❑ Timur MAISAK[1]

# THE UDI LANGUAGE: ITS HISTORY AND MODERN DEVELOPMENT

## UDİ DİLİ: TARİHİ VE MODERN GELİŞİMİ

**Abstract**: The paper presents an overview of Udi, a Nakh-Daghestanian language of the Lezgic branch and an indigenous language of Azerbaijan. After a general introduction about the Udi people and their language, I focus on the history of the study of Udi and Caucasian Albanian, on the development of modern writing systems for Udi, as well as the existing publications and media in Udi. The paper then continues with brief linguistic characteristics of Udi against the backdrop of genealogical and areal features.

**Keywords:** Udi, Nakh-Daghestanian, Caucasian Albanian, language history, language contact, writing systems

**Öz**: Makalede Lezgi koluna bağlı bir Nah-Dağıstan dili ve Azerbaycan'ın yerli dili olan Udi diline genel bir bakış sunulmaktadır. Udi halkı ve dili hakkında genel bir giriş yapıldıktan sonra, Udi dili ve Kafkas Albancası ile ilgili çalışmaların tarihine, Udi dili için modern yazı sistemlerinin gelişimine ve Udi dilinde mevcut yayınlara ve medyaya odaklanılmaktadır. Makale daha sonra, Udi dilinin soyağacı ve bölgesel arka planında kısa dilbilimsel özelliklerin sunumuyla devam etmektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler**: Udi dili, Nah-Dağıstan, Kafkas Albancası, dil tarihi, dil teması, yazı sistemleri

## 1. Introduction: The Udi People and Their Language

Udi belongs to the Lezgic branch of the Nakh-Daghestanian (a.k.a. East Caucasian) family. The native name of the language is *udin muz* 'Udi language', where the first word is the genitive case of the noun *udi* /u'di/ 'an Udi'. The speakers refer to themselves in the plural as *udijoχ* 'the Udis'. Although historically the language was spoken over a broader territory of what is now Northern Azerbaijan, by the twentieth century there were only two large Udi-speaking settlements left. One is the town of Vartashen (now called Oğuz, capital of the present-day District of Oğuz) and the other is the relatively large village of Nizh (*Nic*, located in the present-day District of Qəbələ). In the early 1920s, a small Udi village of Zinobiani (known as Oktomberi in Soviet times) was founded in the District of Kvareli in Georgia by a group of settlers originally from Vartashen, led by Zinovy Silikov. The end of the twentieth century saw a massive outflow of Udis from Azerbaijan, especially from Vartashen, where currently only a few families remain. The largest Udi-speaking settlement today is Nizh with ca. 3,500 Udis living there alongside the Azerbaijanis and the Lezgians. There are about 200–300 Udis in Zinobiani. Several thousands of Udis live in Russia, mainly in the south, more specifically in the Krasnodar Krai, the Rostov Oblast and the Stavropol Krai. There are also Udi diasporas in Ukraine, Armenia, Kazakhstan and other post-Soviet states. The total number of Udis can be estimated at 8,000 to 10,000, not all of whom are fluent speakers of the language.[2]

---

[1] Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia; Linguistic Convergence Laboratory, HSE University, Moscow, Russia. ORCID: 0000-0001-6794-0978

[2] According to the official figures, there were 3,800 Udis in Azerbaijan in 2009 (Statistical Committee 2009) and 4,267 Udis in Russia in 2010, including 2,266 speakers of the language (Perepis´ 2010). In

There are two dialectal varieties of Udi: Nizh Udi and Vartashen Udi, with the latter including the Zinobiani subdialect. The differences between the dialects present themselves especially in the morphology and the vocabulary, but on the whole do not impede mutual intelligibility. While the Nizh dialect has been (and still is) heavily influenced by Azerbaijani, the Vartashen dialect is usually reported to have been more exposed to the Armenian influence. Thus, a common subordinating enclitic *ki*, which is an Iranian loan in Azerbaijani, is very common in the Nizh dialect and corresponds to the Armenian loan *te* in the Vartashen dialect (see also Section 6). The Zinobiani variety has been under a heavy influence of Georgian. The Nizh dialect is not totally homogeneous, showing certain lexical differences between the upper and lower quarters of the village, like the use of *dirij* for 'vegetable garden' in the upper quarters, and *tärväz* in the lower ones, see also Gukasjan (1963: 79). The reason for this variation probably lies in the fact that in the previous centuries, Nizh became home to Udi refugees from other villages.

Udis in Azerbaijan have always lived in a multilingual environment. According to Gukasjan (1972), the community has been multilingual for centuries, with Udi–Armenian–Azerbaijani trilingualism gradually transformed during the twentieth century first into Udi–Azerbaijani bilingualism and then into Udi–Azerbaijani–Russian trilingualism. The language of school instruction in Nizh was Armenian only prior to 1938, then Azerbaijani only until 1951 when two Russian-language schools opened. Before the Soviet times, Armenian used to be the language of religious ceremonies as many Udis once belonged to the Armenian Apostolic Church.

In  the late Soviet period, knowledge of Azerbaijani among Udis in Azerbaijan was not as extensive as that of Russian. Thus, according to the 1989 census of the USSR, among the 6,125 Udis living in Azerbaijan, 91.8% were proficient in Udi, 54.5% in Russian, and 34.4% in Azerbaijani (either as a first or as a second language (see Perepis′ 1989)). The influence of Azerbaijani increased starting from the 1990s when Azerbaijan became an independent state after the break-up of the Soviet Union and Azerbaijani was declared the country's sole official language. Since then, communication in Azerbaijani in official contexts has gradually become the preferred or even the only available option. Besides, the role of Azerbaijani in school teaching has also increased. According to the 2009 Azerbaijani census, 99.6% of Udis were proficient in Azerbaijani (the numbers for Udi and Russian were respectively 99.3% and 60.9% (see Statistical Committee 2009)).[3]

---

recent censuses, the numbers decreased with 3,450 Udis registered in Azerbaijan in 2019 (Statistika Komitəsi 2022a) and 2,551 Udis in Russia in 2020, including 1,860 speakers of the language (Perepis′ 2020). In Ukraine, among the 592 Udis only 342 indicated Udi as their mother tongue in 2001 (Perepis 2001). The number of Udis in Armenia is estimated to be around 200 by Schulze & Schulze (2016: 513). The actual number of Udis in Georgia can be estimated to be about 280 in Zinobiani, with possibly the same number elsewhere (Roman Lolua, pers. comm.).

[3] According to the more recent figures of the 2019 census, 99.8% of Udis claimed to be proficient in Udi, 76.5% in Azerbaijani and 82.2% in Russian (Statistika Komitəsi 2022b).

*A typical house in Nizh (Dabakari family). February, 2009.*

At present, Udi is a highly endangered language. Nevertheless, there may be no immediate danger of language loss for Udis living in Nizh where the Udi people are still the majority and mixed marriages are rare (see also Clifton et al. 2005). Since the late 1990s, Udi is taught in schools in Nizh, where children learn the Udi alphabet and read books in Udi. The Orayin Cultural Center[4] (*orayin* means 'water spring' in Udi) and the Albanian–Udi Christian Association[5] are active in Nizh and aim to preserve and promote the Udi culture and language. However, the situation is different in the communities found in Russia as there is a tendency for young children to start speaking Russian from an early age (in kindergartens or schools) with Udi restricted to home use at best. Attempts to introduce Udi lessons for young schoolchildren on Sundays have been undertaken in Shakhty, Rostov Oblast, since late 2019.

