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Affects of the Russo-Ukrainian War in Georgia: Russian Voices in the Urban Spaces of Tbilisi

ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the ongoing transformation of the urban spaces in Tbilisi, Georgia, after the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine starting from February 2022. More specifically, the authors focus on the increasingly frequent sounds of the Russian language in different public spaces of the capital city, triggering various unsettling emotions and anxiety among locals. By building on the affect theory, the paper explains how and why specific uncanny feelings emerge among Georgians while encountering Russian-speaking newcomers after 2022. Based on interviews and digital ethnography, the article connects individual affective responses to the larger historical and geopolitical events through the categories of voice, memory and language.

Keywords: *Affect; voice; memory; Russian language; Russo-Ukraine war; Russian imperialism; Tbilisi; Georgia.*

Introduction

In late May 2023, as the pleasant weather graced Tbilisi, and the streets became increasingly crowded, I arranged to meet a friend at the iconic Saakadze monument in the heart of the city[1]. As time passed and evening descended, I decided to take a moment to enjoy a cup of coffee at a nearby café. It was during this peaceful interlude that I couldn't help but notice how, after the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the presence of the Russian language and its distinct acoustics had become an integral part of Tbilisi's ambience. The sound of the Russian language could be heard everywhere in Tbilisi, whether in shops, cafes, parks, or on the bustling streets.

That afternoon, I chose to sit outside the café, and the place was relatively empty. Within moments,

[1] Writing the vignette in first person was a joint decision made by both authors to ensure conveying subjective feelings and experiences told in the stories. The ethnographic material has been collected and theoretically examined by Tea Kamushadze, while Nana Kobidze contributed with further theoretical and conceptual analysis.

a group of young men, aged between 20 and 30, entered the open-air section of the café, engaged in animated conversations in Russian, and took their seats. More of their friends soon joined them, filling up two tables. They seemed joyous, chatting away and capturing the moment in photographs. I could only catch fragments of their Russian chatter, which triggered a familiar yet complex mix of emotions within me. Whenever I hear this language being spoken, I instinctively search for the signs of the Ukrainian flag in my surroundings to soothe the unease stirred by these conversations. Especially after 2022, the flag of Ukraine became the symbol of anti-imperialist resistance against Putin's Russia for me and many others who have lived through the effects of Russian imperialism in the region. I search for the flag of Ukraine as it ensures for me that despite speaking the language associated with Russian imperialism, the person is against Putin and the war.

Before long, my friend Eliso (46) arrived, and our discussion shifted to the entry of Russians into Georgia and the latest global news. She mentioned that one of the young men in the group was one of our students, studying Russian philology. She greeted him warmly when she entered. We lingered for about 15-20 minutes, and as we were preparing to leave, the group of young men began singing in Russian. This further intensified my conflicting emotions, prompting me to hastily leave the scene. Out of the blue, my friend walked up to their table, came to a halt, and spoke in Russian:

> *"You know, I want to say that your singing is not bad at all, and I also appreciate Russian songs. However, I have a question for you: Can you imagine what it feels like for me to hear you sing in Russian here and today? Do you realize how your song resonates in a country that was bombed by your nation, leading to over 300,000 people becoming IDPs? Moreover, there's an ongoing war in Ukraine, with children dying?"*

I couldn't resist and moved a little further away, my nerves on edge as I anxiously awaited the unfolding of the situation. My curiosity about their reactions was intense, but my feelings of embarrassment, confusion, and despair kept me from staying put. I retreated, pondering what response they might offer. From a distance, it seemed that Eliso's intervention had not led to a heated argument. When she eventually joined me, I couldn't help but ask why she had approached them and what transpired during their conversation. She replied, "This was not planned, I'm not sure why I did it, it was as if some unseen force compelled me."

She continued, *"I believe they understood what I was trying to convey; they were attentive. However, a Georgian young man among them expressed that they didn't want to engage in politics. The others mentioned that they were Belarusians and had hoped that singing in Russian would not be a contentious issue."* Eliso added that while that might happen eventually, for now, the wounds were still fresh, and their Russian song felt like salt on an open wound.

As we walked out onto the street, my gaze fell upon the proudly displayed Ukrainian flag, and the surge of emotion it stirred within me after the Russo-Ukrainian war rushed back.

Soon after the war began, more than 120,000 citizens of the Russian Federation fled to the Georgian border; they settled mainly in two cities, Tbilisi and Batumi. Some of the local population perceived them more as economic migrants, who left Russia not because of anti-Putin sentiment, but to escape sanctions (Mühlfried, 2023). The various waves of migrants also had an impact on the local economy, including on the prices of products and the housing sector. The images of thousands of Russians queuing to cross the border in cars or on foot flashed across TV screens across Europe. The paper discusses how this sudden influx of Russians to Georgia's capital city has shaped the urban landscape and what reaction did it gave fuel to, while both the physical environment and the people living within it also serve as reflections of the evolving narrative of the war. In the immediate aftermath of the war's commencement, a strong sense of solidarity with Ukraine was evident as Tbilisi adorned itself with blue and yellow flags, mirroring the prevailing mood. However, this physical display was soon juxtaposed by the presence of Russian-speaking individuals emerging in the city. Their arrival created a noticeable tension within the urban environment. "Russians Go Home!", "RUZZKI Not Welcome!", "We Don't Speak Russian!", "No Russian is Welcome, Good or Bad!", "Putin is Killing People in Ukraine While Russians Eat Khachapuri in Georgia", "Russia is a Terrorist State!", "Moscow Will Burn!" – are just a few examples of the street markings appearing in Tbilisi after February 2022. The use of the Russian language in Tbilisi, on one hand, could lead to potential friction, while on the other hand, it rekindled connections for those whose use of the language had been severely limited since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, particularly in the wake of the August 2008 war.

Literature Review

Colonial Past of the Language

The dominance of Russia and the Russian language in Georgia and the Caucasus has a long history (Blauvelt, 2013). In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Georgian people – predominantly adhering to the Orthodox Christian Church and simultaneously caught between the Iranian and Ottoman empires, viewed Orthodox Christian Russia as a savior and a reliable ally. For Georgian kings, however, alliances with Russia ultimately led to the abolition of their kingdoms and the transformation of Georgia into Russian governorates. Within the Russian Empire, a colonial Russification policy was implemented, which mandated that all public affairs had to be conducted in the Russian language. In the 19th century, court proceedings were conducted entirely in Russian (Janelidze, 2005; Guruli & Vachnadze, 2001). Access to education, including higher education, was predominantly available in

Russian, and Georgian aristocrats traveled to Saint Petersburg to receive a university education.

From the mid-19th century, the so-called "Tergdaleulebi" (a group of Georgian intellectuals educated in Russia) became actively involved in the formation of a unified Georgian national identity, primarily by promoting the Georgian language and establishing a periodic press. This movement also prompted the creation of the Georgian theater in 1850. The Georgian language was a fundamental aspect of Ilia Chavchavadze's[2] vision of the Georgian nation. During Georgia's independence years (1918–1921), the establishment of the first Georgian university continued this effort, requiring the adaptation of scientific terminology into Georgian. Georgians educated abroad took this task seriously and regarded it as a crucial component of the national idea.

Following the Sovietization of Georgia in 1921, the process of Russification intensified further. During the Soviet period, the influence of the Russian language grew so much that linguistic interactions took on a bilingual character. It is worth noting that in the first decade of the Soviet Union's existence, the policy of Korenizatsiia ("indigenization") promoted the standardization of the national language in the Soviet republics. Nevertheless, in Soviet Georgia, the Russian language always coexisted alongside the Georgian language. Russian vocabulary penetrated almost every sphere of life, especially politics and professional fields (Tsibakhashvili, 2000). In the late Soviet era, in 1978, a significant student movement opposed Moscow's decision to remove the Georgian language from the constitution as the state language. This event led to the establishment of April 14th as the Day of the Georgian Language in Georgia.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the significance of the Russian language declined but remained an important means of communication, particularly among ethnic minorities in Georgia and the peoples of the Caucasus. A 2012 study (ACT Research, 2012) found that Russian remained the most widely spoken foreign language in Georgia, with 96% of the population possessing some level of proficiency in it (BBC, 2012). However, following the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, efforts to remove the Russian language from public spaces became more pronounced. Since 2011, Russian is no longer a mandatory subject in Georgian schools. Additionally, national television channels no longer broadcast films dubbed into Russian (Tskhadaia, 2018). It is important to see these trends in the age bracket as well, as Russian language proficiency is significantly declining among younger generations. According to the CRRC 2024 study, 41% of Georgian citizens aged 55+ and 32% of citizens aged 18-34 have an intermediate level of Russian. It is clear that knowledge of Russian has been replaced by English among the younger generation, as according to the same data, only 2% of citizens aged 55+

[2] Ilia Chavchavadze was a Georgian writer and one of the founders of "Tergdaleulebi" movement.

have a high level of English, while this number increases to 27% among citizens aged 18-34.

Thus, the Russian language in Georgia is largely associated with Russian imperialism and the legacy of the Soviet regime, where its dominance was imposed at the expense of the country's sovereignty and the suppression of the local language.

Sound, Affect and Embodied Knowledge

Anthropologists have traditionally focused on studying cultures considered as the "other" and those in distant locations. However, with the shifting dynamics of our globalized world, the focal points and subjects of anthropological research are evolving. The myth of "objective truth", grounded in imperialist projects, has been long debunked by feminist, Marxist and postcolonial thinkers (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; Haraway, 1988). Since knowledge and reality is socially constructed and thus – situational, the only way to study it is through changing the research focus to the situated, or embodied knowledges (Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1993). In other words, to understand the affective triggers experienced by local Georgians towards the sounds of the Russian language in Tbilisi, we need to study the embodied knowledge which prompted these affective reactions.

Being the most immovable organ of the human head, the ear is considered to be somewhat passive, which only takes but does not give. It is an organ that cannot turn away or close itself (Simmel, 1907). In his analysis "Sociology of Sense Impression," Georg Simmel (1907) talks about the conceptual differences between vision and hearing: a person can close their eyes or look away, but one cannot fully control what they hear. Consequently, ears lead to a completely different type of social knowledge. Other than that, hearing is supra-individual since whatever happens in a room must be heard by everyone who is present there. This type of sensory knowledge produced by shared lived experiences of colonialism can become "sound souvenirs" associated with traumatic events and can only be known intimately (Birdsall, 2009). Birdsall proposes to study the role of the sound within individual and collective context of remembering (ibid: 169). In this regard, involuntary remembering of traumatic experiences can lead to reoccurring emptions and moods to the similar sensory triggers in the present day. Accordingly, reoccurring encounters with the Russian language can act as a sensory reminder for people who have lived through traumatic events of Russia's imperialist policies and wars (e.g. in the South Caucasus and Ukraine), reactivate their sensory memory and lead to unsettling affective responses. This type of sensory, or in other terms – embodied knowledge, is subjective and situated in its nature, which, as argued earlier, does not lessen its factuality or truth.

When contemplating the impact of Russian migrants on Tbilisi's urban landscape in the aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine war, the concept of affect emerges as an analytical tool. The theory of affect

provides a lens through which we can understand the current conjuncture that has been largely formed by the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and continues to influence our immediate surroundings, compelling us to respond. Affect encompasses a wide range of reactions, emotions and sensations stemming from the war, including the recollection of our own experiences and re-activation of collective memory of Russian imperialist wars in Georgia, the fate of our Ukrainian allies, and the influx of Russian migrants. This conjuncture of various geopolitical events and individual affects cannot be comprehended and described solely through language; they permeate every corner of the city, evoking a range of unsettling emotions among individuals as affective responses. Consequently, these affective responses manifest themselves as various actions and reactions, becoming subjects of scrutiny and judgment.

Anthropologists have long argued that emotions are the mirror of the social (Briggs, 1970; Levy, 1975; Lutz, 1988) and that "...emotions too, are cultural artefacts in man" (Geertz, 1973, 81). According to Sara Ahmed (2014), who has examined different emotional states (including grief, shame and fear), affective responses are the result of specific emotional encounters as well as initial prerequisite and dispositions. For instance, a national grief as a phenomenon would not be possible without the pre-existence of nation itself as an emotional matter. The influx of new Russian-speaking migrants within the urban spaces of Tbilisi gives rise to affect through the instinctual encounters between people, sounds and the built environment. This meeting point activates diverse experiences and emotions among the local population, which are expressed in diverse ways and shaped both by the individual and the surrounding milieu.

In the realm of social sciences and humanities, the concept of affect has become a complex and multifaceted category. As Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth (2010) suggest, affect is not a singular, concrete thing; rather, it is a process, a continuum. At its core, affect can be described as a force of encounter that insists beyond emotion and "can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension" (Gregg & Seigworth 2010:1). Gregg and Seigworth identifies three integral layers within affect: first, the act of contact, touch, or collision that engenders specific feelings and alters our perception of the world; second, the existence of a continuous line of variation and continuity that encapsulates our experiences; and third, the contextual backdrop, which implies diverse potentials for development. According to the authors, the body has the capacity to affect and to be affected; moreover, affect and cognition are never fully separable and therefore, affect is inherently embodied (ibid: 2-3). As we delve into the affective reactions of the residents of Tbilisi to the sounds of the Russian language, it will become apparent how auditory memory from the past, which is by itself – embodied, give rise to present-day distressing affects.

Methodology

Recognizing that an anthropologist's identity and role persist both in the field and at home, we embarked on observing these changing processes even before the onset of the war. The observation initially focused on the virtual realm, particularly as tensions escalated with Moscow's threats and the evacuation of the American diplomatic corps from Kiev. It was through this rhetoric, online discussions, profile picture frames, and hashtags within social networks that the prevailing theme of Ukraine became evident. Consequently, various methods were utilized, including digital ethnography, visual fixation techniques, and interviews. Notably, Tbilisi is not just our field of study; it is our hometown, where we were raised and educated, and where we have been employed. This made the selection of storytellers a complex process. The Russian language and interactions with Russian migrants have become integral aspects of our daily lives. To narrow down our research focus, we have selected individuals closely connected with the Russian language, who teach Georgian through various methods and in diverse forms, as our primary narrators. The interviews have been conducted between 2023 and 2024. It should also be acknowledged that the Russian language has been a constant factor in our life since our earliest memories, influencing our perspective either positively or negatively. This subjective relationship with the language, coupled with its significance, led us to adopt a framework rooted in the theory of affect. Within this framework, perception and its emotional underpinnings assume a pivotal role.

Discussion

Affect and Language

Sofia's (40) journey into learning the Georgian language began in the 6th grade, upon her return to her native Abkhazia from Russia after the war in 1993. Born in Abkhazia, Sofia's family had temporarily relocated to Russia when she was only 4-5 years old due to business reasons. However, because of the war, they couldn't return for nine years. Within her family, they spoke Megrelian[3], while Russian was used outside the home.

At that time, the need for using the Georgian language didn't arise. Nevertheless, Sofia's protest towards the Russian language emerged in her early childhood. She would often question her family about why they lived in Russia, believing that Russians had taken away their home in Abkhazia, followed by war-induced forced displacement in 1992-93. These questions from her youth remained unanswered.

[3] Megrelian is part of the Kartvelian language family spoken in Western Georgia, predominantly in Samegrelo region.

Sofia's family and relatives envisioned a brighter future for her in Russia. A close relative residing there saw the life opportunities available for a child, so they were taken aback when Sofia expressed her desire to learn Georgian. Sofia recalls teaching herself the Georgian alphabet while still in Russia. Upon returning to their native home in Gali, she resolved to master the Georgian language completely. In the sixth grade, she had to memorize all subjects because she had no knowledge of Georgian.

Every day, she walked 8 kilometers to and from school, with the school and her home separated by a de facto border, patrolled by Russian peacekeepers and Abkhaz border guards. Crossing this border daily served as additional motivation for Sofia to learn Georgian and feel like a true Georgian citizen. Once, during a routine document check by the Abkhazian border guard, he inquired about her last name, which happened to match a murder suspect of one of the Abkhazian leaders. The guard asked why she was there in Russian. 14-year-old Sofia responded boldly, saying, "This is my land; what are you doing here?" The border guard was so angered by her response that he aimed his gun at her, but thankfully, other Abkhazian border guards saved the young girl.

Sofia was determined to master the Georgian language and even wished to pursue higher education in Georgia. Despite her family's skepticism, especially her grandmother's, who believed she would not be accepted, and arrangements would be made for her to attend a university in Russia, Sofia surprised everyone by gaining admission to a Georgian university, albeit falling a bit short of a scholarship. Unfortunately, she couldn't study English philology due to her limited knowledge of the language, so she opted for Russian philology while also studying the fundamentals of the Georgian language. She graduated from the university with honors.

Later, she had the opportunity to teach the Georgian language through a special state project. For a year, she commuted daily to Marneuli – a municipality in southern Georgia predominantly populated by ethnic Azerbaijanis, teaching Georgian to Georgian citizens in an Azerbaijani school. This experience revealed to her that language teaching and human relationships were her true calling.

Since then, she has taught both Georgian and Russian in various universities and established a language center in Tbilisi for five years, where she has helped numerous Georgian and foreign individuals learn the language of their choice through various formats. Her language center is situated in one of the most densely populated central neighborhoods and her schedule is filled with teaching and organizing the language learning process.

When asked about the changes following the Russia-Ukraine war, Sofia explained that she had made a principled decision to cease teaching the Russian language, despite high demand. She now teaches Georgian to anyone interested, including Russians. Alongside language instruction, she emphasizes to them that if they intend to stay in Georgia, learning Georgian is essential, as no one here

is obligated to serve them in their language. She incorporates topics such as Georgia's Independence Day and Georgian Language Day into her lessons to help her students grasp the local context.

Sofia's Russian-speaking students often tell her that they're frequently not given the opportunity to speak Georgian. When they initiate conversations in Georgian, Georgians respond in Russian. Sofia is unfazed by this and offers several possible explanations, such as Georgians struggling to imagine a Georgian-speaking Russian or simply showing sympathy and avoiding offense, even though she asserts that speaking Russian is a choice rather than an obligation.

Regarding the biggest challenge in teaching the Georgian language to a Russian-speaking audience, Sofia doesn't hesitate in her response. She cites the psychological state of her audience, many of whom are stressed, depressed, angry, or upset. In such circumstances, teaching becomes challenging. To protect both herself and her students, Sofia adopts an inclusive approach. When asked about her students' backgrounds or nationalities, she doesn't inquire. When discussing conversational vocabulary, she is careful and employs methods such as random selection of cards to determine who is from where and where they are headed, allowing for a more comfortable and inclusive learning experience.

Sofia is remarkably fluent in three languages and she shared her thoughts regarding her perspective on these languages:

> "*When I speak in Megrelian, it takes me back to my home and village in Abkhazia. When I speak Georgian, I feel like a true Georgian and take immense pride in it. But when I speak Russian, it triggers a deep-seated internal protest that has been with me since childhood. I remember telling myself that language shouldn't matter and that I should know it, at the very least because I've had to provide adequate responses to both Russians and Abkhazians on numerous occasions."*

Prior to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, only 10% of her time was dedicated to teaching Georgian. However, since then, she has shifted her focus entirely to teaching Georgian and has chosen not to teach Russian. She has also faced criticism for teaching Russians but refrains from engaging in debates on the matter. She believes that she is dedicated to her work in teaching Georgian and does not compromise her principles.

Sofia's friend, Nia (36), has been teaching Georgian for 12 years. Initially, she focused on teaching Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking students as part of a special state program. She is actively involved in the creation of teaching resources for the Georgian language and has amassed significant experience in this field. Nia approaches her work with creativity and views it from a business perspective. Over the past few years, the number of her students has steadily increased, and at the time

of our meeting, she had more than 30 Russian-speaking students.

Nia is confident when teaching Georgian and places considerable emphasis on the mood and emotional factors in the learning process. Most of her classes are conducted online, which saves time for both instructors and students.

Nia recalled her first Russian-speaking student, and she mentioned that it was a Russian man she heard about while teaching a mixed group remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, she taught a group consisting of Russians and Ukrainians together before the outbreak of the war. One woman in this group, who had relocated to Batumi, shared that she had made the decision to leave Russia and move to Georgia because she no longer wanted to live there. She had made significant efforts to persuade her children to move with her, but it had been a struggle.

As this group progressed in their language learning journey, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 began. Nia recalls that during a lesson, the Ukrainian students couldn't contain their emotions and broke down in tears. Some of them had their parents in bunkers, while others were struggling to obtain information about their loved ones. Although a lady from Russia tried to apologize on her part and calm down the Ukrainians, the atmosphere within the group remained tense. Due to these circumstances, Nia, in agreement with the administration, suspended teaching the Georgian language for a few weeks.

At the outset of the Russia-Ukraine war, Nia held a strongly negative attitude towards Russia and openly expressed it on her social media platforms. During the meetings with the Russian-speaking individuals, who reached out to her for in-person language instruction, she greeted them wearing a hair bow in the colors of the Ukrainian flag, and would often begin the conversation by acknowledging, "Our country is occupied by your country." This approach led to some students not responding at all. She acknowledges that these were rather blunt ways of conveying her stance.

Presently, she no longer adopts such a confrontational demeanor, although she retains the same internal viewpoint. Direct interactions and unfolding events have expanded and deepened her personal dilemmas. Nia is well aware that the Russians seeking her instruction are stepping out of their comfort zones and being compelled to learn Georgian, even though many of them feel that they have no need for the language and are doing so out of necessity. According to her, being under her tutelage serves as a form of therapy for some individuals. Particularly during unconventional lessons, they occasionally bake mchadi (Georgian cornbread) together and raise toasts in Georgian.

Recently, students are no longer asked about their place of origin; it is revealed during the teaching process. Nia mentions that she discovers their origins through study prompts like "Where am I from?". Nia fondly recalls several students who, when asked about their origins, named Georgian cities and

avoided mentioning Russia altogether. She also remembers one student who hailed from Siberia but spoke about Tbilisi's weather instead of describing the climate in his hometown. When Nia inquired about Siberia, presuming it must be quite cold there, the student replied, "It's not my hometown; I'm not from there."

Nia's teaching resources prominently feature the Georgian context, placing special emphasis on Georgian Language Day and the history of its suppression. This narrative often becomes an eye-opener for her Russian-speaking listeners. Occasionally, she encounters protests from Russian-speaking students. For example, one student expressed bewilderment at Georgians' attitude toward the Russian language, considering it foolish. In his view, Russian has produced important literature and culture, and he couldn't comprehend why he shouldn't be able to watch movies or plays in Russian in Tbilisi. Nia jokingly responded that she would teach him Georgian so well, that watching plays and movies in Georgian wouldn't be a problem.

As observed by Nia, most of her students have adapted well to life in Tbilisi. They have found everything they need and established their own communities, including cafes, salons, and social gatherings. One of her students even bought nine apartments in Tbilisi. Any slight discomfort they might encounter in the streets is easily balanced by indulging in Georgian cuisine.

Nia believes that for many of her Russian-speaking students, learning Georgian is more of a statement, a means of gaining moral superiority over other Russians who do not put any effort into even learning the local language. Nevertheless, there is a remarkably high demand for learning Georgian, and if she had the capacity and time, she believes the number of her students could triple.

When asked about the increased use of the Russian language in Tbilisi, she cited a specific example to illustrate her point:

> *"There was a Russian language class at my son's public school in Tbilisi, and initially, no one signed up. However, after the war, twenty children [local Georgians] enrolled. It seems the times have changed. In the context of business, my close friend has expressed disbelief in the potential usefulness of Russian language skills, stating that she would never have imagined it to be valuable in a million years!"*

Nia contemplates that the perception of the Russian language varies within different social circles in Tbilisi. In her view, the influx of Russian migrants has notably reactivated the use of Russian among ethnic minorities in the city. She vividly recalls that she had never noticed Russian being used within her Armenian-speaking groups before, and she was taken aback when her students began conversing in Russian.

In addition to Nia and Sofia, other Georgian language teachers have also shared their experiences,

who have been instructing various groups and private individuals for years. It's important to note that the majority of them find teaching Georgian perfectly acceptable, and they disagree with the principled stance that they might be aiding their adversaries by doing so.

Eliso shared that she has one Russian-speaking student who is of Georgian ethnicity, and she enthusiastically assists a first-year student raised in Vladikavkaz who, despite having a Georgian surname, barely speaks Georgian. She doesn't see any issue with teaching an ethnic Russian as long as she knows their stance regarding Georgia and their perspective on current events.

Similarly, Salome (35) believes that teaching the Georgian language shouldn't be problematic. She personally refrains from doing so primarily due to time constraints and her limited experience in that direction. Her experience teaching Georgian to Russian speakers is connected to her cousin, who arrived in Georgia after the Russia-Ukraine war started and couldn't understand a word of Georgian. Salome also mentioned that she finds the enthusiasm of Georgians who returned from Russia to learn their native language particularly heartwarming. She acknowledges that there are differing viewpoints on these matters within Georgian society. These differences can sometimes become intense in public discourse, and some individuals express aggression not only towards Russian speakers but also towards those who show kindness to them.

Salome explained that like others, she gets irritated by the tone of some Russians and their expectation that Georgians should speak Russian. However, if a confused or disoriented Russian asks her something on the street, she half-jokingly says that she's afraid to respond in Russian, fearing a possible overreaction from Georgian society.

Gvantsa (52) specializes in second language teaching and has been involved in both academic research and practical work in this field for a long time. When talking about her attitude towards teaching Russian-speaking students, she mentioned that this year she has two such groups, with the majority hailing from Dagestan. Consequently, this situation doesn't pose a moral dilemma for her. Depending on her language teaching approach, she minimizes the use of a common language (be it English or Russian). Regarding the use of Russian in public spaces and her general approach, she exercises caution since a Russian speaker could be Ukrainian. In such cases, she opts to converse in Russian. For interactions with Russians, she prefers to use English. Gvantsa is perfectly fluent in Russian, largely due to her Ukrainian grandmother. She recalled an incident after the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 when she was on a scientific mission in Europe. Her European colleagues wanted to converse in Russian with their Georgian counterparts to practice the language. However, she and her Georgian colleagues held a principled stance against speaking Russian on that occasion.

Following the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Natia (50), recognizing her responsibility as a citizen of

Georgia, decided to go beyond passive protest against Russian expatriates. When she hears loud conversations in Russian on the streets, she approaches them and politely requests that they lower their voices, citing the presence of representatives from Putin's imperialist state. Natia explains to them that the ongoing situation is partly their responsibility since their escape doesn't help the problem. Initially, when Russians arrived in Tbilisi, they reacted to her comments with anger, but now they simply listen to her. Besides Georgian, Natia is proficient in several languages, including Russian, allowing her to articulate her perspective fluently.

Natia has been actively involved in a Georgian language training program for over five years, contributing to integration projects. Having lived in various European countries, she draws from their experiences in addition to her linguistic skills. Upon returning to Georgia, she, along with friends, established a crafts workshop that not only serves as a business but also as a creative outlet. This workshop served as the foundation for a social enterprise for retired women. After the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Natia employed two Ukrainian women in this enterprise, wholeheartedly supporting Ukrainians.

Natia firmly believes that teaching Georgian to Russian migrants is not the way forward. She views their sudden interest in learning the language in Tbilisi as a matter of respect for her country, but given the circumstances, she is uncomfortable with the idea of some Russian migrants staying on in Georgia. While she is enthusiastic about teaching Georgian to Ukrainians, she holds a different stance when it comes to Russians.

Lastly, we would like to go back to Eliso's personal journey of learning Russian, how this language became her second language, and the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on her attitude. Eliso has been teaching the Georgian language to students from Georgia and beyond for over seven years. Currently pursuing a doctoral program in anthropology, she examines events and processes through the lens of culture, observing how and why individuals learn a language and the cultural factors involved in teaching.

Over the years, Eliso frequently incorporated Russian expressions, phrases, and individual words into her everyday conversations, especially when she wishes to convey stronger emotions. According to her, this occurs involuntarily and can sometimes be a source of discomfort for her.

Eliso hails from Kutaisi, a city with less ethnic diversity compared to Tbilisi. She shared that she had a Soviet upbringing, beginning her Russian studies in the second grade. The sole language of instruction at her school was Russian. She fondly remembers her upper-class Russian teacher who ignited her passion for Pushkin and Russian literature.

Eliso's exposure to Russian extended beyond the classroom — she watched Russian-language

animations, listened to Russian music, watched movies in their original language, and read Russian fiction. She revealed that until recently, most of the songs on her playlist were in Russian, featuring artists like Vysotsky and others. For her, Russian had become a significant tool for expressing her emotions. She also mentioned that she had never associated Russian with people but rather with art and culture since childhood, so her perspective remained unchanged after the collapse of the USSR. Additionally, Russian became the language of scientific literature for her, as many materials were available in Russian, unlike in Georgian. Consequently, Russian served as a convenient means for her to access scholarly literature.

She mentioned that following the Russia-Ukraine war, she ceased listening to Russian music and stopped watching content in the language. The Russian language she encountered in the streets now irritates her. This irritation isn't directed at specific individuals, although the Russian language itself triggers strong emotions in her.

When talking about how she feels when she hears Russian spoken on the streets of Tbilisi, she explained:

> *"It's a terrible feeling when I hear the Russian language. I cannot, under any circumstances, say that I feel personal hostility towards someone, unless they explicitly show the opposite. When I hear them speaking, it stirs up a feeling of offense within me. I become bitter, and I wish not to hear it at all. It's simply unacceptable." (Eliso 2023).*

Eliso had primarily used Russian for academic purposes, as her proficiency in English and German didn't necessitate her to engage with scientific literature in her field of study. However, she grapples with the emotions stirred by the speech or actions of a solitary Russian migrant, much like many others living in Tbilisi, all of whom carry personal histories shaped by coexistence with them. She also recounted an incident that occurred at a prestigious salon in the Vake district, the center of Tbilisi. When she arrived without an appointment and asked for service, she was directed to a Russian-speaking girl who knew neither Georgian nor English. She spoke to Eliso in Russian, instructing her to sit down. In response, Eliso spoke in Georgian, to which the girl replied in Russian, expressing her lack of understanding of Georgian. While Russian and Armenian, alongside Georgian, were not uncommon in this salon, encountering someone who hadn't bothered to learn even a few basic Georgian phrases was a different experience for her. Eliso decided she no longer wished to patronize their services and explained her reasons, though she remained uncertain about the salon staff's reaction.

Such incidents and countless others unfold in the city, where the Russian language has always been foreign. However, the current global and Georgian context has transformed the way the language is perceived in Tbilisi, giving rise to various reactions and actions. In this context, the role of bodily

perception and experience is particularly significant, influencing individuals' rational decision-making regarding how to act, guided by their embodied knowledge and the experiences tied to their language usage.

Conclusion

The increasing sounds of Russian language in the urban spaces of Tbilisi has resulted in mixed and unsettling emotions among the local Georgians. Emotions such as anger, fear, anxiety, feelings of injustice and bitterness are deeply rooted in the traumatic experiences of war, exile and colonial encounters with the Russian language, leading to moral dilemmas and differing reactions. Direct or indirect personal encounters with Russian imperialism have been significantly shaped by the sounds of the language, leaving indelible traces on them. Building on Simmel's (1997) "Sociology of Sense Impression", feminist critic of knowledge production (Haraway, 1988) and the theory of affect (Gregg & Seigworth 2010), we look at these emotional reactions as the outcome of embodied knowledge people have from the past experiences.

Looking at Russia as an imperialist power, and the Russian language as an instrument of this imperialist power, many of our interlocutors had a hard time approaching the language as a neutral phenomenon. After all, many of them learned Russian with a top-down approach through the school system which still functioned under the shadows of the Soviet regime. This imperialist influence is vividly reflected in Elisos' story regarding the availability of academic literature in Russian, instead of Georgian.

Interestingly, some of our interlocutors had moral dilemmas regarding speaking Russian themselves. While some preferred not to speak the language at all, others could speak in Russian to Ukrainians and felt less anxiety regarding it since Ukrainians share common colonial past with Georgians. Moral dilemmas also occurred in regard to teaching Georgian to Russians: on the one hand, it could be perceived as an act of respect from the Russians' side, who have decided to live in Georgia, or even a decolonial project – Russians speaking Georgian instead of vice versa; on the other hand, it triggered further national anxiety among Georgians regarding Russian's resettlement to Georgia, which could potentially lead to further colonization for them.

Given these points, the affective reactions towards the Russian language have also been largely influenced by the ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine and intensified people's fears and anxieties regarding the future of the region. As Gregg and Seigworth (2010) suggests, affect is not a fixed phenomenon but a process, a continuum, which can change over time and space. As observed during the interviews, the intense negative affects towards Russians and the Russian language have somewhat

lessened over time, since local Georgians learned to cohabit with the new social reality. Yet, anxiety and uncanny feelings still prevail among people. Recently, Eliso shared a nightmare she saw at night: there was a celebration at a kindergarten in Kazbegi municipality and the children were singing in Russian language. The deepest fears of the colonial history repeating all over again continues to live subconsciously and can take different forms.

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Problems of Georgian Aviation Terminology and Ways to Solve Them

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the challenges and prospects of developing standardized Georgian aviation terminology. It reviews the historical evolution of terminological activity, identifies linguistic, structural, and methodological issues, and emphasizes the importance of finding precise Georgian equivalents for English aviation terms.

Keywords: *Georgian language, Aviation, standardization, lexicography.*

Introduction

Aviation, as a field, began to exist and develop in the 20th century, gradually turning into a large industry that united many branches and sub-branches. Aviation turned out to be one of the priority fields, it took Georgia many years to gain real independence in this field. First of all, it needed specialists who would create a solid educational and scientific base. Indeed, the country educated professional specialists and even created an educational center, the Georgian Aviation University, which is the basis of Georgian aviation. This center of aviation education is developing in two directions - Purely scientific and educational. Naturally, both of these processes require the improvement of terminology. The state language strategy also implies language standardization. The normalization of terms and their practical implementation are a necessary condition for all fields, but the aviation industry pays special attention to this. Interest in these problems arose in the 20th century. Famous pilots and scientists in the field of aviation actively participated in the creation of terminology. Specialists in the field of aviation have worked hard and have been able to compile important terminological dictionaries. These dictionaries are: “Aviation Terminological Dictionary”, compiled back in 1945 by the Terminological Commission of the Tbilisi Aviation Technical School, edited by V. Beridze; “Aviation Terminology (Russian-Georgian)”, compiled in 2001 by V. Beriashvili for official use by order of the Civil Aviation Administration (Beriashvili, 2001); “English-Russian-Georgian Explanatory Dictionary of Aviation Terminology”, compiled in 2002 by specialists from the

Arn. Chikobava Institute of Linguistics and the Aviation Educational and Scientific Institute of the Georgian State Technical University. Particularly important is the financial support of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (grant project SL-22-418) The “Illustrated Georgian-English Dictionary of Aviation Terms”, developed in 2023 by specialists from the Georgian Aviation University and the Arn. Chikobava Institute of Linguistics, taking into account modern requirements (Dateshidze & Osadze, 2016)). The thematically arranged material is accompanied by more than 200 illustrations and more than 1,300 terms in Georgian and English. The publication of this type of dictionary was an important step in the Georgian aviation educational space, as well as in the aviation industry. Illustrated dictionaries have been published in Georgia in small quantities so far. It should be noted the importance of this type of dictionaries for the educational process. After all, an illustration is sometimes equal to an explanation and makes it easier for the user to perceive a subject or event. But it should also be noted that even the dictionary published in 2023 cannot meet modern requirements, since it only includes structural parts of the aircraft, engines and electrical equipment (and that too in an incomplete amount).

Currently, a new dictionary is being developed (again with the financial support of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation - grant project SL-24-089) - "Georgian-English Illustrated Dictionary of Civil Airport Management, Operation and Navigation Support", the creation of which was prompted by the shortcomings in the Georgian terminology of the airport management and operation subfield.

The primary task facing us is the gradual improvement of Georgian aviation terminology. The dictionary covers an important subfield of aviation - airports and their operation. The results of the research will be interesting and noteworthy for both the majority of Georgian society and civil aviation specialists.

Literature Review

The development of Georgian aviation terminology has a long-standing history that began in the early and mid-20th century, coinciding with the establishment and expansion of aviation as a scientific and industrial field. The earliest structured efforts to systematize aviation-related terminology were carried out by the Tbilisi Aviation Technical School, whose 1945 Aviation Terminological Dictionary represented one of the first attempts to provide Georgian equivalents for technical aviation concepts. This foundational work laid the basis for future terminological research by demonstrating both the need for a consistent aviation lexicon and the challenges associated with integrating foreign-derived terminology into the Georgian linguistic system. Subsequent publications, such as Russian-Georgian

and English-Russian-Georgian aviation dictionaries prepared in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, expanded the terminological corpus and responded to the rapid technological growth occurring globally. These works introduced more standardized equivalents and revealed gaps in existing terminology, especially in newly emerging aviation subfields.

A significant contribution to the literature came from projects funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, which enabled the creation of illustrated dictionaries addressing aircraft structures, engines, electrical systems, and airport operations. These resources improved accessibility and educational efficiency, particularly for aviation students and industry practitioners. Scholars consistently highlight the importance of maintaining a balance between adopting international standards, especially ICAO, EUROCONTROL, and EASA terminology and preserving the linguistic integrity of Georgian (Dictionary of Aeronautical Terms, 2020). This balance remains a central theme in terminological studies.

Despite notable achievements, existing literature also reveals persistent challenges: overlapping Georgian equivalents for distinct English terms, insufficient differentiation of operational concepts, and the inconsistent handling of abbreviations and nomenclatural terms. Previous research calls for continuous interdisciplinary collaboration, emphasizing that aviation terminology cannot be refined by linguists alone but requires the expertise of aviation engineers, instructors, and operational specialists. Overall, the literature demonstrates both the progress made and the need for ongoing, coordinated research to support the modernization of Georgian aviation terminology.

Methodology

This study employs a multidisciplinary methodological framework combining linguistic analysis, comparative terminology research, and expert evaluation. The primary methodological approach is comparative terminological analysis, which involves examining existing Georgian aviation terms and evaluating their correspondence with English-language equivalents widely used in international aviation organizations, including ICAO, EUROCONTROL, and EASA. This approach allows researchers to identify gaps, ambiguities, and inconsistencies within Georgian terminology and to assess whether Georgian equivalents adequately reflect technical distinctions present in English terminology (Georgian Aviation University, 2023).

The research process began with a systematic review of Georgian aviation dictionaries published from the mid-20th century to the present. Both dictionary content and lexicographic methodology were analyzed to determine how earlier terminologists handled complex aviation concepts and what strategies were applied in forming Georgian equivalents. These analyses highlighted patterns of

transliteration, direct borrowing, semantic extension, and the adaptation of foreign technical abbreviations.

In the second stage, researchers conducted semantic and morphological analysis of key aviation terms related to take-off, landing, airport operations, navigation systems, and aerodrome structures. By evaluating each term's internal structure, meaning, and usage context, the team assessed compatibility with Georgian word-formation rules. Particular attention was given to cases where a single Georgian term represented multiple distinct English concepts, resulting in ambiguity (ICAO, 2016, Kikvidze, 2022).

The final stage of the methodology involved expert collaboration. Aviation specialists including engineers, pilots, air navigation experts, and airport operations professionals participated in consultations to verify technical accuracy. Linguists from the Arn. Chikobava Institute of Linguistics provided linguistic validation, ensuring conformity with Georgian lexical norms. Through this collaborative and iterative method, the research produced terminology recommendations grounded in both technical accuracy and linguistic appropriateness.

Research Results

The analysis identified several categories of problems within Georgian aviation terminology, revealing both structural and semantic gaps that hinder effective communication in educational, professional, and operational aviation contexts. One of the most prominent issues concerns take-off and landing terminology. The study demonstrated that Georgian often uses a single term for multiple stages of takeoff, failing to differentiate between the ground-acceleration phase (take-off run) and the airborne climb phase. English distinguishes clearly between "takeoff" and "climb" whereas Georgian equivalents tend to merge these processes, creating ambiguity in both training materials and operational documentation.

Aircraft take-off process (See Figure 1) (NAU, 2013).

Similarly, terminology related to landing procedures showed inconsistencies. English aviation terminology includes a variety of terms such as "bumpy landing", "hard landing" and "rough landing" each describing a different operational scenario. In contrast, Georgian often provides only a generalized equivalent that does not convey the specific cause or nature of the landing anomaly. This lack of differentiation can create misunderstandings during training or incident documentation. Critical problems were also identified in airport terminology. The terms "terminal", "airport", "aerodrome" and "air terminal" are frequently used interchangeably in Georgian, despite referring to distinct infrastructural and functional concepts in international aviation standards. Such inconsistencies

can hinder proper interpretation of regulatory documents, technical manuals, and operational procedures (Tepnadze et al. 2023).

Additionally, nomenclatural terms and abbreviations such as control cylinder labels, directional notations, and radio communication codes show variation in translation practices. Some terms are directly borrowed from English, others are partially translated, and some appear in mixed forms. This inconsistency complicates technical instruction and reduces standardization. Overall, the results demonstrate the urgent need for systematic standardization supported by updated dictionaries and institutional collaboration.

Discussion

The research findings emphasize the critical necessity for a comprehensive and systematic revision of Georgian aviation terminology. As aviation continues to integrate globally, English has become the dominant language of communication, regulation, and technical documentation. This has exerted strong influence on Georgian aviation terminology, resulting in extensive borrowing and hybrid forms. While borrowing is not inherently problematic, the lack of standardization and the absence of clear Georgian equivalents in many instances have created gaps in understanding among students, trainees, and even experienced aviation personnel.

A major topic of discussion is the need to align Georgian terminology with international aviation standards while protecting the linguistic integrity of the Georgian language. Georgian has a rich system of word formation capable of producing precise technical terms, yet these mechanisms have not always been fully utilized in aviation lexicography. The overreliance on foreign structures has sometimes resulted in awkward or semantically unclear terms.

The discussion also highlights the pedagogical implications of inconsistent terminology. Aviation students often struggle with understanding key concepts when Georgian terminology does not clearly distinguish among operational stages or technical processes. Illustrated dictionaries and modern lexicographic tools have proven highly beneficial, supporting comprehension by providing visual reinforcement and clear definitions. Continued development of such tools is essential.

Finally, interdisciplinary cooperation emerges as a central requirement. Linguists alone cannot determine correct aviation terms, just as aviation specialists cannot independently assess linguistic precision. The joint participation of both communities supported by national institutions such as the Georgian Aviation University and the Institute of Linguistics is necessary to ensure that future terminological solutions are both technically accurate and linguistically sustainable.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Georgian aviation terminology is undergoing an important transitional period characterized by growing international integration, increased technical complexity, and expanding educational needs. Although significant work has been accomplished in recent decades through the creation of various aviation dictionaries and lexicographic projects, the challenges identified in this research demonstrate that terminology modernization remains an ongoing and dynamic process.

A fundamental conclusion is that many Georgian aviation terms require clearer differentiation to match the precision found in international aviation terminology. This includes distinctions between stages of take-off, types of abnormal landings, airport infrastructure components, and technical nomenclatural items. Without such precision, the risk of misinterpretation remains high, particularly in training environments and operational settings where accuracy is crucial.

The research also confirms the importance of linguistic integrity in terminology development. Georgian possesses strong linguistic resources capable of producing accurate and intuitive technical terms, and these resources should be prioritized whenever possible. However, adherence to international standards must also be maintained to ensure compatibility with global aviation communication.

Ultimately, sustainable improvement of Georgian aviation terminology requires continued interdisciplinary collaboration, regular updates to specialized dictionaries, and the consistent application of lexicographic principles. By combining linguistic expertise with aviation knowledge, Georgia can develop a coherent, standardized, and internationally aligned aviation terminology system that supports both professional practice and academic advancement.

As a result of the joint efforts of industry experts and linguists, more than 1,500 terms were developed and defined within the framework of the research. The majority of the terminology is related to airports, aerodromes, air navigation facilities, and ground-based aerodrome service systems.

The identification and establishment of these terms within the scope of the research is an important step forward for all aviation organizations, and especially for the Civil Aviation Agency, since the majority of existing legislative documents are prepared by this institution. The introduction of accurate and well-structured terminology in the aviation sector represents significant progress in the protection, preservation, and development of the Georgian language as a national value.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Shadow Feminism in Elfriede Jelinek's "Lust" (Comparative reading and analysis of Mikheil Javakhishvili's "Jaqo's Dispossessed")

ABSTRACT

The main goal of the research topic is to show how and in what form, in the process of teaching literature and reading literary texts, in the context of modern theoretical models developed within adjacent disciplines and adapted to literature, the interpretative reading of key episodes and female characters can be carried out against the background of comparative analysis. Before we begin to discuss the texts and analyze the noteworthy episodes in terms of the characters, ideological load, connotation, or contexts related to them, we consider it necessary to thoroughly consider the key biographical factors of the authors. This thorough consideration is crucial as it significantly influences the process of forming their personalities, creative thinking, and consequently, their works. The scientific article also provides a brief overview of the sharpest and contradictory assessments of the works discussed in the article by critics and a discussion of the theoretical framework. We adapt this framework to the texts and analyze it in the context of specific episodes, attempting to interpret the female characters. In our discussion of the female characters of the works selected within the framework of our research topic, we will analyze the aspects of feminist theory.

Keywords: *Elfriede Jelinek's "Lust"; Mikheil Javakhishvili's "Jaqo's Dispossessed"; "Shadow Feminism"; Comparative Analyses; Interpretive Reading.*

Introduction

Considering the specifics of teaching literary texts and the main goals and skills to be developed in literature teaching, namely, the need to create a critical and self-reflexive approach to the development of cross-disciplinary and transferable, intercultural competencies; national and universal values; interpretation of texts; we consider it necessary to use comparative analyses and interpretive reading approaches in the process of discussing the representational features of female characters and in-depth reading of the literary texts. This will allow us to examine the female characters depicted in two different works in the light of modern feminist theories when conducting a comparative analysis of texts by authors from different eras and with two distinct cultural and national identities. Let us actively engage in interpretive diversity, read from various perspectives, and, most importantly, by adapting current and cutting-edge theoretical models to literary texts, be able to understand works familiar to us in a new way and see them from a different perspective.

Literature Review

Comparative reading and analysis is a critical skill that involves analyzing and evaluating the similarities and differences between two or more texts. It allows students to distinguish between perspectives, themes, and arguments effectively. This skill improves comprehension by encouraging readers to recognize nuances and complexities in the approaches or contexts of different authors. Comparative reading sharpens analytical skills and promotes a deeper understanding of the material, making it an essential component of academic success. Comparative reading is a method of analyzing and examining these texts side by side to reveal connections, contrasts, and perspectives that may not be apparent when reading them in isolation. In modern times, comparative analysis helps students develop critical thinking skills and an appreciation for diverse perspectives. Students become more able to discern nuanced interpretations and construct comprehensive analyses by considering multiple perspectives. In addition, comparative reading and analysis reflect real-world scenarios where information is rarely single or isolated. Instead, it requires integrative thinking, fostering valuable skills across various academic and professional fields (Guzzetti, 2002, 82-85).

In analytical reading, comparative analysis is a methodical approach that allows you to examine and understand texts by connecting them. It is a powerful tool for discovering nuanced meanings and achieving holistic interpretation. The roots of comparative reading and analysis can be traced back to medieval scholastic practice, where scholars were required to compare classical texts from different cultures to interpret religious and philosophical ideologies better. This method allows us to critically analyze works from various genres or cultures in more modern educational settings, expanding understanding beyond individual perspectives. The practice of comparative reading develops essential skills such as critical thinking, attention to detail, and the ability to synthesize complex ideas. These skills transcend academic needs and offer valuable applications in problem-solving and decision-making (Pickvance, 2001, 7-11).

Using comparative reading and analysis techniques offers the opportunity to develop the ability to analyze and synthesize information from different texts deeply. This involves identifying key similarities and differences that can broaden the scope of understanding and comprehension across texts. Comparing and contrasting reading passages has been an integral pedagogical practice since the earliest days of literary education. By engaging in this process, we become familiar with the ability to discern variations in authorial intent and narrative style, which are crucial for comprehensive analysis. By practicing reading and analyzing literary texts in this way, we develop the ability to identify surface-level differences and deeper, thematic distinctions and connections, strengthening critical thinking skills across disciplines. This approach often goes beyond simply comparing two texts and

offers the opportunity to understand cultural, historical and ideological contexts. This broader perspective is invaluable in fostering an understanding of different worldviews and a deeper appreciation of diverse narrative techniques, ultimately leading to a more nuanced and empathetic worldview.

Methodology

The article is based on a desk research analysis, within the framework of which we studied the personal diaries of the authors (Elfriede Jelinek and Mikheil Javakhishvili), interviews, biographies and opinions, negative and positive assessments expressed in scientific circles and within the framework of literary criticism, about their works ("Lust" and "Jaqo's Dispossessed"). Also, since the aim of the scientific article was to study the main female characters of both texts from different perspectives within the framework of comparative analysis and interpretive reading, we included in the text of the article a brief history of feminist theory, the essence, and main characteristics of "Shadow Feminism".

Discussion

Psycho Portrait of the Authors and their Creative Sense

Before proceeding to in-depth reading of specific texts and moving on to comparative analysis, we introduce students to and help them analyze those important and key biographical details, life experiences, and personal stories that have had a significant (conscious or unconscious, direct or figurative) impact on the authors' worldview, create imagination, and the process of forming specific works.

1.1. According to the speaker of the Swedish Academy, Mr. Per Erik Wastberg, Elfriede Jelinek moves the reader to the depths of the soul with her anger and passions and therefore deserves the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2004: "musical flow of voices and counter-voices in novels and plays that, with extraordinary linguistic zeal, reveal the absurdity of society's clichés and their subjugating power" (Gogolashvili, 2006, 244). It is worth noting that in her homeland, Elfriede Jelinek is known as a scandalous author and is not very well liked by the majority, since with her work, Elfriede Jelinek shows Austria a mirror into which it is not at all pleasant to look. The hostile and aggressive attitude towards the female writer was also conditioned by the fact that she had repeatedly criticized her compatriots for their indifferent attitude towards the Nazi past, which is why the author was given the epithet "a polluter of her own nest". The author herself noted in an interview that she is like a murderer at her desk, because in real life, she is not able to do that. At this point, she fights those she envies because they have settled comfortably into everyday life. Because she is a totalitarian being and

because the Nazis lived here, no one has the right to peace and happiness. As a Professor Horace Oscar Axel Engdahl notes in his speech, the author with her lively, rough and sharp linguistic and expressive means, creates the impression that she is everywhere in the text and nowhere simultaneously, as if she encompasses the entire text. Thus, the writer "deliberately opens her work to the clichés that flood the news media, advertising, and popular culture – the collective subconscious of our time. She manipulates the codes of pulp literature, comics, soap, operas, pornography, and folkloristic novels, so that the inherent madness in these ostensibly harmless consumer phenomena shines through. He mimics the prejudices we would never admit to, and captures, hidden behind common sense, a poisonous mumble of no origin or address: The voice of masses" (Gogolashvili, 2006, 245). It is important to emphasize that Elfriede Jelinek does not fit society's frameworks, priorities, tastes, or the era's demands. She describes the dark pictures of life with complete clarity. It was interesting to see the author's allegorical description of life and her identical essence, overview of others and herself/the everyday and creative path, as well as description of the metaphor of language as her own discussing creative identity and the universality, indeterminacy and self-sufficiency of the writing process, it's comprehensiveness, language as a writer's tool and its many-faceted mask. "Yes, it dares to be confident and to rule over me. This language does not love me. It would gladly love the virtuous people there, on the road, beside whom it runs like a dog and bows its head as if it were so obedient. It disobeys not only me, but also nobody. The language exists for itself. It screams at night because they have forgotten to light the lamps along this road. After all, only the sun is their food source " (Gogolashvili, 2006, 246).

