Linguistics

Semantic Components of Motion Verbs in Megrelian

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ABSTRACT. The study of motion as the most natural and important form of people (and, in general, animate objects) activity is topical not only for the modelling of spatial language structures, but also for the perception of the structural-semantic peculiarities of the ancient layers of language. All this implies detailed linguistic analysis of the above-mentioned verbs. The paper is not aimed at diachronic or typological analysis. At this stage, it is viewed only as material for the research of the above-mentioned type. The obtained results are based on the semantic analysis of the lexical meanings of the verb stems. The model of linguistic categorization of movement-displacement was discussed for one concrete language. The paper is based on the method of componential semantic analysis, which implies identification (by means of commutation test) of semantic components, diverse combinations of which create the meanings of corresponding language units in different languages. For the aims of analysis, the verbs under study have been selected based on their semantic content. These verbs are: verbs of motion and displacement, i.e. verbs of movement from point A to point B, and verbs denoting transfer/transportation. © *2019 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.*

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The complete linguistic characteristics of movement-displacement is conveyed by the verb stem. In Megrelian, which has the highest index of agglutination [1] among the Kartvelian languages, the stem is represented as a complex syntagmatic chain in which the main lexical meaning is denoted by the verb root. Around the root, there are markers of the lexical and grammatical categories denoting the meaning of the stem, prefixal and suffixal morphemes, the number of which in concrete verb forms (not taking into account the obligatory and emphatic vowels appearing for certain phonetic reasons [cf. 2]) may vary from two to thirteen [2]: *ge-xe* „is sitting (above something)“; *me-ur-s*

„goes“; *ve-m-tm-o-γal-ap-uan-d-u-ḳo-ni-a-va* „in order not to allow taking something inside“...

The functioning of the agglutinative chain, as structural unity (which is a necessary precondition for the process of communication), is achieved by means of compatibility of the phonemic and semantic structures united in the chain of morphemes.

a) morphemes, as components of a unified stem, are subject to strict phonotactic transformations in the Megrelian language [3], which represent the sequence itself as a structurally possible unity.

b) the semantic unity of the stem is achieved by means of permanent relations between the

conceptual (core) and superficial (formal) elements of the stem [4].

The root. In Megrelian, the main lexical meaning of the multi-component stem is expressed by the verb root. However, root morphemes are generally neutral from the viewpoint of characterizing the movement by concrete locative features (direction and orientation, place of localization): *txoz* „chase (*me-txoz-u* „runs after"), *či*š „overtake, catch up with" (*kemio-či*š-*u* „overtook", *kegio-či*š-*u* („caught up with"), *čirin*- „reach" (ko-m-mo-čirin-e „pass me", *ko-mio-čirin-u* „reached") and so on. The few exceptions denoting oriented direction do not change the general picture. In this regard, Megrelian (resp. Kartvelian languages), viewed from the angle of L. Talmy's classification (type of lexicalization), may be regarded as satellite-framed language, in which, unlike verb-framed languages, the direction of movement is expressed outside the verb root [4,5].

The meanings denoted by the roots are concepts that denote the general characteristic features of movement, such as: dynamics/statics; the moving subject; the type of movement; the voluntative; the tempo of movement; aspect and tense.

With the aim of identifying the exact meaning of the verb root as a conceptual component included in the agglutinative chain, the forms of verbal noun (the simple stem) and conjugation forms were used in the given paper.

Dynamics vs statics, the most significant feature of movement-displacement and immobility-location, which denotes the universal forms of the physical ability of any object displaced in any space-mobility and immobility.

The above-mentioned conceptual opposition is lexicalized by the verb roots denoting motion/immobility.

Movement-displacement, as a dynamic process: expresses the direction and orientation of movement; describes the place of movement. Both features are represented outside the root, by means of preverbs that form part of the verb stem, and verbal affixes outside the stem.

The direction of the movement differs, above all, as to where the movement takes place, horizontal or vertical space:

In the horizontal space   the direction of movement and displacement, as well as types of orientation are revealed to the utmost.

The main directions, expressed by preverbs, are: *višo/ašo*, *miķi/moķi* „there/here"; *çoxole/uķaxale* „forward/back"; *dinaxale/gale* „inside/outside"; *ole, xasilas* „beside"; *miķe-miķe* „around".

The movement and displacement in the vertical space is represented by opposite directions: *eše* „from below upwards" / *gime* „from above downwards"; In both cases, preverbs underline the difference between straight vertical and bending trajectory.

