

PHONETIC PECULIARITIES FOUND  
IN THE ACHARAN SPEECH  
OF THE KARTVELIAN-SPEAKING MUHAJIRS'  
DESCENDANTS LIVING IN DÜZCE İLİ  
(THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY)<sup>1</sup>

დუგჩას ილში (თურქეთის რესპუბლიკა)  
მცხოვრებ ქართველურების  
მუჰაჯირთა შთამომავლების  
აჭარული მეტყველების  
ფონეტიკური თავისებურებანი

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საქართველოს საპატიოარქოს წმიდა ანდრია პირველწოდებულის  
სახელობის ქართული უნივერსიტეტი  
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### აბსტრაქტი

სტატიაში მიმოხილულია თურქეთის რესპუბლიკის დუზჯეს ილში მოსახლე ქართველურენოვან მუჰაჯირთა შთამომავლების მეტყველება – ქართული ენის აჭარული დიალექტის ერთ-ერთი ნაირსახეობა. სამხრეთ-დასავლეთი საქართველოს კუთხეებიდან: აჭარა-მაჭაბლიდან და ნიგალიდან წასული მუჰაჯირები დუზჯეს ილის ტერიტორიაზე XIX საუკუნის 80-იანი წლების დასაწყისიდან დასახლდნენ. დღემდე, მათი შთამომავლები ცხოვრობენ ძირითადად სოფლად. უფროსი თაობა მეტ-ნაკლებად ინარჩუნებს მშობლიურ ენასა და ზნე-ჩვეულებებს, უმცროს თაობაში კი უკვე შესამჩნევია ასიმილაციის შედეგები. შესაბამისად,

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ქართული ენის აჭარული დიალექტი დუზჯეში გაქრობის პირასაა – მასზე დიდ გავლენას ახდენს როგორც თურქული (რომელიც ქართველურენოვან მუკაჯირთათვის ოფიციალური და სხვებთან საურთიერთო ენა), ისე – თანამედროვე სამწიგნობრო ქართული ენაც (რომელსაც გასული საუკუნის 90-იანი წლების ბოლოდან იქაური ქართველები აქტიურად შეისწავლიან). სწორედ ამიტომაც ძალიან მნიშვნელოვანია დუზჯეს ილისთვის დამახასიათებელი აჭარული დიალექტის შესწავლა.

მასობრივი ორენოვნების შედეგად, დუზჯეში დასტურდება ქართულ-თურქულ სამეტყველო კოდთა აღრევაც (Code-switching). აქვე უნდა აღინიშნოს ისიც, რომ დიალექტური მეტყველება უმეტესად დამახასიათებელია 40 წელზე უფროსი თაობისთვის. იმავდროულად, ქართულის კარგად მცოდნენი 40 წელზე უმცროს თაობაშიც საკმაოდ გხხვდებიან, თუმცა ისინი მეტყველებენ სამწიგნობრო ენაზე (ქართული სამწიგნობრო ენის კურსები დუზჯეში გასული საუკუნის 90-იანი წლებიდან არსებობს).

დუზჯეს აჭარული მეტყველება უნდა დაიყოს ორ – საკუთრივ აჭარულ და ზეგნურ კილოკავებად. დაყოფა ეფუძნება ერთ ღირსსაცნობ ფაქტს – მუკაჯირთა შთამომავლები ორ ჯგუფად იყოფიან: ერთნი – ამჟამინდელი ქედის მუნიციპალიტეტიდან წამოსულები – თავს თვლიან უშუალოდ აჭარლებად, მეორენი – შუახევისა და ხულოს სოფლებიდან წამოსულები – ზეგნელებად.

ამგვარი დაყოფის საფუძველი ქედის აჭარლების დამოკიდებულებაა: დღესაც კი, ამჟამინდელ აჭარის ავტონომიურ რესპუბლიკაში მცხოვრები ქედელები შუახევისა და ხულოს მკვიდრთ ზეგნის აჭარლებს (= მთის აჭარლებს) უწოდებენ. როგორც ჩანს, 140-წლიანი იზოლაციის პირობებში, ოსმალეთში მცხოვრებ მუკაჯირებში მკვეთრად გაიმიჯნა მთის აჭარლებისა და ტაფობის აჭარლების თვითაღება.

სტატია დამუშავებულია 2021 წლის გაზაფხულსა და ზაფხულში უშუალოდ დუზჯეს ილში ჩაწერილი მასალების საფუძველზე.

**Keywords:** Muhajirs, Georgians, the Georgian language, Acharan dialect, Turkey  
**საკვანძო სიტყვები:** მუკაჯირები, ქართველები, ქართული ენა, აჭარული დიალექტი, თურქეთი.

