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The methods and norms of transferring Spanish and Georgian proper names into Georgian language¹

ABSTRACT

Nowadays Georgia is faced with the economic, political and social problems, by which the integration process with the European Union is accompanied. The Association Agreement has given rise to the new challenges that finally aims at providing the collaboration among the member states of EU, including Spain on the issues such as economy, education, tourism, emigration policy, legal cooperation and safety.

The language along this line is the essential tool for the development of international relations. In this respect, the accurate translation of toponyms, anthroponyms and legal terms into the foreign language is of utmost importance. The paper deals with the research conducted on these topics, in particular, by the example of Spanish and Georgian - the two languages belonging to extremely distant language families, which differ from each other from the syntactic, morphological and structural aspects and have distinct alphabets and phonetic systems.

The paper mainly focuses on informing the findings of the still ongoing research, which will be beneficial to the linguists as well as the translators in the fields of diplomacy, law and politics. It is the first time the research has been conducted from the above - mentioned aspects, which, in its turn, develops certain complications. In addition, based on the historical background, the involvement of the third- Russian language in the ongoing processes makes some difficulties, as well.

Keywords: geopolitical situation of Georgia, linguistic problems of Spanish-Georgian translation, transcription and transliteration, alphabetical and phonetic differences between the Spanish and Georgian languages, toponyms and anthroponyms.

The topicality of the subject

Having gained the independence Georgia has established the diplomatic-economic relations with a number of countries of the

world including the Kingdom of Spain as well as the countries of Caribbean Gulf, Central and South America. Over three continents of the

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world there exist 20 Spanish-speaking countries, with a greater part of which Georgia has developed the relations of many years and intends to establish the bilateral connection with the rest of them in the future. According to the current state of affairs, Georgia is faced with the economic, political and social challenges having been posed by the Visa Liberalization of 2017 and the Association Agreement of 2016 signed between EU and Georgia, that triggered the development and enhancement of relations with the countries of European Union, among them Spain, in the fields such as economy, education, tourism, emigration policy, crime and safety

Under the conditions of deepening the international relations, hardly can be found a person who does not use the names and titles borrowed from foreign languages. The proper nouns take the important place in making translations and studying foreign languages. Hence, it is deemed necessary to arrange the proper nouns transferred from Spanish into Georgian in the textbooks, government documents, dictionaries, literary translations.

A certain tradition of transferring the foreign proper and geographical names already exists and their orthography is mainly firmly rooted, but it does not mean that there is nothing to be specified. The parallel forms of certain names can be frequently encountered as well. This is accounted for by the fact that the form of one and the same geographical or proper

name is directly borrowed from the language it belongs to or via another (often Russian, English and French) languages. The translators mainly have difficulty translating or transferring the words denoting the proper nouns. In the case of their transfer, it is important to know what to prioritize: the spelling or pronunciation of words.

The problem related to the unification of rules for transferring the foreign proper nouns was posed to the scientists working on the Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia. In this process, they referred to the first, already issued collection of the “Standards of Modern Georgian Literary Language” (1979-1986) and the “Orthographic Dictionary of Georgian” (1968) compiled by V. Topuria and Iv. Gigineishvili. They also accepted the recommendations from the specialists of certain foreign languages. As regards the languages such as Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, due to the absence of specialists, the selection of the correct forms was based on the Russian, English and French versions, accordingly, the Spanish toponyms and anthroponyms were being established in the Georgian language via the third, intermediate language, in particular, Russian and French, which caused the interference in some cases. The interesting example illustrating the effect of the Russian language is the adaptation of names of the major character and his horse of the famous Spanish literary work- - Don

Quijote and Rocinante, დონ კიხოტე and როსინანტე in the Georgian language - /don kixote/ and /rosinante/². The wrong literary names such as “Don Kikhoti and Rosinanti” - დონ კიხოტი and როსინანტი have been established in the Georgian language for a long time, that indicates that these names were translated from the Russian language and upon the influence of the Georgian language the ending of the nominative case – “i” – (ი) was added to the Russian forms *Дон Кихот* (Don Quijot) and *Росинант* (Rocinant).

