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Teaching Georgian as a second language: Modality and Tense (modal unda) ¹

ABSTRACT

In the Georgian language, the verb paradigm is distributed among the forms of screeves (Shanidze). A screeve is a complex grammatical category which embraces the characteristics of tense, person, aspect, mood, permansive, resultative, perfect, evidentiality. The agglutinative nature of the language implies the existence of several grammatical meanings in one and the same verb form. The category of modality is expressed by means of adding modal elements to the verb form. The modal element expresses modal semantics, whereas the verb form bears the semantics of other grammatical categories. Thus, in Georgian, a modal construction embraces a combination of several grammatical peculiarities and semantics. The modal element is not usually found with all screeve forms. In order to express a modal content, different modal elements choose different screeves.

The categories of tense and aspect are important features of the modal construction. The modal element *unda* is used with three screeves in Georgian: Present Subjunctive, Second Subjunctive and Second Resultative. Out of these, two are subjunctive mood forms, whereas the third one is the form of the indicative mood. However, as a result of weakening of the functions of the third subjunctive, the screeve of the second subjunctive has acquired numerous functions. One of such functions is to express modality in the past. Acquisition of modal constructions is an important part of language teaching. Modal constructions express the speaker's attitude. In this regard, at a certain stage of language teaching these constructions are frequently addressed. It is very important for the learner to grasp the rules of formation of these constructions.

Key words: *Modality, mood, tense, second language teaching*

Verb conjugations in Georgian

Verb conjugations in the Georgian language contain three paradigms based on the morpho-syntactic principle. The first

serie contains two circles and six screeves.

The second serie contains two screeves. The third serie contains three screeves. A screeve is a complex category that corresponds to

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person, number, tense, mood and aspect. The first serie contains two screeves in the subjunctive mood (present subjunctive and future subjunctive); the second serie contains one screeve in the subjunctive mood (second subjunctive / optative); the third serie contains one screeve in the subjunctive mood (third subjunctive) (Shanidze 1980). The third subjunctive is used in limited contexts, however its functions have been taken over by the second resultative which is often used with modal forms and expresses modal semantics.

Expression of Mood in Georgian

Mood is the relation between reality and the action denoted by the verb. In Georgian, mood is the category of conjugation and one of the characteristic features of the screeve form. The name of the screeve itself points to the mood. The subjunctive mood is included in all three series. In the first series, there are two subjunctive screeves, one in the present circle (Present Subjunctive), and the other in the future circle (Future Subjunctive). The Second and Third Subjunctive are, respectively, distributed among the second

and third series. The suffixes forming the subjunctive screeves are: *a*, *e* and *o*. In Georgian, subjunctive screeve forms are not used independently, they are found either in hypotactic constructions with other verbs, or with some modal elements, expressing diverse modal semantics. In contemporary Georgian there are widespread biverbal constructions, the first component of which is a modal verb (*minda* I want, *msurs* I wish, *šemizlia* I can, *vcdilob* I try), and the second component is a subjunctive mood form (Kotinov 1986).

Expression of the category of modality in Georgian

Expression of the category of modality is achieved by means of adding modal elements to the verb form. Modal elements are mostly added to subjunctive forms. However, alongside with the modal element, indicative mood forms are also used in order to express modal semantics. Modal semantics is of complex nature in Georgian: the modal element expresses modal semantics, whereas the semantic features of other categories are revealed in the verb form. Thus, in Georgian,

a modal construction embraces a combination of several grammatical characteristics and semantic features. The modal element is not usually found with all screeve forms. In order to denote modal content, different modal elements select different screeve forms.

Expression of Tense in Georgian

The category of tense denotes the relation between the action expressed by the verb and the moment of speaking. In

Georgian scholarly literature there is a widespread opinion that the definition of tense is based on a triple system, which embraces the past, the present and the future. The screeve form also has the features of other categories. This often influences the expression of tense and adds semantic features which may influence the understanding of the tense². In general, certain screeve forms denote certain tenses. The semantic category of tense is expressed in Georgian in the following way:

<p>Past tense</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imperfect – past tense, continuous process, incomplete, continuous action taking place at a certain time in the past (<i>vçerdi I was writing, vašenebdi I was building</i>); 2. Permansive/Conditional – past tense, multiple, repeated action (<i>davçerdi I would write, avaşenebdi I would build</i>); 3. Aorist – past tense, concrete action which happened at a stated time in the past, complete or incomplete action (<i>vçere / davçere, I wrote, vašene / avaşene I built</i>); 4. Resultative I/ Present perfect – the result of the action which happened in the past, unseen action (<i>damiçeria it turned out that I have written, amšenebia it turned out that I have built</i>); 5. Resultative 2 / Past Perfect – action which had happened before a certain time in the past, preceding action (<i>dameçera I had written, amešenebina I had built</i>)
<p>Present tense</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present indefinite – present tense, general, indefinite time (<i>vçer I write, vašeneb I build</i>);

