THE TYPOLOGY OF TAV-CONSTRUCTIONS AND THE PERSON-ROLE CONSTRAINT IN GEORGIAN

Outline of talk:

1. How do we identify ditransitive constructions in Georgian? It’s not straightforward!
2. What are tav-constructions?
3. Person-Role effects in Georgian: underived verb constructions
4. Two widespread views:
   a. The phenomenon boils down to one of case
   b. The phenomenon boils down to one of role
5. Some more Georgian data: derived verb constructions

§1 How do we identify a ditransitive construction?

(1) a. Case? (‘Indirect objects bear dative case’)
   b. Agreement? (‘Indirect objects take special agreement morphology on the verb’)
   c. Thematic role? (‘Three place Predicates with both a Recipient and a Theme are ditransitive’)

• Dative case is quite promiscuous: it can flag almost any role:

(2) a. Ivane-s c’ign-i c’a-u-k’itx-av-s  
   John-DAT book-NOM PVB-PRV-read-TH-3SG
   ‘John has apparently read the book.’

b. Mze p’ir-s   i-ban-s  
   Sun.NOM face-DAT PRV-wash-3SG
   ‘The sun is washing its face.’ (idiom for rain during sunshine)

c. Ivane-m Mariam-s   c’ign-i   mi-s-c-a  
   John-ERG Mary-DAT book-NOM PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
   ‘John gave Mary the book.’

d. Ivane-s u-qvar-s   Mariam-i  
   John-DAT 3SGDAT-love-3SG Mary-NOM
   ‘John loves Mary’

• Basic ditransitive verbs sometimes [(3)] do, but do not always [(4)], directly register the indirect objects with verb agreement:

(3) Giorgi-m Ivane-s c’ign-i mi-s-c-a  
   George-ERG John-DAT book-NOM PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
   ‘George gave John the book.’
Furthermore, in some constructions it is not clear whether the verb is monotransitive or ditransitive (with expletive direct objects), or intransitive with a dative adjunct -- that is, is Lado in (5) an S or an A?

(5) Lado-m surat-s u-qu-র-a
Vladimir-ERG picture-DAT 3SgDAT-look.at-3SGAOR
‘Lado looked at the picture’

Georgian also features a distinction between ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ object agreement, relative verbs (whether transitive or intransitive) showing indirect object morphology. Most absolute verbs can take relative forms optionally to indicate a dative adjunct:

(6)a. Gela-m es saxl-i a-a-šen-a
Gela-ERG this.NOM house-NOM PVB-PRV-build-3SGAOR
‘Gela built this house.’
b. Gela-m es saxl-i a-uen-a
Gela-ERG this.NOM house-NOM PVB-3SgDAT-build-3SGAOR
‘Gela built this house for him/her/someone.’
c. Es saxl-i a-šen-d-a mesame sauk’une-ši
this.NOM house-NOM PVB-build-PASS-3SGAOR.II third century- in
‘This house was built in the third century.’
d. Es saxl-i a-u-šen-d-a mašin
this.NOM house-NOM PVB-3SgDAT-build-PASS-3SGAOR.II then
‘This house was built then for him/her/someone.’

The reality of expletive indirect object markers is also a serious problem:

(7) a. še-s-deg
PVB-3SgDAT-stand.1/2.IMP
‘Stand!’
b. nu s-e’ev
NEG.IMP 3SgDAT-smoke-TH
‘Don’t smoke!’
c. mo-gv-s-dev-d-a
PVB-1PL-3SgDAT-follow-IMPF-3SgIMPF
‘He followed us’

(Aronson and K’iziria (2000: 359), citing a work by Gamsaxurdia)
§2  What are tav-constructions?

- Literally means ‘head’, since Old Georgian tav- has also been used anaphorically for reflexives, along with verbal morphoreflexives:

(8) k’ac-ma (me) tav-i ga-m-a-cn-o  
Man-ERG 1SG(DAT) self-NOM PVB-1SG-PRV-know-3SGAOR  
‘The man acquainted me with himself’ (i.e., he introduced himself to me)  
(Amiridze and Leuschner 2002: 260)

(9) a. Vano i-ban-s  
John.NOM PRV-wash-3SGS  
‘John is washing himself.’

b. Vano tav-s ban-s  
John.NOM self-DAT wash-3SGS  
‘John is washing himself.’

c. čem-i tav-i da-v-i-ban-e  
my-NOM self-NOM PVB-1-PRV-wash-1/2.AOR  
‘I washed myself’

d. šen-i tav-i da-i-ban-e  
your-NOM self-NOM PVB-PRV-wash-1/2.AOR  
‘You washed yourself’

- Historically, these have also resulted in cognate intensifiers: tvit, tviton, etc.  
(Amiridze and Leuschner 2002).