Notably, the writer's parents had a particular influence on her personality and creativity. The author's father, a Czech Jew from the socialist working class, Friedrich Jelinek, although he escaped persecution during World War II, the fact that his close relatives were victims of the Holocaust had a negative psychological impact on him. The writer herself always suffered and noted in interviews that the greatest and main regret of her life was that she could not properly care for her elderly, mentally ill father (Gogolashvili, 2006, 260-261). It is also noteworthy that Elfriede Jelinek had a tense relationship with her mother, Olga Buchner, who was of Romanian-German origin, from a bourgeois circle, from a wealthy family. Her mother tried to make a brilliant musician out of a writer, so she was taught to play various musical instruments from an early age. However, in parallel with her musical education at the Vienna Conservatory, Elfriede Jelinek studied art history and theater at the University of Vienna. It is also worth noting the biographical fact that due to an anxiety disorder, the writer stopped studying and lived in complete isolation in her parents' house for a year (she also had severe social claustrophobia), when she began her in-depth literary work and chose writing as a form of

artistic self-expression.

In the work of Elfriede Jelinek, on the one hand, there is a sharp criticism of Austria's Nazi past and an attempt to distant herself from her homeland, on the other hand, there is a close connection of her work with the tradition of Austrian Literature. Honegger notes that the influence of Austrian writers such as Ingeborg Bachmann, Marlen Haushofer and Robert Musil is noticeable in her novels (Honegger, 2006, 9-11). Within the framework of modern literary criticism, it has been repeatedly noted that Elfriede Jelinek can be considered a feminist writer who presents gender relations, female sexuality, pop culture, women's faces and their place in the surrounding reality (Stevens, 2016, 169-199). The repeatedly revealed and recurring psychological or sexual violence against women, as well as, in general, the pagan confrontation between the sexes, are the main thematic directions of her work. For example, in the novel "Women as Lovers", the writer presents a woman as a victim, formed in a cruel, unforgiving patriarchal environment. In the semi-autobiographical novel "The Piano Teacher", the writer deals with the suppression of sexuality. Elfriede Jelinek's important novels are "Wonderful, Wonderful Times" (1980); "Lust" (1989); "Greed" (2000). Jelinek created her paradigm of the text. Her text represents a space with layers of meaning because language is the seat of her being, spiritual life and physical existence (Gogolashvili, 2006, 244). Thus, we consider the fundamental origin of the "Women as Lovers" and "Lust" of the novels to be the presentation of the common cultural and psychological problem that considers "creating a family", the obligatory/necessary existence of the other half and attachment to a man as the only way to escape from the hopeless, unpromising existence of the "weaker sex". The female characters in the writer's works "deserve" the status of a married, engaged, loved woman by offering their bodies, denying their essence, giving up their identity and all-around obedience. There can be no talk of love, mutual trust and respect in an environment where a man as a rule, controls his destiny (at least without waiting for the woman's permission). In contrast, a woman is often subjected for fate, because a woman must "catch up with fate", become someone else's property. Based on the above, Elfriede Jelinek shows us in her novels that in such families and relationships, love turns into a bitter, destructive and traumatic experience, a terrifying sexual relationship, in which the man only cares about satisfying his own needs. At the same time, the woman patiently waits for the sexual act and the accompanying physical or sexual violence to end. The illusion of escaping eternal boredom and hopelessness by creating a family or relying on a man throws disappointed women into even greater misery and an endlessly disenfranchised space, within which their identity begins to be destroyed, their voice is suppressed, they become worthless, they become completely degraded and they experience an existential crisis.

Because of her literary language and scenes with female characters, critics often referred to

Elfriede Jelinek as a literary masochist, a literary porn star, an apologist for obscenity, and a "red pornographer". Many people are still offended by the writer's work, especially moralists, anti-feminists, anti-fascists, religious people and those who see novels by female writers as nothing more than provocative and blatant immorality. Knut Ahnlund described Jelinek's work as "whining unenjoyable public pornography", as well as "a mass of text shoveled together without artistic structure". It is not difficult to determine the reasons for such assessments if one understands that creativity focused on pessimistic moods and negative, depressive, violent stories, is a sharp revelation (a sharp reminder) of the hidden weaknesses, fears, complexes and shortcomings of the masculine world, since they clearly show human contempt and the instinct of self-preservation. Thus, in her work, the author studied the Australian national character and in the post-fascist period, presented the internal kitchen of family life and marriage as a boiling mixture of bitterness, anger, limited intimacy and cruel incestuous love (Honegger, 2006, 13).

1.2. Mikheil Javakhishvili was born in the village of Tserakvi, in the family of Saba Adamashvili and Elene Burnadze. The writer's father, Saba Adamashvili, was a loyal and hardworking farmer by nature, who spent his whole life working on the land, so he wanted his son to receive an agricultural education, which is why his son graduated from a farming school, from which Mikheil Javakhishvili, along with other excellent students, was sent to Yalta to continue his studies. It is noteworthy that, unlike her husband, Mikheil's mother always felt her son's uniqueness and loved him exceptionally, pouring more care and attention on him than on her daughters. The writer loved his mother and his sisters with a poor love. That is why the pre-New Year period of 1899 was the most significant psychological trauma for the writer, when his mother and 14-year-old sister, Sofio, resisted two armed villagers who had broken into their house and wanted to kidnap Sofio. In the process of resisting, the mother and daughter were mortally wounded while the writer himself had gone to study and his father to work in another village. After this tragedy that devastated his wife and daughter, on the anniversary of their deaths, Mikheil Javakhishvili's father also died, and the 22-year old student returned to his homeland from the Yalta school. From that time on, the young writer, along with great spiritual pain and orphanhood, also experienced unbearable economic hardship. Years pass and the life of the 30-year-old writer, in addition to the unbelievable murder of his mother and sister, is filled with several more traumatic events (his arrest in 1910 and imprisonment in Metekhi prison, his exile to Rostov-on-don). On February 25, 1921, the 11th Red Army, which invaded Tbilisi, breaks his entire space and determines the decline of his future life – imprisonment in 1923 on charges of representing the National Democratic Party, followed by the failure of the 1924 uprising and the bloody repressions of 1937, to which Mikheil Javakhishvili also fell victim – he was arrested again and, as a traitor to the country and

a spy, was shot.

Against the backdrop of such a difficult life path, spiritual pain and psychological trauma, it is not surprising that Mikheil Javakhishvili's work was from the very beginning connected with depth psychology, the issue of the relationship between the individual and society, crowd psychology, existential philosophy, the breakdown of self-identification, national nihilism, sexuality and psychoanalysis. The relationship between a man and a woman, carnal love, was presented in all the intensity in Mikheil Javakhishvili's work, unfolded in a naturalistic, writing skill, and realistic manner. The writer is well acquainted with a woman's psychology and sexuality. The primacy of the flesh is noticeable in the works of Mikheil Javakhishvili, although in the love described by the writer, a synthesis of traditional and modern worldviews is felt. Love is a distinctive and sublime feeling, but it is conditioned by sexual desire; it follows carnal pleasure. Erotic scenes, nakedness pf the flesh are acceptable and necessary for the writer, since by showing the characters in such a state, the depth of the human psyche, their character, are revealed more fully and realistically. Thus, the character resembles is living, real person, and the reader can identify with the character. Therefore, for Mikheil Javakshishvili, it is noteworthy to elaborate on such psychological themes as: the independence of personality and society, establishing the connection between the conscious and unconscious of a person, outlining the faces of the "innocent perpetrator" and the victim, and in the second period of his creativity – the artistic depiction of gender and sexuality, the manifestation of sexual instinct and its forms, which represent the convergence of mental and physical impulses, the natural, spontaneous manifestation of longing, when the censorship of the mind is powerless and the actions of a person no longer obey public morality. The disenfranchised Nutsa and Eka, Sofia, who succumbs to the temptations of the crowd, Tamro, tormented by the unrealization of her sexual desires, the deceived Margo ("The Ownerless"; "Oblivion"; "The Devil's Stone"; "The Golden Tooth"; "Nine Virgins"; "The Third"; "Jaqo's Dispossessed"), these are the female characters who have to live in a society based on selfishness and hypocrisy, distorted by false morality, injustice and outdated ideas, and are faced with the necessity of making the right moral choice and maintaining inner freedom. From the perspective of the idea of freedom, the writer begins to elaborate on the "philosophy of the crowd" and "women's issues". The author realistically depicts the reality in which time oppress, limits and personally or morally humiliates women. The female characters are allegorical and generalized, but at the same time, they embody living, real women. With their weakness, mistakes, passions, and desires, they present women capable of family loyalty, exemplary motherhood and love for their homeland to reader. Still, at the same time, they also like a pleasant, carefree life, they feel their bodies' desirability, desire to strive for personal freedom and happiness and the need for material well-being. They

sometime take morally unjustified steps and deceive themselves with the illusion of happiness, they are searching for real love and inner peace. Thus, Mikheil Javakhishvili's prose reflects the psycho philosophical transfer of the important theme of women's emancipation from social themes: on the one hand, it represents the disenfranchised state of women, and on the other hand, the problem of gender identification and sexual freedom related to personal identity, which, along with the writer's creativity, cultural and national identity, allows us to analyze it in the context of feminist theory and gender studies (Khomeriki, 2008, 5-12).

Like Elfriede Jelinek, Mikheil Javakhishvili's work irritated many scholars, writers, critics, and citizens, especially with the publication of his novel "Jaqo's Dispossessed". "This novel immediately caused an unprecedented stir and conflicting opinions in Georgian society. Numerous reviews were written, each one devastating the other. One part of society even took the work as a personal insult. The exception was a small number of reviews that objectively evaluated the work" (Javakhishvili, 2000, 36). "Jaqo's Dispossessed" was positively evaluated by Ivane gomarteli and Ioseb Imedashvili, who believed the novel represents a search for something new and deeply expresses contemporaneity: "He offered us such a deep psychological analysis of the spiritual illness of a part of the intelligentsia of that time, the like which has not existed in Georgian writing before". The opposite opinion was expressed by Ana Ghviniashvili, who considered "Jaqo's Dispossessed" to be a fabricated work, and the novel's characters to be unreal people. In her assessment, Mikheil Javakhishvili showed us only a sexually exhausted woman in the form of Margo. Critic Shalva Radiani discusses "Jaqo's Dispossessed" in detail, focusing primarily on the issue of sexuality and noting that this problem has recently become relevant in Georgian writing. The scientist sees nothing wrong with the artistic depiction of such an important issue, but he worries that Georgian writers are losing their boundaries. From this angle, Shalva Radiani discusses Mihkeil Javakhishvili's works, concluding that the writer deals with this critical issue superficially and one-sidedly. The writer's work was negatively assessed by Ippolite Vartagava, who called "Jaqo's Dispossessed" a pathological-anecdotal novel about Jaqo and Margo. According to Giorgi Natroshvili, Mikheil Javakhishvili is becoming a follower of "zoological realism". The writer's characters are not public figures, but naked physiological pieces of flesh. According to Giorgi Natroshvili, the writer's favorite images are the naked biological description of a woman, scenes of female rape. Thus, Soviet and post-Soviet literary criticism, to lower bad taste to the level of the uncultured reader's consciousness, to satisfy base instincts, declared the majority of Mikheil Javakhishvili's works, including "Jaqo's Dispossessed", to be pathological, tasteless, ugly, a kind of generalization of individual cases, naked naturalism (Kupreishvili, 2016, 325-332).

Moderc critics have discussed the novel "Jaqo's Dispossessed" in a completely new way, in the

context of modern philosophical-aesthetic and public thinking, and noted that the writer deepens the idea of freedom, explores the problem of the relationship between the nation, society and the individual. The primary condition for the self-realization of the individual, his and, consequently, the survival and development of the nation and the country is the perfection of society and public institutions. Obedience, complacency, and passivity are unacceptable; it is necessary to confront the unjust times. In the figurative study of "Jaqo's Dispossessed", the model of the desacralized world was revealed in the form of the defiled mysteries of the Orthodox Church. The inverted, or corrupted, representation of the mysteries of the Orthodox Church symbolically reveals the godlessness of the era, and the main inverted model is marriage. Modern literary criticism concludes that in the work of Mikheil Javakhishvili, including in the novel "Jaqo's Dispossessed". Such problems significant for the era as: the estate as an economic factor and as a metaphor, the reconciliation of knowledge and faith in the context of secularization, the regularity of the victory of the merchant over the knight, the antinomy of the sword and money, the city and the village – thesis and antithesis, the necessity of stimulating a functional person. Modern literary criticism have tried to read the novel in question, on the one hand, in the context of the anti-utopian genre and on the other hand, in the context of the theory and liminality. The text research revealed a tendency to realize such motivational features characteristic of the dystopian genre as: the motive of collective labor and quasi-nomination, the motive of the leader and pseudo-leader, the motive of scientific progress and suicide. The artistic realization of the mentioned motives in the text acquires an eschatological meaning, the methodological analysis of which is compatible with the theory of liminality or the boarder. Also, the work has been repeatedly discusses in the light of the theory of cultural trauma and the issue of national identity, and the breakdown of consciousness, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic, modernist-postmodernist and Colonial/postcolonial theories.

1.3. Thus, before discussing the texts of the works themselves, in the process of familiarizing students with the biographical factors presented above, we will analyze the following noteworthy aspects: 1) autobiography is not a set of facts, but a psychological portrait of writers, their worldviews, life experiences, personal interests, priorities and values, individual memory and psychological trauma, one of the factors determining the creative imagination; 2) We show the process of identifying the central artistic theme and thinking model against the background of the unifying and intersecting traumatic memory and experience of a creator born and raised in two different epochal, historical and cultural realities, an author of two different genders, characters and past experiences; 3) We will have students analyze the biased, fragmentary, one-sided, superficial and negative assessment of the work of such authors in critical literature, along with examples of modern interpretations and new

understandings of their works, in-depth analysis and correct assessment. We will highlight the peculiarity of the discussion that it is characteristic of Georgian, German, Austrian and any other nationality scientists, critics and writers to try to overshadow, artificially deny and devalue the essential works of great authors, especially concerning such sensitive topics as national identity, national consciousness, collective memory, cultural trauma, societal vices, historical past, sociopolitical reality, violence, oppression, fascism and totalitarian ideology in the form of sexually motivated and sexually abused female characters.

Historical background of feminism and shadow feminism in literature

Since we are reading the main female characters of both authors from the perspective of Feminist Theory, before directly applying the theory of "Shadow Feminism" to specific episodes and characters, we introduce students to this theory's main essence and manifestations.

2.1. The history of the development of feminism is divided into several steams, for example, the first wave – liberal feminism – aimed at changing gender asymmetry through changes in laws, attitudes and political courses. It focused on women's rights, that they should have the same rights as men. The goal of liberal feminism was not to implement fundamental changes in society; it only wanted to carry out institutional reforms. The second wave of feminism emphasized that despite the acquisition of political and legal rights, the issue of women still could not be resolved. The goal of the second wave was not only political emancipation, but also "women's liberation", which required radical, revolutionary social changes. The second wave of feminism was based on Marxist and Socialist Feminism and stated that it supported changes that promoted the distributing of household chores and equal participation in raising children in the lives of women and men. The third wave, or radical feminism, believed that gender inequality should be eliminated through fundamental changes and such a change could be achieved either by creating alternatives outside the patriarchal system or by changing the system from within. The radical direction of feminism had a vital value index, since it explored the general and deep-seated foundations of women's oppression. After the emergence of radical feminism in the 60s and 70s of the twentieth century, feminism developed into a valuable ideology. Thus, feminism introduced sex and gender aspects as a topical and urgent issue, one of the most critical scientific and discussion issues among academic disciplines. It is worth noting that the primary interest of radical or different feminism was the elimination of the difference between men and women. The demand for equality of women with men was tantamount to the destruction of the feminine origin and nature and the masculinization of women. Therefore, this direction of feminism was also considered utopian. Feminist criticism includes topics such as the history of feminism, the socio-political

foundations of its development, the feminist movement, and feminism in literature (Burton, 2014, 33-40). Feminist aesthetics developed mainly in Western Europe and the United States at the end of the 20th century. Its main goal was the emancipation of women and their liberation from male domination. Feminists aimed to "revise" past texts, which revealed hidden gender discrimination and, together with female authors, demonstrated the need to reassess literature based on the interests and values of female characters. Accordingly, special attention was paid to the faces of women, especially in texts whose authors were men, since, before, in their work, we mainly encountered two types of women: projections of male ideals (Madonna, Beatrice) and demonic creatures (Eva and Pandora, Delilah and Circe). Therefore, critics with a feminist worldview began to deconstruct old, traditional, binary oppositions and dichotomies (dirt/clean; body/soul; bad/good; moral/immoral), which led to a revision of women's representations (in public and literary space) and highlighted such essential topics as: women as a category of analysis, women as victims of male violence, women as universally subordinate, women and family systems, women and religious ideologies, women and education, the issue of identifying female authors and female characters. Through the work of John Stuart Mill, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, Helene Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and other important authors, psychoanalysts and theorists, feminist criticism has identified the following important factors: 1) the question of the woman as author; 2) the woman as reader; 3) the woman as a style of writing. Feminist literary criticism has been divided into several main branches: 1) women's literature, which focuses on the gender of the author; 2) women's reading, which focuses on the gender of the reader; 3) women's writing, which focuses on the style of text. This division of literature identified three main types of text: 1) "Women's texts" – created by female authors; 2) "feminine texts", which were written in a culturally feminine style; 3) "feminist texts", which challenged the dominant patriarchal methods and goals of the literary canon (Gill & Sellers, 2012, 1-8).

2.3. We would like to emphasize that in the process of analyzing both works discussed within the framework of the study, we read female characters from the perspective of "Shadow Feminism" proposed by an interesting contemporary theorist, author working in the field of gender studies and queer theories – Jack Halberstam. Jack Halberstam was the first to start talking about female masculinity in academia in his book of the same name. Since female masculinity is diverse and differs from each other in terms of body, features, sexuality and other characteristics, the author discussed these diverse masculine gender types in non-male bodies, starting with androgyny and ending with transsexuality. According to the researcher, the study of female masculinity is critical, since is shows us in detail how dominant male masculinity works. From the perspective of "Shadow Feminism", the author explores a feminist politics that stems not from doing but from inaction, not from being a woman

but from refusing to be a woman. The theorist discusses the broken bonds between mother and daughter, which he examines from the perspective of "anti-Oedipal Feminism", and notes that this feminism, which is based on denial, resistance, defeat, and forgetting, is an alternative feminist project – shadow feminism, and its language is defined by self-destruction, masochism, and anti-socialism. Jack Halberstam discusses texts in which the mother is actively and passively lost, abused, loved, hated, and even destroyed. This process creates a space, theoretical and imaginary, that is "not feminine", or that can only exist through the denial femininity and it raises the question of why women should be expected to fill and transmit from generation to generation the space of castration, insufficiency, and alienation (Halberstam, 2011, 11-19). The author notes that in discussing the texts, he is referring to an antisocial, anti-Oedipal, anti-humanist feminism that originates from queer and postcolonial, black feminism and involves the denial of the subject, the rupture of inheritance rather than its continuation, the dissolution of the "self" rather than its activation. The form of self-expression of this feminism is silence, stubbornness, self0denial, and sacrifice. Ultimately, we find that women are not a feminist subject, but only subjects who cannot speak, refuse to talk, are fragmented, and refuse to be whole (Halberstam, 2011, 123-129). Antisociality implies an attachment to absence, shame, or destruction, and a radical passivity that offers us a way to embody a different femininity. A radical understanding of passivity represents an antisocial solution to the dilemma of becoming a woman, which reinforces the power of men in the gender binary – the female self will not speak, it is a passive voice that belongs to the masochistic fantasy, and can become a transformative voice for feminism. Thus, being the object of public cutting, stripping, and humiliation is a kind of performance of resistance, immobility.

Elfriede Jelinek's "lust" (Analyzing the Female Character)

From the very first sentence of the novel, the writer leads the readers to the everyday life, depicting that widespread model of human life in which it isn't easy to distinguish human beans from each other – a gray and uniform world, full of false morality, false ideas, slavish expectations and human beans without faces. "Their hideaways: Their fixed abodes. Where their friendly faces abide, and all that distinguishes them is the one thing that's always the same. In this position, they go to sleep. Indicating their connections with the director, who, breathing, is their eternal father" (Jelinek, 2020, 1). Upon reading this expository preface, we can feel that poverty threatens everything spiritual, sublime, and human whatever may be a constituent part of the good beginning of the human race. It turns out that in the earthly world, every ethnic group, every nation, and any social organism, in the bosom of various historical, political, or cultural circumstances, has its leader as a director, a chief, or a noble. The

second paragraph of the very first page of the work also reveals that indiscriminateness, facelessness, and "collective sameness" are such a large-scale and rapidly spreading disease that the roots of evil go deeper than the consciousness distorted by economic hardship: "The children of the workers at the paper mill: they might well recognize the world for what it is at six in the morning when they go to the cowshed and suddenly become strangers terrible to the animals" (Jelinek, 2020, 3). Perhaps, teaching, reading and analyzing this episode, with just this one sentence, many rhetorical questions can be asked, for example, does the difference between animals and humans disappear in such an environment, or is a person who has become an animal and resembles it the most terrifying animal in the world, or is it even possible for a person, for whom "knowledge of the world" begins and ends with entering the factory, to either forge an original identity in this environment or attempt self-knowledge? Against this background of reality, the author introduces us to novel's main character, Gerti, whose one-sentence characterization of this and many other such characters is both the greatest tragedy, the irony of fate, the fatal destiny, and the most incredible sadness of life. The narrator informs us that the woman who is part of this environment and walks her child, "she alone is worth more than half the bodies around here taken together" (Jelinek, 2020, 4). It is probably necessary to mark and remember this phrase, because every time we get angry at this woman, get worried, start evaluating or rejecting her actions in the process of reading or discussing the text, every time we try to separate ourselves from her, we should remember that this woman, even taken separately, was more than all the others taken together, those whom she allowed to trample on, and, precisely in such "undefined textual moments", we should ask the question on the border of the conscious and the unconscious – what is the authors point view, that in such environment, characters like Gerti do not survive?

The woman has fluffy and beautifully combed hair. It turns out that her husband brought her from town, and he heads a paper factory. Thus, the woman is alone in every way, cut off from the natural toponym; here she is entirely alien and "other". Therefore, she is removed from her natural living space and opportunities for self-development from the moment of marriage. She is deprived of the right to realize her desires or interests and free choice, because now she is a wife and mother, adorned in clothes and underwear bought by her husband, beautifully combed, groomed to match his interests. Her main status as a dignity and advantage, distinguishing her from others, is crowned with a crown of thorns – she is the director's wife. A woman ensures family well-being and togetherness with her life. A man has prolonged his existence thanks to this woman and gained a foothold in eternity. In turn, a woman, the best material to be found, has continued herself in her child. From the very first pages of the novel, Elfriede Jelinek reminds the world that, as a rule, a woman is a material used to warm others and prolong life, alienated and sold, like a thing with multiple uses and many valuable properties,

someone else's property. From the passages depicting Sunday visits to the monastery church, we see that not only is the institution of the family and the woman's body desacralized and immersed in a whirlpool of falsehood, but also the house of the Lord, because the image of the Savior presented in it in the judgment seat is also an echo of endless obedience. The judgment presented to women is also the road to Golgotha, where, like the crucified Christ, they must forever carry the family's burden. Instead of being a consolation, the face of the Savior is a reminder of the repentance and obedience that women have to learn.

There is no longer a living space for women, because they are entirely alone, not only existentially, in the context of a theological or mythopoetic vision, but also legally, physically. It is a spiritual orphanhood and personal tragedy of all the women and mothers who have made being someone's wife and mother their sole purpose and identity. This is the logical conclusion and visible reality of those women who began to seek peace, happiness, and refuge in others and could not find it in their bodies, which is why they turned into "other". The author describes the completely degraded form of family life, human relationships, and the institution of the family, when a cozy home resembles a fortress with a woman trapped inside, deprived of all rights, and a victim of psychological, physical, and sexual violence. While reading the text, we realize how many types and forms of violence exist. It is essential to understand that behind the horrific, vividly described scenes of violence, the text implies an even more disgusting, total, desperate and dangerous form of violence witnessed by this woman from her family members, from strangers, from the entire society, culture and religion in form of their indifference, rejection and ignorance, and, perhaps, that is why the female body chooses the most deaf and terrifying form of protest or self-preservation – complete silence, passivity, conformity and emasculation. The author throws the female character into such a heayy and atrophied silence that she even loses the right to overcome the liminal space and acquire a new identity, because women brought to such a state, as a rule, can no longer experience metamorphosis. Like a mirror, a woman reflects the behavior of those around her. She has never found comfort or a solution. No one asks a woman about her real problems or situation; no one cares or shows interest. No one recognizes the woman, no one acknowledges her, no one talks to her, the woman is in complete silence and denial – for society she is the director's wife, for her son – she is simply a mother who his father abuses, while for the husband - the wife is only a source of satisfaction of his sexual desire, needs and fantasies, she is a sexual toy, on which the aggressor covers up his complexes, compensates from his eternal shortcomings and demonstrates his insignificant power. Every sexual act depicted in the text is a depiction of animal and savage violence, with crude details, degrading metaphors of male and female genitalia, epithets, and ironic comparisons – biting, choking, slapping, twisting, pulling of hair, and the violence sexual scenes.

The woman's reaction to any form of violence is unchanged – she is speechless, stiff, insensitive, obedient to everything, submissive, without rights, and will. Elfriede Jelinek uses the example of an ordinary family to illustrate the widening chasm in the national and cultural body, which has penetrated every person's home, heart, and mind, spreading darkness and silence everywhere. Moreover, woman is controlled and forbidden to wear tights and even maintain genital hygiene, because a wife's body should belong only to her husband, not only should it be foreign, uninteresting, disgusting and impenetrable to other men, but the woman herself should also lose the right to own her own body, so that, beyond the consumer interests of her husband, a woman's sexuality does not feel and does not gain legitimacy. It is interesting to realize that a woman who walks her child with a graceful hairstyle for others to see refuses to wear erotic lingerie made of expensive fabric, as if she is not missing the only opportunity to avoid and reject an intimate relationship that is hateful to her. When does a woman refuse a means of beautifying her body, especially something as intimate as underwear, only when she is indifferent to the attractiveness of both a man and her own body, when a woman cannot feel the freedom of her body, when a women's autonomy is not recognized, when she's not comfortable in her own skin? When a woman loses the ability to feel desirable and enjoy the pleasure of sharing, when she is an object, and refuses to own her essence. This is what happens when a husband resembles inevitable death and a wife is a dying flower, when there is nothing in common and shared between two souls.

The writer presents another bitter reality and reminds us that women who are victims of constant violence find it more difficult to leave the role of victim than to give up their lives. Naturally, this is also supported by the fact that these women cannot start an independent life, feed themselves and their children, that, as a rule, they do not find shelter with anyone, and society, trapped in its shell of identical or similar problems, is not interested in or bothered by their acceptance or help. However, along with the above circumstances, it is also worth noting that the victim of violence often still looks for a potential abuser and tries to find salvation, comfort and shelter in him. At the same time, it is important to take into account the fact that people act according to their own life experience and, often, it seems to us to be the only space, an acceptable and natural environment for everyone, in which we have lived for years and beyond which we have not seen anything. The female character has not experienced any other form of love, so it is not surprising that Gerti who has temporarily escaped domestic violence, just to take a few sips of fresh air, who, having endured so many traumatic experiences alone, and seems to be in agony and unconsciousness, willing to run away from her reality, is trying to replace her husband model, in the form of an experienced, handy, carefree, young student – another abuser – who, like her husband, is neither capable of loving this woman, nor of appreciating her, nor of saving

and liberating her, nor of respecting and understanding her. Perhaps, the most painful thing is to admit that a woman who accepts violence as a natural part of her existence loses the ability to feel dignity, true freedom and happiness, and to recognize and appreciate a worthy, honest man with a healthy relationship.

The woman's dream of warmth and love remains unfulfilled. She decides to awaken and open up the feelings suppressed for years with another unworthy man, because she entrusts him with her broken soul, who does not know her value and worth, who does not have any desire or ability to fix her. The scene, when Gerti, who run away from her home, was sitting in the student's car is a kind of catharsis for the woman, an unfulfilled metamorphosis, when the man, who has gone beyond the limits of normality to talk to her about her feelings, again buries her in the abyss of carnal passions, shackles her, and again suppresses her. The scene in the car shows that a woman is not allowed to be alone, to be free, to be in her own skin, to be more than just an object of sexual desires. Otherwise, is she recognizing her essence, then, she also recognizes the unworthy traitor and will not accept the captive slavery as love. The reader sees a used and abandoned woman, doomed and loneliness, indifference and rejection. The woman who has never felt love and care had difficulty distinguishing between love and extreme arousal, between true, deed feelings and desire to be loved, to be trusted, to be recognized and appreciated. We still see the woman who has been beaten, humiliated, scorned, and used up. By touching the young body, the woman seems to be regaining her youth, trying to stop the flow of time in her own body, and becoming a part of eternity. Beyond the mountains, the woman who had utterly lost the ability to perceive and control her body finally collapsed when a young student and his friends gang-raped her with their hands and tongues. The director's wife, who had run away from home for the third time and was kneeling at the door of a young student, saw no more women around her; the shop assistants, the workers' wives, her acquaintances, and the young student girls who had watched her curiously, giggled, and mocked her the night before had disappeared. No one was by the woman's side; everyone had forgotten her, maybe, because, she was neither the first not the last. The end for such women, who have nothing left to lose, is killing her child – a complete and utter fall and degeneration, tearing out one's essence, cutting it off, going against the laws of nature, cutting off from everyone and everything, the most cruel sentence, self-punishment, and eternal revenge on abusers and betray men by destroying their offspring.

Mikheil Javakhishvili's Jaqos Dispossessed

At first glance, what could be similar or familiar between the character Gerti from Elfriede Jelinek's "Lust" and the character Margo from Mikheil Javakhishvili's "Jaqo's Dispossessed", however, while

reading the texts, we discover that both women are caught between two abusive men, one of whom is the women's husband, and the other a "Lover". The novel's main female character, Margo, meets her future husband by chance in the editorial office. The institution of the family in this case is a committed cohabitation of two people devoid of content, which, although in the case of Mikheil Javakhishvili, is not based on sexual desire and insatiable need, however, it is still undermined, since it is only an attempt to escape from monotony and boredom and unite with others. The young woman is Margarita Kaplanishvili, of noble origin like Teimuraz, and an orphan. The woman looks pure and straightforward, has refined taste, restrained speech, and is characterized by a sly avarice, but only with black almond eyes. She has read Teimuraz's published letters, does not seem stupid, and her reasoning is pleasing to Teimuraz. All of the above was sufficient for the man to fall in love with the woman and agree to marry her. Teimuraz did not physically or sexually abuse Margo; such a thought and desire never even crossed his mind. Still, not all abusers are aggressors. Violence has many forms and faces. Passive abusers, willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, often abuse their family members. Teimuraz also abused Margo by indifference, a lack of attention and care. It is true that in Teimuraz's etes, Margo is not a sexual toy, but Margo is also an addition to him, an integral part of his home. Teimuraz Khevistavi also cannot see and cannot recognize Margo as a woman and as a person; he also makes a woman live in loneliness and silence. Hence, this is also violence, but passive, it's like a moral and psychological poison which makes woman to lose her identity and collapse. That is why Margo tried to replace her husband's indifference with entertainment – she dressed well and often left the house; sometimes she went to visit, usually she hosted, but somehow, she covered up the sadness, boredom, and pain is silence and rejection. Finally, the woman got tired of entertaining herself and, depressed, returned to her reality, accepted it, and came to terms with it. As a form of adaptation, she chose to sleep for 15 hours a day, as if her body refused to wake up and return to reality, as if even through sleep, she tried to distract herself, be silent, and create her own space in another world – she chooses a deep sleep as a form of nonexistence. Margo could not hide herself in everyday affairs; she did not have a child, and three or four caretakers and servants did everything for her, so Margo felt completely empty and useless, and all day long, walked around six rooms idly. Margo sometimes tries to seduce her husband. She dances, sings in front of Teimuraz, hugs and kisses him to feel her existence and to be noticed and loved.

Margo's relationship did not begin with contempt and hatred (unlike Gerti); she loves her husband in her way, and she is used to it because fate has chosen him as her husband, and she should experience happiness with him. Margo tries to please her husband; she wants to be close to him. She demands warmth and love from Teimuraz, because she is not visibly and humiliated, she is not beaten, she is

not forced into sexual intercourse, therefore, she cannot perceive herself as a victim, thus she cannot realize the terrible consequences of silence and indifference, which, sooner or later, will manifest itself with all its might. Times changed, and Teimuraz could not adapt to the new times; he could not get a job or find his place anywhere. Margo, who had been raised in a free environment and knew nothing of hardship, at first endured and got used to the difficulties and poverty, but as time went on, she began to ridicule, scorn, and despise him. At that very moment, Teimuraz's former serf, Jaqo JivaShvili, appeared at their door. His two wives had already died, and now he has a third one. He had so driven Teimuraz out of his ancestral homeland that, having escaped from serfdom, he became the owner of his former master's estate. He deceitfully appropriated all of Teimuraz's property and invited the now impoverished Teimuraz and his wife, Margo, as guests. The husband did not listen to his wife's premonitions, did not consider the danger, and led himself to moral degradation. The husband entrusted his wife to Jaqo and Jaqo raped Margo. "He laid her down like a heavy bear, crushed her… He trampled her mercilessly, breaking her arms and legs" (Javakhishvili, 2023, 66), threatening to strangle her, covering her mouth with one hand and holding her neck with the other, biting her shoulder, tearing her dress. After the first violence, Margo, beaten and soiled, cried loudly and yearned for impossible revenge in her heart. The second time, she could no longer scream and fight, so she moaned pitifully, and the third time, the woman's body felt pleasure.

In the bedroom reserved for Teimuraz and Margo, he sleeps so soundly, so deep, that he doesn't even notice the sexual assault on his wife lying next to him the fall of a woman must be monstrous by her environment, it must be placed between two extremes and two ugliness, so that it becomes difficult for us to distinguish between the uglier and the more guilty. Such an environment should transform a woman into a victim, should corrupt her with false ideas and illusions, so that not only herself, but even the reader should consider the woman guilty, and should begin to discuss the morality or immorality of a woman. Left completely alone with her misfortune, rejected by everyone, trampled by the indifference and inaction of those around her, victimized by the ignorance of her existence, all alternatives must be eliminated in the woman's imagination; no other life must exist for women like her.

There are repetitive actions and situations in the scenes of sexual intercourse and violence. The man (Jaqo) quickly satisfies his animal instinct and greedily takes possession of the woman's body several times (like the director in Elfriede Jelinek's "Lust"). The action always takes place in the dark because the consciousness of a woman in a traumatized state is blurred; her willpower is broken and subdued, as for women in such a state, their essence, value, meaning, and future are uncertain and shrouded in darkness. The narrator tells us that Margo never even considered betraying her husband, but what

should she do, or who would protect her, trapped in the arms of a wild beast, in an animal, and a bear? The woman is embarrassed and ashamed of becoming Jaqo's lover; she feels sorry and heartbroken for her husband. Jaqo treats relatives, servants, peasants, and women as goods, only out of consumer interest. The only difference is that, at the beginning, Margo like a new toy for Jaqo, whom a man will first make queen, promising wealth, love and care, then, like other wives, will treat her as a servant. Teimuraz could not take revenge even when he saw his wife and Jaqo naked in bed, nor did he do anything when Jaqo married Margo as his fourth wife, nor could he kill Jaqo, nor could he leave his homeland and start a new life, nor could he save her wife. Therefore, Teimuraz offered his ex-wife brotherhood and attended her wedding ceremony. This cohabitation could not last long in the woman's life either, because after a few months had passed, Teimuraz, who had supposedly gone searching for a new life, returned and discovered Margo, thin and yellow as a sick person, dressed in a torn dress, beaten on the shoulder, bent over from carrying heavy sacks. Margo had nowhere to go and nobody to return to, because like Elfriede Jelinek's character Gerti, she had lost herself and the meaning of life.

Conclusion

As a summary of the discussion presented in the paper, we note that in teaching literature and reading literary texts, in the context of modern theoretical models adapted to literature, against the background of the comparative analysis, Within the framework of an attempt to read key episodes and female characters interpretatively, we can apply the main characteristics of one of the interesting versions of feminist theory proposed by Jack Halberstam, "Shadow Feminism," to both Elfriede Jelinek's female character from the novel "Lust" and Mikheil Javakhishvili's female character from the novel "Jaqo's Dispossessed." Both characters exhibit the main characteristics of "Shadow Feminism", such as: denial and forgetting of one's own essence, identity, personal desires and freedom of expression; complete despair; self-destruction (destructive action) and masochism; complete alienation and anti-socialism; silence and obedience; the function of the speechless and frozen female body as a fixation in a closed system of universal obedience and male aggression; anti-sociality as a symbol of absence, shame or attachment to destruction and radical passivity; masochism as an unsuccessful attempt to suppress the death instinct - destabilization of libido energies through the denial of manifested free will and the disintegration of the personality; adaptation and passivity as a result of fascist nationalism and the colonized past (Soviet past) - an allegorical symbol of the rejection of the traumatic past; scenes of violence against women by male characters as an imitation of conscious or unconscious misogyny, fascist ethos and national nihilism; also, misogyny as an extreme form of domestic violence and sexism, marginalization of women, discrimination, their humiliation, devaluation, violation of rights,

consideration as sexual objects, physical, psychological, and sexual violence.

We want to add that in this regard, it would also be interesting to discuss the novel "Soviet Milk" by the modern Latvian writer Nora Ikstena, which, along with the metaphorically depicted rather painful issues of women's faces, women's voices, and women's writing, shows that a mother who refuses to feed her newborn child, with this act, echoes the faces of countless women living in a totalitarian regime and symbolically depicts a woman's desperate attempt to under no circumstances pass on her terrible history, traumatic experience, the toxicity and violence surrounding her to her child and not to poison the child in the still unconscious phase with the legacy of traumatic memory and to leave something inviolable, free and sacred in a completely desacralized, false, hypocritical and filthy reality, in the form of the pure consciousness of the next generation. Also, in the process of reading and teaching such literary texts, it would be interesting to draw parallels with modern cinematic examples, such as, for instance, Halina Reijn's film "Babygirl", in which the crude, naturalistic nudity and erotic scenes depicted are a satire on power, stigmas, double standards and roles created by society or culture, norms and models of moral and immoral behavior. The film parodies the standard image of a strong, prosperous, and, at the same time, a family woman, as well as scopophilia and domination in general. However, this is a topic for discussion at another time and goes beyond the scope of this article.

Thus, in terms of introducing and analyzing topics related to gender, sexual, psychological, and self-identification crises, which are always interesting and relevant for modern students and readers, we consider it critical to provide opportunities for different teaching and diverse interpretive reading of the works of Georgian writers, including comparative analysis of their work with texts by contemporary foreign authors and discussion in the light of the latest theories.

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Perceptions of Scaffolded and Unscaffolded Corrective Feedback in the Portuguese EFL Context

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the beliefs English as a Foreign Language (EFL) 9th grade learners (n=166) and teachers (n=5) hold about scaffolded and unscaffolded corrective feedback (CF). Participants completed a Likert-scale questionnaire that dealt with the necessity, frequency and timing of error correction, types of errors and their correction, effectiveness of CF strategies and who was responsible for the CF. Results indicate that both learners and teachers value CF, though learners prefer immediate correction while teachers favor feedback after the learner's turn. Both groups prioritize correcting communication-hindering and grammar- or vocabulary-related errors. Learners perceive explicit corrections and recasts as the most effective strategies, whereas teachers favor recasts and prompts. Learners regard the teacher as the main source of CF, followed by self-correction, while teachers opt for promoting self-correction, but also provide CF themselves and resort to peer feedback. These findings are discussed in light of the distinction between scaffolded and unscaffolded CF, highlighting areas of convergence and divergence between learners' and teachers' beliefs and their implications for promoting learner development within the Zone of Proximal Development.

Keywords: *English as a Foreign Language (EFL), corrective feedback (CF), beliefs, 3rd cycle learners.*

Introduction

In the framework of the Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf, 2000; 2006; Lantolf & Thorne, 2007), the value of corrective feedback (CF) lies in the opportunities it provides for scaffolding, since it is through this collaborative process that feedback can foster learners' interlanguage growth and ability (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). The social and dialogic nature of interaction (Nassaji & Swain, 2000) are central to this theory, as language learning is regarded as a process that takes place within a social environment (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Therefore, CF is not understood solely as strategies to correct learners' errors, but as "dialogic endeavor" (Nassaji, 2021: 87) in which teacher and learner interact and the former tries to assist the latter in achieving what he or she would struggle to achieve without help. CF is, thus, according to the Sociocultural Theory, a process which is entrenched and affected by the social context in which the learning takes place, which means that to truly understand how CF works and

how it can help learners, several other aspects such as the teacher, other learners and the educational context must be taken into account.

According to the Sociocultural Theory, it is this interaction between the learner and the teacher as someone who has superior skills in the L2 that enables the learner to use his or her linguistic knowledge to improve his or her skills in the L2. However, this interaction must take place within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a crucial notion in the theory, which Vygotsky (1978) defines as the distance between what learners can do on their own and what they require assistance with.

This is where scaffolding comes into play, as a type of assistance that is appropriate to the learner in the sense that it is negotiated within the learner's ZPD. The notion has been interpreted in different ways, for example by Donato (1994: 40), as the process in which "a knowledgeable participant creates, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate in, and extend current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence".

In this context, the dynamics of the interaction in CF may create opportunities to promote the learner's autonomy and progressive mastery of the TL. Effective CF is, in the scope of the Sociocultural Theory, scaffolded CF, meaning that teachers should consider learners' developmental readiness. It should be progressive and contingent in nature (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994): progressive, meaning that it starts with a less direct form of assistance and becomes more direct if need be; and contingent, because it should give the learner the chance to adopt an active role. This is achieved by encouraging self-correction and bearing in mind that as they further develop their skills, learners will need less scaffolding to use particular aspects of the TL in a correct way.

CF, defined as "responses to learner utterances containing an error" (Ellis, 2006, p. 28), is an everyday practice for language teachers. In each lesson, learners produce erroneous spoken output and teachers have to make an instant decision about whether to correct the error, when to do so, which errors to prioritize, how to correct them and who should correct. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has shown strong support for the effectiveness of CF (Lyster et al., 2013; Pawlak, 2014), and teacher guides have extensively addressed the issue of error correction, although there is still a degree of caution regarding its implementation. Teachers themselves often fear they may be correcting too much or in a less subtle way, or breaking the communicative flow. This is, therefore, an area of interest for both language teachers and L2 acquisition researchers, and studies on the topic may contribute to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

By observing teacher-student interaction in French immersion classrooms, Lyster & Ranta (1997) identified six CF types that have been largely used by researchers to refer to the ways in which feedback can be provided:

(i) *explicit correction,* when the teacher overtly supplies the correct form, making clearthat an error has occurred:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: You should say "I went to the cinema with my friends."

(ii) *recast,* when the teacher reformulates the learner's utterance, correcting the error:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: Oh, you went to the cinema with your friends.

(iii) *clarification request,* i.e., an indication by the teacher that the learner needs to repeat or reformulate his or her utterance:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: Pardon? Can you repeat?

(iv) *metalinguistic feedback,* when the teacher comments on the student's utterance, relying on grammatical terminology so as to make him or her aware of the error and thus promoting self-correction:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: What happens to the verb if you're talking about the past?

(v) *elicitation,* when the teacher directly asks the learner to self-correct, either by asking a question, by leading the student to complete their own sentence or by asking for a reformulation:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: Last weekend, I…

(vi) *repetition,* when the teacher repeats the erroneous utterance, often emphasizing the error by adjusting intonation:

St: Last weekend I go to the cinema with my friends.

T: I go?

The six CF types were later classified into two categories: reformulations and prompts (Ranta & Lyster, 2007). The former category includes recasts and explicit corrections since they provide learners with target reformulations of their erroneous utterance; the latter includes clarification requests, metalinguistic clues, elicitations and repetitions. Therefore, the *reformulations* category consists in unscaffolded CF, since these strategies directly provide the correct form instead of prompting the learner to produce it. On the other hand, the *prompts* category entails scaffolded CF, since the different moves guide the learner to notice the error, offer cues, or require the learner to modify their output so as to attempt self-correction.

Literature Review

Research has shown strong support for the effectiveness of CF in foreign language learning (Lyster et al., 2013; Pawlak, 2014) and it has established itself as a key component in form-focused instruction. According to several metanalyses (e.g. Li, 2010; Lyster et al., 2013), classroom-based studies consistently confirm that providing oral CF is significantly more effective than providing no CF. Additionally, learners receiving CF in the form of prompts (clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, repetition) or explicit correction tend to show more gains on some measures when compared to learners receiving recasts.

However, the results are varied. As the body of research has accumulated, it has become evident that CF and its effect on acquisition is mediated by different factors, such as the nature of the target feature, the instructional context and individual factors. For example, the effectiveness of CF may depend upon learners' receptivity to the CF (Sheen, 2007), and mismatches between learners' and teachers' beliefs may play a role in the process. Beliefs about CF refer to the opinions and attitudes learners and teachers hold about how useful CF can be and how it can be implemented in the classroom, and have been recognized as a relevant factor in the learning process in terms of learner motivation and learner achievement (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005; Tanaka, 2004). Several studies have concluded that learners wish to be corrected more often than teachers deem necessary (e.g. Ancker, 2000; Schulz, 2001). For example, in relation to the question of whether teachers should correct every error learners make, 76% of ESL students answered "yes", as opposed to only 25% of teachers in Ancker's (2000) study, which investigated teachers and students' perceptions in 15 countries during a period of 4 years. The study involved EFL learners of different age groups. The most frequent reason for wishing to be corrected constantly given by learners was the importance of speaking English accurately, whereas teachers feared the negative impact of CF on students' motivation.

Therefore, teachers opt not to correct all mistakes (e.g. Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005), instead using delayed correction (e.g. Tomczyk, 2013) or implicit CF-strategies such as recasts (e.g. Bell, 2005). For example, Park (2010), who investigated the beliefs of 160 low-intermediate to advanced ESL learners and 18 ESL teachers about oral CF, reported that 52% (M=3.43) of students agreed with immediate correction even if it interrupted their speech, whereas only 11% (M=2.33) of teachers gave the same answer. The student participants in Lee (2013), who investigated advanced-level ESL learners' (n=60) beliefs, also stated they would like the most frequent errors in their oral production to be corrected all the time (M=4.42).

In her study, which involved 457 post-secondary FL teachers, Bell (2005) found that 80% of the participants considered that "the effective foreign language teacher uses recasts as a preferred

method of corrective feedback" (p.263), and Lee (2013) found a mean score of 4.43 out of 5 of learners who preferred the teacher to tell them what the error was and provide the correct form immediately. Scores for explicit correction and recast were considerably higher than those for prompts, which seems to indicate that the learners that took part in the study wanted to be provided with the correct form, either implicitly or explicitly. Similarly, 64% of learners in Park's study (2010) rated explicit correction as "effective" or "very effective" and it was the favourite strategy in the correction of all types of error (grammatical, phonological and lexical) among 258 EFL learners in the study conducted by Fadilah et al., (2017). Roothooft & Breeze (2016) investigated the opinions of 395 learners (282 secondary school students and 113 adult students) and 46 teachers (half employed at secondary schools, half working at private language academies). The researchers found that students rated explicit correction more positively than their teachers, as more than 70% of students found it "effective" or "very effective", whereas only about 20% of teachers shared their opinion.

Regarding the question of who should be responsible for the provision of CF, Park (2010) found that 91% of learners and 94% of teachers agree or strongly agree that the teacher should correct students' errors. Self-correction also seemed to be valued by the participants in this study (71% of learners and 89% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed), although opinions were divided regarding peer-correction (46% of learners and 44% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed). Although there is scant attention in the literature concerning teachers' beliefs about who should do the correcting, the student teacher participants (n=55) in Agudo's study (2014) did not show strong support for peer correction, with only 33% stating that it was more effective than teacher correction and 37% stating that it caused less anxiety than teacher correction. The teachers in this study believed in the value of self-correction – 78% agreed that learners should be prompted to self-correct.

The present study investigates EFL learners and teachers' beliefs about oral CF. There are various reasons why this research is important. Firstly, the success of CF may be mediated by preferences and expectations about its frequency, timing, the corrective strategy used, and who does the correcting, as well as the specific errors being addressed. Secondly, examining the beliefs of both learners and teachers enables us to identify disparities that may significantly affect students' motivation to learn the language. Finally, understanding these beliefs provides essential insights into whether students and teachers' perceptions align with research outcomes regarding the effectiveness of CF. With these considerations in mind, the current study addressed the following research question:

Are there any differences between teachers' and students' perceptions of CF practices as far as frequency, timing, type of error, corrective strategy and who provides correction are concerned?

Methodology

Research Context and Participants

Seven classes of 9th Grade students (n=166) and their teachers (n=5) took part in the study, which took place in a state school in the Setúbal district. Eighty-four male students (51%) and eighty-two female students (49%) participated in the study. The average age of the students was fourteen years old and, for the majority (96%), their L1 was Portuguese. Most of the students (76%) reported that they had been learning English for more than 6 years or between 4 and 6 years (24%), which suggests that they started English lessons in primary school. Besides English, all the participants reported learning French as an FL. 5% were also learning Spanish and 5% another FL. Lessons followed the curricular guidelines provided by the Portuguese Ministry of Education (Direção Geral da Educação, 2018). Students had 135 minutes of English lessons per week, divided between one 90-minute lesson and one 45-minute lesson. As a whole, the classes could be said to represent an intermediate level of proficiency in English, or B1, according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2020), although they also comprised of quite a few students who could be placed either above or below this proficiency level.

The five participating teachers were experienced EFL professionals who had taught English for eleven to thirty years, mainly in a state school context. All the teacher participants also taught another FL: three German, and two French.

