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Descendants of Muhajir Georgians in Giresun (Turkey) and their speech codes¹

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Abstract:

In our article we review a Georgian dialectal speech of the Georgian Muhajirs' descendants in Giresun, Turkey. All the research materials are obtained by us during the expedition July 8-19, 2019 in Turkey, Karadeniz (Black Sea Coast) region. In the article, all the illustrative phrases in Georgian are transcribed with specific Latin-based transcription for Ibero-Caucasian Languages. The most part of Muhajir Georgians' Giresun descendants have preserved the Georgian ethnical self-concept. Due to the code-switching process going on during 140 years the historical mother tongue is only spoken by the older generation; their knowledge of the Turkish language is mostly poor. The people of middle generation are usually bilingual speaking both Georgian and Turkish. The younger generation speaks only Turkish, which they consider more prestigious than the mother tongue of their ancestors. Consequently, the Acharan dialect of Georgian spoken in Giresun is at risk of going extinct in the near future. The risk is increased by the fact that the representatives of younger generation who want to know their ancestors' language and develop friendly relations with Georgia are learning the literary Georgian: having learnt the literary Georgian they try to speak "correctly" and avoid using dialects.

Keywords: *code-mixing, code-switching, dialectology, Georgian, Muhajir*

1. Settlement of Muhajirs

Based on historical sources, Ottoman Turkey and Iran divided the Georgian kingdom Kartli (Georgia), dating back to the 4th century, into spheres of influence by the 1555 Amasya Treaty. As a result of such division two kingdoms – Kartli and Kakheti –

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were formed in the part controlled by Iran. Those two kingdoms were ruled by the Bagrationi dynasty. The Southern part of Georgia – historical Meskheta (Samtskhe, Javakheti, Erusheti, Kola, Artaani, Tao, Shavsheti, Chaneti, Livana and Achara with Machakhela) – was soon made part of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, the third Georgian kingdom named Imereti, which was ruled by the Bagrationi dynasty, emerged in the central part of western Georgia. Initially, this kingdom included the principalities of Odishi, Abkhazeti, Svaneti and Guria.

At the turn of the 19th century, the Georgian kingdoms oppressed by Iran and Ottoman Turkey let the Russian Empire with common Orthodox faith enter the central Caucasus. However, Russia had its own interests: the Russian Empire began intensive efforts to oppress Iran and Ottoman Turkey in Caucasus, and, at the same time, to destroy the Georgian kingdoms and principalities.

By converting the local Georgians to Islam the Ottoman Empire tried to preserve the occupied Georgian territory, but as a result of the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 it was forced to give up a large part of the south-western Georgia. It was not in the interest of the Russian Empire that the border area should be populated by Georgians, so it made sure that Georgian Muslims left the Georgian territory and settled the central part of Ottoman Turkey. At the end of 1878 a secret treaty was concluded between Russia and Ottoman Turkey strictly forbidding Ottomans to let the Muhajirs who had moved from the Russian occupied Georgian territories settle the area east of the Giresun-Sivas-Adana line (see Asan 2016: 42-43 for details). The Ottoman government settled the Georgian Muslims in Giresun İli of the present-day Republic of Turkey.

Based on the materials obtained during our expedition in 2019,² part of Muhajir Georgians' descendants are concentrated in Giresun İli/Merkez İlçe village of ambaralani/Anbaralan and the following villages of Bulancak İlçe: k'ışla kjoj/Kışla köyü, tekmezeri/Tekmezer, kuçukdere/Küçükdere, tepewrani/Tepeviran köyü, tepekjoj/Tepe köyü, q'ajadibi/Kayadibi, jenikjoj/Yeni köyü, şemşetini/Şemşetin, erekluyi/Eriklik, kuşluani/Kuşluvan, haži jetimi/Hacı Yetim köy and damudere/Damudere.³ These villages are situated in mountains 20-30 kilometers off the coast. In some of them also other ethnic groups (Turks, Turkified Pontic Greeks etc.) live side by side with Georgians. Descendants of Muhajir Georgians also live in the cities Giresun and Bulancak.

