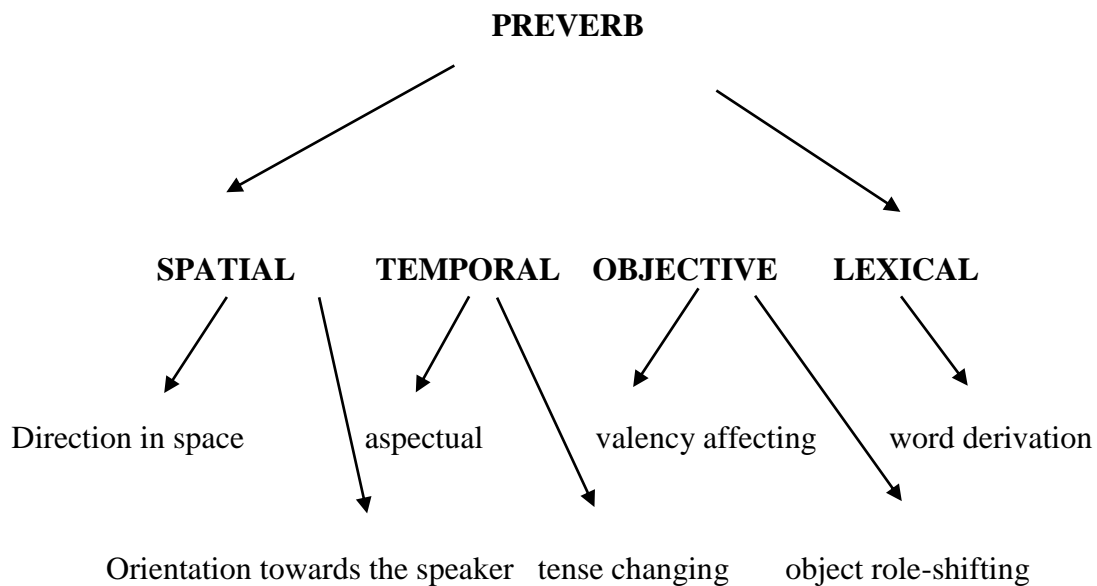


## **Preverbs in Signed and Spoken Georgian Languages**

**Tamar MAKHAROBLIDZE**  
(Ilia State University, Georgia)

In the present paper the functions of preverbs are described in Spoken and Signed Georgian as a contribution to the typology of this issue. Preverbs have different meanings and activities in different languages. The typological classification of the functions of preverbs appears as follows:



The three functions of Spoken Georgian and other Kartvelian preverbs - spatial, temporal and lexical - are well-described by a number of Georgian scholars, but the objective function of preverbs and the object role-shifting effect of preverbs in these languages are first described in this paper.

The objective content or function of preverbs has a derivational effect, such as changing the valency of the verb. The lexical and objective functions are derivational. The latter shows an argument linking effect, while the lexical function performs lexeme derivation. As the affected argument is always an object, I name the argument linking function as ‘objective’. This function of preverbs (particles and adpositions) and the effect of transitivity are described in the Indo-European languages by a number of linguists. Some scientists describe the argument-structural preverbs and particles with a morphological approach, while other authors consider particle verbs and preverbal constructions to be syntactic matters.

The paper also discusses verbal argument structure alternations signaled by preverbs in Spoken Georgian and the other Kartvelian languages. I argue that preverbs also affect verbal valency changes and stimulate object role-shifting in Spoken and Signed Georgian verbs. From initial analysis, it seems preverbs in Georgian Sign Language (GESL) only have spatial content and thus, a GESL preverb can increase the valency by adding a local/spatial argument/indirect object. In order to translate the different meanings of preverbal forms from Spoken Georgian, GESL uses other morphemes conveying the proper morphosemantics for specific cases.

Preverbal object role swamping or so called ‘argument alternations’ may occur in the Indo-European languages and is well-attested in these languages. I name this function of preverbs as ‘object role-shifting’, since it is a morphosyntactic phenomenon with certain morphological reference existing within the incorporated Spoken Georgian/Kartvelian verbs. This is distinct from primarily syntactic ‘object alternations’ with semantic and pragmatic components. Actually, contextual factors are very important for argument alternation in general, but for object role-shifting, it is the verbal morphosemantics that is crucial. Object role-shifting can be considered as one type of object alternation and these two issues may have a single linguistic umbrella.

The present paper is the first to reveal the spatial content of GESL preverbs and the process of grammaticalization as well.

*Keywords:* preverb, Georgian, Georgian sign Language (GESL), SL, object, valency, verb