Dynamics, as movement and displacement, is opposed to statics i.e. immobility, which   are expressed by diverse roots. However, the latter does not imply entire absence of action: „dynamics is action revealed in movement, whereas statics is action in immobile state" [6]. In fact, statics is a process more or less stretched in time, which implies that the subject is in various places (*tak /tek* „here/there", *xolos / šors* „near/far", *dinaxale /gale* „inside/outside"...) and diverse states: *ge-rin-a* „stand", *'n'ʒi r-a* „lie", *xv-en-a*//*xuna* „sit", *ʒv-en-a* "be laid"...

In the language reflection   (same as in the physical world, where motion and immobility are viewed as unity), dynamic and static processes are interrelated. In a sense, dynamics defines statics: statics as a process is realized in a concrete space, where the initial or final stages of movement may take place: *gilmurs* „comes downwards" *gila-ʒu* "lies above something"; *et-murs* „comes up, grows" *baɣana ʒaš tudo eto-xe* „the child is sitting beneath the tree".

Examples of this type explain why the same preverbs are used to denote contrary processes. But this is not always so. cf: *çiari 'urdgelens ge-txo-zudu*

„the hound was chasing hares", where *ge-* means „chase". However, in the statics, the same preverb *ge-* means "being placed above something": *kariš gilnaṭaxa no'vela dixas ge-ʒudu* „the branch, broken by the wind, lay on the ground".

Preverbs may be considered as having the same meaning if they are used in the same or idential space. This happens in cases when the direction points to the initial or final places of movement. cf: *bža el-murs* „the sun rises" (indirectly, seen from the side), *ela-čans* „grows beside", *ela-ʒu* „is placed beside", *ela-ʒanu* „lies beside"; *mit-murs* „enters a narrow, limited space"; being in a narrow, limited space: *mito-re* „stands", *mito-xe* „sits", *mito-ʒanu* „lies", *mito-ʒu* „is placed";

The situation is the same regarding vertical movement. However, there are certain differences regarding the upward and downward movements. In the first case, the situation is the same as in case of horizontal inside movement: *din-murs* „goes deep down", *dino-xe* „is sitting inside", *dino-ʒu* „is placed inside", *dino -ʒanu* „lies inside".

The situation is the same regarding the initial place of movement: *eḳ-murs* „walks uphill", *eko-ʒu* „is placed at the bottom of the hill"; *diḳ-murs* „walks downhill", *diḳo-ʒu* „lies at the bottom of the hill".

Grammatically, movement and displacement is expressed by intransitive (*meurs* „goes", *mirule* „runs", *mexoxuns* „creeps", *mečuruns* „swims", mepurinuns „flies") as well as transitive verbs: *me'uns* „takes someone somewhere", *meuɣu* „take something somewhere", *očkvans* / *oʒɣonans* „sends".

Statics is expressed by intransitive verbs that contain topological characteristics of the place of immobility and provide information on the location of an object. cf.: *ḳoči ṭqas mitore* „the man is in the forest", *baɣana ʒaš tudo etoxe* „the child is sitting beneath the tree", *odiare, ʒa gečans* „grass, tree grows"; *'ude, simeṭi gedgu* „a house, a pillar stands"; *kua* "stone"/ *arguni* „axe" *geʒu* „lies", *ḳardila miḳobu* „the basket is hanging".

The subject of movement (in Talmy's terms, "Figure"), represented by dynamic and static verbs, may be animate (*baɣanak ʒaše geglantxu* „the child fell from a tree", *emer ḳoči čqars dinore* „the man is standing in the water" or inanimate – physical phenomenon: *(kark gelalu* „the wind has started to blow"), or inanimate object (*kuak kodolu* „the stone fell"*);*

The class of animate nouns includes people, animals and plants. Out of these, in case of people and animals, i.e. creatures capable of independent movement, one and the same verbs are used: *ḳoči, cxeni, ʒoɣori, ...meurs, mirule, golas ginmurs, čqari*ša *dinmurs... „*man, horse, dog ... goes, runs, climbs mountains, enters the water*"...* . In this regard, people and animals are opposed to plants which are incapable of independent movement, but reveal other activities characteristic of life. This is revealed, on the one hand, biologically – by vividly expressed life processes (germination, nutrition, growth, pollination) and, on the other hand, lexically. The verbs denoting germination and further development of plants also refer to live organisms in general: *rduala „grow"* (cf. *ʒa* „tree'', *baɣana* „child", *laḳvi „*puppy", *mozveri* „male calf" – *irdu* „grows"; *ešašuma* „drinks something to the end*)*. However, there is special vocabulary denoting the life cycle of plants: *e-ul-a* „grow", *e-palu-a* „germinate", *ṗiru-a* „florish", *go-čanap-a* „yield fruits" and, finally, *žɣirap-a* „wither", *xomapa* „dry i.e. die".

