**MIDDLE MTSQRVELI**

**The Official Grammar**

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**Appendix A: List of Glossing Abbreviations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | First-person |
| 2 | Second-person |
| 3 | Third-person |
| abe | Abessive case |
| acc | Accusative case |
| age | Agentive nominalizer |
| antc | Antecedent |
| bvh | Back vowel harmony |
| dat | Dative case |
| def | Definite |
| dem | Demonstrative |
| du | Dual |
| fvh | Front vowel harmony |
| gen | Genitive case |
| indef | Indefinite |
| int | Interrogative |
| nom | Nominative case |
| past | Past tense |
| pf | Proform |
| pl | Plural |
| rec | Recent aspect |
| sg | Singular |

**2. Phonology**

**Sound Changes from Old Mtsqrveli**

Lowering of mid-vowels /e̞, o̞/ to /ɛ, ɔ/ everywhere

Alveolo-palatals /t͡ɕ, d͡ʑ, ɕ/ to palato-alveolars /t͡ʃ, d͡ʒ, ʃ/ everywhere

/χ/ to /x/ everywhere

/h/ elided between vowels

/h/ to /x/ before front vowels /a, e, i/

Voicing assimiliation: /ɣ/ to /x/ after an unvoiced consonant

/v/ to /b/ after /o/

/bv/ to /b/ everywhere

/v/ elided after any vowel + before /o/

Rounding: /a/ to /o/ between bilabials /m, b, pʰ, pʼ/

/ɛ/ inserted after /o/ + before /tʰ, tʼ/

/a/ inserted after high vowels /i, u/ + before voiced alveolar non-sibilants /n, r, d/

/ɛa/ to /ia/ everywhere

**3. Morphology**

**3.1 Nominal & Pronomial Morphology**

**3.1.1 Number & Pluralization**

Middle Mtsqrveli makes a three-way number distinction between singular, dual, plural; the lemmata of nouns and pronouns are singular.

Both nouns and pronouns are made dual by the addition of the prefix *tv-*; this is a truncated form of the numeral *tvi* “two”. Unlike plural nouns, dual nouns always take the prefix *tv-* regardless of if they begin with a consonant or vowel. For example, **jve** “cloud” becomes **tvjve** “two clouds”, and **ena** “house” becomes **tvena** “two houses” in the dual.

Note that *tv-* is pronounced as its own, single, vowel-less syllable and does not *phonemically* become the onset of the next syllable if the word begins with a vowel: **tvena** is pronounced, officially, with 3 syllables, as /tʰv.ˈɛ.na/, not /ˈtʰvɛ.na/ - although, in a colloquial register, it might be allophonically realized as 2 syllables, like [ˈt̪vɛː.nɐ]. Note also from the preceding example that *tv-* is unstressed and the addition of *tv-* does not affect the preexistent placement of stress within the stem.

Most nouns are pluralized by the addition of the prefix *a(b)-*; that is, *a-* before words beginning in a consonant, but *ab-* before words begininng with a vowel. Thus **jve** “cloud” becomes **ajve** “clouds”, and **ena** “house” becomes **abena** “houses” in the plural.

Like the dual prefix *tv-*, *a(b)-* comprises its own, single, open syllable, and the /b/ in it does not carry over into the onset of the next syllable: **abena** is pronounced /ab.ˈɛ.na/, not /a.ˈbɛ.na/, not only in the formal register but also in colloquial registers. Again, note that *a(b)-* is unstressed and its addition does not affect the preexistent placement of stress within the stem.

Some nouns’ plural forms, rather than with *a(b)-*, are pluralized by the addition of the suffix *-ba*. This is really a collective suffix that has suppleted the plural prefix in some cases, especially (but not solely) words ending in *-ma*, which change to *-moba* with the addition of *-ba* due to sound change. (see also §3.1.17, Collective Nouns) For example, while *abema* is technically a word, the more standard plural form of **ema** “language” to use is **emoba** “languages”.

Pronouns are pluralized differently from nouns – in fact, this is the only paradigmatic difference in inflection between nouns and pronouns. Pronouns are pluralized by the addition of the prefix *md-*. Thus, **txas** “I” becomes **mdtxas** “we”, **dạ** “you” (singular) becomes **mdạ** “you all”, and **kart** “he/she/it” becomes **mdkart** “they” in the plural. (Note that in the case of **mdạ** the ‹d› in the prefix *md-* is truncated because geminates are illegal in Middle Mtsqrveli.)

If the noun exists in any other number, this is indicated by a determiner. Where such a determiner is present, the noun is kept in its singular form; the determiner suffices to indicate plurality and the noun should *not* be made plural. Principal among these determiners are numerals, so for example, the correct expression of “four mountains” from **dzol** “mountain” would be **dari dzol**, not \**dari adzol*.

Technically this leaves open the possibility of expressing the dual with the numeral *tvi* instead of the prefix *tv-*; however, this is proscribed in formal registers and *most* colloquial registers: “two mountains” should be expressed as **tvdzol**, not \**tvi dzol*.

Other determiners that are not numerals do exist, e.g. **diobani** “many”, from whence **diobani dzol** “many mountains”; however, these are few and far between, and many expressions that are indeed determiners in English, like “few” or “some”, are actually nouns in Middle Mtsqrveli, e.g. *ạrlo* “a few” and *mk’a* “some [implictly, not all]”. In order to express the number of a noun with one of these expressions, they must take the genitive case to form a genitive construction with one of these expressions as the phrase head, e.g. **mk’a mcreli** “some women” or “some of the women”:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **mk’a** | **mc(a)r** | **-eli** |
| some | woman | gen.indef |

Even in cases like these, the noun to be pluralized – the noun in the genitive case – still is not pluralized itself with the prefix *a(b)-*; the expression *mk’a* suffices to indicate plurality and e.g. \**mk’a amcreli* is proscribed.

**3.1.2 Indefinite Nominative Case**

The indefinite nominative is one of two nominative cases in Middle Mtsqrveli which, pursuant to the nominative-accusative morphosyntactic alignment, mark the agent in a transitive clause and the sole argument in an intransitive clause.

The indefinite nominative is the “default”, or citation form for nouns in Middle Mtsqrveli. As such, it is futile to speak of how to construct the indefinite nominative. The description of all other cases is made in reference to the indefinite nominative case.

The indefinite nominative is often, though not always, equivalent to the root itself. For example, **cvan** “head” is the nominative indefinite form corresponding to the root *cvan-*. It is also common for indefinite nominative forms to be comprised of the root followed by a vowel, such as **dzto** “leaf”, where the root is *dzt-*.

However, it sometimes also has other letters attached which are found only in the indefinite nominative form; the root itself gives no indication of this, and which roots have extra letters – and also which letters – in the indefinite nominative form is entirely unpredictable. For example, the word **dados** “high wall” is in the indefinite form, but the root is *dad-*, as this is the only part of the word that appears in other inflections of the word for different cases. However, *-os* does not mark the indefinite nominative; in fact, it doesn’t mean anything – it’s just “part of the word”, and only a handful of nouns end in ­*-os*. But there is nothing about the root ­*dad-* to suggest that it should be followed up with *-os* other than prior knowledge of the word *dados*.

*-s* (such as in **gavs** “land, country”)and *-os* (such as in **dados** “high wall”) are the most common endings in the indefinite nominative form that get removed in other inflections.

**3.1.3 Definite Nominative Case**

The definite nominative is the other nominative case in Middle Mtsqrveli which serves the same syntactic role as the indefinite nominative. In contrast to the indefinite nominative it is used, as the name suggests, to indicate that the noun is definite – or, more precisely, to *emphasize* that the noun is definite, as context itself is sometimes sufficient for a noun to be understood as definite without the need for a definite case.

The definite nominative is constructed with the noun root plus *-ia*. In practice, this is equivalent to *-ia* being directly suffixed to the indefinite nominative form if it ends in a consonant, or ­*-ia* replacing the vowel at the end if the indefinite form ends in a vowel. Thus, **cvan** becomes **cvania** and **dzto** becomes **dztia** in the definite nominative case. Remember again that some citation forms include extra letters not part of the root that must be removed from the indefinite nominative before inflecting for other cases – including the definite nominative – and so **gavs** becomes **gavia** and **dados** becomes **dadia** in the definite nominative case.

**3.1.4 Indefinite Accusative Case**

The indefinite accusative is one of two accusative cases in Middle Mtsqrveli which, pursuant to the nominative-accusative morphosyntactic alignment, mark the patient of a transitive clause.

