

Towards one function of the Prefix "Ma" in Megrelian

Summary

One of the important functions of the prefix "ma" in Megrelian is the nomination of plants and animals on the basis of similarity. In addition to it, a root is the name of the simulative object. For instance: **Kobali** "bread, corn" is a cultivated plant, but **Ma-kobal-aia** – aia is a cornlike plant and grows in the fields and forests; **Pati** is millet, but **Ma-phot-ia** is a milletlike grass; **Gvimara** is a fern, but **Magvimar-aia** is a fernlike plant but it is a little shorter than a fern. **Kiri** is a hawk, but **Ma-kir-ia** is a hawklike bird, but less in size than a hawk and so on. When "ma" is used in this function it is followed by the suffixes **ia** or **aia**.

It has been supposed that the function of the prefix "ma-a" used with the names of plants and animals is connected with the Megrelian prefix – suffix "ma" which forms the names of equal degrees and is much older. (Shkhu "thick" → "Mashkhv-a" as thick as"....)