

## The Indigestible Impact of English on the Modern Georgian Lexicon

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To many Georgians, the infiltration of English into their language, like the earlier (and not yet extinct) infiltration of Russian calls for a fight against ‘barbarism’ – a term which we meet in a number of articles on the subject and on lists of English words that are being transliterated and used (or misused) in Georgian. But this battle is a familiar one, not just in linguistics, but in politics. A language or a nation is assailed by hordes of outsiders, whether neighbouring empires or plundering nomads, and tries to repel them. In fact, the outcome is usually a compromise: just as the Byzantine empire was at first overwhelmed by Goths, but then assimilated them as fellow-Christians and as border guards, so a language endures a wave of alien influence and then digests and integrates it.

Before we look at more specific uses of anglicisms, their range, formation, altered meanings etc., let us try to avoid outright condemnation of ‘barbarisms’, redundancy, contamination, weakening etc. 400 years ago, Pierre Nicole, a colleague of Pascal’s saw the benefits of enrichment by new vocabulary:<sup>1</sup>

Il est donc avantageux, pour enrichir les langues vivantes, que des personnes judicieuses soient un peu hardies à se servir de nouveaux mots et de nouvelles phrases... surtout dans de grands ouvrages... pour éviter une trop grande ressemblance de manières de s’exprimer.

Turgenev in *Smoke* has his mouthpiece Potugin remark:<sup>2</sup>

Take our language, for example. Peter the Great flooded it with thousands of foreign words – Dutch, French, German; these words expressed concepts which Russian people had to familiarise themselves with. Peter didn’t rack his brains or stand on ceremony: he filled our guts wholesale, by the bucket, by the barrel with these words. The initial result was something monstrous, but afterwards came the digestion process... The new ideas caught on and were absorbed; they lost their foreign shape, and our language found substitutes for them in its own resources.

If we look at the defences used against these ‘barbarisms’, we can see various strategies, some successful, some absurd, some hopeless. At one extreme are the Slavonic languages of the Austro-Hungarian empire: when the Czechs began their renaissance at the end of the eighteenth century, they found that they lacked words – sometimes because old words were forgotten, sometimes because new words had not been devised for new discoveries. Their solution was to avoid borrowing from the ‘enemy’ language, German, and to devise their own from Slavonic roots, so that we have in Czech *klokan* for kangaroo, *souhлина* for aluminium, *plyn* for gas etc. The Croats took similar steps: they would not do as the Serbs did, calling a station a *stancija*, but devised *kolodvor*. Croats, like Latvians, went even further, refusing to accept even foreign surnames as originally written in the Latin alphabet, but transforming them by rendering them phonetically. Such languages, whose norms were decided and enforced by rural schoolteachers and nationalist academies, who were resisting imperial pressures, have been successful in their self-sufficiency.

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<sup>1</sup> Nicole 1858: 373–374 (‘Sur les langues’).

<sup>2</sup> Turgenev 1868: 40; translation D. R.

Other languages have not: the battle of the French government, despite its centralised control of the education system and the prestige of the Académie française, has failed to stop television and radio talking about *le weekend*, or teenagers saying *cool*, *coolissime*. Even with Britain out of the EU, the English language remains powerful (as the common language, a neutral zone, for Flemish and Francophone Belgians, as the real language of Ireland). All the French can hang on to is an exceptional vocabulary for computer terms: *ordinateur*, *fichier*, *logiciel*, *police de caractères* etc, but even so they are forced to use English *web*, *blog*, *WiFi* (gender indeterminate), while *courriel* has failed to replace *email*, and *télécharger* is so ambiguous (up- or down-load?) that we end up choosing between *j'uploade* and *je mets en ligne*. English bug has given *unbug* and *beuger* to crash. Given this mess, Georgian's internet diglossia seems quite tolerable.

On a wider scale, Georgian must be considered one of the world's languages that, like English or Russian, borrows easily and widely and yet preserves its identity while quickly rejecting what it fails to assimilate. Much depends, of course, in how the 'barbarisms' enter: by cultural imitation, by forced conquest and foreign administration, by population mingling, and so on. The history of Georgian shows half a dozen periods when there has been a massive onslaught or infusion of alien terms, of which only a minority have established themselves in the language. If we start with pre-history, there is no doubt that Kartvelians lived for some times (Gamqrelidze's assumption) in close proximity to Indo-Europeans in the Euphrates valley, so numerous are the coincidences with basic Indo-European vocabulary and even morphology; when Greek expatriates founded city-colonies on the Black Sea, a limited amount of Greek – names of medicinal plants, ceramics etc – were adopted by Kartvelians. The return of monks, together with Greek refugees, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD brought obscure Greek vocabulary used by Petritsi and today no longer understood. Over several stages from the dawn of history to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Iranian terms, especially of religion, administration, economic and military, later, especially after Georgia's association with Shirvan in the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, of chivalry, epic poetry, history, moral codes etc. exerted a powerful influence. Yet readers of Rustaveli or the Rusudaniani now require a dictionary to understand many of these Iranian imports. From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup>, Russian became the dominant force. But it is important to concede that Russia was more an imperial than a colonial power. The Russian language could not permeate Georgia in the same way that English and French permeated Africa. Its influence ran along specific channels: through military service into which so many Georgians were conscripted, in the prison system, particularly the Soviet Gulag, which shaped a large number of Georgian males and their language, and in the Communist hierarchy where, to enjoy privileges and power, speakers of all Soviet languages had to regard Russian as a primary means of communication.

### 1. The first wave of English importations

Public relations and human resources (PR and HR, პოპრო, უბრო) spear-headed the formation of western-style capitalist enterprise in the 1990s, and these two phenomena were seen as aspects which Georgian entrepreneurs had to assimilate in order to set up western-friendly businesses.