The indefinite accusative is constructed as:

**indefinite nominative form + epenthetic vowel + *d***

The epenthetic vowel is required if the noun 1) ends in a consonant, and 2) that consonant is not a fricative (including lateral and sibilant fricatives), i.e. ‹v›, ‹gh›, ‹x›, ‹l›, ‹s›, ‹z›, ‹š› or ‹ž›, as a consequence of Middle Mtsqrveli’s phonological constraints. Else – if the noun ends in a vowel or any of the aforementioned consonants, the epenthetic vowel is not used. Where the epenthetic is used, it is always ‹i›.

Thus, **cvan** becomes **cvanid**, **dzto** becomes **dztod**, **gavs** becomes **gavd**, and **dados** becomes **dadid** in the indefinite accusative case.

Similar to how the definite nominative is used to emphasize definiteness, the indefinite accusative is used – in favor over of the definite accusative – to emphasize the noun’s indefiniteness. For noncount nouns, it can be used instead of the definite accusative to lend a partitive aspect to the noun:

**Kart mdno čelad.** He drinks some milk. vs. **Kart mdno čelis.** He drinks milk. OR He drinks the milk.

It also tends to be used relatively liberally with indefinite direct objects which are 1) countable, and 2) concrete or tangible:

**Gvse-da t’ạdl-oba-d.** You pick up coins. OR You pick up some coins.

pick\_up-2.sg.sub coin-pl-acc.indef

**Md-kart az-t geli ena-d.** They saw seven houses.

pl-3 see-aor seven house-acc.indef

In contrast, even if the direct object is indefinite, it tends not to take the indefinite accusative case if it is either 1) non-count, or 2) abstract, unless the speaker intends to emphasize the indefiniteness of the direct object. Otherwise, the definite accusative case is used instead:

**Rk’id-ia gari-a-t qrha-d.** The craftsman bought *some* bronze [non-count].

craftsman-nom.def buy-3.sg.sub-aor bronze-acc.indef

vs. **Rk’id-ia gari-a-t qrxis.** The craftsman bought bronze. OR The craftsman bought the bronze.

craftsman-nom.def buy-3.sg.sub-aor bronze.acc.def

**K’maroni mecixvosam-ia iš-meši-a-t mčema-d.** The rival barony started *one* war [abstract].

rival barony-nom.def caus-begin-3.sg.sub-aor war-acc.indef

vs. **K’maroni mecixvosam-ia iš-meši-a-t mčema-s.** The rival barony started a war. OR The rival barony started the war.

rival barony-nom.def caus-begin-3.sg.sub-aor war-acc.def

Additionally, the indefinite accusative case is always used to mark the patient of a negative transitive clause, acting as a pseudo-partitive case. The reasoning thought to underly this is that, if the action did not happen, then it did not affect *any* patient (much less a *specific* patient), which is an indefinite quantity. Thus, **eq’iop’ia antioet mkvasi enis** “the farmer built his own house” becomes **eq’iop’ia meantioet mkvasi enad** “the farmer did not build his own house” in the negative; note that the direct object, “house”, has switched from its definite form **enis** to its indefinite form **enad** in the negative sentence.

**3.1.5 Definite Accusative Case**

The definite accusative is the other accusative case in Middle Mtsqrveli which serves the same syntactic role as the indefinite accusative – marking the patient of a transitive clause – but which also (in theory) encodes definiteness.

The definite accusative is constructed as:

**noun stem (possible consonant mutation) + *i* or *a* + s**

In this context, the noun stem is either 1) indistinguishable from the indefinite nominative form if it ends in a consonant, or 2) if it ends in a vowel, the indefinite nominative form minus that word-final vowel. To the noun stem is then appended the suffix *-is*; this can also be analyzed as *-is* replacing the word-final vowel if it exists.

Thus, **k’erk’eti** “cork” becomes **k’erk’etis**, **mepe** “dawn” becomes **mepis**, **čin** “door” becomes **činis**, and **rxab** “neck” becomes **rxabis** in the definite accusative case.

The usual practice of removing a word-final ‹s› directly preceded by a consonant or ‹os› before inflection applies here. Thus, **dados** becomes **dadis** and **gavs** becomes **gavis** in the definite accusative case.

The exceptions begin with nouns whose indefinite nominative form ends in a bilabial/labiodental consonant + ‹a›; that is, any noun ending in ‹pa›, ‹p’a›, ‹ba›, ‹ma› or ‹va›. These nouns are marked only by *-s* in the definite accusative case; the ‹i› in *-is* does not replace the ‹a› at the end of the word as it usually would. Thus, **qema** “cheese” becomes **qemas**, not *\*qemis*, and **emoba** “languages” becomes **emobas**, not *\*emobis* in the definite accusative case.

The next exception to note is if the final consonant in the noun stem is an alveolar sibilant (either fricative or affricate) – that is, in ‹s›, ‹z›, ‹c›, ‹c’› or ‹dz› – it mutates to ‹d› before adding *-is*. Thus, **švce** “mountainside” becomes **švdis**, not *\*švcis*, **ladz** “sand” becomes **ladis**, not *\*ladzis*, **txas** becomes **txadis**, not *\*txasis* (reminder that word-final ‹s› is only removed if directly preceded by a consonant) and **sqamts** “dry ground” becomes **sqamdis**, not *\*sqamcis* in the definite accusative.

(Note also that this consonant mutation rule still applies only *after* the initial removal of word-final ‹s› directly preceded by a consonant or ‹os›, so **dados** and **gavs** do indeed become **dadis** and **gavis** respectively, not *\*dadodis* or *\*gavdis*.)

The final thing of note while discussing the formation of the definite accusative of case is the handful of words with irregular definite accusative forms that defy any explanation by the aforewritten rules. These include **dạ**, which becomes **dạdis**, not *\*dis*, and **iq’os** “state, condition”, which becomes **iq’odis**, not *\*iq’is*.

While it is called the definite accusative case, it is not primarily chosen over the indefinite accusative to indicate definiteness; indeed it may be more accurate to call the definite accusative the “default accusative”, since it is used far more than the indefinite accusative, which is only used to emphasize the indefiniteness of the object. The definite accusative is in fact rather neutral with regards to definiteness and can be used to mark either a definite or indefinite object. Compare definite **mdkart azt enis** “they saw the house” OR “they saw a house” vs. indefinite **mdkart azt enad** “they saw *one* house”.

The definite accusative is often used as well to mark the object of a prepositional phrase in such a way that is purely neutral to the direction of movement. For example, **gbelia ert tec’mas** “the book on the table”, or with the abbreviated form, **gbelia** **ertec’mas**, does not emphasize the movement of the book at all – it suggests neither that the book is stationary, nor that it is being removed from the table, not that it is being placed on the table. Compare this to the effect of the essive-locative, exessive-ablative, or translative-lative cases:

**gbelia ert tec’mats / gbelia ertec’mats** the [stationary] book on the table

**gbelia ert tec’mač / gbelia ertec’mač** the book being removed from the table OR the book that used to be on the table

**gbelia ert tec’madz** **/ gbelia ertec’madz** the book [being placed] on[to] the table

Finally, the definite accusative may be used to mark the subject of a passivized clause not marked with *ġa-* (see also §4.4.6, Passivization and Ergativity), e.g.

**ar-is iš-všeli-a arav-i ivs** [he] who is illuminated by the light of the sacred fire (*Consecration of Fire* 1).

pf-acc.def caus-light.gen-3.sg.sub sacred\_fire-gen light

where the subject, **aris** “[he] who”, is marked with the definite accusative case where normally the subject would take a nominative case; this indicates the passive mood.

The definite accusative case is never used to mark the patient of a negative transitive clause.

**3.1.6 Indefinite Genitive Case**

The indefinite genitive case is one of two cases in Middle Mtsqrveli which marks a noun as either modifying or possessing another noun. It is by far the more commonly used of the two genitive cases.

The construction of the indefinite genitive case is more complicated than that of any other case. In its most basic form, it is constructed as:

**noun stem + *i***

Where the noun stem is the lemma (indefinite nominative), with the final vowel truncated if the lemma ends in a vowel. The result of this is that *-i* is added if the lemma ends in a consonant, or *-i* replaces the final vowel if the lemma ends in a vowel. Thus, **cvan** becomes **cvani**, **dzto** becomes **dzti**, **qema** becomes **qemi**, and **ladz** becomes **ladzi** in the indefinite genitive case.

The usual practice of removing a word-final ‹s› directly preceded by a consonant or ‹os› before inflection applies here. Thus, **dados** becomes **dadi**, not *\*dadosi*, and **gavs** becomes **gavi**, not *\*gavsi*, in the indefinite nominative case.

