

Nina Dobrushina  
nina.dobrushina@gmail.com

# Patterns of neighbor contact in Daghestan

National Research University Higher School of Economics  
(Moscow)

# Daghestan

- Eastern Caucasus
- Mountainous area
- More than 40 languages
- Three language families
- **Mixed marriages were not encouraged, thus mountain villages are normally ethnically and linguistically homogenous**
- It is typical that villages with different local languages are within the range of walking one from another

# How do neighbor villages communicate if they have different local languages?

Conceivable options:

- a) Villages do not communicate at all
- b) Villages communicate in a third language, non-native to either (use of a lingua franca)
- c) Both villages acquire some command of the neighbors' language
- d) One village has some command of the neighbors' language, while the second village does not

# (a) is not attested

- There is always some communication between neighboring villages – neighbors need to communicate

at least in our data

- An open question: what distance is big enough to make communication unnecessary?

in other words, what *are* ‘neighbor villages’

If there always is some common language between neighbors, what is the typical level of knowledge?

- Enough to produce a set of basic sentences?
- Part of people speaks fluently?

If yes, which part, in both quantitative and qualitative terms?

- Fluency depends on different factors, such as distance and economical situation

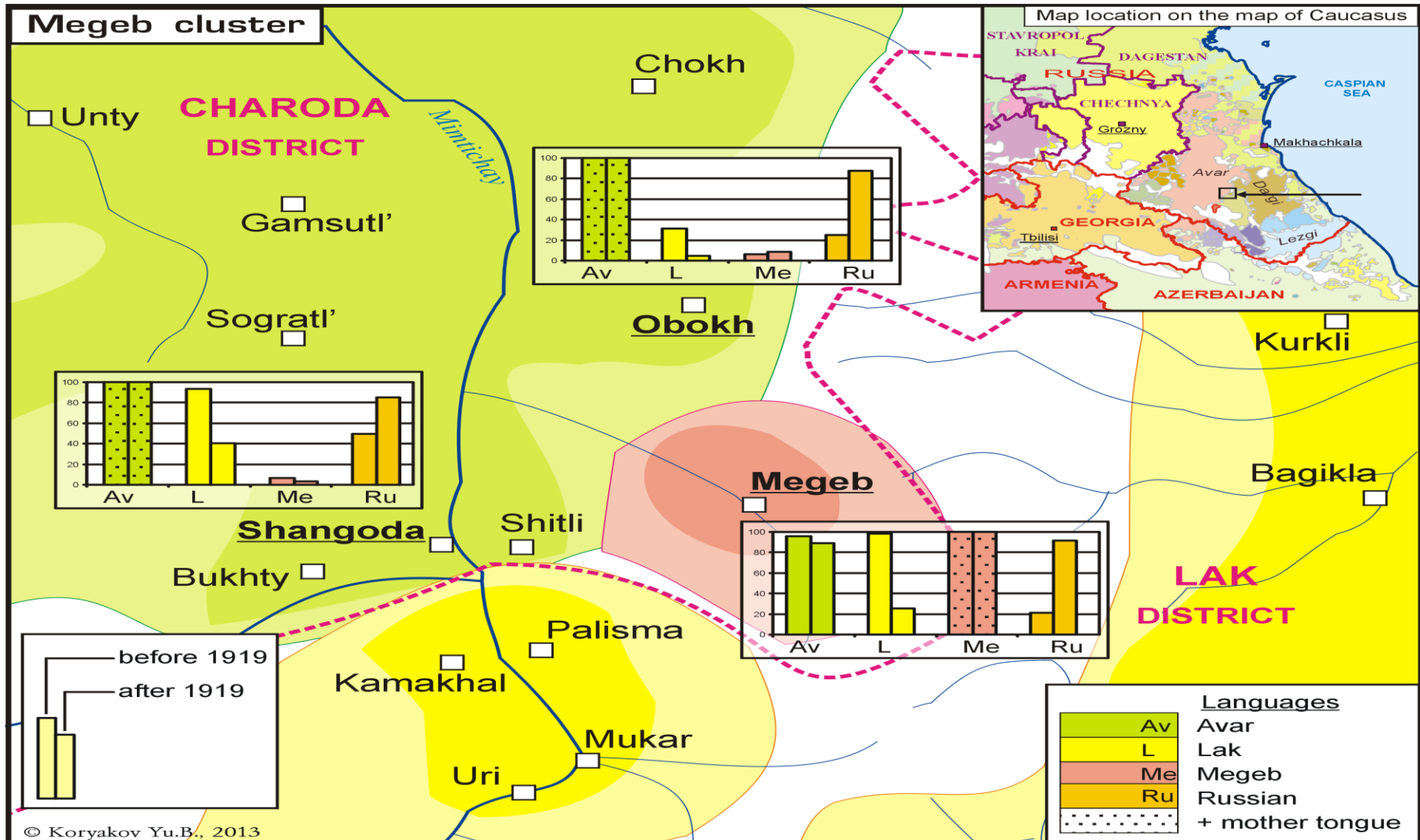
# The method

- Focused interviews
- A short questionnaire compiled based on the recorded focused interviews
- The respondent reports the data not only about himself but also about all his elder relatives whom (s)he thinks) he remembers

# example

<i>Name</i>	Magomed
<i>Family relation to the respondent</i>	grandfather of Karim, father of Musa
<i>Years of life</i>	1880-1963