### 1. Settlement of Muhajirs coming from Georgia (Achara, Machakhela and Nigali provinces) in Düzce ili

Based on the Ottoman written sources, after the end of the 1877-1878 Russo Turkish war, the two sides concluded a truce allowing the **exchange of population**. They agreed that the residents of the districts acquired by the Russian Empire, who preferred to remain subjects of the Sultan, would be permitted to sell their real and movable estate within four years and move to inland provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The noblemen at Sultan's court were instructed to help them to settle down in new lands.

On the other hand, Sultan allowed the Orthodox Christians living in the territory that fell under the Ottoman control to move to the Russian Empire (or to former Ottoman territories – Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia etc.). Their settlement was the responsibility of the Russian Empire nobility or the rulers of the lands liberated from the Ottoman rule (Demireli, 2005:23).

Before 1878, the territory of modern Düzce had been populated by different nations living alongside ethnic Turks. Those were the Orthodox Bulgarians from Thrace, also Greeks and Bosnians. After the war, most of those peoples left the region for their historical motherland and the territory left by them was offered to the Muhajirs coming from the South-western Georgia (Achara, Machakhela, Nigali...). Based on respective documents, Murat Kasap, the modern Turkish historian of Georgian origin, notes that the first inflow of Georgian Muhajirs led by **Ali-Mustafa Balcioglu** was admitted to Düzce İli **on August 18, 1881**. Those people were brought by ship from Batumi and were offered to temporarily settle in the modern **Akçaşehir İlçesi** lands. They received 450 kg Indian corn, 250 kg millet and other products from the Government (Kasap, 2019:366).

According to official sources, a large village populated by Georgian (Batumi) and Abkhaz (Abaza) Muhajirs<sup>2</sup> existed in Düzce back in 1883. Based on Ottoman documents, its name was **Biçki-i Atık** and it was situated in the northwest of the modern Düzce City, six and a half hours drive from it. **Biçki-i Atık** was roughly divided into **Georgian** and **Abkhazian** districts. The Georgian district was populated by 37 Georgian and 5 Abkhazian families, while the Abkhazian district was populated by 47 Abkhazian, 4 Georgian and 10 local (Turkish) families.

By 1899, the two districts were given the status of independent villages: The Georgian district was called **Biçki-i Atık Gürcü** and the Abkhazian district became **Biçki-i Atık Abaza**. The ruler (Mukhtar) of the Georgian village was Şahin Ağa Abdullahoğlu and the Abkhazian village was ruled by **Nuri Beşliya Paşa** (Kasap, 2019:371-272).

The original inhabitants of **Biçki-i Atık Gürcü** were the muhajir Georgians from Achara, Machakheli and Nigali provinces of Georgia, Acharans prevailing. During 1902-1911, the residents of the mentioned village gradually purchased lands in different parts of Düzce and Sakarya. Later their countrymen, who came to the Ottoman Empire from the Russian-controlled Georgia or from mid-Black Sea coast of Turkey (Giresun, Pasa, Ordu, Unye, Sinop...) settled in the same territory of modern Düzce Sakarya. By the time when the First World War started (1915-1916), the process of Muhajir settlement became more intensive. It is when the most part of the Kartvelian-speaking Muhajirs settled down in Düzce Sakarya and founded new villages.

By early 1920s, there were 10 villages in Düzce territory populated by Acharan, Machakhelian and Nigali Muhajirs. Such villages were **Gürcü Huseyin Ağa köyü**,

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that ethnic Abkhazians came to Düzce from two different places: few arrived with Georgians, while most of them were brought by Ottomans from Bulgaria and Macedonia in 1878. The latter belonged to the Sadz tribe (who had left the Caucasus together with Ubikhs and Circassians in 1864) and did not speak Georgian; the Abkhazians who arrived with Georgians, as Muhajirs' descendants say, spoke Georgian as well as ethnic Georgians, so they settled in the same territory as Georgians and later completely assimilated with them.

**Hamamüstü gürcü köyü, Asar gürcü köyü, Gürcü Hızzdere, Kıraklı köyü, Gürcü çiftliği, Yeşiltepe, Muncurlu, Melenağzı** and **Mahirağa**. In addition to that, in Düzce City there was a Georgian district called **Gürcü Mahallesi**, whose residents had mostly migrated from Achara (Kasap, 2019:367). As for the number of Georgians (Gürcü and Laz), based on the documents of that period, it exceeded 15 thousand. By the end of the 1920s, the demographic situation in Düzce Sakarya region somewhat changed: one part of Kartvelian-speaking Muhajirs went back (according to the narrators, their ancestral villages were merged with Turkey), while others moved to different places. Moreover, the number of Georgian Muhajirs living in Düzce City significantly increased.

