Thomas Wier   23-25 November 2007
University of Chicago / MPI-EVA Leipzig

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   **DAT : AG**
            John-DAT book-NOM PVB-PRV-read-TH-3SG
            'John has apparently read the book.'
        b. Mze   p'ir-s   i-ban-s   **DAT : TH**
            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   **DAT : REC**
            John-ERG Mary-DAT book-NOM PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
            'John gave Mary the book.'
        d. Ivane-s u-qvar-s   Mariam-i   **DAT: EXP**
            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.'

(4)   K'ot'e-m   Nino-s   masc'avlebel-i še-a-dar-a
        Constantine-ERG   Nino-DAT   teacher-NOM   PVB-PRV-compare-3SGAOR
        'Kote compared the teacher to Nino'

- 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*-qur-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-***u*-šen-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*-c'-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 (šen)
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 (me)
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   (šen)   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***   ***tav-i***   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 ***čem-i***   ***tav-i***   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***   ***tav-i***   / (*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***   ***tav-i***   / (*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]

---

[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)?

- Often called by other names: person-case constraint (Bonet 1994); object-camouflage (Harris 1981, Anderson 1984, Vamling 1988, Amiridze and Leuschner 2002)
- 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:
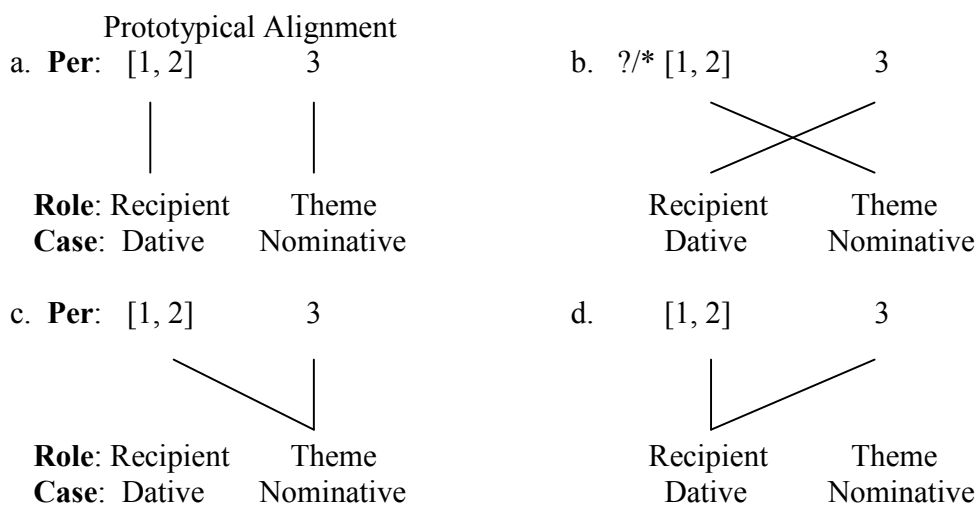
(18) a. Ivane   Mariam-s   c'ign-s   a-dzl-ev-s
          John.**NOM**   Mary-**DAT**   book-**DAT**   PRV-give.PRES-TH-3SG
          'John is giving the book to Mary'
      b. Ivane-m   Mariam-s c'ign-i   mi-s-c-a
          John-**ERG**   Mary-**DAT** book-**NOM** PVB-3SGDAT-give.AOR-3SGAOR
          '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)

Prototypical Alignment
a. **Per**: [1, 2]   3   b.   ?/* [1, 2]   3

Role: Recipient   Theme   Recipient   Theme
Case: Dative   Nominative   Dative   Nominative

c. **Per**: [1, 2]   3   d.   [1, 2]   3

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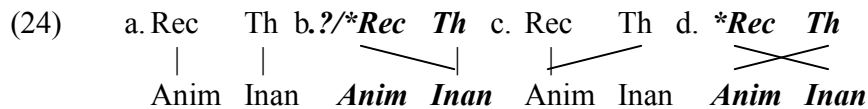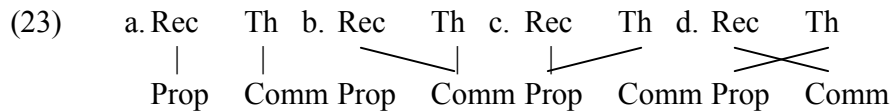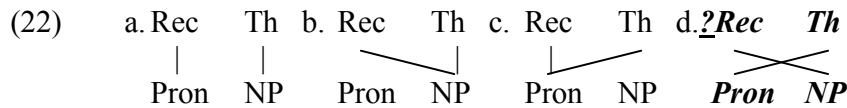
- For Haspelmath, this system of alignment producing favored and disfavored combinations of arguments and role is part of a larger system that links prototypical topicworthiness to role, leading to a robust system of redundant alignment of properties:

(21)   *More topicworthy*   *Less topicworthy*   (Haspelmath 2007: §6.2)
         Recipient   Theme
         first/second person   third person
         pronoun   full NP
         proper name   common noun
         animate   inanimate
         definite   indefinite

- 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-mǧer-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-mǧer-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-mǧer-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

Works Cited:
Anderson, Stephen. 1984. *A-Morphous Morphology*. Cambridge: CUP.
Aronson, Howard I, and Dodona Kiziria. 1999. *Georgian Language and Culture*.
        Bloomington, IN: Slavica. Bonet 1994
Emonds, Joseph. 1975. 'A transformational analysis of French clitics without positive
        output constraints.' *Linguistic Analysis* 1: 3-24.Fassi Fehri 1988
Grevisse, Maurice. 1986. *Le bon usage.* 12ème édition. Paris: Duculot.Harris 1981
Harris, Alice. 1985. *Diachronic Syntax: the Kartvelian Case*. New York: Academic
        Press.
Haspelmath, Martin. 2004. 'Explaining the Ditransitive Person-Role Constraint.'
        [http://www.constructions-online.de/articles/35]
Vamling, Karina (1988). 'A feature-based analysis of Georgian morphology. Case study:
        object agreement.' In Thordarson, Fridrik (ed.) *Studia Caucasologica I. Proceedings of the Third
        Caucasian Colloquium, Oslo, July 1986.* Oslo: Norwegian University Press. 309-319.

CONTACT:
Thomas Wier
Max-Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Deutscher Platz 6   trwier@uchicago.edu
04103 Leipzig   thomas_wier@eva.mpg.de