The complications begin with nouns which end in the vowels ‹e› and ‹i›. For these nouns, the indefinite genitive is formed by suffixing *-li*; or, put another way, ‹e› and ‹i› are replaced by *-eli* and *-ili* respectively. Thus **mepe** becomes **mepeli**, not *\*mepi*, **jve** becomes **jveli**, not *\*jvi*, and **k’erk’eti** becomes **k’erk’etili**, not *\*k’erk’eti*.

(In Old Mtsqrveli, the above rule caused many nouns with lemmata ending in ‹li›, such as *Mt’eli* “God”, *gbeli* “book”, and *otvli* “command” to have genitive forms ending in ‹lili›: *Mt’elili*, *gbelili*, and *otvlili*, respectively. Haplology is observed in the deletion of one of these adjecent /li/ syllables during the transition to Middle Mtsqrveli, resulting in the genitive forms becoming indistinguishable from the lemmata. This likely triggered a rebracketing of the indefinite nominative/genitive form to reanalyze the final ‹i› as *-i*, the genitive marker, which, by extension, would make the rest of the word before the final ‹i› the new noun stem, e.g. *Mt’elili* (GEN) → *Mt’eli* → *Mt’el-i* (GEN) → *Mt’el-* as noun stem; *gbelili* (GEN) *→ gbeli* → *gbel-i* (GEN) → *gbel-* as noun stem; *otvlili* (GEN) → *otvli* → *otvl-i* (GEN) → *otvl-* as noun stem. Many, though not all, such affected nouns have appended a sound to the end of their new stems so as not to leave them bare, whence **gbels**, **Mt’els**, and **otvla** (by analogy to the ­*-la* nominalizing suffix). The fact that this rebracketing affected only the lemmata is responsible for some of the quirks of Middle Mtsqrveli noun inflection where inflected forms are slightly different than what would be expected from the lemma, especially where epenthetic vowels are involved. For example, Middle Mtsqrveli retains Old Mtsqrveli **otvlit** and **gbelit** as the dative forms of **otvla** and **gbels** respectively, rather than *\*otvlat* or *\*gbelt*, as the typical construction of the dative case would suggest.)

The complications continue with the observation that for nouns ending in ‹ev› and ‹iv›, this cluster is metathesized to produce a form ending in ‹e› and ‹i›, whereupon the above rule is then triggered; put another way, word-final ‹ev› and ‹iv› become *-veli* and *-vili* respectively in the indefinite genitive. Thus, **xev** “wood” becomes **xveli**, not *\*xevi*, **p’irev** “song” becomes **p’irveli**, not *\*p’irevi*, and **šiv** “desire” becomes **švili** “desirable”, not *\*šivi*, in the indefinite genitive. This rules applies after word-final ‹s› directly preceded by a consonant is removed from the stem, so lemmata ending in ‹evs› and ‹ivs› are likewise affected: **tatevs** “arrowhead; tip of a spear” becomes **tatveli**, not *\*tatevi*, **mparevs** “prayer” becomes **mparveli** “prayerful”, not *\*mparevi*, **mp’ivs** “finger” becomes **mp’vili**, not *\*mp’ivi*, and **mq’t’ivs** “wit, cunning” becomes **mq’t’vili** “witty, clever”, not *\*mq’t’ivi*, in the indefinite genitive case.

Only to complicate matters further, the above exception to the further-above exception itself has two exceptions: **ev** “bow (weapon)” stays **evi**, not *\*veli*, and **ivs** “light” becomes **všeli**, not *\*vili* (by suppletion that took place in Proto-Tskhri via a now lost word, from the Proto-Tskhri-Zani *\**wəcʰ “light, white, bright”), in the indefinite genitive.

The indefinite genitive is used to indicate modification of an adjacent noun. Typically, this is realized as possession, where the indefinite genitive indicates the possessor. When the indefinite genitive is used as a possessive case, it will typically be placed before the possessee, despite Middle Mtsqrveli’s technically free word order: **karti gbels** would be the usual way to express “his/her/its book”, whereas **gbels karti**, while technically not incorrect, would be unusual.

In all other circumstances, i.e. of non-possessive modification, the genitive noun will typically be placed after the modified noun, e.g. **ničis apari** “all of the estates” (Shenqrdola) or **ghani xemi** “field of wheat”, where **apari** “of [the] estates” and **xemi** “of wheat” are the genitive nouns, respectively.

A noun is almost always put in the indefinite genitive case before being adjectivized by *di-* (see also §3.1.19, Derivations from Noun), e.g. **sakve** “king” → **disakvi** “royal”, **dados** → **didadi** “surrounded by high walls”, **Mt’els** → **dimt’eli** “holy”, etc.

**3.1.7 Definite Genitive Case**

The definite genitive case is the other genitive case in Middle Mtsqrveli which serves to mark a noun as either modifying or possessing another noun. It is less commonly used than the indefinite genitive case.

The construction of the definite genitive case is simpler than that of the indefinite genitive case. It is constructed as:

**definite nominative form + *li***

Refer back to §3.1.3, Definite Nominative Case to see how the first element is formed. Suffice it to say for our purposes here, it will always end in ‹ia›. The *-li* is an invention in Middle Mtsqrveli by rebracketing the *-eli* and *-ili* indefinite genitive markers and then analogizing it to the definite nominative form; in other words, from a diachronic standpoint, the indefinite genitive form came to be analyzed as a genitive form constructed using the indefinite nominative as the lemma, and so, so too should the *definite* genitive form be constructed using the *definite* nominative as the lemma.

Thus, **cvan** becomes **cvaniali**, **dzto** becomes **dztiali**, **gbels** becomes **gbeliali**, **iq’os** becomes **iq’iali**, and **k’erk’eti** becomes **k’erk’etiali** in the definite genitive form.

However, a notable wrinkle in this otherwise simple construction is that lemmata whose final vowel is ‹e› or ‹i› are prone to syncope of that final vowel before the addition of the *-ia* in forming the definite nominative form; this is because the addition of the subsequent *-li* shifts the stress one syllable to the right, leaving these ‹e›s and ‹i›s in the now antepenultimate position unstressed, and thus, prone to syncope. Such syncope is common, but not regular, in polysyllabic lemmata, so e.g. **p’irev** becomes **p’irviali**, not \**p’ireviali*, **sixvi** “ray” becomes **sxviali**, not *\*sixviali*, and **t’q’ineba** “information” becomes **t’q’inbiali**, not *\*t’q’inebiali*. This occurs very frequently in words ending in the nominalizer *-šin*, e.g. **tetišin** “a blue thing” becomes **tetišniali**, not \**tetišiniali*. However, this syncope occurs very rarely in words ending in *-la*, so e.g. **ạbcila** “he who tends to the *ạbts*, ≈high priest” becomes **ạbciliali**, not \**ạbcliali*.

This does not affect nouns where, if such syncope occurred, it would form a cluster illegal according to the syllable structure of Middle Mtsqrveli. This includes e.g. geminates, so **nino** “day” becomes **niniali**, without syncope of the first ‹i›, lest it become \**nniali*. Additionally, this tends not to affect nouns where the result of syncope would not reduce the number of syllables in the word, typically because syncope would result in a syllabic consonant, espcially with ‹r› [r̩] before another consonant. So, e.g. **dzgherba** “issue, effluence” becomes **dzgherbiali**, not \**dzghrbiali*, and **girgi** “sulfur” becomes **girgiali**, not \**grgiali*, since in both cases the noun has the same number of syllables after syncope.

Syncope is less common, but not absent, in monosyllabic words as well; this mostly affects words whose final vowel is ‹i›, not ‹e›. This affects such words as **šiv** becoming **šviali**, not \**šiviali*, **c’vina** “chamber” (which is monosyllabic once the final ‹a› is removed prior to affixing *-ia*) becoming **c’vniali**, not \**c’viniali*, and **čin** “door” becoming **čniali**, not *\*činiali*. However, it does not affect words such as **dzidi** “story”, **švir** “height”, **hizd** “Kerk” or even **vin** “pasture” despite its similarity to the noun root of **c’vina**. We see, then, that when syncope is observed it is more haphazard than a concrete rule, and should be memorized along with the noun.

**3.1.8 Dative Case**

The dative case is constructed as:

**indefinite nominative form + epenthetic vowel + *t***

The epenthetic vowel is required if the noun 1) ends in a consonant, and 2) that consonant is not a fricative (*excluding* lateral and sibilant fricatives) or a rhotic, i.e. ‹v›, ‹gh›, ‹x›, or ‹r›, as a consequence of Middle Mtsqrveli’s phonological constraints. Else – if the noun ends in a vowel or any of the aforementioned consonants, the epenthetic vowel is not used. Where the epenthetic is used, it is always ‹i›.