There was also an important internal factor promoting the influence of English. Georgia staked its economic future on tourism (not just hiking, skiing, bird-watching, but medical, too), on a permissive attitude to international business, on external investment. As a result, institutions appear in which English is the main language of communication and instruction. Business

courses on Human Resources use a great deal of English material. The Tbilisi Medical Academy trains up to 300 doctors on six-year courses, with English the medium of instruction – applicants who provide proof of proficiency in English will be prioritised. Help is offered with the doctor's registration process in the UK. Similar prospects are offered at Kutaisi University and the European University in Tbilisi – three anglophone academic and medical centres. The Black Sea University also teaches many courses in English. These courses are popular with non-Georgians, seeking an affordable way of gaining qualifications recognised in the west. The result is, of course, that English, not Georgian, becomes the *lingua franca* of students and teachers.

Previously, of course, there were Russian streams at Georgian universities, and all school pupils had some subjects taught in Russian. The difference is that for many parents and students Russian was the enemy's language and the diglossia was a complex, often conflicting one, whereas there is less antagonism to English or American influence, and the acquisition is voluntary, sometimes enthusiastic.

Tourism has led to fluency in English in areas as remote and isolated as Svaneti and Tusheti, where the second language for the younger generation may often be English, rather than Russian: a guide for mountain climbers has to be able to give clear instructions to foreign tourists.

Georgians, particular Tbilisi women, liked to make fun of Russian by creating Georgian sentences where the words were Russian, but the morphology Georgian: *sapozhnikma gamiporta sapoghebi*. English, however, is a prestigious aspiration and the language is treated as a subject for mastery and for self-esteem, as well as one which gives opportunities for a career overseas. Georgian macaronic jokes, so far, do not exploit English, so that we have nothing like Mayakovsky's macaronic Russo-Georgian poems to illustrate the diglossia with English:<sup>3</sup>

Да, я русский, რუსი გახლავარ [...]
   
и теперь вдали от вас
   
ვისურვებდი ვყოფილიყავ
   
თქვენთან ერთად
   
Как с братом брат [...]
   
კვლავ მოგველხინა ღვინით და პურით,
   
მაღლარი გვესვა ყანწით და ჭურით. [...]
   
Грузин я знал чуть не с пеленок,
   
ღვინოსა ველაპავ как теленок
   
ველარ დამათრობთ, იმედი ნუ გაქვთ!
   
აბა დაველით ახლა ბრუდერшафт.

From 1990 a century-old trickle of anglicisms (American and British) into Georgian became a torrent with several subsidiary streams. One is the introduction of new products (from cell-phones to pickup trucks), new customs (even morals), new commercial transactions etc., for which no existing words (as distinct from descriptive paraphrases) have existed: more often than not, an Anglo-Saxon word has been adopted to fill the gap. A second stream has been a determination to rid certain spheres of Russianisms, notably the terms for automobile parts (a field in which, during Soviet times, Russians and Armenians, rather than Georgians did the

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<sup>3</sup> Mayakovsky 1933: [2].

dirty work) by devising (or reviving) words of Georgian origin, or importing Anglo-Saxon terms (a similar process has occurred in fields such as rugby football, played from 1959 to 1989 only against Slavonic teams, but now on a world basis). A third stream, after internet use became widespread for personal communication and commerce, was the devising of a terminology parallel to that of western internet users and commerce.

One exception to the trend of importing European vocabulary affects words categorised as obscene or vulgar. Native Georgian words and phrases in the area of slang and obscenity have also flourished: since 1990 words and phrases have appeared in print that had never been seen in literary Georgian since the days of Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani; in this semi-taboo sphere, the absence of foreign influence (if we discount the Hebrew of Georgian Jews) is remarkable.

The first example of crude importation, one which sharpened my interest in the new processes affecting the evolution of modern Georgian, is the command *იშოპინგეთ!*, ‘Continue shopping!’, found in online shops and market places. Like many other such words, it has expanded its originally limited market-place use to general, non-internet communications, and has begun to show derived and conjugated forms: *წავვედით საშოპინგოდ*, ‘We went shopping’, and yet, at the same time, we also see a typical variability in the transcription of the original English, a variability that prevents such words entering the lexicon in a standard form: *შოპინგი* or *შოფინგი*. The ejective consonants of *შოპინგობს იშოპინგა უშოპინგია* are found more frequently than *შოფინგობს იშოფინგა უშოფინგია*, but despite the uncertainty of spelling, all three series of the verb are now in use and the verb has passed the barrier of the Georgian inflectional system. We should also note that the alien nature of the *-ng-* cluster in non-Germanic languages has also not deterred the importation of English terms into Georgian. More on these variations later.

This study is based on internet chat forums, commercial material, plays (notably by dramatists who presented their work for translation and development at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 2013), novels by Lasha Bughadze etc. It is odd that contemporary, even very young Georgian dramatists and novelists still make their characters speak a Russified, not an Anglicised slang. Authors who are middle-aged are uncomfortable with teenage vocabulary, but it is notable that Lasha Bughadze’s *ბოლო ზარი* and *ოქროს ხანი* both have school-age or teenage (anti-)heroes, whose slang is influenced by Russian, but not by English, even when they are illegals working in Scarborough.

A rash preliminary conclusion would be that an alien flood, an indigestible input, has since 1990 struck the Georgian language, comparable to what happened with an Iranian influx in the 10<sup>th</sup> and Russian in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. But, like earlier floods, a new process of absorption and rejection is bound to take place, leaving only a percentage of digestible material to be integrated with the body of the language. Much depends on the equilibrium of norms and innovations reached between a strong and conservative elderly school-teaching establishment and an active and anarchic young internet community. Arguably, another important factor is to be found in the actual phonological structure of innovations: words such as *რითრიითი* (*retreat*) and *დაიგუგლება* (‘can be googled’) have a choice and distribution of consonants and vowels which integrate easily with Georgian, not displaying their alien origin, whereas, say, the alien-sounding *აბეკაპებს* (‘backs up’), with its un-Georgian syllabic structure, still has to compete with the periphrastic Franco-Russian *სარეზერვოდ აღუბლირებს*.

