

On the history of Low German Influence in Slavonic languages

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Novjině z Kaszub a z dalekjeno svjata

Contents

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Middle Low German period
- 3) Transition period
- 4) New Low German period
- 5) Conclusion

A faded, grayscale background image of a European city, likely Prague, featuring a river with several boats and a large cathedral with multiple spires in the background. The text '1. Introduction' is overlaid in the center.

1. Introduction

Interest and Goals

Interest

- LG is a former international and cultural language of the Northern Europe with large impact on other languages
- LG vs. Northernmost Slavonic languages: similarities in diachronic sociolinguistics
- History of LG can be traced through the loanwords in Slavonic idioms
- Different Slavonic idioms impacted in different periods

Goals

- Diachronic approach – identification of loanword layers with help of historical phonology
- Impact of changing sociolinguistic situation on the loanword structure

Slavonic idioms participating in contact

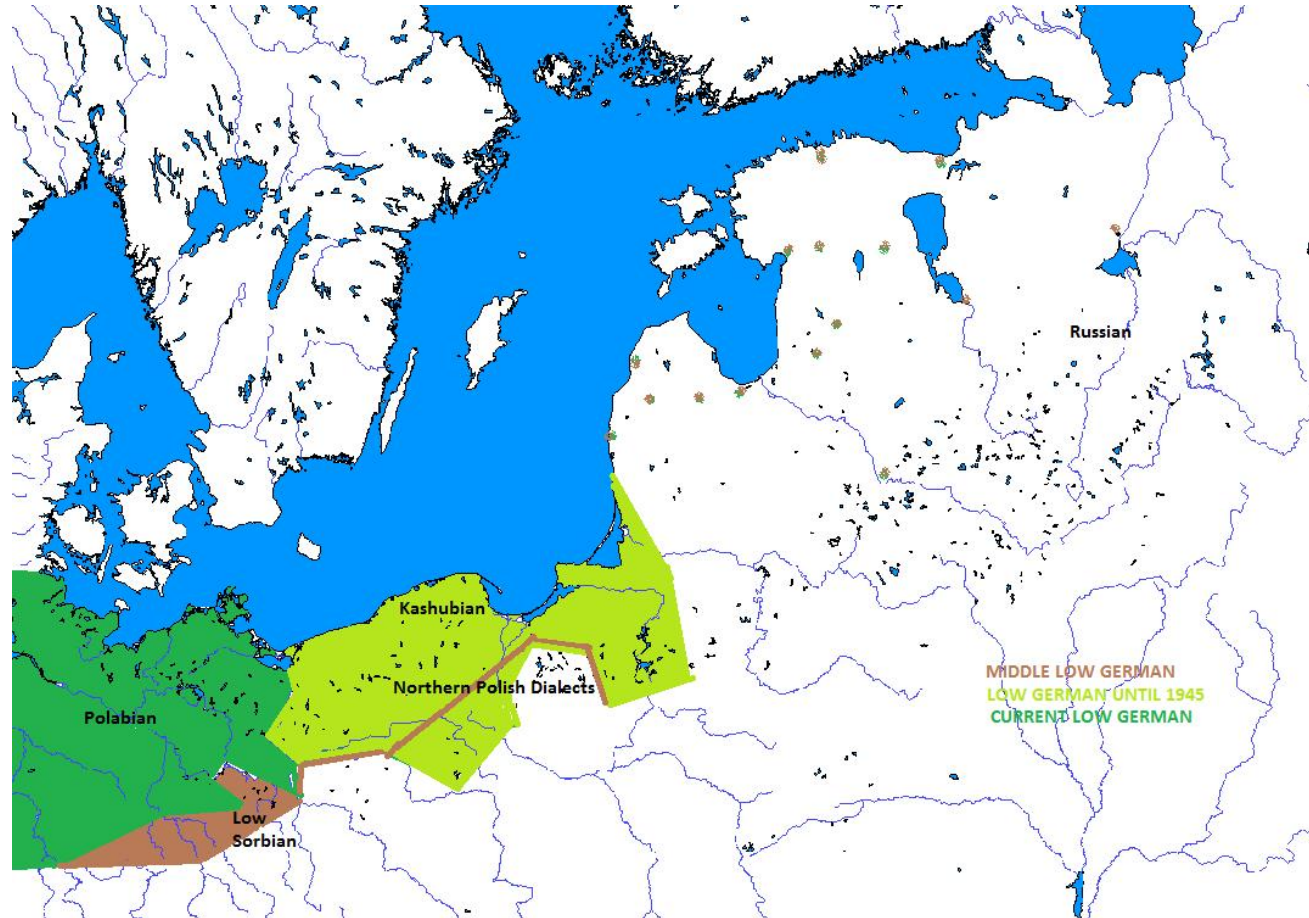
- **Direct neighbour contact**

- Largely impacted (LG = main loanword source)
 - Polabian
 - Kashubian
- Partly impacted (LG in older loanword layers)
 - Low Sorbian
 - Northern Polish Dialects
- Similarly: Estonian, Livonian, Latvian, Latvian-Curonian (longer contact), South-Western, dialects of Lithuanian

- **Business contacts** (few, mostly noun loanwords)

- Written Polish
- Russian
- Similarly: Finnish

Contact zones



Methodological issues

- Disproportion in the attestations of LG and Slavonic idioms
- The phonological evolution of single (both LG and Slavonic) dialects not reconstructed fully
- Sometimes difficult to recognize the loanword source due to LG similarity with another Germanic language in contact (MHG/EMG, NHG, Dutch)



2. MLG period

Rise of MLG period – external history

- Until 1000 Wendland and Lusatia politically under German rule