The semantic category of the subject is grammatically expressed by the markers of subject and object person and number, which are found in one and the same position.

Type of movement. The verb roots denoting movement-displacement denote various types of movement [4]. The differences between the types are conditioned by the subject's environment – land, water, air, as well as the biological peculiarities of the organism. This, above all, refers to movements that are implemented

independently, namely, *ul-a* „walking" is movement defined as the main type of displacement of human beings and animals inhabiting the land surface. In this regard, the movement expressed by the root *ul –* is different.

Voluntative. The root provides information as to whether the movement is performed by the subject's own will-power or someone else's will/force. Hence, there are different verbal roots denoting movement, as well as diverse subjects of movement. In the first case, intransitive verbs denote movement/displacement, performed by the subject: *ḳoči meurs šaras* „the man walks along the road", *baɣana mirule 'udeša* „the child runs home". The same refers to statics: *geʒu* "is placed (upon something)", *gere* „stands (upon something)", *gexe* „is sitting (upon something)", *geʒanu* „is lying (upon something)". In the second case, the movement implies transfer/transportation, performed by somebody else's initiative and/or will-power. Therefore, transitive verb forms are used. These forms differ as to animate and inanimate objects: in case of animate objects, the following verbs are used: *'onapa* „take", *'unapa* „accompany", *čkumala//čkvapa* „send someone" (animate), *ʒɣona* „send something" (inanimate), *žumapa* „take someone/something": *mide'onu* „took with him/her", *mida'unu* „accompanied", *mideʒumu* „took something/someone", *mideɣu* „took something", *midačku* „sent someone" (animate).

The tempo of movement. This feature of movement is partly denoted by adverbs: *neras*, *nerat* „slowly", *čkaras* „quickly", *marxet* „heavily, resting in between". Frequently the tempo of movement (slow, quick ...) is denoted by phonetically peculiar roots, which point not to the appearance of the moving body (cf. *baxvali* „walking of a fat person", *ḳarčali* „a tall, thin person walking in a shaking way", [7,

8] but solely to the manner of walking, which does not depend on the appearance of the moving object: *bandali* „stagger"; *zakapi* „sway" ....; the tempo may also be denoted by the sound made during the movement: *čumini*, *žumini* „flicker, flash by, swift movement accompanied by a rustling sound".

Aspect and tense of movement. In Megrelian (resp. Kartvelian languages) the time/tense of movement (present, past, future) is closely linked to aspect. This phenomenon is a remnant of the formation of the period „when verb conjugation did not imply change in time/tense, but consisted in the marking of aspect i.e. the type of the process" [9]. As tense is differently expressed in languages with and without aorist [10], in Kartvelian languages, there is aspect difference between the present and aorist group forms – complete/incomplete movement is expressed by simple and continuous forms of the present tense: the forms of the present tense use the root *ul-* to denote incomplete aspect (*me-ur < ul-s* „goes/is going"), whereas the aorist makes use of the simple past root denoting complete aspect *-rt* (*mida-rt <* kt < kc- u* „went). The preverbs are used in accordance with the roots, namely, instead of simple *mi-/mo-* preverbs of roots denoting incomplete aspect, compound preverbs are used to denote complete aspect: - *mi+da* and *mo+la*: *mida-rt-u* „went there", *mo+la-rt-u* "came here" .

The situation is different in the aorist and related (complete aspect) forms. Phases I and III are represented by the complete aspect forms of the root *ul-*: *gitilu* „came out", *mitilu* „entered"; *minilu* „got inside", *gimilu* „*came outside*"; *mišelu* „went inside", *gišelu* „went out". Representation of the process by means of complete aspect forms is not contrary to the semantics of the root *ul-*. The case is that the I and III phases denote not the entire process of movement, but only its beginning and end. Thus, it is quite natural to represent these phases as a

complete (terminated) process by means of the aorist forms. However, the aorist form is not capable of denoting the entire process. Therefore, II phase is missing in this cycle [10].

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