According to the descendants of Muhajir Georgians, some of the settled villages had been previously populated by Orthodox Christian Greeks, who left for Greece in 1922-1923. It is logical to assume that the goal of the Ottoman Empire would have been to have the mentioned territory populated by Sunni Muslim Muhajirs instead of Orthodox Christian Greeks. Descendants of Muhajirs also say that their ancestors came to Ottoman Turkey walking. Being reluctant to go too far from their homeland (i.e. from Georgia), they wanted to stay in Trabzon, but the government did not let them do it and sent them to Giresun by force, accompanied by armed escort.

As the data on the ethnic makeup of Turkey is not officially collected, we found it difficult to determine the current number of Muhajir Georgians in Giresun. Based on the information provided by the local population there are about 15000 Ethnic Georgians living in Giresun İli.

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³ We write the toponyms in Georgian in the same way as they are pronounced by the Georgian Muhajirs' descendants. For Turkish versions we use their official names.

2. Muhajirs' lingual and ethnic self-concept and speech codes

Based on the materials we obtained during the expedition most of the Georgian Muhajirs sent to Giresun during early 1880s were from Acharistskali Gorge – Zemo Achara⁴ (higher regions of Achara), the present-day Keda, Shuakhevi and Khulo municipalities. Currently, their descendants are divided into two groups: those whose ancestors came from today's Keda municipality and who call themselves *ač'arlebi* 'Acharans' and others from Shuakhevi and Khulo villages, known as *zegnelebi* 'Zeganians, highlanders'. It is most likely that such classification was caused by the attitude of Keda Acharans: The Keda Acharans living in today's Autonomous Republic of Achara (Georgia) still call the settlers of Shuakhevi and Khulo Municipalities *zegnīs ač'arlebi* 'highlander Acharans'. Apparently, during the 140-year isolation the Muhajirs living in Turkey developed different self-concepts: they got to differentiate between the highland (Shuakhevi and Khulo) and relatively lowland (Keda) Acharans: the themonym⁵ *Ač'areli* 'Acharan' was ascribed to the residents of Keda, while *Zegneli* 'Highlander', the name created based on geographical peculiarities of the particular place was given to those who came from Shuakhevi and Khulo.

The largest Acharan villages are Ambaralani and Damudere, while Küçükdere and Kışla köyü are the biggest among Zeganian villages. From a linguistic point of view, 'Acharans' speak the Kedian sub-dialect of Georgian, while Zeganians the Shuakhevi and Khuloan sub-dialects. The Muhajirs of both groups consider themselves ethnic 'Gürcü' (Georgian) except a small part of younger generation, who define themselves as ethnic Turks. All our respondents without exception regarded themselves as patriots of the Republic of Turkey and demonstrated their respect for the country they are legal citizens of.

Based on their speech codes and code-switching, descendants of Muhajir Georgians can be conventionally divided into three groups:

- People over 50: 3rd generation – older generation.
- People between 25 and 50: 2nd generation – middle generation.
- People under 25: 1st generation - younger generation.

Among the Georgian Muhajirs living in Giresun, the ethnic Georgians of the third generation have preserved their mother tongue. During their conversation with members of our expedition they chose to speak Georgian (its Acharan dialect). Those who had completed

⁴ Achara is one of the ancient districts of Georgia. Acharans – the local Georgian inhabitants of that district – do not really differ from their compatriots living in other districts of Georgia. The only difference is that one part of Acharans was converted to Islam during the Ottoman occupation (1540-1878). In the period of Soviet occupation (1921-1991), almost all the religions were eliminated in Georgia. Since the restoration of the independence of Georgia (1991), present generations of Acharans have been gradually returning to Orthodox Christianity, the religion of their ancestors (In the village Didač'ara, present day Khulo region, based on the Georgian and Greek sources, one of the first churches was built in the Apostolic Age). Their speech is a Georgian dialect like Gurian, Meskhian (Samtskhe-Javakhetian), Kakhetian, Kartlian and others. Unfortunately, the Soviet tendency of providing inaccurate information about Georgia and Georgians to Europe continues under its own momentum. For instance, the English spelling "Ajaria" of the mentioned Georgian district name originated from the Ottoman Turkish form Acarya (acaristan), which entered the Russian language as Аджария and later was introduced into European languages. Since the residents of Achara, who are local Georgians, have always used the name Achara to refer to this district and that is the only form used in literary Georgian, the version Achara, which sounds similar to the Georgian (and not Russian) name, should be established in foreign languages. It should be also noted that the present-day Autonomous Republic of Achara was created in 1920s after the division of the Caucasus between Ottoman Turkey and Soviet Russia and its creation was not the choice of its people. The fact that it still exists can only be accounted by the soviet inertia (for details see Putkaradze, 2009; Putkaradze, 2017; Putkaradze, 2018).