- 12. c. German colonization of Wendland, W. Brandenburg, etc.
- **13. c. peak of German colonization:** Lusatia, Mecklenburg, Western Pomerania, Lower Vistula, Livonian cities (no peasant colonisation in Livonia)
- 1204-1237 State of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword (Riga, Tallinn/Reval, Tartu/Dorpat), then United with the Teutonic Order (later MLG used in written)
- From 1230 **Teutonic Order**, in 1309 Eastern Pomerania conquered, used both MLG and EHG in written
- After c. 1200 intensification of **German merchants contacts in Novgorod**, Vitebsk, Polock, Smolensk (Old Russian, Latin and later MLG in written)
- Beg. 14. c. larger use of MLG in written instead of Latin – spread of Lübeck koine after c. 1350
- **14. c. colonization waves** in E. Pomerania, Pomerellia, Prussia (also EMG) (from both W and E)
- 14. c. Gdańsk/Danzig, Chełmno/Kulm , Toruń/Thorn, Kraków/Krakau are Hansa cities

Reflexes of MLG *sch*-

- SK- preserved (oldest)
 - Plb. *daisko* ‚table‘ (MLG disk/disch), *skonǎ* ‚nice‘ (MLG schône)
 - Rus. (before c. 1400): *скаферь* (1421, MLG schaffer), *скуртойка* ‚women’s jacket‘ (dial., MLG schorte)
- ŠK- preserved
 - Plb. 0
 - Kash. *szkalowac* ‚complain‘ (MLG schelden), *szkùnia* ‚barn‘ (MLG schune)
 - LS: *škyrowaś* ‚make fun of sb.‘ (MLG schüren)
 - Pol. *szkuta* ‚little river boat‘ (1455, MLG schûte)
 - Rus. *шкап* ‚cupboard‘ (c. 1650, MLG schap), *шкипер* ‚captain‘ (1566, MLG schipper)
- ŠK- > Š- (youngest)
 - Plb. *šapâr* ‚shepherd‘ (MLG schâpære/schâper), *šenkot* ‚offer‘ (MLG schicken)
 - Kash. *szapòwac* ‚load‘ (MLG schâpen), *széper* with Ablaut (‚shepherd‘ MLG schâpære/schâper)
 - LS. *šapař* ‚shepherd‘ (MLG schâpære/schâper), *šep* ‚juror‘ (MLG schepe)
 - Pol. *szyper* ‚captain of a small boat‘ (MLG schipshêr, comp. Rus. шкипер)
 - Rus. 0
- Compare:
 - K-: Est. *kinkima* (MLG schenken), kipper (MLG schipper)
 - ŠK-/ŠK’: Liv. *škiņk+kâ* (MLG schenken), Lat. *šķiperis* (MLG schipper)
 - Š: Lat. Cur. *šep* (Low Prussian šep, MLG schip)