The grammatical implications of imported anglicisms are also complicated: *ვიშოპინგეთ* (‘we did some shopping’) is marked as a transitive verb with an ergative agent – although intransitive, unless you count an adverbial complement, such as *ბევრი*, as an object. This

process and similar contradictions seem to occur in other “ergative-inclined languages”, where an imported intransitive verb acquires ergative marking, e.g. Basque *nere kochek ez du funtzionatzen* ‘My car isn’t working’ (with transitive auxiliary *du*, and agent in ergative case), instead of the theoretically correct *\*nere koche ez da funtzionatzen* (with intransitive auxiliary *da*, and subject in absolute case).

## 2. Inconsistencies and instabilities

Even the earliest anglicisms in Georgian, dating from 1980s, have not all achieved fixed form: e.g. დაბლოკვა or დაბლოკება, დააბლოკავს or დააბლოკებს. Some maintain a dual existence, failing to replace native terms: ჰედლაინი coexists with სათაური. New objects have different versions of their name, depending on who manufactures and sells them. For instance, ‘(chip) fryer’ > ფრი(ს აპარატი), ფრიტურნიცა or the conventional ზეთსახარში ქვაბი.

Many anglicisms are *hapax legomena*, occurring once or twice, before disappearing, failing in the struggle of the fittest to survive.

Nato Beridze, writing recently (with marked disapproval of the crudeness and barbarism of unnecessary, in her view, innovation, especially in the field of computer studies), gives a long list of anglicisms.<sup>4</sup> But quite a few have over a decade or two proved their longevity, and some have achieved currency outside a circle of computer programmers and hackers: დასერჩვა ‘to search’, დამესიჯება ‘to message, SMS’, დაგუგლვა ‘to google’ (but დაგუგლება version more common), გაშიარება ‘to share’, დალაიქება ‘to like’, დალინკვა ‘to link’, დაშატდოუნება ‘to shut down’, დატრენინგება ‘to train sb’, დაპოსტვა or დაფოსტვა ‘to post’ – e.g. a message or picture on an Internet forum (the latter generates other phrases and words, e.g. მპოსტავთა უმრავლესობა, გადაფოსტვა ‘to re-post’); სკროლვა ‘to scroll’ (note that სკროლება tends to mean ‘to ride a Scroll electric scooter). Some are still limited in use: დასტალქვა ‘to stalk’, დასპამვა ‘to spam’, დაშეარება or დაშიარება ‘to share’. Others, however, have gone viral: დასინვა ‘to see and take no action’ > ‘to gaslight sb’; დაკლიკვა ‘to click’, from which sheer native genius has derived the term არაკლიკებელური ‘not-clickable’, i.e. unattractive (of face, picture, proposition etc).

## 3. A closer look at a handful of particularly productive anglicisms

3.1 One outstanding viral, albeit unstable word comes from the English *chat*: ჩატ-ი, or ჩათ-ი or ჩეტ-ი or ჩეთ-ი, -აობა (‘to chat’). Clearly, the ambiguity of ა/ე comes from deriving the word imitating the vowel of the written or spoken (southern English) form, while the choice of ტ/თ is an arbitrary or accidental one, even more vacillatory in the case of კ/ქ, for which I have not been able to identify any consistent decisive factor. But the verb derived from ჩატი/ჩათი/ჩეტი/ჩეთი has developed a whole nest of conjugated forms: ჩეთაობა > ჩეთაობს > უჩეთავია > დაჩეთაობს with ე or ა for English open *a*; we also have ჩატაობა or ჩეთაობა (rarely ჩეტაობა), and უჩეთავია or უჩატავია (consistent with the Russian-derived ბლატაობა), rarely უჩათავია). Note that ჩეთაობდა and ჩეტაობდა have acceptable second series forms: აქ ბევრმა იჩატავა, ‘a lot of people chatted here’.

<sup>4</sup> Beridze 2023.

In this example the English import follows a pattern of many Russian imports: compare ჩატაობს with ბლატაობს (ობლატავა, უბლატავია) ‘talking big and not delivering’, from блатовать, and note the change in meaning from the original Russian (just as many English importations also alter, restrict, or broaden their meaning: блатовать originally meant ‘talking a person into a sexual or criminal act’). Also note addition of stem -ა, as in ბანაობა etc., typical of monosyllabic roots which form intransitive verbs in Georgian.

The meaning of ჩატაობა has spread from online to face-to-face chats, as well as AI robot queries. So that we can have a series of actions: იმუშავა, იბანავა, იხატავა, იბლატავა, ‘He worked, washed, chatted and talked big’.

3.2 Entering Georgian perhaps after Russian in 1990s, the English ‘cringe’ (not particularly prominent in English internet usage) has become widespread: დაქრინჯება ‘to cringe’ – ‘to experience inconvenience, discomfort, embarrassment’: შეიძლება დაიქრინჯოთ, როცა ვიღაც ცდილობს გაგაცინოს, მაგრამ თქვენ არ მოგწონთ მისი იუმორი ‘You might cringe when someone tries to make you laugh, but you don’t like their humour’. მარტო შენ არ ხარ ვინც საკუთარი წარსულის ჩანაწერებზე იქრინჯება ‘You’re not the only one who cringes at their own past recordings’. ქრინჯი is very occasionally found as an adjective (ქრინჯი ჩვევა ‘a cringeworthy habit’).