Apart from Düzce City, descendants of Muhajirs who had migrated from Achara, Machakhela and Nigali, presently live in the following villages:<sup>3</sup>

**Düzce İlçe:** Aydınpınar, Asar, Gölormanı, Doğanlı köyü, Yeşilçamı, Muncurlu, Musababa köyü, Fındıklı-aksu, Çakır Hacı İbrahim köyü, Çiftlikköy, Şemşir köyü.

**Akçakoca İlçe:** Doğancılar köyü, Esmehanım köyü, Melenağzı, Uğurlu, Çiçekpınar

Çalımlı İlçe: Yeşil mahallesi, Yeşiltepe, Mahirağa, Hızzdere

**Gölyaka İlçe:** Hamamüstü, Hacı Yakup köyü

**Yığılca İlçe:** Kırıkköyü

Descendants of the Muhajirs from Achara, Machakhela and Nigali, who constitute the majority of population in their places of residence, have preserved their mother tongue, while in the places where they are not in the majority, the Georgian language is hardly ever spoken. It is rather difficult to calculate their exact number, because when conducting population censuses in Turkey citizens do not have to specify their ethnic origin. Based on the approximate data, the total number of Georgian-speaking citizens of Turkey is about 20-25 thousand.

The common dialect spoken by the descendants of Acharan, Machakhelian and Nigali Muhajirs in Düzce ili is the **Acharan dialect** of the Georgian language. The widely spread bilingualism among them has led to Georgian-Turkish code-switching. It should be noted, that the dialect is mostly spoken by the generations aged over 40. There are many Georgian-speakers among the people younger than 40, but they speak literary Georgian – the language courses in literary Georgian have been available since 1990s.

The Acharan speech of Düzce can be divided into two sub-dialects – **actual Acharan** and **Zeganian**. Such division is based on a noteworthy fact – Muhajirs' descendants are divided in two groups: those, who migrated from the present Keda Municipality and consider themselves as **actual Acharans**, and those who migrated from Shuakhevi and Khulo villages and are regarded as **Zeganians**.

This kind of division is conditioned by the attitude of **Keda Acharans**: to this day, Keda people residing in the present Autonomous Republic of Achara call the inhabitants of Shuakhevi and Khulo **Zegani Acharans** (mountain Acharans). Apparently, during the 140-year isolation, the Muhajirs living in the Ottoman Empire used to draw a clear distinction between the mountain (Shuakhevi and Khulo)

<sup>3</sup> The Georgian names of the villages have been spelt as the Kartvelian-speaking Muhajirs pronounce them.

Acharans and valley (Keda) Acharans. The themonym<sup>4</sup> “Acharan” was attributed to those from Keda, while the name Zeganian that originated from the geographical location was given to those who were from Shuakhevi and Khulo (for more details see Putkaradze, Labadze, 2020:45). Certainly, the descendants of Machakhelian and Nigali Muhajirs also speak actual Acharan or Zeganian today, although they say that originally they do not come from Achara or Zegani.

## 2. The system of vowels and sonants in the Acharan speech of Düzce

Phonetically, the Acharan speech of Düzce resembles the literary Georgian, displaying more common features with it than Imerkhevian, another Georgian dialect spread in Turkey (the territory of historical Shavsheti).

In the Acharan speech of Düzce five pure vowels **a, e, i, o, u** have their long correlates **ā, ē, ī, ō, ū** and palatalized ö and ü. The latter vowels mostly occur in the words borrowed from Turkish and more rarely in original lexical units (usually in the units where in the literary Georgian and other dialects we encounter **we** and **wi** complexes); for example: **kültüri** “culture”, **c’öri** “beard”, **c’üma** “rain” etc. It is noteworthy, that the position of palatalized vowels is not firm – in the words borrowed from Turkish they are freely substituted by the pure **o** or **u**: **kültüri** > // **kulturi**, and in original words by **we** and **wi** complexes: **c’öri** > // **c’weli**, **c’üma** > // **c’wima**. As a rule, palatalized vowels are commonly pronounced by the generation aged under 40 who speak Turkish better.