<i>Native language</i>	Archi
<i>Education and the experience of living outside the village</i>	none
<i>Did he read the Koran?</i>	yes
<i>Did he speak Avar?</i>	yes
<i>Did he speak Lak?</i>	yes
<i>Did he speak Russian?</i>	poor
<i>Did he speak any other languages?</i>	Dargwa
<i>Literate in</i>	Arabic

# The aim of the project is to model multilingualism in a number of Daghestanian villages (maps courtesy Yuriy Koryakov)





# Why do we need this information?

If we want to attribute certain linguistic phenomena to language contact, we need to obtain some knowledge about actual language interaction:

- which languages are (were) contacting?
- what is the ratio of bilingual individuals in the respective communities?
- for how long the contact was active?

etc.

# The data

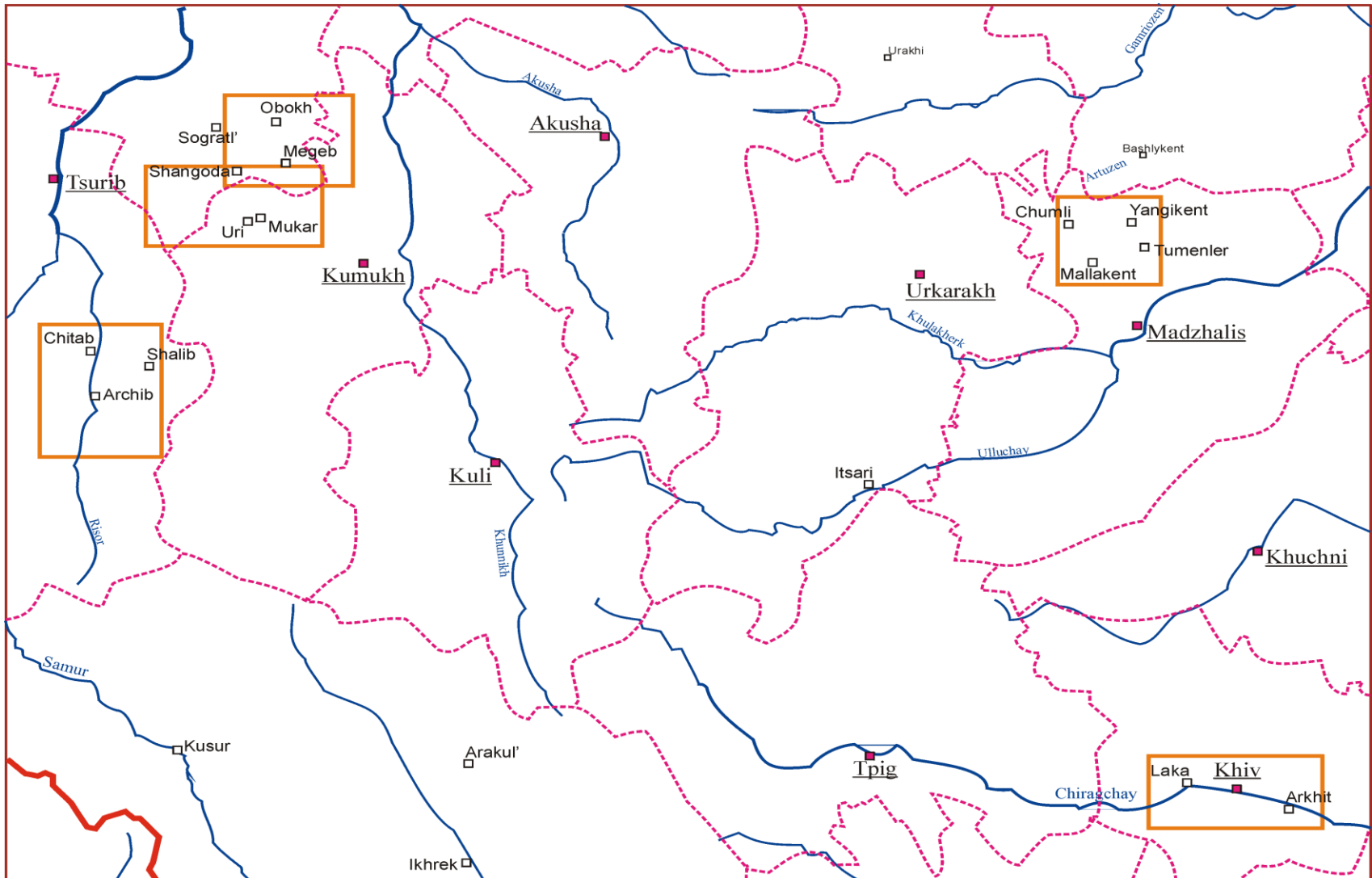
- ten field trips
- five clusters of villages (3-4 villages)
- fourteen villages
- eight 'endemic' languages
- seven situations of language contact