This anglicism was first introduced into Russian as an embarrassing, cringeworthy act (speech etc.), apparently by gamers : *кринж, кринжовый, кринжевать (кринжую)*, but took on a wider meaning (‘disappointment, bad luck, e.g. breaking a leg after beauty treatment, as well as embarrassment’). It may be an import by Russian pupils at English girls’ school, since *cringe* and *cringeworthy* are very much middle-class and predominantly female terms to describe witnessing embarrassing behaviour close to oneself. Georgian literary reaction to the verb is somewhat snobbish: ვიქრინჯები – ამის ასხნა აქ ძალიან რთულია, მაგრამ არსებობს ასეთი ზმნა უხერხულობის გადმოსაცემად ‘The definition of ვიქრინჯები is very complex, but this verb exists to denote embarrassment’.<sup>5</sup> ქრინჯება is now found in literary translation, one example being:<sup>6</sup> დღემდე ვქრინჯავ თუ რამდენი რამ დავაიგნორე და უბრალოდ თვალები ... რამდენ ... ყურადღება არ მივაქციე ‘To this day it makes me cringe to admit, but there was a lot I blinked at and ignored then because I didn’t pay attention’. It is interesting that the translator also uses (და-)იგნორება, an anglicism (if not from Russian via Latin, German or English) which is a common borrowing in most European languages. Russian *игнорировать*, unlike Georgian, has no perfective, but is found as early as the 1880s in Dal’s dictionary and in early Chekhov: why did it take so long to get დავაიგნორე into Georgian? What is puzzling is that ქრინჯება apparently has no causative (\*აქრინჯებს). We should also note choice of initial ქ over კ. As with other imported apparently intransitive verbs, ქრინჯება may, or may not, be treated as a transitive verb requiring an ergative-marked subject in the aorist: მენდომ მაგრა იქრინჯა ალონსოს გოლში თავისი არაზუსტი პასით ‘Mendi was very embarrassed by a clumsy pass at Alonso’s goal’.<sup>7</sup>

‘Cringe’ is widespread in other languages: Bosnian Croat speakers, I am reliably informed, are familiar with *krindž, krindžati, krindžovati*: in Sarajevo schools anglicisation has gone at least as far as in Tbilisi, with not just *skrolati* ‘to scroll’, but terms like *sus*, ‘suspicious’.

<sup>5</sup> Tapnadze 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Mosiashvili 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Halamadrid 2022.

3.3 The origin of დასინვა is not immediately obvious, but it is actually derived from English ‘seen’, the message on a smartphone when your message is delivered, but not yet read. დასინვა has come to mean ‘to gaslight’, to ignore someone’s communications, and has succeeded in completely concealing its alien origin: დასინული defines a message which (or someone who) has been seen but left unanswered, and also a person who is being ignored or gaslighted/gaslit.

მიწერის შემთხვევაში კი დიდი შანსია იმისა, რომ დაგსინოთ, თუ თქვენც "გახითული" [have 1000+ followers] არ ბრძანდებით ‘When you write, you have a big chance of being gaslighted, unless you have a big following’.<sup>8</sup> მაგრამ დაგსინა ყველამ, ახლა დაგსინოთ ევროპამ ‘But everyone has ignored us, now let Europe ignore you’.<sup>9</sup>

დასინვა has a past participle: ყველაზე მეტჯერ დასინული, ‘someone more ignored than anyone else’. Few such verb neologisms have a complete conjugational set.

#### 4. Problematic verbs

4.1 Some innovations seem unlikely to survive. They may be ugly (what Georgian wants to use a verb beginning ჯგა-, even if it only means to judge?): ჯაჯგა (from English ‘judge’): სულ ნუ მჯაჯგავ: – შენთვის რომ კარგი მინდა, იმიტომ გჯაჯგავ ‘Don’t judge me — I just want the best for you, that’s why I judge you’.<sup>9</sup>

Other innovations seem needlessly complex: ამოაპრინტერებს, ამოუპრინტერებია refers to printing from internet only, and is thus separate from დაბეჭდვა, which involves typing or typesetting. What is interesting about ამოაპრინტერებს is its use of ამო- as a prefix and the retention of an English nominal suffix *-er*: ამო- implies singling out a copy, while -ერებს indicates that the borrower does not analyse the constituents of the word being borrowed.

There is a particular problem with ფრენდება (‘to befriend’): 1) some forms (e.g. დაფრენდა) are homonyms with forms of the verb meaning ‘flying about’; 2) it lacks the essential opposite ‘to unfriend’. In general, the Georgian verbal prefix system lacks a specific prefix meaning ‘to undo’, equivalent to an unambiguous *dis-*, *un-* in English.

დაფრენდება is not a secure import, because of its ambiguities when conjugated: როგორ ლინკებს აშეარებთ? Facebook-ზე უამრავი ფრენდი ჰყავს. ჩვენ თვითონაც ვიდაცების ფრენდები ვართ. ‘What kind of links do you share? You have countless friends on Facebook. We ourselves are friends with some people’.<sup>9</sup>

The Russian version of ფრენდი has no such drawbacks, because Russian has the prefix *pac-* to negate a verb, and thus *френдить*, with *расфрендить/расфренджить*, has a full complement in word formation and conjugation. There is even an aphorism to illustrate this:

*Нельзя расфрендить незафрендженное.*

But Georgian has no negative for დაფრენდება, and, just like დალაიქება ‘to like’, the negative is expressed by a supplementary verb, e.g. წაშალე, ‘erase, wipe off’.

4.2 The fourth and most popular innovation is from English ‘like’: ლაიქი, დალაიქება, which now threatens even to oust მოწონება in young Georgian colloquial dialogue. ლაიქი for ‘like’ is unusually stable, since the form with an ejective კ, ლაიქი, is reserved for the breed of dog.

<sup>8</sup> Niny 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Facebook post, no longer available.

Here the choice (not always consistently made in imports from English) of the aspirate ქ is dictated so as to avoid ambiguity.

