

Correlative pronouns in Ossetic complement clauses¹

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In Ossetic, the subordinators mostly occur with correlative pronouns/adverbs in the matrix clause (1)–(2). Correlatives are obligatory in adverbial and relative clauses (except for purpose clauses), while in complementation they can be dropped (2), see Abaev (1950), Bagaev (1982), Belyaev (2015) for details.

Abaev (1950) proposes the following rule for the omission of correlative pronouns in complementation: the pronoun is obligatory if the matrix clause is postposed, and optional if the matrix clause is preposed (Abaev 1950: 719). Hence, there are three possible constructions with respect to the order of the matrix and the complement clause:

(A) MatrCl DepCl *wəj* (B) MatrCl DepCl (C) DepCl *wəj* MatrCl

It remains unclear what triggers the omission of correlative pronouns if the matrix clause is preposed, i.e. in cases (A) and (B). I claim that the correlative marks the pragmatic presupposition. In other words, it is present if the complement is topical or refers to presupposed/old/expected information. This claim is supported by corpus data (Ossetic National Corpus, http://corpus.ossetic-studies.org/search/index.php?interface_language=ru) and elicitation. I provide the following evidence in support of my claim:

- 1) With the subordinator *kəj* and in asyndetic construction the correlative pronoun is required in the context of the factive (presupposition inducing) verbs, and it is dropped with semi-factive ‘know’ exactly in presupposition-opaque contexts (Karttunen 1973).
- 2) With semi-factive and non-factive verbs (in terms of Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1971) the correlative pronoun distinguishes between factive and non-factive propositions (see Asher 1993, Peterson 1997,), e.g. between complement clauses belonging to the presupposition and to the assertion. It is most often absent in contexts where the dependent clause presents new information, or in irrealis contexts.
- 3) The correlative pronoun is unacceptable in contexts of falsity of the complement (3) and in (quasi-)performative contexts (4), which are incompatible with the factive reading (and thus, presupposition of the truth of the complement) according to Benveniste (1966).
- 4) The subordinator *səma*, which introduces propositions but cannot introduce facts, does not take correlatives in complementation.

With irrealis and eventive complements, correlatives encode aforementionedness, topicality and expectedness:

- 5) In the case of aforementionedness, non-factive irrealis clauses take the correlative pronouns.
- 6) Eventive complements with perception and emotive verbs take the correlatives in case of topicality or direct aforementionedness (5).
- 7) Complements of the verb ‘wait’ take the correlative in case of expectedness of the situation in the complement clause, consider the contrast between (6) and (7).

Therefore, I claim that correlative pronouns/adverbs are used if the complement clause is presupposed, constitutes the topic, or encodes old/expected information. All these types of contexts can be generalized in terms of pragmatic presupposition.

¹ The work is supported by the RFBR grant No 16-06-00226.

Examples:

- (1) [salənmɜ =dən mɜ= sʒšt ʒrt:iv-a], walənmɜ
as.long.as thee.DAT my eye shine-SBJV.3SG to.that.time
dɜ= χis-ʒn binont-ə koj ba-kʒn
thy self-DAT family-GEN care PV-do[IMP.2SG]
'As long as I'm alive, take care of your family.' (Gagkaev 1956: 227)
- (2) ʒž žon-ən, [žawər čəžg kʒj ʒr-χašt-a], (wəj)
I know-PRS.1SG Zaur girl COMP PV-take-PST.3SG that.DEM
'I know that Zaur has married.'
- (3) *də žon-əš, [žawər čəžg kʒj ʒr-χašt-a], wəj, fʒlʒ
you know-PRS.2SG Zaur girl COMP PV-take-PST.3SG that.DEM but
wəj ʒsʒg nʒ-w
that.DEM true NEG-be.PRS.3SG
Intended meaning: 'You know that Zaur has married, but this is not true.'
- (4) quš-ən =dən kʒn-ən, [nər-ʒj fʒštʒ-mɜ am nal
listen-INF thee.DAT do-PRS.1SG now-ABL later-ALL here no.more
kuš-əš] (*wəj)
work-PRS.2SG that.DEM
'I declare that you're fired.' (pronounced by an authorized person)
- (5) ʒž nʒ fe-q^wəšt-on, [χəl kʒj kot:-oj], wəj,
I NEG PV-hear-PST.1SG quarrel COMP do-PST.3PL that.DEM
ʒmɜ mɜ nʒ wərn-ə
and me.GEN NEG believe-PRS.3SG
(Zaur quarreled with his wife!) '– I haven't heard that they quarreled, and I don't believe it.'
- (6) ʒnqʒlmɜ kašt-əštʒm, [war-ən kʒd ba-nsaj-ʒʒn], wə-mɜ
(wait) look-PST.1PL rain-INF if PV-stop-FUT[3SG] that-ALL
'We were waiting until the rain stops.' (ONC)
- (7) ʒnqʒlmɜ kʒš, [salənmɜ =dən wəraš-ə pac:aχ jʒ= bandon
(wait) look[IMP.2SG] until thee.DAT Russia-GEN emperor his throne
ʒfštaw a-vʒr-a]
on.credit PV-give-SBJV.3SG
'Wait for the Russian emperor to lend you his throne.' (ONC)

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