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Peculiarities of Diverse Audiences and Some Issues of Language Teaching

ABSTRACT

Teaching Georgian as a second language implies the use of generally known and proven methods of teaching a foreign language. However, there is no universal method of language teaching. In all cases, it is necessary to take into account the specificity of the target language and the interests, goals, motivation, abilities and background knowledge of the language learning group.

In recent years, the number of Georgian language learners from different countries has increased considerably. These are Turks, Turkmens, Kazakhs, Poles... This process was accelerated even more during the Russia-Ukraine war. In Georgia, especially in Batumi, many Ukrainians and Russians of different ages have expressed their desire to learn the Georgian language. Most of those listed (and not only) want to continue their studies at Batumi State University.

Learning the Georgian language requires a special approach in a diverse audience, who do not understand each other, have different cultures, religions and beliefs. Such an audience is characterized by peculiarities. Managing a different audience requires much more work, responsibility and consideration of the group's interests on the part of the teacher. It is quite difficult for the teacher to convey the material to each student of a linguistically mixed group without distracting any of them.

It is known that the learner of a new language perceives and remembers the information received best by sight.

When explaining new material to a diverse audience, it is useful to use visual aids for presentation, which significantly helps the listening and understanding of information. In the Georgian university space, the most common of them are slide show, blackboard, flipchart and handout.

Among the presentation aids, we consider handouts to be the most acceptable form of presentation aids for ethnically mixed groups who are users of different languages and sit in the same audience at the initial stage of language learning.

It is necessary to take into account the time factor, the moment of embarrassment, and most importantly, the goal of the teacher - new vocabulary and phrases should be mastered by everyone in the same way, under equal conditions. At this time, the teacher uses the theses paper, the so-called Handout. It is distributed in printed form to all members of the audience. "Its main purpose is to prepare the listener to listen to the presentation, to make it easier for him

to understand the information and not to need to write down the information while listening." Printed material is a reliable friend to the language learner. The listener feels calmer. If we make the handouts visually pleasing, the teaching process will be even more fun. In addition, the handout should be written in a short, large font. It is better to provide a few pages in a short format rather than overloaded material.

In the report, we will talk about several issues of language teaching in a diverse audience.

Keywords: *second language, method, audience, characteristic, globalization.*

Introduction

Teaching Georgian language as a second language means using all well-known and proven methods of teaching foreign languages, as there is no universal method of teaching a language. In all cases, it is necessary to take into consideration the specifics of the target language, the interests, goals, motivation, abilities and background knowledge of the language learners.

In recent years, there has been considerable increase in the number of Georgian language learners. They are mostly the inhabitants of Turkey, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Belorussia. This process was much more accelerated under conditions of Russian-Ukrainian war. Many Ukrainians and Russians living in Batumi (Georgia) expressed their desire to learn Georgian as a foreign language and continue their study at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University. I would like to mention that the choice of the topic for presentation was determined by the reality. Teachers teaching Georgian as a second language have to work with mixed groups and it may cause a number of problems. Educational programs preparing foreigners in Georgian should prepare students for interaction in the university space, which automatically implies that representatives of different ethnic groups should receive undergraduate education.

Main part

Teaching Georgian language in mixed groups requires a special approach from a teacher. Language learners do not understand each other. They belong to different cultures and have different political views. Language learners always differ in age, gender, motivation, culture and political beliefs. Such audiences have their own peculiarities and their management requires much more work and responsibility from the teacher. The teacher should take into consideration each learner's interests and give equal attention to each language learner.

In 2022-2023 academic year, youngsters from Turkey, Turkmenistan and Russian were enrolled in the Georgian Language Teaching Program of the Continuing Education Center operating at BSU. At the lessons Turkmens and Russians communicated in Russian, while Turks and Turkmens

communicated in Turkish. Multilingualism caused misunderstanding between language learners. Later, new groups were added. The groups were composed by Ukrainians and Russians (12-12 students in each group). At the beginning of the course, I had a fear of managing the classroom effectively, as the learners were from the countries that were at war. There were several cases of tension but I managed to communicate with them. It is also true that sometimes I had to refrain from some topics (my country, my city, relations between neighboring countries) provided by the course.

Teachers of a second language should avoid topics causing different opinions. The learners should respect the language and culture which they study and at the same time respect the diversity of the group. The aim of the language learners should be one: a thorough study of a foreign language.