დალაიქება has spread some distance away from being a mere Facebook button, e.g. the advertisement: ვენდის კაფეს ვაშლის ტარტი მსუნაგებს დაულაიქებია ‘Gourmets [seem to] like Wendy’s Café’s apple tart’.<sup>9</sup> In chats დალაიქება is ubiquitous: ყველა ერთმანეთის პოსტებსა და შეარებს ვუყურებთ, ვალაიქებთ როგორ ფოტოებს პოსტავთ. რას ულაიქებთ ფრენდებს? ‘I follow all the mutual posts and shares, I like the way you post photos. What do you like from your friends?’<sup>10</sup>

Russian has developed a special half-English, half-Slavonic prefix negative for *лайкать/лайкнуть*: *дизлайкать/дизлайкнуть*, a resource which Georgian hasn’t yet developed, given the absence of an unambiguous negating prefix.

## 5. The social and political function of Anglicised Georgian

1. For professional groups (in business, entertainment etc) to demonstrate their international standing and modernity, but with no desire to be impenetrable to non-professionals;
2. For teenagers, the opposite: to be safe from parental or adult interference, which is why sites appear on the net to tell teachers and parents what their charges are up to on their mobiles;
3. For neighbours, former students, relatives, even adults in 20s and 30s.

Teenager vocabulary is meant to be impenetrable to teachers and parents (uncomprehending adults can find the means to decipher their offsprings’ sociolect on [allnews.ge](http://allnews.ge); [mshoblebi/mascavleblebi.ge](http://mshoblebi/mascavleblebi.ge), [etaloni.ge/geo](http://etaloni.ge/geo)).

Even so, much remains indecipherable. Some imports undergo major semantic changes: e.g. სტალკვა has changed from meaning ‘stalk’, to ‘do close research (usually secretly)’, ‘compile a dossier’ (on someone through social networks).

მიშეარებდა is now defined as ამბავს მიყვებოდა ან რაიმე ინფორმაციას მიზიარებდა, მოქმედება დაუსრულებელია ‘told me a story or shared information with me’, imperfective.

დამიფრუვებდე is defined as ნეტავ, დამიმტკიცებდე რაღაცას, რასაც ველოდები ‘I would like something I’m expecting confirmed for me’.

## 6. Some common nouns

ქრაში ‘a crush (on somebody)’

ვაიბი ‘vibe, energy’

ტროლი from which we derive დატროლვა – იტროლება, ტროლები ‘troll, trolling’

ფიშინგი ონლაინ ბულინგი ‘fishing, online bullying’

ჰეითერები ‘haters’.

Macaronic phrases mingling English and Georgian are as common as straight imports: e.g. ‘sensitive data’, სენსიტიური მონაცემები.

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<sup>10</sup> Lominadze 2016.



Made-up English also flourishes, e.g. ეგობუხტა ‘has become more self-confident’ < *ego-booster*;

არაკლიკებელი ‘unclickable, boring’ (person, site) – one might expect დაუკლიკებელი. Note the use of the English morpheme *-able* as well as an English root.

და/ჩა-ფეისტება or და/ჩა-პეისტება, ‘to paste’, used in parallel with ჩასმა (but Georgian has no equivalent of the ingenious Russian combination *конунachmentь*; instead ამოჭრა და ჩასმა). There is one area where Georgian has failed to assimilate an alien term: no proper Georgian form exists for ‘QR code’ (Russian *кваркод*): Georgians have *QR*, transliterated as ქრ or ქანი რაე კოდი.

## 7. Synonyms that may not successfully compete with native words

დასეიება ‘to save’ equals შენახვა and has no real need to co-exist, whereas დასინვა ‘to see but ignore’ is not the same as ნახვა and has its very specific meaning;

Similarly, გაშეარება ‘to share’ differs from გაზიარება: it means ‘to tell something (private)’; likewise დააპდეიტება ‘to update’ is not the same as ‘to renew’ (განახლება), nor does დასკიპვა to ‘skip’ (something) duplicate დატოვება;

Some anglicisms have limited specific semantics: computer only, but many are expanding usage, especially in the imperative mood: დასერჩე! ‘Search!’, დაალაიქე! ‘Like!’, დააშიარე! ‘Share!’, etc., “increasing day by day”.<sup>11</sup>

Natia Davitishvili<sup>12</sup> notes how the process of importation creates variants of the English in form and meaning, so that record-breaker/holder becomes რეკორდსმენი; other anglicisms arise via Russian (ქილერი, which means ‘hitman’, rather than ‘killer’). Many direct imports deal with new concepts and things, e.g. ბეიბისიტ(ერ)ი.

Gochitashvili and Shabashvili point out that an anglicism that supplants a Russianism or Georgian word may have different aura: ბიზნესმენი is positive, საქმოსიანი, its equivalent in Soviet times, was negative. ლუზერი (*loser*) is much more effective as a term of contempt than the periphrastic მუდამ დამარცხებუელი recommended by conservative academics, which is objective, even sympathetic.<sup>13</sup>

## 8. What to do?

Beridze recommends banning anglicisms that have one-word native equivalents.<sup>14</sup> Even the French have failed despite their geriatric *académie* and their centralised school curriculum. Only a North Korean system might succeed.

Russianisms, however undesirable they may seem, have not gone away. They are quite a different matter, and they survive despite the diminished role of Russian and Russians in Georgia – often because they are very creative and witty macaronic language, entered in a different way over different periods, through different classes of speakers (via the military, prisons, as *lingua franca* in the Caucasus, often as joke or gang language): დამიპადიეზდა

<sup>11</sup> “ხომ დღითიდღე მრავლდება”: Tuskia 2014: 156.

<sup>12</sup> Davitishvili 2018: 22–27.

<sup>13</sup> Shabashvili and Gochitashvili 2021: 6.

<sup>14</sup> Beridze 2023: 270–271.