The dative case most importantly marks the indirect object of a transitive clause. It does not, however, mark the indirect object of an intransitive clause, which is instead marked with the benefactive case. (see also §3.1.11, Benefactive Case)

However, it has three other important uses. The first is that to express non-attributive possession, the possessor is placed in the dative case and the possessee in one of the nominative cases, e.g.

**In-ia Tobal-it.** The room is Tobal’s. (*lit.* The room [is] to Tobal.)

room-nom.def Tobal-dat

**Dviš samepo dạ-t?** Is this shirt yours? (*lit.* [Is] this shirt to you?)

this shirt 2.sg-dat

This construction doubles as the most common way to express the meaning of the verb “to have”, which, while extant in Middle Mtsqrveli, is seldom used. While Middle Mtsqrveli word order is technically free, the possessor is customarily placed first in the sentence if the intended meaning is “to have” rather than non-attributive possession, e.g.

**Tobal-it ina.** Tobal has a room. (*lit.* To Tobal [is] a room.)

Tobal-dat room

**Txsa-nen txs-it unda gena.** I don’t have a knife on me. (*lit.* With me, to me [is] not a knife.)

1.sg-com 1.sg-dat neg.adv knife

The second additional important use of the dative is that modality, rather than being morphologized on the verb, is often expressed as a predicative adjective plus the subject in the dative case, especially (but not exclusively) in the negative, e.g.

**Undiomi txsit goneba aobs ornạli t’od.** I cannot lift so heavy a stone. (*lit.* [It is] impossible to me to lift so heavy stone)

**Unda ġaišomit dạt uvdoba dvinadz.** You are not permitted to enter this room. (*lit.* [It is] not allowed to you to enter into this room)

**Dindzeni Qvaqvaret oba dše c’erva dvqucit.** Qvaqvare should go talk to that girl. (*lit.* [It is] necessary to Qvaqvare both to go and to talk to that girl)

The last important use of the dative, apart from attribution and marking the indirect object, is in the expression of necessity. Middle Mtsqrveli does not have a dedicated verb with the meaning of “to need” or “must” for use in verb phrases of the form “X needs to/must do Y”. Middle Mtsqrveli constructs such a phrase with the subject in the dative form, the verb in the infinitive, and the indirect object marked as the benefactive (regardless of the transitivity of the verb), if there is one. Compare:

**Txas cro šenrdz-ad Bia-t.** I write a letter to Bia.

1.sg write letter-acc.indef Bia-dat

**Txs-it cro-ba šenrdz-ad Bia-ghe.** I must write a letter to Bia.

1.sg-dat write-inf letter-acc.indef Bia-ben

**3.1.9 Comitative Case**

The comitative case is constructed as follows:

**indefininite genitive form + *n***

**3.1.10 Abessive Case**

**3.1.11 Benefactive Case**

The benefactive case is constructed as follows:

**root + *ghe/xe***

*-xe* is a variant of *-ghe* that is only used directly adjacent to an unvoiced consonant, being derived from *-ghe* by voicing assimilation. Otherwise, *-ghe* is used. Thus, **mdzo** “man” becomes **mdzghe**, **ghis** “what” becomes **ghisxe** “why”, **Jvari** “Lord” becomes **Jvarghe**, **sakvsam** “kingdom” becomes **sakvsamghe**, and **ruti** “daughter” becomes **rutxe** in the benefactive case.

Ostensibly, the benefactive case marks the recipient of a physical thing – thus, a complement to a noun phrase – rather than a recipient of an action – a complement to a verb phrase, like the dative case marks. It is observed like this in such phrases as

**Ere-la mo-tl-a T’at’-xe.** It is a gift for Tatos.

give-nmz tr-cop-3.sg.sub Tatos-ben

**Mq’če-s-i-t dv-mxredv-is bxieo-ghe.** I have forged this sword for the soldier.

forge-1.sg.sub-e-aor dem-sword-acc.def infantryman-ben

However, it is far more often used, in a more abstract sense, to express purpose, motivation, or telicity (to express the end goal of an action).

*…Uvio zagodgha sakvi amtşevobaghe…* Uvio fought for the armies of the king (Old Mtsqrveli – *Šenqrdola*)

*…Ajo Şạmat unsda ġmio mq'varghe Mardavi…* But Darkness had no claim to the body of man (Old Mtsqrveli – *Mtsprelia* 7)

*Dvisghe… mdzgo tghas ạştva mdkarti abzvod…* Therefore [*lit.* for this]… I call upon to gather their troops… (Old Mtsqrveli – *Writ of Tanists’ori*)

**…cqsin q’vdiadipi, ạria č “Jvari *Sakvsamghe*”-i ạžạlts…** bearing arms, with the cry of “*For the Kingdom* of God!” upon their lips (History of the Kveq’ana)

Additionally, but rarely, the benefactive case is used to mark the indirect object of an intransitive clause or a clause where the subject is marked by the dative case, as in expressions of necessity (cf. §3.1.8, Dative Case), e.g.:

**Ere-s ere-l-is T’at’-i-t.** I give the gift to Tatos.

give-1.sg.sub give-nmz-acc.def Tatos-e-dat

**Txsit ere-va ere-l-is T’at’-xe.** I need give the gift to Tatos.

1.sg.dat give-inf give-nmz-acc.def Tatos-ben

**3.1.12 Originative Case**

**3.1.13 Vocative Case**

**3.1.14 Translative-Lative Case**

**3.1.15 Essive-Locative Case**

**3.1.16 Exessive-Ablative Case**

**3.1.17 Collective Nouns**

**3.1.18 Derivations from Noun**

**3.1.19 Derivations to Noun**

**3.x Pronouns**

**3.x.1** **Personal Pronouns**

The base personal pronouns are 1.sg **txas** “I”, 2.sg **dạ** “you” and 3.sg **kart** “he/she/it”. Note that none of Middle Mtsqrveli’s pronouns reflect either biological or grammatical gender. The dual forms of these pronouns are formed by the addition of the dual prefix *tv-*, resulting in 1.du **tvtxas** “the two of us”, 2.du **tvdạ** “the two of you” and 3.du **tvkart** “the two of them”; the plural forms are formed by the addition of the prefix *md-*, resulting in 1.pl **mdtxas** “we”, 2.pl **mdạ** “you all”, and 3.pl **mdkart** “they”.

**Personal Pronoun Inflection Master List**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1.sg | 1.du | 1.pl | 2.sg | 2.du | 2.pl | 3.sg | 3.du | 3.pl |
| nom.indef | txas | tvtxas | mdtxas | dạ | tvdạ | mdạ | kart | tvkart | mdkart |
| nom.def | txasia | tvtxasia | mdtxas | dạdia | tvdạdia | mdạdia | kartia | tvkartia | mdkartia |
| acc.indef | txsid | tvtxsid | mdtxsid | dạd | tvdạd | mdạd | kartid | tvkartid | mdkartid |
| acc.def | txadis | tvtxadis | mdtxadis | dạdis | tvdạdis | mdạdis | kartis | tvkartis | mdkartis |
| gen.indef | txasi | tvtxasi | mdtxasi | di | tvdi | mdi | karti | tvkarti | mdkarti |
| gen.def | txasiali | tvtxasiali | mdtxasiali | dạdiali | tvdiali | mdiali | kartiali | tvkartiali | mdkartiali |
| dat | txsit | tvtxsit | mdtxsit | dạt | tvdạt | mdạt | kartit | tvkartit | mdkartit |
| com | txsanen | tvtxsanen | mdtxsanen | dạnon | tvdạn | mdạnon | kartnen | tvkartnen | mdkartnen |
| abe | txsamen | tvtxsamen | mdtxsamen | dạčmon | tvdạčmon | mdạčmon | kartčmen | tvkartčmen | mdkartčmen |
| ben | txasxe | tvtxasxe | mdtxasxe | dạghe | tvdạghe | mdạghe | kartxe | tvkartxe | mdkartxe |
| orig | txsvan | tvtxsvan | mdtxsvan | dạvạn | tvdạvạn | mdạvạn | kartvan | tvkartvan | mdkartvan |
| voc | txast’ | tvtxast’ | mdtxast’ | dạt’ | tvdạt’ | mdạt’ | kartit’ | tvkartit’ | mdkartit’ |
| trans | txsidz | tvtxsidz | mdtxsidz | dạdz | tvdạdz | mdạdz | kartidz | tvkartidz | mdkartidz |
| ess | txsits | tvtxsits | mdtxsits | dạts | tvdạts | mdạts | kartits | tvkartits | mdkartits |
| exess | txsič | tvtxsič | mdtxsič | dạč | tvdạč | mdạč | kartič | tvkartič | mdkartič |

h

**Interrogative pronouns**

The interrogative pronouns are overwhelmingly derived from a now non-productive interrogative prefix *gh-*, which was productive in Proto-Mtsqrveli, plus one of several categorical suffixes. Interrogative pronouns in Middle Mtsqrveli cannot double as relative pronouns as in English – they are used solely to elicit information, rather than to provide it (see Relative Pronouns).

