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COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHING GEORGIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Based on applied linguistics, this article examines challenges and perspectives in teaching listening and speaking within the Georgian language curriculum. In the context of speech development, the study analyzes the methodological approaches of prominent scholars (A. Arabuli, K. Lomtadze, M. Koberidze). It emphasizes the need for phonetic processing in relation to the learner's native language. Amid globalization and multi-ethnicity, studying Georgian as a foreign language gains particular relevance. Successful acquisition requires developing both basic and academic language skills. Basic competencies for everyday communication are formed directly through conversational Georgian practice.

Keywords: *Foreign language, Georgian language, applied linguistics, language relevance, speech development, communication*

Introduction

In the era of modern globalization, the growing number of international students, tourists, business partners, and representatives of the diplomatic corps in Georgia has sharply highlighted the necessity of teaching Georgian as a Foreign Language (GEO-FL). The internationalization of the Georgian language is no longer merely a cultural mission – it has become a practical necessity. However, effective language acquisition for foreigners heavily depends on how well the educational process responds to real, everyday communicative demands. The specific structure of the Georgian language – its complex verbal system, peculiarities of personal markers, ergative construction, and an un-

usual phonetic apparatus for foreigners – often creates a barrier and causes learner demotivation when taught through traditional, dry grammatical methods. Another problem is that students frequently learn rules theoretically but struggle to apply them in live, social interaction. Consequently, developing a methodology that connects grammatical structures with communicative aspects has become an urgent priority.

The main goal of this paper is to highlight the communicative aspects of the process of teaching Georgian as a foreign language and to analyze the methodological foundations tailored to them. To achieve this goal, the paper addresses the following objectives: Adapting modern Communicative Language

Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) approaches to the specific features of the Georgian language; Exploring pathways for developing sociolinguistic and linguacultural competencies in international students; Developing methods to balance grammatical accuracy and speech fluency.

The findings of this study and the methodological recommendations presented herein will assist educators of Georgian as a foreign language in conducting the teaching process more effectively, interactively, and in a student-centered manner.

Method of research

The following methods are used in this paper: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), focusing on real communication rather than grammar rules, where grammar is taught directly within everyday contexts; Task-Based Learning (TBL), where language acquisition occurs during practical tasks; Inductive Method, a discovery-based learning where students examine examples, identify patterns, and derive rules with the teacher's guidance; Linguacultural Method, integrating language teaching with Georgian culture, traditions, and social etiquette (e.g., supra culture, forms of politeness); Audio-Visual Method, using multimedia resources essential for the correct pronunciation of specific Georgian sounds (k', t', p', ts', ch', q); Eclectic Approach, a judicious combination of these methods ensuring a balance between grammatical accuracy and fluency. These methods are used alongside well-established descriptive and comparative linguistic methods

Main part

Due to the multiethnic nature of Georgia, multilingual communication has historically been an essential necessity – a reality that remains unchanged today. Language acquisition is an ongoing, longitudinal process that requires a significant investment of time. When learning a foreign language, meticulous attention must be paid to the development of both basic and academic language skills.

Basic language competencies are primarily cultivated through conversational practice in the Georgian language. These skills are utilized in daily situations and routine social interactions. Individuals typically acquire

these competencies within social contexts, such as peer interactions during recreational activities, commuting via public transportation, and socializing with schoolmates. This developmental process occurs naturally within environments of social interaction, further enriched by paralinguistic cues such as gestures and facial expressions (Gogoladze, T., & Koberidze, M., 2016, p. 42).

1. The Interconnection Between Academic and Basic Language Competencies. Academic language competence is a complex phenomenon that encompasses four core dimensions: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Developing these skills enables students to think in the target language and successfully master various undergraduate courses. It is crucial to note that progress in academic language proficiency is unattainable without the foundation of basic language competencies. At this initial stage, an effective strategy involves starting with simple lexical units, constructing basic syntactic structures (sentences), and actively utilizing phrases essential for daily communication.
2. Group Size, Socialization, and Interaction. Group size plays a critical role in the language acquisition process. Working individually with a single student limits the opportunities for dialogue, interaction, or group work. In such cases, to enhance the effectiveness of the learning process, it is essential to involve students in university life beyond regular classroom activities. Interaction with Georgian-speaking students, combined with a supportive university environment and appropriate conditions, significantly fosters the social adaptation of non-Georgian-speaking students and the practical application of their acquired knowledge. Furthermore, when working with students who do not speak Georgian at all and lack a basic vocabulary for elementary communication, it is advisable for the instructor to possess at least a foundational knowledge of the student's native (or intermediary)

language to overcome the initial communication barrier.

