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## **The importance of stress and intonation in the process of learning Georgian as a second language**

### **Abstract**

Listening as a skill plays a great role at the first stage of language learning. Listening helps understanding and enables language learners to perceive information, express their ideas, etc.

Listening means “cooperation between the teacher and the listeners.” The strategies of teaching L2 must be worked out by teachers based on the abilities of the class.

Students studying Georgian as a second language have problems with correct pronunciation of words and phrases in rapid speech. At the first stage language learners do not know grammatical rules well and they study the language by imitating their teacher’s words and phrases. It is clear that the role of listening is great at the first stage.

Time after time language learners get used to the teacher’s voice, tone and articulation system. They pay attention to the teacher’s verbal and non-verbal signs and start to understand the language. In the process of learning and understanding the language, language learners pay great attention to stress and intonation. Georgian language has weak dynamic stress. Foreign language teachers always pronounce words clearly, marking stressed syllables. They also mark learners’ attention to certain phonemes and point at certain endings of the words, stressing the last syllables of the words; Thus, initially, language learners study the language through listening, ignoring grammar rules.

Language learners easily learn language through dialogues. The role of stress and intonation is great in dialogues. The forms of the words in short sentences are more easily remembered than in long texts. In the process of teaching L2 we pay attention to the parts of speech that are frequently used in communication.

In the process of listening and speaking we frequently use the method “parallel dialogues” that means involvement of another person in the process of speaking. This is an interactive lesson is a great fun for language learners and is practically proved. Listening to the dialogues and repeating it, is another helpful method employed by us.

We observed that language learners in dialogues prefer using short answers. Teachers should point to the problem and try to eradicate students’ tendency to answer the questions too briefly.

Learning a second language through listening is one of the best teaching strategies.

**Key words:** *listening, strategy, stress, intonation, dialogue.*

### **Introduction**

Acquisition of a new language is not an easy easy process. It requires much energy from both language learners and foreign language teachers. Many factors should be taken into consideration while teaching but much is dependent on a successful teaching process.

Listening as a skill is of the greatest importance at the first stage of language learning. The process resembles the process of learning a native language by a child. “A year old child starts to study the language through listening, he/she pays attention to the meaning of words, word combinations and a linguistic context. A two year old child guesses nearly all of what is said, because he has learnt the language through listening. Therefore, at the first stage a child acquires the language through listening (geofl.ge).

Listening helps understanding. It enables language learners to perceive information, express their ideas etc. Communicative strategies require from participants asking and answering questions, thanking, giving advice, recommending, etc. Different types of texts created in the process of communication have to be phonetically, grammatically and structurally correct.

Listening means “cooperation between the teacher and the listeners.” The strategies of teaching L2 must be worked out by teachers based on the abilities of the class.

“Methodology of teaching a foreign language is based on traditional and communicative linguistics. Traditional linguistics guarantees acquisition of language as a system and its certain aspects (phonetic, lexical and grammatical), while communicative linguistics makes it possible to use a language as a system in communication. Traditional and modern linguistics have one and the same goal, they both help language learners to acquire the language and be able to communicate in a foreign language (Shaverdashvili, Fhitskhelauri, Ramishvili & Gvasalia, 2014: 13).

While working on the topic the following methods were used by us: active listening, questioning, repeating, communicative, co-operative and “parallel dialogue” methods.

### **The Main Part:**

“Listening skills which are one of the main aspects of language acquisition are given priority as they enable the language learners to achieve correct pronunciation as the basis of successful interaction” (Dzamashvili, 2014: 34).

Listening activities, such as discriminatory and differential exercises aim at finding differences between phonemes, morphemes, words, syntagmas and sentences (Shaverdashvili, Fhitskhelauri, Ramishvili & Gvasalia, 2014: 90).

Students studying Georgian as a second language have problems with correct pronunciation of words and phrases in rapid speech. On the first stage, language learners do not know grammatical rules well and they learn the language by imitating their teacher’s words and phrases. It is clear that the role of listening is great on the first stage.

Time after time language learners get used to the teacher’s voice, tone and articulation system. They pay attention to the teacher’s verbal and non-verbal signs and start to understand the language. In the process of learning and understanding the language, language learners pay great attention to stress and intonation patterns. We believe that while listening, listeners should pay more attention to the stress of the utterance.