§3  Person-Role effects in Georgian: underived verbs.

- Prototypical alignment of first or second person with the recipient and third expectedly provides no problem, whether or not the recipient is registered on the verb:

(10)a. 3 REC; 3 TH  
vano-m anzor-i še-a-dar-a givi-s  
Vano-ERG Anzor-NOM PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT  
‘Vano compared Anzor to Givi’ (Harris 1981: 48)

b. 2 REC; 3 TH  
vano-m anzor-i še-g-a-dar-a  
Vano-ERG Anzor-NOM PVB-2SG-PRV-compare-3SGAOR 2SG.(DAT)  
‘Vano compared Anzor to you’

c. 1 Rec; 3 Th  
vano-m anzor-i še-m-a-dar-a  
Vano-ERG Anzor-NOM PVB-1SG-PRV-compare-3SGAOR 1SG.(DAT)  
‘Vano compared Anzor to me’
• When the recipient is third person, however, and the theme either first or second person, the same sentence is no longer grammatical:

(11) 3 REC; 1 or 2 Th
a. *vano-m (şen) še-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 2Sg PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared you to Givi’

b. *vano-m (me) še-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 1Sg PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared me to Givi’

• There are two main strategies that Georgian uses to repair such a construction: the *Tavization Strategy* and the Patient Agreement Strategy.

• With the first strategy, the sentence can be ‘saved’ by converting the first or second person theme into a third person possessive phrase headed by tavi ‘head’

(12) Tavization Strategy: 3 REC; 3 [< 1 or 2] Th
a. vano-m šen-i tavi še-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 2SGPOSS-NOM head-NOM PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared you to Givi’ (Harris 1981: 49)

b. vano-m ĉem-i tavi še-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 1SGPOSS-NOM head-NOM PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared me to Givi’ (Harris 1981: 48)

• The same holds true when both objects are local arguments: without tavization, the construction is ungrammatical.

(13) 1 or 2 REC; 3 [< 1 or 2] Th
a. man gamo-m-i-gzavn-a me šen-i tavi / (*šen)
   3SGERG PVB-1SG-PRV-send-3SGAOR 1SG 2SGPOSS-NOM head-NOM
   ‘She sent you to me’ (Tuite 1989: 21)

b. man gamo-g-i-gzavn-a šen čem-i tavi / (*me)
   3SGERG PVB-2-PRV-send-3SGAOR 1SG 1SGPOSS-NOM head-NOM
   ‘She sent me to you’

• However, contrary to previous literature (e.g. Harris 1981), an alternative solution exists: object agreement occurs exceptionally with the first or second person argument (the theme) instead of the recipient:

(14) Patient-agreement Strategy: 3 REC; 1 or 2 Th
a. (*vano-m (šen) še-g-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 2Sg PVB-2-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared you to Givi’ (Harris 1981: 48)

1 Note that Harris cited these sentences as ungrammatical. See (15) below.
b. (*)vano-m (me) še-m-a-dar-a givi-s
   Vano-ERG 1Sg PVB-1-PRV-compare-3SGAOR Givi-DAT
   ‘Vano compared me to Givi’ (Harris 1981: 49)

(15)a. davit-i čem-s tav-s nino-s a-axl-eb-s
   David-NOM my-DAT head-DAT Nino-DAT PRV-send-TH-3SG
   ‘David is sending me to Nino’

b. davit-i me nino-s m-a-axl-eb-s
   david-NOM 1Sg(DAT) nino-DAT 1SG-PRV-send-TH-3SG
   ‘David is sending me to Nino’ (Vamling 1988: 316)

• In fact, evidence that this sensitivity to the person hierarchy is deep-seated comes
  from appositional constructions, as in (16), in which a first or second person
  pronoun standing in apposition to a third person noun phrase allows the verb to
  agree with either the recipient or the theme.