⁵ Ethnonym – the name of ethnos; Compare: Temonym – the name of "temi", ('community' in Georgian) a part of ethnos.

secondary school spoke Turkish as well, but with a Georgian accent. When speaking Turkish they often used Georgian words.

The second generation of Muhajirs displayed equal knowledge of literary Turkish and their native Acharan dialect of the Georgian language. During their conversation with the expedition members they mostly spoke Georgian (Acharan dialect), while speaking Turkish they seldom used the Georgian speech code.

The younger (first) generation speaks only Turkish. And the level of their language proficiency is much higher. Many of them understand Georgian, which is historically their mother tongue, but they find it difficult to use it even for simple communication.

It could be said that switching between Georgian and Turkish speech codes (code-switching) is more characteristic of the middle generation, with Georgian dominating in the speech of older people (aged 35-50) and Turkish prevailing in case of the younger ones (aged 25-35). Unlike previous years, during the expedition we could not find a single person who did not speak Turkish, while the number of those who do not speak Georgian is growing every day.

There is one more factor that is worth noting: with the opening of the border with Georgia (1988) and development of friendly relations between Georgia and Turkey, which resulted in intensive trade and economic relations, Giresun Georgians' interest in their native language increased. However, this became another precondition for disappearance of the Acharan dialect of Georgian, since those who try to study their historical mother tongue, learn literary Georgian and not the Acharan dialect spoken by their ancestors.

In July 2019, during our visit to Damudere, a village of Bulancak İlçe, a local resident called Musa tan (Musa Helimoğlu-Baramiçe) named several young people who learnt Georgian after they had started taking trips to Batumi. Their speech did not really differ from the Georgian spoken by our expedition members. Recently, the cases when people study literary Georgian are not rare, but are not common either. On the whole, the language spoken by their ancestors (the particular dialect of Georgian) is irreversibly lost by new generations of Giresun Georgians. The survival of the Acharan dialect spoken by Giresun Georgians is seriously threatened by Georgian-Turkish code-switching. It is possible that Giresun Georgians will lose their historical language (Compare: 40-50 years ago the mother tongue of Muslim Armenians or Hemshins living in Rize İli was lost due to the dominance of Turkish in the process of Armenian-Turkish code-switching; The Hemshin speech only preserved Armenian vocabulary, while the grammar is completely Turkish; for details see Simonian 2007: 353-356).

Code-switching is a spontaneous, unconscious process that takes place in a society characterized by complete bilingualism or diglossia because its members have equal knowledge of A and B languages (dialects). They distinguish the five main subtypes of speech code-switching:

- 1) Tag-switching – adding a lexical unit (so-called “tag”) of B language/dialect at the beginning or at the end of the A language/dialect phrase;
- 2) Intra-sentential switching (inside a phrase) - inserting a lexical unit of B language/dialect into the A language/dialect phrase;
- 3) Extra-sentential switching (outside a phrase) – switching from A language/dialect phrase to B language/dialect phrase;
- 4) Intra-word switching – borrowing B language/dialect phonemes and morphemes by A language/dialect; when speaking B language/dialect substituting the phonemes not characteristic of A language/dialect with different phonemes;
- 5) Calque switching – due to the influence of B language/dialect creating lexical and grammatical calques in A language/dialect spontaneously. We list some Georgian-Turkish examples.

