

# Caucasian Perspectives

George Hewitt (ed.)

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This volume is dedicated to the memory of  
**T'ogo Gudava**  
(1922-1976)

the Mingrelian linguist who, though specialising in the languages of Daghestan,  
did not neglect his mother-tongue,  
publishing a collection of Mingrelian folk-poetry just a year before his death  
and planning (even reputedly writing) a grammar of that same Mingrelian.

Editor

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This volume is dedicated to the memory of  
T. V. Gvishvili  
(1913-1991)  
The author who thought of this project in 1980  
and who worked for several years  
on this project before his untimely death  
in 1991. This volume is dedicated to his memory.  
The editor, Hans-Joachim Lauth, has  
completed the project in 1992.  
The volume is dedicated to his memory.

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## Introduction

Though many of the papers reproduced in this collection were delivered at the Vth Caucasian Colloquium of the *Societas Caucasologica Europæa* (held at The School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, 26-28 June 1990), this book should not be regarded as the proceedings of that conference. A number of the presentations were already destined for publication elsewhere, and I, as editor, commissioned others specifically for inclusion in the selection that follows. In order that the balance between read and new titles be clear to the reader, I now list in alphabetical order of speakers the papers that were presented at the Colloquium, not all of which were delivered in English:

- A. Abdurakhmanov (Maxačkala) *Totemistic elements in rituals and traditions about animals* (read by Simon Crisp)
- Saria Aməčba (Sukhum) *Colour-metaphor in the Abkhaz Nart epic*
- Shukia Apridonidze (Tbilisi) *Literary and dialectal forms of address in Georgian*
- Slavik Ardzanba (Sukhum) *Work in progress at the Sukhum Institute of Research*
- Neli Aršba (Sukhum) *Accentology in Abkhaz*
- Roland Bielmeier (Bern) *Direction and perfect tense in Georgian*
- Neville Birdsall (Emeritus of Birmingham) *Palimpsest-fragments of a xanmet'i Old Testament*
- Winfried Böder (Oldenburg) *The textual structure of Rustaveli's stanzas*
- Jan Braun (Warsaw) *Proto-Kartvelian declension and its development*
- Nani Čanišvili (Tbilisi) *The binary opposition 'who', 'what' in the category-system*
- Alain Christol (Rouen) *Languages of the North Caucasus according to Greek sources*
- Slava Čirikba (Moscow) *Phonological problems in the infant lexicon*
- John Colarusso (McMaster) *How many consonants does Ubykh have?*
- Boris Džonua (Sukhum) *The chronology of kartvelianisms in Abkhaz*
- Bessarion Dzorbenadze (Tbilisi) *The language-situation in Georgia*
- Joakim Enwall (Stockholm) *Some remarks on the language-debate in the q'azaxiši gazet'i*
- Wolfgang Feurstein (Germany) *Mingrelian-Laz-Svan: Old Colchian languages and cultures*
- Asker Gadagatl (Maykop) *Deciphering a 1st century A.D. Meoto-Adyghean pot*
- Gadži Gamzatov (Maxačkala) *The language-situation in Daghestan*
- John Greppin (Cleveland) *On the theory of Armenian loans in Caucasian languages*
- Alice Harris (Vanderbilt) *The particle -a in Udi*
- Martin Haspelmath (Berlin) *Deep ergativity in Lezgian*
- George Hewitt (SOAS, London) *Languages in contact in N.W. Georgia: fact or fiction?*
- Michael Job (Marburg) *Orders of grammatical categories in Caucasian*
- Zainab Keraševa (Maykop) *Convergence and divergence in the Adyghe languages*
- Z. Khubetsova (Vladikavkaz) *Phraseology of the Ossetian poetry of Kosta Khetagurov*
- Aleksandre Kibrik (Moscow) *The semantic organisation of the pan-Daghestanian noun-thesaurus*
- Vova K'ik'ilašvili (Tbilisi) *A Kartvelian and Caucasian data-base*
- Mukhadin Kumakhov (Moscow) *Adyghean epic onomastics*
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- Valérie Le Galcher-Baron (Paris) *Heroism and banditry in the 19th century Caucasus*

V.A. Chirikba

## Phonological Features of Specialized Baby Lexicon (Caucasian Data) \*

All peoples traditionally have in their vocabulary a certain number of so called "baby words" which adults often find appropriate to communicate with small children of between the ages 1 and 2/5 years old, and which are characterized by specific features in phonetic shape and usage. This layer of vocabulary can be called "specialized baby lexicon" (SBL), because it represents a reduced and specialized form of speech designed properly for communicating with small children. The number of items may vary from a dozen to 60, 100, or even more. SBL takes its origin from 3 sources, namely: baby words proper, like **papa**, **mama**, **nana**, **kaka**, etc., baby forms, derived, in accordance with the special rules, from the "normal" adult lexicon, and occasional words in possession of individual families. The first two parts of SBL include items, which are comparatively normalized and standardized, and which are usually transferred from one generation to another, so that any new generation does not have to invent them anew. Having peculiar prosodic characteristics, i.e., distinct and affected pronunciation, accompanied by special intonation, these words are very easy to perceive by small children, and usually have very simple phonetic shape, being, as a rule, of the structure CVCV, or the like. The third mentioned part of SBL may originate in adults' borrowings from child-babble, and in occasional "family" words, included for one reason or another in the SBL of the given microcommunity. All three parts of SBL, the invariant and variable ones, are, nevertheless, in conformity with general rules of SBL phonetics and functioning.