As regards the long vowels, they are also secondary sounds produced by merging either two similar pure vowels (in the same way as in the literary Georgian) or through assimilation. For example, **gaagnedia** > **gāgnebia** “he/she made it known”, **dauʒaxa** > **douʒaxa** > **duuʒaxa** > **dūʒaxa** “he/she called him”; quite frequently long vowels are used to compensate for lost consonant sounds: **ormo** > **ōmo** “a pit”, **erti** > **ēti** “one”... It is worth noting that the long vowels produced as a result of merging two similar pure vowels always remain long, while those produced through compensation or assimilation, often lose this quality and turn into pure vowels. For example, there is a form **dāk’lia** “he/she had it slaughtered to him/her”, whose parallel form **\*daklia** does not exist, while there are parallel forms **dūʒaxa** and **duʒaxa**, **ēti** and **eti** etc.

In Düzce Acharan, we also have the neutral **ə** sound (“Schwa”), which mostly functions as a “separator” of consonants. From the point of view of acoustics, it is difficult to distinguish this sound; e.g. there are parallel forms like **gogwebi** and **gogəwebi** “girls”, **mok’da/mok’t’ɑ** and **mok’əda** “died” etc. Such complexes of consonants are pronounced without the neutral sound by the older generations aged over 40 (who speak Georgian better than Turkish), while the neutral sound is pronounced by the younger generations (whose Turkish is better than Georgian). Respectively, it can be concluded that the neutral **ə** vowel has no phonematic value.

**j** and **w** sonants are also found. Moreover, in Kartvelian original word-forms they are freely substituted by **i** and **u** vowels: **arjan//<arian** “They are”, **c’ārtwa//<c’ārtua** “He took him it away” etc. However, in Turkish borrowings **j/i** interchange does not occur. In Turkish the sonant **j** does not exist, it is indicated by the Georgian **j** sonant, but the latter is never substituted by the full vowel **i**. For instance, they say **Jašar** (<

<sup>4</sup> Ethnonym – the name of ethnus; compare themonym – the name of a part of ethnus, a community

Turkish **Yaşar**) “Yaşar, men’s proper name”, **jari** (< Turkish **Yarı**) “sweetheart” and not **\*Iašari** or **\*iari**. Also, in Turkish borrowings **w** sonant systematically indicates the Turkish dento-labial **v** (or **f**) spirant consonants: **Awži** (< Turkish **Avcı**) (“a hunter”), **wesieti** (< Turkish-Arabic **Vesiyet**) “a will”, **Mutwayi** (< Turkish-Arabic **Mutfak**) (“a kitchen”) etc. Certainly, in such cases **w** sonant is never substituted by **u** vowel.

It is also remarkable, that in the beginning of a word all the vowels are articulated with glottal stop – when pronouncing them vocal ligaments are stretched. In such cases, vowel sounds are usually preceded by a weak laryngeal stop-plosive, which in transcription is marked by ‘ sign or an apostrophe. ‘ is an ordinary consonant, but as an element of glottal stop it has no phonematic value. For that reason, the glottal stop is not indicated in transcription, because it occurs only in strictly determined positions.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Consonant system

All the consonant phonemes existing in the literary Georgian – **b, p, p', g, k, k', d, t, t', ʒ, c, c', ڇ, ڙ, w, z, s, ڙ, ڙ, γ, x, q', h, ' , m, n, r, l** - can be found in the Acharan speech of Düzce. Orthoepic norms are also similar except several remarkable cases, which are discussed below.

Firstly, it should be noted that in the speech of the younger generation aged under 40 the pronunciation of glotialized consonants is changed – they are substituted by their corresponding aspirated, voiced or fricative consonants, e.g., **bič'i** > **biči** “a boy”, **k'aj** > **gaj** “good”, **c'ewda** > **\*cewda** > **sevda** “went away” etc.

It is also interesting that acoustically it is difficult to distinguish between glotialized and their corresponding aspirated consonants. For example, Erdal Aydin, 45, and younger members of his family, who have not lived anywhere except their home village of Çiftlikköy, pronounce the words **k'et'i** “a long thin stick” **č'iboni** “a bagpipe”, **c'ori** “straight” as „**keti**”, „**čiboni**“ and „**cori**“ (the initial consonants are substituted by their aspirated equivalents, Translator’s Note). However, they were surprised when we too pronounced these words with aspirated consonants.

We think that in the above cases we might have the same (or similar) consonant sounds as those encountered in Ossetian (Akhvlediani, 1923:2), Andi (Tsersvadze, 1964:23), Bzhedughian and Shapsughian sub-dialects of the Adighean (Rogava, 1952:34) etc. They are the “minimally aspirated” or preruptive sounds, or “semi-abruptives” (the term introduced by I. Tsersvadze). Thus, in young Düzceans’ speech they are certainly allophonic sounds, while the older generation of Düzce Georgian population can freely pronounce glotialized consonants.