Design and Procedure

Two questionnaires were designed to explore learners' and teachers' beliefs in relation to CF – one with twenty-five closed questions for learners (Appendix A) and another with thirty-two closed questions for teachers (Appendix B). Both employed a Likert-scale and included an open-ended field called "Observations". In the first section, the questionnaire items were organized into five categories: necessity and frequency of error correction (i.e., should oral mistakes always, sometimes or never be corrected?); timing of error correction (i.e., as soon as the error occurs even if it interrupts the student's speaking, after the student finishes speaking, after the activity, at the end of class, in a lesson devoted to addressing the most frequent errors); types of errors (i.e., errors that interfere with communication, errors that do not interfere with communication, frequent errors, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation errors) and their correction; effectiveness of CF strategies (no correction, explicit correction, recast, prompts) and who corrects (the teacher, classmates, students themselves). In the first and second categories – necessity and frequency of error correction, and timing of error correction – students and teachers were asked to rate each item on a 6-point scale, from "strongly disagree" to

"strongly agree". As for the third, types of errors, a 5-point scale was used, from "never" to "always". The effectiveness of CF strategies, the fourth category, was rated by participants on a 4-point scale, from "very ineffective" to "very effective". The teachers' questionnaire included an additional category in which they were asked to rate on a 5-point scale, from "never" to "always", how often they use each strategy in their teaching practice. Finally, in the last category, which investigated opinions on who should be responsible for the provision of CF, participants' degree of agreement was rated on a 6-point scale, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Examples were given to guide learners' and teacher's answers. The second section of the questionnaire collected participants' demographic information: gender, native language, length of English learning/ teaching and other languages mastered/ studied.

The questionnaire was informally piloted with a group of 9th-grade students and administered to students and teachers face-to-face. They were informed that the survey was anonymous and their participation voluntary. The participants were asked to read the general instructions, which gave some insight about the general aim of the study, and filled in the questionnaire in approximately twenty minutes.

Results and Discussion

Necessity and frequency of error correction

In the first category of the questionnaire, learners and teachers were asked to rate three statements to answer the question **"**Should oral errors be corrected?". As shown in Figure 1, on a 5-point scale, the learners' mean rating for the statement **"**I like my English teacher to always correct my errors" was 4.20. No students strongly agreed and only one student agreed with the statement **"**I think the English teacher should never correct my errors" (M=1.42).

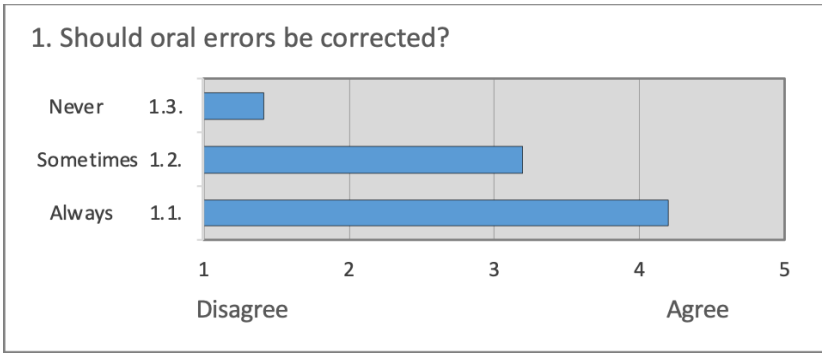

Figure 1. Students' mean responses on the necessity and frequency of error correction (N=166)

Their teachers also recognized the importance of oral CF, despite being somewhat more cautious regarding how often it should be provided. As shown in Figure 2, the mean score for the statement "Students' errors should always be corrected" was 3.20. For the other two statements included in this category, "Students' errors should sometimes be corrected" and "Students' errors should never be corrected", a mean of 3.60 and 1.40 was found, respectively.

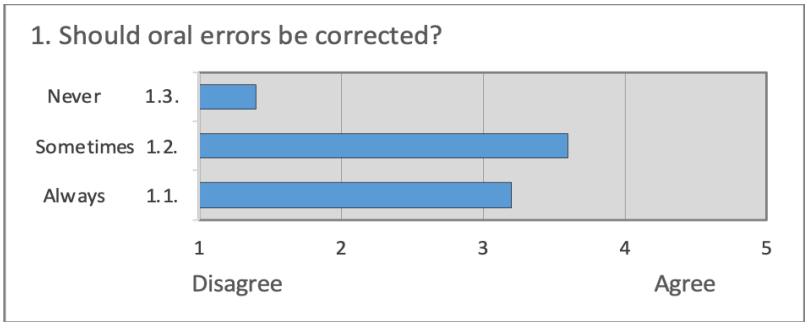

Figure 2. Teachers' mean responses on the necessity and frequency of error correction (N=5)

As far as the necessity and frequency of CF is concerned, the results suggest that the learners that participated in this study strongly believe in the importance of CF and express a wish to have their oral errors systematically corrected by their teachers. These results are in line with previous studies that showed that language learners acknowledge the usefulness of CF and expect to be corrected (e.g. Ancker, 2000; Brown, 2009; Park, 2010; Schulz, 2001).

Results suggest that the necessity for error correction is perceived more strongly by students than by their teachers, although both seem to agree on the usefulness of CF. Several comments left by students in an open question at the end of the questionnaire called "Observações" (*Observations*) confirm that there was a general wish among students to be corrected as often as possible:

> Errors should always be corrected.
>
> Teachers should always correct errors so that students don't make them again and to facilitate language learning.
>
> I want to be corrected in order to improve and learn more.
>
> I love English and would like the teacher to correct me as much as possible so that I can speak English fluently.
>
> In my opinion errors should always be corrected, because if no one corrects them and we don't realize we made a mistake, we will keep doing it and that's not good.

As shown in the examples above, taken from the students' questionnaires, three students use the word "always", another the phrase "as much as possible" and another student clearly stated her

wish to be corrected. Three students referred to the importance they believe oral correction has in their learning or in achieving fluency and another student considered that CF plays a role in preventing the occurrence of future errors.

Loewen et al., (2009), for example, found that FL learners relied on learning grammar rules and, when compared to second language (SL) learners, had fewer opportunities to use the target language (TL) outside the classroom context, which might promote a favorable attitude toward grammar and CF. The students participating in our study were not immersed in the TL and the opportunities to use English in authentic communication were limited, which might contribute to their wish to receive constant correction.

The participating teachers also showed positive beliefs towards CF, despite being more cautious regarding the frequency of its provision:

> Corrective feedback is important, but we must take into account the balance between the need to correct oral errors and the encouragement to practice oral fluency.
>
> The teacher must take into account the group in question. Constantly correcting students individually in front of the class in beginners' classes may discourage students from participating. In the intermediate level classes, from my experience, the students seem to be more comfortable with corrections and these can be an important contribution to the improvement of oral production.

These comments show that, while teachers also regard CF as a useful tool, they are aware that its positive impact is mediated by several factors. The participating teachers highlight the importance of correcting while also maintaining a classroom environment that motivates students to participate orally. Another relevant factor mentioned in the comments section is that CF provision is necessarily different according to the students' proficiency level. The comments written by the participating teachers are illustrative of the several decisions a teacher has to make as far as the correction of students' mistakes is concerned.

Timing of error correction

The second category is related to the timing of error correction and it includes 5 statements to be rated by the participants. The learners' and teachers' mean responses regarding the timing of CF are shown in Figure 3 and 4, respectively. "As soon as the student stops speaking" has the highest mean among students, 3.71, followed by "As soon as they occur", with 3.31. "At the end of the lesson" received the lowest mean score from students (M=1.80). Their teachers believe that the most fitting time for the provision of CF was either "As soon as the student stops speaking", with a mean of 3.40, or "At the

end of the activity", also with a mean of 3.40. In contrast to their students, teachers did not favor the option of correcting the errors "As soon as they occur" (M=2.20). The option of correcting "In a specific lesson" is the least popular among the teachers in this study (M=2.00).

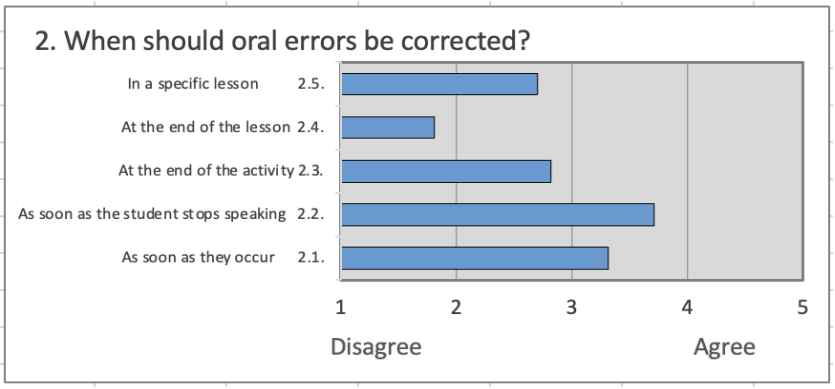

Figure 3. Students' mean responses on the timing of error correction (N= 166)

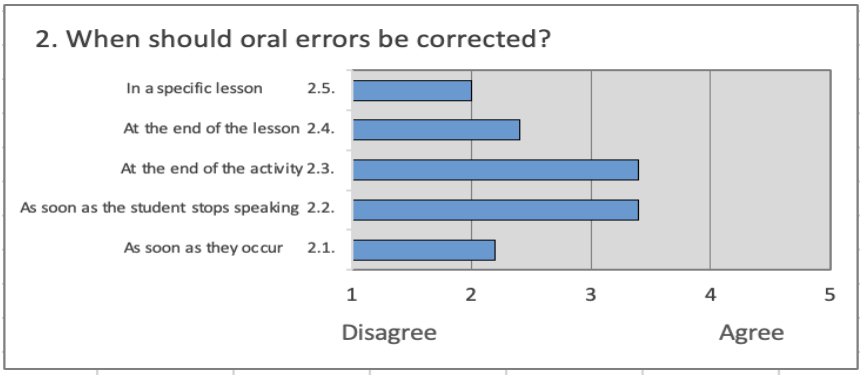

Figure 4. Teachers' mean responses on the timing of error correction (N=5)

Regarding the timing of CF, the students that participated in this study regarded immediate correction as a positive practice, believing that their errors should be corrected either at the end of their turn or even as soon as the error was made. The same pattern was found by Davis (2003), Park (2010) and Tasdemir & Arslan (2018), for example. These perceptions can also be found in some statements that the students noted in the questionnaire:

> I think that spoken errors should be immediately corrected so that in the next exercise we don't make the same mistakes.
>
> In short, I think that when students make oral errors the teacher should correct them when the student finishes speaking so as not to disturb and interrupt the student, but correcting the student so that he or she can try to correct them next time.

The teachers in this study approach the question of CF timing with care, being less certain of the option of correcting errors as soon as they occur. Being more aware of the diverse aspects that are involved in classroom interaction, in particular of the role affective factors play, teachers may fear that

constant correction of every error may inhibit learners or hinder communication. Several teacher guides advise teachers to deal with immediate and constant correction with caution (e.g. Edge, 1989; Harmer, 2007; Hedge, 2000; Scrivener, 2005), for the same reasons, particularly if the context is a communicative activity, as opposed to an activity which aims at developing accuracy. The advice on the topic given in teacher guides may be one of the factors that help shape teachers' CF responses (Ellis, 2017). Furthermore, teachers' beliefs about CF may have their origin in their experiences as trainee teachers, during in-service training or in the classroom context (Borg, 2011).

In line with the recommendations found in teacher guides, the teachers that participated in the study prefer correcting at the end of the student's turn or at the end of the activity. This may be a way of encouraging oral participation in the classroom, making the learner feel at ease to express his or her own ideas freely, without feeling judged. This particular aspect was addressed by two of the participating teachers in the "Observations" section of the questionnaire:

> It seems important to me to be careful not to interrupt the student in the middle of a sentence, so that the correction does not become counterproductive. However, we should also not wait too long before correcting, otherwise the student will no longer be able to associate the correct form with the error.
>
> Usually, I prefer to wait until the student has finished speaking, so that he or she does not forget what he or she is going to say and feels that there is enough space to practice speaking.

Types of errors

The statements in the third category asked learners and teachers about the frequency with which different types of errors should be corrected. As shown in Figure 5, all error types received quite high mean scores among students, especially grammar (M=4.58) and vocabulary (M=4.58) mistakes, followed by errors that interfere with communication (M=4.37). The lowest mean score among students was found in the responses to question 3.2. "Errors that do not interfere with communication", but students still believed that CF should be provided for these mistakes (M=3.36).

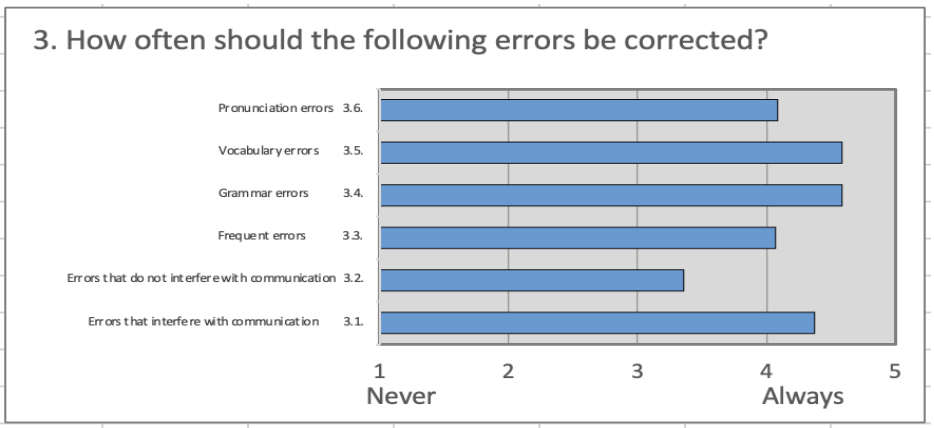

Figure 5. Students' mean responses on the correction of different types of errors (N=166)

The mean scores for the teachers' answers regarding how often different types of errors should be corrected are shown in Figure 6. In the teachers' opinion, errors that interfere with communication should always be corrected (M=5), and high means were also found for grammar (M=4.20) and vocabulary (M=4.20) errors. Similar to students, teachers consider that errors that do not interfere with communication should be given less priority in the frequency of oral CF, but that correction should, nevertheless, be provided to a considerable extent (M=3.40).

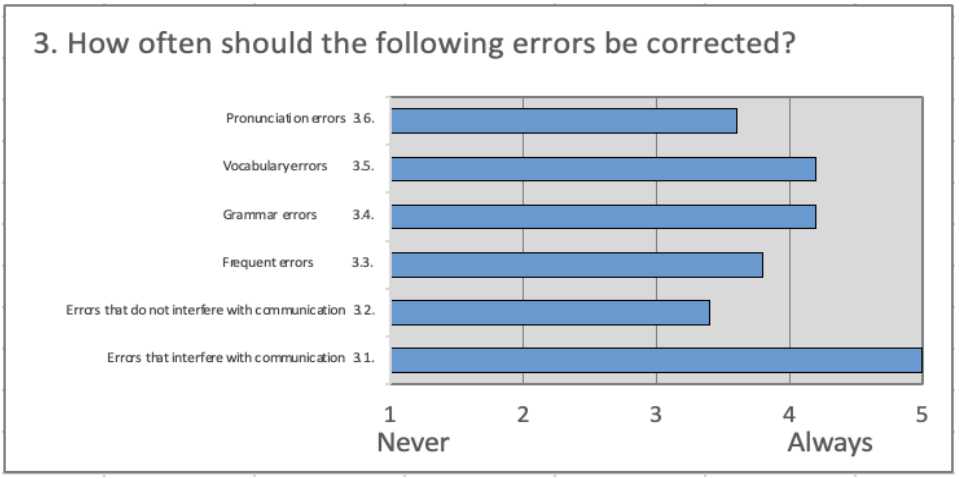

Figure 6. Teachers' mean responses on the correction of different types of errors (N=5)

When asked about correction of different types of errors, students and teachers agreed that errors that interfere with communication should always be corrected. Although information regarding the desired correction by students and teachers of different types of errors is scarce in the literature, the same pattern was found by Park (2010).

All grammar and vocabulary errors should also be corrected at all times, in the students' opinion. However, teachers believe that those errors that hinder communication should be given priority. These results reveal that although teachers do not treat all the errors that occur, they consistently provide CF on errors that cause misunderstanding. As discussed in section 3.1., teachers must strike a balance between offering CF and promoting oral production and interaction while also managing time constraints in classes. Jean & Simard (2011) also found that, when looking at types of errors, errors which impede communication were also thought to be more important than grammar errors by the participating teachers.

The results, particularly those of the students, corroborate the stated wish to be corrected all the time. One of the comments left by the students in the questionnaire clearly expresses this opinion:

> In conclusion, I think it is essential for the teacher to correct our mistakes regardless of the type of mistake.

This contrasts, for example, with the results found by Jean & Simard (2011), as half of the participating learners in their study estimated that oral errors should be corrected only when they interfere with communication.

Another comment written by one of the students in the present study reinforces the perceived importance of error correction. The learner makes reference to two types of errors he or she considers particularly worthy of correction, and presents an argument in favor of immediate correction, which, as discussed above, is generally approved by the students:

> Any type of error should be corrected immediately, otherwise it doesn't have as much effect and the student forgets about it. Grammatical and pronunciation errors, which are the most common, are the errors that should be given the most attention.

Interestingly, in his own words, this student refers to the importance of not delaying a correction, fearing such CF may lack effectiveness. This relates to the concept of "window of opportunity" (Doughty, 2001), according to which immediate CF prompts leaners to carry out a cognitive comparison between their output and the TL form, which may promote the development of linguistic competence.

Effectiveness of CF strategies

The fourth category in the questionnaire aimed at investigating learners' and teachers' beliefs on the effectiveness of different CF strategies. An example of a classroom interaction between a student and a teacher was used (cf. Appendix A and B) to illustrate the different reactions that the teacher can have to a student's oral error: (4.1.) no CF; (4.2.) explicit correction; (4.3.) recast; (4.4.) clarification request; (4.5.) metalinguistic feedback; (4.6.) elicitation; or (4.7.) repetition.

Figure 7 illustrates the mean responses of students as far as the CF types are concerned. Explicit correction (M=4.33) had the highest mean score among students, followed by recasts (M=3.86). Regarding prompts, clarification requests had a mean of 3.46, metalinguistic feedback 3.17, elicitation 3.11 and repetition 2.83. No CF provision had the lowest mean score among learners (M=1.39).

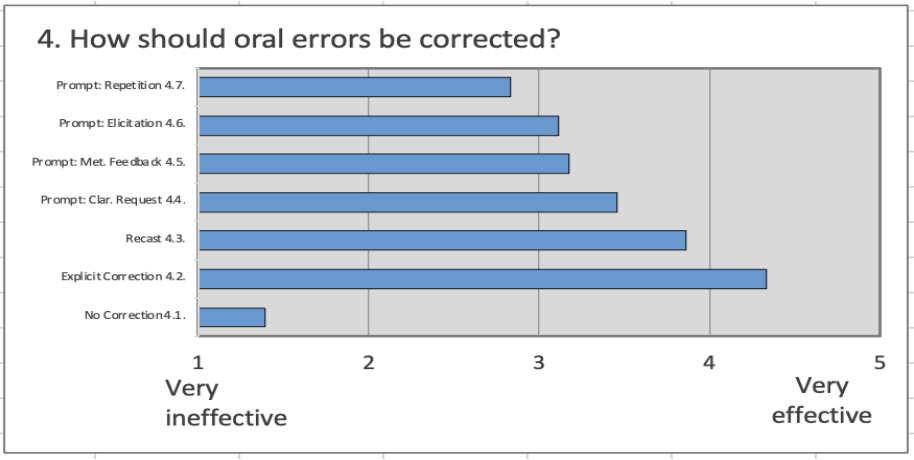

Figure 7. Students' mean responses on the effectiveness of different CF strategies (N=166)

As far as the teachers were concerned, recast and prompts in the form of metalinguistic feedback had the highest mean score, 3.60, followed by prompts in the form of elicitation (M=3.40). No correction also had the lowest mean score among teachers (M=1.40), but it was followed by explicit correction (M=2.40), which shows a contrast between the teachers' and the students' beliefs. Figure 8 shows the mean responses of the teachers regarding effectiveness of the CF strategies.

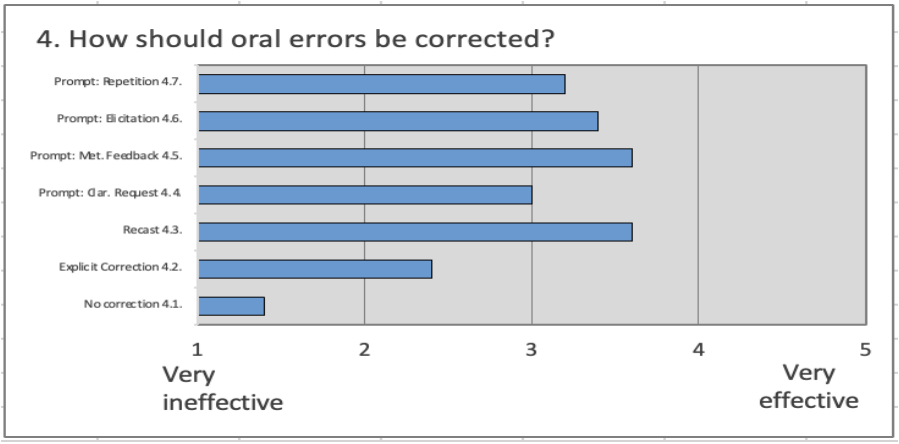

Figure 8. Teachers' mean responses on the effectiveness of different CF strategies (N=5)

When asked how often they used each CF strategy in their lessons, as illustrated in Figure 9, the teachers answered that they relied preferably on the prompt strategies of metalinguistic feedback (M=3.60) and elicitation (M=3.60) and on the recast (M=3.40). Not providing a correction was the option the teachers stated they used least often in the classroom (M=2.00), followed by explicit correction (M=2.40).

Figure 9. Teachers' mean responses on the frequency of provision of the different CF strategies (N=5)

Regarding the perceived effectiveness of the different CF strategies, not surprisingly, students and teachers agree that no correction is the least effective action. As for CF strategies, opinions diverge. For example, explicit correction is the students' favorite strategy, but it is at the same time the one least favored by the teachers. This is a strategy which makes it clear that an error has occurred and provides the correct form. Although there has been little research on students' favorite CF types, other studies also found that explicit correction is perceived as very effective by learners, though unscaffolded (e.g. Lee, 2013; Park, 2010; Roothooft & Breeze, 2016).

The possibility exists that the students' opinions may be influenced by the grammar-based instruction that is still prevalent in some EFL classrooms, in which achieving grammatical accuracy is one of the main goals. The participants' previous educational experiences may also play a role as a mediating factor on their beliefs about CF and grammar instruction (see Loewen et al., 2009). Additionally, the students may expect their teacher to have superior knowledge and, therefore, be a more appropriate source for CF. On the other hand, the teachers in this study do not regard explicit correction as a very effective strategy. The same pattern emerged in Cathcart & Olsen (1976), Roothooft (2018) and Roothooft & Breeze (2016). This might be related to the teachers' concern with promoting oral participation and a positive learning environment. In addition, methodologists such as Harmer (2007) and Scrivener (2005) favor CF techniques that indicate that an error has occurred over those which provide the target form without creating opportunities for self-correction. Another aspect which teacher guides give considerable relevance to is building a good rapport with students, which Harmer (2007, p. 100) states "is dependent on listening to students' views and attempts with respect, and intervening (i.e. for correction) in an appropriate and constructive way". In a section devoted to

establishing rapport, the author refers to correcting students as a "delicate event", due to the risk of being too critical and demotivating students. Despite having completed their initial training long ago, the participating teachers take part in training sessions and/ or conferences regularly and are aware of the role affective factors play in learning and of the recent advice given by methodologists. Taking this into account, they might fear that providing a correction which clearly states an error has occurred might be counterproductive when it comes to encouraging oral participation.

In contrast, recasts seem to be validated by both teachers and students. The students in this study rated recast – a type of unscaffolded CF – as their second favorite strategy. The results seem to indicate that these students wish to be told, either implicitly or explicitly, what the correct form is. Once again, previous classroom experiences may play a role in the students' opinions of this CF type. Research has identified recasts as the most widely used CF strategy in several contexts (e.g. Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2001; Lyster & Mori, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Additionally, as Kartchava (2016) points out, the familiarity with recasts may have its origin not only in the classroom context, but also in the students' L1 acquisition experiences, considering that recasts are used by parents to clarify the meaning or address the truth-value of statements. However, research outcomes regarding the effectiveness of recasts have shown that they may be less effective than prompts because it is not always evident to learners that they are being corrected and they are not provided with an opportunity to modify their output (Lyster et al., 2013).

Prompts seem to be positively regarded by the teachers that participated in the study, in particular metalinguistic feedback. This suggests that these EFL professionals believe in the pedagogic benefits of providing learners with the opportunity to self-correct through engaging in scaffolded feedback, a result that echoed that of Agudo (2014). This practice is also in line with the recommendations given by several teacher guides in the direction of prioritizing output-prompting strategies. This also reflects a general principle adopted in these works, i.e. that "people learn more by doing things themselves rather than being told about them" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 3). Although these strategies are perceived by the students as less effective than explicit correction, they still recognize their importance, as the following comments written by the students illustrate:

> Students should try to correct their mistakes, but if necessary the teacher should help, but not say the correct answer right away.
>
> I think students have to have the willpower to correct their mistakes.

The teachers' answers to the question that investigated how often they used each CF strategy in their lessons also reveal that they tend to give students the chance to correct their own errors by signaling that an error has occurred through a prompt, preferably metalinguistic feedback or elicitation.

Besides using output-prompting feedback, the teachers also employ input-providing strategies, but show a preference for recasts instead of the explicit correction.

Delivering agent of CF

The last category asked learners and teachers about who should be in charge of providing CF. As shown in Figure 10, the teacher as the provider of CF received the highest mean score among learners (M=4.60). Learners expressed a preference for self-correction (M=3.37) when compared to peer-correction (M=2.63).

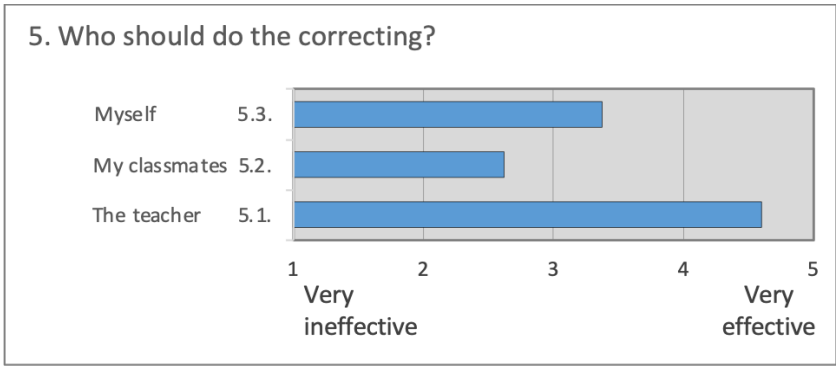

Figure 10. Students' mean responses on the provider of error correction (N=166)

Figure 11 illustrates the mean scores of teachers on who should provide CF. The teachers recognized the importance of self-correction (M=3.80) and also the role of the teacher in giving CF (M=3.60). Peer-correction also received the lowest mean among the teachers in this study (M=3.20).

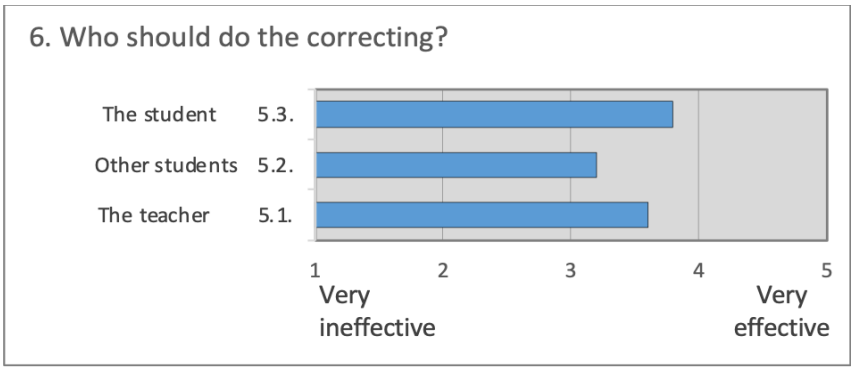

Figure 11. Teachers' mean responses on the provider of error correction (N=5)

Taking into account the learners' strong wish to be corrected, preferably soon after the error is made, it comes as no surprise that they choose the teacher as their main source of correction. In fact, when asked about the effectiveness of the different CF strategies, the students preferred explicit correction and recasts, two strategies that, although distinct in terms of explicitness, are both input-

providing. Therefore, students seem to expect their teacher to provide them with the correct form, a belief that was also identified by previous research (e.g. Brown, 2009; Park, 2010; Schulz, 2001).

Teaching practices such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strive to motivate students to adopt an active role as far as their own learning is concerned and to regard their teacher as a facilitator, rather than as a knowledge-transmitter (Harmer, 2007). Nevertheless, the instructional setting, previous learning experiences and a restricted exposure to the TL, which comes with limited opportunities for language use, may still contribute to the learners' primary reliance on their teacher to obtain CF. In fact, the school in which the research was conducted is located in a town which, despite being relatively near the capital, does not offer many opportunities to use English in meaningful interactions outside the classroom, since it does not attract many tourists and is not home to international companies, which might invite the use of English as a means of communication. Furthermore, certain constraints such as the size of the classes and their heterogeneity in terms of proficiency level often make it hard to provide learners with abundant opportunities for oral production and interaction. In this context, it seems that students still value their English teacher as the main CF provider, illustrated by this comment left by a student:

> Usually, I think the teacher should correct us, since they have more experience with the topic.

The teachers' opinions are more divided as they attribute less importance to the teacher as a CF provider. This belief may be informed by SLA research that has provided evidence on the benefits of encouraging the learner to self-correct by prioritizing scaffolded feedback (e.g. Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Saito, 2010). Moreover, teacher guides, which almost invariably advocate a more learner-centered approach, advise teachers to create conditions for self-correction (Edge, 1989; Harmer, 2007; Hedge, 2000; Scrivener, 2005). This aspect is mentioned by one of the participating teachers in the following comment:

> I think it is helpful to try to get the student to arrive at the correct form on their own, especially in the case of vocabulary and grammatical structures that have already been covered in previous lessons or years.

Another option to engage learners in the process of providing CF is peer correction. This is, nonetheless, the least favorite CF provider for both students and teachers. The students in the present study did not consider peer feedback to be an effective CF option, which reinforces the role of the teacher as the main feedback provider, in the students' opinion. It is possible that, given their role as fellow learners, students do not consider their classmates a reliable learning source and thus fear their corrections may not be accurate. Additionally, students may feel uncomfortable when being corrected

by their peers or even when correcting them (Yoshida, 2010). The following comments give us an insight into the reasons behind the participants' choices regarding peer correction:

> If our classmates correct us, they may mislead us.
>
> The students in my class should not correct me without the teacher's permission and only if I get the question wrong, because they may not have the required knowledge.

These comments echo those of the student participants in Chu (2013), who also believed that providing feedback is the teacher's, not the learners' role. While many students may not consider their peers a reliable learning source, research has shown that peer feedback may encourage an active reflection on the learners' own performance and that of their classmates (Sato & Lyster, 2012), which is believed to positively affect language knowledge (DeKeyser, 2007; Iwashita & Dao, 2021).

Conclusions

To summarize, both students and teachers believe that students' oral errors should be corrected, with students in particular expressing a strong belief that their errors should almost always receive correct feedback. As far as the timing of CF, results suggest that students prefer immediate feedback. Their teachers also regard this practice as effective, but prefer to correct after the student has stopped speaking or at the end of the activity. Regarding the types of errors, errors that interfere with communication, grammar errors and vocabulary errors are those that teachers believe that should most often be corrected. These types of errors are also those that students feel should most often receive CF. With reference to CF types, students and teachers agree that not providing a correction is the least effective strategy to adopt. Students prefer the provision of explicit correction or recasts, both unscaffolded CF, which shows that they want their teacher to provide them with the correct form. Teachers favor recasts as a way of providing CF with minimal interference in the communication, or scaffolded strategies such as prompts in the form of metalinguistic feedback, as a means of providing the student with hints that enable him or her to find the correct form. Finally, students regard the teacher as the person principally responsible of CF, followed by self-correction, whereas teachers opt for promoting self-correction, despite also providing CF themselves or resorting to peer feedback.

In interpreting the present results, one should, however, bear in mind that the tool used to investigate the beliefs may present some limitations, since questionnaires may not fully grasp what the respondents believe about CF. Although the questionnaire was informally piloted with a small group of 9th-grade students, the wording might have been unclear to some of the participants and, therefore, some questions might have been misunderstood. Questionnaires are, nevertheless, a very common tool to investigate such topics, since they allow for a large number of participants to be surveyed in a short

period of time. Interviewing the participants individually would have been too time-consuming. To try to compensate for the lack of an individual interview, an open-ended section for comments was included so that students and teachers could express their opinions on the topic or explain why they agreed or disagreed with a particular item. Moreover, the number of teachers in this study is toosmall to generalize. Finally, future studies on students and teachers' beliefs about CF should also investigate other nationalities, age groups, TLs and proficiency levels.

Declaration of Interest Statement

The author declares that there are no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

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Comparative Analysis of the Phonemic Structures of Georgian and Abkhazian Languages Using Computational Linguistic Methods

ABSTRACT

This study presents a comparative analysis of the phonemic structures of Georgian and Abkhazian languages using computational linguistic methods and corpus-based methodologies. Employing the diasystemic approach, we analyze large-scale corpora (Georgian: 953 million tokens; Abkhazian: 19.4 million tokens) to reveal systematic patterns in vowel distribution. Our findings confirm the principle of markedness theory in both languages, demonstrating universal dominance of the vowel *a* and the marked status of labial vowels. The study identifies both common typological characteristics (preference for open vowels in anlaut position, labial/non-labial opposition) and distinctive features (six-vowel system in Abkhazian versus five-vowel system in Georgian, specific role of the neutral vowel *ə* in Abkhazian). These data provide an empirical foundation for historical-comparative analysis and contribute to the development of Caucasian areal linguistics.

Keywords: *Georgian language, Abkhazian language, phonemic structure, diasystemic analysis, corpus linguistics, vocalism, computational linguistics.*

Introduction

Languages operate through various interacting levels that simultaneously influence the global linguistic system. Phonology occupies a unique position in this hierarchy: while individual phonemes carry no inherent meaning or linguistic value, they present distinct challenges from other linguistic levels (morphology, syntax). Phonemes combine to form morphemes, words, and sentences, yet their syntagmatic relations differ fundamentally within morphemic and lexical frameworks, necessitating specialized investigation.

The establishment of phonotactic rules throughout a language system benefits from the diasystemic method, which draws upon data from linguistic subsystems (Uturgaidze, 1976). Rules derived through diasystemic methodology prove reliable as they are grounded in properties shared

across subsystems.

This article employs the diasystemic method to analyze the Abkhazian phonemic system and compare these findings with Georgian phonemic structures. The novelty of this research lies in applying the diasystemic approach to study the phonemic structures of Georgian and Abkhazian languages, revealing synchronic differences and processes. Based on these results, we attempt a historical-comparative analysis at the diachronic level, advancing our understanding of historical connections between Georgian and Abkhaz-Adyghe languages.

The study encompasses three primary stages:

1. Analysis of vocalism in Georgian and Abkhazian languages;
2. Examination of consonant systems in Georgian and Abkhazian languages;
3. Historical-comparative analysis of Georgian and Abkhaz-Adyghe phonemic structures.

This article focuses on the first stage: investigating vocalism in Georgian and Abkhazian languages utilizing computational linguistic methods. Through frequency analysis of language corpora, we reveal systemic regularities that would be impractical to identify through traditional methods.

Literature Review

Trubetzkoy (1931) pioneered the comparison of accents in their synchronous states rather than through historical development. He categorized sound differences between dialects into three types, with particular emphasis on phonological inventory and contextual constraints. His interest centered on the phonetic realization of phonemes across different linguistic subsystems.

Building upon Trubetzkoy's work, Weinreich (1954) proposed synthesizing linguistic geography with descriptive linguistics by applying structuralist grammar concepts to describe regular correspondences between varieties. He termed this higher-order system a "diasystem," designed to be compatible with individual grammars of all constituent subsystems. In a diasystem, units of analysis represent higher-order abstractions than those in individual systems—just as phonemes in a single variety group into abstract phonemes, phonemes across varieties can be grouped into even more abstract diaphonemes.

Weinreich acknowledged challenges in constructing diasystems, particularly regarding phonemic merging and splitting with divergent consequences between dialects or linguistic subsystems. Following Trubetzkoy (1931), he noted that differences in phonological inventory and etymological distribution could complicate diasystem construction (Weinreich, 1954).

Subsequent researchers expanded this framework. Moulton (1960) identified divergent cases

developing independently in his analysis of Swiss German dialects from Lucerne and Appenzell. Despite both dialects possessing identical sets of eleven short vowel phonemes, only one pair (/i/ ~ /ɪ/) shared a common ancestral vowel from early German. The remaining phonetic similarities resulted from accidental convergence through multiple independent mergers and splits.

Georgian language phonemic analysis has been addressed extensively. Uturgaidze (1976) produced a seminal work applying diasystemic methodology to Georgian phonetics and phonotactic rules, analyzing various classifications by Georgian and international researchers (Zhghenti, Akhvlediani, Vogt, Robins and Waterson, Shanidze, Chikobava). This systematic approach yielded a comprehensive framework that remains fundamental for phonetics research.

Abkhazian phonemic system studies have employed traditional approaches. Research on Abkhaz-Abaza phonetics-phonology has been conducted by Lomtatidze (1976), Genko (1955), Chirikba (1996), Kuipers (1955), Spruit (1986), Uslar (1862), Marr (1912), Akhvlediani (1949), Rogava (1985), Hewitt (2010), Trubetzkoy (1960), Allen (1956), and others. While these scholars have described phonemic systems and phonotactic rules, research conducted through varying methodologies cannot provide accurate systematic results for comparative analysis, particularly regarding diachronic questions of language kinship within the "Ibero-Caucasian" hypothesis.

This study presents an attempt to elaborate the Abkhazian vowel system using diasystemic methodology, enabling more rigorous comparison with Georgian.

Methodology

A diasystem represents a linguistic analysis framework designed to encode or represent related variants in ways that reflect their structural differences. The integration of computational linguistic methods into diasystemic analysis proves crucial. Computational linguistics enables more effective results and objective data in recording and comparing syntagmatic and paradigmatic language relations. Precise statistical analysis of millions of word forms—including sound frequency, positional distribution (anlaut, inlaut, auslaut), identification of language-specific harmonic complexes, and registration of phonotactic constraints—would be practically impossible without modern computational technologies.

Discussion

Corpus Parameters

For this study, we created large-scale corpora of Georgian and Abkhazian languages:

- Georgian Corpus: 953,008,532 tokens (2,873,730 unique word forms)
- Abkhazian Corpus: 19,417,316 tokens (1,217,820 unique word forms)

The asymmetry between corpora reflects differences in available digital resources for both languages. Nevertheless, both corpora provide statistically representative samples for phonotactic analysis.

Quantitative Analysis of Phoneme Distribution

To analyze positional vowel distribution, we employed the following computational algorithm:

1. Tokenization and Segmentation: Division of corpus into lexical units;
2. Phoneme Annotation: Identification of phonemes corresponding to each grapheme;
3. Positional Classification:
    - Anlaut (initial) – first phoneme in a word;
    - Inlaut (medial) – all phonemes between first and last;
    - Auslaut (final) – last phoneme in a word.

This computational approach represents a systematic attempt to integrate modern corpus linguistic methods into the analysis and comparison of language structures.

Results

Sounds differentiate based on their capacity to distinguish meanings through language's communicative function. This meaning-distinguishing capacity establishes their value as linguistic signs and represents their primary function. Such meaningful distinguishing units hold particular interest for linguists. To differentiate meaning-bearing sounds from non-functional ones, linguists introduced the term "phoneme" in the 1920s-1930s, establishing phonology as a specialized branch studying these units.

Phonology investigates the functioning of speech sounds in language, focusing on sound function rather than phonetics' emphasis on articulation and acoustics. Studying vocalism in Georgian and Abkhazian languages involves determining paradigmatic vowel status and revealing syntagmatic regularities.

Vocalism of Georgian Language

Georgian vowels are traditionally characterized by place of articulation, height, and labialization (Akhvlediani, 1949; Vogt, 1961; Shanidze, 1973; Aronson, 1982; Uturgaidze, 1976). Literary Georgian contains five vowels, analyzed from both articulatory-physical and phonemic perspectives. From an articulatory viewpoint, *e* and *i* are front vowels, while *o* and *u* are back vowels. The vowel *a* is variously classified as central or back by different researchers.

Multiple systematic classifications exist for Georgian vowel production:

1. *i, e, a* as front vowels; *o, u* as back vowels
2. *i, e* as front vowels; *a, o, u* as back vowels
3. *i, e* as front vowels; *a* as central; *o, u* as back vowels
4. *i* as front; *e, a, o* as central; *u* as back

Regarding height, *i* and *u* are high, *e* and *o* are mid, and *a* is low.

Robins and Waterson (1952) observed that *l* shows one variant before vowels *i, e* and another before *a, o, u*. This provides phonological justification for grouping *a* with back vowels, establishing a linguistic and physiological criterion for classification.

Uturgaidze (1976) argues that two features suffice for paradigmatic description of Georgian vowels: labiality and height. This creates:

Labial series: *o, u*

Non-labial series: *a, e, i*

By height:

Low: *a*

Mid: *e, o*

High: *i, u*

The labial correlation in Georgian is supported by frequency data. Marked features (labiality) correlate with lower frequency:

- Non-labial (a, e, i): 78.19%
- Labial (o, u): 21.81%
- Ratio: 3.58:1

These data are confirmed by modern corpus research:

Table 1. Absolute and relative frequencies of Georgian vowels

Vowel	Total	Unique	Anlaut (abs.)	Inlaut (abs.)	Auslaut (abs.)	Anlaut (%)	Inlaut (%)	Auslaut (%)
ა (a)	284,210,119	837,686	40,151,199	202,135,525	41,923,395	47.78	26.91	35.59
ე (e)	209,485,327	660,146	10,893,612	186,050,453	12,541,262	12.97	24.77	10.65
ი (i)	251,481,920	699,389	16,702,030	186,568,567	48,211,323	19.88	24.84	40.94
ო (o)	131,571,636	428,796	5,859,727	112,992,112	12,719,797	6.98	15.04	10.80
უ (u)	76,259,530	247,713	10,404,192	63,460,166	2,395,172	12.39	8.45	2.03
Total	953,008,532	2,873,730	84,010,760	751,206,823	117,790,949	100.00	100.00	100.00

Analysis of Georgian vowel distribution reveals:

1. Frequency hierarchy: a (29.83%) > i (26.38%) > e (21.98%) > o (13.81%) > u (8.00%)
2. Positional distribution patterns:

- Anlaut: dominance of *a* (47.78%), indicating preference for open-syllable word beginnings;
- Inlaut: nearly equal distribution of *a, e, i* (24-27%);
- Auslaut: high concentration of *i* (40.94%), related to Georgian verbal morphology.

Vocalism of Abkhazian Language

Modern Abkhazian contains six vowels. Two (*a* and *ə*) are considered basic (Lomtatidze, 1976; Kuipers, 1955; Trubetzkoy, 1960). Uslar (1862) considered *a, i,* and *u* basic in Abkhazian. Some researchers do not consider *e, i, o, u* as phonemes, arguing they derive from combinations of *a* and *ə* with semivowels *j* and *w* (Lomtatidze, 1976). However, Gvantseladze (2011) argues that all six sounds function as phonemes with word- and form-distinguishing capabilities.

The vowel *a* is a narrow, low vowel, less open than Georgian *a* and produced more frontally. It represents the primary and most frequent vowel, occurring 7,470,873 times in our corpus—twice the frequency of *ə*.

The neutral vowel *ə* is narrower than *a*. It rarely occurs initially, appearing primarily in medial position and finally in stressed form. According to Lomtatidze, initial *ə* is absent, with rare exceptions being recent dialectal variants.

The vowel *e* develops from diphthongs *aj, ja* through intermediate *ej, je* stages via partial assimilation. The vowel *o* derives positionally from diphthongs *aw, wa* through *ow, wo* stages.

The vowels *i* and *u* are positionally derived from diphthongs *əj, jə* and *əw, wə* respectively.

The Abkhazian labial correlation shows:

• Non-labial (a, e, i, ə): 82.97%
• Labial (o, u): 17.03%
• Ratio: 4.87:1
•

Frequency distribution of Abkhazian vowels by position:

Table 2. Absolute and relative frequencies of Abkhazian vowels

Vowel	Total	Unique	Anlaut (abs.)	Inlaut (abs.)	Auslaut (abs.)	Anlaut (%)	Inlaut (%)	Auslaut (%)
ა (a)	7,470,873	391,184	2,748,746	3,764,928	957,199	47.85	35.70	30.61
ე (e)	1,494,060	110,740	293,998	1,107,298	92,764	5.12	10.50	2.97
ი (i)	3,570,173	244,633	1,652,799	1,317,341	600,033	28.77	12.49	19.19
ო (o)	1,406,409	113,607	150,038	1,044,760	211,621	2.61	9.91	6.77
უ (u)	1,900,624	116,102	646,495	1,015,160	238,969	11.26	9.63	7.64
ы (ə)	3,575,177	241,491	252,919	2,295,362	1,026,903	4.40	21.77	32.84
Total	19,417,316	1,217,820	5,744,978	10,544,849	3,127,489	100.00	100.00	100.00

Analysis reveals:

1. Frequency hierarchy: a (38.48%) > ə (18.41%) > i (18.39%) > u (9.79%) > e (7.69%) > o (7.24%)
2. Positional distribution:
    - Anlaut: dominance of *a* (47.85%), high frequency of *i* (28.77%)
    - Inlaut: dominant *a* (35.70%), high concentration of *ə* (21.77%)
    - Auslaut: maximum representation of *ə* (32.84%)

Conclusion

Corpus linguistic analysis reveals both common typological characteristics and specific features distinguishing Georgian and Abkhazian vowel systems. Markedness theory principles are confirmed in both languages.

Common features include:

1. Universal dominance of vowel *a* in both systems;
2. Marked status of labial/non-labial opposition;
3. Preference for open vowels in anlaut position.

Distinctive features include:

1. Six-vowel system in Abkhazian versus five-vowel system in Georgian
2. Specific functional role of neutral vowel *ə* in Abkhazian
3. Different patterns of positional distribution

These findings provide crucial empirical data for historical-comparative analysis of both languages and contribute to advancing Caucasian areal linguistics. The diachronic implications suggest possible original two-vowel systems in both languages, though this hypothesis requires further syntagmatic frequency analysis for Georgian. The integration of computational linguistic methods opens new avenues for systematic investigation of phonemic structures across Caucasian languages.

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Public Space Signs as Authentic Materials in the Process of Learning a Second Language

ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to examine and demonstrate the role that signs and public-institution inscriptions play in the process of learning Georgian as a second language, and to offer practicing teachers techniques and methods for their effective use. The presentation outlines the purposes of employing signage and the activities designed to achieve these purposes, as well as a lesson plan that serves as a practical guide for teachers on how to integrate such materials into lessons of Georgian as a second or foreign language.

Keywords: *Public space signs, Second language, Authentic language materials, Speech practice,* Lesson plan.

Introduction

Signs offer authentic, contextually meaningful language input that supports vocabulary acquisition and practical language use. They also convey cultural knowledge, helping learners develop both communicative skills and intercultural competence.

The characteristics of the signs are:

a) Authentic Content

They consist of natural and frequently used words and phrases, making the learning material practical, as learners recognize that they can use it in real-life situations.

b) Visual Support

Signs and inscriptions are often accompanied by logos, images, or other graphic representations and colors, which facilitate comprehension and interpretation of meaning.

c) Cultural Knowledge

They frequently include authentic elements of the local culture (including graphic symbols), which help learners study the culture in addition to the language (e.g., “Come In, Savior,” Restaurant “Multicolored”).

d) Vocabulary Expansion

A key benefit is the enrichment of learners' vocabulary, including informal lexical items. Working with this type of material exposes learners to functional lexical units and phrases such as: open/closed, discount, entrance/exit, prices, product names, services, and more.

The relevance of this topic is defined, on the one hand, by the fact that contemporary language-teaching approaches emphasize the importance of providing learners with authentic materials alongside classical, traditional textbooks; and, on the other hand, by the lack of such resources—and of experience integrating them into classroom practice—in the context of teaching Second Language. In this paper , we offer teachers practical ways to incorporate this approach into the language-teaching process.

Literature Review

Numerous studies highlight the effectiveness of authentic materials in second-language learning. For example, Alex Gilmore, in his work *"Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning,"* emphasizes that incorporating such materials supports the development of cognitive, social, and cultural competences. He underlines that learners are exposed to authentic texts, which considerably enhances their preparation for real-life communication. (Gilmore, 2007).

According to research, integrating authentic materials into the learning process significantly increases learner motivation, especially when the selected material is engaging and appropriate to the learner's language proficiency level. Authentic materials help learners understand and use real language. They enhance learners' motivation and create a more natural learning environment. This approach underscores the importance of communicative methods, in which the use of real language is essential (Nunan, 1988, 1999).

Cenoz and Gorter (2008) have conducted noteworthy studies on the use of signage in second-language learning. They argue that shop signs help language learners acquire new words and expressions unconsciously and naturally, within real-life contexts.

It is also important to take into account M. Bouckaert's perspective on the teacher as a creator of instructional resources. According to the author, teachers play a vital role as creators and adapters of learning materials, applying sound pedagogical principles to design, choose, and modify classroom resources that suit their learners' needs and local contexts. Through this process, teachers strengthen their professional identity, deepen their pedagogical knowledge, and develop the capacity to customize materials effectively, encouraging creativity and a richer understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning. Fundamental pedagogical principles that guide material development include

analyzing learners' needs, ensuring logical sequencing and progression, contextualizing content, maintaining a learner-centered approach, and allowing flexibility for continuous improvement based on student feedback and emerging educational trends (Bouckaert, 2018).

Methodology

The study employs a qualitative research method, specifically desktop research. It offers approaches grounded in the authors' own teaching experience. The subject of the research is signs and examples of the Georgian language.

Discussion

Public space signs differ in content, function, and linguistic characteristics. Below, we present the categories into which such public-space inscriptions can be grouped:

A **sign** is a board or panel with an inscription. It indicates an organization or business located within a building, as well as any inscribed (or illustrated) board that provides information about a street, crossing, intersection, direction, elevation above sea level, speed limit, parking area for vehicles, and so on. In terms of content, a sign belongs to the category of outdoor advertising (Construction Encyclopedic Dictionary).

Regarding inscriptions on signs and informational panels of establishments, they are noteworthy from lexical, grammatical, semantic, and sociolinguistic-cultural perspectives. Therefore, a **sign** attracts attention through visual features such as color, design, and context, whereas an **inscription** draws attention to the textual component.