## 2. The Study of Udi: Current State and Perspectives

Udi was one of the first Nakh-Daghestanian languages to be described in a book-length grammar, published by Schiefner (1863), who worked on Udi remotely by using materials sent to him from the Caucasus. Several grammar sketches of Udi, mostly in Russian, Georgian and German, were produced during the twentieth century, namely by Dirr (1903), Šeiranišvili (1971), Pančviʒe (1974), and Schulze (1982), the latter placing Udi in the wider context of the Lezgic languages. A shorter overview by Schulze-Fürhoff (1994) remains the only English-language grammar sketch of the language. A number of papers by the US linguist Alice Harris, as well as her influential book (Harris 2002), cover topics such as the grammatical status and the origin of endoclitics, the structure of simplex and complex verb stems and the history of locative prefixation, among others. Important twenty-first-century publications dealing with Udi also include a collected

---

[4] https://www.orayEL.com/ (Udi and Azerbaijani interface)

[5] https://udi.az/ (Russian interface)

volume by Alekseev et al. (2008) on various aspects of the language, and a dissertation by Lolua (2010) on the grammatical structure of the Zinobiani subdialect. A leading specialist in Udi for many decades, German linguist Wolfgang Schulze (1953–2020), had been working on a detailed *Functional grammar of Udi* which was sadly not published due to the author's passing. His important papers on various aspects of Udi history and grammar include Schulze (2005; 2011; 2015a; 2015b; 2016a; 2016b; 2016c), among many others.

In the 2000s, Zinobiani Udi was documented within the ECLinG project ("Endangered Caucasian Languages in Georgia") which focused on three languages: Svan, Batsbi and Udi.[6] The project team consisted of Jost Gippert, Manana Tandaschwili, Wolfgang Schulze and several participants from Georgia. Also in the early 2000s, a group of Moscow-based researchers (Dmitry Ganenkov, Yury Lander and the present author) started the project Udilang focusing on the grammatical description and documentation of Nizh Udi,[7] which resulted in a series of papers (see, e.g., Ganenkov 2015; Ganenkov et al. 2010; Lander 2011; 2014; Lander & Maisak 2021; Maisak 2015; 2017; 2018; 2019a; 2019b; 2020; 2021); as well as chapters in Alekseev et al. 2008).

An Udi–Azerbaijani–Russian dictionary by Gukasjan (1974) remains the only comprehensive Udi dictionary which comprises data from both dialects and includes about 6,000 entries. The dictionary was republished by Mobili (2010) with some additions but without reproducing the examples provided under the lexical entries in the previous edition. Fähnrich (1999) is a small Udi–German dictionary based on the author's fieldwork in Zinobiani carried out in 1967. Udi wordlists are appended to Schiefner (1863), Šeiranišvili (1971), Schulze (2001a), Lolua (2010), and Ruxadze & Lolua (2015).



*At the Orayin Cultural Center. Left to right: Yury Lander, Dmitry Ganenkov, Timur Maisak, Oleg Danakari, Mayis Kechaari, Valery Dallari, Sergey Shirvari. February, 2009*

The earliest available texts in Vartashen Udi can be found as appendices to grammatical sketches by Schiefner (1863) and Dirr (1903), with an additional collection of texts published later by Dirr (1928). The Four Gospels were translated in 1893 by a Vartashen priest named Semën

---

[6] http://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/ecling/ecling.htm (English, German and Georgian interface)

[7] http://udilang.narod.ru/ (Russian interface)

Bežanov and published in 1902; see also a later edition by Schulze (2001a). Texts in both Nizh and Vartashen dialects are appended to Šeiranišvili's grammar (1971), and parallel Nizh and Vartashen texts are also provided in an ABC book by Çejrani & Çejrani (1934). Short text collections in Nizh Udi were later published by Maisak (2005), Ganenkov et al. (2008) and Schulze (2009; 2012). Texts in Zinobiani Udi are available in Lolua (2010) and Ruxadze & Lolua (2015).[8]

### 3. Udi and Caucasian Albanian

The twentieth century brought an important discovery in the history of Udi: it was proven to be a descendant of Caucasian Albanian (or Aghwan), an extinct Nakh-Daghestanian language and the only language of the family with a written tradition going back to the fifth century CE. It was only in the 1930s that the Caucasian Albanian alphabet was rediscovered and deciphered by Georgian scholars (see Abuladze 1938; Šanidze 1938). In the 1940 and 1950s, during excavations carried out in the Mingechevir area, a few fragmentary inscriptions in the Caucasian Albanian alphabet were unearthed. In the 1990s, a lower Caucasian Albanian layer was identified in two palimpsests discovered in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai by another Georgian scholar, Zaza Aleksidze. The alphabet and the language of the palimpsests were analysed and published by Gippert et al. (2008), with a grammar sketch of the language written by Jost Gippert and Wolfgang Schulze. In the original manuscript, the Caucasian Albanian text is found on 242 pages and includes fragments of the Gospel of John and a lectionary, with various pieces from both the Old and New Testaments. According to the authors' estimate, the text was written in the period between the seventh and tenth centuries (see also Gippert & Schulze 2007 for discussion).

In the years following the first publication of the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests, the work with the manuscripts continued within the Sinai Palimpsests Project,[9] and new technologies made it possible to improve the reading of the text by approximately 30% (Jost Gippert, pers. comm.). Currently, a second updated edition of the palimpsests is being prepared. In addition, a comprehensive up-to-date compendium of topics related to Caucasian Albania, including its linguistic landscape, will be presented in an international handbook edited by Gippert & Dum-Tragut (2023).

Self-identification as descendants of Caucasian Albanians, an indigenous people of the area, is important to Udis and is often evoked in public discourse (see, in particular, Robert Mobili's papers/publications), although it has also been a source of controversies as one of sensitive issues of Azerbaijani history. The discovery of the Caucasian Albanian alphabet and Caucasian Albanian manuscripts also makes Udi unique within the Nakh-Daghestanian family as the only language whose ancestor had written attestation dating back to the first millennium CE. Unfortunately, not much is known about the history of the language between the decay of historical Caucasian Albania (with the Caucasian Albanian script falling into disuse) in the eighth century and the Modern Udi period.

### 4. The Modern Writing Systems of Udi

Udi has undergone a transformation from being a language with an ancient written tradition (in the Caucasian Albanian era) to becoming an unwritten language (roughly for a millennium) to reacquiring a written tradition. The exact date when Modern Udi became a written language cannot be identified as several attempts to write in Udi were undertaken during the nineteenth

---

[8] On the literature published since the 1990s in Udi by Udi authors, see Section 5 below.

[9] http://www.sinaipalimpsests.org/ (English and Greek interface)

and twentieth centuries.[10] A relatively stable practice of writing in Udi was established in Azerbaijan by the late 1990s or early 2000s. More than one writing system has notably been proposed (and used) for Udi, often based on different scripts, depending on the country and the time period.

The sound system of Udi is in some respects different from the phonological system of an "average" Lezgic language, and in some cases graphic representation had to be justified by non-trivial decisions. Thus, the vowel inventory is rich and, in addition to /i/, /e/, /a/, /u/, /o/, includes a central /ɨ/ and three front vowels /ü/, /ö/ and /ä/. Besides, Udi has the pharyngealised vowels /iˤ/, /eˤ/, /aˤ/, /uˤ/, /oˤ/, /ɨˤ/ which, regardless of being treated as separate phonemes, is found salient enough to be represented in writing. In the system of obstruents, there is a three-way contrast in occlusive stops/affricates which distinguish voiced, voiceless aspirated and voiceless non-aspirated phonemes (e.g. /d/ ~ /tʰ/ ~ /tː/)[11], while fricatives are differentiated as voiced vs. voiceless (e.g. /z/ ~ /s/). Velars have an additional contrast for palatalisation (e.g. /k/ ~ /kʲ/). Another peculiarity of Udi is the opposition between two series of hushing consonants, namely palatalised /ǯ/, /č/, /čː/, /ž/, /š/ and their retroflex counterparts; the retroflex series is sometimes analysed as resulting from pharyngealisation (and hence not representing a separate set of phonemes) but it still should be represented in writing.