<sup>5</sup> See Arn.Chikobava’s and I. Tsersvadze’s observation about the glottal stop in the Avar language: “Every initial (or separately articulated) vowel is pronounced with glottal stop in the Avar language and in most other dialects: the consonant similar to the Zan ‘ participates in the articulation of a vowel... Since in case of the glottal stop the vowel is produced in strictly determined positions and cannot be considered as a phoneme, it does not need to be indicated by a special sign in transcription (Chikobava, Tsersvadze, 1962, p 23). Compare also N. Kutelia: “The Laz dialect tends to have complex anlauts, it avoids simple anlauts.” (Kutelia, 2005, p 45). The latter observation expressed by N. Kutelia about the Laz dialect can be referred to almost all Kartvelian sub-dialects and even the literary Georgian language. Moreover, it is obvious that the “complex anlaut” or articulation of initial or separate vowels with glottal stop is common for all Iberian-Caucasian languages. We would like to stress that the mentioned phenomena needs to be studied in detail.

Since The Acharan speech of Düzce had not been studied before, the phenomenon described above has not yet been recorded by other scholars. However, it is a fact that glotialized consonants are gradually disappearing from young Düzceans' speech. Obviously, it is the result of the overwhelming influence of the Turkish-speaking environment.

Another remarkable quality of the Acharan speech of Düzce is non-vibrant [ɾ] [r] sonant. Its articulation does not involve vibration of the tip of the tongue against the gums of the upper front teeth. Such consonant is mostly characteristic of the so-called **actual Acharans'** (descendants of the Muhajirs who migrated from today's Kvemo Achara) sub-dialect. In **Zeganians'** sub-dialect r is more vibrant (**although, compared to its corresponding sound in literary Georgian, it is pronounced with weaker vibration of the tip of the tongue**).

The non-vibrant r sonant in Kvemoacharan speech was discovered by Nargiza Surmava (2008:66): "Kvemoacharan is characterized by reflection of r sound, which is articulated differently from the Common Kartvelian r sound. This quality can serve to differentiate Kvemoacharan from other Acharan sub-dialects." The scholar explains that phenomenon by the influence of Laz dialects.

According to our observation, the non-vibrant [r] can also be found in Machakhelian and Taoan dialects as well as in Imerkhevian and the speech of Georgians living in Bursa İnegöl; Respectively, it cannot be considered as a phoneme that appeared later under the influence of Laz dialects. Thus, the non-vibrant [r] might be a sound characteristic of Common Kartvelian language (Danelia, Sarjveladze, 1985: 302), which in some Kartvelian dialects gradually superseded the vibrant r.

The existence of non-vibrant r in old Georgian dialects can be proved by the correspondence between r and ჶ, the former encountered in literary Georgian and the latter in Megrelian and Laz dialects **piri : piჶi; yori : yeჶi; q'uri : 'uჶi** – the non-vibrant r is often substituted by palatal j sonant, which, for its part, is freely interchangeable with postalveolar voiced consonants (stop-plosive ჶ and fricative ჶ). This process is still going in Laz (Atinan-Artashenian and Vitsur-Arkabian) dialects and Svan (Balskvemouri and Lentekhian) dialects, also in Meskhian, which is confirmed by historical data (Saba: "ჶare" – iare "walk" in Meskhian). The non-vibrant r has transformed into the fricative ჶ in the Svan word šq'äžw (< \*šq'ažw-i < \*čqaru-i) "a quail" etc.

The non-vibrant r is often lost in the speech of "Acharans" (Kvemoacharans) living in Düzce, while in the speech of "Zeganians" (Zemoacharans) it is quite strong. This is one of the main differences between the two sub-dialects: **"While we Acharans say "maili" ("salt"), Zeganians call it "marili"!"**, the resident of Haciyakup village Fevzi Çelebi, 52, said. As it was already mentioned, in the speech of "Zeganians" (Zemoacharans) r sound is half vibrant, which accounts for its stability.

As regards the consonants whose appearance is conditioned by their position, in Düzce Acharan we encounter geminates (intensive sounds), which are either borrowings (part of foreign words) or must have developed as a result of phonetic processes.

The geminate ll is most common in borrowed words: **illa // illaki** "surely", **belli** "obvious", **selligi** "feast", **jelli** "local" etc. All these words were borrowed from

Turkish. There are separate words with different geminates - **zz**: **muezzini** “muezzin”, **ss**: **helessa** “elesa, a plesant refrain in a song”, **k’k’**: **xak’k’i** “Hakki – men’s name” **mm**: **amma** “but”, **dd**: **bedduaj** “curse” etc. They are also borrowings. The above mentioned geminates are often substituted by pure consonants and we have: **ila**/**ilaki**, **beli**, **šeligi**, **jeli**, **muzini**, **helesa**, **xak’i**... We even observed the exchange between geminates and pure sounds in the speech of the same person. Consequently, we think that **the geminate (intensive) sounds imported with the borrowed words are not phonemes**.