“Stress is a degree of force given to a certain syllable or a word in a sentence.” According to Arnold Chikobava “Stress is a force given to this or that syllables in a word.” G. Akhvlediani gives us the almost similar definition of the term: “marking of certain elements of speech and making them louder than others is called stress” (Feikrishvili & Saghinadze, 2014: 37 - 38). “Stress may come on certain syllables of a word, on certain words or phrases in the sentence” (Kenchiashvili, 2014).

The Georgian language has a weak dynamic stress. Foreign language teachers always try to pronounce words clearly, marking the stressed syllables. They also draw the learners’ attention to certain phonemes (example **k**-argad, not g-argad, **p**-uri, not ph-uri -mispronounced by learners) and point at certain endings of the words, stressing the last syllables of the words (Mariam-**is** odjakh-**is** tsevreb-**is** gatsnoba minda). Thus, initially, language learners study the language through listening, ignoring grammar rules.

Language learners easily learn language through dialogues. The role of stress and intonation is great in dialogues. The forms of the words in short sentences are more easily remembered than in long texts. In the process of teaching L2 we pay attention to the parts of the speech that are frequently used in communication. These parts of speech are:

#### **a) Pronouns:**

Question: **Shen** studenti khar? (Are you a student?)

Answer: diakh, **me** studenti var (Yes, I am a student).

Question: es **shen-i** tsignia? (Is it your book?).

Answer: diakh, es **chem-i** tsignia (Yes, it is my book)/

Rogor-**i**? (what kind?) → karg-**i**, lamaz-**i**, akhal-**i** (good, beautiful, new)

Romel-**i**? (which?) → pirvel-**i**, meore ... (the first, the second)

Romel-**ma**? (which?) → pirvel-**ma**, meore-**m** (the first, the second)

Ramden-**i**? (how many / how much?) → or-**i**, bevr-**i**, tsota... (two, many/much, little/few).

Ramden-**ma**? (how many / how much?) → or-**ma**, bevr-**ma**, tsota-**m**...

### b) Verbs:

- dges ramden-**i** leqtsia **g**-aqvs? (How many lectures do you have today?)

- dges otkh-**i** leqtsia **m**-aqvs. (Today I have four lectures)

- **is** davaleba-**s** tser-**s**, **shen**? (He is writing homework, and you?)

- **me** tsign-**s** **v**-kikhulob. (I am reading a book)

- ra-**s** **tser**? (shen) (What are you writing?)

- tseril-**s** **v**-tser (me). (I am writing a letter)

- ra datser-**e**? (shen) (What did you write?)

- tseril-**i** da **v**-tser-**e** (me). (I wrote a letter)

- ra-**s** datser? (shen) (What will you write?)

- tseril-**s** da **v**-tser (me). (I will write a letter).

### g) Adverbs:

rogo-**r**? (how) → karg-**ad**, lamaz-**ad**.... (well, beautifully)

ranair-**ad**? (how) → karg-**ad**, lamaz-**ad** ....

In the process of listening and speaking an activity called “parallel dialogues” is frequently used. Participants of the so called “parallel dialogues” are the teacher and two students. The teacher asks the first student a question and at the same time warns her/him to pay attention to the endings of personal names. The student answers either correctly or incorrectly.

**Teacher:** Tamar, davit-**is** deda qartul-**i** eni-**is** mastsavlebelia?

**Tamari:** diakh, davit-**is** deda qartul-**i** eni-**is** mastsavlebelia.

For checking the answer, the teacher involves another student in the dialogue. The second student uses the same “Yes” or “No” and evaluates the first student’s answer.

**Teacher:** Davit, Tamar-**is** pasukh-**i** stsoria?

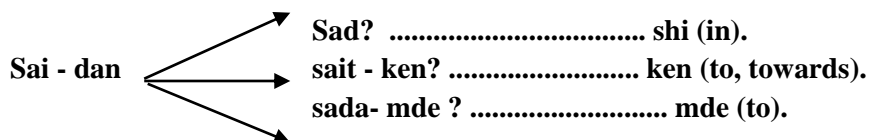
**Daviti:** diakh, Tamar-**is** pasukh-**i** stsoria.