Subtype I:

- (1) *baxtəm ki, isic mwažirula lak'ajbops⁶* (Amb.-Dam.)⁷
 I.saw that he/she too like.muhajir speaks
 'I saw that he also speaks like Muhajir.'⁸
- (2) *me wilap'arik'ep, ŝen dimiq'ure, jawrum!* (Küç.-Kış.)
 I I.will.speak you listen[to me] please
 'When I speak, you listen to me, please!'⁹

Subtype II:

- (3) *k'arma-m giexsnā, hepten tamam oldu, dejc'q'o misla-mosla* (Amb.-Dam.)
 door.ERG.-that is.opened fully good was, is started coming-going
 '[When] entrance [to Sarpi] opened, it was very good, people started travelling'¹⁰
- (4) *imas dūzaxa-ki, wesiet q'abul edažaxsin-dedi, utxra* (Küç.-Kış.)
 he/she.DAT called-that last will agree you.must.do-said, told.him
 'He/she called that person and told him/her to execute the last will.'¹¹

Subtype III:

- (5) *me q'amionži war, bir arada trabzona gittim* (Amb.-Dam.)
 I lorry driver am onceto.Trabzon I.went
 'I am a lorry driver [and] once I went to Trabzon'¹²
- (6) *čweneburi xar tu, türkça nija bilmiyorsun?* (Küç.-Kış.)
 from.ours you.are if Turkish why you.don't.know
 'If you are from ours, why don't you speak Turkish?'¹³

Subtype IV:

- (7) *gaxede erti, zegneli mia, win ari?* (Amb.-Dam.)
 Look.you one Zeganian if is who is
 'Will you look out to see if it is a Zeganian or someone else?'¹⁴

⁶ *lak'ajbops* means 'speaks'. Dialect form: Giresun Kedians ('Acharans') say it only this way.

⁷ The abbreviated form Amb.-Dam. stands for Ambaralani-Damudere speech, Küç.- Kış. stands for Küçük-dere-Kışla-köyü speech.

⁸ *baxtəm ki* < Turk. dial.: *baxtım, ki* 'I saw that.'

⁹ *jawrum* < Turk.: *yavrum* 'My baby'.

¹⁰ *hepten tamam oldu* < Turk.: *hepten tamam oldu* 'it was very good.'

¹¹ *wesiet q'abul edažaxsin-dedi* < Turk. dial.: *vesiyet qabul edücüxsın, dedi* 'told him/her to execute the last will.'

¹² *bir arada trabzona gittim* < Turk.: *bir arada Trabzon'a gittim* 'once I went to Trabzon.'

¹³ *türkça niya bilmiyorsun?* < Turk. dial.: *türkçä niyâ bilmiyorsun?* 'why don't you speak Turkish?'

¹⁴ *mi* < Turk.: *mi*, interrogative particle.

- (8) *šen dimiq'ure, jawrum!* (Küç.-Kış.)
 you listen [to me] my.baby
 'You listen to me, please!'¹⁵

Subtype V:

- (9) *čem gonši 'ar modis isi, wer gewgnep!* (Amb.-Dam.)
 my mind-in not comes it, not I.understand
 'I can't understand it, cannot make it out!'¹⁶

- (10) *inat nu ik, č'ow!* (Küç.-Kış.)
 stubborn not make you.boy
 'Don't be stubborn, boy!'¹⁷

3. *The Georgian speech of Muhajir Georgians*

Most of the materials obtained by us show that the current Georgian speech of Muhajir Acharans' descendants is confined to Acharan dialect. Experts have different approaches towards the division of Acharan into sub-dialects. For example, in 1930s Jemal Noghaideli (1936: 3) made a distinction between Acharan and Kobulian dialects:

The dialect spoken by Acharans can be divided into two branches: a) Acharan spread in two regions: Khula and Keda, including the Southwest part of Batomi region, which was influenced by Akhaltsike and, generally, Southern Georgian (Shavsheti, Klarjeti and others) speech; and b) Kobulian¹⁸, covering Kobuleti and a big part of Batomi region, which seems to be greatly influenced by the Gurian dialect.

Later Noghaideli, having somewhat changed his opinion, drew a line between highland and lowland Acharan dialects (included Kobuleti into lowland Acharan dialects, see Noghaideli 1972: 209).

According to Shota Nizharadze, the Zemoacharan sub-dialect covers Khulo, Shuakhevi and Kedi regions; Kvemoacharan is spoken in Khelvachauri; and Kobuleti should be regarded as a separate sub-dialect of the Acharan dialect (Nizharadze 1961: 10; Nizharadze 1975: 15-22).