The SBL problem is not purely linguistic, but rather a psycholinguistic one. The point is, adults, while communicating with small children, intuitively model an infant's linguistic world picture, especially its phonetic parameters.

The aim of this paper is to summarize the main phonetic-phonological features of SBL as used in the Caucasus. The linguistic material is based heavily on the results of field work in the Caucasus, my informants representing almost all Caucasian languages, belonging to both North Caucasian and Kartvelian families. In addition, for the sake of comparison I also collected material on non-Caucasian languages of the area, i.e. Turcic Karachay, Balkar, Kumyk, Noghay and Indo-European Ossetic and Armenian. I used also the scant literature on SBL in the Caucasian languages /Kibrik, Kodzasov, et al. 1977/, /Bgazhnokov 1984/, as well as the literature of SBLs of other, non-Caucasian languages, such as /Austerlitz 1956/, /Ferguson 1956; 1975/, /Crawford 1970/, articles in /Talking

\*This problem is being discussed in greater detail in the 1st chapter of my book "Aspects of Phonological Typology", Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1991 (in Russian). The present article is a somewhat expanded version of the paper read at the Vth Caucasological Colloquium held at London in 1990.

to Children 1977/, etc.

Actually, SBL may be regarded as an element of traditional culture. Linguists refer to it as of abnormal or deviant types of speech (Sapir 1915; Crawford 1970, 9), as of special types of discourse - together with secret languages, magical invocations, artistic speech /Samarin 1978, 321/. SBLs of different languages of the world are characterized by striking similarities of form and meaning. The explanation of such similarities lies in the universal laws of generating this kind of lexics - i.e., use of limited choice of phonemes, preference for words with simple structure (CVCV, or CVC), onomatopoeic origin of many SBL items, universal standards of infants' early speech, which adults try to imitate, etc., rather than in some kind of diffusion of such words over the vast linguistic areas, as some investigators suggest (cf. /Ferguson 1975, 425, 433/). Areal diffusion of baby words is possible only between contacting languages, constituting one linguistic area, as in the case of the languages of the Caucasus.

1. Canonical phonological structure. The most usual structure of SBL words is a combination of two open syllables, namely, CVCV, which is, actually, very often a reduplication of one and the same syllable. Words with such a structure are well-known to everybody - **mama**, **papa**, **baba**, etc. From the articulatory point of view this structure is rather economical and simple for perception and production. Accordingly, one of the major mechanisms of generating the SBL words out of their adult prototypes consists in transforming them to this particular structure. E.g.: Chech. **bāpi** < **bepig** "bread", **kotā** < **kortā** "head", Lezghi **t'ā<sup>h</sup>za** < **t'ā<sup>h</sup>izza** "I'll kiss you", Archi **gat'a** < **gat'** "handkerchief", ċ'ep'e < ċ'ep "cradle", Abkh. **xāpa** < **xāpa** "hat", Abaza **māg'a** < **mg'a** "belly", Kab. **c'āc'a** < **hap'ac'a** "insect(s)", **χalu** < **nalā<sup>o</sup>** "bread", Adyghe **tofa** < **kartof** "potato", Georg. **buco** < **muceli** "belly", etc.

Words with syllables consisting of heterogeneous sounds, e.g. CVC<sub>1</sub>V<sub>1</sub>, or the like, tend to be modified into syllables with homogeneous sounds, i.e., to CVCV, or C<sub>1</sub>V<sub>1</sub>C<sub>1</sub>V<sub>1</sub>, e.g. Adyghe **bābā** < **bāzā** "breast", Ashkh. Abaza **k'ak'a** < **ajk'a** "trousers", **p'ap'a** < **š'ap'ā** "foot", through the intermediary form **š'ap'ap'a**.

