

The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2015

Advanced level



Problem 10. Georgian verbs (25 marks)

Georgian is spoken by about four million people in Georgia, a country on the Eastern coast of the Black Sea, south of the Caucasus mountains (not to be confused with the American state called Georgia!). The modern Georgian alphabet has been in use for about four centuries. Below are twelve Georgian sentences with their English translations. All of the verbs in the sentences below follow a regular pattern.

კარს ვაღებ	I am opening the door
სახლს აშენებ	You (sing) are building a house
ედუარდ წერილს იღებს	Eduard is receiving a letter
ფარდულს ვაშენებთ	We are building a barn
საჩუქარს აღებთ	You (pl) are opening a gift
ანდრია და მისი დედა პავეტს იღებენ	Andria and his mother are receiving a package.
ხაჭაპური გავაკეთე	I have made khachapuri ¹ .
კარი შეაკეთე	You (singular) have repaired the door.
ანდრიამ პოემა დაწერა	Andria has written a poem.
ლევან და მე ავტომობილი შევაკეთეთ	Levan and I have repaired the car.
სადილი გააკეთეთ	You (plural) have made dinner.
ედუარდ და ეკატერინემ წერილი დაწერეს	Eduard and Ekaterine have written a letter.

¹ Khachapuri is a traditional Georgian dish of cheese-filled bread.

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Q.10.1 Translate the following sentences into English (and write them in the answer sheet):

1. შერილს აღებენ
2. კომპუტერი შეაკეთეთ.
3. ადამ მუზეუმს აშენებს
4. ისტორია და ვწერეთ.

Q.10.2. Translate the following sentences into Georgian:

5. You (singular) are opening the barn.
6. I have repaired the car.
7. We are receiving dinner.
8. They have made a gift.

Q.10.3. Explain, as clearly and as concisely as you can, the main features of Georgian grammar that emerge from the data presented above. (Please don't try to explain the alphabet!)

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Q.10.1. 1.

2.

3.

4.

Q.10.2. 5.

6.

7.

8.

Q.10.3

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10. Georgian verbs – solution (25 points)

Scoring:

Q.10.1: 2 for each correct translation; 1 for just one gap or error. Accept either 'a' or 'the'. (max 8)

Q.10.2: 2 for each correct translation; 1 for up to 5 letters missing or wrong. Be generous in accepting attempts at Georgian script! (max 8)

Q.10.3: (See the commentary in Appendix C) (max 9)

- for a clear and accurate explanation of the morphology of
 - present-tense verbs (3 points, 1 for partial success)
 - past-tense verbs (3 points, 1 for partial success)
- for accurate and relevant comments on noun forms (2 points, 1 for partial success)
- for SOV word order (1 point)
- accept explanations using either Georgian or Roman alphabet

Q.10.1

- | |
|--|
| 1. They are opening the letter. |
| 2. You (pl.) have repaired the computer. |
| 3. Adam is building a museum. |
| 4. We have written a story/ history. |

Q.10.2

- | |
|-------------------------|
| 5. ფარდულს აღებ. |
| 6. აკტომობილი შევაკეთე. |
| 7. საღილს ვიღებთ. |
| 8. საჩუქარი გააკეთეს. |

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Appendix C. Commentary on Georgian (based on notes by the problem author, Dorottya Demszky)

Verb morphological structure summarised

	Present tense (VR = verb root)	Past tense (PV = pre-verb)
1 st sing.	3-/v + VR	PV+ -3-/v + VR
2 nd sing.	VR	PV+VR
3 rd sing.	VR + -ბ/s	PV+ VR + -ს/a
1 st pl.	3- + VR + -ო/t	PV + -3-/v + VR + -ო/t
2 nd pl.	VR + -ო/t	PV + VR + -ო/t
3 rd pl.	VR + -ონ/en	PV+ VR + -ბ/s

Present tense

	To open* ²	To build	To receive
1 st sing.	ვაღებ vagheb	ვაშენებ vasheneb	ვიღებ vigheb
2 nd sing.	აღებ agheb	აშენებ asheneb	იღებ igheb
3 rd sing.	აღებს aghebs	აშენებს ashenebs	იღებს ighebs
1 st pl.	ვაღებთ vaghebt	ვაშენებთ vashenebt	ვიღებთ vighebt
2 nd pl.	აღებთ aghebt	აშენებთ ashenebt	იღებთ ighebt
3 rd pl.	აღებენ agheben	აშენებენ asheneben	იღებენ igheben

Past tense

	To make	To repair	To write
1 st sing.	გავაკეთე gavakete	შევაკეთე sevakete	დავწერე davtsere
2 nd sing.	გავაკეთე gaakete	შეაკეთე sheakete	დაწერე datsere
3 rd sing.	გავაკეთა gaaketa	შეაკეთა sheaketa	დაწერა datsera

² Georgian verbs do not have an infinitive

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Nouns as objects

Nouns have (at least)

two forms when apparently being used as the verb's object. The two relevant examples are shown below, with an alternation between **-ს/s** and **-ი/i**. The choice of noun form depends on the verb's tense.

	door	letter
A) with present tense	კარს	წერილს
B) with past tense	კარი	წერილი

Nouns as subjects

At least one subject noun has two forms: Andria is ანდრია in 'Andria and his mother are receiving a package' but ანდრიაბ (with an extra final **ბ/m**) in 'Andria has written a poem'. This variation is presumably due to the verb's tense (and we see the same extra letter on Ekaterine ეკატერინებ in a past-tense sentence) but it is not found on the first of two coordinated subjects, as in 'Levan and I' or 'Eduard and Ekaterine'.