**ghis** “what?” is one of only two interrogative pronouns that can – and must – be inflected with the typical nominal/pronomial cases. It is typically, though not necessarily, placed at the very beginning of the clause, comparable to English “*wh*-fronting”. **ghis** can be pluralized with the typical pluralizing prefix *a(b)-*; syncope of the following ‹i› reduces the plural citation form to **aghs**. The plural form **aghs** (and its inflections) may be used to explicitly request a plural answer; however, the singular form **ghis** is far more common for both singular and plural answers, e.g.

**Ghis-men dạ?** What do you need? (*lit.* “without what [are] you?”; what-abe 2.sg)

vs. **A-ghs-men dạ?** What stuff do you need? (implies a plural answer; pl-what-abe 2.sg)

**Ghidis kart beg-dgha?** What was he holding? (what.acc.def 3.sg hold-past)

vs. **A-ghdis kart beg-dgha?** What stuff was he holding? (implies a plural answer; pl-what.acc.def 3.sg hold-past)

**ghar** “who?” is the other interrogative pronoun that must be inflected for which role it plays in the sentence. Like **ghis**, **ghar** also has a plural form **aghar** that can be used to imply a plural answer; unlike **aghs** however, **aghar** is not optional – it must be used instead of **ghar** if it corefers with an *explicitly stated* plural noun or pronoun. If a plural coreference is merely *implied* however, then the use of the plural form **aghar** is optional to imply a plural answer.

**Ghar kart-i ghvi?** Who is his friend? (who 3.sg-gen.indef friend)

vs. **A-ghar kart-i a-ghvi?** Who are his friends? (pl-who 3.sg-gen.indef pl-friend) (**aghar** necessary for coreference with **aghvi**)

**Šoba-ts ghar-is mq-a-t Ilos?** Whom did Ilos kill in the battle? (battle-ess who-acc.def kill-e-aor Ilos) – implies a singlular answer

vs. **Šoba-ts a-ghar-is mq-sx-ia-t Ilos?** Whom did Ilos kill in the battle? (battle-ess pl-who-acc.def kill-3.pl.do-e-aor Ilos) – implies a plural answer

Corresponding dual forms *\*tvghis* and *\*tvghar* are not attested. Accordingly, a complete list of singular and plural inflections for **ghis** and **ghar** are given below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | what | pl-what | who | pl-who |
| nom.indef | ghis | aghs | ghar | aghar |
| nom.def | ghisia | aghsia | gharia | agharia |
| acc.indef | ghsid | aghsid | gharid | agharid |
| acc.def | ghidis | aghdis | ghidis | ghidis |
| gen.indef | ghisi | aghsi | ghari | aghari |
| gen.def | ghisiali | aghsiali | ghariali | aghariali |
| dat | ghist | aghsit | ghart | aghart |
| com | ghisnen | aghsnen | gharnen | agharnen |
| abe | ghismen | aghsmen | gharmen | agharmen |
| ben | ghisxe | aghsxe | gharxe | agharxe |
| orig | ghisvan | aghsvan | gharvan | agharvan |
| voc | ghist’ | aghsit’ | ghart’ | aghart’ |
| trans | ghisidz | aghsidz | gharidz | agharidz |
| ess | ghists | aghsts | gharts | agharts |
| exess | ghisič | aghsič | gharič | agharič |

**ghisxe** “why?” is the benefactive form of **ghis**.

**ghde** “when?”

**Ghde di madavs varia-dzi?** When is your son coming home?

when 2.sg.gen.indef son come\_home-fut

**ghrto** “where?”

**Relative Pronouns**

The relative pronouns are derived from the same stems as the interrogative pronouns, but via the prefix *a-* rather than *gh-*.

**as** “what; the one that”

**ar** “who; the one who”

**asxe** “why; the reason that”

**ade** “when; the time that”

**arto** “where; the place that”

**3.2 Verbal Morphology**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **sg** | -s | -da | -a |
| **du** |  |  |  |
| **pl** |  |  |  |

**3.2.1 Direct Object Suffixes**

Verbs in Middle Mtsqrveli must agree in number and person with their direct objects. This agreement is expressed by eight agglutinative suffixes, each of which encode both the number and the person of the direct object:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Direct Object Verb Suffixes** | | | |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **sg** | -mre | -dre | -∅ |
| **du** | -vme | -dve | -vxe |
| **pl** | -c’e | -dzen | -sxe |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **sg** | -am | -ad | -∅ |
| **du** | -av | -dve | -vxe |
| **pl** | -c’e | -dzen | -sxe |

As a general rule, singular suffixes include ‹r›, dual suffixes include ‹v›, plural suffixes include a sibilant, first-person suffixes include ‹m› (except in the plural case), second-person suffixes include ‹d› which becomes ‹dz› in the plural case, and third-person suffixes include ‹x›.

A suffix for a third-person singular direct object is notably absent; a verb with such an object is indistinguishable from an intransitive verb, which takes no direct object suffix since it has no direct object with which to express agreement. Thus, **dạ rt'q'a** can mean either “you hit” (no object) or “you hit him/her/it”. For clarity, it is common in cases like these to explicitly transitivize the verb – even if it’s already transitive – with the transitivizing prefix *mo-* (see also §3.2.2, Valency Operations and Prefixes) to imply a direct object; hence **dạ rt’q’a** “you hit” (no object) vs. **dạ mort’q’a** “you hit him/her/it”.

If the direct object is just a personal pronoun, it can be omitted, since the direct object suffix carries all the same information; **kart t'exvmic’e mdtxadis** “he supplies us” carries no more information than simply **kart t’exvmic’e** “he supplies us”. Still, because the direct object suffixes make no distinction between definite and indefinite direct objects, in practice, unless explicitly stated otherwise, direct object suffixes are assumed to indicate *definite* direct objects. It may, then, still be worthwhile not to drop the personal pronoun if it is in the indefinite accusative case, to put a point on the indefiniteness of the direct object that would otherwise not be communicated by the suffix alone: **kart t’exvmic’e mdtxasid** “he supplies some of us” (see also §3.1.4, Indefinite Accusative Case).

**3.2.2 Valency Operations and Prefixes**

Middle Mtsqrveli has four prefixes with which to change the transitivity of a verb. (Note that this section deals with valency operations to words that are already verbs, not verbalizers – see §3.2.10, Derivations to Verb.)

*mo-* is prefixed to an intransitive verb to yield a transitive verb; generally it is used to promote an unaccusative verb (an intransitive verb with a patientive argument) that does not take even an oblique object to a transitive verb, e.g. **tmeloba** “to close [oneself], to be closed” → **motmeloba** “to close [something else]”, **ganxetliva** “to be contested, to be in dispute” → **moganxetliva** “to contest, to dispute”, **vcaleba** “to come to mind again, to be thought about again” → **movcaleba** “to remember”, **doneba** “to be glorious” → **modoneba** “to glorify”, **č’ilimpoba** “to be reasonable” → **moč’ilimpoba** “to explain”, **c’orileba** “to be habitual” → **moc’orileba** “to make a habit out of”. However, it also used on occasion to promote unergative verbs (an intransitive verb with an agentive argument) to a transitive verb, e.g. **jarcva** “to cry out, to holler” → **mojarcva** “to proclaim”, MQO *ġmtş’ạlva* “to stay, to remain” → **moġmčạlva** “to keep, to maintain”, and *mo-* can even be prefixed to an already transitive verb to reinforce the idea that the verb has a direct object, and thereby imply a 3rd person singular direct object (see §3.2.1, Direct Object Suffixes); this latter use is arguably the most common use of *mo-*.

