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DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND ECOLINGUISTICS ON THE EXAMPLE OF LAZ AND MEGRELIAN**Mashia Nino***Doctor of Philology, Professor
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Abstract. Studying the lexical fund of a language, its composition, functioning and changeability are directly related to the development of a nation. The unwritten Kartvelian languages are particularly interesting in this respect. There are a number of researches but a complete monograph, a vocabulary, a dictionary of the Megrelian-Laz agricultural terminology have not been compiled yet as a comprehensive work. It is especially noteworthy if we take the history and the location of Georgia and its relation to agriculture into consideration. According to our study, there are a lot of words having several meanings that are gradually losing their forms and are disappearing. Samegrelo is one of the most important regions of Georgia that has preserved a number of old linguistic peculiarities that have disappeared in other Kartvelian languages. As for Laz, it is really unique. The people who speak this language live in Georgia's neighboring country but still manage to maintain it (unfortunately older people).

Digital humanitarianism represents a joint resource of humanitarian sciences and informatics, a modern field of science, using digital resources and computer technologies to proceed with scientific research and this is a challenge. Why Lazi and Megrelian? Here too we have a visualization – distribution range of Megrelian is bigger than that of Lazi, which is even reducing with years; What is the determining factor of “existence” of these two languages without writing over so many centuries and why do they face a danger now, this is the significant aspect of the study. Digital literature is well tested in the modern world and is known under the title of digital humanities, its origin was conditioned by use of technologies during the ongoing research process within the humanitarian sciences, its final result (in our case), will give us a possibility to automatize, by placing Lazi and Megrelian into one space thus opening a new perspective for linguistics.

Key words: Laz, Megrelian, Vocabulary, Agricultural, Dictionary, Digital humanitarian

The pandemic posed significant challenges to the modern world, but even before that, given the modern state of science, the development of digital technology, it became clear that it would appear in all fields, humanitarian sciences were no exception. Therefore, archiving, digitalizing of disappearing (endangered) languages, dialects, their placement into one space based on researches and their results, is one of the most important and necessary tasks. In this regard, we have a special diversity in Georgia in the form of Kartvelian languages, over years Megrelian and Laz were the subject of our studies; the range of distribution of these languages used to change over years, gradually diminishing, and considering the scientific researches of UNESCO and others, their eco-linguistic analysis would be important, interesting and relevant within the Georgian scientific space; It is “**Eco-Linguistics**” (ecology of languages – a direction in sociolinguistics) which studies conditions of existence of languages from the perspective of existing and potential dangers for its functioning in societies (The term was first used by the American scientist Einar Ingvald Haugen. Haugen has determined *ecology of language* as “studying interaction between a given language and its environment”. The same is the meaning of the term **Linguo-**

ecology.) Studying of the lexicological fund of a language, its composition, functioning, changes, are directly related to development processes of nation, Kartvelian languages without writing are of a particular interest from this point of view; Though there exist numerous researches, none were yet made in eco-linguistic perspective, with digital attributes, complete monography, dictionary, particularly about Megrelian-Laz. Considering the history of Georgia, its location and relations with Kartvelian languages – Megrelian and Laz - in general, according to our preliminary studies there exist lots of words, having multiple meanings, but they are gradually losing the form and disappear. Samegrelo is an important region of Georgia, which until now preserved alive number of old linguistic specificities, which had already vanished in other Kartvelian languages; As for Laz, it is indeed unique, carriers of this language live in another country, neighbouring with Georgia, however, they still retain this language; Unfortunately, the age of speakers of this language is growing, while young people understand but can not speak it. The present project aims to describe the state of Kartvelian languages – Megrelian and Laz – both in Georgia, as well as in the neighbouring Republic, on the territory of Turkey, where the Laz people live, establishment of their level of language skills is important. The elaboration of this problem will help to collect the latest data, identify the problems, that require immediate solution in order to stop the disappearance of this unique language and to fix its real state under different conditions.

Clearly, any era is marked by new achievements in the field of human consciousness and existence, news of human development; Our epoch, everyday life, is saturated with attributes characteristic of the digital world, there is no field of science that has not been digitized, or is not being digitalized, but there is scarcity in relation to humanitarian fields (despite number of digital libraries, field related web pages), this is why we think that **corpuslinguistics**, a field which had emerged on the merger of linguistics and informatics, and is well tested abroad, as interdisciplinary field, could be important and serve the purpose of further popularization (survival) of Kartvelian languages.

The Georgian scientific space shall be adequate to time, thus several problems do emerge, which require use of developed computer technologies for their solution, and which is expressed in the form of a Digital Humanities; visualization of linguistic issues, problematics, unique publications and archive editions, use of electronic libraries, archive material, unique publications – all what is well known to the world scientific space under the name of digital humanities, will be presented in the Georgian scientific space for the purpose of maintenance/survival of the Kartvelian languages – Megrelian and Laz.

Therefore, digital humanitarium represents a joint resource of humanitarian sciences and informatics, a modern field of science, using digital resources and computer technologies to proceed with scientific research and this is a challenge. Why Laz and Megrelian? Here too we have a visualization – distribution range of Megrelian is bigger than that of Laz, which is even reducing with years; What is the determining factor of “existence” of these two languages without writing over so many centuries and why do they face a danger now, this is the significant aspect of the study. Digital literature is well tested in the modern world and is known under the

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Studying the lexical fund of a language, its composition, functioning and changeability are directly related to the development of a nation. The unwritten Kartvelian languages are particularly interesting in this respect. There are a number of researches but a complete monograph, a vocabulary, a dictionary of the Megrelian-Laz agricultural terminology have not been compiled yet as a comprehensive work. It is especially noteworthy if we take the history and the location of Georgia and its relation to agriculture into consideration. According to our study, there are a lot of words having several meanings that are gradually losing their forms and are disappearing. Samegrelo is one of the most important regions of Georgia that has preserved a number of old linguistic peculiarities that have disappeared in other Kartvelian languages. As for Laz, it is really unique. The people who speak this language live in Georgia's neighboring country but still manage to maintain it (unfortunately older people). Thus, as agriculture has been the most developed field in Georgia and an inseparable part of the country's history, consciousness and cultural heritage since the ancient times, it is not surprising that the agricultural vocabulary is diverse.

In the special scientific literature it is almost unanimously recognized that the Kartvelian tribes have been inhabited on the land of Georgia since the time immemorial. This is a place where pre-Kartvelian ethnos formed and the long and complicated process of the social-economic and cultural development of the Kartvelian tribes was going on for thousands of years. The agricultural and cultural ties with neighboring countries were strengthened which was reflected in both the language and material culture.

Almost all of the serious scientific works go beyond the framework of a concrete field, this is especially true in linguistics, because verbal communication, lexics, toponyms well reflect historical, geographic, ethnological or other characteristics of a nation.

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