

Verbs borrowed from Georgian in the Tsova-Tush language

Author: Kakashvili Diana, Arnold Chikobava institute of linguistics

Tbilisi, Georgia, P. Ingorokva 8.

Email: Diana.kakashvili783@hum.tsu.edu.ge

Abstract

There are numerous verb forms borrowed from the Georgian language in Tsova-Tush, which constitute an essential component of the vocabulary. This article examines the methods and strategies of phonetic and morphosyntactic adaptation of borrowed forms.

The direct borrowing of verbs from Georgian into Tsova-Tush, in verb form, does not occur. Tsova-Tush borrows solely the verbal noun, masdar, shaping it through its own auxiliary verbs, **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**. The first of these produces transitive verbs, while the second one generates intransitive verbs through affixation to both their own and borrowed stems. The elements **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**, in this case, serve a verb derivational function, affixing all inflectional elements, while the main content is expressed through the masdar. Consequently, Georgian Masdars are marked as verbs in Tsova-Tush.

Hence, it can be asserted that all borrowed verbs in Tsova-Tush undergo composite formation: a complex verb is created by using the borrowed Masdar with its own verb derivational elements, specifically auxiliary verbs.

In addition to phonetic adjustments, a morpho-syntactic adaptation of borrowed verbs takes place, facilitated by the aforementioned auxiliary verbs, resulting in their verbification.

the adaptation of borrowed forms from Georgian into the Tsova-Tush language encompasses several stages: a) adaptation to the phonemic structure of the receiving language; b) verbification of a borrowed word; c) to determine its valency: **d-ar** always derives a transitive verb, while **d-al-ar** derives an intransitive one. Additionally, marking it as a verb and determining the inflectional class are accomplished by the same derivatives.

Key words: Tsova-Tush language, verbal borrowings, adaptation of borrowings

Introduction

There are numerous verb forms borrowed from the Georgian language in Tsova-Tush, which constitute an essential component of the vocabulary. This article examines the methods and strategies of phonetic and morphosyntactic adaptation of borrowed forms. All examples provided herein are derived from the "Tsova-Tush-Georgian-Russian Dictionary" authored by Davit and Niko Kadagidze (Kadagidze, Kadagidze 1984).

Nowadays, approximately 500 people speak Tsova-Tush in Georgia, in the village of Zemo Alvani (Wichers Schreur 2021 : 15), Akhmeta Municipality. All individuals who speak this language are bilingual; in addition to their native Tsova-Tush, they also speak Georgian. It belongs to the Nakh group, yet for centuries it has coexisted with Georgian within the same political, cultural, and geographical space, resulting in active interference processes. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Tsova-Tush people started resettling from the mountains to the plains. Since then, the influence of the Georgian language on Tsova-Tush has gradually increased, particularly taking a robust form in the twentieth century with the establishment of educational schools, the emergence of television, magazines, and newspapers functioning in the Georgian language. While Tsova-Tush mainly retained its role solely for communication within the family and the community. The transmission of the language experienced significant delays, leading to a gradual decrease in the number of speakers. This process was further facilitated by mixed marriages and a high rate of urbanization.

Principal part

Nowadays, the influence of Georgian on Tsova-Tush is notably strong, encompassing all levels of the language system. This is evident in the significant number of lexical loanwords. Unlike grammatical loanwords, lexical units are most easily subject to borrowing. Compared to other parts of speech, nouns are borrowed most frequently. Among the 1819 nouns listed in the dictionary by Davit and Niko Kadagidze, 1259 (60%) are borrowed from Georgian or Russian (Wichers Schreur 2021).

Unlike borrowed nominals, which are adapted in Tsova-Tush with only phonetic changes in most cases, the adaptation of verbs is a more complex and multifaceted process, involving phonetic, morphological, and sometimes semantic transformations.

The direct borrowing of verbs from Georgian into Tsova-Tush, in verb form, does not occur. Tsova-Tush borrows solely the verbal noun, *masdar*, shaping it through its own auxiliary verbs, **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**. The first of these produces transitive verbs, while the second one generates intransitive verbs through affixation to both their own and borrowed stems. The elements **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**, in this case, serve a verb derivational function, affixing all inflectional elements, while the main content is expressed through the *masdar*. Consequently, Georgian *Masdars* are marked as verbs in Tsova-Tush. It is noteworthy that certain medial verbs with an intransitive content in Georgian undergo formation with the transitive suffix **d-ar** in Tsova-Tush, for instance, **mushebad-d-ar** 'to work', **bardol-d-ar** 'to snow heavily', **zhivzhiv-d-ar** 'to chirp', **chkharchkhar-d-ar** 'to jingle' and so forth. Since Georgian *masdars* are not marked according to transitivity or intransitivity, in Tsova-Tush they are often presented in pairs, featuring both **d-ar** and **d-al-ar** formants. In this case, transitivity is determined by its own derivational patterns, for instance, intransitive: **gapant'od-d-al-ar** 'to scatter', transitive: **gapant'od-d-ar** 'to scatter' and so forth.