# 7 situations of language contact

Mehweb ( <i>Mehweb</i> )	Shamgoda / Obokh ( <i>Avar</i> )
Shamgoda ( <i>Avar</i> )	Uri / Mukar ( <i>Lak</i> )
Khiv ( <i>Tabassaran</i> )	Arkhit / Laka ( <i>Lezgian</i> )
Mallakent / Chumli ( <i>Dargwa</i> )	Jangikent / Temenler ( <i>Kumyk</i> )
Archib ( <i>Archi</i> )	Chittab ( <i>Avar</i> )
Archib ( <i>Archi</i> )	Shalib ( <i>Lak</i> )
Chittab ( <i>Avar</i> )	Shalib ( <i>Lak</i> )

# Five clusters

(map courtesy Yuriy Koryakov)

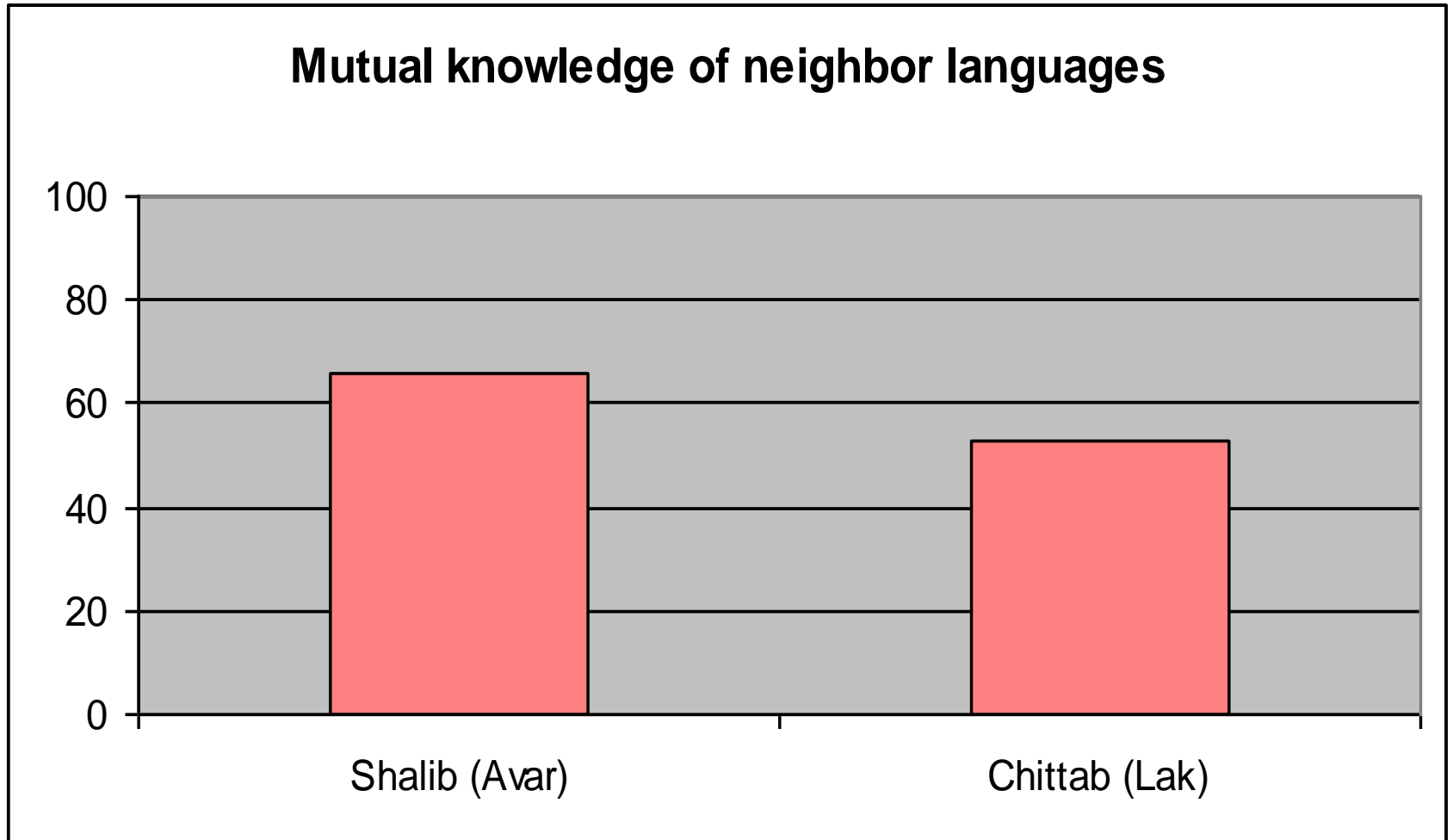


How do neighbors communicate if they have different native languages?

Out of 7 situations of language contact:

- **one** is symmetrical: both neighbors have the same level of the others' language command
- **six** are asymmetrical: residents of village A do not speak the language of village B, while residents of village B have a command of the language of village A