Reflexes of MLG s + consonant

- S+ consonant => S preserved (older)
 - Plb.: šC never in local LG dialect: *spö'ot* (,track' MLG sporen), *stig* (,20' MLG)
 - Kash.: few of naval term. *stach* ,stay; rope holding the mast' (LP *štax*)
 - Rus. *сталь* ,steel' (MLG stal, or Du. or Pol.?)
 - LS. *styriś* ,incite' (more often *štyriś*, MLG stüren)
- S + consonant = Š + consonant
 - Plb. probably by NHG interference: *šrib'ot/srib'ot* ,write' (MLG schrîven)
 - Kash. *sztël* ,quite' (MLG stille), *szpôrowac* ,spare' (MLG spâren)
 - Rus. *эмелть* ,enamel' (MLG smelt)
- Compare:
 - C: Fin. *terttu* (MLG stert), Est. *tool* (MLG stol, Finnish *tuoli* thought to be from Old Swedish)
 - sC: Lat. *spuole* (MLG spole)
 - šC: Lat. Cur. *špel* (MLG spel)

Reflexes of MLG /s/

- S + vocal = Ž/Š (older, but really LG?)
 - Kash. *žôga* (,saw' MLG *sâge*), *žorgac* (,care' MLG *sorgen*)
 - Rus *шуда* ,silk' (1389, 15th c., MLG *sîde(n)* or MHG?)
- S > S/Z
 - Plb. *sip'au* gen.sg. ,soap' (MLG *sêpe*), *soko* ,thing' (MLG *sake*)
 - Kash. *zép* ,soap' (MLG *sêpe*), *zelińt* ,seal' (MLG *sêlhunt*)
 - LS. *zejpa* ,soap' (MLG *sêpe*)
- Compare:
 - S: Est. *seep* (MLG *sepe*), Fin. *syomari* (MLG *somare/somer(e)*) (no /z/ phoneme in Finnic)
 - Z: Lat. *ziepes* (MLG *sepe*), Lat. Cur. *zāg* (MLG *sage*)

Reflexes of MLG and NLG v-

- Pronounced as V
 - Plb. *flitě* (written *wlijte*) ,diligence' (MLG *vît*), *flaškă*, written *wlaschka/flaschka* ,bottle' (MLG *vasche*) – in Plb. the pronuntiation of v- is questionable
 - Kash. Slovincian *wri* (Kash. Fri) ,free' (MLG *vri*), Slovincian *wródac* (Kash. *fródnaç*) ,hurry' (MLG *vrôden*) – longer preservation of /v/ pronuntiation in local LG (Pomeranian)?
 - Rus. *веркопер* hapax (1562 MLG *verkoper*)
- Pronounced as F
 - Plb. *farförij* ,lead!' (MLG *vorvoren*), *frištă* ,fresh' (MLG *vrisch*)
 - Kash. *fri* ,free' (MLG *vri*), *frësz* ,fresh' (MLG *vrisch*)
 - LS. *fryjny* ,single' (MLG *vri*)
 - Rus. *филенка/филенга* ,panel of door' (MLG *vullinge* or *through MHG*), *фоготъ* ,judge' hapax 1229 (MLG *voget*)
 - Pol. *farwater* ,sailable way in the water between sandbanks' (MLG *varwater*, in Russian considered a Dutch loanword)
- Compare (originally no /f/ phoneme in Baltic/Finnic):
 - V: Fin. *viila* (MLG *vile*), Est. *voor* (MLG *vore*), *vîlēt* (MLG *vilen*)
 - B: Lat. *brīvs* (MLG *vri*), Liv. *brī* (MLG *vri*)
 - P: Est. *prii* (MLG *vri*), Liv. *plēdār* (MLG *vleder*)
 - O: Lat. *Uoret* (MLG *voren*)
 - F: Lat. Kur. *ferv* (MLG *varwe*, Low Prussian *fār̥w*, *fēr̥w*)

Hanza

na mapie zaznaczono najważniejsze miasta

▲ - główna placówka handlowa "Konlor"