The *Georgian Dialectology* by Ivane Gigineishvili, Varlam Topuria and Ivane Kavtaradze (1961) considers two approaches: according to the first approach Zemoacharan includes Khulo and Shuakhevi speeches, while Kvemoacharan is comprised of Kedi, Khelvachauri and Kobuleti speeches. By the second approach Khulo, Shuakhevi, Kedi and partially Khelvachauri speeches should be regarded as Zemoacharan, while Kvemoacharan consists of part of Khelvachauri and the entire Kobuleti (Gigineishvili et al. (1961): 43-44).

Kobuleti was deemed to be an Acharan sub-dialect by Shota Dzidziguri as well. In the work *Georgian Dialectology Materials* published in 1974, Kobuleti texts are placed under the category of the Acharan dialect. In the introduction Dzidziguri wrote: "*In 1929 we recorded the texts in Acharan (particularly in the Kobuleti sub-dialect)*" (the emphasis was made by the author. See Dzidziguri 1974: 5).

¹⁵ *jawrum* < Turk.: *yavrum* 'my baby'.

¹⁶ *čem gonši 'ar modis* < Turk. *aklıma gelmiyor* 'I can't understand'.

¹⁷ *inat nu ik* < Turk. *İnat etme!* 'don't be stubborn!'

¹⁸ The author's term; It is the same as Kobuleti.

According to Besarion Jorbenadze, Acharan can be divided in the Zemoacharan and Kvemoacharan sub-dialects, and also speeches: Khulo, Shuakhevi and Kobuletian (Jorbenadze 1989: 540).

Mamia Paghava distinguished “the following sub-dialects of Acharan: a) Zemoacharan (Keda, Shuakhevi and Khulo speech); Batumian (the speech used in villages around Batumi, which can be called Kvemoacharan); c) Kobuletian (the speech used in Kobuleti and Chakvi)” (Paghava 2013: 138). Later, in the work he published together with Nana Tsetskhladze, Paghava remarked that “the issue of determining the sub-dialects making up the Acharan dialect will be discussed again, but that will happen in future” (Paghava and Tsetskhladze 2017: 39).

We think that the Acharan dialect could be divided into four sub-dialects: Zemoacharan, MachaKhelian¹⁹, Kirnat-Maradidian²⁰ and Kvemoacharan (Chakvi-Kobuletian).²¹ Zemoacharan can be further subdivided into three groups:

- Kedan speech;
- Shuakhevi-Khikhanian speech;
- Khulo speech.

As we have mentioned before, during 140 years Giresun Georgians developed two local self-concepts: ‘Acharan’ and ‘Zeganian’. Respectively, while living together the descendants of Shuakhevi, Khikhadzira and Khulo residents became ‘identical’ in dialect, while the Khulo speech of Zemoacharan sub-dialect became dominant in the speech of ‘Zeganians’. Hence, we can consider the Georgian speech of Giresun Georgians to be represented by the following two speeches:

- Acharan spoken by descendants of Kedians: Ambaralani-Damudere speech;
- Acharan spoken by descendants of Shuakhevians and Khuloans: Küçükdere-Kışla-köyü speech.

It is remarkable that the difference between phonetics and vocabulary of the mentioned speeches (idioms) is insignificant. It should be also noted that as a result of isolation from the Georgian language area for 140 years, internal sub-dialectal interference and the influence of the Turkish language, the speech of Muhajir Georgians settled in the interior areas of Turkey developed a lot of peculiarities. Consequently, Muhajirs’ speech can be considered as a new type of Georgian dialectal speech. I think it would be justified if we conditionally called it “the Georgian spoken by Chvneburis.”²² (*Chvneburis* means ‘our person’ or ‘an ethnic Georgian living in Turkey’).

The phonetics of Ambaralani-Damudere speech is characterized by the same non-vibrant *r* as in Laz dialects and Keda speech (Surmava, 2008:185-186). According to descendants of Muhajirs, pronunciation of this consonant is a distinctive feature of ‘Acharans’, as ‘Zeganians’ pronounce *r* as a vibrant sound. It is remarkable that even if they speak Turkish, descendants of Keda Muhajirs substitute the vibrant Turkish *r* with its non-vibrant version (like the Laz do).

