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ANALYSIS OF THE MORPHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF THE SUBLIMINAL

Abstract

In this paper, we aimed to investigate the phonemic structure of the Sub-Imer dialect and, based on this, to analyze the morpho-phonemic changes within the dialect. Our analysis of the data from the sub-unit Kilokav, including the finer dialectal units within it and other kilo-words in the Georgian language, provides significant insights into the general trends of changes in the sound system. The examination of root morphemes in Kvemoimeruli confirmed the prevailing view that three-syllable stems are not historically characteristic of Georgian. Nearly all of the main syntactic features were revealed in Kvemoimeruli, and we consider the current phonetic changes in the dialect to be the result of pressures on the morphological and sometimes syntactic structure of the phonemic system of the language.

Analysis of Morphological Processes of Kvemoimeruli

In addition to the literary language, the language system encompasses dialects, which essentially represent subsystems of the language. Studying dialects is crucial for determining the general regularity of language development and for revealing the internal structure of the language.

Dialectal variation is marked by a relative freedom of phonetic transformations. Unlike literary language, which operates under restrictive conditions, dialects are less constrained. Thus, the direction and trends of phonetic changes observed in dialects often offer valuable insights into the phonetic structure of the language.

Among the Georgian language dialects, Imeruli is one of the largest units, covering a wide area and including three main dialects that exhibit notable differences. Scientific study of Georgian dialects, including Kvemoimeruli, began in the early 20th century. Additionally, foreign-origin words appearing in the literary language are mostly recorded in writing, whereas in dialects, they are encountered orally. This oral tradition allows these words to be adapted to the Georgian form under the influence of the phonetic structure of the Georgian language, a process illustrated by ongoing phonetic changes in such words. Therefore, studying dialects is essential for understanding the global structure of the linguistic system.

The Georgian language boasts a rich variety of dialects, which reveal patterns of linguistic coincidence and difference. Analyzing these patterns helps us understand the possibilities and realizations of language. A detailed examination of phonetic and morphological features and changes in the Sub-Imer dialect highlights its unique position among the dialects of the Georgian language and its role.

Dialectal study is an endless source of research. Although exhaustive study is impossible, we have identified the main characteristics of Sub-Imer speech. Observing living speech, distinguishing and characterizing linguistic features of ancient written monuments, and comparing them with modern materials allow us to determine the phonetic and lexical features of the dialect.

The importance of studying Georgian dialects extends beyond theoretical interests; it also helps explain historical events and their functions. Analyzing Kvemoimerian speech, both in comparison to literary Georgian and other Georgian dialects, provides valuable insights. Morphological analysis of Kvemoimerian involves exploring the genesis of its peculiarities, the variety and fragmentation of characteristic forms, which have deep historical roots. Specifically, the presence of two-part, three-part, and four-part consonant

complexes in the anlaut, inlaut, and auslaut of words confirms the current view that “three-syllable stems are not historically characteristic of Georgian.” Some stems in the Georgian material are trisyllabic because names have been formed from monosyllabic stems through various affixes, resulting in their fossilized forms.¹¹

It is known that when foreign vocabulary is incorporated into Georgian, it generally undergoes influence from the Georgian phonetic structure. In many cases, this influence leads to phonetic transformations that align the foreign words with Georgian phonetic norms. For example, M. Andronikashvili in his work “Essays on the Iranian-Georgian Language Relationship” discusses the transformation of foreign words such as “Bortsvi” and “Rat,” where the complex “tkh” is adapted to create a harmonious “tkh” complex.²

Regarding the rotation of names, historical documents confirm the features observed in modern Umerian speech. Historical rotations of names do not always align with the current forms in Umerian speech, where certain forms participate in what A. Shanidze refers to as “interverbal relationships.”³

2. G. Akhvlediani, Basics of general phonetics, 1949. p. 260

3. A. Shanidze, Basics of Georgian Grammar, 1973, p. 44

Rotational formants have evolved from ancient Georgian to the present-day modern (literary language and dialects). The presentation of rotational formants varies based on the names’ bases. In both singular and plural forms, the differences are evident in consonant-based and vowel-based infinitive and imperative nouns. According to Klimov, the special sign of subject-object (“nominal”) rotation predates the sign of subjective rotation.⁴ This is based on the fact that the forms of narrative rotation in Georgian languages developed separately after their differentiation. In Georgian, the narrative suffix “-man” is relatively new and demonstrative, and its absence in older texts is evident, with proper names sometimes having the nominative suffix “-i” instead.⁵

4. G. KLIMOV declension in Kartvelian languages in comparative-historical aspect, 1962, p. 66

5. T. Uturgaidze, Phonemic structure of the Georgian language, 1976, p. 20

Names with final vowels in sub-numeral contexts, particularly in open constructions, often have “-i” as a nominative sign, a feature still present today.⁶ In some sub-numerals, the “-i” sound retains its fullness even in the following vowel position, for example: “deide” < “deidei” < “deido.” Forms such as “deide,” “dane,” and “mamide” result from the assimilation of the nominative “-i” on the root vowel. Retaining the full vowel of “-i” indicates that forms like “mother,” “danai,” and others are newly formed rather than remnants of an older system where the nominal “-i” vowel did not follow regular weakening patterns.

Vowel-based names, when monosyllabic, were joined with “-i” as a nominative sign (e.g., “brother,” “voice”). The development of this process likely involved diphthongization, specifically the “-ey-” complex.

6. st. Dzotsenidze, Zemoimeruli Kilokavi, 1954, p. 159

If “-i” remains a full syllable in lower vowels, it can convert the preceding “-e” into “-i.” If this process does not occur, the full-syllable status of “-i” is questionable. The next stage of this development, seen in the literary Georgian language as early as the 12th-13th centuries⁷, involved the disintegration of diphthongs: “What was the glass, what was the candle, where was the net.” This process continues in the lower forms of Georgian, evident in both archaic and modern examples such as “aunt” and “uncle” compared to “kalii” and “bachii.” This assimilation process is still active today in Kvemoimeruli, where forms like “kerie-galii” are heard.

Syntagmatic analysis of vowels in Kvemoimeruli shows that, similar to the overall linguistic system, one morpheme is not realized in every position. This confirms that the phonemic structure of Georgian does not typically allow for sequences of vowels within a single morpheme, as seen in Kvemoimeruli vocabulary.

7. Arn. Chikobava, the ancient structure of the root of the name in Kartvelian languages, 1942, p. 75-80

Syntagmatic analysis of consonants in Kvemoimeruli further confirms the fundamental rule of the Georgian phonemic structure: the realization of increasing fissure complexes within a single morpheme is

1 F. Erthelishvili, issues of phonemic structure and history of nominal stems in Georgian, 1980, p. 130)

a core characteristic of Georgian. The rotational forms of names in sub-numeral contexts do not present multiple options. The changes observed in the rotation process are phonetic in nature.

We consider the ongoing phonemic changes in the dialect to be the result of pressure on the morphological and sometimes syntactic structures of the language. From this perspective, sound changes can be classified into two types: changes caused by the phonemic structure and unconditioned changes. Unlike the literary language, dialects provide a broader field for these changes, allowing phonemic rules to influence morphological and syntactic structures and resulting in a variety of phonetic modifications.

References

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