Names of Shops, Cafés, Restaurants, and Other Public Establishments:

a) General*:* Shop, Market, Mall, Pharmacy, Pet Store, Dry Cleaning, Barber Shop, Bakery, Pastry Shop, Computer Services…

Subcategories: Wine Cellar, Khinkali House, Coffee Laboratory, Khinkali Academy, World of Honey, Cheese House, Language Center…

Signs containing geographical names: "Restaurant Abkhazia," "Restaurant Gagra," "Restaurant Ritsa," "Mingrelian Cuisine"…

Specific names: "Come In, Genatsvale," Restaurant "Mravalzhamieri," "Two Steps," "Nikora"…

Public spaces: Dezertiri Market, Navtlugi Market, Lilo Bazaar, New Year Village, Easter Village… Bombora Park, Mtatsminda Park, Mushtaeti Garden, Kikvidze Park, Alexander Garden, Orbeliani Square, Erekle Square…

B) Information about the service:

Knife Sharpening, Shoe Repair, Atelier, Tailor, Sewing Workshop, TV/Refrigerator/Washing Machine Repair Technician, Delivery Service…

C) Product and Section Names:

General Sections: Electronics, Household Appliances, Food, Seafood, Farm Products, Stationery, Construction Materials, Plumbing, Alcohol, Fruits and Vegetables; Women's clothing, Men's Clothing, Children's World, Gold Market…

Bookstore Sections: Children's Literature, School Literature, Scientific Literature, Religious Literature, Fiction, Translations…

Subcategories / Additional Features: products often include extra descriptors that attract attention, such as: Natural, Monastery-made, Handmade, Gori Apple, Marneuli Tomato, Kakhetian Wine, Mtskheta Pie, Mingrelian Khachapuri, Imeretian Cheese, Meskhetian Bread, Svan Salt, Grandmother's Bread, … European Clothing, Dubai Chocolate, Dark Chocolate, r-Vegan Dishes…

D) Vocabulary Commonly Found in Retail Spaces: Wholesale/Retail, Section, Department, Open, Closed, Working Hours, Discount, Promotion, Cash Register, Shop Assistant, Security Staff, Display Window…

Customer Instructions / Notices: "Please inquire at the cash register," "Item return," "Loyalty card"…

Special Dates / Seasonal Promotions: New Year / Christmas discount, March 8 discount, Easter / summer discount, Black Friday, August hot prices…

Store Calls to Action / Promotional Phrases: "Buy 2 items, get the third free," "20% discount with a friend," "Register by October 16 to receive a 40% discount," 24/7…

The materials under analysis provide clear evidence of linguistic contacts. Of particular scholarly interest are instances of bilingual and multilingual texts. Within Georgia, inscriptions in Georgian-English are the most prevalent, although Georgian-Russian texts are also observable. In specific locales where enterprises operated by Middle Eastern immigrants are concentrated, signage frequently integrates Georgian and English alongside Turkish, Persian, Arabic, and Hebrew. It is

apparent that exposure to bilingual and multilingual inscriptions positively contributes to the language acquisition process for learners of Georgian.

ღიაა *("Ghiaa")* - **Open,**

ოპტიკა *("Optika")* - **Optics,**

თბილისი მოლი *("Tbilisi Moli")* - **Tbilisi Mall…**

იყიდება *("iqideba")* **-For Sale - Для продожи…**

Through exposure to bilingual and trilingual examples, learners of Georgian can easily link corresponding forms in Georgian and English, observe the structural distinctions between the languages, and utilize signs as an effective instructional aid. This approach enhances retention and supports learning and communicative practice in authentic contexts.

E) Teaching Grammar Naturally

Regarding grammar, the following list outlines how signs can be used for instructional purposes:

a) **Imperatives** (e.g., *Use the elevator! Do not lean! Do not smoke!*))
b) **Conditional clauses:** (e.g., *If you buy one, you will get the second as a gift*)
c) **Adverbs of direction:** (e.g., *to the right*, *up…*)
d) **Modal verbs:** (e.g., *You must continue straight ahead*)
e) **Prepositions:** (e.g., *Please inquire at the cash register*)
f) **Adjectives:** (e.g., *Biggest Sale*)…

Accessible Resource

Teachers can easily and cost-effectively create their own materials by taking photos of existing signs or drawing them, and they can also involve students in the process.

In the classroom, teachers can incorporate a variety of engaging activities. For example:

1. Working on Vocabulary

a) Show students photos of real store signs and inscriptions and give them tasks such as: "Find the sign that indicates goods are being sold at a lower price than usual (discount)"; "You can come in and buy whatever you want (open)", and so on.

b) Show students various photos (e.g., bakery, dry cleaner, pharmacy, notary office, law firm) and ask them to match each photo with the corresponding word prepared in the form of a sign (dry cleaner,

pharmacy, notary office, law firm) and ask them to match each photo with the corresponding word prepared in the form of a sign.

2. Role-Play

Show students a sign (for example: *"Discount Promotion Today Only"*). Ask them to create a dialogue between a customer and a shop assistant based on this information.

3. Group Project – Create a Store Sign

Ask students to work in groups to design a store sign that includes a logo and the appropriate text/inscription. Through collaborative work, students create the name and signage for a store, restaurant, café, or bakery in the target language. They can also incorporate common inscriptions such as *"No Entry"*, *"Open 24/7"*, and similar notices.

4. Error Correction

Show students signs that intentionally contain grammatical or spelling mistakes and ask them to identify and correct the errors.

5. Discussion on Cultural Parallels

a) Ask intermediate and advanced students to discuss which signs might be specific to the target culture and how they are similar to or different from analogous signs in their own culture.

b) Show students bilingual signs/inscriptions (e.g., English-Georgian) and ask them to share their opinions on why business owners choose to use bilingual signs (e.g., for modernity, prestige, attracting international customers, or other purposes).

6. Guess the Store

The teacher shows students only a slogan or the name of a store and asks them to guess the type of store and what it sells (for example, *"Clean House"* or *"Sweet Land"*).

Lesson Plan

Regarding the lesson plan, the lesson can be divided into the following stages: introductory activity, vocabulary work, comprehension practice, creative work, presentation, and feedback.

Level: *A2–B1*

Age Group: Teenagers and adults

Duration: 45–60 minutes

Topic: Learning everyday vocabulary, functional language, and cultural elements through public space signs and inscriptions

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

a) Recognize and understand frequently used words on store signs and comprehend the meaning of the inscriptions;

b) Analyze the purpose of a sign;

c) Create their own store sign using correct vocabulary and without grammatical or spelling errors.

Resources Needed:

a) Photos of real store signs (printed or included in a presentation)

b) Whiteboard

c) Paper and markers for creating signs (or digital drawing tools)

Lesson Stages:

1. Introduction (5–10 minutes)

Activity: Discussion

a) Ask students what types of signs they encounter in everyday life.

b) Show several signs (e.g., "No Entry," "No Smoking," "Staff Only," "Entry Fee Required," "Under Renovation") and ask students to explain the meaning of each and where they might see them.

2. Vocabulary Exercises (10 minutes)

Activity: Match the Signs

Show 8–10 signs along with a list of their meanings or corresponding situations.

Students should match each sign with its function.

For example:

a) " Shop Assistant Wanted" - "Looking for new staff"

b) "Closed" - "Currently not open"

3. Comprehension Exercises (10–15 minutes)

Activity: Sign Interpretation

Show students 3–5 photos (e.g., a clothing store window with its sign, a pharmacy counter with inscriptions) and ask them to answer the following questions:

a) What can you buy here?

b) What are you allowed/not allowed to do here?

4. Creative Task (15 minutes, individual work, pairs, or small groups)

Activity: Design Your Own Store Sign

Ask students to imagine they own a small business (e.g., a bakery, a beauty salon, a private kindergarten) and create signs for their establishment. The signs should include:

a) The name of the business

b) A short slogan or text about a current promotion

c) Optional warning or informational signs (e.g., "Open from 10:00 to 20:00")

Visual design is considered a plus, but students will not lose points, if they are unable to add decorative elements.

5. Presentation and Peer Evaluation (10 minutes)

Students present the signs they created to their classmates.

Classmates try to guess the type of store and provide feedback or ask questions.

Homework:

a) Ask students to take a photo of a real sign in their neighborhood and present brief information about the establishment to their classmates, or have classmates guess what type of establishment it is (e.g., "Fresh Meat. Since 1991").

b) Translate an interesting sign from their native language into the target language.

Assessment Criteria:

The teacher evaluates, either verbally or in written form, the following components:

a) Participation in discussions and activities

b) Correct use of vocabulary in tasks

c) Creativity and clarity in sign design

d) Ability to analyze and describe signs orally or in writing

Both formative feedback and grading with points are effective.

Conclusion

Considering signs ease of use and accessibility, the variety of possible activities, and their potential to cover diverse learning goals, signs used in public spaces can be regarded as valuable learning materials and incorporated into second language teaching. Furthermore, studying this material can also be significant from the perspective of learning specialized or professional language. A learner of Georgian would, for instance, be better prepared to navigate service-sector interactions, which can be considered a secondary benefit of this teaching method.

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The Role of Generative Artificial Intelligence in IELTS Writing

ABSTRACT

This study targeted intermediate-to-low-level learners of IELTS writing, employing generative AI technology as an intervention to systematically examine its influence on syntactic complexity. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, encompassing an 18-week teaching experiment with 50 participants. Theoretically, the research built upon Ortega et al.'s syntactic complexity framework and innovatively established a dual-track data collection system. This system combined automated assessment using natural language processing dependency parsing tools to extract T-unit structures with manual validation by two experienced IELTS instructors to ensure data reliability.

Empirical analysis via paired-samples t-tests revealed statistically significant improvements in key metrics: the mean number of words per T-unit increased notably, and the clause ratio rose substantially (both $p < 0.05$), confirming AI's positive impact on syntactic complexity. Qualitative feedback from interviews and questionnaires highlighted that while AI excelled at providing real-time feedback, human teachers remained indispensable for fostering critical thinking, motivation, and emotional support.

Based on these findings, the study proposed an "AI-Empowered, Teacher-Led" collaborative writing instruction model. This model integrates AI-driven adaptive feedback for syntactic development with teacher-guided activities focusing on argumentation and creativity. The research offers empirical evidence and practical insights for language teaching innovation in the intelligent education era, advocating blended learning that leverages the strengths of both AI and human instructors.

Keywords: *generative artificial intelligence*；*syntactic complexity*；*IELTS writing*

Introduction

According to the *Big Data Report on IELTS Test Scores in Mainland China for 2023 - 2024* released by the British Council, the application scenarios of the IELTS test are undergoing a structural transformation. Against the backdrop of continuously rising local recognition, the test has transcended the traditional framework of being solely for overseas study purposes and has become an important reference indicator for domestic higher education institutions to assess language proficiency and for employers to select talent. Along with the diversified development of the test's purposes, the language proficiency of IELTS test-takers in Mainland China has shown an overall upward trend. Among them, academic IELTS test-takers have demonstrated particularly remarkable performance in the writing

component, with the average score increasing by 0.45 points to 5.79 points compared to five years ago, making it the area with the largest improvement among the four language skills.

In the context of the IELTS test evolving from a language proficiency certification system catering to specific groups' needs to a more popularized one, the enhancement of competitiveness in the writing component, which has traditionally been a weak area in language proficiency, holds special significance. Faced with the realistic challenge of the overall rising proficiency level of test-takers, how to specifically improve the academic IELTS writing ability of students with weak foundations in our college's joint-venture educational programs has become a key breakthrough for teaching innovation. Writing, as an output-oriented task, is significantly influenced by the quality of input. Based on the theoretical framework of second language acquisition, Krashen's "i+1 comprehensible input" principle emphasizes that input materials (i+1) that are slightly above the learner's current level (i) are most conducive to language acquisition. However, in large-class teaching scenarios, achieving personalized input adaptation faces practical difficulties: teachers find it challenging to customize differentiated training materials for dozens of students under traditional teaching models. The intervention of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) technology provides a technological solution to this problem. Its ability to dynamically generate tiered training materials makes it possible to implement precise language input on a large scale.

Since its inception, GenAI has garnered profound attention from both the academic and industrial sectors worldwide due to its exceptional language generation capabilities, exponential technological iteration speed, and natural language processing architecture driven by deep learning. Especially at a critical juncture of educational digital transformation, this technology is reshaping the traditional paradigm of foreign language teaching with revolutionary force and driving a structural transformation in the relationship between "teaching" and "learning." Currently, the research focus of scholars on the application of GenAI in foreign language teaching has shifted significantly: from early theoretical discussions centered on teachers' perspectives to a growing emphasis on students' actual behaviors and cognitive patterns when using AI technology in foreign language learning (such as English writing). Against this backdrop, this study will focus on exploring the impact of GenAI on students' IELTS writing proficiency and employ qualitative methods to analyze its specific effects on students' syntactic complexity in writing.

Literature Review

In the past two years, the application of GenAI in college English teaching reform has become increasingly widespread, emerging as a crucial driving force for the digital and intelligent

transformation of education. Scholars have conducted systematic explorations in areas such as technology empowerment pathways, teaching effectiveness evaluation, and practical bottlenecks, forming a multi-dimensional research landscape.

At the theoretical construction level, Wang Haixiao (2024), drawing on the teaching reform practice of "General Academic English Writing," innovatively constructed an eight-dimensional framework for generative AI-empowered teaching. This framework systematically integrates core elements such as curriculum design reconstruction, intelligent resource development, and hybrid model innovation, providing an actionable guide for technology-driven teaching transformation that combines theoretical depth with practical effectiveness.

In terms of implementation pathway exploration, scholars have achieved complementary findings by approaching from different teaching scenarios. Jiao Jianli et al. (2023), using ChatGPT as the technological carrier, systematically analyzed its empowerment pathways from four major scenarios: brainstorming, personalized feedback, higher-order thinking cultivation, and automated assessment, and proposed specific strategies for teacher practice. Chen Mo and Lv Mingchen (2024) divided the writing process into four stages -- pre-writing, writing, reviewing, and reflection -- and analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of AI involvement in writing teaching activities at each stage from the perspective of activity theory.

Regarding effectiveness evaluation, Xu Linlin et al. (2024) investigated learners' perceptions and behavioral patterns of AI-assisted academic English writing, finding that AI enhances learners' academic English writing in four dimensions, including language optimization. Both Wang Yabing et al. (2025) and Qin Lili et al. (2025) demonstrated that AI intervention can positively influence students' writing feedback engagement and emotional experiences, thereby enhancing learning motivation and strategy application.

Meanwhile, existing studies have also revealed limitations in AI applications. Yang Linxiu and Ping Jiapeng (2024), based on a metadiscourse perspective, conducted a comparative analysis of the discourse production effects of generative AI and human writing in English academic paper abstracts. They found that while generative AI exhibits unique "human-like" advantages in terms of in-text interactivity and engagement markers, it still shows significant deficiencies in semantic cohesion and coherence, the richness of frame markers, evidentiality expressions, and the construction of academic authority.

Currently, scholars have achieved rich research outcomes on the integration of AI and college English writing teaching from multiple perspectives and dimensions. However, the research still

predominantly focuses on the construction of macro-theoretical frameworks, with insufficient exploration of micro-level aspects such as words, phrases, and sentences in writing assessment criteria.

Methodology

Research Design

The subjects of this study were freshmen majoring in Accounting and International Trade in the SQA Joint-Venture Educational Program at our college. These students generally had below-average English proficiency and moderate learning motivation. A pre-test was conducted at the beginning of the semester, followed by a post-test after a semester of GenAI-assisted writing instruction. For both the pre-test and post-test, students were required to write an IELTS Task 2 essay, which was completed on the Pigai.net platform and graded according to the IELTS essay scoring formula, with the overall evaluation set to an intermediate level. Due to attendance issues, some students only participated in the pre-test, while others only took part in the post-test. Therefore, only essays from students who participated in both tests were selected, and a few extremely low-scoring essays (2 points or below) were excluded, ultimately retaining essays from 50 students as the sample. During the course between the pre-test and post-test, students were required to submit one to two Task 2 essays per week. When writing, students were required to complete the initial draft independently. After finishing the writing, they used GenAI tools for collaborative revision to generate personalized model essays. Finally, students had to submit records of their revision process based on GenAI feedback. Assignments that only included the final draft without the revision process were considered unqualified and returned for rewriting.

This study employed a multi-modal approach for data collection, utilizing the Pigai.net platform for pre-tests and post-tests, and complementing it with semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations. The specific implementation paths included: leveraging Pigai.net's word count and sentence-by-sentence analysis functions, along with manual proofreading by two full-time English teachers, to ensure data authenticity and accuracy; using SPSS 26.0 statistical software to conduct quantitative analysis of students' mean number of words per T-unit and clause ratio in the essays from both the pre-test and post-test. In the middle of the research period, 30 students who volunteered for interviews were selected to participate in approximately half-hour semi-structured interviews focusing on their experiences and perceptions of using AI. During the interviews, teachers recorded key points from the students' conversations and extracted keywords. Meanwhile, an anonymous survey space was created on the Chaoxing platform, and the 50 research subjects were enrolled in a dedicated virtual

class. Structured questionnaires were distributed for data collection, and the system automatically generated word frequency statistics to support qualitative analysis.

Research Findings

To rigorously examine the impact of the one-semester GenAI intervention on students' syntactic complexity--operationalized as the mean word count per T-unit and clause ratio, quantitative analysis was conducted using a paired-samples t-test via SPSS 26.0.

As presented in the paired samples statistics table (Table 1-1), the descriptive data revealed notable differences between the pre-test and post-test results. The post-test mean word count per T-unit stood at 19.1795, with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.14645 and a standard error of the mean (SEM) of 0.70357. In contrast, the pre-test yielded a lower mean of 17.0365, accompanied by a slightly higher SD of 3.74960 and an SEM of 0.83844. The reduced variability in the post-test data suggests that the intervention may have also contributed to greater consistency in students' T-unit word count across the cohort.

The paired-samples t-test results (Table 1-2) further validated the intervention's effectiveness. The mean difference in word count per T-unit was 2.14300, indicating an average increase of approximately 2.14 words per T-unit in the post-test. The SD of this difference was 3.08732, with an SEM of 0.69035, and the 95% confidence interval of the difference ranged from 0.69809 to 3.58791--a range that does not include zero, reinforcing the reliability of the observed increase.

Statistically, the t-value was calculated as 3.104 with 49 degrees of freedom, and the two-tailed significance level was 0.006. This p-value is substantially below the conventional alpha level of 0.05, demonstrating a highly statistically significant difference in the mean word count per T-unit between the pre-test and post-test. Such results confirm that the observed increase in syntactic complexity, as reflected by longer T-units, is not attributable to random variation but is likely a direct outcome of the GenAI intervention.

The paired samples statistics table (Table 2-1) presents clear disparities between the pre-test and post-test clause ratio results. The post-test mean clause ratio reached 0.6205, with a SD of 0.27194 and a SEM of 0.06081. In contrast, the pre-test yielded a substantially lower mean of 0.3785, accompanied by a smaller SD of 0.18559 and an SEM of 0.04150. The higher SD in the post-test data suggests that while the intervention generally improved clause skills, there was greater variability in post-test performance among students—potentially reflecting differences in individual learning trajectories, prior language proficiency, or engagement with instructional activities. This variation, however, does

not diminish the overall significance of the intervention's impact, as the mean difference remains statistically meaningful.

The paired-samples t-test results (Table 2-2) further confirmed the intervention's effectiveness in enhancing students' clause ability. The mean difference in clause ratio was 0.24200, indicating an average increase of 0.242 in the proportion of clauses used by students in the post-test. The SD of this difference was 0.29790, with an SEM of 0.06661, and the 95% confidence interval of the difference ranged from 0.10258 to 0.38142. Notably, this interval excludes zero, which reinforces the reliability of the observed increase and suggests that the intervention consistently promoted clause skill development across the cohort.

Statistically, the t-value was calculated as 3.633 with 49 degrees of freedom, and the two-tailed significance level was 0.002. This p-value is considerably below the conventional alpha level of 0.05, demonstrating a highly statistically significant difference in clause ratios between the pre-test and post-test. Such findings indicate that the observed improvement in students' ability to use clauses is not a product of random variation but is likely the direct result of the AI assistance in the English writing course.

The semi-structured interviews, conducted with 30 participating students, centered on two core themes: students' specific strategies for using GenAI writing tools and their assessments of the generated texts. The findings revealed distinct variations in students' usage patterns, reflecting differences in digital literacy, learning autonomy, and familiarity with AI tool functionalities.

A small subset of students (approximately 15%) adopted a passive usage mode, treating AI merely as a basic search tool. Their interactions with AI were limited to inputting simple prompts (e.g., "Write an essay on environmental protection") without leveraging advanced features such as follow-up questioning, multi-perspective inquiry, or iterative revision requests. These students reported that the AI-generated model essays were often "overly complex" and "far beyond their current English proficiency level"—characterized by dense syntactic structures, specialized vocabulary, and sophisticated argumentation that they struggled to comprehend or emulate. For this group, AI's utility was constrained by a mismatch between the generated content and their linguistic competence, leading to limited learning gains from the tool.

In contrast, the majority of students (around 65%) demonstrated proactive and strategic usage of AI tools. They employed targeted techniques to refine AI outputs, such as asking follow-up questions to clarify ambiguous points, like "Can you explain how this argument is supported?", requesting multi-perspective analyses, or demanding iterative revisions. These students engaged in a collaborative "dialogue" with AI, using the tool as a co-constructor of writing rather than a passive content provider.

They reported feeling satisfied with the final AI-generated texts, as the iterative refinement process ensured the content aligned with their proficiency level, writing goals, and personal expression needs.

Notably, across both usage groups, students exhibited a high level of trust in AI-generated results. Only a small minority (about 20%) expressed mild skepticism—primarily regarding the originality of AI's arguments or the appropriateness of its vocabulary in specific contexts. Most students perceived AI outputs as "reliable" and "authoritative," citing the tool's ability to generate coherent, grammatically accurate content as a key reason for their trust. This high trust level suggests that students generally view GenAI as a credible learning aid, though it also raises potential concerns about over-reliance or uncritical acceptance of AI-generated content. When asked about their primary focus when using GenAI to revise their own essays, the interview responses revealed clear priorities. The largest proportion (33.2%) of students identified advanced vocabulary as their main concern, expressing a strong interest in acquiring and applying words they could not independently produce. For these students, AI served as a "vocabulary expansion tool," helping them replace simple or repetitive words with more precise, academic, or contextually appropriate alternatives. Additionally, 27.8% of students highlighted AI's ability to generate unique perspectives as a key draw -- particularly for unfamiliar writing topics, where AI's multi-dimensional insights helped them break through creative blocks. Smaller proportions of students focused on grammar (16.7%) and essay structure (11.1%), using AI to identify grammatical errors, improve sentence coherence, or optimize the logical flow of their writing. These priorities reflect students' self-awareness of their weaknesses in English writing and their strategic use of GenAI to address specific gaps.

The keyword frequency analysis from Chaoxing platform (Figure1) revealed four core areas of perceived benefit: viewpoint generation, advanced vocabulary, grammar support, and structural guidance -- consistent with the priorities identified in the interviews. Among these, "viewpoint" emerged as the most frequently mentioned keyword, indicating that students perceive AI's greatest value in helping them generate ideas and develop arguments. For many students, especially when facing abstract or unfamiliar topics, AI's ability to propose diverse, well-structured viewpoints addressed a key pain point: the lack of concrete ideas or logical frameworks for writing.

Following viewpoint generation, "advanced vocabulary" and "grammar" were the next most commonly cited benefits. Students reported that AI not only provided them with new vocabulary but also offered context-specific usage examples, helping them understand how to integrate advanced words into their own writing effectively. Similarly, AI's grammar-checking and revision functions were valued for their ability to identify errors that students might overlook, such as tense inconsistencies, preposition misuse, or subject-verb agreement issues. Finally, "structure" was

identified as a key benefit, with students noting that AI-generated model essays provided clear templates for organizing introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions -- helping them improve the coherence and logical flow of their own writing.

Collectively, the questionnaire results reinforce the interview findings, confirming that AI tools address multiple layers of students' writing needs—from idea generation to linguistic refinement and structural organization. The consistency between qualitative and quantitative data enhances the reliability of the study's conclusions, highlighting AI's multifaceted utility in supporting L2 writing development.

Discussion

Syntactic complexity stands as a cornerstone concept in second language (L2) writing teaching and research, as learners' syntactic development is not merely a peripheral skill but a core component of target language acquisition that reflects the depth of their linguistic mastery (Ortega, 2003). This concept encapsulates two interrelated dimensions: the diversity of syntactic structures a learner can deploy and the degree of sophistication with which these structures are integrated to convey meaning. Unlike basic grammatical accuracy, which focuses on avoiding errors, syntactic complexity emphasizes the ability to manipulate language to express complex ideas—an essential skill for academic and communicative success in L2 contexts. As defined in existing literature, syntactic complexity is generally operationalized through two key measurable indicators: T-unit length and clause ratio (Bao Gui, 2009). Notably, Ortega (2003) offered a nuanced perspective, arguing that syntactic complexity should not be simplistically equated with overall language proficiency. She highlighted that high-proficiency L2 writers often shift from clausal complexity to phrasal rhetorical complexity, such as nominalization or prepositional phrases. This shift reflects a move toward the concise, information-dense syntactic style valued in academic writing. However, this distinction is particularly relevant for advanced learners; for lower-proficiency learners, clausal complexity remains a critical marker of development. Jayanti Banerjee's research found that the mean clause length per T-unit is a more sensitive indicator of proficiency differences among lower-level L2 learners than phrasal complexity metrics. This is because lower-proficiency learners typically lack the linguistic repertoire to deploy phrasal sophistication, making clausal complexity, such as integrating relative clauses or adverbial clauses, the primary way to demonstrate syntactic growth. Consistent with this framework, the pre-test and post-test IELTS Writing scores of the study's participants primarily ranged from 3.0 to 5.5, with only one outlier score of 7.0—confirming that the cohort was predominantly composed of lower-proficiency learners. For this group, the statistically significant increase in the average number

of words per T-unit and clause ratio observed post-intervention is not merely a quantitative change but a meaningful reflection of improved writing proficiency. It indicates that learners were able to elaborate ideas more fully, integrate dependent clauses more effectively, and deploy syntactic structures with greater control -- all key indicators of progress in L2 acquisition for this learner demographic..

As a productive language assessment, IELTS Writing imposes higher requirements on candidates' language proficiency. Effective input is the guarantee of efficient output. The changes in the average number of words per T-unit and clause ratio between the pre-test and post-test indicate that the revised versions provided by GenAI based on students' drafts are appropriate input materials for students. When students see their revised essays become more readable, they gain a stronger sense of self-identity and enhanced self-efficacy, which improves their output quality and motivates them to invest more in exam preparation. Meanwhile, the emphasis on process over results in regular assignment evaluation corrects students' perception of tasks -- completing a task is not merely submitting a perfunctory outcome. This individual understanding of task requirements directly influences their behavior, turning each assignment into a learning process. Such immersive learning is more likely to sustain students' learning enthusiasm compared to cramming, thereby facilitating the improvement of their English proficiency. Long-term use of AI-generated model essays as learning templates and AI scoring may lead to measurable progress in students' overall writing scores. This progress, especially for students with lower English proficiency, provides tangible learning motivation and further improves their overall learning attitude. However, it is crucial to remain vigilant: to perform effectively, lower-level language learners may focus more on imitating or even directly copying so-called "universal sentence patterns" from previously generated model essays in subsequent tasks. This may make it seem that their English proficiency has improved in a short period, but such improvement comes at the cost of sacrificing self-expression -- they choose to make fewer mistakes over expressing their own ideas better. Therefore, a key focus repeatedly emphasized in cultivating students' information literacy is the development of critical thinking. This is particularly important in IELTS Writing. If candidates blindly rely on model essays and dare not attempt to express themselves, they will struggle to achieve qualitative breakthroughs in English learning. The suggestion proposed by Wen Qiufang et al. (2006) to avoid the tendency of emphasizing language skill training over thinking ability development in writing teaching is equally applicable to IELTS Writing instruction.

The standard deviation of students’ clause ratios in the post-test (.27194) was notably higher than that in the pre-test (.18559), a statistically observable shift that signals a widened range of variation in syntactic complexity across students’ IELTS Task 2 essays following the intervention. Beyond a mere

quantitative discrepancy, this increase in variability reflects a deepening performance gap among learners—one that can be directly linked to the integration of AI tools in the writing learning process and its uneven impact on different student groups. In traditional in-class teaching contexts, the learning environment is characterized by relative uniformity in instructional input. Teachers typically deliver the same quality and type of content, guidance, and feedback to all students, regardless of individual differences in proficiency, learning styles, or motivation. While inherent variations in students' cognitive abilities, prior knowledge, and engagement levels do lead to differences in learning outcomes, these gaps are often constrained by the structured nature of classroom instruction. Teachers can adjust their pacing, offer targeted scaffolding, or provide supplementary support to mitigate extreme disparities, ensuring a baseline level of equity in learning opportunities. In this model, the "playing field" remains relatively level, as the primary driver of performance differences is individual effort rather than differential access to high-quality learning resources.

However, the advent of the AI era has disrupted this balance, introducing new dynamics that amplify existing inequalities. A critical observation from the study is that even when students interact with the same AI writing tool, the outcomes of their engagement can vary drastically—often independent of the tool itself. Unlike traditional teaching resources that deliver fixed content, AI tools operate as "responsive systems" whose outputs are shaped by users' input strategies, digital literacy, and proactive engagement. Students who pose vague, generic questions, like "Improve my essay", may receive superficial, one-size-fits-all feedback, while those who use precise, iterative prompts, like "Can you rephrase this paragraph using more complex subordinate clauses?", can elicit targeted, high-quality support tailored to their specific needs. This means that the same AI tool can function as a "learning accelerator" for some and a "passive resource" for others, depending on how effectively students leverage its capabilities.

The root of this widening gap lies in two interrelated factors: students' AI literacy and their intrinsic learning motivation. For students who approach AI with a passive, perfunctory attitude -- treating it as a "shortcut" to complete assignments rather than a learning partner -- engagement is limited to minimal interactions. They are unwilling to invest time in mastering advanced usage techniques, such as follow-up questioning, multi-perspective inquiry, or iterative revision requests. As a result, they gain little from the tool beyond surface-level adjustments and fail to develop the syntactic complexity, critical thinking, or rhetorical skills that the intervention aimed to foster. For these students, AI does not supplement their learning but merely replaces their own effort, leading to stagnant or minimal progress. In stark contrast, students with strong learning motivation and proactive learning habits view AI as a collaborative tool to enhance their capabilities. They actively experiment

with different prompt strategies, reflect on the feedback received, and use AI to address specific gaps in their writing . Over time, this iterative engagement not only improves their immediate writing outcomes but also builds their “AI literacy”. As their AI literacy grows, they receive increasingly relevant and high-quality feedback, creating a positive feedback loop: better use of AI leads to improved English proficiency, which in turn enables more sophisticated interactions with AI. This group thus pulls further ahead, widening the performance gap with their passive peers.

If this trend remains unaddressed, the implications for educational equity are profound. Educational equity, at its core, emphasizes fair access to learning opportunities and the elimination of barriers that prevent students from reaching their full potential. However, AI-driven learning environments risk creating a “digital divide 2.0”--not one based on access to technology, as most students in this study had access to the same AI tools, but on the ability to use technology effectively. This divide marginalizes students who lack AI literacy, learning autonomy, or supportive learning contexts, trapping them in a cycle of limited progress while their more engaged peers advance. Over the long term, this could exacerbate existing social inequities, as academic success in an AI-integrated education system becomes increasingly tied to skills that are not evenly distributed across student populations.

These concerns align with the warnings outlined in UNESCO’s Guidelines on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education and Research, which highlights that while generative AI offers significant potential to enhance teaching and learning, it also poses inherent risks to educational equity. The document notes that AI’s technical limitations—such as its reliance on user input quality and its tendency to reinforce existing biases—can exacerbate issues like information cocoons and digital divides. These risks, if unmitigated, can intensify social inequities, marginalize vulnerable groups, and perpetuate unbalanced development in education. For IELTS writing instruction specifically, this means that the benefits of AI tools may be concentrated among already advantaged students, while others are left behind—undermining the goal of providing equitable support for all learners.

Interview and questionnaire results show that students have a high degree of recognition for AI-generated model essays and feedback, and they will earnestly learn the parts that are helpful to them. Although students did not specifically focus on sentence construction skills, there was a substantial improvement in their sentence writing. This provides important insights for IELTS teaching. In IELTS Writing, especially when facing topics far removed from students' life experiences, the "ice-breaking" role of ideas is particularly crucial. Unfamiliar topics often increase students' cognitive load and risk a lack of ideas. When dealing with unfamiliar topics, students need to invest more energy in

understanding the topic, collecting materials, and organizing ideas, which may occupy resources that could otherwise be used for syntactic processing, leading to a decline in syntactic complexity. At the same time, unfamiliar topics are more likely to result in a lack of ideas, making sentences empty and logically confusing, which further affects the display of syntactic complexity. AI-generated model essays can provide targeted ideas and writing materials, helping students familiarize themselves with writing frameworks for different topics, enhance their adaptability to unfamiliar topics, and encourage them to use more complex syntactic structures to express their views, thereby improving their IELTS Writing scores. Therefore, IELTS Writing teaching should not be confined to mere language training; expanding students' knowledge and helping them enhance their perception of social life should also be part of the teaching syllabus.

Additionally, during the semi-structured interviews, a consistent theme emerged from students' reflections: the initial novelty of interacting with generative AI writing tools tends to fade over time, leading many to gradually experience fatigue, monotony, or even a loss of enthusiasm for sustained interaction. This shift in engagement is rooted in the inherently functional, task-driven nature of AI tools—while they excel at delivering technical feedback and generating content, they lack the dynamic, empathetic, and adaptive interaction that characterizes human communication. In the early stages of use, students are often curious about AI's ability to generate essays, suggest vocabulary, or revise sentences, which motivates active exploration. However, as this novelty wears off, the repetitive nature of AI interactions can lead to a sense of disconnection. Students reported feeling "unmotivated to continue asking questions" or "indifferent to AI's responses" after several weeks, as the tool fails to recognize their evolving learning needs, celebrate small wins, or adapt its tone to match their emotional state. This decline in engagement underscores a critical limitation of AI: its inability to sustain long-term learner motivation through relational connection, making teachers irreplaceable in maintaining students' investment in the writing process—especially in writing evaluation, where personalized guidance and humanized feedback are key to keeping learners engaged.

Another fundamental reason AI cannot substitute teacher feedback lies in the multi-dimensional nature of human guidance—teachers' feedback encompasses far more than just language knowledge; it includes emotional affirmation, tailored encouragement, and genuine spiritual support that directly fosters students' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks, is a key predictor of learning outcomes in L2 writing. Teachers nurture this belief through intentional, personalized interactions: they might highlight a student's progress in using complex sentences, validate their unique ideas, or reassure them during setbacks. These moments of emotional support are not peripheral to teaching; they are integral to helping students build the

confidence to take linguistic risks, persist through challenges, and view themselves as capable writers. In contrast, AI feedback is narrowly focused on linguistic form and content, lacking the warmth, empathy, and personalization that make emotional affirmation meaningful. Even the most advanced AI tools cannot replicate the sincerity of a teacher's encouragement or the reassurance of someone who understands a student's individual journey, strengths, and struggles.

Conclusion

This study targeted intermediate and low-level IELTS candidates, a group facing persistent writing barriers: over-reliance on simple sentences, poor clause integration, limited advanced vocabulary, and logical incoherence with complex topics. It explored GenAI as a targeted intervention to address these needs and foster syntactic growth. After a 18-week AI-assisted program, paired-samples t-tests revealed highly significant progress in mean word count per T-unit and clause ratio. These findings validate AI's efficacy for lower-level learners, and highlight its potential to democratize high-quality, personalized writing support—hard to deliver in traditional classrooms due to time constraints and diverse needs.

The study also signals a paradigm shift from the traditional teacher-student binary to a tripartite ecosystem: teachers, students and AI. In this ecosystem, AI handles routine tasks like grammar feedback, idea generation, and vocabulary suggestions, freeing teachers to focus on personalized pathways, critical thinking facilitation, emotional support, and AI literacy guidance. For students, this model enables anytime access to scaffolded feedback, boosting learning ownership and confidence. In IELTS Writing instruction, teachers should leverage AI's adaptability and data-analytic capabilities to develop "one student, one plan" interventions. To mitigate widened performance gaps, teachers must instruct students on effective AI use to ensure equitable access to benefits.

Ultimately, integrating AI aims to help lower-level candidates overcome linguistic barriers, build confidence, and improve IELTS Writing scores—key to their academic aspirations. This study provides a roadmap for responsible AI integration, centering learner needs, equity, and sustainable writing development.

Mean word count per T-unit

Table 1-1

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Post-test	19.1795	50	3.14645	.70357
	Pre-test	17.0365	50	3.74960	.83844

Table 1-2

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean Difference					t	df	Sig.（2-tailed）
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Post-test - Pre-test	2.14300	3.08732	.69035	.69809	3.58791	3.104	49	.006

Subordination ratio

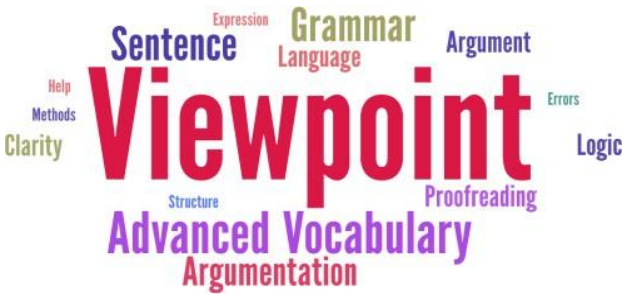
Table 2-1

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair1	Post-test	.6205	50	.27194	.06081
	Pre-test	.3785	50	.18559	.04150

Table 2-2

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean Difference					t	df	Sig.（2-tailed）
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Post-test - Pre-test	.24200	.29790	.06661	.10258	.38142	3.633	49	.002

Figure 1 *Word cloud of questionnaire-based keyword statistics*



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Consonant Articulation and Lexical Stress in Georgian EFL Learners: Phonological Patterns and Pedagogical Implications

ABSTRACT

This study investigates segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation challenges encountered by Georgian learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), focusing on consonants, and stress. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, it combines IPA-based audio analysis, frequency tracking, and learner surveys to explore both observed difficulties and students' perceptions of their underlying causes.

Data were collected from 30 B1-level first-year university students enrolled in a Practical Phonetics course at Tbilisi State University during the 2024 Fall–2025 Spring academic year. The analysis reveals systematic inconsistencies in consonant production. Frequent consonantal issues are most commonly manifested through interdental fricative substitution, /v/–/w/ confusion, final consonant devoicing, and misarticulation of English /r/, largely influenced by the Georgian trilled /r/.

The findings suggest that these patterns stem primarily from L1 transfer, orthographic interference, and restricted exposure to authentic English input. Grounded in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) frameworks—specifically Flege's Speech Learning Model and the Orthographic Interference Hypothesis—the study proposes pedagogical strategies emphasizing explicit pronunciation instruction and phonological awareness within communicative EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Georgian EFL learners, Pronunciation challenges, Vowels, consonants, and stress, L1 transfer and orthographic interference, Pronunciation pedagogy.*

Introduction

In the era of English as a *lingua franca*, a foreign accent can be viewed as a marker of global engagement and communicative courage rather than a sign of insufficient proficiency. Yet in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, that courage often collides with moments of communication breakdown. Pronunciation errors—although a natural part of second language development—can obscure meaning, hinder intelligibility, and diminish learners' confidence and communicative effectiveness.

Contemporary EFL pedagogy increasingly positions pronunciation as an essential dimension of communicative competence rather than an optional or peripheral skill (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). For Georgian learners of English, persistent pronunciation challenges stem largely from structural

contrasts between the two phonological systems. Georgian lacks several features that are central to English consonant production (e.g., interdental fricatives and the /w/–/v/ distinction) and employs a different stress pattern and rhythmic organization. As a result, learners frequently exhibit recurrent consonantal substitutions, segmental deviations, and difficulties with lexical stress placement.

This paper focuses specifically on consonant articulation and lexical stress among Georgian EFL learners. It identifies recurrent phonological deviations, interprets them through the lens of L1 transfer and phonotactic constraints, and offers pedagogical recommendations aimed at enhancing learners' intelligibility and communicative competence in multicultural contexts. More specifically, the study aims to: (1) identify common segmental and suprasegmental errors—particularly those involving consonant production and lexical stress; (2) document these patterns using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); (3) examine the potential causes and phonetic implications of these errors by drawing on major theories of second language acquisition (SLA), cross-linguistic comparison between Georgian and English, and selected learner self-reports collected through a survey on perceived sources of difficulty; and (4) propose practical, empirically informed, and theoretically grounded recommendations for fostering phonetic fluency.

Literature Review

Phonological Implications and Theoretical Perspectives

According to a wide body of SLA research, pronunciation development is shaped by interactions among pedagogical practices, L1–L2 phonological contrasts, cognitive constraints, and sociocultural conditions. Within communicative approaches to language teaching, pronunciation has traditionally received limited explicit focus. Although Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aims to promote fluency and meaningful interaction, it has often marginalized systematic phonological instruction (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010; Levis, 2005). As a result, learners may develop functional communicative skills while retaining persistent segmental errors or inaccurate word stress patterns that hinder intelligibility (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Lado, 1957) remains influential in explaining phonological transfer, particularly when L1–L2 differences are substantial. Modern phonological theories, including Best's (1995) Perceptual Assimilation Model and Flege's (1995) Speech Learning Model, further demonstrate that learners assimilate unfamiliar L2 sounds to the closest L1 categories, resulting in predictable substitution patterns. Against this background, for Georgian learners, the absence of English interdental fricatives, aspiration contrasts, and the /w/–/v/ distinction increases the likelihood of transfer-based misarticulations unless instruction makes these contrasts salient.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) provides a complementary lens, emphasizing that phonological restructuring emerges through socially mediated interaction. Studies on corrective feedback (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) and interactionist SLA (Long, 1996) show that negotiation of form, scaffolding, and exposure to proficient models are essential for improving learners' pronunciation. Limited interaction—common in EFL settings—reduces opportunities to receive modified input or feedback on both segmental accuracy and suprasegmental features such as lexical stress (Saito & Lyster, 2012).

Psycholinguistic perspectives clarify how phonological knowledge is processed andautomatized. Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser, 1997; Anderson, 1983), supported by Flege's (2003) phonetic learning research, argues that repeated, meaningful practice is required for learners to proceduralize new articulatory routines. Without sustained practice, learners rely heavily on declarative knowledge (rules about pronunciation) rather than automatized production, resulting in inconsistent or unstable phonological output.

Interlanguage Fossilization Theory (Selinker, 1972; Han, 2004) further explains why inaccurate pronunciation forms can become stabilized. Fossilization is particularly common in contexts where learners receive limited feedback or where intelligibility is minimally compromised, allowing incorrect forms to persist. Research in L2 phonology has shown that fossilized segmental and suprasegmental patterns can be resistant to change without targeted, high-quality instructional intervention (Major, 2001).

Another key factor influencing phonological development is orthographic interference. The Orthographic Interference Hypothesis (Bassetti, 2008; Bassetti & Atkinson, 2015) posits that learners rely on L1 reading strategies when interpreting L2 grapheme–phoneme correspondences. For speakers of languages with transparent orthographies, this may lead to mispronunciations based on English spelling irregularities, contributing to inaccurate vowel quality, consonant substitutions, and misplaced stress (Rastelli, 2018). Such interference is particularly salient for Georgian learners, whose native orthography is highly phonemic.

Overall, research and classroom evidence suggest that the persistent difficulties EFL learners face with consonant articulation and lexical stress stem from a complex interplay of factors, including instructional practices, the phonological distance between the L1 and L2 languages, cognitive processing constraints, limited opportunities for interaction and feedback, and the influence of English orthography.

Against this background, despite the growing body of research on L2 pronunciation, there remains a notable gap in studies that examine how these theoretical perspectives converge in the

context of Georgian EFL learners, particularly with respect to consonant articulation and lexical stress. Existing studies on Georgian learners tend to focus broadly on segmental errors or general pronunciation challenges, but they rarely integrate insights from contrastive phonology, sociocultural interaction, cognitive skill development, and orthographic influence into a unified analysis. Moreover, few empirical investigations document how these factors interact in real classroom settings, where limited exposure, insufficient corrective feedback, and CLT-driven instructional practices shape learners' phonological development. As a result, the field lacks a comprehensive, evidence-based description of the specific phonological patterns Georgian learners produce and the theoretical mechanisms underlying them. The present study seeks to address this gap by systematically analyzing recurrent consonant and stress-related deviations and interpreting them through an integrated, multi-theoretical lens.

Methodology

Participants and Setting

The study was conducted at **Tbilisi State University**, within the English Philology Programme. Participants included **30 Georgian undergraduate students** enrolled in a **Practical Course of Phonetics**. All participants shared a comparable educational background, having completed secondary education and achieved at least **A2 level** in English proficiency according to national standards.

Data Collection

Data were collected over 28 classroom sessions spanning two academic semesters (Spring 2024–Fall 2025). During these sessions, each student read aloud or retold an assigned text of approximately 150–160 words, yielding a total of roughly 840 minutes of recorded observation.

Research Instrument

A researcher-designed phonetic observation checklist was employed, adapted from the framework proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010). The checklist captured the following dimensions:

- Consonant articulation errors, including inaccuracies in voicing, place and manner of articulation, consonant-cluster simplification, and recurrent substitution patterns;
- Word stress deviations, such as incorrect placement of primary stress and the overgeneralization of initial or final stress patterns;
- Error frequency, categorized as infrequent (<5 occurrences), moderate (5–10 occurrences), or frequent (>10 occurrences).

In addition, a survey questionnaire was administered to the same participants to assess their self-awareness and reflections regarding the potential causes of their pronunciation errors. All procedures were conducted in accordance with institutional ethical standards, and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

Results

Consonantal Mispronunciations

Table 1

Consonantal Mispronunciations Among Georgian EFL Learners

Error Type	**Description and Realizations**	**Examples (IPA)**	**Frequency Category**	**L1/SLA Explanation**
Interdental fricative substitution	/θ/ realized as /t/ or /s/; /ð/ realized as /d/ or /z/	*think → tɪŋk*; *sunbathe → /ˈsʌnbeɪs/* ; ***Thousand → /ˈtaʊ-zənd/; Author- → /au tːə/; Rhythm- → /ˈrɪtəm/;*** *Amazing →* ***/əˈmeɪ ðɪŋ/***	Frequent (>10)	Absence of interdental fricatives in Georgian; L1 transfer
Reverse substitution *voiceless alveolar fricative into voiceless interdental fricative or * voiced alveolar fricative into voiced interdental fricative	s/ → /θ/ and /z/ → /ð/	*music, seen singer, cause → /ˈmjuːˑθɪk/, /θiːn/, /ˈθɪŋ.ər/, /kɔːθ/,*	Moderate–frequent (5-10)	L1 transfer combined with articulatory unfamiliarity, sometimes reinforced by phonetic overgeneralization.
Cluster simplification	Reduction or deletion of initial interdental clusters (e.g., /θr/, /θw/, /θl/)	*three → triː*; *author → ɔːtə*	Frequent (>10)	Georgian phonotactic constraints; cluster reduction
/w/–/v/ confusion	Reciprocal substitution of /w/ and /v/	*warm → vɔːm*; *very → wɛri*	Moderate–frequent (5-10)	Lack of /w/ phoneme; category assimilation (Flege, 1995)
Orthographic/graphemic	<ph> pronounced	*phone →* p^{h}*oʊn*	Moderate	Orthographic

Error Type	Description and Realizations	Examples (IPA)	Frequency Category	L1/SLA Explanation
influence	as /p/ or /pʰ/ instead of /f/	*Phoneme→ pʰoni:m*	(5-10)	interference; grapheme–phoneme mismatch
Final devoicing	Word-final voiced obstruents devoiced	*dogs → dɒgs → dɒks* *Trees→tri:s*	Moderate (5-10)	Transfer of Georgian final devoicing rule
Rhotic misarticulation	English /ɹ/ produced as a trill or tap /r/	*red → rɛd* (tapped/trilled)	Frequent (>10)	L1 articulatory habits; lack of approximant /ɹ/ in Georgian

Suprasegmental Stress Errors

Table 2

Suprasegmental Stress Errors Among Georgian EFL Learners

Error Type	Examples	Description / Phonetic Evidence	Frequency / Impact
Initial Stress Overgeneralization	*development, employee, success*	Words were frequently produced with stress on the first syllable instead of the canonical stress position (e.g., ˈdevelopment → deˈvelopment).	Occurred frequently (>10 instances per learner); contributed to unnatural speech rhythm.
Final Stress Overgeneralization	*record, import, insult*	Verbal forms typically stressed initially were pronounced with final stress (e.g., ˈrecord → reˈkord), indicating incomplete understanding of noun–verb stress alternation.	Occurred frequently (>10 instances per learner); disrupted natural prosody.
Overall Suprasegmental Impact	—	Stress misplacement led to syllable-timed rhythm rather than stress-timed, reducing comprehensibility and naturalness.	Occurred frequently (>10 instances per learner); speech sounded monotone and rhythmically unnatural.

Analysis of Survey Results: Student-Reported Factors Affecting Pronunciation and pedagogy

The following survey asked participants to select the main reason for their pronunciation mistakes in English.

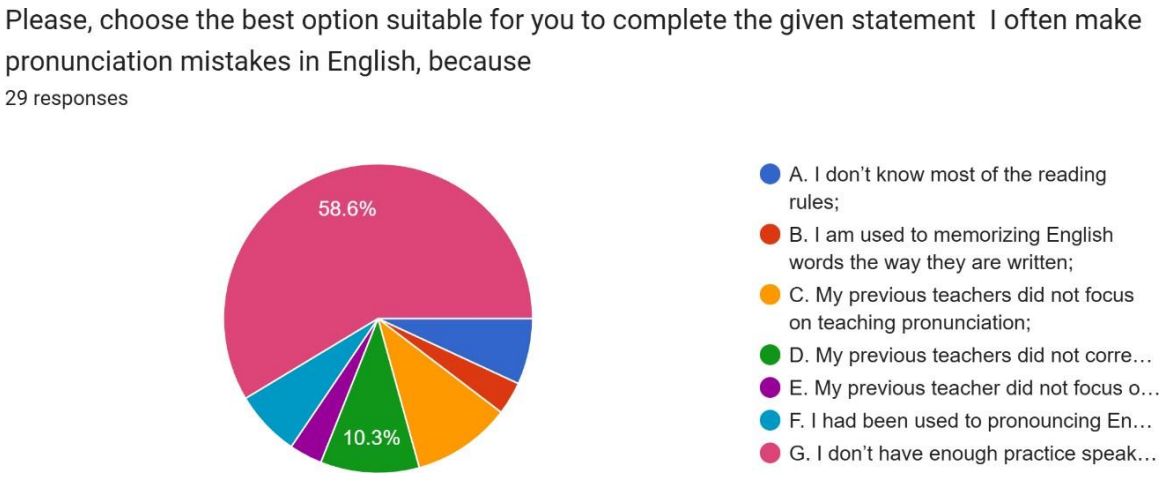

Figure 1: Student-Reported Factors Affecting Pronunciation and pedagogy

Note. Data are based on self-reports from 30 Georgian EFL learners regarding factors influencing their pronunciation skills and classroom pedagogy.