● - miasta należące do Hanzy

3. Transition period



Decline of MLG - external history

- 14. c. **Slavonic died out in most of Mecklenburg and Brandenburg** (until 1404 in Rügen, in 1526 still in SW Mecklenburg)
- 14/15 c. rising impact of LG on Sorbian, Wendland Polabian and Kashubian
- 1466 **incorporation of Western parts of the Teutonic Order to Poland** (1569 end of autonomy) => spoken LG in Poland, impact of EMG through Polish on Kash.
- 2nd half of 15. c. **decline of Hanseatic trade in Russian** and Polish cities => market opens for other merchants (e.g. Flemish/Dutch, Southern Germans) => after c. 1550 loanwords of rather other than LG origin
- 16.c. larger spread of EMG to Lower Lusatia
- 16. c. spread of LG to the Land of Kulm (instead of EMG)
- 16. c. **NHG as administrative language** in LG cities (Baltic sea during the 2nd half of the c.)
- Beg. of 17. c. NHG as language of education, end of MLG as cultural written language

Changes in Polabian c. 1450-1650

- Ref. to the relative chronology Olesch 1989: 306
- **I>AI**
 - **Before:** *jai* ,you' (MLG *jî*), *maiso* ,mass' (MLG *misse*)
 - **After:** *krig'ot* ,get' (MLG *krîgen*), *ritě* ,rich' (MLG *rîk*)
- **O>U> Ü/Ö**
 - **Before:** *Dümas* ,Thomas', *knöp* ,button' (MLG *knop*)
 - LG *û* *brüt* ,bride' (MLG *brût*, *brûde*), *brükot* (MLG *brûken*/*brüken*)
 - LG *ü*: *brödegam* ,husband' (MLG *brûdegam*/*brödegam*)
 - **After:** *komol* ,he came' (MLG *komen*), *dot* ,dead' (MLG *dôt*)
- **A>Å>O**
 - **Before:** *lodo* ,box' (MLG *lade*), *moľă* ,he draws' (MLG *malen*)
 - **After:** *jaxt* ,hunting' (MLG *jacht*), *dralě* ,quick' (MLG *dral*)
- **U > AU/AI**
 - **Before:** *traivă* ,marriage' (MLG *truwe*), *saurau* gen. sg. ,vinegar' (MLG *sûr*)
 - **After:** *runtă* ,round' (MLG *runt*)
- **Palatalization of K/G > Ť/Ď**
 - **Before:** *ťarl* ,man' (MLG *kerl*), *tūsân* ,pillow' (MLG *kussen*)
 - **After:** *köko* ,kitchen' (MLG *köke*), *gelt* ,money' (MLG *gelt*)

Changes in Kashubian c. 1500-1700

- **Switch of quantity to quality** (16.c., Treder 2002: 225) > similar sounds as NLG
 - **Á > Å** (later to O/Ö): *klôga* ,complaint' (MLG klâge), *szpôda* ,shovel' (MLG spâde)
 - **É > Ę**: *bédowac* ,propose' (MLG bêden), *mést* ,probably' (MLG mêst)
 - **Ó > Ȯ**: *nót* ,need' (MLG nôst), *sztót* ,moment' (MLG stôt)
- **Kashubian Schwa** (until c. 1700, Popowska-Taborska 1961: 102)
 - **MLG long vowel > ë**: *brëkòwac* ,need; use' (MLG brûken), *lëdac* ,suffer; tolerate; love' (MLG lîden)
 - **Original vowel maintained** (NLG+NHG): *druw* ,drill' (MLG drûf), *duwa* ,dove' (MLG dûve)

Concurrence of other Germanic idioms

- **Russian:** Middle Ages: Old Norse (few loanwords), Modern Age: EMG via Polish; Dutch (naval terminology as MLG), NHG (administrative and culture as MLG), LG words mostly replaced
- **Polish:** From Middle Ages: EMG as main source, Bavarian via Czech, MLG mainly naval terminology
- **Low Sorbian:** EMG parallel with LG, after losing the contact with LG EMG only, also EMG via Upper Sorbian
- **Kashubian:** EMG (+Bavarian) via Polish from c. 1500
- **Polabian:** probably no influence of another Germanic language

Min Danzig.

Von Walther Domanſky.