# The only case of symmetrical contact



# Asymmetrical relations were more frequent

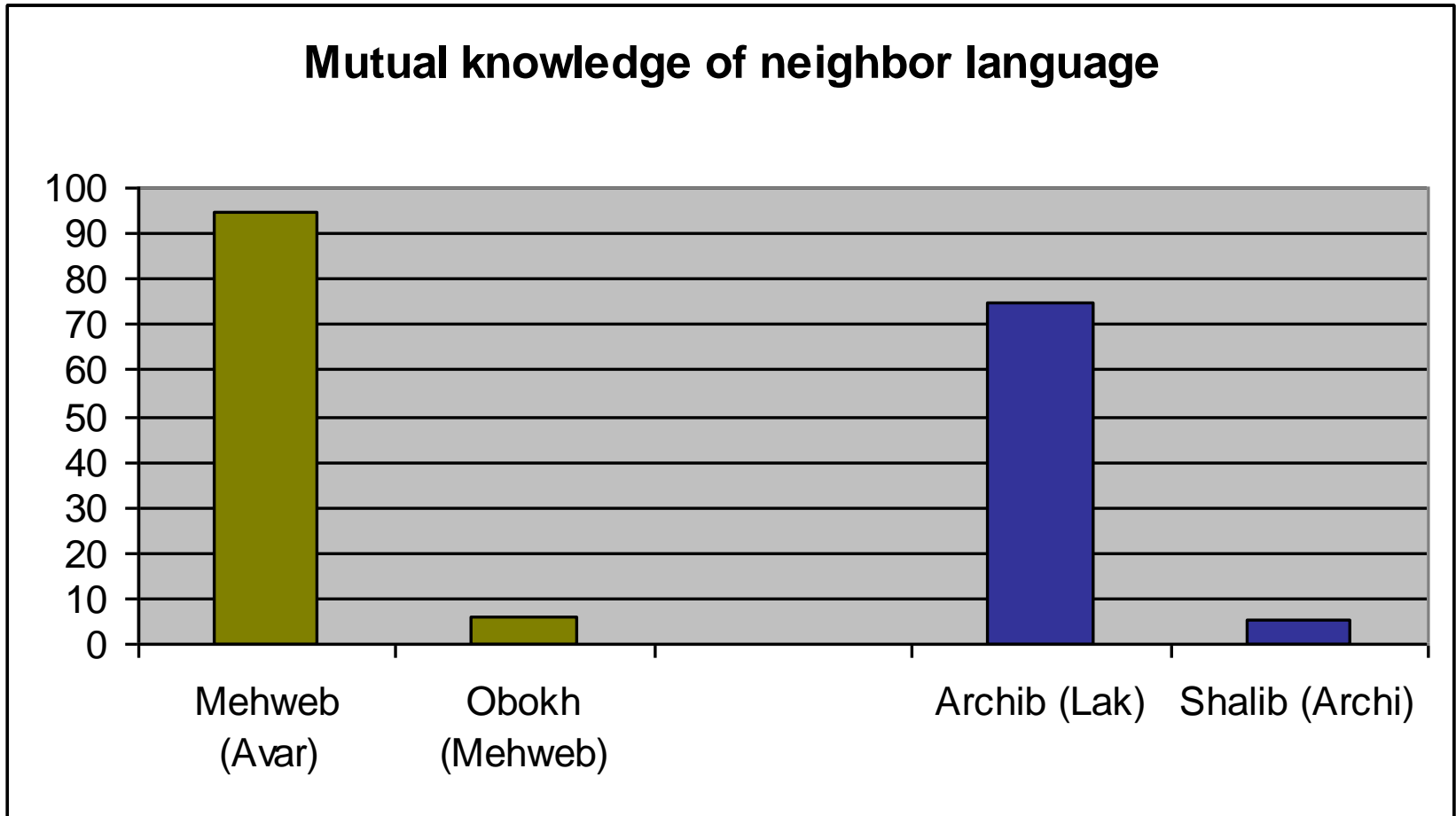
<i><b>Dominant language</b></i>	<i>Secondary language</i>
Obokh / Shamgoda ( <i><b>Avar</b></i> )	Mehweb ( <i>Mehweb</i> )
Uri / Mukar ( <i><b>Lak</b></i> )	Shamgoda ( <i>Avar</i> )
Arkhit ( <i><b>Lezgian</b></i> )	Khiv / Laka ( <i>Tabassaran</i> )
Jangikent / Temenler ( <i><b>Kumyk</b></i> )	Mallakent / Chumli ( <i>Dargwa</i> )
Chittab ( <i><b>Avar</b></i> )	Archib ( <i>Archi</i> )
Shalib ( <i><b>Lak</b></i> )	Archib ( <i>Archi</i> )

Looking for explanations:  
which language becomes dominant?

- **The size of the village does not matter:**  
Archib and Mehweb were (and still are)  
bigger than their neighbors, but their  
language is not shared