As seen from the figure 1, the responses reveal the following patterns: **Lack of practice is the primary factor:** The majority of respondents (58.6%) (n=17) indicated that *"I don't have enough practice speaking English"* (Option G) is the main reason for their pronunciation errors. **Instructional influence:** About 10.3% (n=3) reported that *"My previous teachers did not correct my pronunciation"* (Option D), highlighting the role of teacher feedback in developing accurate pronunciation habits. Smaller percentages pointed to being *accustomed to memorizing written words* (Option B, 3.4%, n=1).**Knowledge of reading rules and habit transfer:** A minor proportion (6.9 %) (n=2) selected *"I don't know most of the reading rules"* (Option A) or *"I had been used to pronouncing English words differently"* (6.9 %) (n=2), indicating that phonological knowledge and L1 transfer play a smaller but notable role.

To summarize, the survey demonstrates that insufficient speaking practice is the dominant self-reported cause of pronunciation errors among Georgian EFL learners. Teacher intervention and corrective feedback, while less frequently cited, are also important factors. Overall, the data suggest that a combination of practice opportunities and focused instruction is critical for improving learner pronunciation.

Discussion and Pedagogical Implications

The present study demonstrates that Georgian EFL learners face pervasive pronunciation challenges at both the segmental and suprasegmental levels, primarily influenced by the interaction of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. At the segmental level, consonantal mispronunciations were widespread, with frequent interdental fricative substitutions (/θ/ → /t, s/; /ð/ → /d, z/), rhotic misarticulations, and cluster simplifications, reflecting the transfer of Georgian L1 phonological patterns and articulatory habits. Additional errors, such as /w/–/v/ confusions, orthographic influences, and final devoicing, highlight the combined effect of L1 interference, grapheme–phoneme mismatches, and phonotactic constraints. At the suprasegmental level, learners exhibited consistent stress misplacement, including both initial and final stress overgeneralizations, resulting in syllable-timed rhythm and reduced speech naturalness.

These findings reflect a complex interplay of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that contribute to pronunciation challenges among Georgian EFL learners. At the linguistic level, the influence of Georgian L1 phonological patterns interferes with the accurate production of English sounds, stress, and intonation. Additionally, the inherent complexity of English phonology, including irregular spelling-sound correspondences and unpredictable stress patterns, further complicates learners' acquisition of native-like pronunciation.

Survey results reinforced these observations, revealing that insufficient speaking practice is the primary self-reported cause of pronunciation errors. Teacher feedback and previous instructional practices also contributed, although to a lesser extent, while L1 transfer and limited phonological knowledge played a minor but notable role.

To address these challenges, as the findings demonstrated, there is the need for a **multi-faceted pedagogical approach** that integrates **explicit pronunciation instruction,** ample practice opportunities, corrective feedback, and contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 phonological systems. Research in SLA supports the effectiveness of explicit phonetic instruction: for example, Gordon, Darcy, and Ewert (2012) found that learners who received focused, metalinguistic presentation and guided practice improved their comprehensibility more than those without explicit instruction Similarly, meta-analytic and empirical studies show that explicit instruction coupled with communicative, form-focused tasks (i.e., focus on form in meaningful contexts) leads to greater gains in both controlled and spontaneous speech than explicit instruction alone (Mora & Mora- 2023).

Corrective feedback is also central: pronunciation-focused feedback (e.g., recasts) has been shown to help L2 learners notice and self-repair phonological errors, particularly when learners already have some explicit phonetic knowledge (Saito, 2012). Moreover, classroom studies reveal that learners

strongly desire feedback on their pronunciation, and teacher recasts are frequently used, even if their effectiveness varies (Baker & Burri, 2016)

Finally, contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 phonological systems aligns with SLA principles: by explicitly drawing attention to differences between Georgian and English phonology, learners can become more aware of L1 interference, a process that helps form-meaning mapping and supports long-term intelligibility (Center for Applied Linguistics [CAELA], n.d.).

Incorporating **communicative and form-focused tasks,** listening discrimination exercises, self-monitoring, and collaborative practice provides a balanced and evidence-based framework. Such an approach not only targets segmental and suprasegmental difficulties but also fosters interaction-rich environments that promote natural pronunciation adjustment—ultimately enhancing learners' intelligibility, prosody, and overall oral fluency.

Conclusion, Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The study reveals that Georgian EFL learners experience significant pronunciation difficulties at both segmental and suprasegmental levels, shaped by linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. Segmental errors included frequent substitutions of interdental fricatives, rhotic misarticulations, cluster simplifications, /w/–/v/ confusions, orthographic interference, and final devoicing, reflecting L1 transfer and articulatory habits. Suprasegmentally, learners often misapplied lexical stress, producing a syllable-timed rhythm that reduced naturalness. Survey responses indicated that limited speaking practice, insufficient teacher feedback, and gaps in phonological knowledge contributed to these errors. To address these challenges, a multi-faceted pedagogical approach is required, integrating explicit pronunciation instruction, ample practice opportunities, corrective feedback, and contrastive L1–L2 analysis. This approach emphasizes the importance of incorporating communicative and form-focused tasks, listening exercises, self-monitoring, and collaborative activities, all of which can help learners improve both segmental accuracy and prosodic fluency (Gordon, Darcy, & Ewert, 2012; Saito & Lyster, 2012; Center for Applied Linguistics, n.d.).

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relied on a relatively small and homogeneous sample, limiting generalizability. Data were collected through classroom observations, recorded speech, and self-reported surveys, which may not fully capture learners' performance in more naturalistic or high-stakes contexts. Manual analysis introduces potential observer bias, and while pedagogical recommendations are grounded in SLA theory and classroom practice, their practical effectiveness remains to be empirically tested.

Building on this work, future research could explore longitudinal intervention studies to evaluate the impact of SLA-informed pronunciation instruction over extended periods. Tracking learners' development in segmental and suprasegmental features would clarify which instructional strategies yield the most durable improvements in intelligibility and prosody. Additionally, comparative studies with learners from different L1 backgrounds could help distinguish which pronunciation challenges are specific to Georgian learners and which are more universally experienced by EFL students. These directions would strengthen the evidence base for effective, targeted pronunciation pedagogy.

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Promoting Engagement in a Research-Rich Curriculum (on the Example of Enquiry-Based Tasks in Lexicography)

ABSTRACT

Thinking carefully about the impact that research might have on teaching is a topic of international interest. The main aim of the paper is to explore the complexity of the linkage between research and teaching in institutional context, with peculiar reference and on an example of postgraduate program of English philology (Lexicography) at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. Lexicography provides an intriguing test ground on which to examine the connections between research and teaching because of the position it holds at the intersection between the theory and practice (theoretical lexicography and the lexicographic practice).

It is suggested that undergraduate and postgraduate students are likely to gain most benefit from research in terms of depth of learning and understanding when they are involved actively, particularly through various forms of inquiry-based learning (Sambell et. al, 2017). From this perspective, teaching and learning in higher education is a multifaceted process, based on subtlety and artistry, as opposed to more functional definitions of teaching and learning, because it is not just a simple matter of knowledge transfer. Hodge et al. (2007) emphasize how engaging students with research can go further than more traditional paradigms of learning. Their model frames the "student as scholar" (Hodge et al. 2007), rather than simply a learner. At the level of course curriculum design, Healey (2005) noted that the research-teaching relationship can be developed along a spectrum which ranges across several different dimensions: research-tutored, research-based, research-oriented and research-led.

Accordingly, the curriculum of lexicography had been radically redesigned so as to explicitly focus on the research-teaching paradigm. Examples of inquiry-based learning activities in curricular design, that benefit student learning through direct involvement in research, are included in the paper. Lecturers draw upon a wide range of techniques to help make their courses inquiry-driven, student-centered and active, as in the following small-scale examples:

A. To support students to practice data-gathering techniques, under the course of Learner Lexicography and Metalexicography, students were able to explain what is done in research into dictionary use and explain its significance in lexicography, choose an appropriate method for their scientific hypothesis and apply it, analyze scientific publications from the field, formulate problems in the field and solve them through discussion, develop an individual usage study.

B. During the practical course of Georgian-English Lexicography, research tasks provide a compact and hands-on overview of basic tools, methods and technologies in today's digital lexicography (TlTerm, Lexonomy, etc.). The focus is on the use of the tools for the structured representation of lexicographic data as well as on technologies for data management, storage and presentation.

As a result, it is similarly important that university teachers endeavor to reflect upon and seek to enhance the research-teaching nexus because it is often seen as a vital contributory factor to students' all-round development. They have important decisions to make, on personal and professional levels, so they need to become equipped with the skills of critical analysis, gathering evidence, making judgements and the capacity to reflect on what they are doing and why.

Keywords: *active learning, lexicography, research-rich, postgraduate.*

Lexicography is linguistic surgery. There's a ritual preparation, a laying out of instruments… There is the first slice into the patient, which could be the beginning of a very long morning full of unexpected complications or the start of a procedure so routine a seasoned surgeon could do it in their sleep.

- Kory Stamper, "Word by Word: The Secret Life of Dictionaries"

Introduction

In the landscape of contemporary higher education, the relationship between research and teaching is a subject of enduring international interest. While universities have traditionally prioritized the accumulation of theoretical and applied knowledge, the actual integration of these two domains within the learning environment remains a complex challenge. Too often, research and teaching exist in distinct silos, a structure that positions students as passive consumers of established knowledge rather than active participants in its creation (Harvey & Tree, 2025).

This paper explores the complexity of this research-teaching linkage within a specific institutional context: the postgraduate program of English Philology (Lexicography concentration) at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU). We argue that lexicography, a discipline situated uniquely at the intersection of abstract theory and rigorous practice (dictionary compilation), provides an intriguing testing ground for this pedagogical shift. By analyzing specific curricular interventions in the MA program, this paper illustrates how inquiry-based learning can transform students from mere learners into junior researchers. Specifically, this research examines a selection of both compulsory and elective modules within the program to ensure a representative analysis of the curriculum. The primary focus lies on three core courses: Learner Lexicography, Metalexicography, and the Practical Course in General English-Georgian Lexicography. Adopting a qualitative case study design framed within practitioner action research, the paper analyzes curricular documents and student reflections to evaluate the efficacy of the research-teaching nexus in these modules.

Literature Review

The relationship between research and teaching is rarely actualized in a single, uniform way. Traditionally, it has been assumed that active researchers make better teachers simply by virtue of their expertise. However, recent pedagogical scholarship challenges this assumption, arguing that the benefit to students is not automatic, rather, it must be explicitly engineered into the curriculum.

Students may experience research in diverse ways. The research-teaching relationship can be conceptualized along a spectrum ranging across several dimensions (cf. Healey, 2005; Jenkins &

Healey, 2012). These dimensions are categorized as:

- Research-led: The curriculum content is dominated by faculty research interests, and information transmission is the main teaching mode.
- Research-oriented: The curriculum emphasizes the processes by which knowledge is produced as much as the knowledge itself; faculty attempt to engender a research ethos through their teaching.
- Research-based: Students learn as researchers; the curriculum is largely designed around inquiry-based activities, and the division of roles between teacher and student is minimized.
- Research-tutored: Students engage in small-group discussions with a teacher, focusing on research findings.

From this perspective, teaching and learning in higher education function as a multifaceted, complex process grounded in subtlety rather than simple functional definitions of knowledge transfer. Sambell et al. (2017) argue that students gain the most benefit from research not merely by hearing about it, but by being actively involved in inquiry-based learning.

To operationalize this connection, this paper draws upon the framework proposed by Healey (2005) and Jenkins & Healey (2012). The authors argue that the curriculum can be designed along two axes: the emphasis on research content versus research processes, and the student as a participant versus the student as an audience. Complementing this is the "Student as Scholar" model (Hodge et al., 2007), which advocates for a radical reshaping of the curriculum. In this paradigm, a discovery-led frame of mind infuses every module, encouraging students to search for and discover new knowledge (Hodge et al., 2007: 3). This resonates with the constructivist viewpoint: the learners must be empowered to consider the process of their own learning, enabling them to make decisions, solve research problems, and develop effectively as independent scholars.

In enhancing the links between research and teaching, the nature of the discipline itself acts as an important mediator (Breen et.al., 2003). Lexicography provides an intriguing testing ground on which to examine these linkages because of its position at the intersection of theory and practice. The field is inherently dualistic, possessing a rigorous theoretical foundation while maintaining a large interdisciplinary scope. As Fuertes-Olivera (2025) notes, there is "hardly any academic discipline or branch of human knowledge that has not left its traces in lexicographical works." Consequently, lexicography requires not only the theoretical understanding of metalexicography, semantics, and corpus linguistics, but also the technical skill to manage data, define senses, retrieve co-textual and contextual information and utilize digital tools.

At TSU, the lexicography curriculum has been redesigned to integrate all elements of this research-teaching model, aiming to bridge the gap between abstract academic study and the concrete demands of modern digital lexicography.

Methodology

Research Design

/This study adopts a qualitative case study design combined with elements of practitioner action research. A qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate as it allows for a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the educational experience. A qualitative approach was prioritsed because statistical data alone cannot fully reveal our research questions and complex shift in student perceptions regarding the research-teaching connection.

The research is situated within a constructivist paradigm, acknowledging that learning in lexicography is not merely the acquisition of facts, but the active construction of professional knowledge. Accordingly, the study focuses on a targeted curricular intervention within the Lexicography program, utilizing Healey's (2005) Research-Teaching Nexus as the primary theoretical lens to observe and analyze the development of students' research skills.

By mapping course activities against Healey's (2005) four quadrants, the research design seeks to evaluate how specific pedagogical shifts (e.g., from passive lectures to active digital tool usage) impact the students' transition from novices to junior scholars.

Context and Participants

The research was conducted within the Department of English Philology at TSU during the Spring semester of the 2024–2025 academic year, specifically within the modules of Learner Lexicography, Metalexicography and the Practical Course in General English-Georgian Lexicography. This timeframe allowed the researcher (who also served as the primary lecturer) to observe the development of the cohort in real-time.

The study focuses on a small, purposive cohort of seven postgraduate students enrolled in the courses. This small sample size allows for a comprehensive description of individual learner development and deep qualitative analysis of student output.

The group was relatively homogeneous in terms of academic background and age, with the majority entering the program directly from their undergraduate studies. The participants (n=7) were all Georgian native speakers with a background in English Philology. Prior to this course, the majority of the cohort had limited exposure to practical lexicography or computational tools, entering the

program with primarily theoretical linguistic knowledge. The courses were delivered in a face-to-face workshop format, consisting of 4 contact hours per week (Practical Course in General Lexicography), 3 contact hours per week (Learner Lexicography), 2 contact hours (Metalexicography). The students were asked to use their computer devices for immediate application of digital tools.

Ethical considerations were important for the research design, particularly given the dual role of the researcher as the module teacher. While the identities of the participants were known to the researcher during the data collection phase (as the reflective essays were part of the formal coursework), confidentiality is maintained in the dissemination of the findings. Codes (Student A, etc.) are used to ensure confidentiality. To mitigate the potential for response bias, for example, students writing favorably to influence grades, the qualitative analysis of these essays for research purposes was conducted after the final course grades were submitted.

Data Collection Instruments

To evaluate the efficacy of the research-teaching linkage, qualitative data was triangulated from three distinct sources: (1) module syllabi, (2) student research outputs, and (3) reflective narratives.

The primary documents analyzed included the redesigned module syllabi, assessment criteria, and teaching materials. These were evaluated against Healey's (2005) framework to verify the extent to which research-based and research-oriented activities were explicitly embedded in the course design. From this standpoint, syllabus is viewed as the interaction between teachers, learners and knowledge, as an action. Viewed like this, the focus is on the processes that help make learning and meaning-making to happen, with room for experimentation and a degree of flexibility.

To visualize how these theoretical frameworks were operationalized within the syllabus, Table 1 outlines the mapping of specific modules against Healey's research quadrants and the corresponding assessment evidence.

Table 1: Integration of Research-Teaching Nexus in Syllabus Design

Target Module	*Healey's Quadrant*	*Syllabus Intervention (Activity)*	*Documented Evidence (Assessment)*
Learner Lexicography	Research-Based *(Students as Researchers)*	Students formulate hypotheses and design original user surveys to test dictionary efficacy.	User Questionnaire Design Usage Analysis Report

Metalexicography	**Research-Tutored** ***(Engaging in research discussions)***	**Critical analysis of macro- and microstructures of existing printed dictionaries;** **Academic article writing.**	**Academic Article Submission** **Evaluation Criteria (Data Reliability, Content Depth)**
Practical Course (English-Georgian)	Research-Oriented *(Learning research processes)*	Application of digital tools (Lexonomy, TlTerm) to compile bilingual entries; Solving equivalence problems.	10 Weekly Lexical Entries Corpus Query Logs

The core of the data consisted of the scholarly products produced by the cohort (N=7) across the three targeted modules. These artifacts served as direct evidence of the students' ability to engage in "research-based" and "research-oriented" learning.

Task of user Research Studies (*Learner Lexicography*): Moving beyond theoretical study, students were tasked with designing and conducting original user research. This involved formulating hypotheses regarding dictionary usage and creating data gathering instruments (questionnaires). Students designed specific items to test user behavior and preferences, such as querying frequency of use, evaluating the clarity of definitions ("Is the definition vague?"), and identifying preferred microstructural elements. Students then distributed these forms, collected the data, and analyzed the results to draw conclusions about user needs.

Task of Critical Dictionary Analysis (*Metalexicography*): In this module, students produced a formal academic article featuring a critical analysis of the macro- and microstructure of a specific dictionary. To emphasize primary source research, students were required to visit the public library and select a printed Georgian dictionary for evaluation. The assignment was graded on strict research criteria: content depth, quality of analysis, data reliability, article layout, and the validity of

conclusions. Following submission, students received extensive feedback to simulate the peer-review process.

Task of Digital Lexicographic Projects (*Practical Course in General English-Georgian Lexicography*): Throughout the semester, students engaged in the ongoing compilation of a bilingual dictionary using industry-standard platforms (Lexonomy, TlTerm). Each student was responsible for processing 10 lexical units weekly. This research-oriented task required them to:

Disambiguate senses and find equivalents.

Translate illustrative examples and identify grammatical, paradigmatic, and syntagmatic relationships.

Utilize corpus data and other lexicographic evidence to support their decisions.

These practical tasks were supplemented by weekly research seminars where students discussed complex challenges, specifically focusing on issues of anisomorphism and equivalence structures.

At the conclusion of the course, all 7 students submitted reflective essays. These narratives required students to self-assess their learning journey, specifically focusing on the challenges of data gathering and their evolving understanding of the lexicographer's role. The reflection was not an open-ended diary entry, rather, it was a guided self-assessment focused on the friction between theory and practice. Students were prompted to deconstruct their decision-making processes during the research tasks. Specifically, the narrative prompts (see Table 2) required students to articulate how they navigated methodological ambiguity, such as resolving issues of equivalence in Lexonomy (Mechura et al., 2017) or designing valid questions for the user survey in Learner Lexicography. These narratives provided the critical qualitative data necessary to answer the research question regarding the shift in student perceptions. They allowed the researcher to trace the cohort's evolution from passive recipients of linguistic theory to active agents capable of defending their lexicographic choices.

Table 2. Guiding Prompts for Reflective Narratives

Guiding Prompts for Reflective Narratives
Methodological Challenges: Describe a specific moment during your data collection (survey or corpus analysis) where the textbook theory did not provide a clear answer. How did you resolve this?
How did using tools like TlTerm/Lexonomy change your understanding of a dictionary entry? Did you feel limited or empowered by the software structure?
Compare your view of a lexicographer's role at the beginning of the semester vs. now. Do you consider yourself a researcher? Why or why not?

Research Results

The analysis of the student research outputs and reflective essays (N=7) suggests that the sillabi redesign successfully facilitated a shift towards the student as Scholar model. The results are categorized into three primary directions: Firstly, in the Learner Lexicography module, students were required to formulate hypotheses (e.g. good dictionaries do not only display a linguistically sound treatment of a specific selection of lexical items, good dictionaries are products that can be used as linguistic instruments by their respective target user groups) and conduct small-scale usage studies. The feedback in the reflective essays reveal that their research preparation was the primary driver of deep learning.

Students reported that the process of gathering original data forced them to move beyond theoretical knowledge. For example, one student noted:

"At the beginning, I was waiting for the lecturer to tell me which learner's dictionary was better. Or what were the specific questions for the questionnaire on the layout of the dictionary. But after designing my own survey, I realized that "better" depends entirely on the user's needs. I had to stop being a student and start thinking like a lexicographer." This aligns with the research-based quadrant of Healey's (2005) model. By dealing with the messiness of real data, students developed the critical skills to evaluate lexicographic resources not as static authorities, but as constructed tools subject to critique.

Secondly, the introduction of TlTerm (Joffe & De Schryver, 2004) and Lexonomy (Mechura et.al., 2017) proved to be a significant catalyst for student engagement. While traditional teaching might focus on analyzing existing dictionary entries, the research-oriented task of creating entries required a higher level of cognitive engagement. Analysis of the student projects in Lexonomy demonstrated a high degree of structural awareness. Students did not merely input words; they had to make active decisions about data structure (XML tags, hierarchy). In their course evaluations, the cohort emphasized that mastering these tools were important:

"Using Lexonomy gave me confidence that I could actually work in a digital publishing house, because I edited the structure of entries, made several editing decisions."

However, in terms of article writing as their assignment in Metalexicography, students mentioned that the instructions were a bit overwhelming: "*The prompt was one long block of text, so a lot of us missed small details—like the requirement to include screenshots or the specific word count for the abstract versus the paper*." Some of them wrote "*I struggled to figure out how much theory (Wiegand/Gouws) to include versus how much actual dictionary analysis to do*." The results showed that they liked the freedom of the assignment, but they struggled significantly with the structure and

density of your instructions.

Perhaps the most significant finding from the reflective essays was the shift in self-perception. At the start of the course, students identified primarily as "learners" absorbing information. By the end of the semester, the requirement to produce original usage studies and digital dictionaries fostered a sense of ownership.

The small cohort size (7 students) allowed for intensive mentoring, which was crucial for this identity shift. As one student reflected:

"The project made me feel like my opinion actually mattered because it was backed up by the data I collected."

Conclusion

The case of the MA Lexicography program at TSU illustrates that integrating research-based and research-oriented tasks into the curriculum does more than teach skills; it reframes the student-teacher relationship. By engaging in the actual practices of lexicographers, gathering data and building digital entries, students moved from passive consumers of knowledge to active producers.

The case study of the MA Lexicography program at TSU illustrates that integrating research-based and research-oriented tasks into the curriculum does more than merely teach skills; it fundamentally reframes the student-teacher relationship. By engaging in the authentic practices of lexicographers (gathering user data, critiquing macrostructures, and compiling digital entries) students moved from the position of passive consumers of knowledge to active producers.

The findings strongly support the application of Healey's (2005) model in postgraduate education. The transition across the elements, from the research-tutored critique of dictionaries to the research-based creation of user surveys - allowed students to experience the discipline not as a static set of rules, but as a dynamic field of inquiry. As evidenced by the student reflections, the lexicographic editing tools served as cognitive scaffolds; they helped students transform the abstract theory into concrete decision-making.

The study reveals that the discomfort associated with research is a necessary component of the "Student as Scholar" identity (Hodge et al., 2007). The student feedback regarding the ambiguity of assignment instructions and the complexity of real usage data highlights an important pedagogical implication. The feedback suggesting that instructions were occasionally "overwhelming" indicates that while autonomy is the goal, adequate scaffolding remains essential.

Declaration on Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used Gemini in order to: Grammar and spelling check, Paraphrase and reword. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the publication's content.

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Manipulative Discourse Strategies in EFL Teaching: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Analysis

ABSTRACT

The paper evaluates the prevalence, examines various forms, and studies the cognitive-pragmatic mechanisms underlying manipulative discourse strategies within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom environments. Employing frameworks such as Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975, 1979; Purtseladze, 2024), the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1978, 1989), Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/95a; Wilson and Sperber, 2004; Carston & Powell, 2009), and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989; Van Dijk, 2006; Maillat & Oswald, 2011), the study investigates the manner in which teachers' linguistic choices may subtly exert psychological pressure on learners. Data for this research were obtained through a survey administered to 100 undergraduate students enrolled across various faculties at Tbilisi State University.

The results demonstrate that manipulative discourse is both widespread and multifaceted: gaslighting accounts for 42% of reported instances, followed by shaming (28%), guilt-tripping (20%), and triangulation (10%). These strategies frequently overlap, producing complex perlocutionary effects that students cannot pragmatically ignore. Through explicit, covert, and inclusive assertives, teachers often generate cognitively inescapable implicatures that violate conversational maxims, prompting students to internalize blame, experience anxiety, and question their competence. The findings indicate that manipulative communication in educational contexts extends beyond traditional pragmatic models, revealing how evaluative cues, sarcastic remarks, and comparative framing affect students' state of mind and academic performance. By identifying these communicative patterns and their psychological impact, the study underscores the need for increased pedagogical awareness and the development of ethical, supportive classroom discourse practices.

The research findings were partially presented at the Sixth International Conference on Second Language Teaching/Acquisition in the Context of Multilingual Education (SeLTAME 2025).

The results of this study, both theoretical and practical, are applicable across a wide range of educational contexts. By identifying and analysing the cognitive-pragmatic mechanisms underlying manipulative discourse strategies, the research addresses a significant gap in existing pedagogical and pragmatic scholarship.

Keywords: *cooperative principle; classroom discourse; gaslighting; manipulation; relevance theory; speech acts.*

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Introduction

Mental well-being and psychological self-awareness have become vital concerns in today's fast-paced, globalized world. People are becoming more aware of their emotional states, while society as a whole is gaining a deeper understanding of the psychological processes that influence human interaction. In

recent years, both public discussion and scholarly research have focused on the phenomenon of psychological manipulation, reflecting a growing awareness of emotional abuse not only in personal relationships but also in broader social and institutional settings. Linguistic pragmatics is no exception: a significant amount of research has been dedicated to manipulative communication as a unique, complex form of discourse. (Fairclough, 1989; Mooney, 2004; Van Dijk, 2006; Maillat & Oswald, 2011; Sorlin, 2017, etc.)

The classroom constitutes a distinctive environment for communication, characterized by the integration of professional procedures and interpersonal dynamics. Interaction within this environment does not always proceed harmoniously, as certain pedagogical practices may employ manipulative tactics. Such strategies are frequently implicit and unintentional; however, they can be profoundly detrimental to students. While the majority of research in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy has focused on effective teaching methodologies and learner-centered strategies, considerably less attention has been paid to the more problematic aspects of classroom discourse — those involving manipulation, control, or psychological pressure exerted upon learners.

The current study aims to identify the types of manipulative discourse strategies used in EFL classroom settings and to assess their effects on students' academic performance and emotional well-being. The study relies on the theoretical framework of linguistic pragmatics, drawing on Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975, 1979; Purtseladze, 2024a) and the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1978, 1989), while also including key concepts from Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/95a; Wilson and Sperber, 2004; Pickrell et al., 2004; Carston & Powell, 2009) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989; Mooney, 2004; Van Dijk, 2006; Maillat & Oswald, 2011; Sorlin, 2017). It also integrates contemporary psychological insights, including Birch's (2015) work on emotional manipulation and Vaknin's (2014) examinations of narcissistic behavior.

The research is based on empirical data collected from a survey completed by 100 undergraduate students representing the Faculties of Humanities, Psychology and Educational Sciences, as well as Social and Political Sciences at Tbilisi State University.

Understanding manipulative communication within educational settings is especially significant, as the classroom serves not merely as a venue for knowledge dissemination but also as a formative environment where students' identities are shaped. When manipulative discourse becomes ingrained in teacher–student interactions—whether intentionally or unintentionally—it can erode learners' confidence, distort their self-perceptions, and foster an emotionally unsafe atmosphere. These effects are particularly pertinent in EFL classrooms, where language anxiety, diverse proficiency levels, and

heightened reliance on the teacher inherently render students more susceptible to psychological influence.

Despite these challenges, manipulative strategies in pedagogical communication remain insufficiently examined, especially in non-Anglophone academic contexts. By identifying these strategies and assessing their consequences, this research fills a critical gap in both linguistic pragmatics and pedagogy. Moreover, the findings have practical implications: they can inform teacher training programs, contribute to the development of ethical communication guidelines, and promote more supportive, transparent, and psychologically safe educational environments. In doing so, the study not only advances the theoretical and practical understanding of manipulative discourse strategies and harmful pedagogical practices but also supports the broader goal of enhancing students' well-being alongside their academic performance.

Theoretical Framework

Fairclough (1989, p. 6) characterizes manipulation as "a devious way to control the others," highlighting its covert and strategic nature. Van Dijk (2006, p. 359) expands this definition, describing manipulation as the *illegitimate domination* by a more powerful group over less powerful individuals, typically to maintain social or institutional inequality. Within educational environments — and particularly in EFL contexts — such asymmetries are structurally embedded. Teachers, administrators, or more proficient interlocutors possess greater linguistic, institutional, and interactional power, which can create conditions in which manipulative strategies may operate unnoticed and uncontested.

From a relevance-theoretic perspective, the effectiveness of manipulation is closely linked to the cognitive mechanisms that underlie communication. Relevance Theory posits that the relevance of an input depends on the ratio of cognitive effects to processing effort (Sperber & Wilson, 1995b; Wilson & Sperber, 2004). Crucially, every utterance carries a *presumption of optimal relevance*: speakers implicitly guarantee that their contributions are worth processing, and hearers rely on this guarantee when interpreting them. As Carston and Powell (2009) note, this presumption supports a particular comprehension procedure in which the hearer follows a path of least effort, testing interpretations in order of accessibility and stopping once one fits his/her expectation of relevance.

Manipulative strategies leverage this cognitive framework. Given that listeners assume speakers to be *cooperative* (Mooney, 2004; Sorlin, 2017) and that their utterances are optimally relevant, they tend to accept interpretations that the speaker subtly guides them toward — even when the speaker's intentions are not benevolent.

This dynamic is intensified in EFL settings, where the inherent power asymmetry between teachers and students increases students' vulnerability. The teacher's epistemic superiority is not only socially acknowledged but also structurally embedded in the educational environment. As a result, students are institutionally positioned as epistemically dependent, which raises their susceptibility to manipulative communicative tactics.

Numerous accounts of manipulative communication, particularly from a discourse-analytical perspective, emphasize the conditions under which discourse may be deemed manipulative. A primary focus is placed on the external contextual setting of the communicative event, including the broader social context: the relationship between speaker and audience, their respective roles and prerogatives, the relative status of their knowledge, and the purpose of the interaction. This social-contextual perspective is exemplified by Van Dijk's assertion that "it only makes sense to speak of manipulation […] when speakers or writers are manipulating others in their role as a member of a dominant collectivity" (2006, p. 364). A secondary focus pertains to the discursive and linguistic devices that speakers strategically deploy to gain consent through partially uncooperative means, often outside the audience's awareness. (Maillat and Oswald, 2011).

In EFL settings, the educator assumes the role of "a member of a dominant collectivity" precisely because of the contextual structures. In this regard, context is not merely an incidental element but an active component of manipulative strategy, influencing the meanings that students are able to interpret as relevant.

In the context of EFL teaching, subtle forms of pedagogical manipulation may depend on what Maillat and Oswald (2011) describe as *cognitive black holes* — situations so emotionally charged and cognitively dominant that they limit learners' interpretive options. Drawing on Pickrell et al.'s (2004, pp. 352–353) description of *flashbulb* contexts like 9/11, which serve as "highly salient memories" with a "highly emotional, meaningful, and subjectively permanent nature," such contexts can overshadow competing information and steer learners toward a predetermined evaluative stance. From a relevance-theoretic perspective, these emotionally intense frames effectively "erase" alternative interpretations by overwhelming the learner's cognitive environment, making certain meanings not only more accessible but also seemingly inevitable or natural. In EFL classrooms, emotionally charged contexts are often already assumed: low grades, public teacher criticism, peer comparison, academic deadlines, and constant competition routinely increase affective pressure. Therefore, manipulation in EFL settings does not necessarily require the deliberate introduction of emotionally extreme content; instead, it can operate through the existing affective climate, which quietly absorbs learners' attention and constrains their interpretative choices.

Research in cognitive psychology and Argumentation Theory demonstrates how certain assumptions can be rendered so salient that they become *cognitively inescapable*. (Maillat and Oswald, 2011). In EFL classrooms, this implies that some implicatures—particularly those related to evaluation or feedback—may attain such prominence that learners are compelled to interpret the teacher's input in the prescribed manner.

Regarding the linguistic devices employed in manipulative discourse, it can be argued that, from a pragmatic perspective, most manipulative strategies depend on ***indirect speech acts,*** particularly assertives. Purtseladze (2024a, see also 2025a) identifies three types of indirect assertives that are prevalent in gaslighting discourse: ***explicit assertives,*** where the encoded illocution aligns with the literal illocutionary act; ***covert assertives,*** where an assertive speech act is conveyed via a different illocutionary act; and ***inclusive assertives,*** in which the encoded message is embedded within an assertive speech act realized through a distinct illocutionary act, such as a directive or a commissive. Considering that gaslighting, as a form of psychological manipulation, constitutes a complex cognitive and communicative phenomenon (Purtseladze, 2025a) involving additional manipulative strategies (to be discussed further in this paper), it is reasonable to assert that this classification, as a tool for pragmatic analysis, can be more generally applied to manipulative discourse.

The peculiar and notably effective nature of these types of assertives lies in their ability, within manipulative discourse, to acquire a ***double direction of fit***—an attribute not commonly ascribed to assertives in traditional pragmatics. In this configuration, the utterance **ostensibly describes reality (*word-to-world*);** concurrently, it **compels the hearer to modify his/her beliefs, emotions, or behaviour to align with the speaker's perceived version of reality (*world-to-word*)**. This dual functionality enables manipulative assertives to alter the interlocutor's mental model while maintaining the superficial appearance of mere factual assertions, thereby serving as potent instruments of covert influence. (Purtseladze, 2024a)

Relevance Theory (RT) reconceptualizes communication as an **inferential, ostensive** process rather than a straightforward code-based transmission of meaning (Wilson & Sperber, 2004). In cognitive pragmatics, the interpretation of **indirect speech acts** in interactional communication is initiated by the hearer's assumption that the speaker is acting cooperatively (Grice, 1978) and by the detection of a disparity between the literal utterance and the surrounding context. According to Bara, Bosco, and Bucciarelli (1999), hearers initially endeavour to interpret the speaker's utterance literally; only when this interpretation fails—typically because it results in insufficient relevance—do they seek an alternative meaning that aligns with the speaker's primary illocutionary intent. Significantly, this inferential process is not conducted consciously or deliberately: as Searle (1979, p. 34) observes, the

reasoning involved in interpreting indirect speech acts operates automatically, drawing on deeply ingrained cognitive capacities.

This automatic inferential mechanism is of significant importance in manipulative discourse. When the speaker utilizes **indirect assertive speech acts** that ostensibly meet the felicity conditions of cooperation, the listener's cognitive system compensates for perceived gaps, rationalizes inconsistencies, and reconstructs the speaker's message to maintain coherence. The manipulator thus exploits the hearer's expectation of cooperation and his/her reliance on the ***presumption of optimal relevance***. What appears to be a mutually cooperative exchange is, in fact, an *illusion of cooperation*, with its perlocutionary force mimicking genuine cooperation precisely because it is processed as such. (Purtseladze, 2025b)

In this context, manipulative discourse systematically **violates Gricean maxims** — specifically the maxims of *quality* and *relation* — while maintaining sufficient surface plausibility to sustain the hearer's engagement in cooperative inferencing. The perceived cooperativeness encourages the hearer to exert greater cognitive effort, whereas the concealed violations enable the manipulator to direct interpretation and limit access to alternative contextual assumptions.

These effects become even more pronounced in EFL contexts, where learners face increased cognitive load and an intensified epistemic dependence on the teacher. The teacher's presumed authority reinforces students' expectations of cooperation and relevance, making them less likely to notice maxim violations and more susceptible to coercive influence. As a result, cognitive mechanisms that typically support efficient communication — automatic inference, relevance-oriented processing, and the assumption of cooperative intent — can be redirected to facilitate manipulation.

Taken together, these propositions demonstrate that manipulative communication in EFL settings arises from the interaction of structural power asymmetries, cognitive constraints, and pragmatic mechanisms. The teacher's institutionally preestablished authority influences learners' expectations of cooperation and relevance, while relevance-driven inferencing and the automatic processing of indirect implicatures make violations of maxims difficult to detect. Consequently, the very cognitive and pragmatic capacities that usually facilitate effective communication become channels through which manipulation can be enacted and sustained. Notably, despite the significant awareness of manipulative tactics among Georgian youth (Purtseladze, 2024b), such practices continue to present challenges not only within second-language classrooms but also across various educational contexts, where institutional hierarchies increase learners' vulnerability to implicit discursive influence.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses to investigate the prevalence and cognitive-pragmatic mechanisms of manipulative discourse strategies in EFL classrooms. The design combined survey-based data collection with detailed discourse analysis, allowing both statistical assessment of strategy frequency and in-depth examination of their linguistic realization. The methodology was guided by a cognitive-pragmatic framework grounded in Relevance Theory, Speech Act Theory, and the Cooperative Principle, which facilitated the interpretation of manipulative effects on students' emotional state and classroom engagement.

The study involved 100 EFL students, aged 18–25, enrolled in intermediate and upper-intermediate English courses across the Faculties of Humanities, Psychology and Educational Sciences, and Social and Political Sciences at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. All participants had completed at least one term of EFL instruction, thereby ensuring sufficient exposure to classroom interactions to provide reliable accounts of manipulative practices. The gender of participants was not considered, as the analysis concentrated on manipulative discourse patterns rather than potential gender-based differences in perception.

Data were collected through a structured survey that incorporated open-ended questions aimed at capturing both the frequency and qualitative characteristics of experiences with manipulative discourse. The survey included:

1. *Quantitative items* assessing the occurrence of four primary manipulative strategies — gaslighting, shaming, guilt-tripping, and triangulation — using a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = very frequently).
2. *Qualitative prompts* inviting participants to provide examples of specific utterances or classroom interaction fragments they perceived as manipulative, to describe the context, and to report their cognitive and emotional responses.

Quantitative data were analyzed employing descriptive statistics to ascertain the prevalence of each manipulative strategy. Percentages were computed to illustrate the distribution of reported practices.

Qualitative data were subjected to a cognitive-pragmatic analysis. Each reported utterance was examined for:

1) Speech-act type (explicit assertive, covert assertive, inclusive assertive).
2) Conversational maxim violations (relation, quality, quantity, manner).
3) Perlocutionary effect, including cognitive, emotional, and social impact on the student.

4) Functional category – a thematic classification of manipulative utterances, characterized by the specific implicatures it aims to communicate.

To ensure reliability, all qualitative data were carefully analyzed, with repeated checks to maintain consistency in classifying speech acts and maxim violations. Validity was supported as multiple students reported similar utterances and emotional effects across classrooms. To enhance trustworthiness, the research findings were partially presented at the Sixth International Conference on Second Language Teaching/Acquisition in the Context of Multilingual Education (SeLTAME 2025), and peer feedback was used to confirm the validity of the analysis and conclusions.

The study was conducted in accordance with the American Psychological Association (APA) Research Ethics Code. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary and performed in the participants' mother tongue to ensure clarity, comfort, and accurate reporting of experiences. Data were anonymized, and identifiers were removed to preserve confidentiality. Care was taken in reporting illustrative examples to avoid exposing specific individuals or creating reputational harm. All personal names used in examples throughout this study (e.g., Maria, John, Tina) are pseudonyms, randomly assigned to preserve the realism of the classroom contexts.

Results and Discussion

The study demonstrates that the most frequently employed manipulative tactics, such as gaslighting, guilt-tripping, shaming, and triangulation, are peculiar to classroom discourse. According to the survey, practices which may superficially resemble routine pedagogical feedback can, in fact, function as covert forms of manipulation.

The analysis reveals that *gaslighting* constitutes the most prevalent form of manipulative behavior, accounting for 42%. It is followed by *shaming* (28%), *guilt-tripping* (20%), and *triangulation* (10%), the latter of which generally involves comparisons or third-party involvement. Collectively, these findings position gaslighting as the predominant manipulative pattern within classroom discourse. Its significance extends beyond frequency; gaslighting also appears to be the most impactful tactic, capable of encompassing or co-occurring with other identified strategies. This suggests that gaslighting may serve as an overarching manipulative framework rather than a standalone technique, warranting particular analytical focus in educational settings.

The following sections provide a cognitive-pragmatic analysis of the aforementioned manipulative strategies, based on survey data.

Gaslighting in EFL Teaching

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines ***gaslighting*** as a form of psychological manipulation whereby an individual or group persistently seeks to undermine another person's perception of reality. This process often results in the victim questioning his/her own memories, perceptions, or understanding of events, which can lead to confusion, diminished confidence or self-esteem, and an increasing dependence on the manipulator for validation.

Within the context of classroom discourse, gaslighting pertains to instances whereby an educator's verbal or non-verbal conduct causes students to question their own understanding, competence, or interpretation of events. This may manifest through the denial of prior statements, the dismissal of concerns, or the suggestion that the student's perception is inaccurate. Throughout the dataset, numerous representative examples demonstrate how gaslighting functions pragmatically. In one instance, a student expressed confusion, to which the educator responded that *all explanations had been provided clearly*. In this case, the statement functions as an *explicit assertive*, as its literal and encoded illocutionary forces are aligned, thereby infringing upon the maxims of quality and manner. The pragmatic impact resides in the implied assertion that the student was inattentive. Such implicature serves a manipulative purpose by denying the student's experience and fostering self-doubt.

In a different instance, an educator asserted that an idiom employed by a student did not exist. This statement can be categorized as an explicit assertive, violating the maxim of quality. Although it appears as a factual correction, the implicature of this remark serves as an implicit assertion regarding the student's lack of proficiency, functioning as epistemic dominance by superseding the student's linguistic evaluation.

A further set of examples involves emotional invalidation. When a student expressed anxiety about presenting, the teacher responded, You're just exaggerating; everyone else is fine. The explicit assertive, in this case, violates the maxims of relation and manner. It encodes an evaluative illocution portraying the student as oversensitive, thereby reframing a legitimate emotional state as irrational.

Gaslighting can also manifest through covert assertive speech acts. For example, the interrogative directive illocution How come you don't know it by now?! implicitly conveys an assertion—You are inadequate—and breaches the maxims of quality and manner. This statement induces guilt and deters subsequent inquiries.

In more severe cases, such as Maybe English just isn't your thing, the teacher produces an inclusive assertive that covertly performs a directive illocution: You should consider switching departments. By violating the maxims of relation, quality, quantity, and manner, this statement undermines the student's sense of belonging and induces self-doubt.

Such examples are particularly insidious because a single suggestion can violate all four maxims simultaneously. First, it breaches the maxim of *relation* by introducing an irrelevant evaluative implication that is not connected to the student's initial concern — for example, confusion caused by instructions or a request for clarification. Second, it breaches the maxim of *quality* because the utterance is not evidence-based but serves as an unfounded negative evaluation of the student's overall linguistic competence. Third, it breaches the maxim of *quantity* by providing considerably more evaluative content than is pragmatically necessary. Instead of addressing a specific difficulty within the classroom, the teacher elevates it into a comprehensive judgment regarding the student's academic aptitude. Finally, it breaches the maxim of *manner* because the statement is framed ambiguously and indirectly, leaving the underlying invalidating illocution (*You should not be studying this subject*) implicit rather than explicitly articulated. This layered pattern of violations enhances the manipulative potential of the utterance, allowing it to appear superficially harmless while exerting significant psychological pressure on the student.

Taken together, the corpus reveals four recurrent functional categories of gaslighting:

1) ***Memory distortion****, including utterances such as I already explained this, you just weren't paying attention; We talked about this yesterday, don't you remember; That's not what I said, you must've misunderstood again; You understood it perfectly before, so what happened now; You're misremembering what I said, which erode the students' trust in their own cognitive reliability;*
2) ***Causing self-doubt****, exemplified by statements like You're the only one who doesn't understand; Nobody else seems confused, maybe you just need to focus more; It's not that the instructions were unclear, you just didn't listen properly; You're making a big deal out of nothing. Such statements shift responsibility from instructional clarity to student inadequacy;*
3) ***Emotional invalidation****, including You're overcomplicating things, it's actually very simple; You always take things too personally; I didn't raise my voice, you're being too sensitive; I wasn't criticizing you, you just can't take feedback, which minimizes emotional responses and inhibits open communication.*
4) ***Authority-based gaslighting****, wherein educators invoke their status or expertise — I'm the teacher here, I know how this language works; Native speakers don't say it that way, trust me; I've been teaching English for twenty years; I believe I know what's correct — serves to override students' perceptions. The perlocutionary effects associated with these strategies*

include the erosion of epistemic self-trust, the suppression of emotional expression, and an increased reliance on the teacher's validation.

Ultimately, gaslighting induces cognitive dissonance, diminishing students' linguistic autonomy by encouraging them to doubt their interpretive abilities and to depend on external authority rather than cultivating internal self-assessment mechanisms.

Shaming in EFL Teaching

Shaming is among the most frequently reported manipulative strategies observed in classroom discourse. It typically manifests through mockery, public embarrassment, or belittling comments, thereby creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity rather than motivating students. From a pragmatic standpoint, shaming statements often breach the maxim of *relation* (irrelevance to the pedagogical objective) and the maxim of *manner* (lack of clarity, tact, or empathy). Furthermore, these utterances primarily serve as, but are not limited to, *explicit* and *covert assertives*—evaluative judgments disguised as neutral observations. In the dataset, shaming utterances can be categorized into two broad functional groups: (1) *mocking and ridicule*, and (2) *competence shaming*.

Within the initial category, humor, sarcasm, or exaggerated tones are frequently employed to conceal criticism, thereby undermining students' dignity while maintaining an appearance of playfulness. For instance, when a student mispronounced a word, the teacher repeated it in a mocking voice, ostensibly as a joke. The student reported feeling embarrassed and self-conscious, experiencing a sudden loss of confidence in his/her speaking ability. Similarly, when a student requested clarification, the teacher rolled her eyes and said, *You really don't get anything, do you?* — a *covert assertive,* containing an implicature of mocking the student's cognitive abilities, which violates the maxims of *manner* and *quality*. This left the student feeling belittled and anxious, reluctant to ask further questions, and hesitant to participate in future classroom interactions. Another example is an *explicit assertion*: the teacher laughed and remarked, *This is so basic — you can't be serious*, violating the maxims of *relation* and *manner*. Consequently, the student reported feeling humiliated and intellectually inferior, perceiving the classroom as an unsafe environment for expressing uncertainty.

Pragmatically, the literal humor of such utterances conceals an evaluative illocution: *You are inadequate or incapable*. The manipulative function of such discourse resides in normalizing humiliation, discouraging students from expressing uncertainty or seeking further clarification, and fostering enduring self-doubt that impacts both academic performance and engagement.

Within the second functional category, shaming may target students' abilities, effort, or perceived potential, typically through definitive or comparative judgments that implicitly position the learner as deficient. For instance, one student reported that the teacher looked at his/her essay and asked, *Did you even try?* — a ***covert assertive*** that violates the maxims of *relation* and *manner* and produces an immediate sense of diminishment, as its implicature is that the student's work is so inadequate that it barely qualifies as an attempt. Another recalled being told, *You should be embarrassed to make such a basic mistake* – an *explicit assertive* breaching the maxims of *relation*, *manner*, and *quality*, which induced a strong sense of personal inadequacy.

Explicit assertives manifest as comments such as *I expected more from you,* delivered publicly and thereby intensifying humiliation through social exposure. Similarly, the remark, *You are the only student who received a mark this low,* violates multiple maxims and singles out the student as uniquely incompetent; as the student observed, this resulted in a complete loss of motivation. Pragmatically, these utterances encode evaluative assessments of the student's competence and serve manipulatively to induce shame, erode self-confidence, and foster long-term linguistic insecurity. By discouraging students from asking questions, attempting challenging tasks, or engaging openly in classroom discourse, such practices contribute to patterns of learned helplessness. Both mocking and competence-based shaming diminish willingness to participate and cultivate a classroom environment characterized by fear, conformity, and dependence on the teacher's approval.

Guilt-tripping in EFL Teaching

According to Merriam-Webster, *to guilt-trip* means "to cause feelings of guilt in (someone): to try to manipulate the behavior of (someone) by causing feelings of guilt."

In the context of EFL teaching, *guilt-tripping* involves inducing students to feel personally accountable for the teacher's emotional well-being, workload, or perceived shortcomings in the educational process. For instance, one participant recalled the teacher stating, *I spend hours preparing lessons, but some of you clearly don't care. It's very disappointing.* This statement functions as an ***explicit assertion,*** subtly assigning blame to the group while implicitly targeting individuals. It breaches the maxim of *manner* through ambiguous generalizations and emotional appeals, and the maxim of *relation* by diverting focus from instructional objectives to the teacher's personal sentiments.

Another student reported the statement, *I've explained this so many times; it's frustrating that you still don't get it,* which constitutes an ***explicit assertive*** that portrays the student not as a learner facing challenges but as the source of the teacher's emotional frustration.

A *covert assertive* is exemplified by the statement, *You are not interested at all, are you?* — a rhetorical question that serves as an implicit accusation. Although it is grammatically an interrogative directive, it functions as an assertive illocution by presupposing the student's disengagement, thus eliciting guilt without explicit articulation.

Guilt-tripping is also evident through more explicit accusations, such as *If you had studied properly, you wouldn't keep making this mistake.* These statements violate the maxims of *quality* and *relevance* by overestimating personal responsibility and portraying academic difficulties as moral shortcomings. Pragmatically, guilt-tripping operates as a form of emotional manipulation rather than constructive feedback: students internalize responsibility for the teacher's frustration, which over time results in emotional exhaustion, reduced participation, and a distorted perception of accountability.

Consequently, two primary functional categories of guilt-tripping in EFL classrooms can be identified. The first, ***imposing emotional responsibility***, occurs when students are held accountable for the teacher's emotions, frustration, or workload, thereby shifting the instructor's emotional burden to the learner. The second, ***imposing blame***, involves attributing underperformance or a perceived lack of effort to the student, even when the learner may be sincerely engaging with the material. As demonstrated in the examples above, both categories operate through subtle cognitive-pragmatic mechanisms, generating implicatures that compel students to internalize responsibility for pedagogical outcomes. In doing so, they influence emotional states and classroom behavior in ways that go beyond the legitimate scope of instructional feedback.