More geminate consonants - **missa** “s/he gave it to him/her”, **moššra** “s/he cut off it” – are known to have originated as a result of phonetic processes. Jemal Noghaideli was the first to discover similar consonants in the Acharan dialect (1972:45). Speaking about such sounds, Besarion Jorbenadze noted that “such cases could not be considered as assimilation; the complexes **s+c** and **s+c’** were simplified (through the loss of **c** and **c’**...), while **s**, **š**... spirants **are geminates**” (Jorbenadze, 1989:544; the emphasis is made by us – M.L.). ...

These sounds are explicitly geminates in the Acharan dialect spoken in Düzce, and interestingly enough, they are not substituted by corresponding pure consonants. However, the geminates produced as a result of phonetic processes cannot be considered as phonemes either, since their development is determined by their position.

#### 4. Syntagmatic analysis. Phonetic processes.

Different kinds of phonetic changes are widely spread in **complexes of vowels** in Düzce Acharan speech.

As a result of phonetic changes, the **ae** and **oe** complexes create three varieties:

a) through complete regressive assimilation, after passing the **\*ee** stage, we receive a long vowel: **\*gaegna** > **\*geegna** > **gēgna** “understood” “find the way”, **\*daekida** > **\*deekida** > **dēkida** “hung on shoulders, hugged”, **\*moec’q’o** > **\*meec’q’o** > **mēc’q’o** “got used to, accepted”. For such complex prefixes, it is not uncommon to change the vowels of both components: **gadaeq’lap’ā** > **\*gedeeq’lap’ā** > **gedēq’lap’ā** “swallowed”; **gamoeq’wana** > **\*gameeq’wana** > **\*gemeeq’wana** > **\*gemēkūana** “take out”; **\*c’amoegno** > **\*c’ameegno** > **c’emēgno** “caught the eye”...

b) For its part, the **\*ee** developed through complete regressive assimilation, suffers regressive dissimilation - **\*ee** > **\*ie** > **je**: **gjegna** **djek’ida**, **mjec’q’o**, **gedjeq’lap’ā**, **gjeq’wana**, **c’emjegno**...

c) The **\*ee** developed through complete regressive assimilation of the original **ae** complex of vowels becomes one pure vowel: **\*ustaebi** > **\*usteebi** > **ustebi** “the masters”; the **o** of **oe** complex turns into the sonant **w**: **gogoebi** > **gogwebi** “the girls”...

As regards the **ea** and **oa** complexes, as a result of incomplete regressive assimilation, they were transformed into **ja** and **wa** diphthongs: **\*šeak’itxa** > **šiak’itxa** > **šjak’itxa** “swore at him/her”, **\*čarea** > **\*čaria** > **čarja** (**ercxwa** **ra** **čarja**? “What else can be done?”), **moatanina** > **muatania** > **mūatanja** (“had him/her bring it”; **sazowari** > **\*sazoari** > **\*sazuari** > **sazwari** “pasture”). It should be also noted that the original **ia**, **ua** complexes behave in the same way: **ažab**, **isi** **ra** **kacija**? “I wonder what he is like?”; **\*bedduai** > **beddwaj** (< Persian-Arabic-Turkish **Beddua**) “curse” etc.

**ai** and **oi** complexes emerge as the following varieties:

a) The \*ei produced through incomplete regressive assimilation become ej diphthong: **\*gaigno > geigno > gejgno** “understood”; **daic’q’o > deic’q’o > dejc’q’o** (“started”); **moit’ana > meit’ana > mejt’ana** “brought”;

b) The first component of these complexes remains unchanged, while the second turns into the sonant j: **\*zaide > zajde** (< Arabic –Turkish Zahide) “a female name”; **\*penc’oi > penc’oj** “a snail”, there is a parallel form **penc’o** as well).

**au** and **eu** complexes develop into the following variaties: a) The \*uu produced through incomplete regressive assimilation becomes the long ū vowel: **c’auyo > \*c’ouyo > \*c’uuyo > c’ūyo, šeugnia > \*šougnia > \* šugnia** „heard, listened” etc.; b) The **u** vowel becomes a sonant: **č’ilauri > čilawri** “the name of a village”, **\*avadebuli > \*avadeuli > avadewli** “a sick person”... In the above case **w** sonant also interchanges with the labial fricative **v** and we have parallel forms: **čilavri, avadevli** etc.

