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Category of Evidentiality in the Kartvelian Languages: Problems, History of the Question Study, Prospects

Study of any universal linguistic category according to grammatical and semantic characteristics is based on four main principles: determining the range of problems, history of the study of the question, genesis of the question and typology. The present paper, which is prepared within the project funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation – *Evidentiality in the Kartvelian Languages* (№217300), is aimed to demonstrate on the basis of material of the Kartvelian languages the problem of the category of evidentiality and its urgency. These activities are based on the history of the study of this issue and determine future prospective.

Evidentiality is a universal category by means of which **the speaker expresses his/her attitude towards the utterance with reference to the source of information**; therefore, it is naturally related to cognition. However, primarily it remains an object of linguistic study, as analysis of any psychological perception begins with linguistic expression. The interest towards the question is also intensified by the fact that this category is attested in languages of different structures. The study by Aikhenvald includes the grammatical evidence of more than 500 languages (2004); of the Kartvelian languages it contains the evidence of the Georgian and the Svan languages. These languages, together with Megrelian and Laz, are united in the family of the Southern Caucasian (Kartvelian) languages.

The study of evidentiality in the Kartvelian languages began at the end of the 20th c. by foreign as well as Georgian authors and the results of study were reflected in scholarly articles and monographs (Boeder 2000, Sumbatova 2007, Topadze 2011, Margiani 2012). Different viewpoints were expressed concerning the **genesis** of evidentiality of the Kartvelian languages: some scholars assume that evidentiality is a phenomenon characteristic of the Kartvelian languages proper, according to other viewpoint, the existence of evidentiality in the Kartvelian languages is explained by the influence of the Turkish language. These viewpoints are expressed taking into account the synchronic evidence of the Georgian, Svan, and partially Megrelian languages. To demonstrate fully the **history of the question, and, which is the most important, to solve the problem it is necessary** to study **comprehensively** the

means of rendering the category of evidentiality by means of comparison and juxtaposition of evidence of all the four Kartvelian languages - Georgian, Svan, Megrelian and Laz - and by consideration of the Georgian literary language on the diachronic level. After this, the well-grounded answers will be given to following questions:

- Is this category developed on the Kartvelian foundation proper?
- Was this category developed in the Kartvelian languages under the influence of a foreign language (namely, Turkish)?
- Was the foundation of this category present in the Kartvelian languages proper, whereas another language (namely, Turkish) performed only the role of a catalyst for its development?

The above-mentioned scholarly grant is intended for the study of the category of evidentiality in the Kartvelian languages, which will be implemented in 2016-2019 at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University on the basis of the Scientific-Educational Institute of the Georgian Languages with the participation of professors and teachers K. Margiani, R. Kurdadze, M. Lomia and Ph.D student M. Maduashvili.

By means of the relevant methodology, the study will be founded on the extensive empiric material – printed texts and electronic databases. The obtained results will lead to the correct answers to the above-mentioned questions. At the same time, the comprehensive study of the question according to the evidence of the Kartvelian languages is a **novelty**, which is significant not only for demonstration of the similarities and differences of the above-mentioned languages, but for the theoretical and interdisciplinary studies as well.

Reference:

1. **Aikhenvald 2004** – A. Aikhenvald, Evidentiality. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. **Boeder 2000** – W. Boeder, Evidentiality in Georgian, Evidentials, Turkic, Iranian and Neighbouring Languages, *edited by* Lars Johnson Bo Utas, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin – New York.
3. **2007** – . , , - .
4. **Topadze Gäumann 2011** – M. Topadze Gäumann, The Expression of evidentiality between lexicon and grammar. A case study from Georgian, *Linguistic Discovery* 9, 2, Dartmouth.
5. **Margiani 2012** – K. Margiani, The Category of Evidentiality in the Svan Language, Publishing House Global-Printi, Tbilisi.