Triangulation in EFL Teaching

Triangulation is an interpersonal strategy characterized by manipulation, wherein an individual fosters or intensifies competition or alliances amongst others to achieve control, influence, or advantage. (Holland, 2023) In EFL settings, ***triangulation*** refers to the creation or reinforcement of competition, rivalry, or favoritism among students as a means of exerting control. One participant reported, *The teacher always praises the same two students and compares the rest of us to them. It makes everyone anxious and resentful.* Another noted, *We're compared to other classes constantly. When I struggled, the teacher said, 'Last year's students learned this in one lesson.' It made me anxious and ashamed. It's demotivating.* Furthermore, praise can inadvertently contribute to triangulation: when a student is singled out as an exemplary figure and compared to less capable peers, feelings of pressure or isolation may arise. As one participant remarked, *When the teacher praised me and compared me to the weaker students, I felt awkward and distant from the rest of the class.* Another confessed, *Even though I was praised, it didn't feel good; I didn't want to draw attention to myself.*

A standard illustration of triangulation involves **direct comparisons** among students, as in the statement, *Why can't you be more like Maria? She's always well-prepared.* This expression acts as a ***covert assertive***: although it appears as an interrogative directive, it implicitly implies that the student addressed is inferior to Maria. Another form, **involving comparison** at the class level, is evident in statements such as, *Last year's students learned this in one lesson, and you're still struggling.* Here, the teacher makes an ***explicit assertive*** statement suggesting that previous students demonstrated greater competence.

Additionally, triangulation may be conveyed through **praise**, as demonstrated by, *I'm so impressed with John's essay. Some of you should take notes.* This exemplifies an ***inclusive assertive***, where the indirect command masks the assertion that other students are inferior to John.

Consequently, the data reveal two primary functional categories of triangulation within EFL classrooms. The first, ***comparison by diminishment***, encompasses explicit or implicit contrasts that position one student (or group) as inferior to another, thereby fostering competition, anxiety, and shame. The second category, *creating* ***inequality through praise***, transpires when a positive evaluation of one student implicitly renders others inadequate, even in the absence of direct criticism.

From a pragmatic perspective, triangulation functions as a manipulative strategy that primarily breaches the maxim of *relation* (though other maxims may also be simultaneously violated): the instructor's comments no longer serve an educational purpose but manipulate interpersonal relationships. These practices undermine social cohesion in the classroom, fostering distrust, rivalry, and anxiety rather than encouraging cooperation within a shared learning environment. By strategically accentuating differences among students, triangulation not only exerts pressure on individuals but also divides the class, fostering distance and eroding both confidence and collaborative engagement.

Pragmatic Observations

It is noteworthy that, within EFL classroom settings and likely in other contexts as well, the manipulative strategies previously discussed often overlap. In other words, an interflow of manipulative functions across these tactics can be observed. For example, guilt-tripping often integrates elements of shaming, producing a complex perlocutionary effect on the listener, whereas triangulation may imply both shaming and guilt-tripping. Collectively, these strategies may contribute to the cognitive-pragmatic manifestation of gaslighting.

Furthermore, in the context of shaming and guilt-tripping, both explicit and covert assertives frequently share the illocutionary force of inclusive assertives, as they impose specific emotional responses on the listener, thereby inducing particular behaviors. This observation reinforces the

perspective that, within manipulative discourse, assertive speech acts demonstrate a *double direction of fit*. It further emphasizes that the linguistic mechanisms underlying manipulative discourse strategies extend beyond the explanatory capacity of conventional pragmatic frameworks.

In the course of data analysis, a distinct type of "manipulative" speech act was identified. The utterance *Go on, carry on like this!* functions as a *countermanding directive*: superficially permissive, it implicitly communicates disapproval while simultaneously requesting the opposite behavior, effectively combining elements of shaming and guilt-tripping. This classification is deemed appropriate because, although the literal form appears to endorse the student's behavior, the illocutionary force indicates that the behavior is inappropriate and warrants correction. For instance, such utterances may occur when a student repeatedly submits poorly prepared work or underperforms; the instructor employs sarcasm to underline the disparity between the student's effort and the expected standard.

This concept aligns with Zhang's (2024) description of *impositive irony*. Nonetheless, within manipulative discourse, the illocutionary force of such directives surpasses the ironic tone, bearing a more potent and coercive implicature. Unlike irony, in which the listener may resist or ignore the implied directive, manipulative utterances evoke an emotional reaction that effectively prompts a behavioral response. As a result, the perlocutionary force is not solely ironically suggestive but functionally coercive, leading to specific actions or compliance from the student. Therefore, I employ a distinct term to capture the peculiar pragmatic dynamics of this type of directive speech act.

From a **Relevance Theory** perspective, these multifunctional manipulative speech acts generate ***cognitively inescapable implicatures***: the intended meanings — such as the student's inadequacy, failure to comply with expectations, or inferiority to other students — must be inferred to make sense of the utterance within its context. Even innocently phrased statements, such as *You should follow Tina's example*, are processed by students as disapproval rather than encouragement, because contextual cues and prior classroom interactions (previous discourse experience) render alternative interpretations irrelevant or implausible. **It is precisely because these implicatures are cognitively inescapable that even unconscious manipulation can be so harmful within the classroom,** undermining students' confidence and autonomy.

Conclusion

The current research elucidates the prevalence and intricacy of manipulative discourse strategies within EFL classroom environments. Gaslighting is identified as the predominant tactic, representing 42% of documented cases, followed by shaming (28%), guilt-tripping (20%), and triangulation (10%). These

statistics not only reflect frequency but also underscore functional significance: gaslighting emerges as the most impactful strategy, often integrating or co-occurring with elements of shaming, guilt-tripping, and triangulation. This indicates that gaslighting may function as a comprehensive manipulative framework, rather than a singular category, capable of encompassing various evaluative, corrective, and comparative illocutions.

From an analytical perspective, the findings demonstrate that these manipulative strategies infrequently operate independently. Instead, they display considerable overlap and fusion. Shaming systematically involves guilt-inducing implicatures; triangulation often incorporates comparative shaming; and guilt-tripping commonly elicits evaluative judgments analogous to covert shaming. Collectively, these tactics generate cumulative perlocutionary effects that amplify their psychological influence.

The analysis further revealed that each strategy comprises distinct functional categories that shape its manipulative force. Gaslighting operates through four core functions — ***memory distortion, inducing self-doubt, emotional invalidation,*** **and** ***authority-based epistemic domination*** — each of which systematically erodes epistemic trust and destabilizes students' interpretive capacities. Shaming comprises two primary functions **—** ***mockery and ridicule,*** and ***competence shaming*** — both of which undermine students' confidence, discourage inquiry, and foster participation anxiety. Guilt-tripping is realized through ***imposing emotional responsibility*** and ***instilling blame***, shifting the instructor's emotional or instructional burden onto learners, and pressuring them to internalize guilt. Triangulation, likewise, manifests in two key forms — ***comparison by diminishment*** and ***creating inequality through praise*** — which strategically restructure peer relations and generate interpersonal competition, mistrust, and insecurity.

From a speech-act perspective, these tactics are enacted through explicit, covert, and inclusive assertives, often violating multiple conversational maxims. Notably, the study delineates a specific subtype of manipulative speech act — the *countermanding directive* (e.g., "*Go on, carry on like this!"*) — which employs sarcasm to shame, blame, and correct the learner's behavior concurrently. Its pragmatic structure largely conforms to traditional taxonomies but diverges in function by simultaneously permitting and censuring, thereby producing a coercive implicature that transcends the typical scope of directive force. Moreover, both *explicit* and *covert* assertives converge in their pragmatic effect, functioning similarly to *inclusive* assertives and thereby producing a directive perlocutionary impact on the student. This underscores the necessity for a revised conceptual framework for speech acts within manipulative discourse.

From the perspective of Relevance Theory, the implicatures arising from manipulative utterances are inherently unavoidable cognitive phenomena: students are compelled to deduce evaluative, corrective, or comparative implications, which lead to internalizing blame, experiencing self-doubt, and depending on educators for validation. Even seemingly benign statements, such as comparisons or ostensibly encouraging directives, are perceived as critical or corrective owing to contextual cues and preceding classroom interactions.

These findings highlight that manipulative discourse within educational settings extends beyond the explanatory capacity of conventional pragmatic models. The convergence and multifunctionality of these strategies enhance their influence, undermining students' confidence, autonomy, and willingness to engage, thereby fostering learned helplessness. Therefore, it is essential to increase awareness of such practices to promote reflective teaching, prevent both conscious and unconscious manipulation, and establish a learning environment that is supportive both mentally and emotionally.

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Unlocking Reading – Developing Reading and Critical Thinking Skills

ABSTRACT

Critical reading goes beyond surface understanding of a text. It involves readers' interpreting, analyzing, questioning, and evaluating texts while recognizing assumptions, assessing evidence, and linking ideas to broader academic, cultural, and social contexts. Within various frameworks of critical thinking development, such engagement is vital for constructing meaning and developing analytical, cognitive, and reflective skills necessary for independent interpretation of a narrative. These skills are best cultivated through well-organized reading strategies.

This paper reviews the textbook Unlocking Reading – Developing Reading and Critical Thinking Skills, which aims to improve university students' critical and analytical reading skills. The textbook is currently being piloted in the Department of English Philology at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU).

It analyses the organization, content, and teaching implications of the textbook. Additionally, it presents and analyses findings from an electronic survey conducted at TSU among students and teachers using the book during the current academic term, evaluating its effectiveness concerning developing and enhancing critical reading skills and strategies.

Keywords: *critical thinking, reading strategies, EFL, reading skills*

Introduction

Critical reading skills involve active, reflective, and evaluative engagement with a text. Moreover, it requires readers to infer, interpret, analyze, and assess meaning while questioning assumptions, evaluating evidence, and transferring ideas within broader academic, cultural, and social contexts. Theoretical work on reading, literacy, and critical thinking highlights that cognitively engaged reading enables the construction of meaning and fosters independent, analytical thought.

This paper describes and analyses the textbook Unlocking Reading – Developing Reading and Critical Thinking Skills, designed to develop and enhance analytical and critical reading skills among university students. Currently piloted at the Department of English Philology, TSU, this textbook integrates teaching reading strategies through authentic reading materials. Based on feedback survey from students and teachers collected via an electronic questionnaire during the current academic term, this paper also evaluates the textbook's pedagogical effectiveness and identifies opportunities for further improvement.

Literature Review

Developing Critical Thinking: Theorizing a Tradition

Critical reading is rooted in two main traditions, each with different philosophical orientations but connected by shared concerns about knowledge, literacy, and the reading process.

The first tradition, mainly associated with academic contexts, concentrates on comprehension, analysis, and evaluation. In this framework, critical reading involves identifying main ideas in a text, recognizing structural features, evaluating textual credibility, and evaluating arguments (Bartholomae & Petrosky, 1991; Harris, 1993; Behrens & Rosen, 2013). Knowledge is seen as relatively stable and accessible through systematic inquiry (Cervetti, Pardales, & Damico, 2001). Research in applied linguistics demonstrates that academic literacy concerning critical reading skills depends on understanding argumentation, analyzing evidence, and mastering disciplinary conventions (McWhorter, 2010).

The second tradition situates critical reading within broader sociocultural and pedagogical frameworks. Freire (1970) conceptualizes critical literacy as a way of questioning assumptions, challenging dominant ideologies, and promoting social change (Dozier, Johnston, & Rogers, 2000). Meaning is thus shaped through the interaction of reader, text, and context. Critical literacy theory emphasizes agency, ethical participation, and reflection, encouraging readers to interrogate social power relations and imagine alternative possibilities (Stevens & Bean, 2007).

Although these traditions differ in aims—academic mastery versus social change—they share core cognitive processes, including inference, interpretation, and contextualization. Together, they portray reading as both cognitive and sociopolitical.

The importance of developing critical reading skills is evident across academic disciplines. Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional model views reading as a dynamic process where meaning is co-constructed. Research by Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) indicates that active engagement improves comprehension and memory. Critical reading also enhances analytical judgment by helping readers evaluate arguments and recognize assumptions (Paul & Elder, 2006; Bailin et al., 1999). Beyond academia, critical reading supports informed participation in a complex information environment (Kuhn, 1999; Luke, 1996). Freire (1970) and Bizzell (1992) further argue that readers become active creators of meaning through such engagement.

Reading Strategies in L2 Acquisition:

Reading involves activating prior background knowledge and applying cognitive and metacognitive processes to construct meaning. Research on second language acquisition in applied linguistics and

cognitive psychology emphasizes the importance of explicit strategy instruction to support comprehension and learner autonomy. Schema Theory (Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart, 1980; Anderson, 1984) suggests that comprehension occurs when readers connect new information to existing knowledge structures. In L2 contexts, where unfamiliar vocabulary and cultural references often present challenges, activating prior knowledge is particularly essential (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

Strategy-based practices such as previewing, predicting, and anticipating content strengthen engagement and comprehension. Cognitive strategies include summarizing, inferring, and note-taking (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Anderson, 1991). Summarizing enables the identification of main ideas (Pressley & Woloshyn, 1995), while inference skills allow readers to deduce meaning using contextual clues (Carrell, 1989). Classroom instruction often reinforces these strategies through activities involving context clues, paraphrasing, and guided synthesis (Pauk & Owens, 2013).

Interactive models of reading (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich, 1980) highlight the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processes, which is particularly relevant for L2 learners and involves balancing decoding skills and background knowledge. Strategies such as skimming and scanning operationalize these models. Metacognitive skills, for instance, planning, monitoring, and evaluating comprehension, are vital for L2 readers (Flavell, 1979; Pressley, 2000). Strategies like self-monitoring and self-questioning enhance understanding and awareness (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995). Collaborative approaches such as reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984) support L2 readers through prediction, questioning, clarification, and summarization. Transactional and reader-response theories (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1982) emphasize that meaning is co-constructed through interaction with the text. Instructional practices like response journals, reflective tasks, and personal connections facilitate deeper engagement.

Recent research emphasizes integrating critical reading with analytical thinking, metacognition, and sociocultural awareness. Hà and Huertas-Abril (2024) argue that critical reading instruction should follow a two-stage model: identifying the author's purpose and responding through evaluation. Archila et al. (2025) highlight the value of active engagement with scientific texts. Strategy-based interventions (Olifant, 2024) have demonstrated measurable improvements in critical reading comprehension. Large-scale studies emphasize the predictive value of metacognitive reading strategies for comprehension and academic performance (Ghimire & Mokhtari, 2025).

Further scholarship highlights teacher preparation and equity, emphasizing culturally sustaining critical reading practices (Walker, Yoon, & Pankowski, 2024). Across these studies, contemporary trends favour explicit, structured instruction that integrates analytical, metacognitive, and sociocultural dimensions of reading.

The Need for a Skills Development Textbook at TSU

Unlocking Reading – Developing Reading and Critical Thinking is one of several textbooks produced within the Department of English Philology at TSU to support the integrated development of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Authored by the writers of this paper, the textbook is currently in its piloting phase. Other textbooks in the series include Speak Out the Box (2003, two parts) and Think, Write, Rewrite, also in pilot. Final versions of these materials will incorporate feedback from teachers and students.

The need for this reading-focused textbook arises from several considerations, namely, alignment with the specific needs of Georgian learners, explicit attention to reading strategies, expansion of vocabulary knowledge, improvement of comprehension at multiple levels and development of critical thinking, cultural awareness, and textual evaluation skills.

The textbook incorporates theoretical foundations from schema theory, cognitive and metacognitive strategy research, interactive models of reading, sociocultural theory, and transactional theory.

These frameworks support practical, evidence-based strategies enabling L2 learners to integrate cognitive, metacognitive, and socially mediated approaches to reading.

Using authentic texts, including newspaper articles, reference materials, and literary excerpts, the book provides structured pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading tasks, guiding questions, multi-level exercises designed to activate background cultural knowledge and engage students cognitively.

Methodology of the research and findings of the survey

To assess student engagement with the textbook, an anonymous 43-item online questionnaire was administered in November 2025. Twenty-five undergraduate students with B1+ English proficiency participated in the survey, providing both quantitative and qualitative data on developing reading skills, the employment of strategies, challenges faced, and perceptions of the textbook's design and effectiveness.

` Overall, students viewed the textbook as effective, engaging, and pedagogically sound. They reported consistent use of embedded strategies, especially skimming, scanning, rereading, and summarizing, that supported comprehension and confidence. The challenges identified were generally related to the variations in language proficiency and text complexity. Feedback focused not on fundamental revisions but on optimization of the textbook through more precise instructions, additional guided practice, and greater variety.

Engagement and reading habits

Students generally completed assigned readings and felt that the materials were well-balanced in length and difficulty. Shorter or vivid passages, especially those linked to real-world issues or contemporary themes, were highly engaging. Longer texts were sometimes demanding but recognized as essential for developing higher-level analytical skills. Overall, the textbook balances accessibility with appropriately challenging content.

Strategy use

Skimming and scanning were commonly used to identify key information efficiently. Rereading supported accuracy and understanding. Other beneficial strategies, as indicated, included inferencing, contextual analysis, previewing, summarizing, note-taking, and highlighting. Learners appreciated breaking texts into manageable sections and valued guided practice and examples. According to the survey, the textbook effectively supports diverse reading preferences and cognitive styles.

Perceptions of textbook design

Students praised the textbook's conceptual and linguistic clarity, noting that strategy instruction boosted both confidence and independence. Suggestions aimed at refinement rather than a complete redesign of the textbook, including more precise instructions, reduced redundancy, and improved scaffolding.

Challenges and support needs

Identified challenges included inferencing with unfamiliar vocabulary, scanning when questions used different vocabulary from the text, interpreting figurative language, and managing longer passages alongside multi-step tasks. Additionally, students stressed the importance of scaffolded guidance and targeted practice.

Practice priorities

Learners expressed a desire for more practice in inferencing, skimming, scanning, and time management. They valued gap-filling, sequencing tasks, and real-world application activities, as well as vocabulary development and summarizing.

Suggestions for exercise improvements

Students recommended incorporating more contemporary, culturally rich, and engaging content. They also suggested adding interactive elements, clearer formatting, a wider variety of question types, self-check quizzes, sample answers, and more visual aids. Although some exercises appeared to address similar needs, students understood their pedagogical purpose as reinforcement

Conclusion

Students consistently reported that *Unlocking Reading – Developing Reading and Critical Thinking Skill*s is an engaging, effective, and helpful resource. The textbook fosters active and independent learning, supports diverse reading strategies, and encourages critical thinking. While learners proposed refinements of the textbook, such as more precise instructions, increased scaffolding, additional activity types, and shorter or more varied texts, these suggestions reflect a constructive aim to enhance the already strong foundation on which the book is based.

The survey demonstrated that the textbook has a positive impact on learners' reading skills development, supports the acquisition of essential strategies, and promotes confidence and independence in academic reading. Incorporating the suggested improvements will further strengthen student engagement and support the continued development of critical reading skills through methodically taught reading strategies.

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Ethno-linguistic Aspects of Svan Religious Vocabulary[1]

ABSTRACT

This paper presents general conclusions considering the ethno-linguistic aspects of Svan (pagan and Christian) religious vocabulary. Since the primary aim and objective of our research was to conduct, as far as possible, a systematic analysis of numerous linguistic data embedded in ethnographic texts and containing diverse ethnocultural information, as well as to compile these units comprehensively, we used as illustrative material found in "**Chrestomathy of the Svan Language**" and "**Svan Prose Texts**" (all four volumes), both based on ancient Svan sources; M. Kaldani and V. Topuria's "**Svan Dictionary**"; B. Nijaradze's "**Georgian–Svan–Russian Dictionary**"; As. Liparteliani's "**Svan–Georgian Dictionary**" (Cholur sub-dialect); and Al. Davitiani's "**Svan Proverbs**". These materials were compared with the relevant **Georgian-Zan** linguistic data. Through the use of various research methods (**descriptive**, **historical-comparative**, **contrastive**, etc.), we identified both **Common Kartvelian** elements and materials borrowed from different languages (from Georgian-Zan directly or indirectly, as well as from Greek, Hebrew, Russian, etc.). Naturally, Svan material itself was separately identified. Although no correspondences are found in other Kartvelian languages, it is particularly valuable from a general linguistic perspective, as even minor details play an important role in presenting the most complete picture of ancient worldviews and beliefs. The results of our research are also important from the point of view of teaching Svan, which will contribute to improving the quality of teaching Kartvelian languages, training highly qualified specialists, and developing relevant fields.

keywords: *Vocabulary, Ethnology, Phonetics, Semantics, Borrowing*

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Introduction

The dialects-sub-dialects of Svan are quite rich in religious (pagan and Christian) lexical units, the main stock of which comes from Kartvelian language. However, alongside this material, Svan also contains a large amount of vocabulary borrowed from Georgian (and not only Georgian), the complete documentation and structural-semantic and etymological analysis of which, despite the great interest in religious vocabulary in the linguistic community, has unfortunately not been carried out to date. The study of Svan

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vocabulary from the perspective of various semantic groups, which allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the lexical richness of the language and the corresponding social realities, is clearly very important and necessary, especially in light of the serious warning issued in 1978 by the patriarch of Kartvelology, Academician Ak. Shanidze: "**We can still catch and document the materials of folk speech, which belong to sub-dialects.**" This is especially true for Svan dialects, which due to the fast pace of modern life and the recent intense movement of the population inside or outside the country, are strongly influenced by both related and unrelated languages. The severance of the linguistic connection between the generations derives certain threats to the viability of Svan, so it is important to work on the lexicology of Svan, in particular on the diverse archaic religious (pagan, Christian) vocabulary, taking into account ethno-linguistic aspects. The main task and novelty of our work is to systematically research as much linguistic data as possible, containing a lot of ethnocultural information, stored in ethnographic texts, and to fully collect these units. Over time, lexical items reflecting forgotten religious (pagan or Christian) rituals, which are preserved, fossilized, and often used solely to perform rituals, have been gradually disappearing and are at risk of being lost entirely.

Research Methods

The specific research we conducted, based on extensive Svan textual and lexicographic material, involves various types of scholarly activities, including: the comprehensive documentation of borrowed religious lexical units and the identification of the circumstances, pathways, and chronological layers of their borrowing from different languages (Georgian-Zan, Greek, Hebrew, Russian, etc.); the phonetic–phonological and semantic analysis of this vocabulary with consideration of ethnographic materials; the phonetic–phonological, semantic, and etymological analysis of Common Kartvelian lexical items, likewise drawing on ethnographic sources; the structural–semantic and etymological analysis of Svan material itself; the structural–semantic and etymological analysis of archaic Svan (pre-Christian) lexical items; and the extraction of empirical data from various types of texts (ethnographic, dialectological, folkloric, etc.), dictionaries, ethnological studies, and related sources.

Naturally, in order to carry out these activities, the study employed various research methods, including the **descriptive method**, **historical-comparative** and **internal reconstruction methods**, the **contrastive method**, and others. Illustrative material will be taken from the data collected over the years with strenuous efforts of A. Shanidze, M. Kaldani and Z. Chumburidze based on ancient Svan texts published in "**Chrestomathy of the Svan Language**" and "**Svan Prose Texts**" (all four volumes), "**Cholur Prose Texts**" which is already prepared to be published (by the Head – Nato Shavreshiani and coordinator –

Medea Saghliani of the submitted project), "**Svan Dictionary**" compiled by M. Kaldani and V. Topuria, "**Georgian-Svan-Russian Dictionary**" compiled by B. Nizharadze, "**Svan-Georgian Dictionary** (Cholur sub-dialect)" compiled by As. Liparteliani, "**Svan Proverbs**" compiled by Al. Davitiani and so on. The research will also use the fieldwork material collected by us in Mestia and Lentekhi districts over the years. Svan dialectological medical (pagan, Christian) material used for illustration will be compared to Georgian-Zan linguistic data, which will allow us to identify material borrowed from both Common Kartvelian and different languages (Georgian-Zan, Abkhazo-Adyghean, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Russian, Arabic, Pahlavi, etc.). Naturally, the specifically Svan material was also treated separately. Although it has no equivalents in the other Kartvelian languages, it is highly valuable from a general linguistic perspective, since even the smallest details are significant for reconstructing as complete a picture as possible of ancient worldviews and beliefs. As V. Bardavelidze noted, these elements "are capable of restoring and clarifying important aspects of traditional ritual and belief" (Bardavelidze 1939: 7).

Given the specificity of the material, the study required a **theoretical–methodological** framework within ethnolinguistics. Since Svan **religious** (pagan and Christian) **vocabulary** and the ethnographic material associated with it **have not previously been the subject of specialized linguistic research**, we attempted to address this gap by applying a complex analytical approach grounded in an appropriate theoretical–methodological base. In this work, we took into account both ethnological and linguistic studies on archaic religious lexical units by various researchers, including V. Bardavelidze, N. Berdzenishvili, R. Kharadze, J. Oniani, Ak. Shanidze, T. Mibchuani, Sh. Chartolani, M. Makalatia, O. Oniani, A. Gelovani, Z. Chumburidze, K. Tuite, I. Chantladze, E. Gazdeliani, A. Arabuli, R. Topchishvili, N. Tserediani, N. Gabuldani, M. Saghliani, R. Gujejiani, and etc. The comparative analysis revealed similarities and differences both among the Svan dialects themselves and between Svan and other Kartvelian and foreign languages (from which various borrowings have entered). We believe that the results of our research, as well as the material collected, will have significant scientific value not only for linguistics, but also for theoretical linguistics, ethnology, cultural studies, and other fields of the humanities and social sciences. Most importantly, they will be of interest to researchers studying the history of the Caucasus in general, since a detailed diachronic study of the lexical composition of Svan reveals numerous notable facts about the prehistory of Western and Central Caucasus, the past in general, and the cultural and economic connections of the ancestors of the Svans both with other Georgian-speaking communities and with neighboring peoples. **The results of the research will contribute to improving the quality of Kartvelian language education, training highly qualified specialists, and developing the relevant fields.**

Research results

The study of Svan archaic (pagan or Christian) religious vocabulary from the ethno-linguistic perspective, which we conducted on the basis of simple roots and composite materials, using data from the traditionally known dialects of Svan (Upper Bal, Lower Bal, Lashkhian, and Lentekhian) and from Cholur speech, enabled us to draw several important and interesting conclusions. Based on the comparison of the illustrative Svan dialectological material with **Georgian-Zan** linguistic data, we identified both **Common Kartvelian** elements and **borrowings** from various languages (from Georgian-Zan—directly or indirectly, as well as from Greek, Hebrew, Russian, and others). Naturally, Svan material itself was also separately identified; although it lacks equivalents in other Kartvelian languages, it is of particular value from a general linguistic perspective.

Borrowed vocabulary: Since foreign religious lexical units occupy an important place in the lexical stock of Svan, and since they have undergone significant phonetic–phonological and semantic adaptation in the process of borrowing, we examined them separately, taking into account the various phonetic processes occurring during borrowing and relying on data from the dialects and subdialects of Svan: **Borrowed religious lexical units that are phonetically completely unchanged or phonetically modified; stems with final-consonant truncation (in the auslaut); consonant alternation in the auslaut of borrowed religious lexical units; stems that have undergone umlaut; vowel length phenomena; vowel reduction; consonant and vowel alternation according to their type** (voicing, devoicing, aspiration, assimilation, affrication–deaffrication, alternation of consonants and vowels, alternation of the sonorant consonants **l/m/n/r**, insertion or loss of sounds, vowel aspiration, metathesis…**); composites containing borrowed religious lexical units; religious lexical units containing borrowed verbal roots; borrowed religious vocabulary formed by Svan morphological system; borrowed religious lexemes that are semantically identical or modified with semantic nuances, etc.**

As it turns out, the roots of foreign lexical units in Svan are attested in a phonetically and semantically unchanged form (e.g., **აიაზმა aiazma** (US.) < Geo. aiazma (< Gre. **αγιασμός** “blessing“) “holy, blessed water”; **კალანდა ḳalanda** (Lent.) < Geo. (Gur.) kalanda (< Lat. **calendae** “the first days of the month”; “New Year”**; მეტანია meṭania** (US., LS.) < Geo. metania (< Gre. **მეტა{გ}ონია meṭa{g}onia μετάνια** „regret; repentance“) “kneeling and bowing down to the ground or floor during prayer or supplication to God”; **საყდარ saqdar**(Lash., Chol., Ushg.) < Geo. sakdar-i "church, temple"; **ტრაპეზ ṭrapez**(US., LS.) < Geo. trapez-i (< Gre. **trapeza** “table“) 1.“the altar throne in a church; the same as the altar” 2. "table, feast", 3. "feast, dinner, party"; **ქრისტე krisṭe** (LB., Lent., Chol.) < Geo. Kriste (< Gre. **χριστός** "anointed") "Jesus

Christ"; **ხსნილ xsnil** (Lash., Chol.) < Geo. khsnil-i “the period during which the eating of animal products (meat, eggs, dairy products, etc.) is permitted”, and also in various phonetic variants (e.g., **Ანგ{ჟლეზ/ ნგლ რზ äng{w}lez/änglöz** (UB., Lent.)/ **ნგᲐლეზ änglez** (LB.)/**ანგლოზ angloz** (LB., Lash.)/**Ანგ ღრეჯ ängwlež/ანგ ღჟზ angwlez** (Chol.) < Old Geo. angeloz-i(< Gre. **ἀγγελος** “messenger; envoy; apostle …”) 1. “an incorporeal being represented as God’s messenger”, 2. fig. “an embodiment of goodness, beauty, tranquility, and gentleness”; **დ კ ჳნ ḏīḳwen** (UB.)/**დ კონ ḏīḳon/დ კ ან ḏīḳ̂wan** (Lash.) < Geo. diakon-i (< Gre. **διάκογος** "servant") "assistant of the priest, - deacon"; **თანაფ tanaf** (US., LS.) "Easter"< Zan (Meg.-Laz) tanafa 1. "Easter", 2. "dawn”; **კირ ენ ḳ̂irwen** (US., Chol.)/**კირონ ḳiron** (Lash.)/**კირენ ḳiren** (Lent.) “a large wax candle (lit for the deceased)" < Old Geo. kereon-i, kerovan-i "a large wax candle"; **მარხჳ marxw** (US., LS.) < Old Geo. markh-v-a (< **pāhr** > **parx** > markh through metathesis from Pahl. **pāhr**-) 1. "religious rule that prohibits the eating of meat and dairy products", 2. "the period during which this rule was kept..."); **მეᲐს ზობ mejsärob** (UB.) "festival dedicated to the strength and multiplication of cattle" < Geo. (Lech.) meisroba “religious festival, prayer”; **Ეეფისკოპოზ jepisḳopoz** (UB.) < Geo. episkopos-i (< Gre. **επίκοπος**) "The head of the diocese or his assistant, High priest"; **სამეთხ** (UB.)/**სამეთხჳ sameṭxw** (Ushg.) < Geo. samotkhe "the Garden Created by God, orchard"; **სამრ Აკჳ samräḳw** (US., Lent.) < Geo. sa-m-rek-l-o "the tower in which the church bells hang"; **ჳეთხთაჳ weṭxṭaw** (Ushg.) < Geo. otkh-tav-i "it's the same as the gospel"; **ფერცჳლობ percwlob** (UB., US.)/**ფერცლობ perclob** (UB.)/**ფერცლაბ perclab** (LB.)/**ფერიცჳლობ pericwalob** (Chol.) "religious holiday; a holiday for horses" < Old Geo. fer-is-tsv-al-eb-a “Lord’s feast”; **შობ šob** (US., LS.) < Geo. sh-ob-a 1. "birth, Christmas", 2. "religious holiday celebrating the birth of Christ"; **ცოდ cod** (US., LS.) < Geo. tsod-v-a (< Oss. **cawd** "bad, wicked") "disobedience to the will of God, offense against God's moral law"; **ცხონაბ cxonab** (Lash., Chol.), cf. US. **ცხონᲐბ cxonäb** < Geo. tskhon-eb-a “the soul’s eternal bliss in the afterlife” **წირ ċir** (US., LS.) < Old Geo. tsir-v-a “the main Christian liturgy”**; ხᲐტ xät** (US., Lent.)/**ხატ xat** (Lash., Chol.) < Geo. khat-i (< Arab. **xaṭ** “line; drawing”) “image of a deity or saint”; **{ȝ}ეშმ Აშ{h}ešmäj** (UB.) “demon, evil spirit, devil” < Old Geo. (< Pahl. **hēšm**, **hišm** "evil, wicked, rabid, furious") "same as the devil"...) or in the case of data altered by semantic nuances (e.g.:**იორდ ნ iwrdän** (LB.) "holy water” < Geo. iordane (< Old Hebr. **ιορδανης** "river, flowing") "one of the rivers of Palestine"; **ჳიჯმ wiǯ** (US., Lent., Chol.)/**უჯმ uǯm** (Lash.) 1. “fast; the Nativity fast (Advent fast)”, 2. “the month of the Nativity; December”< Old Geo. u-chm-i, u-chm-eb-a “not eating”, u-chm-el-i “one who fasts”; **წყილიᲐნ ċqiliän/წყვლᲐნ ċqəlžän** (US.)/**წყილᲐნ ċqilän** (LB.)/**წყვლაან ċqəljan** (Lash., Chol.))/**წყვლი ნ ċqəliän** (Lent.)/**წყილიან ċqilian** (Ushg.) “holy, pure, immaculate; innocent” (literally _ **tskl**-ian-i (watery))“ <Geo. tskal-i “a colorless, transparent liquid _ a chemical compound of

hydrogen and oxygen"...)

In the analyzed material, the following phonetic processes are most prominently observed: voicing, devoicing, aspiration, assimilation, affrication–deaffrication, consonant and vowel alternation, alternation of the sonorant consonants **l/m/n/r**, insertion and loss of sounds, vowel aspiration, metathesis, etc. Some of the borrowed roots have been "svanized," i.e., they contain the morphophonological features characteristic of Svan, such as palatal, velar, or labial umlaut (e.g., **მაცხჳარ macxär**, **მოძღჳბ moʒywʒär**, **საყდ ärsaqdär**, **უფჱლ upäl**, **ჯჳარ ǯwär**; **სჳინჱა swinäj**, **უსხჳჱაusxwäj**, {ჰ}ეშმ ჱ {h}ešmäj; **ბärძიმ bärʒim**, **სჱხსნილ säxsnil**, **ფ რისჳელ pärisewel**; **ზედ შ zedäš**, **ჟ რდ ნ iwedänʒ** ნგრ}ლეზ **äng{w}lez**, **კირჳენ ḳirwen**, **მირჳნ mirwen**; **დღესასწ ჱლ dyesasc̣äwil**, **მოცქ ჵლ mockwil**, **რჯჳილ rǯwil**, **წჳიჭმ säwič̣m**; **ანღლჱბ anyläb**, **განცხად ჱბ gancxadäb**, **ზირ ჱბ ziräb**, **ფერცლ ჱბ percläb**...), long vowel (e.g., **დრკჳენ dīḳwen**, **ზრრებ zīreb**, **მაცხჳარ macxwär̆**, **პჱრპრლდჱშ p̣ärp̣öldäš**, **საკმ ელ ჳ saḳmēlw**, **ჭიმკრობ č̣imḳārob**; **თრინგზელ ṭāringzel**; **ამნ amēn**, **მეჲსრობ mejsär̆ob**, **ყჳელიერ qweliēr**, **ჭნტილობ č̣āntilob**...), anaptyxis (e.g., **გგრცმ gərcäm**, **ლაზგნგლგ lazəngläg**, **ლიწგრჳელი liç̣ərweli**, **საღგრმათ/სჱღგრმათ dsayərmaṭ/säyərmaṭ**, **წყგლჲნ ç̣q̣əljän**...) and etc., which serves as a kind of guide in determining the geographical direction of borrowings.

Observation of the material revealed that most of them seem to have been borrowed from Georgian (e.g., **სამება sameba**, **სანთელ sanṭel**, **ყჳელიერ q̣welier**, **ჯარ ǯwar**...), while some of them seem to have been borrowed from other languages, namely: Greek (e.g., **აიაზმა aiazma**, **ქრისტე kriste**, **იწრდნ iwrdän**, **ნგ{ }ლჳზ äng{w}lez**, **მირ ენ mirwen**...), Latin (e.g., **კალანდა ḳalanda/კანდა ḳanda**..), Pahlavi (e.g., **ბარძიმ barʒim**, **მარხჳ marxw**, **ჭაბგობ č̣abgob**...), Arabic (e.g., **ხატ xat**...), etc. through Georgian-Megrelian.

The roots of foreign religious lexical units in Svan appear to be primarily borrowed from Georgian–Zan (directly or indirectly), and they have undergone significant phonetic–phonological and semantic changes following their adoption. In many cases, naturally, we are dealing with rather complex phonological transformations, which, from our perspective, indicate very old borrowings. Clearly, other phonetic processes also operate in bringing borrowed religious lexical units into their own forms (consonants and vowel alternation, alternation of the sonorant consonants **l/m/n/r**, insertion and loss of sounds, vowel aspiration, metathesis, etc.), detailed analysis of which will be presented in the forthcoming monograph: "**Ethno-linguistic Aspects of Svan Religious Vocabulary**".

Common Kartvelian material: Based on the comparison and contrast of Svan religious lexical units with their corresponding Georgian–Zan roots, we identified a number of newly reconstructed Common

Kartvelian archetypes. The Georgian–Zan contrastive material known from etymological dictionaries was supplemented with Svan correspondences revealed in our study. To identify the most ancient archetypes, as previously mentioned, we employed various research methods (**synchronic–diachronic, descriptive, historical–comparative, internal reconstruction**, etc.) and, relying on extralinguistic materials, presented a discussion of the customary and ritual aspects of Svan folk festivals (e.g., დულობ **dulob** (US., LS.) “a tabooed festival of Svan women”; უწონაშობ **uc̣onašob**/უწონ შ **äc̣onäš**/უწენ შ **üc̣enäš** (US.) “eating a specially sacrificed animal or a round loaf of bread within the family without anyone outside seeing it”; უყლარობ **uqlarob**/უყლა **uqla** (LB.) “eating within the family of a specially sacrificed animal or cake in such a way that no one outside sees or hears it.” ლალყ ჯ̈ **lalqäǯ** (LB.) “a forbidden offering that was not permitted to be seen by anyone except the family members”... დულ{ } **d̄ul**{**w**} (US.)/დულ **dul** (LS.) “a cheese-filled ritual round loaf of bread /khachapuri baked by a woman in secret from the other members of the family”**;** უწონშ **uc̣onäš**/უწენშ **uc̣enäš** (US.) "ritual round loaf of bread which were forbidden to be eaten or seen by people outside the family"; უყლა **uqla** (LB.) “forbidden food (bread, meat, etc.) for people outside the family”; ლალყ ჯ̈ **lalqäǯ** (US.)/ლელყაჯ **lelqaǯ** (UB., LS.)/ლალყაჯ **lalqaǯ** (Lash., Chol.)/ლჭლყაჯე **ləlqaǯe** (Lash.) “a forbidden/taboo sacrificial pig for certain family festivals, either whole or in parts—its head, lower jaw, belly, internal organs, blood, bones, kemp-hair, etc.”... ლემზირ **lemzir** ღუნძილ **ywinʒil** (UB.) “a cheese-filled ritual bread baked by women and sacrificed to the earth**”;** კიხუ **k̦ixw** (LB.)/კიხე **k̦ixe** (Chol.) "ritual bread"...); ლიცხტი **licxti** (LB.)/ლიცხ ტ̈ **licxät** (UB.)/ლიცხატ **licxat** (Lash.)/ლიცხტენი **licxteni** (Lash., Chol.) “sacrificing/offering (land, livestock, etc.) in the name of a deity or a saint”; “declaring land to be a sacred/protected site, a place of worship”…), as well as certain archaic lexical units of Svan pantheon of deities (e.g., აბრ ხ̈ **abräx**/აბრახ **abrax**/აბრ ჰ̈ **abräh**/აბრაჰ **abrah** (LB.) "Patron deity of sheep", აბრჰამ **abərham** {detsesh} (US.) 1. “Deity of the sky / sun,” “Deity of livestock and their caretakers,” “Deity who heals eyes”), ლაპატრა **lap̣atra** “Patron deity of pigs”; ჴეჩხტარ **weč̣xtär** "the name of one of Svan gods"...)

From an ethnolinguistic perspective, the study of this ancient Svan ritual and ceremonial vocabulary allowed us to identify a number of archaic forms, most of which (e.g., აბრ ხ **abräx**ჴეჩხტარ **weč̣xtar**; ლაპატრა **lap̣atra**) have been forgotten today, while others have undergone significant change. In the context of contemporary globalization, we believe it is particularly important to study and identify those ancient, relic folk festivals (pagan or Christian) and tabooed lexical units that have undergone remarkable transformations from the most ancient times to the present.

We conducted a detailed study of Svan lexical units related to fasting and communion, taking into

account both religious and folk motivations, and examined the material borrowed from Georgian-Zan (directly or indirectly) (e.g., **ზირაბ ბ ziräb/ზ რებ zīreb/ზიარებ ziareb/ზირაბ zirab/ძიარება ʒiareba/ძ ბრება ʒjäreba** “communion — one of the rites of the Christian Church: the reception (drinking and eating) of the so-called consecrated wine and portion of the communion bread”; **ლიმარხულე limarxule** "fasting, keeping the fast, observing the rules of fasting"; **მარხ̂{ა} marxw{w}** "fasting"; **მარხ̂ობ marxwob** "fasting, keeping the fast, observing the rules of fasting"; **ლიწ̂ ჯმ̆ ლ liwčmăl/ლიწ̂ ჯმელ liwčmel/ლიწ̂ჯმალ- liwčmal-/ლიწ̂ჯმ̆ალ liwčmäl/ლიწ̂ჯმ ლ liwčmäl** “fasting; the Nativity Fast”; **ლი ჯმი liwčmw/ლი ჯმე liwčmê** “fasting” **ლიურწყ̂ი liurçqwi/ლიუწყ̂ეწ̂ liuçqwewi/ლიურწყ̂ეწ̂{ი} liurçqwew{i}/-ლიურწყეწ̂ი - liurçqewi/ლიუ̂ურწყოწ̂ი liwurçqoçi/ლიურწყოწ̂ liurçqowi** "fasting as a sign of mourning"; **საჴსნილ saqsnil /სა̈ჴსნილ säqsnil/სა̈ხსნილ säxsnil/სახსნილ saxsnil** “permitted food for non-fasting days; non-Lenten food”; **ლიტმე litme/ლიტა̈მე litämе** "fasting; hunger"...), in parallel, we identified both Common Kartvelian … (e.g., **ლილჩ̈ალ lilčäl/ლინ lin/ლჩ̈ალ lčäl/ლილჩალ lilčal/ლინჩ̈ალ linčäl/-ლილეჩ̈ალ -ilečäl** "keeping, fasting"), and Svan material itself (e.g., **ლიშრ̈ა̂ი lišräwi/ლიშრაუ̂ი lišrawi/ლიშრ̄უ̂ინე lišrāwine/ლიშერ̈ა̂ი lišeräwi/ლიშრაუ̂ lišrawe** 1. “breaking the fast (eating the permitted food)”; 2. “the liberation of the soul; the opening of the hand”; **ლიშრუ̂ნ̄ლ̂ lišrawīnāl** “breaking the fast after mourning (on the third day)”; **ბაპა ჟაგი ლიმნე/ლიყმ̄უნე bapa žagi limne/liqmūne** (Ushg.) “communion (literally — eating the priest’s consecrated bread”); particularly interesting was the issue of differentiating the most ancient sacred terms denoting fasting (e.g., **ლიწ̂ჯმი liwčmi/ლიწ̂ჯმე liwčme** “ecclesiastical fast” and **ლიურწ̂ი liurçqwi/ლიუწ̂ეწ̂ი liuçqwewi** “fasting as a sign of mourning”), which was determined by the nature of the fast. From a chronological perspective, some terms (e.g., **ურწყ̂urçqw**, **მუ ჭ̂ი muwčwmi**, **ოხთრის oxtris**...) appear to be quite old borrowings, while others (e.g., **მარხ̂marxw**, **ხსნილ xsnil**, **სახსნილ saxsnil**...) are relatively recent. The aforementioned vocabulary has naturally undergone appropriate phonetic changes corresponding to the phonemic structure of Svan, including: reduction, vowel length, auslaut simplification, umlaut, metathesis, affrication, glottalization, assimilation, bilabial modificaion, vowel alternation, sound loss... and other phonetic processes

Svan material itself: those phrases (e.g., **ბაპა ჟაგი ლ მნე/ლიყმ̄ნე bapa žagi limne/liqmūne** (Ushg.) “communion (literally — eating the priest’s consecrated bread”)...) and lexical units (e.g., **ჯეჯგლ̈აბ ǯežgläb/ჯეჯგილ ǯežgil** "Deity of pigs"…), which have no correspondences in other Kartvelian languages, were naturally considered as specifically Svan forms. Despite their small number, they are particularly valuable from a general linguistic perspective.=

Conclusion

In the ancient customs and rituals we studied, numerous archaic motifs have naturally been preserved, many of which are distinguished by the richness of facts of sacred significance. In the context of contemporary globalization, we believe it is particularly important to study and identify those ancient, relic folk festivals (pagan or Christian) and tabooed lexical units that have undergone remarkable transformations from the earliest times to the present. The results of our ethno-linguistic research will contribute to further studies of the phonetics, phonology, grammatical system, and lexicology of Svan, as well as to its ethnological aspects. At the same time, it will be useful to specialists in Kartvelian languages, students in the humanities at higher education institutions, master's and doctoral students, and, more broadly, to all Kartvelologists interested in linguistic studies.

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Teaching Grammatical Topics Focused on the Optimal Outcome

ABSTRACT

This research aims to **optimize the teaching process** for Georgian grammatical topics, specifically, the **parts of speech,** in order to **improve learning outcomes** for students studying Georgian as a second language. We are proposing a new model for classifying parts of speech in modern Georgian. It **deviates from the traditional classification** to emphasize the **practical application and functional roles** of these linguistic units.

Keywords: *Georgian language, second language, parts of speech, language teaching.*

Introduction

Every word that exists within a language is classified and assigned with its specific position within the system of parts of speech. In other words: there is no word that does not belong to one of the various groups of the parts of speech. The central objective of this research is to optimally and effectively teach a range of grammatical topics to individuals for whom Georgian is a second language.

The present study is based on the authors' extensive, long-term experience within a Georgian language educational program, whose primary beneficiaries are Azerbaijani- and Armenian-speaking students.

Literature Review

Parts of Speech in Georgian

According to traditional description, the classification of the parts of speech in modern Georgian takes the following form:

1. Noun
2. Adjective
3. Numeral
4. Pronoun
5. Verb
6. Adverb

7. Postposition
8. Conjunction
9. Particle
10. Interjection (Shanidze, 1980, p. 34).

The parts of speech are presented in this same arrangement in Georgian language school grammars and other types of grammar resources.

Furthermore, teaching of grammatical material also proceeds in this order: specifically, the analysis of **nominal** categories is presented first, followed by the formal and functional specificities of **verbal** forms, and concluding with a discussion of **uninflected** words.

Discussion

Topics on Teaching Nominal Inflection

It is a well-known fact that teaching the **nouns** is easier as compared to verbs. This is defined by the fact that the nominals (noun, adjective, etc.) have only two categories: case and number.

The category of case represents an **inflectional system**, and every case has its own identifying marker.

This circumstance, when the dynamic progression **from the simple to the complex** - is naturally represented in existing Georgian grammar (Shanidze, 1980; Gogolashvili and others, 2011; Kvachadze, 2018; Chikobava, 1998). It therefore appears logical that none of these resources analyze verbal forms before nouns.

While the nominal system is genuinely simpler compared to the verbal system, operating with any nominal (noun, adjective, numeral, or pronoun) for communicative purposes still requires a specific grammatical foundation: a **nominal** does not have just one form; rather, it has a considerably wide spectrum of forms.

What forms are these?

Firstly, these are the case forms.

There are seven cases, but this does not mean that the nominal form analysis ends only with these seven forms. These seven forms share a common **lexical stem**. The case forms are distinguished from one another by **case markers**.

Seven main case markers are distinguished accordingly:

Nominative Case	-ი (-i)
Ergative Case	-მა (-ma)

Dative Case	-ს (-s)
Genitive Case	-ის (-is)
Instrumental Case	-ით (-it)
Adverbial Case	-ად (-ad)
Vocative Case	-ო (-o)

These are the case endings for consonant-stem nouns.

It is difficult to say why preference is given to consonant-stem nouns and why vowel-stem nouns are given a secondary position.

It is also necessary to mention here that even among the vowel-stems themselves, the picture is not consistent, in terms of the endings of the case forms; the endings for nouns with a contractive stem are as follows:

Nominative	დღე	Zero ending
Ergative	დღე	-მ (-m)
Dative	დღე	-ს (-s)
Genitive	დღ	-ის (-is)
Instrumental	დღ	-ით (-it)
Adverbial	დღე	-დ (-d)
Vocative	დღე	-ვ (-v)

Case markers of nouns with a non-contractive stem:

Nominative	წყარო	Zero ending
Ergative	წყარო	-მ (-m)
Dative	წყარო	-ს (-s)
Genitive	წყარო	-ის (-is)
Instrumental	წყარო	-ით (-it)
Adverbial	წყარო	-დ (-d)
Vocative	წყარო	-ვ (-v)

To this can be added the declension paradigm for anthroponoms: in the Nominative and Vocative cases, such vowel-stem names are represented by the stem form, while in the Nominative case of consonant-stem names appears the –[i] marker and the Vocative case is shown by the stem form.

It is already evident that the system of nominal forms involves significantly more forms than just seven.

To fully clarify this system of forms, the **stem factor** is an essential and key issue to consider. This is not a grammatical end in itself. The **correct representation** of the case forms, that is the **orthography**, without which a literary language cannot exist - is tied to establishing the stem (we have different versions of the formants that produce the case forms according to structures of stems). On the other hand, the case **formants** act upon the stem structure, causing either the **reduction** (or **elision**) of its **last vowel** or a change of a similar nature (reduction) **within the stem itself.**

As a result, the **number of forms increases** even further.

We have:

Incompressible stems	კაცი, სახლი..
Compressible stems	კალამი, კედელი...
Contractive stems	მიწა, დაფა..
Non-contractive stems	ოქრო, კუ...
Compressible-contractive stems	ფანჯარა, ქვეყანა..

Obviously, such an analysis begins with the **definition of the stem** itself.

What is the stem for nominals?

This is the simplest topic: the **stem** is the part of the noun that carries the **lexical meaning**. It is followed by one or another case marker (though not always).

Traditionally, the stem is defined as follows: the noun must be put into the **Ergative case**, the case marker must be removed and then what remains will be the stem (Shanidze, 1980, p. 33).

At first glance, this is a simple operation, but it can be performed **only if we already know what the stem is** (!): accordingly, we will either attach the **-ma** ending to the stem, or the **-m** suffix.

This method in no way helps someone who practically does not know the Georgian language and is learning it: he will not know whether to write and say ***katsim*** or ***k'atsma***.

