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For the Relation of the Inversion and the Perfect Semantics in Georgian verbs¹

Abstract

In Georgian the verbal form comprises the names expressing the subjective-objective references of certain quantity, which shows the representing signs to express the category of the subjective and objective person. However, sometimes the subjective person is expressed by the sign of the objective person or vice versa, which is called inversion in Georgian language. There are many options about the reason of inversion. Bipersonal static verbs are considered as the oldest verbs as believed by many scientists. These are the verbs of feeling and owning, they are inverse, bipersonal and hold the dative construction.

We think that inversion cannot be only explained with the static character. There are the verbs, which are not static but are inverse. We believe that it must be one and the same aspect in every case: perfect semantics.

In Indo-European languages, the verbs of the perfect semantics have been converted from the class of the lexical words into the grammar perfect. When the Georgian language encountered the need to express the perfect forms respective to Indo-European languages and thus, the third series has been generated and it used the form as the model, belonging to the verbs of bipersonal non-transitional "perfect semantics" in present. This form has been supplemented by preverb, has become dynamic and gradually acquired various semantic nuances characterizing the perfect tense: resultativity, will, evidentiality, interrogative and negative, etc. In our opinion such verbs are not the continuation of the I and II series, they are the standalone link of the verb system, namely the perfect group characterized with the dative construction, which is inverse and always bipersonal.

Key Words: *Inversion, Static verbs, Model, Perfect semantic*

Introduction

The Georgian verb system is the best example of the personal conjugation. In

The form of the Georgian verb are represented both the subjective and

¹ The article was prepared within the grant (Development of Perfect Semantics and its Realization in Georgian).

objective persons with their proper morphemes. Namely the subjective person is expressed by the subjective person markers and the objective person by the objective person markers. However, sometimes the subjective person is expressed by the markers of the objective person or vice versa, which is called inversion in Georgian language.

Inversion can be found in the verbs of a certain type, mostly in: bipersonal statistic verbs and the transitional verbs of the third series.

A. Shanidze calls only the forms of the third series “inverse”. As to other cases, he considers them not inverse.²

As for Arn. Chikobava, he considers all cases as inverse and establishes the concept of the real subject and real object, which is conditioned with semantics.³

B. Jorbenadze believes static form as a significant characteristic of inverse nature.

All the forms, being bipersonal with the semantics of the ascending root word

and at the same time, expressing the function of the static nature, are of inverse order. According to him, all inverse forms in the Georgian language express the function of the static nature and such constructions are polyphonic, namely:

- a) The forms of the third series of the transitional verb are: **a-m-ishenebi-a** (I have built it), **ga-m-iketebi-a** (I have done it, etc.)
- b) Verbs of the type: **m-ikvar-s** (I love him), **mo-m-tson-s** (I like it), **m-akv-s** (I have it), **m-kav-s** (I have smb.);
- c) Some of the verbs of active voice expressing the wish and desire: **netavi m-amgher-a me is** (I should have sung it), **netavi ga-m-aketebin-a me is** (I should have done it);
- d) Verbs of the type: **m-emghereb-a** (I feel singing), **m-epataraveb-a** (I feel doing, etc.);

² A. Shanidze, *Fundamentals of Georgian Grammar: Novels*, vol. 3 (Tbilisi, 1980), 195.

³ *Explanatory Glossary of Georgian Language*, Vol. 1 (Tbilisi, 2007), Arn. Chikobava, “General

Linguistic Characteristics of Georgian Language,” 63.

e) Verbs of the active voice, where the subject is disappeared: **m-atsatsahkeb-s** (I am shivering), **m-adrdjoleb-s** (I am thrilling).⁴

T. Uturgaidze, when considering the inversion, speaks about the inhomogeneous nature of definition of the subject and object in Georgian. In his opinion, first of all, the concepts shall be clearly formulated to clarify further consideration of inversion. The subject is traditionally recognized to be active and the object to be for action but such explanation in the verb of diverse categories such is in Georgian language cannot be complete. For instance, he names the forms of the causative forms, where there are two persons active instead of one - one person, leading the action and another person implementing the action. The real acting person holds the objective sign, and the person leading the action is represented as subjective.⁵

For instance: we show the form of causative verbs in the sentence: **dedam me davaleba da-m-atserin-a** (Mother made me do the homework). Here the subject is- **deda** (mother), but the **me** (me)- is the indirect object who implements the action.

