innovative and useful. It enables the student to achieve a more integrated understanding of
Georgian verbal morphology, in opposition to the fragmented picture given in other grammars.
This textbook is an exemplary product of the reading-knowledge approach to language
learning, combining as it does pedagogical thoroughness with linguistic insight. The practice
sentences contain a great deal of cultural and historical information so that the student
acquires general knowledge along with linguistic knowledge. The text also includes numerous
photographs of Georgia. This work is more than a practical textbook, however, incorporating
as it does pedagogical adaptations of recent theoretical advances in the understanding of the
structure of Georgian. It will thus also be of interest to those already familiar with the
language.

Victor A. Friedman, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

NOTE: Although he is mentioned in the acknowledgements to this volume, I do not believe
that Prof. Friedman’s work as reader of an earlier version of Aronson’s Georgian: A Reading
Grammar prevents him from objectively evaluating it. (Book Review Editor.)

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work thus emerges as more than a mere dictionary of synonyms; it is in fact a practical
compendium of the contemporary Ukrainian language. As such, it will prove valuable to a
variety of users: scholars, translators, and readers of belles lettres.

Thomas E. Bird, Queens College, CUNY

$22.95 (cloth).

The publication of Aronson’s textbook represents a major advance in the study and accessibil-
ity of Georgian, one of the most important languages of the Soviet Union, with a literary
tradition pre-dating the Slavic by four centuries and a scholarly literature of major impor-
tance, especially in relationship to all aspects of the study of the Caucasus. Until now, would-
be students of Georgian have had at their disposal only a few reference grammars of varying
quality and a tiny number of textbooks, most of which are unsuited to any type of mastery of
Georgian and none of which are directed toward the acquisition of a reading knowledge. With
the exception of a single work published in Tbilisi in 1972 which is virtually unobtainable and
is, in any case, intended for Georgians living outside of Georgia, none of these works is in
English. Aronson’s textbook is thus unique in that it aims solely at the acquisition of the
single most useful skill for the scholar interested in Georgian, viz. reading knowledge, and it is
available in English.

The book is organized into fifteen lessons, with seven appendices, a Georgian-English
vocabulary, and three indices. The first lesson comprises an introduction to the phonological
system; the remaining fourteen lessons each contain an annotated grammar section, a large
number of Georgian exercise sentences followed by a vocabulary, and English translations of
the exercises. The book can thus be used effectively by those studying without a teacher. After
the fifth lesson, each lesson also contains a reading passage reproduced directly from a Geo-
rian work, followed by a separate vocabulary.

From a pedagogical point of view, the textbook is distinguished by three excellent features.
First of all, each of the grammar chapters contains a section on word formation, which greatly
enhances the students’ ability to expand their passive vocabulary. Secondly, the order of pre-
sentation of grammatical information places the greatest emphasis on the information most
important to reading knowledge and conscientiously builds on what has gone before. The
third and most significant distinguishing feature of this textbook is the fact that it makes use
of new advances in the understanding of the structure of Georgian by basing explanations,
particularly of the verbal system, on recent linguistic analyses rather than on the traditional,
received wisdom, whose convoluted analyses involving cumbersome multiple homonyms
often left the bewildered student with the feeling that this language has no intelligible struc-
ture. Thus, for example, Aronson treats the complicated Georgian system of so-called passive,
middle, indirect, and relative verbs as a series of four numbered conjugations, after the fre-
quently met with Indo-European model, which stresses the fact that these are morphological,
inflexional classes rather than purely semantic-syntactic ones, as they are so often presented.

This enables the student to grasp the fact that while the verbs in the various conjugations are
generally united by certain semantic and syntactic features, these features are not the deter-
mining factors of classification. Aronson’s treatment of the category of version (Georgian
keve) as the object-marking function of what he calls pre-radical vowels, a complete synthesis
of whose uses is given in lesson 13.6 (not 13.5 as listed in the index and Appendix B), is both