*da-* is the applicative voice marker, prefixed to either intransitive or transitive verbs which take an oblique object to promote the oblique object to a direct object, e.g. **c’kiva (erdavit)** “to yield (to someone)” (indirect object) → **dac’kiva** **(erdavis)** “to surrender to (someone)” (direct object), **vk’meva (erdavit)** “to sell (to someone)” → **davk’meva (erdavis)** “to sell to (someone)”, **mqšava** (**eršenit)** “to flee (from something)” → **damqšava (eršenis)** “to flee from (something)”, **tbrctoba (eršenghe)** “to suffer (through something)” → **datbrctoba (eršenis)** “to suffer/undergo (something)”. Notice in each case how the argument in a non-accusative case becomes accusative after *da-* is attached.

Note that when *da-* is attached to a transitive verb, the oblique object now promoted to a direct object displaces the existing direct object, which then cannot be expressed by the same clause. In such a case, *da-* functionally acts as a valency *decreasing* operation rather than an *increasing* operation. For example, **ereva** “to give” is normally ditransitive with both a direct object (the thing being given) and an indirect object (the recipient): **ereva (eršenis) (erdavit)** “to give (something) (to someone)”. When the applicative voice is applied, the direct object **(eršenis)** must be dropped to allow the recipient in the dative **(erdavit)** to be promoted to the direct object in the accusative **(erdavis)**, as in **daereva (erdavis)** “to give to (someone)”.

The principle use of *da-*, on either intransitive or transitive verbs, is to be able to leverage the direct object markers for the direct object of choice. With the direct object markers, an entire clause can potentially be condensed into a single word, or at least reduce the number of syllables the writer or speaker must use. As an extreme case, **kart c’ert kartis mdtxsit** “he said it to us” does not communicate any more information than **dac’erc’iat** “he said [it] to us”, but the latter is quicker to write or pronounce.

Likewise, *da-* is sometimes used when two different verbs take the same object, but a direct object for one verb and an oblique object for the other, in order to promote the oblique object to direct object for both verbs in order to avoid having to restate the oblique object in a different case. For example, in the phrase **azat karti gmuris ba eebat e-kartit** “[he] saw his father and spoke to him”, **gmuris** “father” and **kartit** “to him” corefer; however, because **azva** “to see” takes a direct object but **eeba** “to speak” takes an indirect object, the same entity (“father”) must be stated twice: once in the accusative (**gmuris**) for **azva**, and once in the dative (**kartit**) for **eeba**. If one wishes to avoid this redundancy, *da-* may be prefixed to **eeba** to promote its indirect object to a direct object. Then, because both **azva** and **daeeba** “to speak to” take the same direct object, it only needs to be stated once to satisfy the valency of both verbs: **azat ba daeebat karti gmuris** “[he] saw and spoke to his father”. This has the effect of slightly shortening the resulting sentence.

**3.2.3 Pluractional Prefixes**

“Pluractionality” in Middle Mtsqrveli refers to morphological encoding of the number of times an action is performed. By default, it is assumed the action is performed once. §3.1.4, Indefinite Accusative Case

To indicate that the action was performed a certain number of times, a pluractional prefix can be derived from the name of that number with the final ‹i› truncated. For example, since the Middle Mtsqrveli word for 4 is **dari**, the pluractional prefix to indicate that an action is done 4 times is *dar-*. Compare e.g. **kart mqšat** “he escaped” vs. **kart darmqšat** “he escaped 4 times”.

Other pluractional prefixes do not reference a specific number of times an action is performed. For example, *v-* can indicate either an iterative aspect or simply that the action is performed “again”. Compare e.g. **sadoba** “to fill” vs. **vsadoba** “to refill”, or **k’aba** “to hit; to strike” (root *k’a-* is onomatopoeic) vs. **vk’aba** “to grind; to pulverize”.

**3.2.4 Venitive Prefixes**

Verbs indicating motion of some kind may be marked for venitivity. The venitive prefix *sx(e)-* marks that motion as proceeding towards the deictic center, while the itive prefix *čem-* marks the motions as proceeding away from the deictic center. These affixes are derived from **saxedz** “towards [lit. “into the face”] and **čemi** “away” respectively.

While Old Mtsqrveli was becoming Middle Mtsqrveli, it was common for new venitive verbs to be coined from this venitive prefix joined with the semantically opposite itive verb, e.g. Old Mtsqrveli’s *azkhrava* “to come” has been supplanted by **sxoba** in Middle Mtsqrveli, derived from *sx-* plus *ova* “to go”. In some cases, such as the case of *ova*, the original itive verb then acquired the itive prefix for contrast with the venitive form for extra clarity, albeit at the cost of redundancy. Hence the existence of the word **čemoba** “to leave” from *čem-* plus *ova* “to go”.

**3.2.5 Tenses as Suffixes**

The morphemes in Middle Mtsqrveli that indicate tense can either be suffixed directly to the end of the verb or detached as a particle. The morphemes look slightly different depending on whether they are used as suffxies or particles. Here we discuss the case of tense suffixes.

The tense suffix is the very last morpheme attached to the verb, after all other suffixes. The present tense is unmarked (­-Ø), the past tense is marked with *-dgha*, and the future tense is marked with *-dzi*. Additionally, Middle Mtsqrveli has at least one combined tense-aspect suffix, *-Vt*, which marks the aorist past. Although *-dgha* is technically a general-use past tense marker, in practice it is used as an imperfective past marker to contrast with the usage of *-Vt*.

The vowel V in the aorist suffix varies according to the letter directly before it. If the preceding letter is a consonant, V is ‹i›, if the preceding letter is ‹o›, V is ‹e›, and if the preceding letter is any vowel *except* ‹o›, V is elided entirely.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **pres** | **fut** | **past** | **aor** |
| **lạsrva** | *to entreat* | lạsra | lạsrdzi | lạsrdgha | lạsrit |
| **t’q’va** | *to believe* | t’q’a | t’q’dzi | t’q’dgha | t’q’it |
| **č’emoba** | *to set free* | č’emo | č’emodzi | č’emodgha | č’emoet |
| **dmoba** | *to take by force* | dmo | dmodzi | dmodgha | dmoet |
| **mqšava** | *to kill* | mqša | mqšadzi | mqšadgha | mqšat |
| **prq’c’eva** | *to be in pain* | prq’c’e | prq’c’edzi | prq’c’edgha | prq’c’et |

**3.2 Numerals**

Middle Mtsqrveli’s numerals use a decimal system; however, unusually, the words for multiples of 10 are not apparently etymologically related to the words for multiples of 1. As each of these words begins with a different letter, each of these values can be associated with the letter that the numeral’s name begins with; in particular, it is the *dimtsġxioghi* version, not the *igamšili* version (as Middle Mtsqrveli usually uses) of each letter that is used to denote that numeral.

A table of the words for multiples of 1 and 10 are given below, along with the letter they correspond to:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | (not written) | - | *ačmeni* | 10 | M |  | M | *miot’i* |
| 1 | E | E | *eri* | 20 | Ġ |  | Ġ | *ġori* |
| 2 | T | T | *tvi* | 30 | Š |  | Š | *šmt’i* |
| 3 | A | A | *abi* | 40 | I |  | I | *ilomi* |
| 4 | D | D | *dari* | 50 | TS |  | TS | *tsovanet’i* |
| 5 | Č | Č | *čmi* | 60 | DZ |  | DZ | *dzuzegi* |
| 6 | S | S | *sošvi* | 70 | GH |  | GH | *ghobduli* |
| 7 | G | G | *geli* | 80 | R |  | R | *ruvạli* |
| 8 | Q’ | Q’ | *q’smi* | 90 | N |  | N | *nimsxet’i* |
| 9 | J | J | *joli* | 100 | Z |  | Z | *zuni* |

While numerals are written in positional notation, the existence of two separate sets of glyphs partially negates the need for a glyph for zero.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11 | ME | ME | *ermiot’i* | 33 | ŠA | ŠA | *abšmt’i* |
| 12 | MT | MT | *tvmiot’i* | 45 | ID | ID | *darilomi* |
| 13 | MA | MA | *abmiot’i* | 78 | GHQ’ | GHQ’ | *q’smghobduli* |
| 14 | MD | MD | *darmiot’i* | 101 | Z E | Z E | *zun eri* |
| 15 | MČ | MČ | *čmiot’i* | 110 | Z M | Z M | *zun miot’i* |
| 16 | MS | MS | *sošvmiot’i* | 112 | Z MT | Z MT | *zun tvmiot’i* |
| 17 | MG | MG | *gelmiot’i* | 204 | T D | T D | *tvzun dari* |
| 18 | MQ’ | MQ’ | *q’smiot’i* | 256 | T TSS | T TSS | *tvzun sošvtsovanet’i* |
| 19 | MJ | MJ | *jolmiot’i* | 1024 | M ĠD | M ĠD | *miots’un darġori* |
| 21 | ĠE | ĠE | *erġori* | 2709 | ĠG J | ĠG J | *gelġorzun joli* |

**3.6 Adverbs**

**3.6.1 Derivation from Adjective**

Adverbs are derived from adjectives by several different suffixes; only some, however, are productive.