Often, the noun is **represented by the stem form even in the Nominative case** itself (these are the nominals or **substantivized** nominals that end in the vowels - [a], -[e], -[o], and -[u]: *mits'a... tv'e... okr'o... b'u... p'at'ara... mekhut'e... r'a...*), **from which, for some reason, we must transfer the noun into the Ergative case, add the appropriate case marker, and then remove this marker again.**

So, **we will end up with the very same forms we started with.** Then the question arises: **How logical and rational is such a procedure?**

The issue might be simply resolved if we state that: **all nominals or nominalized** (**substantivized**) **words that end in** - [a], -[e], -[o], and -[u] **are vowel-stem nouns** (K'iria, 2021, pp. 54–58).

Nouns ending in **- [i]** are **consonant-stem nouns**. There are certain exceptions in this case (when the noun ends in **- [i]** , but this **- [i]** is part of the stem and not the Nominative case marker.

For example: *zhiur'i…*, *visk'i...*, *maiam'i…*, *somal'i* ..., *Giorg'i* , *Ak'ak'i* (Akaki)...), which are necessary and possible to memorize.

Unlike the verb, the noun **forms** have a **transparent structure**, which allows for free operation using simple formulas and rules.

If we denote the stem with **R**, then we can say that:

R-[i] / R-[e'b]-[i]	Nominative Case
R-[m'a] / R-[e'b]-[m'a] **or** R-[m]	Ergative Case
R-[s]	Dative or Genitive Case
R-[e'b]-[s]	Definitely Dative Case
R-[i's] / R-[e'b]-[i's]	Definitely Genitive Case
R-[I't] / R-[e'b]-[i't] **or** R-[t'i]	Instrumental Case
R-[a'd] / R-[eb]-[a'd] **or** R-[d]	Instrumental Case
R-[o] / R-[e'b]-[o] **or** R-[v]	Vocative Case
R-[zero]	Nominative or Vocative Case
R-[m] pattern	indicates that the noun's stem ends in a vowel.
R-[v] formula	we can say that this is a vowel-stem noun in the Vocative case.

Declension of Nouns with Postpositions and Particles

The system of noun forms is not ended up solely by these rules.

Postpositions may be affixed to the cases - this information is also crucial, especially since sometimes the case marker is not visible at all, and the only means of identifying the case is the postposition itself. For example, if we do not know that **– [ze]** (on) and **–[shi]** (in/into) are postpositions of the **Dative case**, then we cannot assign a grammatical qualification to forms of the type ***mits'aze*** (on the ground/earth) and ***mits'ashi*** (in the ground/earth).

This is essential **to know that particles** may also be affixed to the main form of the noun: *orive* (both), *samigha* (only three), *k'ats'its* (the man, too/also).

Thus, it follows that in order to include a noun in a communicative operation, **one appropriate form** must be selected from the **many forms** available in the database. For example, if the construction **Stem + ma/-m** is fixed within the communicative structure, this indicates that the noun fixed in this form is the **performer of the action** (the agent); yet, for the performer of the action, the **Ergative Case** must be selected, **however** the **Nominative** and **Dative** cases are also **alternatives** for this purpose.

According to the research, it becomes clear that the system of noun forms is quite robust and comprehending it is not so easy to - it requires knowledge of the considerable amount of information. **However, it certainly cannot be compared to the complexity of verbal form derivation**. The Georgian verb almost has **no specific form of its own** and **no special affixes** that produce, let's say, the form for the **Present** tense, Future or Aorist Tense and so on.

The system of the noun is simple not because there are only two categories here, while there are significantly more in the verb. Actually, the specifics of the Georgian verb- its **polypersonalism** and the peculiarity of the relationships between the person markers - is what makes the study of the verb difficult.

We believe that the **traditional arrangement of grammatical materials** - that is, the manner and order in which the material is presented - could be **reviewed** and **corrections should be introduced** in the teaching of the language for those learners for whom Georgian is a second language.

Uninflected and Minimally Inflecting Parts of Speech

There are parts of speech that are **"simpler"** than nouns. These are parts of speech that are either uninflected or have **limited resources for inflectional change**.

One group consists of words with full lexical meaning: *dghes (today), khval(tomorrow), zeg (day after tomorrow), gushin (yesterday), ak (here), mashin (then), uk'an (behind), ik (there)... sad (where), rodis(when), rogor (how)... amit'om (therefore), imit'om (because)... odnav (slightly)...*

The second group does not have lexical meaning but has grammatical function and meaning.

These include: *-tvis (for), -k'en (towards), -vit (like)... rom (that/if), magram (but), tu (if/ whether)... diakh (yes), k'i (yes), ara (no)... vakh (oh!), vai (oops), ui (oops) ...*

We believe it is logical and methodologically justified to teach the uninflected words first - memorizing these words already offers the possibility of activating them and automatically including them in a communicative situation: there is no need to know the stem of these words, nor is it necessary to select any of their alternative forms (alternatives practically do not exist). It should also be noted that these words are quite functionally loaded, and the frequency of their usage is high.

It is known that in **continuous speech**, the words most frequently used are precisely those that stand on the periphery of the lexical stock when studying vocabulary from a purely **semantic** perspective: out of the approximately one hundred most frequently used words, which cover one-fifth of the text, only about ten are typical full-meaning words (*tqva* (said), *itsis* (knows), *guli* (heart), *dghe*
(day), *sakme* (business), *kheli* (hand), *khma* (voice), *k'argi* (good), *khalkhi* (people)...).

Here are the remaining frequently used words:

Particles (*ar* (not), *ara* (no), *agha r*(no longer), *arts*(neither/nor), *vera* (cannot), *aba* (well then), *ai* (here is), *gana* (surely), *maints* (still/anyway), *mash* (so/then), *khom* (isn't it?)...),

Postpositions (*ts'in* (in front), *t'avze* (on top)...),

Conjunctions (*an* (or), *da* (and), *tu* (if), *rogorts* (as/like), *rots'a* (when), *ro* (that), *kholo* (while/a nd),

Auxiliary Verb (*aris* (is), *khar* (are), *var* (am), *iq'neba* (will be), *iq'o* (was), *iq'os* (may be)...),

Numerals (*ert'i* (one), *didi* (big/great), *met'i* (more), *q'vela*(all)...).

Pronouns are also frequently used words (*me* (I), *shen* (you), *chven* (we), *tqven* (you, plural), *is* (he/she/it), *igi* (he/she/it), *es* (this), *chemi* (my), *sheni* (your), *chveni* (our), *imis* (his/her/its) , *imas* (to him/her/it), *imat* (to them)... *mas* (him/her/it)... *ra* (what), *rats* (that which), *rad* (for what), *ram* (what, ergative)... *vin* (who)...), the meaning of which, as is known, is **determined by the context**.

Adverbs also fall into this category, their meaning, as of pronouns, is dependent on the speech situation(*ak*(here), *ik* (there), *ase* (thus/so), *ekhla* (now), *mashin* (then), *dghes* (today), *dzher* (yet/still , *upro* (more), *k'idev*(still/again), *mkholod* (only)... *sad* (where), *rogor* (how)...)
(Pochkhua,1974, p.129).

Conclusion

Based on the presented research, it was **determined** that the order of learning materials in the grammar books, in current curriculums, are presented **exactly in that order and adherence** as demonstrated in the **usual classification of the parts of speech**.

When working on **Georgian as a second language**, we consider the following version as the optimal variation for the classification of the parts of speech and, consequently, the arrangement of the grammatical materials:

1. **Adverb**
2. **Postposition**
3. **Conjunction**
4. **Particle**
5. **Interjection**
6. **Noun**
7. **Adjective**
8. **Numeral**
9. **Pronoun**
10. **Verb**

The teaching method we have proposed is **optimal** and provides the possibility for **easier, step-by-step deepening of knowledge** and, consequently, **better linguistic expression**.

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A Historical Perspective on Soviet Language Policy: Educational and Cultural Projects for the Laz Population Living in Abkhazia (in the 1920s-1930s)

ABSTRACT

The Laz appeared on the territory of modern Abkhazia in the 1870s. As a result of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, by the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, all of southern Georgia (historical Tao-Klarjeti) and part of Lazeti – the Gonio-Makriali region – became part of the Russian Empire, and the center of the Ottoman Sanjak moved from Batumi to the city of Rize. At this time, intensive migration of Laz people began from the remaining Laz regions in the Ottoman Empire – Atina, Vitse, Arkave, Khopa – to the Black Sea coast of Georgia: on the one hand, towards Batumi, on the other hand, towards Samegrelo – towards Poti and Anaklia, and on the third hand, towards the port cities of Abkhazia: Sukhumi, Ochamchire.

After Sovietization, Abkhazia became an “interesting” testing ground for the implementation of Bolshevik language policy, and consequently, the Laz community became a target of this policy. It should be noted that the study of the Laz of Abkhazia was a taboo topic during the Soviet period, and recently this issue has become relevant for Abkhazian, Russian and European researchers, both from a historical-demographic-geographical perspective, as well as from the perspective of studying the consequences of the Bolshevik terror and linguistic-ethnic policy.

The aim of this study is to bring greater clarity to the overall picture of perspectives reflecting the real goals and results of the language policy implemented towards the Abkhazian Laz. In our opinion, the majority of studies are based only on historical documents or research, and almost nowhere do they take into account the main witnesses of the events themselves - the Laz people and their language, the narratives embedded in the texts. On the other hand, the linguistic foundations of language policy are not taken into account - the artificially ideologized confrontation of the "Marists" and the so-called "Indo-Europeanist" linguists by the Bolsheviks, the consequences of using science as a political instrument on the fate of individual peoples or languages. We will try to at least partially illustrate these issues through educational, cultural and scientific projects implemented for the Laz language in Abkhazia in the 1930s.

Keywords: *Language policy, Laz language, ethnic minority, migration, linguistic ideas.*

Introduction

The Laz community first began to appear on the territory of present-day Abkhazia in the 1870s. Following the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the subsequent Berlin Treaty of 1878, the

entirety of southern Georgia (the historical region of Tao-Klarjeti) and part of Lazistan—the Gonio–Makriala district—were incorporated into the Russian Empire. Concurrently, the administrative center of the Ottoman sanjak was transferred from Batumi to the city of Rize. These developments prompted an intensive wave of Laz migration from those parts of Lazistan that remained under Ottoman rule — Atina, Viçe, Ark'ave and Hopa—toward the Black Sea regions of Georgia: on the one hand, in the direction of Batumi; on the other, toward Samegrelo, specifically the areas of Poti and Anaklia; and, thirdly, toward the port cities of Abkhazia, including Sokhumi and Ochamchire. Moreover, a Laz community also appeared in the valleys of Gumista and Eshara–Tskhara–Shubara.

The migration of the Laz along the Black Sea coast was a characteristic process in previous centuries as well. For instance, a compact Laz settlement in Anaklia was already established in the first third of the 19th century – preserved is a copy of a letter dated 22 February 1834 by Niko Dadiani, "Great Niko," the secretary of Samegrelo and author of "The Life of Georgians", addressed to Lieutenant Kaputsin, the commander of the Russian army stationed in Samurzakano. A fragment of the letter was recorded by "Great Niko" in his diaries: 46. 22 February. I addressed Lieutenant Kaputsin of the Mengrelian Regiment as follows: "I have received information regarding this matter, that a certain illness has appeared among the Tatars in Anaklia; therefore, I request that you send a regimental doctor…" (Dadiani 2022, 145). By "Tatars," the Laz inhabitants of Anaklia are meant, just as S. Makalatia uses the term "in Tatarstan" to refer to Lazeti. In describing the "Tsachkhuroba" festival, the ethnographer notes that people came to the shrine from all parts of Samegrelo, as well as from Samurzakano–Abkhazia and "from Tatarstan," that is, from Lazistan (Makalatia 1941, 365).

Thus, from the 1870s, the migration process intensified, this time towards Abkhazia, possibly facilitated by ,,Muhajirism". During the same decade, a mass deportation of the Abkhaz (alongside Circassians, Ubykhs, and other Western Caucasian tribes) to the Ottoman Empire occurred, while the Laz population residing there resettled in Georgia. Naturally, quantitatively, the two processes are incomparable. Tsarist Russia began actively settling Russians, Estonians, and Germans on territories vacated by the Abkhaz, a process later joined by Armenians arriving from the Ottoman Empire. These migrations not only transformed the ethnic composition but also resulted in changes to historical toponyms.

After World War I, when Turkey regained its territories under the Treaty of Kars, part of the migrated Laz population returned to the Ottoman Empire, while another part remained in Abkhazia and Samegrelo. This process was facilitated by the unresolved "land issue" in Sovietized Abkhazia. Until that time, the Laz had been tenants of local affluent Abkhaz and Mingrelian nobles or peasants, with 75% employed in tobacco cultivation and plantation work (Junge & Bonvech 2015, II, 58).

Following Sovietization, this system collapsed, and the Laz began demanding the transfer of land plots into their private ownership. The process advanced with difficulty, and between 1921 and 1928 the majority of the Laz population returned to Turkey—according to I. Chitashi's data, 4,500 Laz (ibid., 57). Despite this outflow, a substantial number of Laz still remained in Abkhazia—up to 5,000 according to the same Chitashi; however, some scholars consider these figures to be inflated, and based on the census data of 1921 and 1926, no more than roughly 1,000 Laz were actually residing in Abkhazia (Bagapshi 2019; Bugai 2011). In order to resolve the land issue, in 1930 the local Soviet authorities of Abkhazia allocated land plots to the Laz in two locations: in the Bzipi Valley and in the vicinity of Adzyubzha (in the direction of Ochamchire), on the territory of the collective farm ("kolkhoz") Mchita Lazistan ("Red Lazistan"). In this way, Laz ethnolinguistic enclaves were formed in Abkhazia. This ethnolinguistic group was so compact and self-isolated that, based on the rich linguistic material recorded in Laz villages of Abkhazia, Arn. Chikobava singled out and linguistically described the Vytsur–Arkabi and Atina Kilo–Kav dialects of Laz (Chikobava 1936). It can be stated that the Laz community added its own distinctive feature to the ethnically diverse landscape of Soviet Abkhazia, with an identity connected, on the one hand, to Laz origin and the Laz language, and on the other, to religious ties with Turkey. Historical links with other Kartvelian groups had weakened, although a faint narrative of a shared history persisted in collective memory. This is reflected in the ethnographic works of Z. Chichinadze (1927), T. Sakhoikia (1985 [1898]), and S. Makalatia (1941), as well as in the rich textual material documenting Laz speech recorded in the early twentieth century by linguists N. Marr (1910), Ios. Kipshidze (1911; 1938), Arn. Chikobava (1928; 1936; 1938), S. Jikia, and S. Zhghenti (1938).

After Sovietization, Abkhazia became a "testing ground" for the implementation of Bolshevik language policy, and the Laz community, accordingly, was targeted by this policy. The first attempt to provide a detailed account of the language policies of this period, based on archival sources, is the study by G. Gvantseladze et al., The Bolshevik Concept of Language Merging and Language Policy in 1930s Abkhazia (2024). However, given the focus of the study, the Laz issue is addressed only fragmentarily. It should be noted that research on the Laz of Abkhazia was a taboo topic during the Soviet era, but in recent years it has drawn attention among Abkhaz, Russian, and European scholars alike, both from historical, demographic, and geographical perspectives, and in terms of examining the consequences of Bolshevik terror and language–ethnic policies (Bagapshi 2019; Bugai 2011; Junge & Bonvech 2015; Aleksiva 2022; Sisoeva 2025).

The aim of the present article is to provide greater clarity on the actual goals and outcomes of the language policy implemented toward the Laz of Abkhazia, within the broader picture that, upon

examination, gives the impression of missing pieces. In our view, most studies rely solely on historical documents or previous research, and the following two aspects are considered in almost no studies: on the one hand, the linguistic dimension of research on the Laz issue, and on the other, the narratives embedded in the rich textual material documenting Laz speech. The linguistic preconditions of the Soviet language policy have also not been adequately considered – the artificially ideological opposition between the "Marists" and the so-called "Indo-Europeanist" linguists by the Bolsheviks, and the consequences of using science as a political instrument on the fate of individual peoples and languages. We will try to partially present these issues through the educational, cultural, and scientific projects carried out for the Laz language in Abkhazia during the 1920s and 1930s of the last century.

Methodology

Modern language policy in any country should be grounded in an analysis of historical experiences, mistakes, and shortcomings, with a reconsideration of planning in light of the current context. For a young state like Georgia, it is therefore especially important to assess the unfavorable legacy of the Soviet period accurately and objectively. It is important to note that the consequences of Soviet language policy continue to affect our country to this day. Any ethnolinguistic conflict begins with a language conflict, and the root of a language conflict lies in language planning. Accordingly, an analysis of specific aspects of language policy in Abkhazia during the 1920s and 1930s provides a clear understanding of the broader picture.

The language policy implemented toward the Laz of Abkhazia was, of course, dictated from Moscow and carried out in accordance with the rules of the general language policy. Scholarly literature notes that in the 1930s, language policy throughout the Soviet Union was based on Stalin’s 1929 concept of zonal languages, which differed from Lenin’s "Korenizatsiia"—the concept of self-determination of nations and languages. Moreover, it ultimately led to contradictions and initiated a simultaneous restriction or elimination of the rights of languages, whether or not they held autonomous status (Gvantseladze G. et al., 2024, 371–373). Naturally, the Leninist–Stalinist language policy had its most painful impact on the Laz language, which lacked titular status. Moreover, the Laz of Abkhazia shifted from holding the right to self-determination to being labeled an "unreliable" people—a transformation that culminated in their mass deportation to the Central Asian republics in the 1940s–50s. Accordingly, the fate of the Laz also became part of the agenda of Bolshevik terror. As noted in scholarly literature, any issue concerning the Great Bolshevik Terror must first be examined through the perspective of the imperial center—Moscow. In this view, groups were labeled as “hostile peoples” according to shifting geopolitical circumstances and perceived military threats. At the same time, it is

crucial to examine how the perspectives of the central authorities aligned—or conflicted—with those of the ruling elites in the peripheries (Junge & Bonvech 2015, I, 212). We would further note another important dimension: the Soviet imperial center's approach to language planning developed in parallel with contemporary linguistic theories, and the convergence of these processes played a decisive role in shaping Soviet language policy. We believe that without analyzing this aspect, the activities of Iskander Chitashi—the main ideologue and executor of the planning and development of the Laz language—will remain incomprehensible, as will his conflict with the Georgian authorities and Georgian scholars, his rise and fateful downfall, and, consequently, the Soviet history of the "sacrifice" of the Laz community and language in Abkhazia.

In this article, we will endeavor to present not only the ideological background but also the general linguistic and scientific context that accompanied the educational and cultural projects implemented for the Laz language. Beyond the textbooks and reading materials themselves, to grasp the context of the process, we will also analyze two letters written by Iskander Chitashi: one addressed to J. Stalin in 1934, and another to Comintern Chairman Dmitriev in 1937. Furthermore, we will assess the influence of the Laz language research conducted by Georgian scholars during the same 1930s on the process of language policy formation.

Research Outcomes

A. The "Korenizatsiia" Policy and the Creation of Laz Textbooks

The Bolsheviks' national policy—specifically, Lenin's policy of self-determination for nations and languages, also known as "Korenizatsiia"—envisaged that small ethnic groups living in the USSR would have courts, administrative bodies, economic institutions, and government offices operating in their native language, staffed by local people; It also aimed to develop the press, schools, and theaters in the mother tongue.

This policy, along with other components, aimed to provide "adequate" education and instruction to small nations. Under the pretext of defending the rights of minorities residing in Abkhazia, schools were opened for Abkhaz, Greek, Armenian, Estonian, German, Turkish, Laz, and Mingrelian communities.

Seven Laz schools operated in Abkhazia: in the Ochamchire district—Kindghi Primary School and Ochamchire Primary School; in Gudauta—the Greek-Laz Primary School; in Sukhumi—Pshaltilugh Primary School, Shubara Primary School, and Tskhara Primary School; and in Gagra—the Laz Primary School.

Despite the apparent benevolence, the situation in the Laz schools was alarming. One document

reads: “Gudauta District: Red Lazistan Laz Primary School – Class I – 8 pupils, Class II – 2 pupils, Class III – 3 pupils, Class IV – 8 pupils, total – 21 pupils. Instruction is conducted in the Russian language with translation into the Laz language. Due to the absence of a Grade IV textbook, the Grade II textbook is used. Georgian language is not being taught due to the lack of a textbook. The school has one teacher. The teacher Dursunish has 5 (books?) in the Laz language.”

The opening of the schools placed the issue of creating appropriate alphabets and textbooks on the agenda. Following the established practice of the era, and influenced by Niko Marr, Latin script was utilized for the new alphabets. Among the spoken units widespread in Abkhazia, the process of Latinization in the 1920s directly affected only the Abkhaz language, which had previously been based on Cyrillic script, and the Laz language, which was previously unwritten. A Mingrelian script based on the Georgian alphabet was also created, but the operational schools using it were abolished in Samegrelo and Abkhazia in the early 1930s. Nevertheless, several newspapers continued to be printed in Mingrelian in Samegrelo and the Gali district (Abkhazia) until 1938.

In Abkhazia, Latinization did not affect the Georgian, Russian, Greek, Armenian, Estonian, and German languages, since these languages already possessed their own writing systems with centuries-old literary traditions, and this, apparently, was the decisive factor. A Latinized alphabet was created only for the Laz language, and the Abkhaz alphabet was transitioned from Cyrillic to Latin. The alphabet was later printed as a separate book titled, “Alboni, Gech'kaphuloni mektebepesh 1-ani sinapisheni" [Alphabet – for the first grade of primary schools] (1935). However, naturally, immediately after the creation of the alphabet, Iskander Chitashi developed Laz language and mathematics textbooks for primary schools: “Chkuni Ch'ara” [Our Writing] (1932), “Okhesapushi Supara” [Arithmetic Book – in two parts, a Mathematics textbook] (1933), and “Ok'itkhirushi Supara” [Reading Book – for the second grade] (1937).

The alphabetical section of "Chkuni Ch'ara (Çquni Çhara, 1932) predominantly contains Laz words. The following section replaces ideological texts with didactic material. Side by side, we encounter: Inuva Mulun ("Winter is Coming"), Jalepe inuvas ("Trees in Winter"), Kinchishi okhorina ("Bird's House"), Mtuti obch'opit ("We Caught a Bear"), Ditskhironi bjachxa ("Bloody Sunday"), Mch'ita ordu ("Red Army"), Maartani Maisi ("First of May"), Hek, so va ren Soveti ("There, Where There Is No Soviet"). Short stories and poems describe the life of the Laz people at the beginning of the Soviet period, the establishment of "Red Lazistan" (Mch'ita Lazistani), and stories reflecting the activities of workers and peasants. Throughout the textbook, we occasionally find Bolshevik slogans that I. Chitashi has translated succinctly and skillfully.

For example: Skidas maduliepesh do makhachkalepesh ok'ak'atu! ("Long live the unity of

workers and peasants!") (The word Skidas translates as “May it live”); Lenini ren mteli duniash proletarepesh gianjghoneri! ("Lenin is the leader of the proletariat of the entire world!") (The word Gianjghoneri translates as “Guide/pathfinder”; from the word onjghonu “to send”); Ukitxu tsalonnas sotsializmi var ikoden! ("Socialism cannot be built in an uneducated country!") (Lenin)

The textbook includes a Laz-Russian-Turkish dictionary. The question naturally arises: why did the author need to add Turkish material? This fact once again confirms that the textbook had not only an educational purpose but also a propagandistic one, and was intended for the Laz people living in Turkey, a point we will address below.

The mathematics textbook Oxesapuşi Supara [Okhesarushi Supara], 1933 consists of two parts. The book is a Laz adapted translation of the textbook by the Russian mathematician and educator Natalia Popova: Учебник арифметики для начальной школы: 1-й год обучения – ч. 1 (Arithmetic Textbook for Primary School: 1st Year of Study – Part 1) and Учебник арифметики для начальной школы – 2-й год обучения (Arithmetic Textbook for Primary School – 2nd Year of Study). Some sections were added by I. Chitashi. This two-volume work is intended for the first and second grades.

The Alphabet book „Alboni’’, published in 1935, aimed to teach the Laz alphabet.

Okitxuşeni Supara [Ok'itkhusheni Supara], 1937 was intended for second-grade students. The short texts aimed to train students in reading.

Some of the words used in the textbooks (especially in the mathematics textbooks) were created by Iskander Chitashi himself—these forms are not found in N. Marr’s dictionary, nor in other Laz dictionaries or texts published later.

B. Political Goals of the Laz Educational Projects

The adoption of the Latin script for the Laz alphabet was motivated primarily by political and ideological goals rather than practical, educational, or cultural benefits. The Soviet Union used this strategy to deliberately fragment ethnoses and languages in order to achieve its political objectives. This strategy aimed to create opposition between traditional peoples and newly created "peoples," and between genuine languages and dialects that had been artificially declared as languages. The small total number of Laz people in Adjara and Abkhazia leads us to hypothesize that by creating a Laz script, the Soviet Union was also exerting ideological influence on the numerous Laz population living in Turkey. The message conveyed was: "You in Turkey have no script, no books, no newspapers, and no schools in your own language, but here, we are assisting even our small Laz population in developing their own culture. The political objective behind creating writing systems for both Laz and Mingrelian is also confirmed by the fact that these two closely related linguistic units were given scripts

based on different graphical foundations: The Mingrelian writing system was based on the Georgian Mkhedruli script, while the Laz system utilized the Latin script, similar to the system adopted for the Turkish language in Turkey at that period. This suggests that the decision-makers, one way or another, still considered the Mingrelians to be Georgians, but did not view the Laz people in the same way (Gvantseladze G. et al., 2024). The explicit designation of the Laz as an independent ethnos further confirms the goal of Soviet language policy: the Laz people primarily lived in historical Lazistan, meaning Turkey, while the Laz in Abkhazia were recent migrants. The true target was actually Turkey, where the Laz people and Lazistan were intended to serve as a staging ground for the Bolshevik revolution. This is clearly evident in the writings of Iskander Chitashi as well.

In 1935, Iskander Chitashi wrote a letter to Stalin discussing the condition of the Laz people in Abkhazia and the reasons for them leaving Georgia. These reasons included:

The poor arrangement of land (uncultivated or unsuitable land); Insufficient employment of the Laz people in artels, small craft workshops, and fishing; Failure to take into account the Laz way of life (cultural specifics); The absence of Party and Soviet services in a language they could understand; Agitation work conducted by the Kemalists encouraging their return to Turkey; The dominance of kulaks disguised as others... I. Chitashi names specific Laz individuals, former kulaks, and now party representatives who work to the detriment of Soviet authority and to the benefit of Turkey. In fact, a whole series of Laz people were surveilled, which subsequently affected their fate. The letter, on the one hand, confirms the need for a wide range of support measures for the Laz, while on the other hand, it clearly reveals antagonism toward the "Kemalist," that is, pro-Turkish oriented Laz. At the same time, it expresses dissatisfaction with the activities of the highest authorities of the Republic of Georgia (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, II, 58–63). Although after this letter, from 1935 onwards, the living conditions of the Laz, as well as issues of employment and education, indeed improved significantly, Chitashi still worries about the lack of education and the absence of complete information available to the Laz population in the Laz language. In 1937, he writes to the Chairman of the Comintern:

"…Soviet and party work is not conducted in a language understandable to the Laz, which exacerbates all the above-mentioned issues. No one speaks to the population in a way they can understand, does not explain the laws or measures, and does not inform them not only about Soviet but also foreign affairs. The absence of the press in the Laz language leaves its mark on all of this. In Adjara, all work is conducted in Georgian, while in Abkhazia it is in Russian, Abkhaz, and Greek—and the majority of the Laz do not know any of these languages. It is understandable why the situation of the Laz has hardly changed during the fourteen years of Sovietization" (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, II, 82–83).

All these events are analyzed by I. Chitashi against the backdrop of describing the Laz resistance movement. He identifies several stages:

First stage – the beginning of the national autonomous movement in historical Lazistan, Turkey, during the First World War;

Second stage – 1918–1920, the holding of elections and the formation of a provisional government with a pro-Soviet orientation;

Third stage – as a result of the policies implemented by Kemal Pasha, the center of resistance moves from Turkey to Abkhazia, and from 1923, the existing free movement regime allows the movement to transform into a national-revolutionary one, with communist groups in Lazistan and Abkhazia becoming the leading force;

Fourth stage – after the closing of the borders in 1928, the focus shifts to conducting educational and cultural activities for the remaining Laz in Abkhazia and Adjara, as well as encouraging them toward anti-Kemalist agitation (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, II, 80–82).

Immediately following the creation of the alphabet, I. Chitashi began publishing a Laz-language newspaper. In particular, from 1929, the five-day organ of the Abkhaz District Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia (Bolsheviks) and the CEC, “Mch'ita Murutskhi” (“Red Star”), was issued. In his autobiography, Iskander Chitashi writes: "During the summer holidays of 1929, I went to Abkhazia, where Laz emigrants were residing. Throughout the summer, I worked at the Bureau for National Minorities of the Central Executive Committee and was appointed editor of the Laz newspaper "Mchita Murutskhi"' (Aleksiva, 2022, 16).

The first issue of “Mch'ita Murutskhi” was published on Thursday, November 7, 1929, and the second issue appeared in December 1929. The newspaper was illegally transported to Turkey and circulated among the local Laz population. It was a political publication, promoting the ideas of Laz self-determination, separation from Turkey, and unification with Georgia with autonomous status. One of the newspaper’s editors, Muhamed Vanilishi, who published under the pseudonym “Sarpuli”, writes in his autobiography:

"Under the leadership of the Central Committee, I was engaged in illegal activities abroad. We established the center of this activity in Sukhumi... We carried out extensive work and published a small-format Laz newspaper called “Mch'ita Murutskhi” (“Red Star”), which consisted of only two issues and was also distributed abroad. The newspaper was published using the Turkish (Latin) alphabet, because the local Laz did not know the Georgian language and alphabet (Aleksiva, 2022, 146). [According to another account, “Mch'ita Murutskhi” continued to be published at long intervals until 1937.] According to Zurab Vanilishi, the son of Muhamed Vanilishi, who recalls his father’s

account, the newspaper was published for 5–6 years. Moreover, for distributing the newspaper, the Ata-Turk government sentenced Muhamed Vanilishi to death in 1937].

The Turkish government did not remain indifferent to this newspaper; it strictly monitored and obstructed its distribution. By decree signed by President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on February 26, 1930, the import of the newspaper into Turkey was prohibited. Later, by decision of the Soviet government, the newspaper was shut down.

During the same period, Iskander Chitashi left Georgia. Researchers in the study “Terror and Ethnos” do not agree with Chitashi's explanation for the newspaper’s ban (attributing it to Turkish pressure) and interpret his action as an attempt to shield Moscow from criticism—especially considering that the local party leadership in Abkhazia supported the Laz and, in turn, regarded them as a force supporting their own autonomy against Georgia (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, 233).

I. Chitashi’s dissatisfaction with the Georgian authorities’ approach to the Laz issue is evident in both letters, but it is particularly pronounced in the one sent to the Comintern. In this letter, Chitashi seeks, through Comintern influence, to regain Moscow’s support in order to reactivate work with the Laz in Georgia and Turkey. He directs the full force of his criticism toward the Communist Party of Georgia (Bolsheviks), accusing it of covertly pursuing a policy of “Georgianization” (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, 231).

Junge also notes that Chitashi’s actions were partly motivated by personal ambition: he wished to maintain the image of the Laz people’s “guardian angel,” a title deliberately conferred upon him by Moscow at the time (ibid., 233). Scholars unanimously agree that Chitashi was not ethnically Laz; in fact, the Laz living in Adjara generally considered him to be of Russian, Jewish, or German origin. Nonetheless, the well-known Laz party activist and leader of the Laz in Adjara, Muhamed Vanilishi—whose voice carried considerable weight in the “center”—revealed that Chitashi’s real name was Aleksandr Tsvetkov (ibid., 234).

In various autobiographical accounts written in 1930, 1933, and 1936, Iskander Chitashi identifies himself as Vitseli Tsitaishvili (Aleksiva, 2022, 15–18).

Evidently, the promotion of the Laz language and the establishment of a form of cultural autonomy for the Laz served both a clearly internal purpose—showcasing the benefits of Soviet governance—and an external one, functioning as a means of propagating and disseminating Soviet ideology in Turkey.

C. Iskander Chitashi against Georgian scientists

The available sources and documents provide mutually contradictory information about Iskander

Chitashi. He was a writer, educator, linguist, translator, and public figure—and, most importantly, a loyal member of the Bolshevik Party and an uncompromising executor of its directives. He studied at the Moscow Institute of Oriental Languages, where he attended the lectures of Niko Marr and later collaborated with him. After holding various party positions, he served as the head of a department within the Azerbaijan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union.

It was while occupying this post that he was arrested and executed in 1938. According to the charges, he was an active member of a counterrevolutionary, insurgent, terrorist, and sabotage organization operating among the Laz population of Abkhazia. He was accused of engaging in subversive, destructive, and espionage activities in the interests of the Turkish intelligence service. Against the background of the letters mentioned above, the charges brought against Chitashi appear as a true "irony of fate." Yet, it was precisely these letters that ultimately determined his fate. Both documents were forwarded for action to the highest authority of the Georgian Communist Party—Lavrenti Beria himself. Each of them reveals clear dissatisfaction with the Georgian leadership. It is also noteworthy that Iskander Chitashi aligned himself with the party faction of Nestor Lakoba, the leader of the Abkhaz Communist Party, who, in turn, held an unfavorable attitude toward his Georgian party counterparts.

However, local disagreements could not have been the decisive factor in the direction of events, were it not for the new course adopted by Moscow —namely, the replacement of Lenin's policy of "korenizatsiia" with Stalin's program of "Zonal languages" and, ultimately, the planned merger of languages. In practice, a new type of linguistic policy began to take shape from 1935 onward, one that favored linguistic centralization over linguistic pluralism. It appears that Stalin's approach was grounded in the Japhetic theory of N. Marr, which at that time enjoyed official recognition in the Soviet Union and was concerned "not only with the past of language… In general, Marr was concerned not only with the origins of spoken language but also with the future of languages. For this reason, "the center of gravity of the theory shifts from dead languages to living ones… The purpose of the Japhetic Institute is clear: through conscious and deliberate technique, to ease humanity's path toward creating a unified social instrument for communication" (Bolkvadze 2018, 90). As subsequent studies have shown, similar ideas regarding a universal human language were expressed by Stalin as well, which greatly encouraged Marr—so much so that he frequently cited passages from Stalin's speeches to support his views. Moreover, Marr had argued for the necessity of zonal languages even before Stalin did, particularly in his discussions on the creation of a unified Caucasian language (Bolkvadze 2018, 95). As noted above, Iskander Chitashi was a student of Niko Mari and fully embraced the Japhetic theory—both in its general framework and in its specific application to the Kartvelian languages. He

maintained that Laz is closely related to Megrelian and, together with it, forms the “hushing group” of the Japhetic languages, while also exhibiting connections to Svan;

Together with this language and the hissing group representative, the Georgian language, it constitutes the Sibilant group of Japhetic languages in the South Caucasus. However, because this theory was based on the glottochronographic method and the idea of language layers intermingling, Niko Marr immediately opposed the historical-comparative method established in Indo-European studies. This latter method was officially condemned in the Soviet Union, and its adherents were labeled as followers of bourgeois linguistics. Georgian scientists found themselves among the ranks of the latter: including A. Shanidze, Arn. Chikobava, V. Topuria, and others. T. Bolkvadze's work, "The Georgian Triangle of Soviet Science", meticulously examines the minutes of the Tbilisi State University Party Committee meetings, including those from 1934, where the issue of the aforementioned scholars' reliability was discussed. Based on this analysis, T. Bolkvadze concludes that "a merciless struggle was waged against the Indo-Europeanist counter-revolutionary linguists, who used the historical-comparative method and not Marr's paleontology or four-element analysis" (Bolkvadze 2018, 71).

It may be stated that, since its foundation, the Georgian university maintained a clear distance from N. Mar’s theoretical framework. This intellectual distance became even more pronounced after 1926, when Arn. Chikobava began his research on the Laz language within the principles of the historical–comparative method. Between 1926 and 1928 he collected extensive Laz linguistic material, working primarily in Sarpi and the Batumi region; for the same purpose, he dispatched the student L. Tsulaia to document the Athinuri and Arkabuli speech varieties of the Laz communities in Abkhazia. Later, in 1935–37, S. Zhghenti conducted fieldwork in the Laz settlements of Eshkhera–Tskhara–Shubari and Adziubzha.

Thus, while Chitashi and his Bolshevik patrons pursued their party-driven agenda, Georgian linguists were engaged in systematic, academically grounded research on the Laz language. Their findings were presented in two major monographic works by Arn. Chikobava: A Grammatical Analysis of chan with Texts (1936) and the Chan–Megrelian–Georgian Comparative Dictionary (1938). These works effectively established the modern theory of the genetic unity of the Kartvelian languages. More precisely, they advanced the view that Chan (Laz) and Megrelian constitute two dialects of a single language—Zan. This conclusion is supported by comprehensive analysis of phonological systems, root structure, and morphological and syntactic patterns (Chikobava 2008 [1936]). Accordingly, based on linguistic criteria—including regular phonetic correspondences—Laz and Megrelian demonstrably preserve a dialectal relationship to one another.

Arn. Chikobava's scientific indignation is evident in Chitashi's 1937 letter sent to the Comintern. Specifically, the Marrist Iskander Chitashi attempted to present the research of Georgian scientists, branded as "counter-revolutionary Indo-Europeanists," as an additional argument for how "Georgian nationalist" scientists obstruct the issue of the autonomy of the Laz people as an independent nation. He argued that they try to present the Laz people as being of Kartvelian origin, that their language is a dialect of some invented language, Zan, and that it originates from a common proto-language. Chitashi refers to this theory as hypothetical and mythical. He also accuses Georgian historians of presenting the history of the Laz people as part of the history of Georgia (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, II, 80).

It appears that, on the one hand, Iskander Chitashi tries to present himself as a follower of Niko Marr's doctrine, thereby positioning himself in opposition to Georgian scholars who studied the Laz language using the historical–comparative method. On the other hand, as the "protector of the Laz people" and a defender of their rights, he "exposes" Georgian scientists and the Georgian government for pursuing a nationalist policy, arguing that in the process of forming the Georgian nation, the Laz, Megrelian, and Svan people are considered a single people together with the rest of the Georgians, meaning that the "Georgianization" of the Laz people is taking place (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, II, 80).

Thus, I. Chitashi displayed clear anti-Georgian sentiments both in academic discourse and in his party or educational activities. This entire narrative was well known to the leadership of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Georgia, Lavrenti Beria, who, in parallel, maintained excellent relations with the leader of the Laz people of Adjara, Muhammed Vanilish, who stood alongside Chitashi in 1929 in the matters of creating a newspaper and textbooks (Junge & Bonvech, 2015, 229).

However, both the Muslim Adjarians and the Laz people of Adjara were characterized by a pro-Georgian orientation, and their self-identification was shaped differently than what Chitashi attempted by inciting anti-Turkish and anti-Georgian orientation among the Laz people of Abkhazia.

Iskander Chitashi's like-minded associate and fellow combatant, the well-known Laz public figure, writer, and scientist Muhammed Vanilish, despite their common cause and shared views, did not agree with Chitashi's anti-Georgian ideas. He later co-authored the historical-ethnographic essay "Lazeti" (1964) with Ali Tandilava, which is the first attempt at a scientific study of the history and ethnology of Lazeti.

Unfortunately, I. Chitashi's anti-Georgian narrative towards the Laz people of Abkhazia created distrust, which led to the mass unjust deportations of the Laz people to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 1944-53. Their repatriation occurred soon after, due to the direct intervention of the Laz patriot Muhammed Vanilish, but they found healthy socialization with the local population difficult and were gradually assimilated into the Abkhaz and Georgian (Megrelian) populations.

Today, according to the 2014 census data from the Abkhaz side, there are 128 individuals of Laz descent (assimilated into Abkhaz) in Abkhazia; they have forgotten the language (Bagapsh 2019). Unfortunately, the Georgian side does not possess similar statistics among those displaced from Abkhazia due to the military actions in 1991–92.

Conclusion

The educational and cultural reforms implemented for the Laz people living in Abkhazia during the 1920s and 1930s were part of the linguistic policy that the USSR government pursued towards small nations across its entire territory. A special alphabet was created for the Laz people, schools were opened, textbooks were developed, and a Laz-language newspaper was published. The course of events made it clear that these reforms and projects were political in nature, serving as a means of propaganda and aimed at "charming" the Laz people living in Turkey. The government planned to expand the USSR's borders within the limits defined by the Treaty of Berlin, and for this, it needed the support of the local population—in this case, the Laz people of Lazistan.

The inspirer and defender of the educational projects for the Laz language was the well-known public figure, linguist, and dedicated Communist Iskander Chitashi, who successfully managed the task of creating the Laz alphabet and textbooks, thereby winning the hearts of both the Laz people and the Soviet government. However, over time, along with his anti-Turkish stance, his anti-Georgian sentiment became apparent. This sentiment was based on both his linguistic ideology—Marristism opposing Indo-Europeanists—and a party rivalry with the leader of the Communist Party of Georgia, L. Beria. Ultimately, however, this peripheral opposition was managed from the center, Moscow.

Stalin's vision of language policy was already based on the ideology of the merging and blending of languages and nations, and the fate of small ethnic groups and languages in the process of implementing this was understandable. Unfortunately, the process of marginalization of the Laz people of Abkhazia began in the late 1930s, which was followed by deportations to Central Asia. Although the process of tracing and returning the Laz people began soon after, due to the intervention of Muhammed Vanilish, the rehabilitation of the Laz people in Abkhazia proved painful. Over time, some of them assimilated into the Abkhaz community, and others into the Georgian (Megrelian) community. In the 1960s, the Laz language could still be heard in Ochamchire, and fortunately, this speech was recorded and published in texts by Irene Asatiani, serving as the last breath of a Laz community with a centuries-old history in Abkhazia.

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Linking Extramural Exposure and Oral Proficiency

ABSTRACT
In an increasingly digital world, many young learners are exposed to English without ever taking a class. Researchers have shown various benefits from extramural exposure to English (De Wilde et al., 2020; Kusyk et al., 2025). However, it is not clear to what extent extramural exposure can compare to formal learning in terms of general proficiency, including sentence complexity, vocabulary and accuracy.
The data in the current study comes from two groups of Hungarian learners. One group of learners studies English in a Bilingual English program with explicit instruction, and the other group, who study German and have learned English implicitly through extramural exposure. On average, the Bilingual English students achieved higher proficiency as indicated by scores on the Cambridge Young Learners Exam.
For this study, we focused on the 4 top-scoring participants (all at A2 level) from both groups and compared them in an oral picture storytelling task. Speech samples were analyzed on linguistic features that show stages of proficiency development (cf. Verspoor et al., 2012): mean length of utterance, use of tenses, use of low-frequency words, and general accuracy. The English students scored similarly in mean length of utterance, with both groups' average being 9.1 words per utterance. The German students scored higher in the use of past tense (74% compared to 31%) and in accuracy (82% compared to 46%). The two groups display similar vocabularies and use of Low-frequency words.
These results show that oral skills can develop through implicit learning, specifically demonstrating the ability to implicitly learn grammatical structures and vocabulary. The findings support previous research (Peters, 2018; Rousse-Malpat, 2019). These results help understand language learning and may influence and improve teachers' methods.

Keywords: *implicit learning, extramural exposure, speaking, proficiency*

Introduction

English teachers cannot ignore the growing role that extramural exposure to the English language plays in students' language learning journey. More and more children have access to smartphones and tablets, and the widespread use of English as the lingua franca means that children no longer need to attend English classes in order to have a significant source of input. As Sundqvist (2024) said, extramural exposure has "replaced classroom activities as the starting point and foundation for learning English". This represents a shift in how children learn languages and is an opportunity for research

into how implicit learning affects proficiency gains.

Extramural exposure includes streaming platforms, online gaming, social media, podcasts, TV and films, and online/offline communication These spaces offer authentic language input that is rich, varied, and tailored to each learner's interests. Importantly, EE is usually voluntary, meaning learners may be more engaged with the content as compared to a traditional classroom (Ebadi et al., 2023; Zhang & Liu, 2024). This difference between teacher-controlled input and learner-controlled input is likely to impact how children's language skills develop (Sundqvist, 2009).

Much of the existing research into extramural exposure has been conducted in high-exposure contexts or contexts where the L1 is linguistically similar to English (De Wilde et al, 2020; Puimège &Peters, 2019). This means that the participants in these studies may be able to learn English more easily due to the high level of exposure or cognates in their native language. The Hungarian context lends an interesting backdrop due to the linguistic distance from Hungarian to English. Typologically and syntactically, Hungarian is quite different from English. This means that Hungarian learners cannot rely on a wealth of shared cognates or structural similarities to aid in English acquisition. Consequently, learning English may require more input or time to reach the same level of proficiency as found in other contexts. This makes Hungary an ideal place to examine whether EE alone can support language development.

Hungary is also interesting as it adds to the breadth of research into low-exposure contexts. In Hungary, many of the TV shows and movies are dubbed, which leads to less English exposure from the media. Additionally, in Southwestern Hungary, there is less tourism than in bigger cities where English may be present in daily life. Older generations of Hungarians were forced to study Russian in school, so there is sometimes a lack of English knowledge among this portion of the population as well. Although the rise of social media and streaming services has made English more accessible than ever, Hungary still qualifies as a low-exposure context compared to many other countries (Molnár, 2013).

So, despite the challenges of linguistic distance and low-exposure context, to what extent does extramural exposure affect young learners and how does this compare to more traditional methods of language learning? The present study seeks to answer that question by focusing on the language of eight focus learners from two unique groups: those who have had explicit instruction in a Bilingual English program and those who have never studied English formally and instead study German in school and thus learned English in an informal learning context. The following study compares in detail the language produced by four focus students at the A2 level (in CEFR) who had explicit instruction and four who did not. The research question for this study was: How does speaking proficiency compare in A2 learners from formal and informal learning backgrounds?

Literature Review

Many theories exist as to how these different forms of learning work. Krashen's Input Hypothesis contends that comprehensible input is sufficient for acquisition (Krashen, 1982) and Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1980) argues that attention to linguistic form is necessary for durable learning. Usage-based models (Rousse-Malpat, 2019) contend that knowledge of a language emerges from repeated exposure to constructions in authentic contexts. These theories provide the foundation for research on extramural exposure.

Extramural English (EE) was defined by Sundqvist (2009) as "English that learners come in contact with outside the walls of a classroom". This means that language learning from extramural exposure represents a form of implicit learning, which occurs when learners acquire language patterns, typically through meaningful exposure (Reber, 1967). On the other hand, explicit learning involves conscious rule learning, metalinguistic explanations, and corrective feedback (N. Ellis, 2005).

The role of EE in young learners' proficiency has been widely researched. For example, research has supported the role of extramural exposure in developing vocabulary (De Wilde et al., 2020; Puimège &Peters, 2019; Olsson and Sylvén, 2015), as well as implicit grammar knowledge (Schurz, 2025). De Wilde et al. (2020) conducted research on children between the ages of 10-12 in Flanders, Belgium. These students had never had formal English instruction, but 14% of the children were able to reach an A2 level of speaking proficiency through extramural exposure alone. Furthermore, studies have investigated specific skills that can be developed from Extramural English. EE has been shown to increase children's confidence when speaking (Stenlund, 2019), which highlights how receptive input can boost productive skills.

Another important aspect of the way EE impacts L2 English learning is the linguistic distance to the L1. Learners whose native language is linguistically similar to English may benefit from shared cognates or grammatical structures that make input more comprehensible. In fact, relatedness of L1 to the target language has been linked to proficiency in speaking and writing (Muñoz and Cadierno, 2021). Muñoz and Cadierno (2021) described the "joint effect" that exposure and linguistic distance can have, which boosts learners' language acquisition. Additionally, research shows that cognate linguistic distance was the strongest predictor of both listening and reading scores (Lindgren & Muñoz, 2013). Interestingly, Lindgren and Muñoz (2013) found that exposure to English was the second strongest predictor, which underscores the effect of EE on English proficiency.

In order to quantify proficiency, one must group learners based on characteristics that they display or their ability to navigate certain tasks in the target language. Verspoor et al. (2012) studied the development of proficiency in L2 writing in young Dutch learners of English. They first grouped

learners into five levels that were aligned with the CEFR. Level 1 represented A1.1, 3 represented A2, and 5 represented B1.2. They then examined 64 variables that might predict differences between the levels and found that several broad measures distinguished significantly between the levels. These were among others: the relative use of simple sentences, the relative use of the present tense, the relative use of frequent words, and the relative occurrence of errors. In other words, at each stage, there were fewer simple sentences, fewer verbs in the present tense, and fewer errors.

Supporting these findings, Potratz et al. (2022) concluded that the mean length of utterance is a valid measurement of children's grammatical development in spoken language. Other research supports the concept that the past tense is a sign of higher proficiency and grammatically complex language (Yang & Pongpairoj, 2024). On the other hand, the use of low-frequency words in spoken language has not been as clearly defined as a marker of proficiency. Research with young learners has shown that more proficient learners often use more high-frequency words, while lower proficiency speakers use less frequent words. (De Wilde et al., 2020). This stems from the fact that the lower proficiency speakers may have learned a less frequent word by translating from their L1, rather than from frequent exposure to the target language. Additionally, Abe et al. (2024) found that lexical sophistication was not correlated with the length of learning in low-proficiency learners. These findings do not support earlier research about L2 writing that showed more proficient writers use more low-frequency words (Laufer & Nation, 1995). The present study investigates this issue further.

This study will thus focus on young Hungarian learners of English and fills two gaps: First of all, it is conducted in a context where the L1 is linguistically not similar to English. Secondly, it will compare the effect of formal versus informal exposure in terms of sentences, the tenses, the use of frequent words and errors.

Methodology

Two groups of learners are compared in terms of their general level of proficiency and amount of extramural exposure: 21 learners who had explicit instruction (BE) and 29 students who had no explicit instruction (GFL). Then, from each group 4 focus learners are selected based on their general proficiency level (A2) and compared on the language they produced during an oral storytelling task to see if there are differences in sentences, the tenses, the use of frequent words and the use of errors.

Participants

The participants in the larger study were 50 Hungarian young learners between the ages of 10-12 years old. These participants were tested on their speaking proficiency. The participants belong to two

groups: those who study in a Bilingual English (BE) program and have explicit instruction and those who study German as a foreign language (GFL) and who have no formal instruction in English.

The BE group attends a public elementary school that offers an English curriculum that includes systematically increasing levels of exposure to English, as well as the opportunity to take classes with a native English-speaking teacher. From 1st through 3rd grade, students have 4 English lessons with explicit instruction as well as 3 Physical Education lessons, 2 art classes, and 1 crafts class, all taught in English. In the following year, students have 5 English classes and 3 Physical Education classes, 1 art class, and 1 crafts class taught in English. In 5th grade, they also add two new classes, World History and Civilization, which are both taught in English. The participants in this study were in 5th grade, which means they had substantial formal exposure to English through a variety of subjects.