It was only after the break-up of the Soviet Union, in the 1990s, when language activism of Georgi Kechaari (Jora Keçaari ) (1930–2006), a native of Nizh and one of the first modern Udi writers, poets and folklorists, resulted in the formal introduction of an Udi writing system and the publication of the first books in Udi. Together with his colleague Yuşka Aydınov, Kechaari suggested using a Cyrillic-based system identical to the one used in the Udi–Azerbaijani–Russian dictionary published by Gukasjan (1974), also a Nizh-born Udi scholar. Gukasjan's system resembles the Cyrillic alphabets used for Lezgian and other languages of Daghestan, where digraphs play a major role. In particular, digraphs representing the voiceless non-aspirated consonants bear the letter "palochka" (e.g. кӀ /kː/), digraphs for the front vowels carry a "soft sign" (e.g. аь /ä/), and digraphs for the pharyngealised vowels feature a "hard sign" (e.g. аъ /aˤ/). A special letter к was borrowed from the Cyrillic Azerbaijani alphabet for the palatalised /gʲ/ (see Table 1). Some years later, following the adoption of a Latin-based script for Azerbaijani – the official language of Azerbaijan, Kechaari changed the alphabet in favour of a Latin-based one. A number of letters were borrowed from the new Azerbaijani alphabet (e.g. ə /ä/, ç /č/ and ş /š/). At the same time, a few Cyrillic symbols remained in use (e.g. ц /c/ and ь /ɨ/). As an equivalent of the "palochka", the grapheme ı (which represents /ɯ/ in Azerbaijani) was introduced (see Table 2). Thus, the alphabet was a mixed Latin-Cyrillic one and maintained quite a few digraphs. In the 2000s, a radically modified version of the existing writing system was suggested by a group of Nizh teachers engaged in a Bible translation project. The author decided to abandon digraphs completely and instead to make extensive use of diacritics. For instance, pharyngealised vowels and the hushing consonants of the retroflex/pharyngealised series were marked with a "caron" (e.g. ӑ /aˤ/ or š /šˤ/). Some non-aspirated stops and affricates

---

[10] For example, as part of the Latinisation campaign in the Soviet Union (which took place during the 1920s–1930s), a primer by the Dzhejrani brothers, both native Udis, was published in 1934, where a Latin-based alphabet was suggested, with a number of highly idiosyncratic symbols from the "Japhetic" transcription employed in the then-dominating linguistic school of Nikolay Marr (see Çejrani & Çejrani 1934). See also Maisak (2008) for an overview of the Udi transcription systems and scripts.

[11] Thus, Udi does not possess ejectives, which are a hallmark not only of the Nakh-Daghestanian family but the whole Caucasian area. The realisation of non-aspiration can vary, though, and it seems that in Zinobiani non-aspirated consonants are closer to ejectives (or are in fact ejectives) than in the other varieties.

were rendered as digraphs with a straight apostrophe (e.g. t' /t:/), which became an equivalent of the "palochka". For some consonants lacking phonemic counterparts in Azerbaijani, idiosyncratic combinations were employed (e.g. ś /c/, s' /c:/, c' /č:/ and č' /č:ˤ/); see Table 3. It is this new version of the Udi script that is used in the Udi textbooks by Venera Antonova, in the Bible translated into Nizh Udi, as well as in the folklore collection published by Dabakov (2007).

Table 1. The Cyrillic script for Udi (Gukasjan's version)[12]

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| А а | АЪ аъ | АЬ аь | Б б | В в | Гг | ГЪ гъ |
| ГЬ гь | Д д | ДЖ дж | ДЖІ джІ | ДЗ дз | Е е | Ж ж |
| ЖІ жІ | З з | И и | ИЪ иъ | Й й | К к | КІ кІ |
| КЪ къ | Ќ к | Л л | М м | Н н | О о | ОЪ оъ |
| ОЬ оь | П п | ПІ пІ | Р р | С с | Т т | ТІ тІ |
| У у | УЬ уь | УЪ уъ | Ф ф | Х х | ХЪ хъ | Ц ц |
| ЦІ цІ | Ĺ ĺ | Ч ч | ЧІ чІ | ЧЪ чъ | Ĺ ĺ | Ш ш |
| ШІ шІ | Ы ы | ЫЪ ыъ | | | | |

Table 2. The Latin script for Nizh Udi (early version)[13]

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A a | B b | C c | Cı cı | Ç ç | Çı çı | Çъ çъ |
| Ć ć (съ) | D d | E e | Еъ еъ | Ə ə | Əъ əъ | F f |
| G g | Ğ ğ | H h | I i | Iъ iъ | J j | Jı jı |
| K k | Къ къ | К к | L l | M m | N n | O o |
| Ö ö | Öъ öъ | P p | Pı pı | Q q | R r | S s |
| Ş ş | Şı şı | T t | Tı tı | U u | Ü ü | Üъ üъ |
| V v | Y y | X x | Хъ хъ | Z z | Zı zı (dz) | |
| Ц ц | Цı цı | ь | | | | |

Table 3. The Latin script for Nizh Udi (modern version)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A a | B b | C c | Č č | Ç ç | Ç̌ ç̧ | C' c' |
| Č' č' | D d | E e | Ĕ ĕ | Ə ə | Ə̆ ə̆ | F f |
| G g | Ğ ğ | H h | X x | İ i | I ı | Ĭ ĭ |
| J j | J̆ ĭ | K k | K' k' | Q q | Q' q' | L l |
| M m | N n | O o | Ö ö | Ŏ ŏ | P p | P' p' |
| R r | S s | Ś ś | S' s' | Ş ş | Š š | T t |
| T' t' | U u | Ü ü | Ŭ ŭ | V v | Y y | Z z |

There has been an activity aiming to create writing systems for the Udis living in Georgia and Russia as well. Thus, an ABC book by Vladislav Dabakov (2013) suggests a Cyrillic-based system almost identical to Gukasjan's (and to the early Latin version by Kechaari). The difference between Dabakov's system and the one developed by Gukasjan is that instead of the "palochka", a straight apostrophe is used for non-aspirated consonants (e.g. (e.g. т' /t:/)), iotified vowel signs are used for "j + vowel" combinations (e.g. я instead of йа for /ja/), and the retroflex/pharyngealised series of hushing consonants is marked more uniformly with the hard sign (e.g. шъ /šˤ/). For the Zinobiani variety, a local school teacher and activist Mamuli Neshumashvili developed an alphabet based on the Georgian script, with additional symbols borrowed from the Georgian scientific transcription for Caucasian languages.

Although, especially after the publication of the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests by Gippert et al. (2008), the possibility of using the Caucasian Albanian script has been discussed by the Udi

---

[12] Strictly speaking, instead of "palochka" I, Gukasjan (1974) uses the symbol 1 ('one'), which is often done in Caucasian Cyrillic scripts for the sake of simplicity while typing.

[13] The graphemes that are occasionally found in texts in the same function are given in brackets.

community, there have not been any serious attempts to adapt it to Modern Udi. It should be mentioned, however, that the monument (bust) of Zinovy Silikov recently erected in Zinobiani features his name written in both Georgian (both the first name and the last name) and Caucasian Albanian (only the first name) letters.

## 5. Publications and Media in Udi

The body of literature published in Udi has been growing since the late 1990s, especially in Azerbaijan.[14] The published books can be grouped into three types, alongside some other printed materials such as thematic annual calendars of the Orayin Cultural Centre.

The first group comprises Udi folklore as well as original and translated poetry and prose. The folklore published by Kechaari (Keçaari 1996; 2001; 2003) and Dabakov (2007) consists mostly of tales, legends and local anecdotes. Books by Kechaari also include his own poems and translated poetry (mainly from Azerbaijani), as well as a one-act play and a selection of proverbs, blessings, curses, and superstitions. Keçaari (1996) presents short stories and poems by various other Udi authors, including Hayik Qoasaari, Bakir Shirini, Ashot Udinoghlu, Eduard Qoasaari and Yasha Durmushari, and others. In 2015, an Udi translation of the *Book of Dada Qorqud* was published as part of the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre project of translating the book into many languages; in 2021, an Udi translation of Kurban Said's *Ali and Nino* appeared. To this group, one can add an illustrated collection of traditional Udi recipes published by the late Oleg Danakari (2017a; 2017b) in two versions, a trilingual Udi–Russian–English book, and a bilingual Udi–Azerbaijani book. There are literary works written in Udi, in particular a collection of stories and anecdotes by the late Mayis Kechaari, brother of Georgi Kechaari, that still await publication.