It is remarkable that speaking about the same phenomenon in the Acharan dialect, B. Jorbenadze wrote: “This seems to have been caused by an emphasis: in the first case, the emphasis falls on **u** vowel: **c’auyo > c’uuyo > c’ūyo**, while in the second case the vowel preceding **u** is emphasized **akàuroba > akavroba**. The same change occurs in case of **eu** complex” (See Jorbenadze, 1989, p. 546).

**eo** and **iu** complexes mostly develop into **ew** and **\*uu > ū** variaties: **\*meore > mewre** “another one”, **miugzavna > mügzavna** “sent on mission to”, **\*miuyira > müyira** “pointed at” etc.

Based on the cases mentioned above, we can conclude that the gathering of vowels (hiatus) is not characteristic of the Acharan speech of Düzce and, it is avoided by transformation of vowel complexes into long vowels or diphthongs, which is how the “single vowel” principle works. Generally, this peculiarity is common for other Meskhan sub-dialects as well.

As regards the **consonants complexes**, labialized complexes are worthy of attention. A labialized complex could be roughly indicated with the symbol **Cʷ**, which means a consonant + the sonant **w**.

The term “labialized complex” was introduced to Georgian linguistics by Professor Giorgi Rogava (See Chikobava, Tservadze, 1962:81, notes). In a labialized complex a sonant “to certain extent merges with the preceding root consonant, but is still considered as a separate unit” (Ibid.). That is the main difference between such complex and a labialized consonant sound.

All the consonants except the labial plosives **b, p, p’** can function as root consonants (or consonant elements) in labialized complexes: **gemeiq’wans** “takes out/is taking out”, **azwia** “deceived”, **gogwebi** “girls” etc.

Unlike the literary Georgian, in Düzce Acharan all the labialized complexes are simplified if they are followed by a consonant: **še3ra** “sneaked through”, **gaxrit’ā** “pierced”, **xeli gac’da** “to stretch one’s hand, shake hands with smb” etc.

Before vowels labialized complexes retain all their components: **še3wer** “you sneak through”, **gūc’wada** “stretched his/her hand, shook hands with smb”... However, sometimes they merge with the following sounds: **\*kwemo > komo** “lower”. In this example, under the influence of the final **o** vowel, the sonant element of **k** complex and the following **e** vowel merged to produce **o** vowel. We have the similar

situation in case of **\*gaušwebs** > **gūšops**, but here development of the secondary **o** vowel through the merge of the sonant element of the labialized complex and **e** vowel was conditioned by the voiced plosive **b**, which in its turn became voiceless.

Another notable phenomenon in Düzce Acharan is the “separation” of labialized complexes by neutral vowels, when the sonant **w** is substituted by the fricative consonant **v**, e.g.: **gogavebi** “girls”, **mejtkəvi** “you take a breath”, **gūšəves** “let him,/ her go”, **tkəva** (“said”), **datəvi** “bear”... As we have observed, such tendencies are more characteristic for young people’s speech.

Generally, neutral sounds can separate the elements of almost all consonant complexes, both homogeneous and heterogeneous. This can be illustrated by the following parallel forms: **mxeneti** // **msxeneti** and **mcəxeneti** // **msəxeneti** “a horse”, **zma** and **zəma** “brother”, **pxa** and **pəxa** “fish bone”, **buʒgi** and **buʒəgi** “hedgehog” etc. Interestingly, consonants can be separated by the neutral vowel even if one of them belongs to a labialized complex: **šeʒəra** “sneaked in”, **mokədoma** “death”, **gacəlida** “exchanged” etc.

Certainly, the forms with the neutral vowel occur in parallel with the original forms and are less common than the latter; sometimes neutral vowels are substituted by other vowels to create the following forms: **č'reli** // **č'əreli** // **č'ereli** “colourfull”, **k'bili** // **k'əbili** // **k'ibili** “tooth”, **q'rəu** // **q'əru** // **q'uru** “deaf” etc., also: **čwen** // **čəven** // **čuven** “we”, **tkwa** // **tkəva** // **tkuva** “said” etc.

The phonetic processes characteristic of Düzce Acharan are assimilation, dissimilation, substitution, metathesis, reduction, loss and development of sounds, affrication, deaffrication etc.

The following forms are examples of distant regressive assimilation: **degič'ira** // **digič'ira** “caught you”, **šememišwa** // **šimimišwa** “let me in”, **šinžops** “examines/is examining”, **q'orq'eli** (< \*xorx-qeli) “back of the throat” etc.

