not* eat a lot.'   ✗ ¬ circumstantial necessity

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> The pattern of force variability in modal UAC is consistent with the account proposed by Deal (2011) based on Nez Perce data.
>
> A possibility modal is also licensed in situations where its dual (i.e. a necessity modal) would be felicitous - in the absence of a distinct necessity modal in the language.
> → "possible P" can be uttered when P is necessary. (due to entailment)
>
> Under negation, entailment is reversed!
>
> → "not-possible P" cannot be uttered when P is not necessary.

- **There is a clear contrast between negated modal UAC and non-modal UAC.**

  * Modal UAC only accepts a 'not able to' interpretation

  * Non-modal UAC most naturally says
    'there is no relationship between the event and the NP'

(65)   a.   Arte-s   ham kva   var $\boxed{a}$- t'ax   -u
           Arte-DAT this stone.NOM NEG APPL break$_{trans}$ PST
           'Arte was not able to break this stone'   modal UAC

       b.   Arte-s   ham kva   var $\boxed{u}$- t'rox   -u
           Arte-DAT this stone.NOM NEG 3.APPL break$_{intrns}$ PST
           (Consultant's comment:
           Arte has nothing to do with the breaking of this stone.) non-modal UAC

- The fact that the readings that survive under negation are different for modal and non-modal UAC **argues against a unification under one type of semantics.**

8   Concluding Remarks

- Laz has distinct compositional paths to 'unintentionality'.

  - non-modal:
    It can loosely link an individual x to an anticausative event e - crucially without asserting x is the agent of e;

  - modal:
    It can assert that circumstances allow for an agentive event to unfold.

- A question that remains: why can't Laz make modal claims about non-agentive events? Redundancy?

  - such as: 'kiwi can grow here' (climate, soil conditions allow it)

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