It is widely-known that the Spanish and Georgian languages represent two completely different language families. Their alphabet, syntax, morphology and phonetics differ from each other qualitatively. Accordingly, the prerequisite for transferring the names from Spanish into Georgian is the study of alphabetical peculiarities and phonological systems of the both languages and their matching. The major ways of transferring these names such as transliteration and transcription should be also taken into consideration. It is also worth noting, that these ways do not exclude each other and are most frequently applied throughout the world. There are cases when transliteration does not suffice and the perfect transfer of proper nouns is made by applying the transcription method.

The transcription and transliteration of Spanish consonant phonemes.

All the consonants existing in the Spanish alphabet can have the corresponding grapheme or “phoneme” in the modern Georgian alphabet, or to put it differently, each Spanish consonant has its Georgian equivalent. At first, we will deal with the consonants whose unitary transliteration can be used. Later, the consideration will be given to the cases of consonants and digraphs, the exact (direct) match for which cannot be found.

The graphemes matching each other:

D – დ

F- ფ

J- ბ

K- კ

L- ლ

M- მ

N- ნ

P- პ

R- რ

S- ს

T- ტ

● Spanish / θ/ and /s/ phonemes

For the Georgian language it is too difficult to tell the difference between Spanish phonemes / θ / and / s / and both of them sound

² Chkhvimiani Sofi. (2006) “Proper names in the translation of “Don Quixote”, Tbilisi,

Linguistic Papers, XXI. Publishing house “Kartuli Ena”. (in Georgian)

in the same way. These phonemes are visually represented by the letters - c (before the vowels i and e), s, z in the Spanish alphabet. The special attention should be focused on the grapheme – z. It necessitates studying and disseminating the norms of its correct pronunciation in Georgian. As a result of the influence of the English, Russian, or Italian languages, the wrong forms, such as / ზ/-[z] or / ც/-[ts] are often encountered in the texts translated from Spanish. In order to pronounce Spanish proper names correctly in the Georgian language and approximate them to the original at the most, it is deemed expedient to study the forms from the phonetic-morphological aspect and further to match and adjust them to Georgian orthography. Based on the above-mentioned, in the Georgian language the Spanish consonants c (before the vowels i and e), s, z and their corresponding phonemes / θ / and / s / match only to a single phoneme - /s/, which, in its turn, corresponds to the letter and sound „ს“ (s). This version is supported by the linguistic factor, according to which the phoneme / θ/ is pronounced only in the Spanish - speaking world of the Iberian Peninsula, whereas the consonants c (before the vowels i and e), s, z are represented by the phoneme - s (s) in all the countries of Latin America.

If we focus our attention on the following examples: Zara – ზარა /zara/, El Pozo – ელ პოზო /el pozo/, González – გონზალესი /gonzalez/, Zarzuela - ცარცუელა /tsartsuela/, we will see, that one and the same consonant – z, which corresponds to the phoneme –/ θ/, is always repeated in the words written in the Spanish language, while in the Georgian translations the three various consonants such as ზ, ც, ს are encountered. As explained above, the Spanish phoneme /z/ corresponds only to the phoneme /ს/ (s) in the Georgian speech. Accordingly, it is reasonable to assume that Georgian forms of the previously mentioned proper names are wrong, their correct forms are as follows:

Zara – სარა /sara/,

El Pozo – ელ პოსო /el poso/,

González– გონსალესი/ gonsalesi/,

Zarzuela - სარსუელა /sarsuela/.

- Letter and sound H

In the Spanish alphabet the graphic representation “h” is the only grapheme which does not match to any phoneme. It mainly represents the graphic sign having no phonetic correlate; hence, it is called “Silent h”³. However, the grapheme “h” has its equivalent in the Georgian language - a

³ *Ortografía de la lengua española de Real Academia Española* (2010) Madrid, Espasa, p. 6.3.1.

pharyngeal/laryngeal aspirated fricative consonant, whose graphic symbol is - ჰ [h] and which is a weak vowel. According to the general recommendation of Georgian linguistics relating to the Spanish language, the Spanish toponyms and anthroponyms transferred to Georgian alphabet should not preserve their graphic signs. In this case, their Georgian pronunciation would be correct and simplify the identification of a person as well as geographical location or a piece of art. The same approach and method applies to the identification of French proper names, but not in the case of English, because English “h” is the consonant of the strong aspiration and is distinctly pronounced. The correct forms are as follows:

Calahorra – კალაორა /kalaora/,

Huesca – უესკა /ueska/,

Hugo – უგო /ugo/,

Hilda - ილდა /ilda/.

