Loan verb typology and Georgian-English language contact

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Based on the typology of verbal borrowings by Wohlgemuth [Woh09] and on the spoken Georgian data coming from various social networks, blogs, discussion forums as well as printed media of the last decade, we overview the ways English items are accommodated in Georgian.

Literature on verb borrowing knows several strategies of loan verb accommodation [Woh09]: direct insertion, indirect insertion, light verb strategy and paradigm insertion. Direct insertion means adapting a form from the donor language into the recipient language without any morphological modification (1a), while indirect insertion implies such a modification tool, usually a verbalizer (1b). Light verb strategy is the use of a native inflected light verb in combination with a borrowed item (1c). Paradigm insertion is a rare case of borrowing of an entire paradigm, like finite verbal paradigm borrowing from Russian in the mixed language Mednyi Aleut [Tho97].

We identify a special accommodation technique for English items as the root of Georgian synthetic verbs, namely, the Georgian preverb *da-*. Apart from widely used forms (2), (3), there are individual uses of all kinds of English material as a root, depending on the creativity of the utterer. For instance, in figurative speech, in marked contexts even English phrases can serve as roots (4a), (4b).

It seems that the preverb *da-* does not fit neatly into the typology of accommodation types above. It cannot be considered as an indirect strategy, since it does not match the cases that define this category in [Woh09]: *da-* is neither a verbalizer (its function is not to accommodate a borrowed verb into a verb of the recipient language), nor a factitive/causative, nor is it special for loan verbs only since it can be used with native ones too. Neither it is a direct insertion, as loans do not get directly inserted in the native Georgian verb frame with just any preverb but require the use of a special one, the preverb *da-*. By default, it can be neither a light verb strategy nor a paradigm insertion.

By form, Georgian preverbs are of two types, simple and complex. The latter is formed via adding the element *mo-* to the former, to refer to the speaker-oriented movement. This particular preverb *da-* is different from any other simple preverb by lacking its complex counterpart (*damo-*) in Modern Georgian [Sha73] and by being more grammaticalized, that is by having acquired an extra grammatical function of expressing distributivity. The use of *da-* in loans could be argued to illustrate a further extension of its grammatical function to a loan verb marker.

(1)　a.　German, [Woh09, p. 88]

download-en
(Eng.)download-INF

‘to download’

　　b.　Modern Greek, [Woh09, p. 96]

tsek-ar-i
(Eng.)check-VBLZ-3SG

‘(It) checks.’

　　c.　Korlai Portuguese, [CL15, p. 237]

tray　　hedze
(Eng.)try do

‘try, give a try.’

(2)　Georgian, http://forum.tsu.ge/lofiversion/index.php?t9774.html

da-m-serč-e.
PV-O1.SG-search-TAM

‘You made an online search on me.’

(3)　Georgian, about a movie, from a private conversation

ert-i-or-i　　　siṭqv-it　　moqevi… ḳi　ar　da-a-spoil-o.
one-NOM-two-NOM word-INST you.tell.it　PART not PV-PRV-spoil-TAM

‘Tell in a word or two… don’t spoil it.’

(4)　Georgian

　　a.　https://forum.ge/?showtopic=33957881&view=findpost&p=13547826

da-v-sit+daun-d-e-t.　　　　　　　(Ironic)
PV-S1.SG-sit+down-INTR-TAM-PL

‘Let’s sit down.’

　　b.　http://forum.ge/?showtopic=33558967&view=findpost&p=163204

rame   eget-s   tu naxav   xolme,
something like.that-DAT if you.will.see PART
da-gv-i-posṭ+linḳ-e. (Individual use)
PV-o1.PL-PRV-post+link-TAM

'If you see something like that, post the link.'

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