Danzig, mien leewet, es, dat mi gefällt,
Dat's doch de scheenste Stadt en disse Welt.
Danzig, mien leewet, heft Hart mi onn Senn
Ganz onn för emmer genoahme doahenn.
Danzig, mien leewet, mien Voaderstadt god,
Benn di verschreewe met Liew onn met Blod.
Wie sachst du niedlich ut rings mang de Wäll,
Wo nije Stroate nu kām oan de Stell,
Wie kickd' so manch een Torm öwer dat Grön,
Wo uck de Veilchen noch dāde recht blöhn.
Danzig, mien leewet, mien Voaderstadt god,
Benn di verschreewe met Liew onn met Blod.
Elsie de heft du nich een bloß, nee drie,
Elsie de heft du nich een bloß, nee drie,

4. NLG period

NLG period – external history

- From c. 1650: **LG just as spoken dialects**, attestations in dialectal literature, NHG as cultural language
- From 16. c. In contact only Polabian, Kashubian, Northern Polish dialects
- **1754 Extinction of Polabian**
- After c. 1750 Kashubian limited to the area East of Słupsk/Stolp
- Until the end of 18.c. LG ceased to be used spoken in „Livonian“ cities
- **1772-1918 Pomerellia and parts of Poland within Prussia**
- 19. c. increasing influence of NHG on the spoken language both LG and Slavonic
- **After 1945 no more German speakers** in Pomerellia etc.

Changes in NLG

- **G+E/I > J:** Pomeranian, Low Prussian:
 - Kash. *jift* ,poison', *jeszeft* ,shop, business'
- **A > Å** (until 17th c.?) maybe later in Wendland
 - Before: *halac* ,hold' (MLG *halen*), *malowac* ,draw' (MLG *malen*)
 - After: *ôpen* ,open' (MLG *apen*), *brôda* ,roast' (MLG *brâden*)
- **Delabialization** (from 17th c.) not in Wendland
 - Kash. *frisztëk* ,breakfast' (LP *Friehsteck*)
- **I/Ü > Ö>E** (17th – 18th c.): partly Eastern Pomeranian, Low Prussian (maybe convergence with Kashubian)
 - Kash. identified with *ë*: *fëszer* ,fisher' (LP *fešer*), *dëcht* ,quite' (LP *dext*); *very*' vs. *dik* ,pond' (MLG *dîk*)
- **Diphthongization:** Pomeranian
 - Western Kash.: *meidech* ,tired' (Pom. *meidech*), *gaiter* ,ladle' (Pom. *Geiter*)
- **Dialectal loanwords:**
 - Plb. *tasâi* ,home' (locally *kåse*), *bactě* ,a little'
 - LS: *pitśka* ,a little'
 - Kash. *jiwer* ,anger, problem'

Concurrence of LG and NHG

- **Plb.** few NHG forms at the very end of the language's life
 - NHG consonantism: *selšaft/selšap* ,company' (NHG Gesellschaft), *nüse* ,nuts' (NHG Nüsse)
 - NHG vocalism: *gut* ,good' (NHG gut)
 - šC-: *šrekol-să* ,he was frightened' (NHG schrecken), *šrib'ot/srib'iot* ,write' (NHG schreiben)
- **Kash.** Rising of NHG from late 19th c. (winning in admin. Language)
 - NHG Diphtongs vs. LG monophthongs: *rajzowac/rézowac* (NHG reisen)
 - NHG g- vs. LG j-: *gészeft/jeszeft* (NHG Geschäft)
 - NHG vs. LG consonantism: *fùtrowac/fùdrowac* (NHG füttern), *lojfer/léper* (NHG Läufer)
 - No Delabialization: *mùca* ,cap' (NHG Mütze)

Role of LG in Modern Kashubian

- **No more contact with LG** since 1945, NHG may be known from school
- **NHG loanwords mostly disappeared** from the language (young and linked to a different reality)
- **LG words** with similar Polish EMG equivalents often **replaced** by those
- Many **older LG words remained**, not felt as foreign + seem to be characteristic for Kash.
- Some **LG words** significantly **productive** (*bënë/bùten*) and frequent (*brëkòwac, lëdac, brutka*)