- Letter – sound Ñ

The letter – sound Ñ is the fifteenth letter and the twelfth consonant of the Spanish alphabet. It is a nasal –palatal sonorant consonant called eñe“ (enje). It is worth noting, that lately the trend towards the identical transfer of the Spanish phonemes - /n/ and /ɲ/

is apparent, that, in its turn, is reflected in the errors made in the printed, online, public and law texts while transferring the proper names. For example, *señor(a)*, *doña*, *señorita* - their correct Georgian versions encountered in the fiction are as follows: *senjora*, *senjorita*, *donja*⁴. Whereas the toponyms - *La Coruña*, *Logroño* are transferred as *la Koruna*, *Logrono* into a lot of informational documents or directories, the great importance is attached to the correct transfer of the phoneme - /ɲ/ in Georgian, so as to preserve the Spanish original phoneme.

The graphic symbol ñ corresponds to the palatal phoneme /ɲ/. According to the definition of the “Orthographic Dictionary of Foreign Person Names” of 1989, the compound sounds - ña, ño, ñu should be transferred into the Georgian language as – *nia*, *nio*, *niu*.⁵ It implies that the vowel “I” is added to the coronal dent - alveolar nasal occlusive consonant “n” and its accompanying vowels (a, o, u) resulting in creating the compound sound /ni/, the equal phoneme of which can be conditionally represented as - /ɲi/. Based on the above-mentioned, the proper names containing the vowel “ñ” are written in Georgian in the following way: *La Coruña* – *la korunia*, *Logroño* – *logranio*, *Marañon* – *maranioni*, *Muñoz* – *muniosi*, *Begoña* – *begonia*.

⁴ Don Quixote of La Mancha, by M. Cervantes. Translated by B. Bregvadze. 1994

⁵ Orthographic Dictionary of the Foreign Names (edit. Al. Kobakhidze, M. Chabashvili), 1989. Tbilisi. (in Georgian).

• Digraph /ll/

The digraph /ll/ is called “double l” (doble ele) in the Spanish alphabet and corresponds to the palatal semi-vowel phoneme /ʎ/ in the International Phonetic Alphabet. The equivalent phoneme to the digraph /ll/ does not exist in the Georgian language. Accordingly, the phonetic transcription should be made and their proper pronunciation should be further introduced in the Georgian language. We should once again refer to the “Orthographic Dictionary of Georgian Language” of 1989, where in order to transfer the digraph /ll/, the linguists repeat the method for the transcription of the phoneme /ɲ/ and create the compound sound /li/ and the phoneme /ʎi/.⁶ In the proper names transferred from Spanish into the Georgian language one more vowel –“i” is inserted between the consonant “l” and its accompanying vowel. It should be noted that the Georgian linguists engaged in the Spanish language have not reached a consensus on the pronunciation of the phoneme /ʎ/, because, presumably, the maintenance or change of the indicator can be made according to its various position in a word. For example, the phoneme /ʎ/ before a vowel “a” is accepted to be directly matching to the Georgian vowel “I”, but at the end of a word it corresponds to the consonant “l”, such as: Valladolid - ვალადოლიდო

/valiadolidi/, Sevilla - სევილია /sevilia/, Trujillo - ტრუხილიო /truxilio/, Ripoll - რიპოლი /ripoli/, Sabadell - საბადელი /sabadeli/.

• The digraphs /gu/ and /qu/

The digraphs /gu/ and /qu/ represent the peculiarities of the Spanish literary pronunciation. They are used before I (i) and e (e) vowels. The component vowel u (u) of the digraph is the graphic sign lacking the sonority and independent phonetic value.⁷ While their transfer into the Georgian language each of them matches to a specific consonant with its corresponding phoneme /gu/-/g/ -/g/ y /qu/-/k/ - /k/. The correct forms are as follows: Enrique - ენრიკე /enrike/, Quintana - კინტანა - /kintana/, Quito - კიტო /kito /, Guernica - გერნიკა /gernika/, Miguel - მიგელი /migeli/.

b, v, w - consonants

The graphic representation of the phneme /b/

The phoneme /b/ may be represented in the Spanish language by three consonants. They are as follows: b, v, w. Among them the first two consonants (b, v) have their roots in Latin, whereas the consonant –w is encountered only in the words of foreign origin, because it

⁶ Orthographic dictionary of Georgian (1968) compiled by V. Topuria and Iv. Gigineishvili, Tbilisi, (in Georgian)

⁷ Ortografía de la lengua española de Real Academia Española (2010) p. 6.2.2.2.1. /6.2.2.4. Madrid. Espasa

is the unfamiliar consonant for the Latin alphabet⁸.