² This refers to the forms where the verb form denotes other tense instead of the main one: for instance: the form of Resultative I expresses either result or evidentiality. However, it can also have the

semantics of the present tense in certain expressions: *momilocavs (=gilocav)...*(congratulations=I congratulate you)

	2. Present Subjunctive – general present, indefinite form, multiple, habitual (<i>vçerde I wish I wrote, vašenebde I wish I built</i>).
Future tense	1. Future – future time (<i>davçer I will write, avaşeneb I will build</i>). 2. Future Subjunctive – future time, desirable action (<i>netav davçerde if only I wrote, netav avaşenebde if only I built</i>). 3. Second Subjunctive – future time, desirable or obligatory action (<i>unda davçero I must write, unda avaşeno I must build</i>). 4. Third Subjunctive – future time, necessity or strong wish (<i>netav demeçeros I wish I may write, netav amešenebinos I wish I may build</i>).

Modal form unda in Georgian

The modal form *unda* has been developed as a result of grammaticalization of the verb *ndoma* (want). It is found only in three screeves. The data of KaWac Corpus³ have clearly proved this fact. The above-mentioned three screeves are: Present Subjunctive, Second Subjunctive and Second

Resultative. These constructions are mostly distributed throughout the tenses as follows: Present Subjunctive denotes general actions, present tense and incomplete aspect, the Second Subjunctive denotes future tense, whereas Second Resultative refers to the past tense.

The screeve form	Context	Position	Tense / Aspect	Semantics
Present Subjunctive	<i>unda vaķetebde (I must be doing)</i>	<i>unda +V</i>	indefinite / present tense / incomplete aspect	Logical necessity, obligation, wish ...
Second Subjunctive	<i>unda gavaķeto (I must do it once)</i> <i>unda vaķeto (I must do it continuously)</i>	<i>unda +V</i>	Future tense, perfective aspect (with preverb), incomplete aspect (without preverb)	Logical necessity, obligation, wish ...
Second Resultative	<i>unda gameķetebina (I must have done it)</i>	<i>unda +V</i>	Past tense, complete aspect (with preverb), incomplete aspect (without preverb)	Logical necessity, obligation, wish ...

³ <http://corpus.leeds.ac.uk/internet.html>

	<i>unda meketebina (I must have been doing it)</i>			
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As the screeve is a complex category in Georgian, we should identify what semantic features the modal construction has taken from the semantics of the screeve.

Present Subjunctive

The main semantics of the Present Subjunctive is to denote general, indefinite tense. The subjunctive mood attaches this screeve the semantics of unreality, whereas the tense is present, general and indefinite. Besides, the semantics of Present Subjunctive denotes continuation, duration, multiple actions. To be more precise, „this is multiplicity, the repetition and continuation of which is desirable or likely“ (Papidze 1984, 91). This screeve may also have the semantics of habitual action. A habitual action may also be related to wish or desire.

Thus, the combination of Present Subjunctive screeve and the modal form უნდა unda has the semantics of specific modality (mostly deontic) expressed by

means of უნდა unda modal form and the semantics of general, indefinite present tense, based on the semantics of the screeve itself. Therefore, **unda + Present Subjunctive** is often used in legal language in order to express deontic modality, usually in the passive voice form: *unda šeesabamebodes (it must correspond), unda inaxebodes (it must be kept), unda escrebodes (he/she must attend)...* (Sharashenidze 2017).

Second Subjunctive

Second Subjunctive is a most widespread screeve of all subjunctive mood forms. It is a screeve of the second series. It originated in ancient times and in Old Georgian it performed the following functions: a) it denoted the future tense of the indicative mood; b) it denoted the semantics of the subjunctive mood and c) it denoted the imperative mood. This functional diversity conditioned its frequent use. However, denoting of the future tense of the indicative

mood is no longer its main function, as, due to the changes in the tense system, a new screeve has been developed which denotes the future tense by adding a preverb to the present tense forms in the majority of verbs. Second Subjunctive still actively denotes the future tense, albeit within the system of the category of modality. **Modal form + Second Subjunctive** construction denotes an action marked with modal semantics and meant to be performed in the future.

Thus, the ancient function of Second Subjunctive – the expression of future tense – continues to exist in contemporary Georgian. It has become more interlinked with the subjunctive mood and has become the most productive expression of the system of modality. This refers not only to the modal form *unda* but to other modal forms as well.