The verb **d-ar** also serves as a full verb, signifying 'to do', but within the provided construction, its meaning is predominantly abstracted. In the majority of tense-mood forms, realization occurs solely through a class marker, whereas in the Aorist, the vowel **-i** appears along with the gender prefix. The etymology of the element **d-al-ar** is ambiguous, and as an autonomous verb, it is no longer in current use. In both the present and imperfect forms derived from it, it loses its gender class sign and takes the form of the **-la** suffix (Hauk, Harris 2019 : 26).

Hence, it can be asserted that all borrowed verbs in Tsova-Tush undergo compound formation: a complex verb is created by using the borrowed *masdar* with its own verb derivational

elements, specifically auxiliary verbs. The vast majority of these exhibit a uniform structure. There is only one strategy for adapting borrowed forms in Tsova-Tush, as mentioned above.

There are single cases when in Tsova-Tush, through the use of nouns borrowed from Georgian and auxiliary verbs **d-ar**, **d-al-ar**, a complex, compound verb is also derived. This method is less productive and lies beyond the scope of our observation.

The phonological systems of the Georgian and Tsova-Tush languages are similar to each other, yet their word base structures and consonant complexes differ. Consequently, in order to adapt to the phonetic system of the Tsova-Tush language, certain phonetic alterations occur in borrowed verb derivational nouns: reduction, metathesis, vowel removal, and so forth. Tsova-Tush is characterized by the tendency to avoid polysyllables (Gagua 1972 : 24). Simultaneously, with few exceptions, three-consonant sequences are uncommon in Tsova-Tush, leading to a process of superation, whereby all polysyllabic words borrowed from Georgian are simplified as much as possible and fit into the Tsova-Tush phonetic system.

In addition to phonetic adjustments, a morpho-syntactic adaptation of borrowed verbs takes place, facilitated by the aforementioned auxiliary verbs, resulting in their verbification.

-a is the most productive suffix to form masdars in the Georgian language. Sometimes it is affixed directly to the verb stem, while in other cases it is preceded by certain thematic marker (Gogolashvili et al. 2011 : 263). Verbal nouns are also produced by **-il/-ul**, **si - il**, **si - ul** affixes.

As previously mentioned, Tsova-Tush borrows masdar forms from Georgian, primarily those produced with the **-a** suffix, resulting in all of them ending in a vowel. The borrowing of verb derivational nouns formed with other affixes can be considered an exceptional case.

When borrowing, in some cases, mostly polysyllabic stems have their thematic marker removed, along with the masdar suffix, But it is noteworthy that in all of them, the consonant **-d** precedes the derivatives **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**, for instance, in Tsova-Tush **ak'leba-d-d-ar** ← in Georgian **ak'leba** 'beseige' , in Tsova-Tush **breka-d-d-al-ar** ← in Georgian **breka** 'boast' and so forth.

We have not encountered verbs borrowed from Georgian in Tsova-Tush that deviate from the described rule and are used as a simple verb stem. It is interesting to note that Tsova-Tush employs the means of the source language to transform the verb stem into a noun i.e. it borrows a ready-to-use masdar form. Borrowing verbs as nouns is a common phenomenon and is attested in many languages (Wichman 2008 : 1). Additionally, the most common form involves using the verb 'to do' as an auxiliary verb, although other verbs are also used. (Wichman 2008 : 104).

Borrowed unmarked verbal nouns do not undergo any phonetic changes; they merely add verb derivational elements and are formed into a verb. Relevant examples are provided in the first table. Similar to Georgian, the preverb forms belong to the perfect aspect, whereas non-preverb forms pertain to the imperfect aspect, therefore, the preverb forms are specified in brackets.

Table №1

Tsova-Tush	Georgian	gloss
(mo)pkhek'a-d-d-ar	(mo)pkhek'a	scrape
(da)c'era-d-d-ar	(da)c'era-a	write
zhlet'a-d-d-ar	zhlet'-a	massacre

rbeva-d-d-ar	rbev-a	raid
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As already mentioned, the majority of thematic markers are partially or completely lost. Typically, the thematic marker **-eb** loses its vowel component, rarely disappears entirely. Additionally, **-v** with the thematic marker **-av**, followed by the initial **-a** suffix, results in **-o** in Tsova-Tush, because the Georgian sequence of **va** is almost always realized as **o** in Tsova-Tush.