From the psychological point of view words with structure CVCV, or reduplicated complexes CVC-CVC, or CVCV-CVCV, being pronounced with an appropriate intonation, are rather rhythmical and can create positive connotations when perceived by a child. On the contrary, words with the structures CVC, CV, etc, very often may have negative connotations, which can be illustrated by the following examples:

Positive emotions:

**Mama** : Avar, Karatin, Archi **baba**, Georg. **deda**, Svan **nana**, cf. Engl. **mama**, Arab. **māma**;

**Papa** : Abkh., Megr. **baba**, Svan, Georg. **mama**, Chech. **dāda**, Avar, Karat. **dada**, cf.

Arab. *bāba*, Marathi *baba*, Engl. *daddy*, Span. *tata*;

Food : Abaza *ž'až'a*, Karat. *žiži*, Megrel *c'ic'i* "meat", Kab., Adyghe *p'ap'u*, Georg. *baba* "bread", Avar, Karat. *mama* "food", cf. Nivkx *mama* // *ñaña*, Span. *papa* "food", Berber *mama* "water", susu "flat cake";

Bosom (mother's) : Avar, Archi *mama*, Karat. *kaka*, Abkh. *ззза*, Adyghe *bāba*, Megr. *зззз*, cf. Osset. *žēžē*, Arm. *cici*, Nogh. *mamaj*, Arab. *zēzē*

\_\_\_\_\_ Negative emotions. or commands:

Abaza *pu*, Kab. *qax*, Adyghe *xə* // *x* // *t(f)u*, Agul *bāe*, Osset. *gax*, Karach. *gax* "spit it out!"; Circass. d-t of Kab. *bək*, Archi *duk-*, Chech. *bop*, Nogh. *kax* "you can/will fall!"; Kab., Adyghe *cās*, Avar *is*, Lezghi *kx*, cf. Arm. *vaj*, Arab. *ʔuh* "fire! you'll burn yourself!"; Kab. *bəq'*, Adyghe *ʔə* // *kaw*, Abkh. *k'o*, Archi *ah* (-bos) "I'll beat you!", cf. Korean *kō* (*handa*) "I'll make you an injection!"; Tabass. *āq* "it is cold", *ā?* "dirt, excrements", Agul *bə?* "it hurts; a sore", *əə* "dirt; excrements", Botlikh *fussu* "it hurts; it's hot!", Akhvakh *ize* "pain; it hurts!", "it's cold!", cf. Nogh. *uwvaj* "it's cold", *awej* "it hurts!"; Kab. *bə?* // *k'ə?* "wolf; monster", Chech. *bo?* "wolf", etc.

2. Derivation of SBL. Phonetic means. While a certain part of SBL, as was mentioned above, is composed of special "baby" words of the type *mama*, *papa*, *nana*, *kaka*, etc, another part of this is produced from the normal words of adults' speech. The main mechanisms of such transformations are: syllable elision, substitution, metathesis, assimilation, etc. These means may accompany one another.

a. Syllable elision. E.g. Avar *hedda* "grandfather" < \**heraw-dada*, lit. "old father", *dje* "mom" < *dide* "mother", *debax* "aunt" < *dide bax* "aunt, mother's sister", *ba* < *buba* // *ba?* "father", Archi *xit'i* < *xit'māsan* "pap", Abkh. *maa* < *ajmaa* "shoes", *k'ək'* < *ajk'a* "trousers", Abaza *takəm* < *g'əstaqəm* "I don't want it", Adyghe *š'āš'*, *sās* < *psāša* "girl", Geo. *ႁa(i)\** < *c'q'al-i* "water", *buco* < *mucel-i* "belly", Megr. *k'ič'i* "tooth/teeth" < *k'ibiri* "tooth", Svan *pun-īl* < *nepxwuna* "nose", etc.

In languages with the dynamic stress elision usually occurs on an unstressed syllable. One can explain exclusions from this rule. For instance, Abkhaz SBL form *k'ək'* "trousers" is derived from *ajk'a*, the stress being on the first syllable, which, as it seems, contradicts the above-mentioned rule. But in the Ashkhar dialect we have the corresponding SBL form *k'ək'a*, and the adult form *ajk'á*, with the final syllable stressed. We may subsequently assume that the Abkhaz baby word *k'ək'* testifies to the old place of stress in Abkh. *ajk'a* — i.e., on the final syllable, just as it is in Ashkhar (cf. regular SBL derivation in Abkh. *maá* < *ajmaá* "shoes").

\*I use symbol Δ to render the various types of clicks. The letter before this sign defines the particular character of the click (i.e., nasalized, dental, or bilabial).

b. Cluster reduction. This is one of the major phonetic processes involved in the generation of SBL, as even the languages notorious for their huge consonantal clusters (such as Georgian, for instance), radically modify the phonetic shape of words so as to meet the canonical model CVCV. Illustrations are numerous: Chech. *beag* < *bearg\** "eye", *kotā* < *kortā* "head", *p'eg* < *p'elg* "finger", *ceɣ* > *ceg* "tooth", Abkh. *nanu* < *nandow* "grandmother, granny", *səč'an* < *səč'k'an* "my child/boy", *xəpa* < *xəlpa* "hat", Askh. *xəša* < *xšə* "milk", Kab. *hak'ama* < *thak'ama* "ear", *ha-ba* < *šba* "head", *bocej* < *bostej* "dress", Geo. *3'e-pia* < *r3e* "milk", *cuno* < *cxwir-i* "nose", *ba(o)*, *baia* < *bawšw-i* "child", *k'ai* < *k'argi* "good", *t'ak'o* < *t'rak'-i* "podex", Megr. *čou* < *čxou* "cow", Laz *c'omi(-c'omi)* < *oč'k'omi* "eat!", Svan *č'ič'-il* < *č'išx* "foot", etc.

c. Substitution. We may name two main functions of substitution during the generation of SBL: pragmatic function, i.e. tendency to substitute difficult sounds by simpler ones, and symbolic function, which determines the significance of sound change itself, which is realized as "diminutivization" of the words of adults. Moreover, the very fact of substitution is semiotically marked, signalling a shift from the standard to the deviant speech style.