¹⁹ Traditionally, Machakhelian is considered as one of the Acharan sub-dialects. Conventionally, the Machakhelian speech could be regarded as a separate dialect.

²⁰ Traditionally, Kirnat-Maradidian is considered as one of the Acharan sub-dialects. Conventionally, the Kirnat-Maradidian speech could be regarded as a part of the Livanan dialect.

²¹ Kobuletian speech is a transitional speech code between the Acharan and Gurian dialects.

²² Compare: according to Sh. Putkaradze (2016: 9-13) the term “the Georgian spoken by Chvneburis” covers several Georgian dialects spoken in Turkey - the Tao-Klarjetian dialectal group: Livanan (Nigalan), Machakhelian and Imerkhevan.

In the Küçükdere-Kışla-köyü speech the same function is fulfilled by -en:

- *c'ewden* 'they went'
- *mowden* 'they came'
- *konden* 'they had'
- *icoden* 'they knew'

Furthermore, in the Ambaralani-Damudere speech the third person singular of subjunctive forms ends in -o-s:

- *c'ewd-o-s* 'let him/her leave'
- *mowd-o-s* 'let him/her come'
- *misc-o-s* 'let him/her give him'
- *icod-o-s* 'let him/her know'

In subjunctive II -o- is encountered (instead of -e- and -a-) in other Georgian dialects as well: *gamowd-o-s* 'let him/her come out', *mokc-o-s* 'let him give you' (Livanan), *dadg-o-n* 'let them stand', Dawrč-o-t "let us stay", c'owd-o-t "let us leave" (Machakhelian), *ššind-o-n* "let him be scared", *mokc-o-n* 'let them give it to you' (Taoan) (Putkaradze 2016: 210, 246, 378). Such forms are spread in the Ingilo dialect (Aliabatian sub-dialect) as well: *dawdg-o* 'let me stand', *gitxr-o* 'let me tell you', *digik'l-o* 'let me butcher it for you', *mowk'l-o* 'let me kill it' (Imnaishvili 1966: 118).

Both sub-dialects are characterized by a different expression for the occasional, "it seems to" semantics: the *-imiš* suffix borrowed from Turkish:

- (15) amatjepši k'oγo bewri ari-jmiš, wer dawdgebit-dedi (Amb.-Dam.)
 here in them mosquito a lot seems to be we cannot stay said
 'There seem to be many mosquitoes in these areas, we cannot stay here - he said.'
- (16) šen k'aj k'aci xar-imiš-dedi, čemi gogo mokce-nao, utxra (Küç.-Kış.)
 you good man seem to be said my girl I will give to you, said told him
 'You seem to be a good man, I will let you marry my girl - he told [the man].'

The forms derived by adding the mentioned suffix are semantically close to Laz (Hopa) kort'eren 'it seems to be', ideren 'it seems to leave' or Kvemo Imeretian: namušvara 'he/she seems to work', nakoneba 'he/she seems to have' forms: they express the action that already occurred (and is in progress at the moment of speaking), and the speaker has learnt about it from others.

In both sub-dialects the Georgian particles used for representing the speech of other people are substituted with Turkish borrowings:

- (17) oci c'lisi gawxdi-dedim (Amb.-Dam.)
 twenty of year I had turned-I said
 'I had turned twenty, I said'
- (18) ra puna c'ejk'ide-dedi, ras wer gnebulop? (Küç.-Kış.)
 what dung you got hooked-he said what not you understand?
 'Don't be a nuisance - he said, - why can't you understand?'

Compare Turkish 'Yirmi yaşındayım, dedim' and 'Sana ne oldu dedi, niye anlamıyorsun?'. In origin, *dedim* and *dedi* are the first and third person past perfect forms of the Turkish verb *demek* 'to say'.