The second group is a series of school textbooks. Early publications include an ABC book and a textbook for the third grade by Aydınov & Keçaari (1996a, 1996b). Later, another series of schoolbooks using the new version of the alphabet was published by Venera Antonova, a school teacher and currently the headmistress of one of Nizh schools (see Ant'onova 2010; 2012; 2015; 2018). This group also includes an Udi picture dictionary published in 2014.

Religious literature belongs to the third group. The translations of the Book of Ruth and the Book of Jonah were published in 2009, and the translation of the Gospel of Luke was published in 2011, all of them as part of a translation project carried out by the Üfüq-S society. (An earlier translation of the four Gospels by Georgi Kechaari remained unpublished.) Later, a new Bible translation project was launched by the Mozaika-T society, which works in association with the Bible Society of Azerbaijan (the translation copyright being owned by Translation Services International). A number of books from both the Old Testament and the New Testament were translated and are now available online on the Udi Holy Scriptures website.[15] Of these, the Four Gospels were published in paper format in 2020. Similar publications include a selection of the Parables of Jesus (2018), as well as the translation of *25 Favourite Stories from the Bible* (2012) and *The Family Book of Christian Values* (2016).

The ABC book *Nanay muz* ("Mother tongue") by Dabakov (2013), which uses the Cyrillic version of the Udi alphabet, seems to be the only book in Udi published in Russia. A number of books in Udi were also published in Georgia by Mamuli Neshumashvili, including the ABC book *Bez muz* ("My language"), an Udi–Georgian dictionary, and collections of Udi tales and poems. A practical

---

[14] The focus here is on the literature published in Udi only, although there have been publications of Udi folklore, prose and poetry by the Udi authors in other languages, mainly Azerbaijani and Russian. For an overview of existing textual resources in Udi, including earlier ones, see Schulze (2016c).

[15] https://www.udibibliya.com/ (English, Azerbaijani and Russian interface)

reader in Udi prepared by two Georgian linguists, Ruxadze & Lolua (2015), should also be mentioned.

In 2021, two Udi activists from Russia, Vladislav Dabakov and Feliks Dinchari, founded a YouTube channel called UdiMedia,[16] which aims to bring together Udis from around the world and to spread awareness about Udi people and their culture, history, and language. By the end of 2022, the channel had attracted over 1,200 subscribers. Topics covered by the broadcasts so far include the study and preservation of the Udi language, the Bible translation project, the celebration of the Udi Culture Day in Nizh, and the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Zinobiani, among others. In addition, the channel has screened special memorial programmes dedicated to Voroshil Gukasjan (1932–1986) and Oleg Danakari (1955–2022). Udi is used to present the content and to conduct interviews with invited speakers (in addition to Azerbaijani and Russian) and is usually subtitled in Russian.

## 6. Udi: the Genealogic and Areal Background

Genealogically, Udi is a peripheral member of the Lezgic branch of the Nakh-Daghestanian family. There are nine Lezgic languages in total, all of them spoken in the southern part of Daghestan and northern parts of Azerbaijan. Lezgian, Tabasaran and Agul belong to the Eastern subbranch, Tsakhur and Rutul belong to the Western subbranch, and Kryz and Budugh belong to the Southern subbranch. While Udi is a southern outlier, another outlier is Archi spoken to the northwest of the core Lezgic area nestled between Lak- and Avar-speaking villages. Udi is considered to be the first language to have separated from Proto-Lezgic[17] (see e.g. Alekseev 1985: 23 and Kassian 2015: 13). According to the calculation presented in Kassian (2015), the approximate time of this break-up is 3,700 years ago, which means that Udi has developed as a separate language for millennia, although remaining in contact with both related and unrelated languages.

In comparison to the other Nakh-Daghestanian languages, Udi undoubtedly has a unique contact situation. Due to its geographical position, contact between Udi and the genealogically unrelated languages of the area has been so intense that it has affected its linguistic structure on various levels. Thus, Schulze (2001b) identifies several chronological layers of contact between Udi and genealogically unrelated languages including Old and Middle Iranian varieties (Median, Persian, Northwest Iranian), Talyshi and Jewish Tati, Old, Middle and Modern Eastern Armenian, Azerbaijani, Russian, and Georgian. Stilo (2015) includes Udi in the Araxes–Iran linguistic area covering the South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), Northern Iran, Northern Iraq, and Eastern Turkey, and comprising Kartvelian languages, Armenian and its dialects, Turkic varieties of Eastern Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq, Neo-Aramaic and Arabic dialects of Northern Iraq and Turkey, as well as a number of Iranian languages extending southwards to approximately the Esfahan area of central Iran.

As already mentioned above, the phonological profile of Udi has changed with respect to the related languages of the Lezgic branch. A number of important developments, both in terms of losses and innovations, can be identified in the other domains of its grammar as well (for details, see Maisak (forthcoming)). Thus, the case inventory of Udi with its dozen case forms is quite modest compared to the other Lezgic languages (or even to Caucasian Albanian), especially with respect to locative cases, which usually make up a substantial chunk of the Lezgic case system. An important Udi innovation, however, is a polyfunctional dative case in *-a* / *-ä* which developed

---

[16] https://www.youtube.com/@udimedia1/ (Russian interface)

[17] According to an alternative view, both Caucasian Albanian and Udi belong to the East Lezgic subbranch of the Lezgic together with Lezgian, Tabasaran and Agul (see Schulze 2005; 2015a and Gippert et al. 2008: II-74). This view, however, is not shared by many specialists (see Maisak 2010 for some criticism).

from a locative case (namely the inessive) and, in addition to the marking of locations ('in', 'into') and peripheral argument roles such as recipient and addressee, became a means of direct object encoding. The category of noun gender and, consequently, gender agreement was lost altogether, making Udi one of only three languages of the family (together with Lezgian and Agul) in which this category, reconstructed all the way to Proto-Nakh-Daghestanian, has disappeared. In the verb system, the opposition between the perfective and imperfective stems is not as pronounced as in the related languages. The indicative tense-aspect system is not very rich: in particular, the core of the system comprises only synthetic forms, while periphrastic tense-aspect forms are very peripheral. Negative morphemes (*te*, *ma* and *nu*) are rather clitics or function words in Udi, whereas they tend to be prefixes or infixes in the other Lezgic languages.

In the Udi morphosyntax, the "canonical" ergative alignment coexists with the accusative and tripartite encoding strategies. Thus, the ergative agent and the absolutive patient can be found if the patient is indefinite, as in (1)–(3a).[18] If the patient is definite, especially when it is encoded with a personal or demonstrative pronoun or a person name, it obligatorily takes the dative case, as in (3b)–(4). This strategy, known as Differential Object Marking, is an innovation, which is most probably contact-induced as similar patterns are found in Armenian, Azerbaijani and Iranian, but not in Nakh-Daghestanian. On the other hand, the dative marking of the experiencer subject, which is typical for Lezgic languages, was lost: subjects of such verbs as 'love', 'know' or 'see' in Udi behave like those of canonical transitive verbs and receive ergative case marking. Personal pronouns (*zu* 'I', *jan* 'we', etc.) display ergative-absolutive syncretism which occurred in favour of the absolutive forms. Given that pronouns obligatorily take the dative in the object function, the contrast here follows accusative rather than ergative alignment.

(1)     Yan ereq'yan girbsa.
        *jan                 ereq:=jan              gir-b-sa*
        we(ERG/ABS)     hazelnut(ABS)=1PL     gather-LV-PRS
'We gather hazelnuts.'