Concrete linguistic material shows that laryngals and pharyngals are substituted by either uvulars (e.g.: *h'>x'* in Abkhaz, *h'>ɣ'* in Ashkhar), or velars (*ʔ>k'* in Abkhaz, Abaza, Bezhta, *h>χ* in Adyghe and Kabardian), uvulars by velars (*G>g* in Kumyk, *q'>k* in Tabassaran, *q'>k'* in Abkhaz, Abaza, Adyghe, *q'>k'/k'* in Abkhaz, *q>k* in Abaza, Chechen, Tabassaran, Tsez, Ginukh, Balkar, *q'>k'* in Ashkhar, *ɣ>g* in Tsez, Ginukh, Ossetic, *ɣ'>g'* in Adyghe, *x>x* in Avar, Tsez), or dentals (*q'>t'* in Botlikh), velars by dentals (*k>t* in Akhvax, Bezhta, Chechen, Karachay) or labials, back sibilants by the front ones (cf. *š>s* in Chechen, Abkhaz, Tsez, *š'>s'/s* in Abkhaz, *ž>z* in Tsez, Chechen, *č>c* in Dargwa, Chechen, *č'>c'* in Botlikh, Ginukh, Tsez). The main direction in changing the consonants is, therefore, from back to front in the oral cavity. Complex consonants tend to lose one of their features, such as glottalization (e.g.: *k'>k* in Adyghe, Chechen, Ginukh, Andi, Tsez, *q'>k* in Tsez, Tabassaran, Ginukh, Kumyk, *t'>t* in Adyghe, Ginukh, Tsez, *t'>d* in Bezhta, *c'>c* in Tsez, Ginukh, Abkhaz, Adyghe, *c'>č* in Lak, *h'>h* in Chamala, cf. also *k'>g* in Ossetic, and *p'>b* in Kudar Ossetic), palatalization (cf. *š'>s* in Abzhawa Abkhaz, *č'>t'*, *s* in Abaza), labialization (*t'>t'*, *d'>d*, *q'>k'*, *k'>t'* in Abkhaz, *k'>k'* in Abkhaz, Adyghe, Circass. d-t of Kabardian, *k'>k* in Avar, *ɣ'>ɣ* in Tsez, *x'>x* in Chamala, *č'>č* in Tabassaran, *ɣ'>g+u*, *g'>g+o* in Adyghe, *d'>d+u* in Chamala) pharyngealization (*x>x* in Bzyp Abkhaz); affricates and spirants tend to be replaced by stops (*č'>t'* in Abaza, Chamala, *c'>t* in Adyghe, *č't* in Chamala, *z>d* in Iron Ossetic, *w>t'* in Abkhaz, *ɣ'>g'* in Adyghe, *v>b*, *p*, *š'>t'* in Kabardian, *z>ʔ* in Akkin Chechen, *x>g*, *kk* in Ossetic).

One of the commonest rules is the substitution of /r/ by zero, or some other

\*Letter e stands for the voiced laryngal similar to the Arabic 'ain.

sound, usually by l, j, or t. Obstruent laterals, common in many North Caucasian languages, are replaced by sonorant laterals (mostly in Daghestanian) or obstruent dental stops, cf. λ>t in Bezhta, Tsez, Ginuch, λ'>t' in Bezhta, Tsez, λ'>t in Ginukh, λ'>l in Avar, λ>l in Ginukh, λ>t in Adyghe, λ>n in Karata, λ>l in Ginukh, cf. also λ'>? in Bezhta.

As far as vowels are concerned, diphthongs are often substituted by monophthongs (ī>i in Ginukh, ju>i, jo>u in Tsez, cf. also iw>ü in Karachay, aj>e in Armenian), long vowels shorten (ī>i in Archi, ē>a in Akkin Chechen, ā>a in Ginukh), or, vice versa, short vowels may become long, to make the words sound more emphatic (cf. Abkhaz, Ashkhar). Complex vowels tend to lose some of their features, such as nasalization (cf. õ>o, ā>o, ī>i, ū>u in Bezhta), pharyngealization (e>e, i>i, a>a, o>o in Tsez), palatalization (cf. õ>o in Karachay, ū>u in Kumyk), labialization (u>ð in Lezghi, u>i in Megrel, ū>i in Bezhta), etc. The symbolic function of substitution conditions such transformations, as front vowels replacing the back or middle ones, cf. ə>i in Abkhaz, Adyghe, Akkin Chechen, Noghay, a>e in Ashkhar, Ginukh, u>i in Tsez, Megrel, a>ā, u>ü in Tsez, non-labialized vowels becoming labialised, cf. ə>u in Besleny Kabardian, i>o in Archi, ā>o in Tsez. The most popular vocalic substitution is the change [-a]>[+a], which reflects both the tendency to the openness, maximal sonority of the syllable, and the "basic" character of the vowel a either for the speech of the children or for the vocalic systems in most languages of the world (see also below).