# Mehweb VS Obokh and Archib VS Shalib

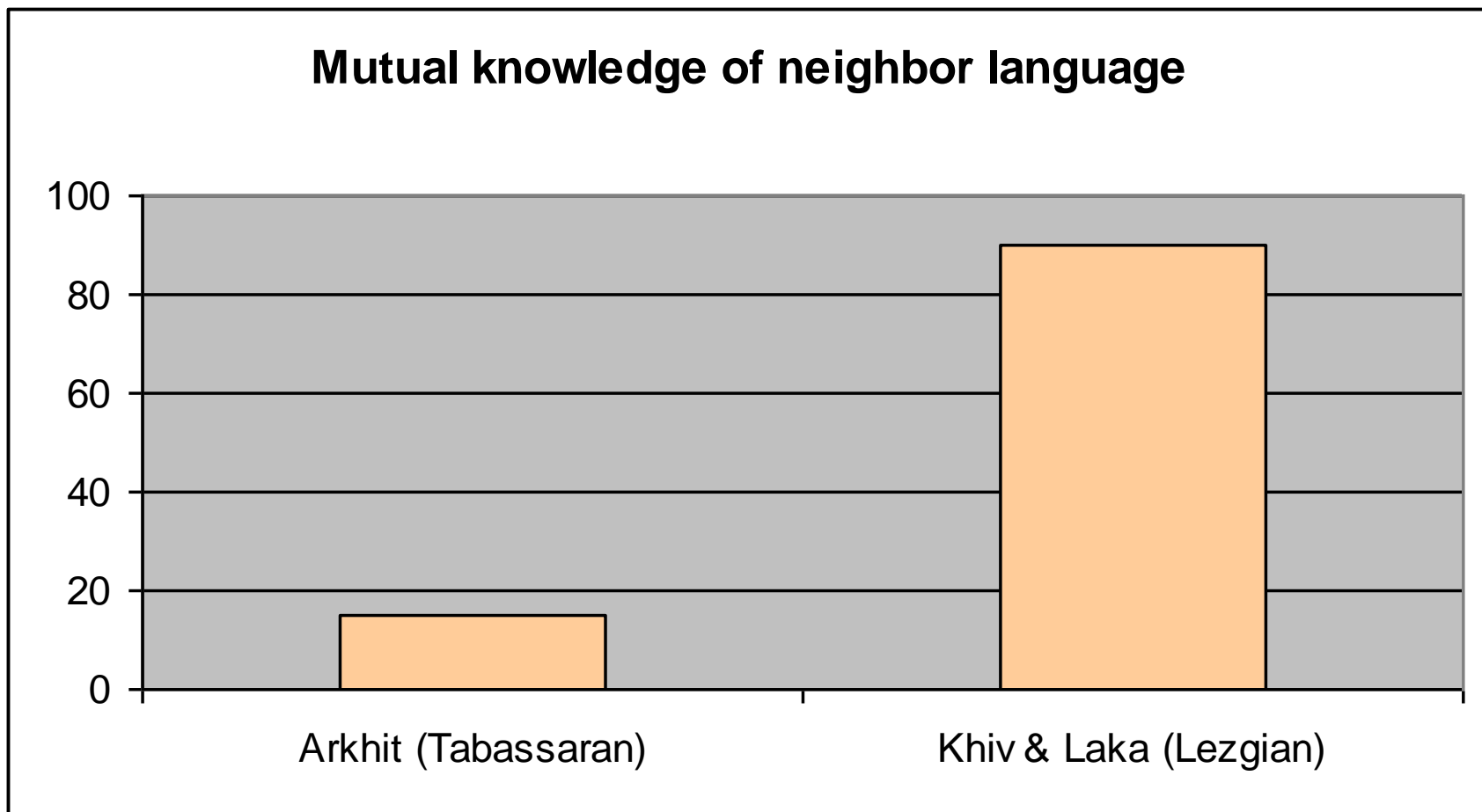


Looking for explanations:  
which language becomes dominant?

- **The domination in the district does not matter:**

Khiv (Tabassaran) is the center of the district dominated by Tabassarans, but Tabassaran yields to Lezgian