Old Mtsqrveli’s main adjectivizer was –*(i)ş* – that is, *-ş* if the adjective ended in a vowel, or *-iş* if it ended in a consonant, with the result that adverbs so derived could end in ‹aş›, ‹eş›, ‹oş› or, by far most commonly, ‹iş›. While this adjectivizer is not as prevalent in Middle Mtsqrveli as it was in Old Mtsqrveli, it still remains productive with the epenthesis of ‹e› at the end: adjectives may be adverbialized by the addition of the suffix *–še* to an adjective ending in a vowel; it is no longer productive, however, for adjectives ending in a consonant, except for fossilized examples preserved from Old Mtsqrveli. Additionally, while occasionally in Old Mtsqrveli adverbs could be formed by suffixing *–(i)ş* directly to a noun and some fossilized examples are preserved in Middle Mtsqrveli, e.g. MQO *oliş* “in the flesh” is preserved as MQM **oliše**, this strategy is no longer productive.

Some examples are given of adverbs derived from *-še*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **calaotni** purposeful, intent | **calaotniše** on purpose, with intent |
| **sạrep’i** honest | **sạrep’iše** honestly |
| **ure** only, sole | **uroše** only, solely |
| **ho** cold | **hoše** coldly |

Some adverbs in Middle Mtsqrveli end with *-še* despite either not being derived from any attested adjective:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **qạrtoše** somewhere else | ← \**qạrto* |
| **joroše** also (antiquated) | ← \**joro* |
| **c’keramiše** after all | ← \**c’kerami* |
| **dghiše** already | ← \**dghi* |

(In the case of the latter, **dghiše** is derived from the same root as **dghas**, the past particle. The point being made is simply that not every adverb ending in *-še* is derived from a corresponding adjective.)

The suffix *-ra* is also sometimes used to adverbialize an adjective, moreso in Middle Mtsqrveli than it was in Old Mtsqrveli. It is used principally to form frequentative adverbs and sometimes temporal adverbs, but is also rarely attested on other adverbs, such as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ani-čmen** orderless, unrestrained (order-abe) | **aničmenra** extraordinarily, to an extent beyond reason |
| \**č’mli* “indiscriminate”? (unattested) | **č’mlira** altogether, indiscriminately |

**Temporal Adverbs**

Temporal adverbs – that is, adverbs which express that the action is happening at a given time –

Such adverbs can be derived from nouns or noun phrases by means of the essive-locative case suffix *-(i)ts*; adverbs so derived typically imply that the time referred to is “now”, the time of utterance – or at least, that the time of utterance is a specific point within the period of time that the adverb refers to, such as in the following phrases:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **tera** the present | **terats** now |
| **dvnino** today (*lit.* this day) | **dvninots** today |
| **dvjem** this year | **dvjemts** this year |
| **olom** hour | **olomts, …** it is time to… (*lit.* [being] the hour, …) |

However, derivation from *-(i)ts* is used for all adverbs derived from **nino** “day”, including **ġdzami ninots** “yesterday” and **msvili ninots** “tomorrow”, even though those are almost definitionally a time period seperate from the time of utterance.

Else, temporal adverbs derived from *-(i)ts* typically refer to a general, unspecific or recurring period of time; for example, **ninạts** “by day” and **mexrạts** “by night” do not refer to any one day or night in particular, but rather over many unspecified days and many unspecified nights, in the following translation:

**Ba Jvaria horvat te mdkartis ninạts avtadxla jveli, meteva ipris, ba mexrạts avtadxla brdzoli, dat’exvmxeva ivd, oba ninạts ba mexrạts.** And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. (KJV, Exodus 13:21)

The suffix *-de*, which was not productive for forming temporal adverbs in Old Mtsqrveli, has become productive in Middle Mtsqrveli by analogy to the preposition **dede** “during”, the interrogative pronoun **ghde?** “when?” and the relative pronoun **ade** “when” (diachronically, however, these pronouns themselves were derived from *-de* as far back as Proto-Mtsqrveli).

­*-de* is used primarily for temporal adverbs which refer to a period of time rather than a point in time. It can be appended to nouns, for example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **sạrmo** winter | **sạrmode** in the winter |
| **zeghe** summer | **zeghede** in the summer |
| **saxvi jem** next year | **saxvi jemde** [during the] next year |

*-de* can also be appended to adjectives, for example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ġdzami** yesterday’s | **ġdzamide** yesterday |
| **msvili** tomorrow’s | **msvilide** tomorrow |
| **juri** latter | **juride** last time, previous time |

**ġdzamide** and **msvilide** are interchangeable with **ġdzami ninots** and **msvili ninots** respectively, although the latter two are considered more formal.

*-de* can also be appended to spacial prepositions to form adverbs of proximal temporal deixis; that is, adverbs that do not express any specific time, but merely the time an action occurred relative to the time of utterance, for example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **te** in front of, before | **tede** before now |
| **brveli** behind | **brvlide** after now |
| **ạlạ** around, encircling | **ạlạde** both before and after now |
| **xa** near, by | **xade** around now, at approximately this time |
| **od** through | **odide** before now, currently, and after now |
| **meli** among, amid | **melide** right now, currently |
| **apts** above | **apcde** up until now |
| **zar** out | **zarde** from now on |

A similar construction can be used to form adverbs of distal temporal deixis; that is, adverbs which, rather than expressing a specific time, express the time an action occurred relative to *some other time other than the time of utterance*. These are formed with the suffix *-txa* (from MQO *trha* “time, instance”) rather than with *-de*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **te** in front of, before | **tetxa** before then |
| **brveli** behind | **brveltxa** after then |
| **ạlạ** around, encircling | **ạlạtxa** both before and after then |
| **xa** near, by | **xatxa** around then, approximately then |
| **od** through | **otxa** before then, at that time, and after then |
| **meli** among, amid | **melitxa** then, at that time |
| **apts** above | **apctxa** up until then |
| **zar** out | **zartxa** from then on |

ka

**Frequentative Adverbs**

Frequentative adverbs express that the action

**3.7 Conjunctions**

h

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ba** and | ***x* dše *y*** both *x* and *y* |
|  |  |

h

**4. Clausal Syntax**

**4.2 Negation**

lorem ipsum

**4.3 Coreferential Agreement**

In Middle Mtsqrveli, nouns and pronouns within the same clause which corefer indicate their coreference by taking the same case. The underlying idea is that, for example, any given clause may only have one subject, so if two different subjects – two nouns or pronouns (or one of each) with one of the two nominative cases – are mentioned, this is analyzed as redundant, in that they must just be the same thing referenced twice, rather than actually incorrect.

Coreferential agreement is critical f0r the demonstrativizer *dviš*, which acts as a pronoun rather than a determiner. As such, to make an existing noun demonstrative is to bind *dviš* to it within the same clause; however, this places two different expressions within the same syntactic role for the same clause; the conflict is resolved by making *dviš* take the same case as the noun it is bound to in order to indicate their coreference. For example:

**[Dạ] Bghebšda *dvišis zelidavis?*** Do you know *this foreigner?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dạ** | **bgheb** | **-š** | **-da** | **dviš** | **-is** | **zeli** | **-dav** | **-is?** |
| 2.sg.nom.indef | know | int.fvh | 2.sg.sub | dem | acc.def | foreign | age | acc.def |

The italicized portion displays coreference, in that *dvišis* is a pronoun separate from *zelidavis*, and are apparently both the direct object of the clause, which implies that they have the same referent; thus, *dvišis* is deictically equivalent to *zelidavis*. It is in this way that *dviš* imparts its demonstrativity to *zelidavs.* One might read this sentence as “Do you know this [person], the foreigner?”, which better illustrates how Mtsqrveli makes nouns demonstrative by letting them share their syntactic space with a demonstrative pronoun.