‘ambushed me in the entrance’, დამიაბგონა ‘outran/overtook me’. Omiadze notes the persistence of გატრუპვა ‘to kill sb/to make a corpse from sb’, გაიასნება ‘to make sth clear’ > გამიიასნდა ‘it became clear to me’, იქით გაგიიასნებ თუ გინდა ‘I’ll make it clear to you later, if you like’, გასროქვა, ‘to be sentenced to imprisonment’, დაპადერუქება ‘to give support’.<sup>15</sup>

Russian auxiliary words were totally integrated all over the Caucasus several decades ago: ვაფშე, ჩესნად, კაროჩე are perceived merely as sub-literary. Russian, when borrowed, sometimes undergoes a radical change of meaning: დაიზმენდა or იზმენაში მოვიდა means ‘began to have doubts, or backed out’, but no longer means ‘changed or betrayed’.

## 9. Changes in service industries

Modern motor mechanics now replace Russianisms with Georgian or English: დვორნიკი has given way to მინასწმენდი and მაყუჩი replaces გლუშიტელი since motor mechanics are no longer predominantly Armenians who use Russian to communicate with Georgian customers. In a few cases, Russian names for mechanical parts have remained: ფრთის ქვედა საფარი is too clumsy to replace Russian პადკრილნიკი, but დგუში has superseded პორშინი. Some anglicisms have taken over: for instance ბრეკეტი (English *bracket*) replaces სალასკა, აირბაგები still dominates over საჭის უსაფრთხოების ბალიში, and სანიაგო has not replaced ვენტილატორი nor has ნიაგება ousted ვენტილატორი. The process in which Russian is ousted, but English does not replace it, is found in electrical and plumbing terms: დამაგრძელებელი replaces უდლინიტელი, and სამკაპი has ousted ტრაინიკი. One English term, however, is common, ფიტინგი: ლატუნის ფიტინგი სამკაფი ‘brass three-point fitting’.

In business language the English origin of some words is not obvious: they may sound Georgian, or even oriental: დისკუტები is used to mean discussions, while რითრითი, with a syllable division quite unlike English ‘retreat’, has largely Buddhist/Tibetan associations, for instance in იოგატური რითრითი: it has purely meditational meaning and is mainly restricted to hotels with yoga and gurus – the word has lost any military connotations. Material for business retreats and courses often reads like English in the Georgian alphabet: რითრითი implies უორკშოპები ბიზნეს სამიტინგ, ფასილიტატორი, სპიკერი who will talk of წარმატებულ ქეისებს. Management is taken over by მენეჯმენტი, out of the hands of any მმართველი.

## 10. The role of sport in standardising international vocabulary

Sporting terms have taken on a duality ever since competition became international after the fall of the USSR, thus in rugby:

- Referee can be რეფერი or მსაჯი
- Linesman – ლაინსმენი or გვერდითი მსაჯი
- Offside – ოფსაიდი or თამაშგარე
- Fan – ფანი or გულშემატკივარი
- Half-back – ჰაუბეკი or ნახევარმცველი
- Forward – ფორვარდი or თავდამსხმელი.

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<sup>15</sup> Omiadze 2007.

For rugby terminology, Z. Gigineishvili has provided an extensive account.<sup>16</sup> From 1959 to 1986, when Georgians played only within the Communist bloc, Russian terms (რეგბი for რაგბი) predominated. But after 1989 ‘goal’ became ლელო instead of ცდა or დამიწება, although ლელობურთი, despite being the traditional name of Georgian handball, failed to replace the English name of the game. One traditional Georgian sporting term, შერკინება, derived from wrestling, has become the word for ‘scrum’, while other anglicisms have also been ousted: ჰუქერი has given way to კვაჭი. Most English terms have been replaced by calques, e.g. dead ball becomes უქმი ბურთი; sometimes Georgian and English co-exist: ბექი or მეზურგე (but ფულბეკი ‘full back’, and ჰავბეკი ‘half back’). A few terms are taken from Beria’s football terminology: პირველი მგეზავი ‘fly half’.

Tennis has a longer, if interrupted history in Georgia, with a pre-revolutionary admixture of English, so that დაბრეიება means ‘breaking (someone’s serve)’, and რეკეტი, სერვერი, მიტინგი (meaning ‘rally’), მატჩი, სეტი are well established: სიყვარული (‘love’) is, of course, a calque. Tennis was first in Tbilisi around 1910: the viceroy Vorontsov-Dashkov’s Tbilisi ლაუნ-ტენისი club, run by Russian women (the viceroy’s wife and wife of his chief of staff, Anastasia Peterson), and later the Batumi Boulevard Club made it fashionable. English had already begun to infiltrate, when in the Russian empire French governesses began to be replaced by English and Scottish governesses, whom the lady of the house would feel safe to have in close contact with her husband. (Remember *Anna Karenina*, where the French governess who upsets the Oblonsky household in the beginning of the novel, is replaced by the reliable British Miss Goole, who takes care of Anna’s second child.) English governesses sometimes stayed on, even after the revolution, and educated their charges (and, when they married their widowed employers, their own children) to speak English almost as native speakers. In Georgia this happened in at least one Tsereteli and Chanturia household, and produced a small, but influential core of English linguistic influence.

Football, ფეხბურთი, was, however, well supplied from the start with a Georgian terminology. Lavrenti Beria (himself a volley-ball player whose Tbilisi house included a gym) founded Tbilisi Dinamo as a team for *Chekisty* to keep fit. By the 1930s *chekisty* had become too fat or old, so that young men, often orphans of those shot by Beria, were recruited, trained in the NKVD building where their parents were tortured. Nevertheless, some English terms have infiltrated Georgian football: გოლი, ფორვარდი, ჰედერი, მატჩი, ოფსაიდი, დრიბლინგი. Otherwise, the game uses well established Georgian terms.

## 11. Future prospects

The weakness of linguistics as a science lies in its poor predictive value: what will happen in the decades to follow is uncertain. One prediction is a spread of usage among the population: 54% of mature respondents reported that they customarily use ‘barbarian’ anglicisms. Critics note the integration of words like გრენდი, ლუზერი, ნეთვორქი into normal literary texts, others have recognised such ‘barbarisms’ as წავედით საშოპინგოდ ‘we went shopping’ as the consequence of Georgian’s lack of pithy phrases, especially since the kind of shopping involved is window-shopping, as well as actual purchasing.