Diversity is the main characteristic of Georgia as a multilingual country. "Variety is recognized and accepted as a part of linguistic development" (Coyle, Hood, Marsh, 2016: 35). Diversity is a positive and interesting process, but it may cause a lot of problems in the society as well. It is especially evident in ethnically diverse audiences where people of different views and approach interact and learn at the same time.

The continuous process of globalization automatically means adaptation to diversity. So, there is a risk of working in the same classroom where people are completely different or politically unacceptable to each other. Of course, we should take into account formal environment and interests of language learners. We share Muriel Savillier-Troike's point of view: "Sociolinguists can use social, economic and political differences and their experiences in terms of interaction as the basis for the difference between learners" (Troike, 2010:5).

In a mixed audience, there is always an emotional and psychological background, which naturally affects the proper management of the learning process.

In the report, I will focus on several issues of language teaching in mixed audience conditions.

Meeting with familiar vocabulary:

At the initial stage of teaching, I provide language learners with international words (university, professor, student, bank, telephone, Internet, cafe, restaurant...). This is the first step to overcome the difficulty and the fear of learning a new language.

Meeting with familiar vocabulary is considered to be one of the interesting processes in language learning. The planning of each new lesson is based on the previous one, and the more familiar words the student encounters in the new material, the higher is the degree of satisfaction. At this time, the teacher often repeats the phrases: "You already know these words", "These words are known to you", etc.

The acquisition of a new language is determined, first of all, by the richness of the vocabulary. It

is quite difficult for a non-Georgian speaker to use word-forms correctly (inflectional forms of nouns, verb forms, adverbs, syntagms created by the relationship between a name and a verb, etc.), but the fact that Georgian language learners have a special vocabulary means a lot. In connection with this issue, I will give an example of one of my students, a young man of Russian nationality. He is a programmer by profession and is interested in learning Georgian language. After 3-4 months studying Georgian, he started reading Georgian stories in original. The stories were intended for school age, particularly for 6-7 year old students ("Candy Country," "Travelling in Candy Country"). This initiative of his was motivated by pure professional interest - he wanted to know how many Georgian words he knew and how many were more or less known to him; This list of words included all word-forms (nouns and verb forms). A language learner read a text in original, underlined familiar words and asked questions, if needed. This process appeared to be very pleasant and fruitful for him. His interest increased and at present he knows at least 1500-2000 words.

I consider memorizing similar words as one of the practical methods of enriching the vocabulary. Here I highlight:

a) **words that differ in one sound:** კარი-ყარი-ლარი-დარი (kari-qari-lari-dari); დაფა-ფაფა-ტაფა (dafa-fafa-tafa); ბიჭი-ნიჭი (Bichi-nichi); ვაზა-ვაზი (Vaza-vazi); სული-ფული (suli-fuli); თბილი-რბილი (tbili-rbili); კბილი-ტკბილი (kbili-tkbili); ძნელი-ძველი (zneli-zveli); საშლელი-სათლელი (sashleli-satleli....). I believe that during the so-called "alphabet period" it is desirable to enrich vocabulary with the words having identical sound forms but being semantically different.

b) **words with a similar sound composition or a common root:** ყვავი-ყვავილი (kvavi-kvavili); მაღლა-მაღალი (maghla-maghali); დაბლა-დაბალი (dabla-dabali); ახლა-ახალი-ახლოს (akhla-akhali-akhlos); ყური-საყურე-ყურება (kuri-sakure-kureba); ფული-საფულე (fuli-safule); პური-საპურე (puri-sapure); კალამი-საკალმე (kalami-sakalme); სტუმარი-სასტუმრო (stumari-sastumro); ექიმი-საექიმო-ექიმობა (ekimi-saeqimo-eqimoba); მეგობარი-მეგობრობა (megobari-megobroba)...

c) Learning synonymous phrases:

My name is - I am (me mkvia-me var- chemi sakhelia)

I have a telephone - This is my telephone (me maqvs telefoni/es chemi telefonია)

Where is it located? Where is it? (sad mdebareobs? / sad aris?)

For non-Georgian speakers, it is difficult to match the third person form of the verb in the present tense with the pronoun "mas" (he/she). They easily learn phrases: she (Nino) goes, she (-

ნინო-Nino) calls, she (ნინო-Nino) lives, etc., but they have difficulty in learning forms like: ნინო-ს უყვარს (Nino loves), ნინოს ჰყავს (Nino has); Georgian language learners not very easily learn syntagms formed with the pronoun “mas” (he/she): she/he has, he/she loves. I think that it is possible to write down those verbs, mainly verbs of active use, which arrange the subject in the dative form, and then say: where there is third person pronoun “mas,” the corresponding subject will have the suffix -s as well: **ma-s** აყვს – **Nino-s** აყვს, **ma-s** უკვარს-**Nino-s** უკვარს.