# Arkhit (*Lezgian*) VS Khiv / Laka (*Tabassaran*)

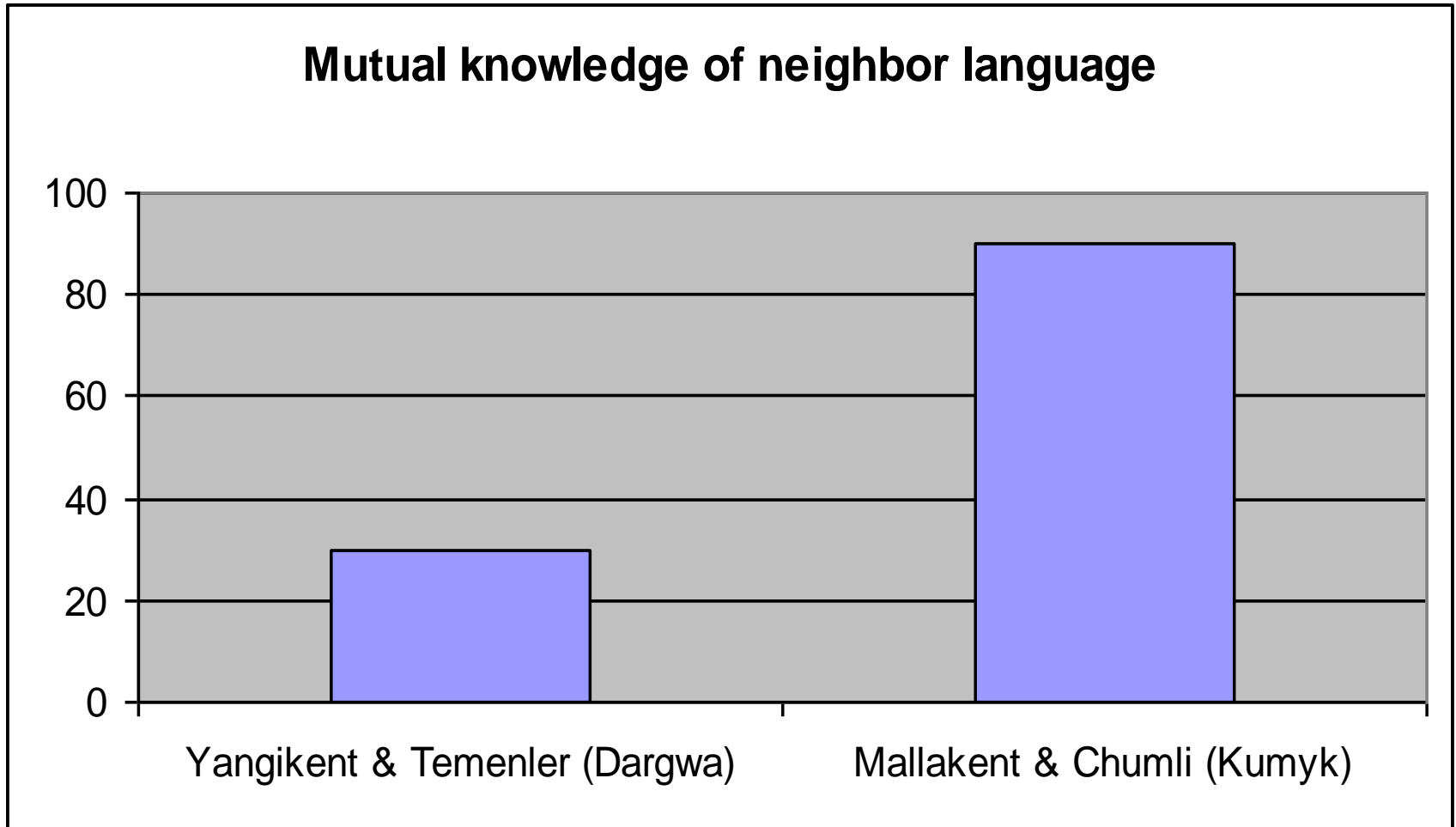


The position of the language  
on a larger geographical scale  
is more essential than its position  
within the cluster

Dargwa yields to Kumyk in the Mallakent cluster,  
because Kumyk was lingua franca of the  
Daghestan plains

The important supralocal factor is the vertical  
pattern of bilingualism, where higher communities  
speak languages of lower communities, but not vice  
versa (Wixman 1980, Nichols forthcoming)