d. Assimilation. This phenomenon may be regarded as a kind of substitution, its essence being a tendency for consonantal or/and vowel harmony, for the material symmetry of both syllables of the structure CVCV. Apart from the purely simplificational functions, this process may also reflect the tendency for reducing the number of relevant phonetic contrasts used in the adults' speech. E.g.: Kab. **ħa-p'āc'a** "insects" > c'āc'a, Adyghe **bəʒə** "breast" > bəbə, Dargwa **k'imi** > **mimi** "penis pueri", Svan **č'išx** "foot" > č'ič'il, Laz **k'ibi(r)i** "teeth" > k'ik'i(i), cf. also Osset.(Digor) **šɜʒæ** "podex" > **ʒɜʒæ**, (Kudar) **ʒiʒa** > **ʒiʒa** "meat", Karach. **čopaj** "penis" > **čočaj** "penis pueri".

e. Metathesis aims at making the word more easily articulated; sometimes it serves to mark the shifted character of the SBL text. As a matter of fact, this same device in other jargons is usually used to make the speech incomprehensible to outsiders, cf. thieves' jargon, and its Abkhaz variety as the so-called **a-c'ās bəzš'a** "bird language"; the latter was used also in some Abkhaz families to exchange information which should not be understood by outsiders, e.g., by the guests. Children can also use this device for the purpose play. Cf. Ashkhar SBL **məħa** < **ləmħa** "ear", **ʒətaskəma** < **ʒəg'staqəm** "I don't want it", Tsaxur **l'ayi** < **jaləy** "handkerchief", Agul **biʒin** < **ʒibin** "pocket".

3. Expressive character and symbolic value of SBL. As was mentioned above, substitution may have not only purely pragmatic aims, i.e., to replace difficult sounds by more easily articulated ones, but also a symbolic value too — to give

the SBL words diminutive colouring in concordance with the dimensions of infants' speech.

One such symbolic modification is palatalization of consonants, which can take place even in those idioms that do not have any phonemic correlation of this kind. As S. Kodzasov has noted, symbolic palatalization usually involves only dentals, not affecting labials or velars, cf. Russian **дядя, тетя, няня, ляля** vs. **папа, мама, баба, рара, кака** /Kodzasov 1975, 70/; the apparent exception in Russian is **паца** "good, pretty", usually with unsoftened affricate, obviously due to the lack of palatalized c' among the phonemes, but it may also be pronounced with palatalized c' in the affected individual speech, just to create the diminutive shape of the word. A process symmetrical to palatalization is the use of high front vowels, especially /i/, which is known even in languages lacking i as a phoneme, cf. Abkhazo-Adyghean languages where the presence of i gives the words diminutive colouring, cf. Abkh. c'is // c'ijs "birdy" vs. neutral a-c'ās "bird", **т́pas** vs. neutral a-**t́pas** "puppy". Vowel a can also bear the symbolic connotation of diminutiveness, or affection, as is seen, for instance, in Abkhaz and the Ashkhar dialect (cf. Abkh. vocative **s-ab-a** "(my) daddy!" vs. neutral **s-ab** !, **k'aʒ'-a** affected vocative for a male child, from SBL **a-k'aʒ'** < **a-q'aʒ'** "penis", Abkh., Ashkh. **Zurab-a** — vocative with affection-colouring to the male-child with the name **Zurab**), or in Georgian (**aču-a** "little horse", from the interjectional **aču!** used for driving on a horse, **ba(i)-a** "baby", from **bašw-i** "child", cf. also adult **bič'-un-a** "little boy", from **bič'-i** "boy"), etc. I came across a symbolic change [-a]>[+a] while recording an Abkhaz folklore text: my informant, an old man, citing the first words uttered by the new-born hero, Nart Sasraq'a, said **amla sak'at'** instead of **amla sak'əjt'** "I am hungry", the substitution əj>a was obviously used to express the infantile character of the child's speech. Specifically, long vowel **aa** marks the SBL words in Abkhaz and Ashkhar (cf. Abkh. **taatí** "good(ly), pretty", **baabí** "hot !", **naaní** "(to) sleep !", **maamí** "bad, dirty, disgusting !",\* **bəkaa** "(to) fall !"), while in other languages the same role can be assigned to the labialized vowels, as occurs in Kabardian, Archi, Bezhta; in non-Caucasian idioms it can take place in the SBL of such languages as English (**mom** vs. **mama**), Latvian, Tatar, Berber, Nivkh.