We teach non-Georgian speakers not only language, but also culture, manners of behavior in the audience, polite forms. In a diverse audience, we deal with people of different cultures, but our goal is to share each other’s cultural ideas, knowledge, values: "A group of people form a hierarchy of values, however, this hierarchy of values can change over time..." (Tabatadze, Inasaridze, Chachkhiani, Kiria, 2010:7). It is proven to teach parallel phrases at the same time: როგორ ხართ? – როგორ ბრძანდები? – როგორ გიკითხობ? Adeqit!-abrzandit! Daskhedit!-dabrzandit! Modit!-mobrzanidit!, tsadit!-tsabrdzandit! Vin khart?- vin brzandebit?, sad khart?-sad brzandebit?

When explaining a new material to a diverse audience, it is helpful to use visual presentations. "It is believed that out of the five basic senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch), a person perceives and remembers the information received by sight the best. The use of visual aids for presentation is useful and contributes to the listening and understanding of information (Basics of Academic Writing, 2018:201).

The usage of Slide-show, blackboard, flipchart and handouts are the most common in the Georgian university space. But with ethnically mixed groups the most acceptable way to teach Georgian is to use handouts. New vocabulary and phrases should be mastered by everyone in the same way, under equal conditions. At this time, the teacher uses handouts. It is distributed in printed form to all members of the audience. "Its main purpose is to prepare the listeners for the presentation, to make it easier for them to understand the information and not to write down the information while listening" (Basics of Academic Work, 2018:207).

Printed material is a reliable friend to the language learners. The listeners feel calmer. If we make the handouts visually pleasing, the teaching process will be even more fun. In addition, the handout should be written in a short, large font. It is better to provide a few pages in a short format rather than overloaded material.

Students of the one-year educational program of training in the Georgian language and students of the Georgian as a second language program continue their studies at the bachelor's level after completing the preparatory level. In the first semester of the first year, all the faculties of the university learn the subject - "Basics of Academic Writing." It is quite natural that a non-Georgian

speaker, after completing a one-year training program, finds it quite difficult to listen to, understand and do tasks. In this regard, Georgian language learners will be helped by presentation aids, handouts, which, in turn, will prepare them for the basics of academic writing.

One of my Ukrainian students created two groups of colorful handouts. The first were the forms of the verb "to be" and the second were the forms of the verb "have". He also created schemes of personal and possessive pronouns. As he says, visual aids are effective for him as a new language learner. This is how the so-called "portfolio" is created.

We consider the cooperative teaching method to be the most important among the teaching methods tested in the non-Georgian speaking audience. We not only teach, but also learn from our students. It is evident when working with both groups and individuals. People of different professions are objects of observation for us. Every learner has different goals and desires. They dictate what method should be used in the teaching process. As it is known, "cooperative learning and teaching is one of the most effective teaching methods. Practice shows that cooperative learning/working in groups significantly:

- improves the student's academic achievements;
- develops the student's social and communication skills;

It promotes the active involvement of each student in the learning and teaching process" (Tabatadze, Inasaridze, Chachkhiani, Kiria, 2010:59).

During my work career, I had contact with many interesting learners of Georgian language. But I will single out one Ukrainian, who is a sailor by profession and who is learning Georgian language enthusiastically. He is helpful to me. His method is to focus on the object, i.e. the new language. For 25 minutes, the language learner forgets about the outside world and turns all his attention only to the material to be studied - learning new words and phrases. This method is acceptable both when learning a new language and for any group work, especially if the audience is ethnically mixed.

Concluding

Thus, learning a new language is always accompanied by difficulties. On the one hand, success depends on the skills and responsibility of the language learner, and on the other hand, the teacher's correct management of the audience and learning process.

In Georgia, as a multilingual and culturally diverse country, great importance is attached to the issue of raising the knowledge of the state language and also to the interest of foreigners in our language.

The multi-component and large-scale campaign launched on the initiative of the State Minister's office and with the financial support of the Ministry of Education and Science under the name - "Georgian language unites us" is completely timely and welcome.

Learning the Georgian language needs promotion, support, diverse opportunities and language learner-oriented programs.

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