The consonants “b” and “d” of the modern Spanish represent the phoneme /b/ in the Spanish of the Iberian Peninsula. In the Spanish speaking area of South America both of them have their own phonemes /b/ -/b/ and /v/-/v/. This considerable difference is expanded by the fact that the Georgian corresponding phonemes are distinguished from their Spanish analogues by the pronunciation of occlusive bilabial sonorant /b/ and labiodental fricative sonorant /v/.

Accordingly, our recommendation coincides with the transliteration forms derived as a result of the Anglo-Saxon impact, where the consonant /b/ is transferred as a phoneme /ბ/ (b) and the consonant /v/- as /ვ/ (v). For example, Burgos - ბურგოსი /burgosi/, Badajoz - ბადახოსი /badaxosi/, Valencia - ვალენსია /valensia/, La Orotava - ლა ოროტავა /la orotava/.

Consonant X

The letter-sound X represents the compound of mainly two phonemes /ks/. In general lexis its phonetic specifications are changed according to the position in the word it is encountered in. At the end of a word or a

syllable followed by the consonant as well as in the intervocalic position it is pronounced as /ks/- /ქს/(ks), but at the starting position of a word it represents the consonant /s/ -/ს/(s).⁹

Despite the fact, that the phoneme /X/ does not exist in the Georgian language, in the process of transliteration the phonemes /ქ/, /ქ/, /გ/, /ფ/, /ს/ - /k/, /q/, /g/, /z/, /s/ existing in the Georgian language make it possible to retain the sound value for the Spanish version in such a way, that the created sounds were not unfamiliar for the Georgian language

The English, French and German languages are profoundly studied by the Georgian scientists. Accordingly, the Georgian analogues of the sounds characteristic to these languages have been searched for and determined. Hence, in the case of absence of the direct analogues of any phoneme in the Georgian language, the priority is given to already established relations with the English, French or German languages and they automatically apply to the cases of the Spanish language, as well. That is exactly why; the consonant X is transliterated in the Georgian language as /qs/ and not as /ks/. While translating the Spanish toponyms and anthroponyms it is expedient to employ the above-mentioned norms of the Spanish language established by the Spanish Royal

⁸ Ortografía de la lengua española de Real Academia Española (2010). P. 6.2.2.1. Madrid. Espasa

⁹ Ortografía de la lengua española de Real Academia Española. (2010). p. 6.2.2.8.1./6.3.2.1. Madrid. Espasa.

Academy in respect of the Spanish language. However, we are well aware of the fact, that the phoneme /x/ still will be transferred as /qs/ in the Georgian language due to already established and deep – rooted tradition. For instance, the autonomous unit Extremadura – Extremadura and Municipality of Andalusia Guadix – guadiqsi will be transferred as -qs compound sound.

The transcription and transliteration of the Georgian and Spanish alphabet has not been represented yet and accordingly, their clearly built standard system does not exist. In the paper presented by us, we made an attempt to gain some insight into the interrelation between the graphical and phonemic systems. In the process of work, we relied on the norms of

Romanization of the Georgian language of 2009 (BGN/PCGN).¹⁰

The examples discussed above clearly reveal the differences between the Spanish and Georgian alphabet systems. The collation of these distinctions requires the knowledge of linguistic norms of both languages. Such knowledge allows us to transfer the linguistically accurate and acceptable versions from the Spanish into Georgian language in the debatable occasions. The transcription and transliteration created as a result of the linguistic approaches are of normalized nature and accordingly, for our part, are recommended to all the persons concerned with this subject: translators, interpreters, language learners, diplomats, lawyers and the persons employed in the business sector.

¹⁰ BGN/PCGN romanization of Georgian (2009 agreement)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanization_of_Georgia
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