(16) 2 + 3 REC; 1 + 3 TH
a. ??/*!kartvel-eb-ma še-a-dar-es tkven os-eb-i
   Georgian-PL-ERG PVB-PRV-compare-3PLAOR 2PL Ossetian-PL-NOM
   čven kosovoel-eb-s
   1PL kosovar-PL-DAT
   ‘The Georgians compared you Ossetians to us Kosovars.’

b. kartvel-eb-ma še-g-a-dar-es tkven os-eb-i
   Georgian-PL-ERG PVB-2-PRV-compare-3PLAOR 2PL Ossetian-PL-NOM
   čven kosovoel-eb-s
   1PL kosovar-PL-DAT
   ‘The Georgians compared you Ossetians to us Kosovars.’

c. kartvel-eb-ma še-gv-a-dar-es tkven os-eb-i
   Georgian-PL-ERG PVB-1PL-PRV-compare-3PLAOR 2PL Ossetian-PL-NOM
   čven kosovoel-eb-s
   1PL kosovar-PL-DAT
   ‘The Georgians compared you Ossetians to us Kosovars.’

• Some speakers resolve the feature competition in (17) by a different kind of
  possessive phrase

(17) kartvel-eb-ma še-g-a-dar-es tkven-i os-eb-i
   Georgian-PL-ERG PVB-2-PRV-compare-3PLAOR 2PLPOSS-NOM Ossetian-PL-NOM
   čven-s kosovoel-eb-s
   1PLPOSS-DAT kosovar-PL-DAT
   ‘The Georgians compared you (lit. ‘your’) Ossetians to us (lit. ‘our’) Kosovars.’
§4 What is the Person-Role Constraint (Haspelmath 2007)?

- Although the basic descriptive phenomenon has been recognized in the literature for a number of decades now (Grevisse 1986, Fassi Fehri 1988, Emonds 1975, etc.), there has been no consensus about its origins.

4.1 Bonet (1994)

- Bonet (1994) is one widely cited analysis having a formal constraint on the generation of output sentences linking person features and case-marking: the Person-Case Constraint.
- While the origin of much literature based on other European languages, Georgian data clearly rules out structural or morphological case as a possible source of the variation because of Georgian’s split-S case system changes from one tense series to another.
- As you can see comparing (18) with (19), especially (18c) and (19c), although case morphology changes radically from one tense construction to another, the degraded grammaticality person-role phenomena occur whether or not case has changed:

(18) a. Ivane Mariam-s c’ign-s a-dzl-ev-s
   John.NOM Mary-DAT book-DAT PRV-give.PRES-TH-3SG
   ‘John is giving the book to Mary’

b. Ivane-m Mariam-s c’ign-i mi-s-c-a
   John-ERG Mary-DAT book-NOM PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
   ‘John gave the book to Mary’

c. Ivane-s Mariam-isa-tvis c’ign-i mi-u-c-i-a
   John-DAT Mary-GEN-tvis book-NOM PVB-3SGDAT-give-TH-3SG.BE
   ‘John has apparently given the book to Mary’

(19) a. *Ivane Mariam-s šen a-dzl-ev-s
   John.NOM Mary-DAT 2SG(DAT) PRV-give.PRES-TH-3SG
   ‘John is giving you to Mary’

b. *Ivane-m Mariam-s šen mi-s-c-a
   John-ERG Mary-DAT 2SG(NOM) PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
   ‘John gave you to Mary’

c. *Ivane-s Mariam-isa-tvis šen mi-u-c-i-a
   John-DAT Mary-GEN-tvis 2SG(NOM) PVB-3SGDAT-give-TH-3SG.BE
   ‘John has apparently given you to Mary’
4.2  Haspelmath (2004)

- Basic process involves constructions where a prototypically more topical argument such as first or second person aligns with a less topical role, or does not fully differentiate the roles featurally:

(20) Haspelmath (2004)’s typology of Topicality-Role effects

“Grammars are likely to put restrictions on Recipient-Theme combinations to the extent that the Recipient argument is not inherently more topicworthy than the Theme argument” (Haspelmath 2004: sec. 6.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prototypical Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a.</strong> Per: [1, 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role: Recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case: Dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b.</strong> */[1, 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role: Recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case: Dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c.</strong> Per: [1, 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case: Dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d.</strong> [1, 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role: Recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case: Dative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- For Haspelmath, this system of alignment producing favored and disfavored combinations of arguments and role is part of a larger system that links prototypical topicworthiness to role, leading to a robust system of redundant alignment of properties:

(21) \textit{More topicworthy} \hspace{1cm} \textit{Less topicworthy} \hspace{1cm} (Haspelmath 2007: §6.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first/second person</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronoun</td>
<td>full NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proper name</td>
<td>common noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animate</td>
<td>inanimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>definite</td>
<td>indefinite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Because each combination of Role with a given feature is possible, some languages may single out some for grammaticalization while leaving others simply infrequent.
• In the case of Georgian, we find this frequency-based analysis generally holds true: speakers find sometimes strong and sometimes also weak violations of the topic-role constraint to be degraded in grammaticality:

(22) a. Rec Th b. Rec Th c. Rec Th d. Rec Th
    Pron NP Pron NP Pron NP Pron NP

(23) a. Rec Th b. Rec Th c. Rec Th d. Rec Th
    Prop Comm Prop Comm Prop Comm Prop Comm

(24) a. Rec Th b. Rec Th c. Rec Th d. Rec Th
    Anim Inan Anim Inan Anim Inan Anim Inan

§5 Person-Role effects: derived verbs.

• While these generalizations seem quite robust, and must indeed have some truth to them to make sense of the data, they make the prediction that structural considerations are essentially orthogonal to the relationship between role and person.
• That is: if the semantic role changes, then we expect not to see this correlation between role and morphosyntactic manifestations of person.
• Consider the following data on causatives in (25) and (26), in which the causative morpheme can be iterated to add extra arguments:
• They show exactly the same distribution as the nonderived verbs: either exceptional agreement with the patient or tavization must occur.

(25) a. *Lado-m ilia-s šen a-rben-in-eb-in-a
    Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT 2SG(NOM) PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
    ‘Lado made Ilya make you run.’
b. Lado-m ilia-s šen g-a-rben-in-eb-in-a
    Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT 2SG(NOM) 2-PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
    ‘Lado made Ilya make you run.’ (PATIENT-AGREEMENT STRATEGY)
c. Ladom ilia-s šen-i tav-i a-rben-in-eb-in-a
    Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT YOUR-NOM self-NOM PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
    ‘Lado made Ilya make you run.’ (TAVIZATION STRATEGY)

(26) a. * Lado-m ilia-s šen a-mğer-in-eb-in-a
    Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT 2SG(NOM) PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
    ‘Lado made Ilya make you sing.’
b. Lado-m ilia-s šen g-a-mğer-in-eb-in-a
   Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT 2SG(NOM) 2-PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
   ‘Lado made Ilya make you sing.’ (PATIENT-AGREEMENT STRATEGY)

c. Lado-m ilia-s šen-i tav-i a-mğer-in-eb-in-a
   Lado-ERG Ilia-DAT YOUR-NOM self-NOM PRV-run-CAUS-TH-CAUS-3SGAOR
   ‘Lado made Ilya make you sing.’ (TAVIZATION STRATEGY)

- In these causative constructions, we are dealing with a different semantic role,
  namely the causee/patient, and yet the same pattern exists, contrary to
  Haspelmath’s otherwise well-grounded generalization that the alignment of
  feature to role is matters

**Conclusions:**

- The identification of a ditransitive construction is nontrivial: neither case nor
  agreement nor even thematic role (as we saw with the causatives) definitively
  identify a construction as ditransitive.
- The Person-Role constraint is ‘fixed’ by two repair-strategies: tavization and
  the patient agreement strategies.
- Although the Georgian data more closely parallels Haspelmath (2007) than
  Bonet (1994)’s account, causatives provide reason to believe that role, as such,
  is not the defining factor in Georgian, but rather some notion of grammatical
  relations.

**Abbreviations**

ERG = ergative case; DAT = dative case; NOM = nominative case; PVB = preverb; PRV = preradical vowel; SG = singular;
PL = plural; AOR = aorist; IMPF = imperfect

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