While analyzing SBL we come across a very interesting phenomenon: in one and the same language we can meet substitutions, which are contradictory to each other — strengthening (in one set of words) and, at the same time, weakening (in other words) of consonants, shortening of long vowels and lengthening of the short ones, labialization of non-labialized vowels and, on the other hand, substitution of labialized vowels by non-labialized, etc. For example, in Circassian we have /ħ/ changing to /χ/ (cp. **ħa** > SBL **χa** "dog"), which may be understood as the tendency to replace back phonotypes by front ones (see 1. c above). But in other words with the same /ħ/ this latter remains unchanged. In Adyghean, on the contrary, /χ/ in the adult form **dāχa** "beautiful" in SBL changes to /ħ/: **dāħa**, and in

\*Note also the use of i which does not have a phonemic status in Abkhaz.

Kabardian in the same word velar spirant /χ/ becomes /š/, hence SBL *dāša*. There may be several explanations of this fact. First, we may explain such contradictory data by the interplay of the pragmatic (as in the first mentioned example with *ha* "dog") and symbolic (as in the example with *dāxa* "beautiful") functions of substitution, when the mere act of substitution can be of semiotical significance. Still one more explanation for some of these cases may lay in the non-strictness of the derivational processes involved, i.e. in their optional character.

Another general feature of SBL is that it acquires phonemes (or, it is better to say, phonotypes), rare or alien to the given language, which serves to encrease the markedness of the SBL text. It is interesting to note that SBL has its own phonetic variants, depending on the age of the children. Thus, when SBL is used in communicating with older children (about 3-4 years), it loses some of its phonetic characteristics and becomes nearer to the speech of adults; cf. Adyghe *k'āk'a* "egg" for younger children and its variant *qāqa* for the older ones, the adult form being *č'ānc'a* (Proto-Circass. \**k'ank'a* /Kuipers 1975, 52/); SBL *kakāk* "hen", *qaqāq* for the older children (cp. adult *qaqa-n* "to cackle"), and *č'arā* being the adult form; Abaza SBL *takām* "I don't want it", *itasqāma* for the older children and *jog'staqām* the adult form; Chechen (Akkin) *nam* "food" for the youngest, *na'am* for the older ones, and *ja'hama* for adults, *pipi* "sweets, goodies" for the youngest, *pepet* for the older, and *kempet* (<Russ. *конфета*, its colloquial phonetic variant being [*камфета*]) for adults, *pisu* "cat" for the youngest, *pišu* for the older (<adult *pišu-pišu* "call for cats"), and adult form *cicig*; Dargwa *mimi* "penis" when speaking with smaller children, *k'imi* with the older, the adult word being *duna*; same in Abkhaz SBL: *a-k'až'*, *a-k'umaž'* "penis", used when talking with small children, and *a-q'až'* — with the older, the adult word being *a-γō*; Tabass. *bā?* "there isn't" for the smaller, and *va?* for the older children and for the adults; cf. also in Ossetic (Iron): *didi* "bosom" for the youngest, and *ziz* // *ziži* for the older, (Kudar) *žiža* "meat" for the youngest, *žiža* for the older, *žiža*, or *fād* for adults. Of interest are also cases of lexical suppletion, as can be seen, for instance, in SBL of (Turcic) Noghay: *jataa-jataa* "(go) to sleep!" when addressing the smaller children vs. *oxajde* "id", this time addressing children of the age of 5 years, which is derived from the adult form *əxlaj-de* "he sleeps", from the verb *ūxlaw* "to sleep".

As far as the phonetics of SBL words are concerned, we may conclude that lexemes which are neutral from the semantic point of view (e.g. "head", "hand", "food", etc.) usually contain central phonemes, while items with more expressive meaning often include more peripheral phonotypes — postvelars, emphatics, glottalized, clicks. Thus, use of emphasized or emphatic laryngeals (plus vowels like *o*, or *u*) helps to create the symbolic image of a menacing object — e.g. Circassian dialect of Kab. *bā°ə*, Kab. *ħuħu/ħ°*, Adyghe. *bħəw* "wolf", Chechen *beabi*, *bəu*, Avar *boəo*, Karat., Bezhta *ħo*, Lezghi *bee°* "bogyman", Chamal. *əū*, Tsaxur *bə?* "bear, bogyman, monster", etc. Use of peripheral phonotypes may also be conditioned by the tendency to imitate the natural sounds which accompany a particular action, cf. usual use of dental clicks, or, as their functional counterparts, glottalized stops, for rendering such notions as "water / drink!" (Tabass. *nΔah*