The above discussed activity helps foreign language learners to learn the endings of personal names in different grammatical cases and to construct simple sentences.

We observed that language learners prefer using short answers in dialogues. They think that short answers “yes” or “no” are quite enough. Teachers should point to the problem and try to eradicate students’ tendencies to answer the questions too briefly.

Foreign students have difficulty studying Georgian prepositions. We shall concentrate mainly on prepositions - **dan**, - **mde**. While teaching prepositions, we use question words like: saidan? saitken? sadamde? - that are stressed in interrogative sentences. Question word – saidan? – reveals several positions:

**sai - dan – sad?                      Sakhli - dan universitet - shi (preposition – shi (in))**  
**sai - dan – sait - ken?      Sakhli - dan Universitetis - ken (preposition – ken (to, towards)).**  
**Sai - dan – sada-mde?              Sakhli - dan universiteta - mde      (preposition – mde (to))**  
 Below is the scheme that will make it easier to understand the essence of the activity.



Foreign students can't differentiate between the forms **bevri** (many/much) and **dzalian** (very). In Georgian they belong to different parts of speech. **Bevri** (many/much) is a quantitative numeral, while **dzalian** (very) is an adverb of manner. But the problem is that the Turkish has an identical lexeme **çok** to denote **bevri** and **dzalian**. **Çok** can be used with nouns (**çok** kitap – many books, **çok** kalem – many pens, **çok** insan – many people ...) and verbs (**çok** seviyorum – to love something very much, **çok** istiyorum – to want something very much, **çok** özledim – to miss someone very much...). This is the most difficult problem for Turkish language learners. They use words **bevri** and **dzalian** correctly with nouns, but make mistakes while using the same lexemes with verbs (bevri mikvarkhar, bevri momenatra, etc).

Using a native language is quite reasonable at the first stage. It has a more positive effect rather than a negative one. Students study a foreign language easily and show motivation (Dzamashvili, 2014: 80).

We try to define to Turkish students that, in Georgian **bevri** (many, much) is mainly used with nouns (bevri megobari (many friends), bevri tsigni (many books), bevri samushao (much work), bevri tirili (much cry), bevri stsavla (much learning), derived words (bevri chemiani (many relatives), bevri khutiani (many excellent marks), quantitative numerals. Question word - ramdeni (how many?) is followed by bevri, where the intonation rises and stress falls on pairs: ramdeni-i? – bevri-i. **Bevri** is used even with verbs: bevri davtsere (I have written much), bevri tsavikitkhe (I have read much), bevri vimushave (I have worked much). Question word **ramdeni** can be used even with verbs (ramdeni davtsere – how much did I write?).

**Dzalian** is used with a) adjectives (**rogor-i?**) We try to draw the language learners' attention to the last vowel – dzalian lamaz-i, dzalian bednier-i (very beautiful, very happy); b) verbs (**rogor? (how?)**).



(mistake: *bevri mikvars, bevri momtsons...*)

Foreign language learners should pay attention to what parts of speech follow bevri and dzalian (bevri kalami, dzalian momtsons, dzalian lamazi).

Foreign students make mistakes with words end at -ze, -shi. They reveal the tendency of retaining vowel **i** before – ze, -shi, for example: sakhl-i+ -shi > sakhlshi. Vowel **i** is even retained with verbs, especially with the first person forms: **vikitkhulob** instead of vkitkhulob, **vitser** instead of vtser. Every foreign student has problems with the pronunciation of ts, k, ch when they are pronounced after prefix v - (vikitkhulob, vitser). Students should realise that semantically vitser is different from vtser. But “vikitkhulob” is an artificial form and has no meaning.

### Conclusion

Learners of the Georgian language have problems in the pronunciation of certain sounds, they use some word forms properly in the sentences. That is why it is important for the teacher to talk slowly, using short

sentences and easy phrases. The teacher should use proper stress and intonation patterns to make the words easily understandable for the learners.

At listening lessons teachers should give priority to dialogues, practical exercises, interviews and use short and funny texts in the process of teaching. There should be collaboration between language learners and teachers. A friendly atmosphere at the lesson is essential for successful communication.

We believe that there are several ways to acquire a new foreign language and some of the best are learning through audition, pronunciation and drawing the learners' attention to stress and intonation.

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