(2)     Kalnan yaynak' uq dənə qoq'lane ǰalde.
        *kalna-n               ja-jnak:      uˤq    dänä    qoq:la=ne         žˤal-d-e*
        grandmother-ERG     we-BEN       six    CLSF    egg(ABS)=3SG     fry-LV-PRF
'Granny has fried six eggs for us.'

(3a)    Ğə̌yninen ğusmine uksa.
        *ʁaˤjn-in-en              ʁusmi=ne              uk-sa*
        crow-OBL-ERG          cheese(ABS)=3SG     eat-PRS
'The crow is eating cheese.'

(3b)    Tülkinen şot'o anek'sa.
        *tülk-in-en         šo-t:-o              a=ne=k:-sa*
        fox-OBL-ERG     that-NMLZ-DAT     see₁=3SG=see₂-PRS
'The fox sees it.'

---

18 Examples (1)–(6) are from Ant'onova (2010; 2012; 2015). The first line represents an example in the original orthography, and the second line provides the transcription; translations and interlinear glosses are mine. Abbreviations: 1PL, 3SG – person markers; ABL – ablative; ABS – absolutive; AOR – aorist; BEN – benefactive; CLSF – classifier; COMP – complementiser; DAT – dative; ERG – ergative; LV – light verb (in complex verbs); NMLZ – nominaliser; OBL – oblique stem; PL – plural; PRF – perfect; PRS – present. Following Harris (2002), two separated parts of simplex verbs are shown with subscript indices. Equals separate clitics from their hosts.

(4)    Əlbizen xazala uneksa.
       *älbiz-en      χazal-a      u=ne=k-sa*
       snail-ERG     leaf-DAT     eat$_1$=3SG=eat$_2$-PRS
‘The snail is eating the leaf.’

(5)    Irinen q'a Alesyan ğŏğŏlaxun q'ĭt'unbsa.
       *irin-en      q:a  alesja-n      ʁoˤʁoˤl-aχun              q:iˤ=t:un=b-sa*
       Irina-ERG    and Alesya-ERG    bombardier_beetle-ABL    be_afraid=3PL=LV(do)-PRS
‘Irina and Alesya are afraid of bombardier beetles.’

Subject person agreement is an innovation of Udi, attested already in the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests. Agreement markers of the first and second persons have their origin in personal pronouns (cf. *jan* ‘we’ and *=jan* ‘1PL’ in (1), *zu* ‘I’ and *=zu* ‘1SG’ in (7)), while the etymology of the third-person markers is less obvious. Importantly, person agreement markers are “mobile”: their position in a clause reflects information structure. In indicative clauses, person enclitics are hosted by focused constituents (see the placement of person markers on preverbal objects in (1)–(3a)). This phenomenon finds parallels in the genealogically unrelated languages of the area. A similar system of “mobile” person markers is attested in Northern Talyshi (Stilo 2008), and the focus-driven displacement of the copula is common in Eastern Armenian periphrastic forms. In Udi, the behaviour of person markers became even more typologically unusual in that they can occur within words, namely within verb forms, bisecting both complex verbs (appearing before a light verb, as in *q:iˤ=t:un=b-sa*) and simplex verbs (appearing before the last stem consonant, as in *a=ne=k:-sa*, *u=ne=k-sa* above or *beˤ=jan=ʁ-i* below). This brings about a situation in which almost all verb stems are bipartite, being either complex verbs like *q:iˤ-b-* ‘be afraid’ (which is originally a combination of *q:iˤ* ‘fear’ and *b-* ‘do’), or simplex verbs whose final stem consonant, together with the inflections which follow, is separated from the rest of the stem, e.g. *ak:-* ‘see’ in (3b), *uk-* ‘eat’ in (4), and *beˤʁ-* in (6). Besides person agreement markers, negative morphemes as well as the additive particle *=al* ‘also, even’ are allowed inside verbs and thus can be labelled “endoclitics”.

One more feature of Modern Udi which assigns the language a rather “Indo-European” look is the profusion of finite subordination strategies. While relative clauses, complement clauses and adverbial clauses are almost exclusively headed by non-finite forms (participles, converbs, infinitives or verbal nouns) in Nakh-Daghestanian, in Udi one can often encounter postposed finite subordinate clauses introduced by clause-initial conjunctions. Among the conjunctions, some are borrowed (e.g. *ägär* ’if’ or *čunki* ‘because’), and some are calqued from Azerbaijani. The latter case can be illustrated by, e.g. the two complex conjunctions with causal meaning *šot:ajnak: ki* (7) and *šot:o görä ki* ‘because’, both of which include a distal demonstrative *šo-* (in the benefactive and dative cases respectively) with a borrowed postposition *görä* ‘due to’ in the second case. As already mentioned, a borrowed, originally Iranian, syntactic marker *ki* plays a major role in Nizh Udi and introduces various types of subordinate clauses (6).

(6)    Oṣa běyanği ki, şo śaśnağŏğŏle.
       *oša  beˤ=jan=ʁ-i              ki,  şo         cacnaʁaˤʁaˤl=e*
       then  look$_1$=1PL=look$_2$-AOR    COMP this(ABS)   hedgehog(ABS)=3SG
‘Then we look (and see) that this is a hedgehog.’

(7)    Ğe zu gele mŭqzu, şot'aynak' ki bez sinifi əyloğoxun p'urumal sagalazu.
       *ʁe        zu           gele  muˤq=zu,  šo-t:-ajnak:      ki*
       today    I(ERG/ABS)    very  glad=1SG    that-NMLZ-BEN      COMP
       *bez    sinif-i      äjl-oʁ-oχun      p:urum=al    sagala=zu*
       I.GEN   class-GEN    child-PL-ABL     again=ADD    together=1SG
‘Today I am very happy because I am again together with the children from my class.’

At present, Azerbaijani remains the main source of contact-induced language change for Nizh Udis.[19] The beginning of Udi–Azerbaijani contact can be dated back to the eleventh century, the period when the Oghuz Turks invaded South Caucasus and made it part of the Great Seljuk Empire (Menges 1995: 26–29; Johanson 2006: 164). For centuries, Azerbaijani has been spoken by Udis as a second language. As a result, the Azerbaijani influence can be seen on various linguistic levels, including phonology, lexicon and morphosyntax. Thus, one can immediately notice a large number of morphemes and morphological patterns borrowed from Azerbaijani, such as the suffix *-(i)mži* which derives ordinal numerals from cardinal bases, the adjectival suffix *-lu* 'related to X' and the privative suffix *-suz* 'not having X' (the latter is in competition with an older Udi privative/negative morpheme *nutː*). Borrowed suffixes also include the suffix of abstract and status nouns *-luʁ* and the agent noun suffix *-či*. Importantly, all of these suffixes do not only occur with borrowed Azerbaijani words but can also combine with native Udi stems, e.g. *χib* 'three' > *χib-imži* 'third', *niˤžˤ* 'Nizh' > *niˤžˤ-lu* 'inhabitant of Nizh', *χe* 'water' > *χe-suz* 'not having water', *muˤq* 'joyful, glad' > *muˤq-luʁ* 'joy', etc.

As a productive strategy for the derivation of new verb lexemes, Udi employs verb compounding with the light verbs *bak-* 'be, become' (for intransitives) and *b-* 'do, make' (for transitives). The Azerbaijani verbs in such compounds take the form of the perfective participle in *-miš* (> *-jnš*), e.g. *jašajnš-b-* 'to live', *iräzilajnš-bak-* 'to agree', *azmiš-bak-* 'to go astray', etc. Udi has also copied the Azerbaijani reduplication pattern expressing high degree in adjectives: this pattern involves partial reduplication of the first syllable with the insertion of a fixed consonant /p/ after it, e.g. *ap~acːar* 'very clean' (< *acːar* 'clean'), *map~macːi* 'very white' (< *macːi* 'white'), *bip~bisi* 'very old' (< *bisi* 'old'), etc.