"water / to drink / milk", Svan *nΔa-īl*, Avar *f'ah*, Lezghi *t'eh*, Archi *p'ah* "water", Abkh. *aži-me'k'a* "id", where first element is adult *a-žə* "water"). The same phonotypes are used to render the notion of a kiss or kissing (Lezghi *pΔ'a<sup>h</sup>* (*a*)*ja* // *t'ā<sup>h</sup>* *ja* "kiss", Megrel *pΔač'i*, Svan *p'ač'-il* "kiss", cf. also Avar *baj*, Karat. *oba* (*ga*), Chech. *oba* (*āla*), Abkh. *baa*, Kab. *ba*, Adyghe. (*a*)*baa*, Megr. *ba* "id", where *b* substitutes the bilabial clicks). Combinations of clicks or stops with laryngeals often express admiration or designate such notions as "sweet", "delicious (of food)", etc. cf. Abaza *Δ-h-h-h* "how sweet!", Askhar *ah* "sweet", Kab. *ʔ<sup>h</sup>h-ʔ<sup>h</sup>h*, (Circass. *d-t*) *nΔ-h-h-h*, Adyghe *mΔ(a)h*, *mΔ-ʔah* "sweet, delicious", Avar *maħu* "meet", *daħa-w* "beautiful (of a small boy)", etc. By the way, comparing Common Circassian *dāxa* "beautiful" with SBL words with the same meaning in different languages (cf., for instance, above-mentioned Avar *daħa*, or Arab *dahħ*, both derived from the interjections expressing admiration), we may propose the same origin for the Circassian word.

4. SBL phonemic inventory and its relation to the adult phonemic system. Correlation of this kind may be regarded as the relation of part to whole. SBL phonemic inventory is usually twice as small in number (if we regard the languages with complicated phonological systems) than the corresponding adult systems. This is true for such idioms as Avar, Karata, Archi, Tabassaran, Abkhaz, etc. For example, in Archi only 31 consonants out of 70 (in the adult system), and 8 vowels out of 11 remain in its SBL form (cf. Kibrik, Kodzasov et al., 1977, 213, 224), losing all obstruent laterals and labialized consonants and reducing the number of postvelars (8 of 15 of the latter remain in SBL) and glottalics (6 out of 15 remain). Generalizing the results obtained, we may conclude that normally SBL consonantal inventories lack such phonotypes, as postvelars (or, more definitely, postuvulars), labialized, emphatics, pharyngealized, interdental, alveolopalatals ("hissing-hushing"), obstruent laterals, nasalized, retroflex and other consonants with complex nature or with more or less sophisticated articulation. SBL vowel systems usually do not include nasalized, pharyngealized and diphthongs. Comparing consonantal systems of SBLs of different languages of the world, we may propose the following standard SBL consonantal inventory, consisting of 9 (+ 1) phonotypes, namely:

b	d	g
p	t	k
m	n	(j)
l		

These basic 9 (+ 1) phonotypes are obviously those which normally form the centre of any human language's consonantal system. This sound-set is actually very close to the systems notorious for their minimal number of consonantal segments, cf. 10 consonants in Andoa (Northern Peru), and in Cherokee



(North-Western California), 9 consonants in Gadsup (New Guinea) and as few as 8 consonants in Mura (Western Brazil) /Brackel 1983/. The same consonants can be found in the system singled out by Trubetzkoy for a supposed international language because of their universal character /Trubetzkoy 1939/. Putting any of the above-mentioned consonants in the canonical SBL structure, we actually get typical SBL words present with one or another meaning in almost any language: *baba, papa, mama, dada, tata, nana, lala, gaga, kaka, jaja* (the latter occurring much rarer). It is noteworthy that there exists a kind of hierarchical correlation even among these basic consonantal phonotypes, the general rule being — the more front the consonant is, the less marked it is. Thus, taking into account the fact, that both in SBL and in the speech of small children velars are substituted by dentals, we may conclude that velars are less central phonotypes than dentals and bilabials. Outside this basic chart, sibilants are more marked than stops, as they often tend to be substituted by the latter both in SBL and in the speech of the infants themselves. Within the group of sibilants, then, affricates, as it seems, might be regarded as more marked than spirants — these often replace affricates in SBL (unless presence of an affricate like *č*, for example, stylistically mark the SBL text, as it is in Spanish, Latvian, Marathi, Kannada, Japan, Apinaye) and, more regularly, in the speech of small children.