3. Fiction as a Tool for Language and Culture Acquisition Culture serves as the foundation for social unity and societal development. Parallel to learning conversational Georgian, special attention must be paid to a thorough knowledge of the literary language, ensuring that students can read texts in the original in the future. Adapted literature represents the finest methodological tool for achieving this goal. Literary texts function as both a prerequisite and a powerful mechanism for language learning. Meaningful reading, correct interpretation of content, and an appreciation of its aesthetic and emotional richness positively influence students' critical thinking and the development of their literary taste.

In the process of text analysis, asking targeted questions (by both the lecturer and the student) facilitates: The enrichment of vocabulary; The identification of stylistic and grammatical norms characteristic of the Georgian language; The development of versatile oral and written skills. By highlighting the author's biography, the title of the work, or a prominent theme within the text, the lecturer can significantly increase student motivation and engagement. The themes presented in literary works provide an excellent platform for initiating discussions. Fiction offers students more than just linguistic competence; it opens the door to understanding cultural and literary contexts. In turn, introducing, appreciating, and respecting Georgian linguistic and cultural values strengthens students' intrinsic motivation to thoroughly master the state language.

Analyzing errors in oral communication is essential for identifying linguistic difficulties. In the process of developing speaking skills in a target language, errors are inevitable and are driven by various factors. A primary challenge involves comprehensively mastering the phonetic structure of the new language and adapting the articulatory apparatus – a process that requires long-term effort. Although individual innate abilities, such as auditory precision and phonetic aptitude, enable some learn-

ers to achieve accentless speech naturally, it is advisable to develop phonetic structures in relation to the learner's native language. Specifically, this is achieved by isolating distinct sounds and subsequently integrating them into sentences and simple, short texts (Lomtadze, K., 1993, p. 192).

The unique Georgian consonant “q” [qʰ] often presents a prolonged or even insurmountable phonetic challenge for foreign learners, thereby requiring distinct methodological attention. In spontaneous speech, learners frequently substitute it with mispronounced yet similar sounds, such as “g” [ɣ] and “b” [x]. Such substitutions can completely alter the semantics of a word, as demonstrated by the following word pairs: ყრუ [qʰru] (deaf/voiceless) – ღრუ [ɣru] (hollow/cavity) and ყელი [qʰeli] (throat) – ხელი [xeli] (hand).

In the process of language acquisition, another significant difficulty lies in the correct phonetic realization of the sound “l” [l]. To prevent mispronunciation, an effective method involves an articulatory exercise where the tip of the tongue is placed between the teeth while producing the sound. For learners, the primary objective is to differentiate the phonetic variance between the soft and hard varieties of “l” [l] and to manage the corresponding articulatory movements. To refine these skills, the utilization of specific phonetic exercises and tongue twisters is highly recommended (Arabuli, A., 2004, p. 72).

One of the challenges for students learning Georgian is the incorrect usage and alternation of directional preverbs (prefixes). For example, confusing oriented motion towards or away from the speaker, such as: ამოვიდა (rose/came up) vs. გამოვიდა (came out), or გავიდა (went out) vs. ჩავიდა (went down) (Koberidze M., 2016, p. 192).

Teaching Georgian as a foreign language requires integrating communicative aspects and methodological foundations. The use of functional grammar helps foreign students freely apply the language in real, everyday communication (Asatiani R., 2012, p. 45). Consequently, contemporary methodology focuses on developing practical language competencies aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Beridze M., 2015, p. 112)."

Thus, based on the principles of applied linguistics, the analysis of oral speech errors effectively identifies linguistic challenges and competency difficulties in learning Georgian as a non-native language. To overcome these barriers, it is crucial to: develop phonetic skills considering the learner's native lan-

guage; share pedagogical expertise to resolve pronunciation, grammatical, and lexical issues; integrate learners into the Georgian language environment across educational levels; promote the appreciation of cultural values; and enhance motivation for learning the state language.

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