*Jotari Church in Nizh. The lower caption is in the Udi script. November, 2006.*

It should be clear from these examples that the morphemes and morphological strategies borrowed into Udi from Azerbaijani mainly concern derivation. There are no obvious examples of Azerbaijani inflectional affixes adopted by the Udi grammatical system (e.g. in the domain of case, number or tense-aspect). One exception may be the conditional clitic *=sa*, which in its core use belongs to the typically inflectional domain of mood/modality, e.g. *har-e=ne* [come-PRF=3SG] 's/he has come' > *har-e=ne=sa* 'if s/he has come' or *ej-sa* [come-PRS] 's/he is coming' > *ej-sa=sa* 'if s/he is coming'. Besides its use in realis conditional clauses, *=sa* also occurs in the indefiniteness marker *=esa / =nesa*, which derives indefinite pronouns from interrogative ones, e.g. *šu=ne=sa* [who=3SG=SA] > *šu=nesa* 'someone' (Maisak 2019a). The pattern itself has been calqued from Azerbaijani, where the conditional copula *isə* is employed as the indefiniteness marker, e.g. *kim* 'who' > *kim isə /*

---

[19] For an overview of the history of Udi–Azerbaijani contact and its linguistic consequences, see Gukasjan 1973; specifically on Azerbaijani calquing in the Udi phraseology and its influence on the sound system, see Gukasjan 1968 and Gukasjan 1978, respectively.

*kim=sə* 'someone'. The source of the Udi *=sa* is undoubtedly the Azerbaijani conditional copula *isə*, usually reduced to *=sə*.[20]

As also mentioned above, there are quite a few particles, conjunctions and postpositions borrowed from Azerbaijani, like the frequently used subordinator *ki*, the conjunctions *ägär* 'if', *joχsa* 'or, if not' and *čunki* 'because', or the postpositions *görä* 'for the sake of, due to' and *barada* 'about', among others. Some of these items are ultimately of Arabic or Persian origin, so Azerbaijani may not necessarily be the immediate source for all of them. At the same time, it is probably the presence of such elements in Azerbaijani that supports their longevity in Udi. Another function word whose presence makes Udi very different from its relatives is the numeral classifier *dänä* which is also present in Azerbaijani but is ultimately an Iranian borrowing (< *dāna* 'seed, grain'). In Nizh Udi, *dänä* is optionally used in numeral phrases, preferably with numerals of the first ten, as a sort of universal numeral classifier for all types of nouns (Maisak 2021). In Stilo's terms, this makes Udi the only Nakh-Daghestanian language to possess a "small-inventory classifier system" typical of the Araxes–Iran linguistic area (Stilo 2018).

## 7. Conclusion

Udi is an indigenous language of Azerbaijan which has been spoken there for millennia. Being genealogically a Nakh-Daghestanian language of the Lezgic branch, it is a geographical outlier of its own family, located on its southeastern periphery. At the same time, due to a heavy influence from unrelated languages of South Caucasus (Armenian, Iranian, Turkic, Kartvelian), Udi has considerably changed its typological profile. From an areal perspective, it can be considered a member of the Araxes–Iran linguistic area despite being significantly removed from its core. At present, Udi speakers are scattered across several post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan (and, in particular, the village of Nizh) remaining the only place where thousands of Udis are still concentrated in one area.

Udi is a highly endangered language with only a few thousand speakers. Although writing has been created for Udi based on the Latin, Cyrillic and Georgian scripts, the practice of writing in Udi is relatively common only in Azerbaijan. There is a danger that Udi children will be losing their native language, especially in countries where Udis live in scattered groups. The documentation and preservation of Udi, in all its dialectal and territorial varieties, remains an urgent task to be undertaken in the nearest future.

## Acknowledgements

## References

Abuladze, Il´ja V. (1938). K otkrytiju alfavita kavkazskix albancev [On the discovery of the alphabet of Caucasian Albanians]. *Izvestija Instituta jazyka, istorii i material´noj kul'tury im. akad. N. Ja. Marra*. 4(1). 69–71.

Alekseev, Mikhail E. (1985). *Voprosy sravnitel´no-istoričeskoj grammatiki lezginskix jazykov. Morfologija. Sintaksis* [Problems of the comparative-historical reconstruction of the grammar of Lezgic languages: Morphology. Syntax]. Moscow: Nauka.

---

[20] In the Udi indefiniteness marker, the first component *=e* / *=ne* is the 3rd singular person agreement marker, here in the function of the copula 'is'.

Alekseev, Mikhail E., Timur A. Maisak, Dmitrij S. Ganenkov & Jurij A. Lander (eds.) (2008). *Udinskij sbornik: grammatika, leksika, istorija jazyka* [The Udi collection: Grammar, lexicon, language history]. Moscow: Academia.

Bežanov, Semën (1902). Gospoda Našego Iisusa Xrista Svjatoe evangelie ot Matfeja, Marka, Luki i Ioanna na russkom i udinskom jazykax [The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in Russian and Udi]. *Sbornik materialov dlja opisanija mestnostej i plemen Kavkaza*, XXX.

Clifton, John M., Deborah A. Clifton, Peter Kirk & Roar Ljøkjell (2005). The sociolinguistic situation of the Udi in Azerbaijan. In John M. Clifton (ed.), *Studies in languages of Azerbaijan*, vol. 1, 107–123. Baku: Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan & St. Petersburg, Russia: SIL International. Available online at https://www.sil.org/resources/archives/9063

Dirr, A[dolf]. M. (1903). Grammatika udinskogo jazyka [Udi grammar]. *Sbornik materialov dlja opisanija mestnostej i plemen Kavkaza*, XXXIII.

Dirr, Adolf. 1928. Udische Texte. *Caucasica* 5. 60–72.

Fähnrich, Heinz (1999). *Kleines Udisch-Deutsches Worterverzeichnis*. Jena: Friedrich-Schiller-Universitat.

Ganenkov, Dmitry (2015). Infinitival Complementation from Caucasian Albanian to Modern. Udi. *Journal of Historical Linguistics* 5 (1). 110–138.

Ganenkov, Dmitry, Yury Lander & Timur Maisak (2008). Udinskij jazyk (nidžskij dialekt) [Udi language (Nizh dialect)]. In Aleksandr E. Kibrik (ed.), *Malye jazyki i tradicii: suš'estvovanie na grani, vyp. 2: Teksty i slovarnye materialy*, 232–259. Moscow: Jazyki slavjanskix kul'tur.

Ganenkov, Dmitry, Yury Lander & Timur Maisak (2010). From interrogatives to placeholders in Udi and Agul spontaneous narratives. In Nino Amiridze, Boyd Davis & Margaret Maclagan (eds.), *Fillers, pauses and placeholders,* 95–118. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Gippert, Jost & Jasmine Dum-Tragut (eds.) (2023). *Caucasian Albania: An International Handbook*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Gippert, Jost & Wolfgang Schulze (2007). Some Remarks on the Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests. *Iran and the Caucasus* 11(2). 201–211.

Gippert, Jost, Wolfgang Schulze, Zaza Aleksidze & Jean-Pierre Mahé (2008) *The Caucasian Albanian palimpsests of Mount Sinai. Edition and interpretation*. 2 vols. Turnhout: Brepols.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1963). Nidžskij dialekt udinskogo jazyka (zvukovoj sostav i nekotorye fonetičeskie processy) [The Nizh dialect of Udi: sound inventory and some phonetic processes]. *Izvestija Akademii nauk Azerbajdžanskoj SSR. Serija obščestvennyx nauk* 3. 79–90.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1968). Frazeologičeskie kal´kirovanija v udinskom jazyke [Azerbaijani phraseological calques in Udi]. *Voprosy frazeologii i sostavlenija frazeologičeskix slovarej*, 167–170. Baku.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1972). K trex"jazyčiju udin [On the trilingualism of the Udis]. *Problemy dvujazyčija i mnogojazyčija*, 286–295. Moscow.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1973). *Vzaimootnošenija azerbajdžanskogo i udinskogo jazykov* [Relations between the Azerbaijani and Udi languages]. Avtoreferat dissertacii doktora filologičeskix nauk. Baku: Elm.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1974). *Udinsko-azerbajdžansko-russkij slovar´* [Udi-Azerbaijani-Russian dictionary]. Baku: Elm.