The word *dạ*, while normally included, can be inferred by the hearer. We will assume it is dropped, and the question asked were merely *Bghebša dvišis zelidavis?* in order to prove the following point: suppose *dviš* took some other case, e.g. a nominative case, and that this is the only way in which our new question differs from the above. The meaning of the sentence changes like so:

**Bghebša dvišia zelidavis?** Does that [thing, person, etc.] know the foreigner?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bgheb** | **-š** | **-a** | **dviš** | **-ia** | **zeli** | **-dav** | **-is?** |
| know | int.fvh | 3.sg.sub | dem | nom.def | foreign | age | acc.def |

Note that without the shared case to indicate coreference between the demonstrative and the noun, not only is the noun *zelidavis* not demonstrative anymore, but *dvišia* is understood to occupy a completely different syntactic role – in this case, the subject of the sentence, since it has the definite nominative case.

Note that the converse of this relationship of “if coreferential, then case-sharing” is *not* true – two expressions in the case clause sharing the same case does *not* necessarily imply coreference. A good example of this involves several genitives stringed together in a row. For example:

**Bdztots dieri Mt’eli Mạdztrạli karti čišiali** concerning the first Division of God of His covenant (*Mtsprelia* 30)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **bdztots** | **dieri** | **Mt’e** | **-li** | **Mạdztrạl** | **-i** | **kart** | **-i** | **čiši** | **-ali** |
| about | first | God | gen.indef | division | gen.indef | 3.sg | gen.indef | covenant | gen.def |

It should not be assumed that, because e.g. *Mt’eli* and *mạdztrạli* share the same case, that they corefer, nor that *mạdztrạli* and *karti* corefer; “God” does not refer to the same entity as “division”. It does happen to be the case that *Mt’eli* and *karti* corefer in this case, but there is nothing about the case marking to suggest that this should be true – it must be determined from context.

Indeed, expressions like these with multiple genitives in a row *usually* lack corefence between any of their constituents, with instead each genitive constituent merely modifying the constituent either before it or after it (depending on which direction the phrase head is in). Again, *if* coreference is to be found in cases like these, it is situationally and from context. This is considerably less clear-cut than the accusative example because indeed, each clause can only have *one* direct object, but there is no restriction on the number of modifiers a noun can have.

In principle, other cases not limited in how many individual referents can appear in a single clause (really a proxy for “cases that don’t mark verb arguments”) exhibit this same muddy relationship with coreference where multiple incidents occur within the same clause – the essive-locative case tends to be the second-most afflicted case in this way.

**5. Phrasal Syntax**

**5.2 Relative Clauses**

Middle Mtsqrveli has two different and concurrent methods of forming relative clauses. One of them is easier but situationally limited, and the other is more contrived but universally applicable.

In the first case: if the antecedent and the proform in the subordinate clause occupy the same syntactic role – both the subject of their respective clauses, or both the direct object, or both a genitive modifying a noun, etc. – then the two clauses can simply be combined into one. The proform is dropped and the subordinate clause that used to contain it is rearranged to include the antecedent, such that the antecedent actually bridges both clauses. This is enabled by Middle Mtsqrveli’s technically free word order and is a notable exception to its *de facto* SVO word order (see also §4.1, Word Order).

For example, if the entity which corefers between two clauses – each of which individually would be SVO – is the subject of both clauses, then one of the clauses omits its subject (either clause can; the subject is the same between both clauses, after all) and is switched to OV(S) word order, and then slurred straight into the other SVO clause so that they share the same subject. The result is a compound clause of the form OVSVO. For example:

**Mdzia dauvdoet bagratis.** The man entered the church.

**+ Mdzia beg gbelid.** The man is holding a book.

**↳ Bagratis dauvdoet mdzia beg gbelid**. The man holding a book entered the church. (lit. The church (O) entered the man (S) holds book (O).)

OR **Gbelid beg mdzia dauvdoet bagratis.** The man who entered the church is holding a book. (lit. Book (O) holds the man (S) entered the church (O).)

Either sentence can mean either of the 2 slightly nuanced, but otherwise functionally equivalent English translations. To make a point of the OVSVO order in these examples, let us examine the gloss of the first one:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bagrat** | **-is** | **da-** | **uvdo** | **-et** | **mdz(o)** | **-ia** | **beg** | **gbeli** | **-d.** |
| church | acc.def | appl | enter | aor | man | nom.def | hold | book | acc.indef |

Note the nominative case sandwiched between two verbs and two nouns in the accusative case.

Likewise, if the coreferent is the object in both clauses, each of which individually is SVO, then the resulting compound clause would be SVOVS, so that the object is “shared” between both clauses, e.g.

**Kart unazt bzq’is.** He didn’t see the beetle.

**Txas dat’rbžat bzq’is.** I stepped on the beetle.

**↳ Kart unazt bzq’is dat’rbžat txas.** I stepped on the beetle that he didn’t see. (lit. He (S) didn’t see the beetle (O) stepped on I (S).)

OR **Txas dat’rbžat bzq’is unazt kart.** He didn’t see the beetle that I stepped on. (lit. I (S) stepped on the beetle (O) didn’t see he (S).)

Again, to examine the gloss of just the first:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Txas** | **da-** | **t’rb(ạ)ž** | **-at** | **bzq’(e)** | **-is** | **un-** | **az** | **-t** | **kart.** |
| 1.sg.nom.indef | appl | step | aor | beetle | acc.def | neg | see | aor | 3.sg.nom.indef |

And in principle, the same “clause-joining” process works for any two clauses in which the coreferent occupies the same syntactic role between both clauses – it is not restricted to, albeit most common with, clauses in which the coreferent is the subject or object of both sentences. It would still be applicable if e.g. the coreferent were in the essive-locative case in both sentences.

Furthermore, the very same free word order that allows the rearrangement of an SVO clause to OVS needed to produce OVSVO and SVOVS *also* means that that rearrangement is not strictly necessary. In principle, this compound clause could take e.g. VOSVO or SVOSV word order. To take the above two examples,then, **dauvdoet bagratis mdzia beg gbelis** “the man holding a book entered the church” and **kart unazt bzq’is tghas dat’rbžat** “he didn’t see the bettle that I stepped on” are equally grammatically correct sentences; they are however less common than OVSVO and SVOVS and would be perceived as abnormal by native speakers.

If the coreferent does not occupy the same syntactic role in both clauses, however, one must resort to the second method, in which one forms a bonafide relative clause.

To do so, the antecedent must be explicitly marked with the prefix *sa-*. In the subordinate clause, the coreferent is expressed as some form of the relative pronoun *ar*, inflected for whatever case the coreferent would have had in a clause by itself. For example:

**Kart č'smet xortis.** He ate the meat.

**Xortia ptvili ghaks.** The meat had recently spoiled.

**↳ Kart č’smet saxortis, aria ptvili ghaks.** He ate the meat that spoiled recently.

Here *saxortis* and *aria* corefer: the *sa-* attached to *xortis* “meat” marks it as the antecedent, and *aria*, the definite nominative form of *ar*, refers back to whatever is marked as the antecedent. It is necessary to use this method to form a relative clause since the coreferent is the object in one clause but the subject in the other. The gloss is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Kart** | **č'sme** | **-t** | **sa-** | **xorti** | **-s,** | **ar** | **-ia** | **ptvili** | **gha<k>s.** |
| 3.sg.nom.indef | eat | aor | antc | meat | acc.def | pf | nom.def | spoiled | past<rec> |

When the antecedent and proform are directly adjacent, as in the above example, so much grammatical machinery just to indicate that they refer to the same thing seems a bit silly. It seems less so when the words are separated with more distance and in much more complicated sentences. For example:

**…unid unsda *samcali, ar* ungord ba unodzo ert saersqamcdz, žar arič kart ġaqret;** …there is no *man who* does not die and return to the ground from whence he was formed; (*Mtsprelia* 5)

In the above example, the italicized words corefer, and the underlined words corefer. Notice that the second clause has both an antecedent (*saersqamcdz*) and a proform (*ar*), but they don’t corefer. This is because, on a shallow level, a proform cannot refer back to an antecedent within the same clause. On a deeper level, the proform *ar* can only refer back to an antecedent that has already been indicated (such as *samcali* directly before it), not one that has yet to be indicated.

The understanding is that the proform *ar* refers back to the most recently indicated antecedent. There is no limit to the number of proforms that can refer back to a given antecedent; for example (italicized words corefer):

**…mtvralimodagh brdzolia *Sajvari, ari* abrulia ivạn, *ari* q'ipc'lia mevari saerevạn, *ari* tvqmạ ġvrebs t'mivạn; *aria* ilat mardavi jmilis** …prevailed the fire of *the Lord*, *whose* eyes were made of light, *whose* frame was of perfect structure, *whose* feet were shod with vigor; *who* begat the human race (*Mtsprelia* 2)

However, once a new antecedent is declared all subsequent proforms must corefer with it.