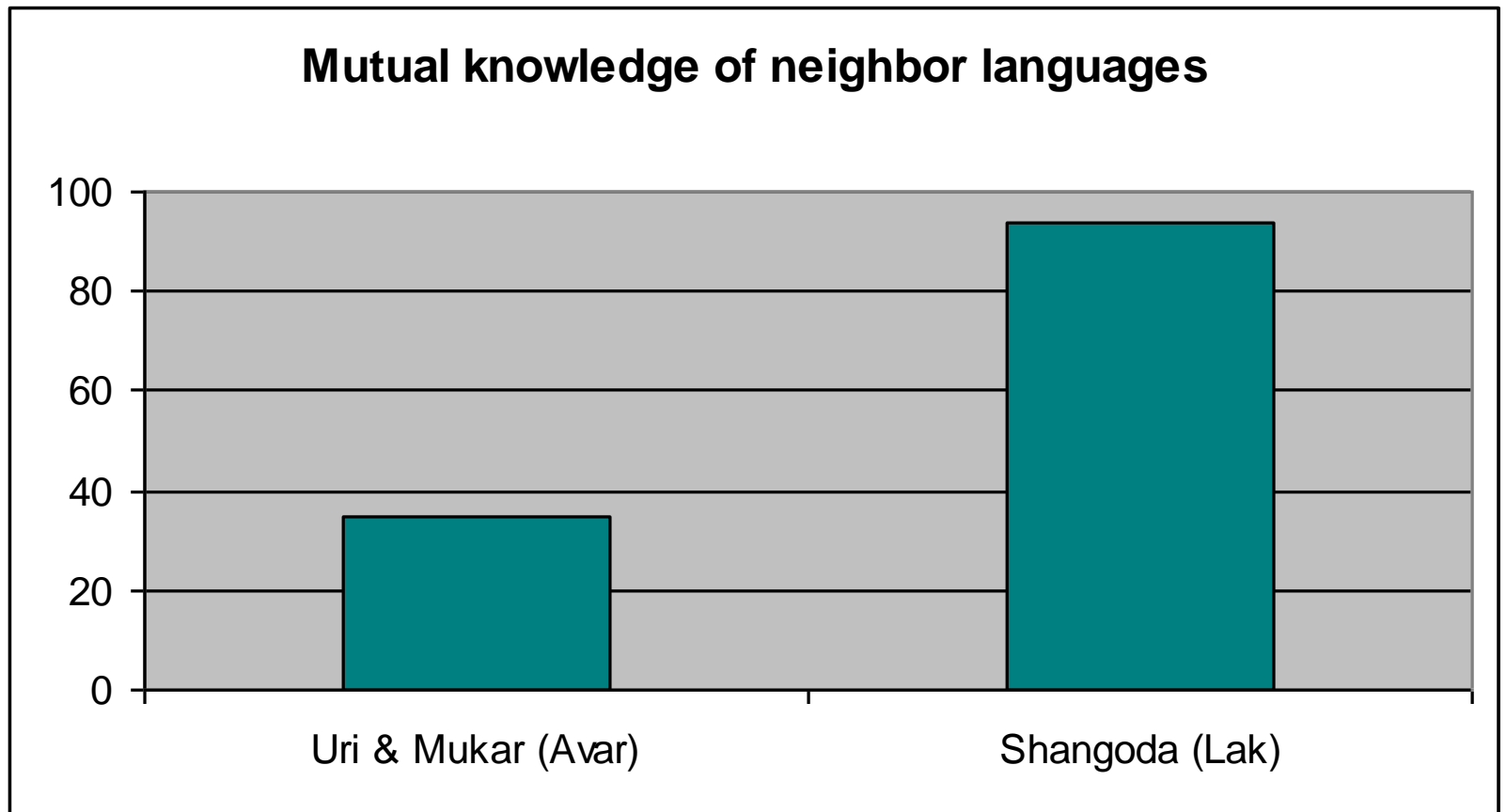
# Jangikent / Temenler (*Kumyk*) VS Mallakent / Chumli (*Dargwa*)



The position of the language in larger geographical domain was more essential than its position in the given cluster of villages

Avar yields to Lak in the Mehweb cluster, because Lak was spoken in Kumukh, which was an extremely important marketplace for this part of Daghestan

# Uri & Mukar VS Shangoda



- In case of asymmetrical contact, two cases are distinguished
  - non-dominant minority languages (e.g. Archi vs. Lak) show less than 10 percent of command
  - non-dominant major languages (e.g. Avar vs. Lak) may show 20 to 30 percent of command



# Generalizations

- Language contacts between neighbors are typically asymmetrical (unilateral)
- Minority languages yield to major languages: people do not become bilingual in minority languages
- The knowledge of the secondary language is less than 10% if it is a minority language, and 15-30% if the secondary language is a major language

# Generalizations

- local factors are outweighed by supralocal ones: the relative sizes of the villages (local parameter), the dominance in the cluster or in the district are of less importance than the spread of the languages (supralocal parameter)
- thus, for the hierarchical relations between two neighbor language groups the position of the language in larger geographical domain is more essential than its position in the given cluster of villages

# References

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