Gukasjan, Vorošil L. (1978). O fonemnom novoobrazovanii [On the genesis of phonemes]. *Sovetskaja tjurkologija* 5. 33–43.

Harris, Alice C. (2002). *Endoclitics and the origins of Udi morphosyntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Johanson, Lars (2006). On the roles of Turkic in the Caucasus area. In Yaron Matras, April McMahon & Nigel Vincent (eds.), *Linguistic areas: Convergence in historical and typological perspective*, 160–181. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kassian, Alexei (2015). Towards a formal genealogical classification of the Lezgian languages (North Caucasus): Testing various phylogenetic methods on lexical data. *PLoS ONE* 10(2). 1–25. Available online at http://journals.plos.org/ plosone/article?id=10.1371/ journal.pone.0116950

Lander, Yury (2011). The adrelative genitive in Udi: Syntactic borrowing plus reanalysis. In Vittorio Springfield Tomelleri, Manana Topadze & Anna Lukianowicz (eds.), *Languages and Cultures in the Caucasus. Papers from the International Conference "Current Advances in Caucasian Studies", Macerata, January 21–23, 2010*, 325–349. München, Berlin: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Lander, Yury [Jurij A.] (2014). Pokazatel´ *ki* v udinskom jazyke: problema dlja lokusa markirovanija i sintaksičeskoj struktury [The marker *ki* in Udi: a problem for the locus of marking and syntactic structure]. In Mikhail A. Danièl´, Ekaterina A. Ljutikova, Vladimir A. Plungjan, Sergej G. Tatevosov & Ol´ga V. Fedorova (eds.). *Jazyk. Konstanty. Peremennye. Pamjati Aleksandra Evgen´jeviča Kibrika*, 485–498. Moscow: Jazyki slavjanskoj kul'tury.

Lander, Yury & Timur Maisak (2021). "Other" Strategies in the Eastern Caucasus (Part I): Data from Udi. *Iran and the Caucasus* 25(3): 272–283.

Lolua, Roman (2010). *Udiuri ena (gramat'ik'uli analizi, tekst'ebi, leksik'oni)* [Udi language: grammatical analysis, texts, lexicon]. Tbilisi. Available online at http://www.ice.ge/new/ pages/samples/books/cavcas/ 6_r_lolua_udiuri_ena.pdf

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2005). Pjat´ udinskix pesen: teksty, morfologičeskij razbor, kommentarii [Five Udi songs: texts, morphological annotation, comments]. *Kavkazovedenie* 9. 83–98.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2008). Varianty udinskoj orfografii i transkripcii (kratkij obzor) [Variants of Udi orthography and transcription: An overview]. In Mikhail E. Alekseev, Timur A. Maisak, Dmitrij S. Ganenkov & Jurij A. Lander (eds.), *Udinskij sbornik: grammatika, leksika, istorija jazyka*, 443–460. Moscow: Academia.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2010). K publikacii kavkazsko-albanskix palimpsestov iz Sinajskogo monastyrja [On the publication of Caucasian Albanian palimpsests from the Mount Sinai Monastery]. *Voprosy jazykoznanija* 6. 88–107.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2015). Pozicija ličnyx klitik v udinskom jazyke po korpusnym dannym [The placement of person clitics in Udi according to corpus data]. In Ekaterina A. Ljutikova, Anton V. Cimmerling & Maria B. Konošenko (eds.), *Tipologija morfosintaksičeskix parametrov. Materialy meždunarodnoj konferencii «Tipologija morfosintaksičeskix parametrov 2015». Vyp. 2*, 243–265. Moscow: MPGU.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2017). Soglasovanie po množestvennomu čislu v udinskom jazyke [Plural agreement in Udi]. *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* 13(1). 680–724.

Maisak, Timur (2018). The Aorist / Perfect distinction in Nizh Udi. In Diana Forker & Timur Maisak (eds.), *The semantics of verbal categories in Nakh-Daghestanian languages: Tense, aspect, evidentiality, mood/modality*, 120–165. Leiden: Brill.

Maisak, Timur (2019a). Borrowing from an unrelated language in support of intragenetic tendencies: the case of the conditional clitic *-sa* in Udi. *Diachronica* 36(3). 337–383.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2019b). Perevody «Otče naš» v istorii udinskogo jazyka [Translations of the Lord's Prayer in the history of Udi]. *Rodnoj jazyk: lingvističeskij žurnal* 1. 114–145.

Maisak [Majsak], Timur A. (2020). Pričastnye otnositel´nye predloženija v udinskom jazyke po korpusnym dannym [Participial relative clauses in Udi according to corpus data]. *Tomsk Journal of Linguistics and Anthropology* 2. 46–65.

Maisak, Timur (2021). Numeral classifiers in Udi: a unique contact-induced evelopment *Journal of Language Contact*, 14: 330–367.

Maisak, Timur (forthcoming). Udi. In Yuri Koryakov, Yury Lander & Timur Maisak (eds.), *The Caucasian Languages. An International Handbook*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Menges, Karl H. (1995). *The Turkic languages and peoples: An introduction to Turkic studies*. 2nd, revised edn. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Mobili, Robert (2010). *Udi-azerbaycanin-urusin əyitluğ*. Bakı: Qrifli nəşr.

Pančviʒe [Panchvidze], Vladimir N. 1974. *Udiuri enis gramaťikʼuli analizi* [Grammatical analysis of the Udi language]. Tbilisi: Mecniereba.

Perepis (2001). *Deržavnij komitet statistiki Ukraini. Vseukrainsʼkij perepis naselenvnja ʼ2001. Rozpodil naselennja za nacionalʼnistju ta ridnoju movoju* [The State Statistical Committee of Ukraine. All-Ukrainian Population Census ʼ2001. Population by ethnic groups and native language]. Available online at http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/ results/nationality_population/ nationality_popul1/

Perepis´ (1989). *Vsesojuznaja perepis´ naselenija 1989 g. Raspredelenie naselenija Azepbajdžanskoj SSR po naibolee mnogočislennym nacional´nostjam i jazyku* [The 1989 Soviet census: Distribution of the Azerbaijan SSR population by the largest ethnicities and language]. Available online at http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/sng_nac_lan_89_az.php

Perepis´ (2010). *Vserossijskaja perepis´ naselenija 2010 g. Nacional´nyj sostav naselenija Rossijskoj Federacii* [The 2010 Russian census: Ethnic composition of the Russian Federation]. Available online at http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_nac_10.php

Perepis´ (2020). *Itogi Vserossijskoj perepisi naselenija 2020 goda. Tom 5. Nacional´nyj sostav i vladenie jazykami* [The results of the 2020 Russian census. Vol. 5. Ethnic composition and language proficiency]. Available online at https://rosstat.gov.ru/vpn_popul

Ruxadze, Nino & Roman Lolua (2015). *Udiuri enis pʼraktʼikʼuli sakhelmdzghvanelo krestʼomatiita da udiur kartuli leksikʼonit* [A practical guide of Udi, with a reader and an Udi–Georgian dictionary]. Tbilisi. Available online at http://caucasiology.tsu.ge/docs/geo/proektebi/udiuri-ena.pdf

Šanidze, Akakij G. (1938). Novootkrytyj alfavit kavkazskix albancev i ego značenie dlja nauki [A newly discovered alphabet of Caucasian Albanians and its significance for science]. *Izvestija Instituta jazyka, istorii i material´noj kul'tury im. akad. N. Ja. Marra* 4(1). 1–68.