Such cases are in multitude in Georgian grammar.

A. Shanidze has the interesting opinion on the expression of subjective and the objective persons in the verb. It turns out that markers of the both rows can equip the appropriate person in the form with the function of the subject or with the object. It depends on the purpose is given completely to the bipersonal form or what relationship are established between persons.⁶

We noticed B. Jorbenadze opinion and he explains that significant characteristic of inverse nature is static forms. We think, that not only static character can express the inversion. We meet a lot of verbs, which are not static

⁴ B. Jorbenadze, *Principles of the Formal and Functional Analysis of Georgian Verbs* (Tbilisi: 1980), 374.

⁵ T. Uturgaidze, *Issue of Georgian Lingual System* (Tbilisi; 2016), 93

⁶ A. Shanidze, *Fundamentals of Georgian Grammar: Novels*, vol. 3 (Tbilisi, 1980), 185.

but they are inversed. For example: the verbs of the passive voice: **m-emgereb-a** (I feel singing), **m-etireb-a** (I feel crying), **m-ecineb-a** (I feel smiling).. The active verbs: netavi **m-amger-a** (I should have sung it), netavi **m-acekv-a** (I should have danced), The active forms of the III Series: **a-m-ishenebi-a** (I have been built), **ga-m-iketebi-a** (I have been done)...

There are also bipersonal static verbs which are well-known as the oldest verbs in Georgian. They are the verbs of feeling and owning.

As we can see there are also complicated references simultaneously with the simple reference. We think, that it must be one and the same aspect in every case: perfect semantics.

In our opinion in the case of inverse the form of the verb indicates that the expressed action depends on another factor – event or action. It is realized in Georgian language with the actant confirming the preceding event, namely: **mas ukvars is** (he loves her), **sdzuls mas is** (he hates her), **hkavs mas is** (he has her), **aqvs mas is** (he has it)...(verbs of the feelings and owning), there someone or something essential, which is just

assumed before the action expressed with the verb. More precisely, it becomes the reason for emergence of the action expressed with the verb . accordingly it creates the certain relation of the actants: the actant in absence of which there would not be feeling or ownership, which is the reason for emergence of the action expressing feeling or ownership, is expressed with the sign of the subject, and the other person which is the ownership or who suffers the action is expressed with the sign of the object. The verb becomes inverted. In this case, the semantics is foregrounded and indicates that something was preceded before the action. As it is well-known such semantic is characteristic for perfect, and Georgian language expressed this semantic with the different form—with the inverse. So the inversion became the model of expressing the perfect semantic and it was used in every needed cases in Georgian.

In Georgian, similar to Indo-European languages, the verbs of the perfect semantics have been through the evolution – they have been converted from the class of the lexical words into the

grammar perfect⁷. The Georgian language encountered the need to express the perfect forms respective to Indo-European languages and thus, the III series has been generated. The language used the form as the model, belonging to the verbs of bipersonal non-transitional “perfect semantics” in present. This form has been supplemented by preverb, has become dynamic and gradually acquired various semantic nuances characterizing the perfect tense: resultativity, will, evidentiality, interrogative and negative, etc.,. Namely, the analog to the first resultative is the static verb with the preverb, and the links between the

second resultative and the third relative forms coincide with the forms of the relative passive of the II series.

In our opinion, the first resultative, second resultative and the third relative – the III series do not present the continuation of the I and II series but they are the standalone link of the verb system, namely the perfect group characterized with the dative construction, which is inverse and always bipersonal. That is why there are no three-personal verbs in the III series because the model of the perfect semantic verbs are always bipersonal.

⁷ T. Giorgobiani, *Historical Grammar of Greek Language* (Tbilisi: 2017), 114.

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