Thus, the function of the second subjunctive in contemporary Georgian may be defined as follows: this screeve is the main form expressing the category of modality in the future tense. Apart from the future tense, its semantics include different modal

semantics of the action to be performed in the future.

Second Resultative

The key function of Second Resultative was and still is the expression of Past Perfect. In Middle Georgian, apart from denoting a result in the past, Second Resultative acquired a new meaning – expression of actions, unseen by the speaker and judged by the latter on the basis of the result (Babunashvili 1995). Thus, the main function of Resultative is to denote the result, and the secondary function is to denote unseen actions.

In general, the forms of the third series were rarely used in Old Georgian, as they were developed comparatively late. Resultative I was used quite often; Resultative II was also used more or less frequently. All scholars agree with the fact that Second resultative screeve took over the functions of Third Subjunctive. The explanation of the above-mentioned phenomenon, however, is related to the

development of the new system of modality. In Old Georgian, the category of modality was expressed by several special verbs (*zal-uc* (can), *egebis* (may), *ǰer-ars* (should), *Qams* (ought to)...). Beginning from the 14th century, as a result of grammaticalization, a new system of expressing modality began to develop – modal elements were formed from verbs, they were added to the main verb form, enriching the latter with modal semantics. As for the expression of tense, there was a strong need for certain language means that would denote all the three tenses. Subjunctive I started to express the semantics of present and future (this was transferred also to the semantics of Present Subjunctive), Subjunctive II expressed the future tense, this was its main characteristic feature. As for Resultative II, it easily found its place in the system due to the following factors: the vividly expressed semantics **of the past tense and result** and **formal** similarity with the subjunctive mood - *gak etebuliqo* - *had been done* (Resultative II) - *gak etebuliqos- may it*

be done (Subjunctive III). As a result, the tense system of expressing modality became perfect, and the functions and frequency of use of Resultative II increased radically.

Georgian Language Teaching – Modality and Tense

Acquisition of modal constructions is an important part of language teaching. Modal constructions express the speaker's attitude to the idea expressed by the sentence. In this regard, at a certain stage of language teaching these constructions are frequently addressed. It is very important for the learner to grasp the rules of formation of these constructions. In this respect, several principles should be taken into account: 1. The relation between modal constructions and tenses. 2. In-advance explanation of the screeve forms included in these constructions, and 3. Compiling of special exercises aimed at the acquisition of modal constructions (insertion, filling the gaps, transformation of sentences into other tenses).

Tense, Aspect, Mood and Modality in Georgian - unda

	Present, general /indefinite tense	Future tense	Past tense
Aspect	Incomplete aspect <i>unda ketdebodes</i> (must be done)	Incomplete aspect <i>unda aketos</i> (must do every day) Complete aspect <i>unda gaaketos</i> (must do once)	Incomplete aspect <i>unda eketebina</i> (must have been doing) Complete aspect <i>unda gaaketebina</i> (must have done)
Screeve	Present Subjunctive	Second Subjunctive	Second Resultative
Formation of the screeve	stem + d /od-e	stem + e, o, a	Monopersonal verbs: Participle + auxiliary verb in the past (<i>viqavi / iqavi / iqo</i> / was were) Bipersonal intransitive verbs: <i>-od-i</i> Bipersonal transitive verbs: <i>-ebin / -in</i>
Modal form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>unda</i> (must/wants), <i>undoda</i> (wanted), <i>šeizleba</i> (may), <i>šeizleboda</i> (it was possible), • <i>ikneb</i> (maybe), <i>egeb</i> (might), <i>lamis</i> (almost), <i>vinzlo</i> (probably), <i>titkos</i> (as if), <i>titkmis</i> (nearly), <i>vitom</i> (as though), <i>netav</i> (I wish), <i>barem</i> (also), <i>oğond</i> (on condition that/if only), <i>tunda</i> (even if).. • <i>surda</i> (wished), <i>cdilobda</i> (tried), <i>ğirda</i> (it was worth), <i>saçiro iqo</i> (it was necessary), 		
Examples	<i>unda ketdebodes</i> (must be done every day) <i>unda tbebodes</i> (must get warm every day) <i>unda çerdes</i> (must write every day)	<i>unda gaaketos</i> (must do) <i>unda gatbes</i> (must get warm) <i>unda daçeros</i> (must write)	<i>unda gaaketebuliqo</i> (must have been done) <i>unda gamtbariqo</i> (must have got warm) <i>unda daeçera</i> (must have written)

	<i>unda esalmebides</i> (must greet every day)	<i>unda miesalmos</i> (must greet)	<i>unda misalmeboda</i> (must have greeted)
	<i>unda ašenebdes</i> (must build every day)	<i>unda aašenos</i> (must build)	<i>unda aešenebina</i> (must have built)

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