The English language often fails to generate a Georgian equivalent: FAQ remains as a hieroglyph for ‘frequently asked questions’, and ‘unsubscribe’ is still translated periphrastically as გამოსწერის გაუქმება.

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<sup>16</sup> Gigineishvili 2014; cf. also Gigineishvili 2009 for examples.

The failure of Georgian users to arrive at an agreed standard form leads to multiple terminology: there are several versions of download – ჩამოტვირთვა, გადმოტვირთვა, გადმოწერა etc.

The problem of choosing an ejective versus aspirate unvoiced plosive in borrowings from English makes standardisation difficult. We see the substitution of ფ (which usually represents *f*) for პ in ფუბლიკი, ფლაგინი, ფოსტი, ფართი, ფლეი(ბოი), as well as all Hellenic words beginning with ფსი-, but not in პლერი.

Likewise, the aspirated plosive is less common than ejective when transcribing *k/c*. The exceptions are many, however: ქილერი, ქეში, ქუქი, ქულერი, ქანთრი (child's car seat can be either ქარსიტი or ქარსითი), but most other initial *c* and *k* are represented by კ: კეჩუპი, კენგურუ.

In the case of *t* the ejective is normal (თ being more often used for *th*), but there are notable exceptions: თოქ შოუ, თრილერი, თორების პარტია, თეგი (*tag*), თაიბრეკი, თრეში (*trash*); otherwise any initial *t*- becomes ტ-.

Undoubtedly, the Anglo-Georgian to be found on internet blogs and forums is a chaotic creole and is likely to evolve into something more stable: take for instance, 'Magda', who writes: ბლოგზე უამრავ სიახლეს დავდებ სელებრიტების..შოუბიზნესის... მოდის შესახებ...<sup>17</sup>

## 12. Likely consequences for Georgian phonology and morphology

One positive result for Georgian phonology is the revival of a lost letter, *o* replacing initial *y* in *ოგურტი*, *დახტა*, *აუნორი*. But borrowing from English might possibly lead to the marginalisation, or at least the reduction in frequency, of consonants that do not occur in English: ჭ, ქ, წ, ძ, ჟ, ღ. The loss of distinction, or arbitrary choices, between aspirated and ejectives – ფ/პ, ქ/კ, თ/ტ may eventually lead to the blurring of an important phonemic quality of Georgian.

One can also anticipate morphological problems, particularly in verbs: neologisms show a lack of determinacy – what stem do they have, -ვა or -ება? We usually have ატვიტერებს, აფისბუქებს, but others diversify, for instance აგუგლებს or, as a doctor writes, გუგლგანი ერთ ჩემს პაციენტს, რომელიც გუგლავს სიმპტომს და ისვამს სასტიკ დიაგნოზებს.<sup>18</sup> We often see incomplete conjugation of verbs, and hesitation over their governance. E.g., is მილაიქებია an impersonal (inverted) verb replacing მომწონს, or is it just the perfect tense of ვალაიქებ? Why doesn't იქრინჯები have a causative \*აქრინჯებს?

Languages with complex synthetic verbal morphology borrow mainly nouns and adjectives which present fewer problems when inflections are required: typically, verbs are borrowed in their 'dictionary' form and exempted from most inflections. Languages that conjugate with the aid of auxiliaries (Basque *eduki/izan*, Turkish *etmek/kilmek*, Farsi *kardan*, etc) just borrow a verb in its often invariable infinitive, supine or aorist form, whereas Russian and Georgian, when they borrow, feel obliged to integrate a verb into a system with a variety of stems in order to conjugate it: hence the uncertainties and difficulties.

Will these 'barbarisms' die out? Some will, because they are awkward and alien. It is, however, a mistake to think that teenagers will abandon their 'jargon' as they emerge from their bedrooms

<sup>17</sup> Lomaia 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Panjikidze 2019.

and volatile groups to mix with others at work, or to run a household. Smartphone users keep their phones, stay on Reddit, WhatsApp, Facebook (Meta) or Twitter (X) and will continue to exchange views on life, love, friends and shopping, in the same language. New groups (neighbourhood watches, colleagues at work) continue communicating on phone, pad and using the same vocabulary, even if there are going to be fewer ქრამები or დასინჯლები than in adolescence.

Shorter words will always win over longer ones. ლუზერი over მუდმივ დამარცხებული. Note the victories of English over French, thanks to the laconicism of the former and effusiveness of the latter: the warning to drivers *virages en épingles à cheveux* is far more easily assimilated in time by the monosyllabic *hair pin bends*.

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## ინგლისური ენის დამღუპველი ზეგავლენა თანამედროვე ქართული ენის ლექსიკაზე

დონალდ რეიფილდი (ლონდონი)

ქართულ ენაში ანგლიციზმების (ამერიკული და ბრიტანული) ერთსაუკუნოვანი მოზღვავეების ტალღას გასული საუკუნის 90-იანი წლებიდან ნასესხობათა ახალი, უფრო ძლიერი ნაკადის შემოჭრა დაემატა სხვადასხვა შენაკადის სახით. ამ შენაკადებიდან ერთ-ერთი უკავშირდება ახალი პროდუქციის შემოტანას (მობილური ტელეფონებით დაწყებული – სატვირთო ავტომობილებით დამთავრებული), ახალი წესჩვეულებების დამკვიდრებას (მორალური ღირებულებების ჩათვლით), თანამედროვე კომერციული ტრანსაქციების განხორციელებასა და სხვა სახის აქტივობებს, რომელთა ამსახველი ლექსიკა (აღწერით პერიფრაზს თუ არ ჩავთვლით) ქართულ ენას მანამდე არ გააჩნდა. შესაბამისად, ახალი პროდუქციის გამოყენება-დამკვიდრებამ გამოიწვია უცხო სიტყვების მოძალება ქართულში, რომელთა დიდი ნაწილი ანგლოსაქსური წარმოშობისაა.