As for syntactic peculiarities, it is remarkable that in both speeches we often have ergative constructions instead of nominative constructions:

(19) babam momik'da me (Amb.-Dam.)
 father.ERG died (for me) I
 'My father died'

(20) yorma wozdaxuti c'elic'adia, akit mowda (Küç.-Kış.)
 wild boar.ERG twenty five years is to here came
 'It is twenty five years since the wild boar appeared in this area'

The verbs *momik'da* 'he (my relative) died' or *mowda* 'he came' given in the examples, build only nominative constructions in Standard Georgian. Like some other languages (e.g. Hindi-Urdu, Kurdish etc.), the Standard Georgian is characterized by the so-called Split Ergativity - ergative construction is only used in the past tense of polypersonal verbs:

(21) man gāk'eta is
 he/she.ERG did it it
 'He/she did that'

(22) man misces mas is
 he/she.ERG let.him.give he/she.ERG it
 'Let him/her give it to him/her'.

In these sentences, the subject is active, it requires the ergative case, while the object is in the nominative and not in the accusative case (there is no accusative case in Georgian). In Georgian dialects, the situation is different – ergative constructions can be built by the verbs that are usually encountered in nominative constructions (for ergative constructions see I. Melikishvili 2008).

Lexical peculiarities: both sub-dialects have preserved the basic lexical stock, although they certainly contain a lot of borrowings from Turkish (and through Turkish from other eastern languages). It is noteworthy that almost all the Turkish, Arabic and Persian lexical units, which could be found in the Acharan dialect until the first half of the 20th century and were later replaced by their Georgian equivalents (see Nizharadze 1971: 59-65), are still active in the speech of Muhajir Georgians' Giresun descendants. Such words are: *lule* 'tobacco pipe', *bardayi* 'a glass', and *anžax* 'hardly', which, according to Shota Nizharadze, have purely Georgian equivalents in today's Acharan: *k'ip'aj*, *č'ikaj*, and *zvilaj*. These words are known to Giresun Georgians, but they prefer to use the borrowings.

One of the lexical units that changed meaning in Girusen Georgians' speech is the form *moč'irixebaj* 'turn/change course':

(23) agze pač'aj mūc'irixo-nda (Amb.-Dam.)
 on here littlely ou have to turn
 'Here you have to turn slightly'

Shota Nizharadze (1971: 272) gives two meanings of the form *moč'irexwa* derived from the same root. These meanings are: 1. to twist a with; 2. to bend, crook; also, for Giresun Georgians *q'artopilaj* only means 'potato as a root vegetable', while 'fried potatoes' are called *p'uraj*.

There are some interesting phraseological units, e.g.:

- (24) *dasaxčolebeli* *nu gawxtebit!*
 to burn incense not we will turn
 ‘Be careful not to do something that will expose us to danger!’

Daxčoleba literally means ‘to burn incense’, but Giresun descendants of Muhajir Georgians do not know about it. Likewise, *punajs mok’ideba* (literally: ‘to get hooked the dung’) means ‘to be a nuisance’:

- (25) *ra puna mejk’ide,* *č’ow?! p’ac’aj dadeki, dā!* (Küç.-Kış.)
 what dungy ou got hooked boy a little stay you yo
 ‘Can’t you stop being a nuisance, boy?! Wait a minute, yo!’

Thus, the Georgian speech of Muhajir Georgians – Acharan dialect of the Georgian language – has survived in Giresun İli Giresun İlçe and Bulancak İlçe, the Republic of Turkey, to this day. Since 1950 (when Turkish became the language of education at all the compulsory secondary schools) the Acharan speech, which has been overwhelmed by the literary Turkish and lately, the literary Georgian as well, is slowly disappearing.

The most part of Muhajir Georgians’ Giresun descendants have preserved the Georgian ethnical self-concept. Due to the code-switching process going on during 140 years the historical mother tongue is only spoken by the older generation; their knowledge of the Turkish language is mostly poor. The people of middle generation are usually bilingual speaking both Georgian and Turkish. The younger generation speaks only Turkish, which they consider more prestigious than the mother tongue of their ancestors. Consequently, the Acharan dialect of Georgian spoken in Giresun is at risk of going extinct in the near future. The risk is increased by the fact that the representatives of younger generation who want to know their ancestors’ language and develop friendly relations with Georgia are learning the literary Georgian: having learnt the literary Georgian they try to speak ‘correctly’ and avoid using dialects.

Despite the influence of Ottoman-Turkish and, later, modern literary Turkish, the Acharan speech of Georgian Muhajirs’ Giresun descendants has preserved unchanged the systemic and structural features of the Georgian language.

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