Table №2

Tsova-Tush	Georgian	gloss
abargo-d-al-ar	abarg-eb-a	move
agrilba-d-al-ar	agril-eb-a	cool
kirba-d-ar	(da)kirav-eb-a	rent
baro-d-d-ar	bar-v-a	dig
gamarto-d-d-ar	gamart-v-a	hold
gapant'o-d-d-ar	gapant'-v-a	scatter
damora-d-d-ar	damor-v-a	cut into logs

In Georgian, the preverb has multiple functions: it denotes direction, orientation, generates future tense forms, alters the lexical meaning of the word, expresses the full aspect, etc. (Gogolashvili et al. 2011 : 308). In many cases, in the forms borrowed from the Georgian language, the preverb has retained its function of distinguishing aspect: Preverb forms belong to the perfective aspect, whereas non-preverb forms pertain to the imperfective aspect, for instance, **ga-zhletaddar** 'massacre' belongs to the perfective aspect, **zhletaddar** is imperfective, similar to them is **ga-beddodar** 'dare' and **beddodar**, etc. It should be noted within this framework that certain verb forms, which distinguish aspect in Georgian, lack aspect in Tsova-Tush, and the preverb is also omitted. If the preverb modifies the lexical meaning of the word, it will always be preserved, as observed in cases involving aspect distinction. However, in other instances, it is entirely lost.

In the Georgian examples provided in the table, the preverb is separated by a hyphen.

Table №3

Tsova-Tush	Georgian	gloss
tavzeba-d-d-ar	she-tavazeba	offer
nelba-d-d-ar	mo-neleba	digest
ocba-d-d-al-ar	ga-oceba	astonish
(da)kliba-d-d-ar	ga-klibva	file

(da)c'era-d-ar	da-c'era	write
gamopuğra-d-d-ar	gamo-puğuroeba	hollow
gamockhadba-d-d-al-ar <i>INTR.</i>	gamo-ckhadeba	announce
ga-mockhadba-d-d-ar		
garidba-d-d-ar <i>TR.</i>	ga-rideba	avoid
garidba-d-d-al-ar		
dat'eva-d-d-ar	da-t'eva	contain
mocdena-d-d-ar,	mo-cdena	Idle, loaf
mocdena-d-d-al-ar		

Based on the empirical evidence outlined above, the question arises regarding the significance of the final **-d** consonant in the borrowed stem, which initially appears to lack functionality. There has been no extensive discussion about it in the scientific literature; however, two perspectives have been expressed: 1) It should be an ending of the adverbial case of the Georgian language (Gagua, Holisky 1994 : 185) and 2) It might possibly serve as a fossilised gender class marker. Rusudan Gagua poses this final assumption as a question in her letter "General Rules of Loanwords in Batsbi". However, no reasoning or arguments regarding this issue are provided, which can also be observed regarding the first assumption. Both viewpoints are accompanied by contradictions, provoke questions, and necessitate further justification. What should the function of the adverbial case or grammatical class marker be in this instance? As mentioned, all borrowed root-stems, except for the **-d** element, are also formed by the morphemes **d-ar** and **d-al-ar**. Both of them are class-marked auxiliary verbs. Double agreement in gender is natural for Tsova-Tush in cases where the simple verb stem is class-marked and the mentioned auxiliary verbs are affixed to it. However, in this case, it is unclear what the function of the second, fossilized, unchanging class marker should have been. As a rule, the gender marker of the object in the Tsova-Tush verb is fossilized, which can be represented not only by **-d** but also by **-v**, **-j**, or **-b**.

The adverbial case serves the function of expressing transformability and adverbial function in modern Georgian. In Old Georgian, the initial and auxiliary verbs, when placed in the adverbial case, created circumstantial-masdar and complement-masdar constructions, as well as expressed future tense forms (Ukleba 2001:19), but these functions are not evident in Tsova-Tush. Moreover, such constructions are no longer present in modern Georgian. Aram Martirosov observes that the masdar placed in the adverbial case ceased to evolve in Georgian since the 10th century and gradually became obsolete. However, it continued to serve the function of expressing purpose-related circumstances in

literary Georgian until the 12th-13th centuries (Ukleba 2001 : 6). Shota Dzidziguri highlights that *masdar*, placed in the adverbial case, was retained solely within live spoken language, mountain dialects, such as Khevsurian and Tushetian (Ukleba 2001 :12). Tsova-Tush borrows verbs from Georgian in the form described above currently as well.

