

Formal and Semantic Evolution of the Category of Perfect Tense in Georgian Language

Giuli Shabashvili

The perfect tense is one of the most complicated categories both from the contentual point of view, also from the point of view of expressionism. This category is well researched concerning the Indo-European languages, namely structural components, contextual variations and the main tendencies of its development process. In Contemporary Indoeuropeistics perfect is thought to exist at the level of the common Indo-European root language and it is connected with the period, when the language system distinguished the lexemes of state and action.

The main topics of the issue are as follows: what is position of the perfect category in modern Georgia, what formal and functional-semantic features had it in the old Georgian language, how it is now in and also in the Georgian dialects concerning this item, what kind of changes and evolution has the perfect tense and what are the main reasons of it, what are the main points for pragmatic realization and motivation of perfect tense, what kind of similarities does this category have with the Indo-European languages. The tendencies for further research are also outlined in the paper.

Semantics of the perfect in Georgian Language is expressed both by central and peripheral means. The central means include the third series, the peripheral means are the resultative constructions (compose verbs, have done construction and etc.)

The present perfect forms mainly the hypotactic constructions in the old Georgian language and mostly happens to exist in the depending sentences – 67%. Internal semantic attributes of the perfect (resultativeness, precedence) form the reason of it: but they are quite rare in narration, in the compound clause - 17%, in the main clause – 6%. In case of minimal contexts the perfect forms are used only in the interrogative and negative clauses. What is the most important, this forms mainly happen to be with the first person meaning.

Actually, the perfect is polisemic category. The functional-semantic variety of the perfect is completely reflected in old Georgian language distinguished both, as structural and the internal semantic point of view. The distantional, actional perfect is the well-spread type.

Actually, the analyses of the pragmatic motivation of the perfect in old Georgian Language is definitely complicated, still it is possible to outline some features. Here this category is used most frequently for expressional purposes.

The Georgian language mountain dialects have more or less preserved the previous condition from the viewpoint of applying of the forms of perfect tense. In spite of the fact that semantic transformation of the perfect category as well as the loss of standard meaning has began, analytical construction application has increased, its principal semantics – resultative is still presented at high percentage.

In addition, mountain dialects keep almost all possible semantic alterations of the perfect category. Here we have modal, continues, future, panachronic perfects. Standard meaning of perfect (the result) is also preserved. Cases of the main meaning violation are presented.

In the modern Georgian the category of the perfect has been subjugated to formal and semantic gradation as well. Synthesis production has lost its main meaning and obtained the semantics of evidentiality. Only negative forms are the exceptions, because negation is one of the strong means of references. The meaning resultative is expressed by the analytical constructions – with have done forms, which are identical to Indo-European production. It is to be said that this type of forms are occurs in limited number in old Georgian language. These forms are presented in minimal context, narration, in fiction and publicity most frequently. The first person forms figure most frequently and have the meaning of actional perfect. the pragmatic invironment is as follows: this forms are often used in minimal context and next to the present verbal forms. As to pragmatic motivation of using perfect forms, in most cases they are accentuated at emphasizing the result.

Research of the modern situation in Georgian language is worth of interest (category of evidentiality is especially strongly presented in Mengrelian). In that case we can reconstruct this category in the root Katvelian languages.