მეორე შენაკადის გაჩენა განაპირობა გარკვეულ სფეროებში დამკვიდრებული რუსიციზმების დაძლევის სურვილმა, კერძოდ, ავტომობილის სათადარიგო ნაწილეების დასახელებებში (ავტომობილების შეკეთების სფეროში ძირითადად რუსები და სომხები მუშაობდნენ), სადაც რუსიციზმების განდევნა ორი გზით განხორციელდა: ახალი ქართული სიტყვების შექმნის (ან გაცოცხლების) მეშვეობით ან რუსიციზმების ანგლოსაქსური ტერმინებით ჩანაცვლების საშუალებით. ამგვარი პროცესები მოიცავდა ისეთ სფეროებს, როგორცაა, მაგალითად, რაბი, ვინაიდან ქართველი მერაბებები 1959–1989 წლებში მხოლოდ სლავურ გუნდებთან თამაშობდნენ, ამჟამად კი მსოფლიო ასპარეზზე გავიდნენ და საერთაშორისო ტურნირებში იღებენ მონაწილეობას.

პირად ურთიერთობებსა და ბიზნესში ინტერნეტის საყოველთაო გამოყენებამ გამოიწვია უცხო სიტყვების მესამე შენაკადის მოზღვავება და იმ ტერმინოლოგიის შემოტანა, რომელსაც იყენებდა დასავლელი ინტერნეტმომხმარებელი და ბიზნეს-სფერო. ამის ერთ-ერთი თვალსაჩინო მაგალითია სიტყვა „იშოპინგეთ!“ ‘Continue shopping’. სამაგიეროდ, უკუპროცესს ჰქონდა ადგილი სლენგისა და ბილწსიტყვაო-

ბის სფეროში, სადაც აქტიურად დაიწყო საკუთრივ ქართული ლექსიკის გააქტიურება. 1990 წლებიდან „აფეთქდა“ ქართული სკაბრეზი. ნაბეჭდ პროდუქციაში გაჩნდა ისეთი სიტყვები და ფრაზები, რომლებიც სულხან-საბა ორბელიანის ლექსიკონის შემდეგ აღარ გამოყენებულა წერილობითი ფორმით. ამ სფეროში არ შეიმჩნევა უცხოური ენების გავლენა (თუ არ ჩავთვლით ქართველი ებრაელების ლექსიკას).

მოცემული ნაშრომი ემყარება ემპირიულ მასალას, რომელიც ამოღებულია ინტერნეტფორუმებიდან, კომერციული მასალებიდან, ლაშა ბუღაძის რომანებიდან, პიესებიდან, რომლებიც 2013 წელს საკონკურსოდ იყო წარდგენილი სათარგმნად და ლონდონის სამეფო თეატრში დასადგმელად და სხვ.

ჩვენი წინასწარი დასკვნით, 1990 წლიდან მოყოლებული ქართული ენა წაღვეკა უცხოური სიტყვების მძლავრმა ტალღამ, რომლის „მონელებასაც“ ჯერჯერობით ვერ ახერხებს ენა, და რომელმაც ისეთივე ზარალი მიაყენა ქართულ ენას, როგორც ირანულმა მეათე საუკუნეში და რუსულმა – მეცხრამეტე საუკუნის დასაწყისში. მაგრამ როგორც ადრეული უცხოური გავლენების შემთხვევაში, აქაც იგივე პროცესი განვითარდება – ქართული ენა ნაწილობრივ შეითვისებს ან უკუაგდებს უცხოურ ლექსიკას და დაიტოვებს უცხოური ენობრივი ერთეულების მხოლოდ იმ ნაწილს, რომელიც მისაღები იქნება და ბუნებრივად ინტეგრირდება ენაში. ამ პროცესში ბევრი რამ დამოკიდებულია ნორმებისა და ინოვაციების ბალანსზე, რომელიც უნდა დამყარდეს, ერთი მხრივ, ძლიერ და კონსერვატიულ სასკოლო-სასწავლო დაწესებულებებსა და, მეორე მხრივ, აქტიურ და ანარქიულ ინტერნეტსაზოგადოებას შორის. ამ პროცესში კიდევ ერთ ფაქტორს აქვს განსაკუთრებული მნიშვნელობა, ეს არის ახალ ლექსემათა ფონოლოგიური სტრუქტურა. ისეთი სიტყვები, როგორებიცაა „რითრითი“ (‘retreat’) და „დაიგუგლება“ (‘can be googled’), შედგება იმგვარი ხმოვნებისა და თანხმოვნებისგან, რომლებიც ადვილად ინტეგრირდება ქართულში, მაგრამ ისეთმა სიტყვამ, როგორიცაა „აბეკაპებს“ (‘backs up’), კონკურენცია უნდა გაუწიოს ფრანკო-რუსულ პერიფრაზს „სარეზერვოდ აღუბლირებს“.

ანგლიციზმების შემთხვევაში დამატებით სირთულეს წარმოშობს გრამატიკული იმპლიკაცია. მაგალითად, „იშოპინგეთ“ ქართულში შემოტანილია ისეთი გარდამავალი ზმნის კონსტრუქციით, რომელიც სუბიექტს მოთხოვნილობითში შეიწყობს. ეს პროცესი შემჩნეულია „ერგატიულობისადმი მიდრეკილ“ სხვა ენებშიც, სადაც უცხოური ენიდან შემოსული გარდაუვალი ზმნა ფორმდება ერგატიული კონსტრუქციით, როგორც მაგალითად, ბასკურში: *nere kochek ez du funtzionatzen* „ჩემი მანქანა არ მუშაობს“ ‘My car isn’t working’. (ამ წინადადების სტრუქტურული შესატყვისი ქართულში დასტურდება ნამყოში: „ჩემმა მანქანამ არ იმუშავა“).