In addition to the fact that in Tsova-Tush, the functions of the *masdar* placed in the adverbial case, similar to Georgian, are not confirmed in those complex verbs of identical structure where a proper noun or another noun is used instead of a borrowed one, there is no rule governing the use of the adverbial case. As usual, auxiliary verbs are affixed to the bare stem. For instance, **c'eg-eⁿ** 'red', **c'eg-d-ar** 'redden', **c'eg-d-al-ar** intransitive, **mal-ar** 'to drink', **mal-d-ar** 'to give someone something to drink'. The nominal part assumes absolutive or any of the oblique cases, including adverbial, within the composites derived from the predicative syntagm, where it serves as a complement of the verb. In Georgian, *masdar* placed in the adverbial case represents the complement of a verb, primarily a direct object, In the examples provided above, this function is not evident; the *masdars* borrowed from Georgian do not signify the complement of Tsova-Tush auxiliary verbs.

Rostom Pareulidze examines Georgian loanwords in the Kist dialect and highlights that a strategy similar to Tsova-Tush, involving the formation of *masdars* with the **-d** suffix, is also applicable here. The author questions the origin of this suffix; however, no reasoning is provided regarding this issue (Pareulidze 2010 : 82).

In the auxiliary verb, which appears next to the *masdar*, the class marker of the argument, typically in the nominative case but occasionally in the ergative, is reflected. When the argument in question belongs to the **d-** class, two **d**'s converge at the morpheme boundary, which is unnatural in Tsova-Tush, leading to the loss of one of them. If the noun is classified under a different gender class, then no restrictions apply. When only one of the two **d**'s remains in a complex verb, the question arises: should it be classified as a gender class marker of the auxiliary verb or as a quantity presented as a suffix of the *masdar*? By different authors it is sometimes analyzed as part of the auxiliary verb and sometimes as part of the Georgian *masdar*. We believe it should function as a prefix of the auxiliary verb, as it serves a verb derivational function and is primarily realized as a gender class marker. As demonstrated earlier, without it, a Georgian *masdar* cannot be marked as a verb in Tsova-Tush.

Given that the gender class marker in the forms created by **d-al-ar** is generally unstable and is lost in certain tense-mood forms, therefore most examples below are transitive verbs formed by **d-ar**:

(1) **atkvlepa-d-d-ar** 'to slurp'

p̄har -a -v shur atkvepa-d -j -inor

dog -OBL-ERG milk.J slurp -D -CL.J-EVID

'The dog has slurped up milk'. In the given verb **-j** is a gender class marker of milk.

(2) **ak'leba-d-d-ar** 'to besiege'

mastkhov-a -s dejnĭ (dĭnĭ) p̄he ak'leba -d -b -ij -eⁿ

enemy-OBL-ERG entire village.B besiege -D -CL.B-TR-AOR

‘The enemy besieged the entire village’. A direct object, a village belonging to the class **b-** is presented after the suffix **-d** in the mentioned verb.

In the following examples, the presence of only one **-d** is notable, as direct complement in both instances falls within the gender class **d-**.

(3) **Dac’era-d-d-ar** ‘to write’

as žagnõ dac’era -d -in -as

1SG.ERG letter.D write -CL.D-AOR-1SG.ERG

‘I wrote a letter’.

(4) **beč’da-d-d-ar** ‘to print’

oqus žagnu -j beč’da -d -o

3SG.ERG book.D-PL print -CL.D-PRS

‘he/she prints the books’

Regarding the function of **-d** itself, its origin could be attributed to phonetic considerations. Since Tsova-Tush is characterized solely by verb stems ending in a consonant - (C)V(C)C structure, there are very few verb stems that end in a vowel, approximately ten. Schiffner still refers to this and provides a list of the relevant units (Schiffner 2856 : 51), Georgian *masdars* end in a vowel, but through the addition of the consonant **-d**, they are transformed into a consonant final base, for instance, **akhundzad-d-alar** ← Georgian *akhundzvla* , **Gamartod-d-ar** ← Georgian *gamartva* and so forth.

When a consonant final noun is borrowed and an auxiliary verb is added, the letter **-d** is notably absent, it is no longer placed in the "adverbial case", for instance, **mors-dar**, Georgian *mosrva* ‘massacre’, **ghonar-dar**, Georgian *gaghonivreba* ‘strengthen’, **k’avk’av-dar**, Georgian *k’avk’avi* ‘shiver’, **markh-dar**, Georgian *markhva* ‘fast’ and so forth.

Conclusion

Consequently, the adaptation of borrowed forms from Georgian into the Tsova-Tush language encompasses several stages: a) adaptation to the phonemic structure of the receiving language; b) verbification of a borrowed word; c) to determine its valency: **d-ar** always derives a transitive verb, while **d-al-ar** derives an intransitive one. Additionally, marking it as a verb and determining the inflectional class are accomplished by the same derivatives.

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