Schiefner, Anton A. (1863). *Versuch über die Sprache der Uden*. (Aus den Mémoires de l'Acad. impériale des sciences de St. Pétersb., 7. Ser., tome VI, No 8.) St. Petersburg.

Schulze, Ilona & Wolfgang Schulze. 2016. *A handbook of the minorities of Armenia. A sociocultural and sociolinguistic survey*. Hamburg: Dr. Kovač.

Schulze, Wolfgang (1982). *Die Sprache der Uden in Nordazerbajdžan. Studien zur Synchronie und Diachronie einer süd-ostkaukasischen Sprache*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2001a). *The Udi Gospels: Annotated text, etymological index, lemmatized concordance*. München: Lincom Europa.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2001b). *The Udi Language: A grammatical description with sample text* Available online at http://wschulze.userweb.mwn.de/Udigen1.htm

Schulze, Wolfgang (2005). Towards a History of Udi. *International Journal of Diachronic Linguistics* 1. 55–91.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2009)*.* Vier neuere udische Texte, Teil 1. *Georgica* 32. 5–20.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2011). The Origins of Personal Agreement Clitics in Caucasian Albanian and Udi. In Manana Tandashvili & Zakaria Pourtskhvanidze (eds.), *Folia Caucasica. Festschrift für Prof. Jost Gippert zum 55. Geburtstag*, 119–168. Frankfurt am Main: Universität Frankfurt.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2012)*.* Vier neuere udische Texte, Teil 2. *Georgica* 34. 8–29.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2015a). From Caucasian Albanian to Udi. *Iran and the Caucasus* 19. 149–177.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2015b). Aspects of Udi-Iranian language contact. In Uwe Bläsing, Victoria Arakelova & Matthias Weinreich (eds.), *Studies on Iran and the Caucasus. In honour of Garnik Asatrian*, 373-401. Leiden: Brill.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2016a). How much Udi is Udi? In Ramazan Korkmaz & Gürkan Doğan (eds.), *Endangered languages of the Caucasus and beyond*, 187-208. Leiden: Brill.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2016b). Udi. In Peter O. Müller, Ingeborg Ohnheiser, Susan Olsen & Franz Rainer (eds.), *Word-formation: An international handbook of the languages of Europe*, 3564–3578. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Schulze, Wolfgang (2016c). Textual Resources for Udi. In Reineck, Natia & Ute Rieger (eds.), *Kaukasiologie heute – Festschrift für Heinz Fähnrich zum 70. Geburtstag*, 361–381. Jena: Buchverlag König.

Schulze-Fürhoff, Wolfgang (1994). Udi. In Rieks Smeets (ed.), *The indigenous languages of the Caucasus. Vol. 3. North East Caucasian languages. Part 2*, 447–514. Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan.

Statistical Committee (2009). *Distribution of population by native language and freely command of languages (based on 2009 population census)*. The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan: Population by ethnic groups, by native language and freely command of languages. Available online at https://www.stat.gov.az /source/demoqraphy/en/001_11-12en.xls

Statistika Komitəsi (2022a). Azərbaycan Respublikasında Əhalinin Siyahıyaalınması. *Statistik Məcmuə 2019-cu il*, 21-ci Cild [The Republic of Azerbaijan Census: *Statistical Digest 2019*, Vol.21]. Bakı: Azərbaycan Respublikasının Dövlət Statistika Komitəsi.

Statistika Komitəsi (2022b). Azərbaycan Respublikasında Əhalinin Siyahıyaalınması. *Statistik Məcmuə 2019-cu il*, 22-ci Cild [The Republic of Azerbaijan Census: *Statistical Digest 2019*, Vol.21]. Bakı: Azərbaycan Respublikasının Dövlət Statistika Komitəsi.

Stilo, Donald L. (2008). Two sets of mobile verbal person agreement markers in the Northern Talyshi language. In Simin Karimi, Vida Samiian and Donald Stilo (eds.), *Aspects of Iranian linguistics*, 363–390. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Stilo, Donald L. (2015). An introduction to the Atlas of the Araxes-Iran Linguistic Area. In Bernard Comrie & Lucía Golluscio (eds.), *Language contact and documentation. Contacto lingüístico y documentación*, 343–355*.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Stilo, Donald L. (2018). Numeral classifier systems in the Araxes-Iran linguistic area. In William B. McGregor & Søren Wichmann (eds.), *The diachrony of classification systems*, 135–164. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Žeiranišvili [Dzheiranishvili], Evgeni F. (1971). *Udiuri ena. Gramat'ik'a, krestomat'ia, leksik'oni* [Udi: grammar, texts, lexicon]. Tbilisi: Tbilisi univ. gamomcemloba.

**Publications in Udi**

Ant'onova, Venera (2010). *Nanay muz-2*. Bəkü.

Ant'onova, Venera (2012). *Udi muz-3*. Bəkü.

Ant'onova, Venera (2015). *Udi muz-4*. Bakı.

Ant'onova, Venera (2016). *Kuşt'oni Külfətin Urufi Dəyərxo*. Bakı.

Ant'onova, Venera (2018). *Udi T'arurxo*-1. Bəkü.

Aydınov, Y. A. & J. A. Keçaari (1996a). *Əlifba (TIetıir)*. Bəkü.

Aydınov, Y. A. & J. A. Keçaari (1996b). *Udin muz (udi dili) 3*. Bakı.

*Bibliya: Mat'fey, Mark', Luk'a, İoan, İvel Girk* (2020). Bakı: Azərbaycan Bibliya  Cəmiyyəti.

Çejrani, Ţədər & Mixak Çejrani (1934). *Samçi dəs*. Suxum: Abgizen Ţərbi.

Dabakov, V. V. (2007). *Udiğoy folklor: Nağılxo. Legendoox*. Astrakhan.

Dabakov, V. (2013). *Nanaj muz (Rodnoj jazyk)*. Shakhty.

Danakari, Oleq (həzirbiyo) (2017). *Udiğoy ukunxo. Udi milli mətbəxi*. Bakı: Üfüq Servises.

Danakari, Oleq (həzirbiyo) (2017). *Udiğoy ukunxo. Udi national cuisine. Удинская кухня*. Bakı: Üfüq Servises.

Henrix Fridrix fon Dits (2015). *Homeri śampit'uxun mügayisinast'a təzə çoyel c'eri Oğuzi siklop. Dədə K'orgudi Girk. Basaten Kəlləgözə besbsuni boya bayanebsa* / Udi dilinə tərcümə edənlər: Rafik Danakari, Robert Mobili, baş redaktor: Kamal Abdulla. Bakı: Mütərcim.

*İsusi məsəloox* (2018). Bakı: Allban-Udi Xristian İcması.

Keçaari [Kečaari], Ž. (1996). *Nana očal: Šeirxo, hekjətxo, drama*. Baku.

Keçaari, Ҡ. (2001). *Orayin*. Bakı.

Keçaari, Ҡ. (2003). *Buruxmux*. Gəncə.

*Luk'an exlətbi Mŭq Xavar* (2011). Bakı.

Miller, Yura (2012). *İvel girkaxun 25 çureğala exlətxo* / Udi muza taradiyo: Venera Ant'onova. [TGS International].

Nešumašvili, Mamuli (2009a). *Udiur-kartuli leksik'oni / Udin-Georgian dictionary*. Tbilisi: Leta.

Nešumašvili, Mamuli (2009b). *Udiuri zghap'rebi / The Udin tales*. Tbilisi: Kartuli ts'igni.

Nešumašvili, Mamuli (2009c). *Čemi ena / Bez muz: Udiuri sakhelmdzghvaneli*. Tbilisi: Kartuli ts'igni.

Nešumašvili, Mamuli (2010). *Udiuri leksebi / Udi poems*. Tbilisi: Chabichadze da k'omp'ania,.

*Rut', İona* (2009). Chambersburg.

*Udi şikillə əyitmux* (2014). Bakı: Qanun Nəşriyyatı; Üfüq-S.