Parallel to the simplification of consonantism we observe similar transformations in vocalic systems during the derivation of SBL. The general rule here, also, is the qualitative and quantitative simplification of the vocalic inventory of the given language, the main tendency being to reach the canonical structure CaCa. As far as the idioms with rich vocalic systems are concerned, the number of vowels in SBL is half that of the adult form, cf. 18 segmental vowels in Chechen and Svan against the 10 vowels in their SBLs. In case of moderate vocalic systems, consisting of 5-6 phonemes, all these are normally preserved in SBL. And, finally, in case of the languages with minimal vocalic systems, the number of vowels in SBL exceeds that of the adult system, which is observable, for instance, in the Abkhazo-Adyghean languages, the major process here being the transposition of the timbre modifications of the complex (labialized and palatalized) consonants to the original vowels *a, ə, ā* (the latter one only in Circassian and Ubykh), neutral in relation to their timbre characteristics, resulting in transformation of the elementary "vertical" vowel system to the more "normal" one with four or five members. Cf. Abkh. *a-gʷə > a-gu* "heart", Adyghe *gʷəgʷa > gogo* "bird", etc. Here, too, we come across the phonosymbolic use of different vowels. Thus, *a* is normally assigned to words with neutral meaning (names of relatives, words for food, etc), while in the designations of some menacing objects (like wolf or bogymen) we often find *o* and *u*; similarly, *e* and *i* are often found in diminutives, designations of the young of animals or birds, etc. As in the case of consonants, in SBL we can come across the use of vowels rare, or alien to the given language, as is seen in Abkhazo-Adyghean languages. Yet, despite these examples of some exaggeration of phonosemantic tendencies over the pragmatic ones when deriving SBL, the general tendency remains the simplification of articulation, elimination of timbre characteristics (pharyngealization, nasalization, labialization, palatalization,

etc), substitution of peripheral sounds by basic ones.

5. *Diachronic aspect.* Projecting the phonological features of SBL into a linguistic retrospective, we may suppose that the singling out of the centre and periphery of the phonemic system in ontogenesis (in generation of SBL) might probably reflect the original dichotomy of such systems in phylogenesis. But investigation of SBL can provide some interesting facts also from the point of view of more recent times. Thus, of interest are some cases when the phonetic shape of an SBL word coincides not with that of its adult form, but with the form of this word in another dialect. R. Austerlitz cites the Nivkh SBL, where there is a word *moq* "bear", which differs from the standard form *cxyf*, but is similar to the designation of bear in another dialect of Nivkh, which is *maqʷ* /Austerlitz 1956, 267/. One can come across the same phenomenon also in the Caucasian languages. For instance, in the Circassian dialect of Kabardian the SBL word for "dress" is *bocej*, which is different from the adult form of this lexeme — *boχʷcej*, and from the Literary Kabardian (*bostej*), but is similar to the form *bocej* in the Terek dialect of this language. Georgian SBL *k'ai < k'argi* "good" coincides with the form of this word in the language of Georgians living around Sochi.

The sound change which takes place during derivation of SBL often repeats analogous alterations in the sister language(s) or dialect(s). Thus, the substitution of the hissing-hushing sibilants by their hissing (and sometimes hushing) counterparts in the SBL of the West Caucasian languages correlates with the same (diachronic) change in the dialects and sub-dialects of these languages. The substitution of glottalized uvular *q'* by glottal stop (?) in the negation suffix *-q'am* in SBL of Kabardian, as B. Bgzhnokov notes, has already become or is becoming a norm in the adult speech, especially in central and eastern Kabarda /Bgzhnokov 1984, 157/. Delabialization of dentals in the SBL of Abkhaz parallels the same diachronic process in the Askhar dialect and in the speech of the Batum Abkhazians, cf. Abkh. SBL *u-t'a < wə-t'a* "you (hum. male) sit down" and Askhar, Batum adult form *u-t'a*. The change of lateral affricates *ʎ, ʎ'* by stops *t, t'* in the SBL of a number of Daghestanian languages finds its parallel in the Antsux dialect of Avar. Sometimes in SBL we can observe in a way a restoration (or conservation) of some features characteristic of more archaic stages in the given language. From this point of view we may point to the vocalism of the SBL of the Abkhazo-Adyghean languages which might be regarded in general as a restoration of the vocalic system of the early Proto-West Caucasian: the timbre characteristics are assigned not to the consonants (as now) but to the vowels, resulting, from the typological point of view, in a normal vocalic system (5-6 phonemes vs. present binary vocalism) and, consequently, in a considerably reduced consonant inventory (cp. 67 segmental phonemes in present-day Bzyp Abkhaz and 80 consonants in Ubykh).

One of the most interesting results of this study is, as it seems to me, the revelation of the fact that adults, while communicating with small children, intuitively judge the stratificational layers of their own language's phonemic

system and, according to this (mostly subconscious) estimate, single out its centre and periphery, thus assigning to the centre the most simple, basic phonemes, which constitute the core of their phonemic systems, and to the periphery — the more complex (e.g., labialized, palatalized, pharyngealized), or marginal (hissing-hushing, laryngeals) phonotypes. As a result of this estimate, the general rule in the generation of SBL out of the standard form of the language is the substitution of the peripheral (and more marked) phonotypes by the central (and less marked) ones; it is noteworthy that the very process of substitution becomes semiotically marked thus signalling the shift from the standard form of speech to its deviant variety. The basic SBL phonemic system, common to most languages, is in effect congruent with the phonemic minimum as attested in the languages of the world.

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