The examples of contact regressive assimilation are: **pxari** “a shoulder”, **fč'am** “I eat/I am eating”, **mok'k'lida** “would kill you”... also, the forms mentioned above: **mejtana**, **gejgno**, **ʃjak'itxa** etc.

The examples of progressive assimilation are **daxta** “met, received”, **datpa** “it grew warmer” etc. It should be noted that this phenomenon is less common in Düzce Acharan: for example, the form **mok'əda** occurs more frequently than the form **mok't'a** “died”. In some cases, when the foreign influence is stronger, we have the forms **mogda** and **gdari**.

The typical examples of dissimilation are **ar aris** > **ar ali** “is absent”, **\*seraskeri** > **sereskeli** (< Arab. - Turk. Serasker) “officer”, **eubneba** > **ebneva** “he tell him”... There are cases of dissimilative sonorization of certain sounds: **t'k'iba** instead of **t'k'ipa** “tick” or loss: **exwip'iri** instead of **exwirp'iri** “face”. As it was already mentioned, the above named forms **djek'ida** and **gjegno** were also developed through dissimilation.

Another widespread tendency in Düzce Acharan is substitution: **dagžagnis** “will overpower you”, lit. Georgian: **dagžabnis**, **dejmic'q'a** “forgot” Georgian **daivic'q'a**, **maq'aq'i** “a frog”, lit. Georgian **baq'aq'i**; **bulti** “ball”, lit. Georgian **burti**; **t'rink'i** “kick”, lit. Georgian **t'link'i** etc.

### 5. Stress and main intonation characteristics

From the point of view of intonation, the Acharan speech of Düzce shows mostly the same characteristics as Acharan dialects generally. Particularly, the stress is dynamic and weak. It usually falls on the first syllable, but the words with more than three syllables may get two stresses: the main stress and the additional **tonic** stress falling on the third or second syllable from the end of a word.

The vowel receiving the tonic stress is higher in pitch and slightly longer, for example, in the word **dédámisi** “his/her mother” the vowel **a** can be represented as a long sound as well. It is also remarkable, that in determining accentuation, a significant role is played by enclitics: when words are merged in pronunciation, the stress falling on the first word often becomes the main one, while the stress of the second word becomes secondary. However, enclitics often lead to strengthening of the secondary stress, which becomes another main stress.

In interrogative and exclamatory sentences, the tonic stress falls on the final word, namely, on the second syllable from the end, both in multisyllabic words and enclitics. In such cases, the tonic stress is often stronger than the main stress.

We would like to bring up another interesting peculiarity: when addressing people, the stress always falls on the last syllable of the person’s name whose stem ends in a vowel, while when people’s names are mentioned in the third person, the stress usually falls on the first, second or prefinal syllable. For example, compare:

**févzi mósula** “Fevzi has arrived” and **Fevzí!** “Fevzi!”

**suléjmanas útkmia** “Suleiman said” and **sulejimanáw!** “Suleiman!”

This phenomenon could be accounted for by the Turkish influence, but we encounter exactly the same patterns in the spoken forms of literary Georgian. Consequently, it cannot be resulted by the influence of the Turkish language. Moreover, when addressing people with the names whose stem ends in a consonant, the stem adds the vocative **o** [o] suffix and the stress falls on the prefinal syllable:

**dursúno!** “Dursun!”

**ajdíno!** “Aidin!”

**demurálo!** “Demir-Ali!” etc.

The final example is especially interesting because the root of the name **Damurali**, borrowed from Turkish, ends in a vowel, but its final vowel is associated with the nominative **-i** suffix and, respectively, is dropped in a vocative form – instead the root adds the vocative **-o** suffix.

### 6. Conclusions

In respect of phonetic peculiarities, the Acharan speech of Düzce stands close to the dialect presently spread in today’s Achara (Georgia) – during 140 years the native speech of Kartvelian-speaking Muhajirs’ descendants underwent almost no phonetic changes. In our opinion, it can be accounted for by the factor of **perceptual basis**, which being connected to the sensory-cognitive receptors of brain, does not easily change.

On the other hand, **the Acharan dialect of Georgian spoken in Düzce stands on the brink of extinction.** Such danger is increased by the fact that those

representatives of the new generation, who are interested in learning their ancestors' language and maintaining relations with Georgia, are studying the literary Georgian: having learnt the literary Georgian language, they try to speak "correctly" and avoid using dialectal expressions.

Notwithstanding with the influence exerted by Ottoman-Turkish and later the modern literary Turkish language, the Acharan speech of Kartvelian-speaking Muhajirs' descendants living in Düzce has retained the Common Kartvelian systemic-structural features.

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