Vnde te schreuen vnsē rechticheit tegen iude breue to tu dhutschen. ~~sonen vnde goren.~~ En aller laanscher tinge
Dhen olden vrede to dher nuwart binnin kerlingen van grolande. En ~~odher~~ van nogarden bit tote ker-
gen. So wat so dheme gaste dat en tuschen schut. dat schal dhy konig uore andworden mit al dhen nogarderen. dheme
somergaste. vnde dhy wintergast sal comen. upp dhes koninges hant. Des borgreuen. vnde al dher nogardere. upp dhen
olden vrede sunder hindernisse. vnde scholen nemen dhy nogardeschen loden. vnde dhy nogardeschen cophude. upp dhen
olden vrede. vnde of te dhen nogardeschen loden nene nemet. ge schut en wat tusgen nogarden. vnde kerlingen.
Dhar ne heuet dhy koning. vn̄ dhy nogardere nicht mede to vnde. Willet of dhy nogardere nenen loden senden. noch
ere copmanne nicht varen. vnde dhy ~~dhutschen~~ ~~waren~~ ~~sunder~~ ~~hindernisse~~ tote ker-
lingen upp dhen olden vrede. ~~So welle~~ ~~dhudsch~~ ~~offte~~ ~~gote~~ ~~uere~~ ~~coppart~~ to dhen crelen. ge schut eme dhar wat
dhar ne hebet dhy nogardere nicht mede to vnde. Willet oc dhy nogardere bi eres silues willen nicht wedher vare
mitten coggen. so scholen se geuen van reuelikeme vare ene halue mark silueres. ~~So~~ ~~wanne~~ ~~dhy~~ ~~gast~~ ~~comet~~
in dhy nu. vnde heuet to dunde hokes odher mast. dhy mach he holden. an leidhent sit dhes wateres. wat so he
wil. ~~Et~~ ~~men~~ ~~enen~~ ~~dhes~~ ~~tusgen~~ ~~kerlingen.~~ vn̄ aldagen. dhen sal men uore. tote aldagen. dhar sal man ouer en richte
al na sineme broke. ~~Over~~ ~~en~~ ~~dhes~~ ~~ge~~ ~~uangen~~ ~~tusgen~~ ~~aldagen.~~ vnde nogarden. dhen sal men to nogarden oū richten
na sineme broke. ~~So~~ ~~wenne~~ ~~dhy~~ ~~dhudsch~~ ~~vn̄~~ ~~dhy~~ ~~goren~~ ~~comet~~ ~~in~~ ~~dher~~ ~~uostrov~~ ~~vore~~ ~~vorsch.~~ So solen se dhy uorsch
kerle uorderen sunder letten. vnde setten in ere schepe vrome lude. vn̄ nemē von en. dat van older ge wesen heuet. vnde
nicht met. vnde swenne so dhy gast upwart comet to gesteuete. so sal he geuen alsd he van older rit heuet ge geuen. vnde
nicht met vn̄ dhy lodenman. dhy ~~scholen~~ ~~nemen~~ ~~al~~ ~~dhy~~ ~~gast~~ ~~uore~~ ~~andworden~~ ~~mit~~ ~~al~~ ~~dhen~~ ~~nogarderen.~~ dheme
somergaste. vnde dhy wintergast sal comen. upp dhes koninges hant. Des borgreuen. vnde al dher nogardere. upp dhen
olden vrede sunder hindernisse. vnde scholen nemen dhy nogardeschen loden. vnde dhy nogardeschen cophude. upp dhen
olden vrede. vnde of te dhen nogardeschen loden nene nemet. ge schut en wat tusgen nogarden. vnde kerlingen.

5. Conclusion

Diachronic view

	Polabian	Kashubian	N. Polish	Low Sorbian	Stand. Polish	NW Russian
13th c.	Green	Light Green	Green			Light Blue
14th -16th c.	Green	Green	Green		Blue	Blue
17th - 18th c.	Green	Green	Green	Light Green		
19th c. - 1945		Light Green				
after 1945						

Synchronic view

- **Polabian:** almost all loanwords of LG origin, but language extinct
- **Kashubian:** LG element still visible, but in concurrence with Polish (often EMG) loanwords
- **Kociewian:** few LG lexemes (all identical with Kash), overlaid by NHG and Standard Polish
- **Low Sorbian:** few LG lexemes, overlaid by EMG and Slavonisms
- **Standard Polish:** few LG lexemes, mostly of naval terminology
- **Russian:** overlaid by Dutch and NHG, most of LG loanwords disputable

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