In contrast, the GFL group were students who had never studied English formally, meaning that all their English knowledge came from extramural exposure. As mentioned before, their families had opted for these students to study German, so English represents something that they learned due to their own interests. Their German exposure varied greatly from school to school, with some participants studying German from 1st grade, while others started in 3rd or 4th

Focus Learners

From the larger groups, 8 students were selected from those who had scored an A2 level for speaking. These participants had the top four scores for the BE and GFL groups. In the larger sample, 6 BE learners had reached an A2 level, but 2 of these learners' scores were lower than the rest of the A2-level students, so the researcher decided to use the top 4 scoring BE participants so that the average scores of the two groups would be more similar. Thus, these 8 students represent the sample population for this study, and consisted of 5 boys and 3 girls, all aged 10-12. All the students were in 5th grade in public elementary schools in Southwest Hungary.

Permission

Before beginning the research, approval was obtained from both the regional education office (Tankerulet) and the headmaster of each school. Parents and students were given a consent form, which explained the process and how data would be handled. These forms were given in Hungarian to ensure that all participants understood what they were agreeing to. Additionally, all students were informed that they could opt out of participation at any time. After the data was collected and processed, numbers were assigned to protect the identity of the participants.

Instruments

Participants were given questionnaires to learn more about their extramural exposure and habits (See Appendix A). This questionnaire was previously used in De Wilde et al. (2020). The questionnaire was translated into Hungarian to ensure participants could fill it out easily and was piloted by the researcher. This questionnaire asked about their habits in both English and Hungarian and included a chart to write how much exposure to each language they had daily.

For English, the participants were asked about how often they: watch tv/movies, listen to music, game, use social media, read books, and speak the language. The chart gave categories for exposure amounts, ranging from "I don't do this" to "I do this for more than 2 hours a day". The questionnaires also asked questions about what websites, apps, and games they usually engage with. For the sake of this study, only the quantitative results will be reported.

After gathering the quantitative data, the average group exposure was calculated. First, a number was assigned to each category "0" for "I don't do this" up to "5" for "I do this more than 2 hours". Based on the participants' responses, numbers were assigned for each category. Then, these numbers were averaged to show group totals and averages for each type of exposure. Finally, the numbers were converted back to the original measure for reporting. Thus, if the group scored a "5" on average, then the average was "more than 2 hours" of exposure for that category.

To obtain the oral samples, the researcher administered the Cambridge Young Learners Flyers Exam. This test was piloted during an earlier study and found to be reliable. This exam tests students up to an A2 level. The test has 3 parts- reading, speaking, and writing and reading. The speaking test itself contains 4 activities, including picture differences, information exchange, a picture story, and a short interview. In order to get the longest chunk of interrupted speech, the researcher chose to use the picture story task (See Appendix B) to examine their language.

Procedure

For the larger study, participants were asked to do the following things: a parental consent form and survey, student survey, Cambridge Flyers Exam (reading and writing, listening, and speaking sections), and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-4. For the current study, the data from the speaking section of the Cambridge Flyers Exam was used. As mentioned before, this section of the test features 4 parts and the data from the picture story was selected for this analysis.

When administering the picture story task, the researcher starts the story and then encourages the student to finish telling what happened by looking at the pictures and narrating the events. The directions were given in English and Hungarian as some students had a very low level of English

proficiency. The students were also directed that they should try to use English as much as possible, but that it was acceptable to use Hungarian whenever they were stuck. Students were recorded while completing the speaking task.

Scoring

After collecting the data, the speaking tests were scored by the researcher using the rubric provided by Cambridge for this test. The researcher is a native English speaker and an English teacher who is experienced with using the Cambridge Young Learners Exam scoring rubric. The speaking tests are scored based on four criteria: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and interactive communication. The highest possible score is 20, with each category counting for 5 points. A score of 16/20 or higher is considered an A2 level of proficiency. After scoring the speaking tests, the students who had reached an A2 level as indicated by their score were selected for this study. The data was transcribed and checked for errors by the researcher.

Coding method used for focus learners

Speech samples were analyzed on linguistic features that show stages of proficiency development in writing (cf. Verspoor et al., 2012). Because the language was spoken rather than written, the criteria (Table 1) selected were adjusted to include sentences, the tenses, the use of frequent words, and the use of errors.

For sentences, we calculated the mean length of utterance, which has been found to be a measure of syntactic development in children (Potratz et al., 2022). An utterance was defined as the number of words present in each major thought and between pauses in the students' speech. For the use of tenses, each tense was coded as present simple, present continuous, and past simple. If a student used a mixed tense, for example, "They is put", it was classified as the present tense.

For the use of less frequent words (LFW), we checked for words that were outside of the range of the K1, meaning either on the K2 list or higher (Nation & Webb, 2011). We classified LFW as words that are not among the 1000 most frequent words in English. In order to determine this, we entered the transcribed data into LexTutor (Cobb, 2025) to analyze the texts using the Vocab Profile Compleat tool, which looks at BNC-COCA word families.

For accuracy, we counted the number of clauses that contained no mistakes or errors. Averages were based on the total number of clauses. Clauses were defined as utterance parts with their own subject and verb.

Table 1.

Categories used for analysis.

Label	**Definition**	**Example**
Mean Length of Utterance	Uninterrupted chain of spoken language	*And the TV is go home with a car.* (9 words)
Percentage of Past Tense	Use of past simple tense	They *got it out* of the car.
Percentage of Clauses with Low-Frequency Words	Clause (portion of sentence containing noun and verb) containing a word from the K2 list or higher	But suddenly, the TV fell down and *cracked*.
Percentage of Correct Clauses	Clause (portion of sentence containing noun and verb) with no verb form, use, or semantic errors	*Tom bought the TV.*

Results

Extramural English

Examining the results from the larger group's questionnaires, we see that the BE group was exposed to video games, music, and YouTube and Social media for around 30 minutes- 1 hour per day. They also reported speaking English, watching TV/Films, and reading in English for less than 30 minutes each day. The GFL group was exposed to EE for less than 30 minutes each day, and on average did not report speaking English, watching TV/Films or reading in English. Table 2 illustrates these results.

Table 2.

Whole Group Exposure Time (n=50)

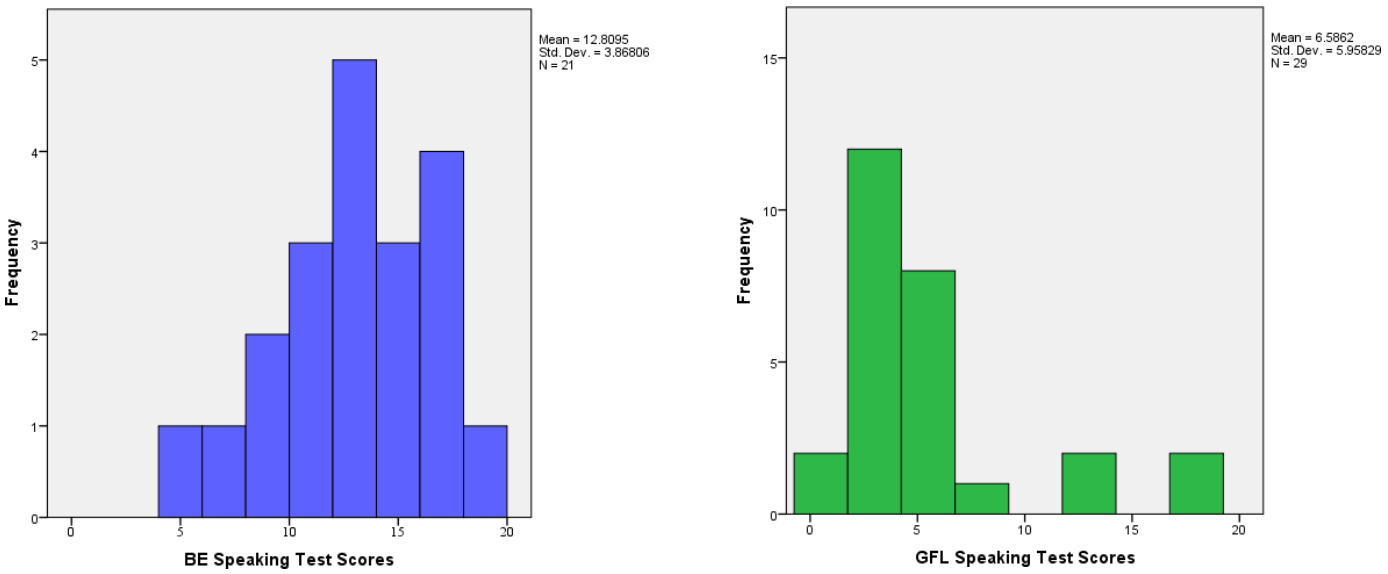
Type of Exposure	BE	GFL
Video Games	30 min-1hr	<30 min
Music	30 min- 1hr	<30 min
YouTube/Social Media	30 min- 1hr	<30 min

Speaking English	<30 min	none
TV/Films (L1, L2, or no subs)	<30 min	none
Books/Magazine	<30 min	none

Looking at speaking proficiency scores, the BE group outperformed the GFL group. In fact, 29% of the students in the larger BE sample group obtained an A2 level of proficiency, while only 13% of the GFL reached the same level. Figure 1. shows the score on the speaking test for the larger sample group.

Figure 1.

Whole Group Speaking Test Scores (n=50)



Results-Focus Learners

Looking first at the questionnaire results, focus learners reported daily exposure to English. Table 4. shows the breakdown of exposure for the focus learners. On average, the BE focus learners were exposed to gaming for 1-1.5 hours, music for 30 minutes-1 hour, YouTube and Social media for 1-1.5 hours, speaking English for 30 minutes-1 hour, TV and films for less than 30 minutes, and did not report reading books or magazines. The GFL focus learners were exposed to gaming for 1.5-2 hours, music for 1-1.5 hours, YouTube and Social media for 1.5-2 hours, speaking English for 1.5-2 hours, TV and films for 30 minutes-1 hour, and reading books for 30 minutes-1 hour.

Table 4.

Focus Learners' Exposure Time

Type of Exposure	BE Focus Learners (n=4)	GFL Focus Learners (n=4)
Video Games	1-1.5hrs	1.5- 2hrs
Music	30 min- 1hr	1-1.5hrs
YouTube/Social Media	1-1.5hrs	1.5- 2hrs
Speaking English	30 min- 1hr	1.5- 2hrs
TV/Films (L1, L2, or no subs)	<30 min	30 min- 1hr
Books/Magazine	<30 min	30 min- 1hr

As far as their linguistic data was concerned, only descriptive statistics were calculated because of the sample size. Table 5. shows an overview of the type, number, and examples of errors for each of the focus learners

In the first category of mean length of utterance, the GFL and BE groups had the same mean length of utterance. Both groups had a 9.1 average length of utterance. Among the BE group, the individual learners had 5.5, 10, 11, and 10 words per utterance, respectively. Among the GFL, it was 10.8, 10, 9, and 6.4. In this category, the BE group had both the highest and lowest scoring students.

As far as the use of past tense is concerned, the German students scored higher (74% compared to 31%), meaning the GFL used past tense in 25 out of 34 clauses. The BE group used past tense in 8 out of 26 clauses.

As far as the use of low-frequency words is concerned, the two groups showed very similar vocabularies, with only 2 LFW used in the GFL group and 1 in the BE group.

In terms of accuracy, the GFL had an 82% error-free clause rate, meaning that across the 4 learners 28 out of 34 total clauses were error free. In the BE group, the average was 46%, as 12 out of the 26 clauses were error free. Some of the most common mistakes were the mixing of verb tenses.

For example, "*He is put the TV in the car."* Across learners, mixing of verb forms was seen in 13 clauses in the BE group with each focus learner showing at least one case of mixing. In the GFL group, only one learner used a mixed tense, one time. Notably, there were several errors with the word "*broke*." Several of the mixing errors included the word "*broke"* being used with the verb "*to be*", which may be due to confusion over the adjective form of the word, rather than a mixing of tenses. If we remove the cases where the word "*broke*" was involved, then the BE focus learners had 6 total verb mixing errors between 3 of the learners. With these cases removes, the GFL learners would have no mixed tense errors.

Table 5.

Data from Focus Learners

	GL1	GL2	GL3	GL4	BE1	BE2	BE3	BE4
MLU (number of words)	10.8	10	9	6.4	5.5	10	11	10
Past tense	7/9	14/15	3/5	1/5	1/6	4/4	2/10	1/6
Errors								
verb *The TV fall out*	1	1	0	1	3	2	3	1
meaning *It [the TV]was safe*	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
pronoun *Them is dropped the..*	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1
Low-frequency words *cracked, injured, stairs*	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0

Discussion

Exploring the data gathered from questionnaires and the results of the speaking test, we see interesting trends emerge. Looking at the larger sample, the BE group outperforms the GFL group in the percentage of A2 level speaking proficiency. On average, they also have higher levels of exposure to English. However, it is notable that 13% of the GFL students have obtained an A2 level of English-speaking proficiency, which is very similar to the 14% that De Wilde et al. (2020) found in Dutch-speaking young learners of English through exposure, and suggest that significant proficiency gains through extramural exposure are possible, even with an L1 that is quite linguistically distant from English.

Summary of Focus Learners

To summarize the findings of the questionnaires given to the focus learners, the results show that all of the participants engage with English on a daily basis, and that the exposure is through a variety of inputs. Comparing the two groups, the GFL group had more daily informal exposure to English than

the BE group. It is important to note that the questionnaire did not account for simultaneous exposure, for example, listening to music while scrolling on social media. Also, it has been shown that not all exposure types are equally beneficial for language learning (De Wilde et al., 2020; Kuppens, 2009). For instance, engaging in online gaming where you must listen to English and write or speak in English in order to progress in the game surely offers more benefit to language learning than passively listening to music in English while working on math homework. Among the focus learners, the GFL group was found to game 1.5-2 hours per day, while the BE group reported only 1-1.5 hours per day.

Looking at the linguistic analysis within this small sample, the groups were quite similar in terms of sentence complexity with the same mean length of utterance. Despite the similarity in the averages, there were large individual differences observed within the groups. In the BE group, both the lowest and highest mean length of utterances were recorded- 5.5 and 11. The GFL group also has wide gaps between the lowest and highest scores with a 6.4 being the lowest and a 10.8 being the highest. This may be due to individual speaking styles, which may be present even in the L1 and can reflect differences in individual factors, such as temperament Hadley et al., 2014).

In terms of more advanced tense use, the GFL students used past tense in 74% of their clauses, while BE students used past tense in only 31%. We noticed also that the BE students seemed to mix their tenses more frequently, and may have been attempting to use past tense, but used it incorrectly. This is typical of instructed learners at an A2 level as found in Verspoor et al., (2012). However, it is also possible that the BE students were attempting to use present continuous tense after hearing this tense used in the prompt at the beginning of the story. Throughout the storytelling, both groups demonstrated some understanding of both regular and irregular simple past tense using verbs such as “made”, “saw”, “dropped”, and “drove” accurately. These findings support previous research that shows extramural English can boost implicit knowledge of grammar (Schurz, 2025).

The K2 words that were used were *upstairs, cracked, and injured.* It was notable that both groups developed similar vocabularies despite differences in their learning contexts. This supports the idea that extramural exposure can develop vocabulary (De Wilde et al., 2020; Puimège & Peters, 2019). With a larger sample size, it will be interesting to see if this trend continues.

In terms of accuracy, we focused on the accurate use of verb tenses, words and pronouns. The students in this study are at approximately level 3 according to the grouping in Verspoor et al. (2012). These findings support the idea that there is a spike in verb use errors at around an A2 level when students are experimenting with new tenses and making mistakes (Verspoor et al., 2012). Interestingly, the GFL group displayed a lower frequency of errors, and this may be because BE students have had explicit instruction on grammar rules, which may exacerbate the mixing as they attempt to formulate

verbs correctly following the rules or as some form of hyper correction. In fact, in the case of mixing tenses, when the cases involving misuse of the word "*broke"* were removed, we see that the GFL focus learners did not mix tenses at all. Thus, the GFL group may speak with less concern for "rules" since they have never been explicitly instructed on how to form these verbs. This supports previous research that implicit learners are as accurate as explicit learners (Rousse-Malpat, 2019). This suggests that the natural acquisition of English may somehow mitigate the confusion in these students.

Due to the small sample size, we cannot generalize based on these results. However, it is clear that exposure to English has supported the GFL students in learning English and has allowed them to reach an A2 level of proficiency. Their speech has developed with more complexity in some of the chosen parameters than their peers who have studied in a Bilingual English class.

Conclusion

In this paper, we showed that Hungarian young learners can learn quite a bit of English without formal exposure. This research has implications for educational practices, especially in multilingual classrooms where the L1 may be linguistically distant from English. Some educators may incorrectly assume that extramural exposure to English is not enough to build proficiency in students. It underscores the value of using authentic materials and just how much students can learn when they are engaged with the task at hand. Since extramural exposure generally comes through personal choice, it is likely that students are able to select materials that interest them, and that this reinforces their learning.

Of course, there are limitations. First, the small sample size means that these students could simply be outliers. More samples are currently being collected, and the hope is to expand on this research in the future. Additionally, convenience sampling was utilized, and the researcher sampled schools that were geographically quite close to each other. In order to make generalizations about Hungarian young learners, a more representative sample that included other parts of the country would be necessary. Another limitation stems from the fact that the researcher used reported data from children. It is possible that the children may not be aware of how often they engage with English and may over- or underestimate their exposure.

Future research should include a more detailed examination of the quality of extramural exposure, not only the quantity. This would help to answer questions about which types of exposure offer the most benefit. Additionally, it would be interesting to expand this study to include a longitudinal focus on these students to see how their speaking skills develop over time.

Declaration of interest statement

I declare that by conducting this research and publishing it, there are no conflicts of interest for the researcher.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Children's questionnaire

School:_____

Class : _____

Name : _____

Date of birth : _____

I am_____years old

How much contact do you have with the English language?

1. Tick the box. How many hours/minutes do you do the activities in the list **per day**:

In **ENGLISH**	I don't do this.	Less than 30 minutes	30 minutes– 1 hour	1 hour – 1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes – 2 hours	More than 2 hours
Watch TV without subtitles						
Watch TV with English subtitles						
Watch TV with subtitles in the home language						
Listen to English music						
Read English books, magazine,comics						
Gaming in English						
Youtube, use of social media in English						
Speak English						

-Which games do you play? How often do you play these games? -

-Youtube/social media: what do you watch? Which social media do you use (e.g. Snapchat, Instagram,…)?

In the **HOME LANGUAGE**	I don't do this.	Less than 30 minutes	30 minutes– 1 hour	1 hour – 1 hour 30 minutes	1 hour 30 minutes – 2 hours	More than 2 hours
Watch TV						
Listen to music						
Read books, magazines, comics						
Gaming						
Youtube, use of social media						

2. Do you have any contact with people who speak English? Yes / No

If yes, where, when, with whom?

a. On holiday? Yes / No How often? _____

b. At home? Yes / No How often? _____

c. In other situations? Yes / No How often? _____

3. Do you sometimes speak English? Yes / No

If yes, where, when, with whom? _____

4. Do you think English is a fun language? Yes / No

5. Do you sometimes look for opportunities to speak English? Yes / No

If yes, where, when, with whom? If no, why not?

6. What language do you study in school? Why did you choose it?

General information:

- Which language do you usually speak with your mother? _____

Which language do you usually speak with your father? _____

Which language do you usually speak with your brothers/sisters?_____

Which language do you usually speak with your friends? _____

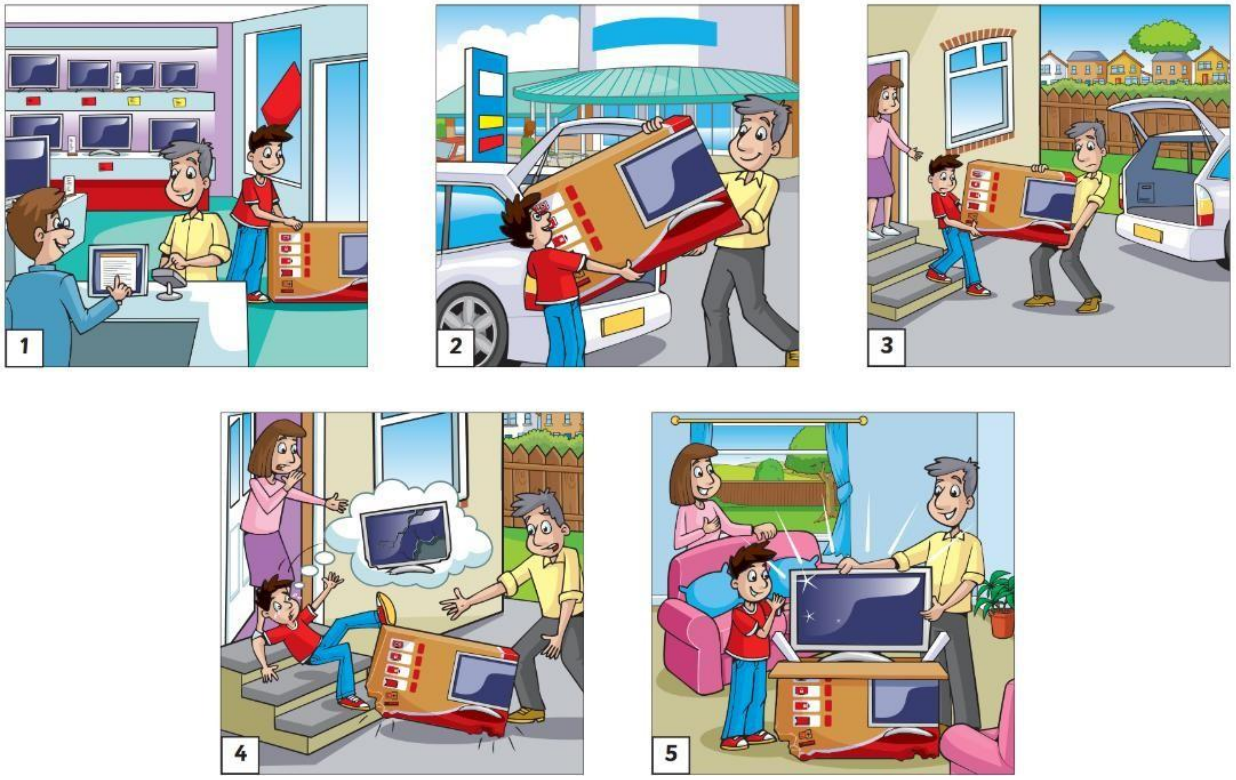
- I am a

☐ boy.

☐ girl.

- I have ____ brothers and ____ sisters. They are_____years old.

Appendix B



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Strategies for Teaching the Phonetic Aspect of Russian as a Foreign Language in Georgian Schools

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the features of teaching the phonetic aspects of Russian to Georgian-speaking learners. By comparing the Georgian and Russian phonetic systems, it identifies the phonetic minimum of Russian and substantiates suitable teaching strategies.

The article advocates for a differentiated approach, recognizing the full similarities and partial differences between the phonetic systems of a foreign and a native language and combining imitation and articulation techniques. The educational phonetic minimum is organized around acoustic and articulatory methods, emphasizing the teaching of sounds frequently overlooked in Georgian textbooks. These sounds are crucial for enhancing students' pronunciation and listening skills.

For the first time, the paper proposes categorizing the Russian phonetic minimum based on teaching strategies appropriate for Georgian-speaking schools. This aids in developing curricula and methodological recommendations that can inform the creation of Russian as a foreign language textbooks and other educational materials.

Keywords*: phonetic minimum; differentiated approach; phonetic interference; Russian as a foreign language; Georgian-speaking audience*
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Introduction

This paper discusses teaching the phonetic component of Russian as a second foreign language to a Georgian-speaking audience. It highlights key basic phonetic content to be taught through various pedagogical approaches. The Russian phonetic system is analyzed for its similarities and differences from Georgian phonetic systems.

In environments lacking a Russian-speaking context, phonetic interference is widespread among Georgian school students. For some students, phonetic obstacles are the primary hurdle to language mastery. Acquiring phonetic skills is essential for effective communication and supporting speaking and listening abilities. Sounds help differentiate meaning; if a learner cannot pronounce them correctly, conveying thoughts becomes difficult, and recognizing these sounds in speech presents a challenge. Intonation, speech tempo, and rhythm are vital for communication. Disrupting these elements hampers interaction and limits expressive capability. Therefore, developing accurate articulation skills in a foreign language requires targeted and sustained effort. Furthermore, phonetic

skills should be cultivated systematically, as they are often less stable and more vulnerable to loss of automatization.

Methodology

Teaching approaches and their relation to phonetic interference

All languages possess sounds, intonation patterns, stress, etc., that are more or less similar or different. The phonetic similarities and differences between foreign and native languages determine the approaches that should be used to develop phonetic skills when teaching a foreign language.

Phonetic **similarities** help teachers and students teach and master a foreign language. They do not require much time, and most importantly, help the student psychologically by creating the illusion of easy learning of a foreign language, ultimately contributing to learning motivation. The student and the teacher fully know the phonetic **differences** and devote sufficient time and energy to mastering them. As for the **partial** articulatory similarity of sounds, this circumstance poses a difficulty, and the reason for this is primarily phonetic interference. When pronouncing a partially similar sound, the articulatory habit of the native language dominates. At the same time, the student cannot distinguish between the sounds of the native and foreign languages, so the student has difficulty distinguishing between the pronunciation of familiar sounds, making learning/teaching their correct articulation much more challenging than mastering completely “foreign” sounds.

Partial similarity of sounds raises another important issue that often does not receive enough attention due to its perceived simplicity. Both students and teachers see this issue as straightforward. In such cases, similar sounds may formally resemble native sounds. However, in reality, minor differences in articulation or acoustics are the primary obstacles that hinder the development of pronunciation and phonemic awareness. L. V. Shcherba notes, "Special difficulties lie not in those sounds that have no analogues in the student’s native language, but in those for which there are similar sounds in this latter language. [...]. We often overlook these differences because there is no apparent reason to notice them initially. Consequently, when learning a foreign language through simply imitating the teacher, we inevitably substitute the corresponding or nearest Russian sounds for the foreign sounds, confidently believing we are replicating what we hear, albeit with varying degrees of accuracy. This is how we often develop poor pronunciation, which we often hear from foreigners who speak Russian and tend to think they are imitating it more or less correctly (Scherba, 1974).

This opinion remains relevant today, as such an attitude still applies in Georgian schools. A clear example is that textbooks accepted in Georgian schools for teaching Russian lack focus on practising the articulation of partially similar sounds and do not include suitable exercises. For instance, none of

the Georgian textbooks compares the pronunciation of Russian hard consonant sounds with their Georgian equivalents. Nonetheless, from the very first lessons, it is possible to draw parallels between the pronunciation of corresponding sounds in Russian and Georgian in words like: мама, Нана, папа, Тата (mother, Нана, daddy, Tata). Only through such comparisons can students realistically perceive the differences, recognizing that although these consonant sounds in Russian may resemble Georgian sounds — such as the "m" being voiced, velarized, and nasal in both languages — they are characterised by velarisation, which implies that the tongue must be pulled all the way back when pronouncing them. Georgian textbooks often overlook subtle sound differences and the varied pronunciation of interlingual words — even when the phonetic gap is substantial. For example, the word "bicycle" has markedly different pronunciations in Georgian and Russian — "велосипед" [vʲьlъsʲɪpʲe:t] and ველოსიპედი [vɛlɔsipɛdi] - yet, no textbook offers exercises specifically aimed at practising the Russian pronunciation of this word. The student's attention is not drawn to these phonetic differences. Some textbooks, when teaching individual sounds, include occasional tasks where students must read aloud sequences with hard and soft consonants (e.g., ма-ме, мо-ми). However, they do not systematically train students at the word level, where the "collision" (alternation) of soft and hard consonants occurs — a feature characteristic of Russian and entirely unnatural in Georgian.

In the Russian methodological literature, there are three main approaches to teaching the phonetic aspect of Russian as a foreign language (Balikhina, 2007; Chesnokova, 2015):

1) **The conscious-imitative (articulatory) approach** involves methodical and deliberate teaching of sound articulation, effectively developing correct pronunciation of individual sounds. However, in speech, these articulatory skills tend to be forgotten, students struggle to use them, and such teaching can be time-consuming and tedious.
2) **The imitative (acoustic) approach**, used in intensive courses, focuses on teaching pronunciation by imitating speech sounds and highlights auditory perception of speech. Georgian textbooks for learning Russian adopt this approach but do not recognise its main drawback - its effectiveness is limited to students with good phonemic hearing. As a result, the number of phonetic errors when applying this approach can be very high. E.N. Solovova questions this approach: "But does this mean that such a method is good for a modern school? This method is not suitable for a general school in its pure form. The percentage of errors is too high, sometimes it is unjustifiably high" (Soloviova, 2008).

3) **The differentiated approach** combines the first two strategies, is adaptable, and utilises both methods as needed. An alternative method to teaching sound articulation considers their similarities and differences. For similar sounds, imitation alone is sufficient, following the principle of "listen-repeat." However, sounds that do not have an exact equivalent in Georgian or are only partially similar should be taught using elements of the articulatory approach. Understanding and correcting pronunciation should be approached with age-appropriate methods.

As we have noted, phonetic difficulties for a Georgian-speaking student relate to the pronunciation of sounds that are entirely unfamiliar to him and those that are partially similar. This illusory similarity leads to the most errors: the student believed he already knows the new sound, but even the slightest difference in articulation significantly changes it. This emphasizes the need for a differentiated approach:

• **Imitation** is sufficient when the sounds are similar or very close to each other;

• **Articulatory perception**, and specialized exercises are necessary for those sounds where the difference is noticeable but imperceptible to the student, which is crucial for developing correct pronunciation.

Thus, when teaching the phonetic aspect of the Russian language in Georgian schools, it is essential to choose the right approach based on the phonetic similarities and differences between the Georgian and Russian languages. For this, it is necessary to determine the phonetic minimum of the Russian language by formal criteria (list of sounds) and teaching strategies and approaches. Within the framework of this article, we will generally outline which approach - conscious or unconscious - is more acceptable for which phonetic material. As for specific approaches, methods, and exercises, this is the topic of another article.

Discussion

Russian Phonetic Minimum in the Context of Differentiated Teaching to Its Georgian-Speaking Audience

A general comparison of the phonetic systems of the Georgian and Russian languages allows us to identify the phonetic minimum, determine what should be given special attention, and decide which approach should be applied when teaching specific sounds or phonetic phenomena.

Based on the similarities and differences in sounds and phonetic phenomena between Georgian and Russian, three groups are distinguished:

1. There are sounds and phonetic phenomena in the Russian language that have **no equivalents in the**

Georgian language; therefore, more time and focus should be dedicated to teaching them. It is necessary to incorporate elements of conscious articulatory teaching.:

1.1 The Georgian language does not possess the consonants “Щ”, “Й”, “Ф”. However, although the sound “Ф” is foreign to the Georgian phonetic system, it is not unknown to schoolchildren because English is taught in Georgian schools as the first foreign language. Therefore, when teaching this sound, it is sufficient to use an unconscious imitative approach.

1.2 The vowel “Ы” is one of the most challenging sounds for a Georgian-speaking student; when teaching it, it is also necessary to pay attention to the positional change of the vowel “и” and its transformation into this sound, for example, С Ириной – с[Ы]риной.

1.3 The stress in Georgian is weak and fixed, falling at the beginning of a word, while the stress in Russian falls in different places in different words and changes place even in the case of a change of one word form, for example, ва́жно–важны́ –важне́е. Georgian-speaking students, as a rule, have difficulty perceiving the stress at the auditory level, therefore they cannot use the stress correctly, and special exercises are needed to fix and use the stress consciously. In general, teaching stress should begin from the very first lesson and follow the student at all stages.

1.4 Georgian does not possess the sounds that result from the first and second qualitative reduction of the vowels “а”, “о”, “е”, “я”. These are only partially covered in Georgian school textbooks; notably, the second weak reduction is not addressed at all in Georgian schools. This significantly hinders not only the correct pronunciation in the future but also the development of the ability to understand oral speech at a fast pace.

1.5 There is no “j” sound in the Georgian language, so pronouncing iotated vowels - е, ё, ю, я - as two separate sounds is unfamiliar to the Georgian phonetic system. It is worth noting that the English language assists Georgian-speaking students in pronouncing these sounds at the beginning of a word and after a vowel within a word (e.g., "яма", "поём"), whereas for their pronunciation after the soft -ь- and hard -ъ- signs (e.g., "семья", "въезд"), a conscious imitation approach should be employed.

2. The articulation of Russian and Georgian sounds **partially overlaps**, as mentioned above, but interference causes the greatest difficulties in teaching; therefore, developing pronunciation skills requires a conscious imitation approach.

2.1 The main articulatory features of Georgian and Russian consonants are mostly similar. However, in Georgian, there is no opposition between soft and hard consonants, which is a key feature in Russian consonants. Unlike Georgian, Russian hard consonants are characterised by

velarisation and full tongue lowering at the back, while soft consonants are palatalised. The distinction between soft and hard consonants in Russian is vital for word meanings, for example, рад-ряд, быть-бить, лук-люк, and others. As mentioned, Georgian does not include the sound "j," which, among other functions, helps to produce soft consonants. Georgian speakers find the pronunciation of soft consonants entirely unfamiliar, so systematic work is necessary to develop correct pronunciation of these sounds.

In Georgian schools, some time is allocated to teaching pronunciation of soft consonant. However, this is insufficient, especially since the teaching of hard consonants is not the main focus, as previously noted. Like A. Akishina, we believe that special attention should be given to pronouncing these consonants: "When teaching Russian consonants, it is necessary to remember that in languages without a contrast of hardness and softness, there are not only soft consonants but also hard ones. In such languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Hindi, Urdu and many others), consonants are neutral concerning distinctiveness based on hardness or softness; there is neither systematic palatalisation nor velarisation. Consequently, the distinctiveness of hardness in Russian must be specifically taught (Akishina, 2011). Others also advocate for dedicated teaching of hard consonants; for example L. Kryuchkova (Kryuchkova, 2009) suggests special exercises to train the ability to articulate hard consonants.

Within the framework of the pronunciation of hard consonants, we consider it necessary to emphasise the necessity of conscious teaching the alternation of soft and hard consonants within one word, as well as emphasising the teaching of the pronunciation of the consonants "ж", "ш" and "ц". In the Russian language, these sounds are always complex. They are characterised by the formation of geminated (doubled) variants during contact assimilation, for example, "ЗЖ" - [ЖЖ] безжизненный, без жалости, "ДЦ" - [ЦЦ] двадцать, тридцать, which is not characteristic of the Georgian language in the case of the consonants "ж" and "ц".

2.2 In this section, we highlight the cluster of consonants at the end of commonly used Russian words, such as: тр (театр, центр, литр), гр (тигр), сл (смысл), пр (Днепр, Кипр), etc. When pronouncing the endings of these words, an irrational vowel often appears between the two consonants, resulting in sounds like "теат[g]р" and "тиг[g]р". Our observations indicate that Georgian-speaking students find it particularly difficult to pronounce this sound correctly; they tend to pronounce it similarly to the Russian word "театра". Therefore, in addition to other core phonetic challenges in Russian, we believe this particular pronunciation aspect warrants special attention.

We emphasise once again that because the partial articulatory coincidence causes significant difficulties, it is essential to dedicate ample time to teaching the sounds of this subgroup during Russian

language instruction, as: “The “imaginary” similarity of the sounds of the native and target languages leads to the emergence of quite serious problems in the process of pronunciation training” (Barkhudarov, 2015).

3. Phonetic phenomena which are **similar** in Georgian and Russian. The phonetic minimum of this subgroup does not pose a problem for Georgian-speaking students; therefore, their teaching is quite feasible using the “listen-repeat” principle:

3.1 There are voiced and unvoiced sounds in both Georgian and Russian. Positional changes of voiced and unvoiced sounds characterize both languages. For example, the devoicing of the voiced consonant in Russian - “дуб” - “ду[п]” and in Georgian - გავაკეთებ (gavakete[p]).

3.2 There are minor differences in Georgian and Russian intonation structures, but they are similar in the three main intonation patterns. For example, in Georgian, the stress falls on the interrogative word in a sentence containing such a word. In Russian, the interrogative word is the focus of the intonation construction. The intonation of a declarative sentence is also similar - in Georgian, it is pronounced calmly, and the sound lowers at the end of the sentence, just as in Russian, where the intonation center features a descending melody.

Below is a table showing the phonetic material and the best approach for teaching it in a Georgian-language school.

Imitative approach	Conscious imitative approach
• Assimilation Voicing • Assimilation Unvoicing • Quantitative Reduction • Intonation	• Soft and Hard Consonants • Stress • Reduced Vowels • Sounds Missing in the Georgian Language • Assimilation • Irrational Vowel at the End of a Word

Conclusion

In this article, we have outlined the minimum of the phonetic material and a differentiated approach to teaching essential for developing the phonetic skills in Georgian-speaking students learning Russian as a foreign language. Specifically, unconscious imitation is relevant only when there is complete or near-complete phonetic similarity. Conversely, conscious and systematic practical training is required for foreign or only partly similar sounds. The definition of the phonetic minimum and the establishment of differentiated learning strategies create an opportunity to develop standard programme recommendations, which will significantly enhance the practice of teaching Russian in Georgian-speaking schools. This approach promotes the development of phonetic skills and enhances overall competence in listening and spoken language.

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The Advantage of Structured Literacy for Dyslexia Prevention in Multilingual Learners

ABSTRACT

In the modern education system, literacy and reading difficulties remain the most common challenge. It affects the present and future of students, regardless of their cultural, linguistic, or socio-economic background. Developing reading skills presents even more difficulties for children who grow up in a multilingual environment. This problem is especially acute for those who learn two or more languages at the same time. Additional difficulties arise in the process of learning to read, which requires clearly structured, scientifically proven learning methods. In this context, the Structured Literacy approach is recognized as one of the most effective ways to prevent and manage dyslexia in multilingual children.

Nothing is known about this method in Georgia yet. Information in Georgian can only be found in my dissertation (Shashviashvili, 2024). In Georgia, we do not have statistical data on dyslexia, nor does the education policy take effective measures to overcome reading difficulties. Therefore, students with dyslexia face significant difficulties, especially those who learn to read in two or more languages at the same time. The needs can be met in several regions of our country, such as Samtskhe-Javakheti, Marneuli and Kakheti. Dyslexia is a particular challenge in multilingual learners.

The aim of my research is to investigate best practices and approaches to the prevention of dyslexia in multilingual learners to overcome the challenges identified in learning to read in a second language. This is the structured literacy approach. This article will attempt to answer the main question: *How can structured literacy be an effective framework for the prevention of dyslexia in multilingual learners in Georgia?* To address this issue, I have researched international evidence supporting structured literacy.

A number of studies have been conducted in developed countries in this regard, but it is clear that we do not have a similar study in Georgia. Therefore, the information in the article is based only on international studies.

As part of my desk research, I did their analysis and summarized the benefits of structured literacy for the prevention of dyslexia in multilingual learners as the main findings of the study.

Finally, the article proposes strategic recommendations for the education of Georgian teachers, adapting classroom approaches, and integrating literacy into national policies aimed at strengthening early intervention, equity, and inclusive education.

Keywords: *Dyslexia, Structured Literacy, Multilingual Education, dyslexia, Georgia.*

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Introduction

Reading is the cornerstone of all academic achievement and civic engagement. Against this backdrop, despite extensive educational research and advancements, reading difficulties remain one of the most common and often misunderstood learning challenges.

In many countries, reading difficulties have historically been attributed to poor learning or lack of motivation and non-neurodevelopmental causes. However, this paradigm shift has nevertheless occurred in recent decades: dyslexia is now widely recognized as a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects phonological processing and language comprehension. This recognition has led to a growing global focus on early screening, prevention, and literacy instruction and it paved the way for the integration of evidence-based preventive and interventional frameworks – in particular, structured literacy – into global educational practice. Structured literacy integrates linguistic science with explicit (explicit), cumulative and diagnostic instruction, providing a reliable framework that supports learners in learning to read in both monolingual and multilingual contexts.

Awareness about dyslexia in Georgia has begun to grow in recent years. The lack of systematic data on the prevalence of dyslexia has made it difficult to formulate a coherent educational policy. Nevertheless, a number of fundamental initiatives have been launched since 2024: the first Georgian "Questionnaire for Early Diagnosis of Dyslexia" for teachers and other specialists has been created. (Shashviashvili, 2024). In the same year, the "Georgian Dyslexia Research Center - Reading School" was founded, which became a member of the European Dyslexia Association in 2025. The Georgian Dyslexia Association and the Dyslexia Foundation were also established. The first conference on dyslexia was held in Georgia, but students with dyslexia still face significant difficulties, especially those who learn to read in two or more languages at the same time. They face additional difficulties, both in identifying problems and in the right support, and - both in school and in later life.

Current processes point to a growing demand for integrating research-based interventions into the education system. Nevertheless, Georgia still faces common challenges for many multilingual communities – such as identifying learning disorders (dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia) in bilingual and multilingual learners, preventing them, intervening and ways to overcome them.

Reading difficulties are more common than anyone thinks, writes expert Nicola Wolf Nelson (2016). Statistics of developed countries also show this condition. About 35% of students with special educational needs in the United States are students with learning

disabilities. 75-80% of them have reading difficulties (LDA-Learning Disabilities Association of America) In Europe, statistics vary by country. The variability is related to the spelling transparency of the language and assessment practices. However, the general trend here also shows that dyslexia is a widespread problem. According to the European Dyslexia Association, it affects about 9–12% of the European population. These statistics underscore the importance of dyslexia in special education services, which unequivocally identifies the need for early diagnosis and intervention.

Literature Review

Multilingual Education and Reading Challenges

Multilingual education aims to provide access to academic content in two or more languages, considering the principle of linguistic equality (García & Wei, 2014). Modern studies emphasize that a bilingual environment provides a child with significant cognitive advantages (Bialystok, 2018), but at the same time creates special challenges for the development of reading and writing skills. In a multilingual environment, students have to learn phonologically, spelling, and syntactically differently navigating systems. This process increases cognitive load, especially when a child tries to process the phonological structure in one language and uses completely different linguistic rules in another language (Koda, 2007). As a result, early signs of reading difficulties in multilingual learners are often disguised by normal language learning processes, making dyslexia difficult to diagnose.

In Georgia, the multilingual context is particularly evident in regions such as Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and Kakheti, where a significant proportion of children acquire Georgian as a second language. His limited knowledge of teaching (a second language) has a dramatic impact on the reading process — especially on text comprehension and vocabulary.

The phonological system established in the first language often does not coincide with Georgian: for example, in Azerbaijani and Armenian, the frequency of vowels and consonants, the correspondence of sounds and letters are different. In addition, the child often learns English at the same time, which increases the multilingual cognitive load.

At the same time, Georgian orthography **is transparent,** which means that the number of letters corresponds to the sounds, both Azerbaijani and Armenian languages are relatively transparent, and English is classified as one of the opaquest language systems, where there are more than 170 exceptions to letter-sound correspondence (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005).

Studies have shown that dyslexia in transparent languages can be detected by reading slowly but accurately, and in opaque systems - by quick and frequent errors.

Such discrepancies pose a serious diagnostic dilemma: a multilingual child may look dyslexic in one language but not in another, leading to either insufficient or excessive identification (Paradis, Genesee & Crago, 2021). Assessing reading skills in the case of a second language is a more difficult process than in a native language, because it requires not only knowledge of reading ability, but also knowledge of a second, foreign language. (Lisbeth, Rolf, Glenn, 2016).

The Dyslexia Association of Ireland (DAI, 2023) and the British Dyslexia Association (BDA, 2022) highlight the picture of dyslexia in multilingual learners should be considered by considering the differences between language systems. This is why the International Dyslexia Association (IDA, 2019) recommends the Structured Literacy Framework as a best practice in multilingual environments, as it teaches the structure of language clearly and consistently.

Structured literacy addresses these challenges by systematically and explicitly teaching the structural elements of language—phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and spelling—that provide equal support in both monolingual and multilingual contexts. A structured literacy approach reduces cognitive load, enhances decoding skills, and facilitates the development of language-to-language transferable skills (Castles, Rastle & Nation, 2018).

In general, students with dyslexia read and write less in a second language than students with typical development. Their learning process is statistically slower in mastering vocabulary and developing spelling. (Helland & Morken, 2016). Learning a second language can be challenging, especially for students with primary school dyslexia, as they also experience difficulties in phonological analysis, reading, and writing while learning their native language.

A growing stream of empirical studies also shows that structured literacy is particularly effective precisely in environments where students must learn two or more languages with different spelling systems (Goodwin & Jiménez, 2020). Consequently, integrating structured literacy into a multilingual educational environment is not only a beneficial but also a necessary strategy that can significantly reduce the long-term learning and social barriers of children with dyslexia.

Methodology

Within the framework of the research, I used a desk research design based on the systematic principles of literature review. The methodology included identifying, selecting, and synthesizing peer-reviewed studies from major academic databases as well as from the

resources of the Dyslexia International, European, British, and other countries' associations. Within the framework of the exploratory research, empirical or meta-analytical studies published in 2000-2025 were used, which include *Structured literacy,* dyslexia, *reading science, multilingual education, dyslexia prevention, reading intervention, and more.*

After collecting the data, the thematic analysis of the literature allowed me to synthesize research-based information, which combined the theoretical, empirical, and applied perspectives of my research issue, which is necessary for the development of adaptive and effective recommendations for the Georgian educational system.

Through the evidence-based strategies presented in the article, educators can help students with dyslexia unlock their linguistic potential, sharing the benefits of multilingualism and giving them a chance to develop even more in these settings. Creating such a positive and inclusive learning environment is essential for students with dyslexia to feel comfortable in the learning process, which in turn will increase confidence and motivation to learn.

Embracing these challenges is crucial for teachers and education policymakers to support students with reading difficulties on their path to learning Georgian as a second language.

Discussion

About dyslexia

ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision) defines dyslexia as a form of “developmental learning disorder" with impairment in reading, coded 6A03.0. Learning difficulties during reading disorders are manifested in the following:

1. Accuracy in reading words,
2. Express Reading Fluently
3. Impairment of reading comprehension.

A diagnosis of a disorder of learning development should be made only when,

When learning limitations significantly exceed the expected indicators for an individual's level of intellectual functioning.

The DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition) defines dyslexia under the umbrella of "Specific Learning Disorder” under the umbrella of "Impairment in reading." 315.00 (F81.0) which I am in the following difficulties:

- Word Reading Accuracy
- Comprehension of reading comprehension
- Reading speed and reading fluently.

In addition, it is characterized by difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory, and verbal processing speed. This affects the comprehension and memorization of the

information seen and heard, which in turn can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills.

The European Dyslexia Association (EDA) defines it this way - dyslexia is of neurobiological origin. This term refers to a disorder that is mainly characterized by severe difficulties in acquiring reading, spelling, and writing skills. Based on more than 10 years of intensive research experience, three distinct disorders have been distinguished: reading disorder, spelling disorder, and combined reading and spelling disorder. Many people associate dyslexia with a combination disorder used. The prevalence rate of all three disorders is about 3-4%. Its spread is influenced by genetic and environmental factors. It is caused by phonological processing difficulties and affects verbal working memory, rapid naming, and consistency skills. The good thing is that it responds to structured, evidence-based intervention (EDA).

The International Dyslexia Association writes that dyslexia is a specific learning ability disorder characterized by difficulties in reading words and/or spelling, which includes reading accuracy, speed, or both, and depends on spelling. These difficulties manifest themselves in a variety of severity, continuously, and continue even when there is an effective learning process for his (the student with dyslexia) for his or her peers. The causes of dyslexia are complex and include combinations of genetic, neurobiological, and environmental factors that interact with an individual throughout the entire period of development. The main difficulties of phonological and morphological processing are frequent, but not universal. Early weaknesses in oral language often predict literacy difficulties. Secondary outcomes include problems with reading comprehension and reduced reading and writing experiences, which can hinder the growth of language, knowledge, written expression skills, and overall academic achievement. It can also affect psychological well-being and employment opportunities. Identification and targeted learning are important at any age. Language and literacy support before and during early education is particularly effective. (IDA)

It should be noted that these definitions were updated by the world's largest organizations as recently as October of this year.

The British Dyslexia Association echoes these definitions in the following way – as each person is unique, so is the experience of each dyslexia. It can have different effects and may be accompanied by other specific learning difficulties. It is usually common in families and is a lifelong condition.

It's important to remember that disparate thinking has upsides. Many people with dyslexia show strengths in areas such as thinking, visual, and creative areas. (BDA)

Dyslexia and Multilingual Education

More than 60% of the world's population regularly uses two or more languages (Grosjean, 2010). Multilingualism is more common than monolingualism because it is a social phenomenon and is driven by globalization, migration, and economic dependence.

Multilingual education refers to the process of teaching and learning in two or more languages, where all languages are recognized and used for educational purposes. This type of education takes into account the cultural and linguistic background of the student and seeks to deepen knowledge of both (or more) languages. In Europe, multilingualism is often seen as "a resource, not a problem to be solved" (Hornberger, 2000).

Multilingual education in Georgia has been going on since 2009. It aims to promote the acquisition of the state language for ethnic minorities and to ensure their equal access to higher education.

It is known that in a multilingual environment, children may face language confusion, which creates difficulties in the process of mastering reading. Multilingual children with dyslexia who have difficulty reading in one language are more likely (with a correlation of about 85%) to have difficulties in the other language as well (Genesee, 2015). Learning a second language is cognitively challenging. Learners with dyslexia who have already impaired phonological processing abilities have particularly difficulty in phonological awareness of a foreign language, decoding words, developing vocabulary, and comprehending grammatical structures (Kilpatrick, 2015; EAB, 2021). On average, students with dyslexia need twice as many repetitions to grasp a new word firmly as their peers (Ramus & Szenkovits, 2008).

Dyslexia, as a specific learning difficulty with a neurodevelopmental nature (International Dyslexia Association, 2002), does not disappear when a child is proficient in many languages. It affects the complexity of the language acquisition process, creating unique barriers for multilingual learners (Peer & Reid, 2000).

Multilingual children who are still developing language competence are particularly at risk. The detection of dyslexia in them may be delayed or misinterpreted as a general delay in language development. Because of this, it is necessary to double the assessment in both languages (Shashviashvili, 2023).

Studies, especially in the European context, show that more than 50% of foreign language teachers consider themselves incompetent to work with students with dyslexia, as they have not received specialized training on the principles of second language learning (Atar & Amir, 2023). This confirms that the methods used in the school are not tailored to their needs. The

methods they use are often more likely to hinder a child with dyslexia than help them succeed in learning a foreign language (Schneider, 2009).

Studies have shown that the structured literacy approach improves the early detection of dyslexia and offers effective strategies even for children who have not yet been diagnosed (Torgesen, 2005).

All students with dyslexia have different strengths and weaknesses, but it can generally be said that their problems with learning a foreign language occur due to two main reasons: the peculiarity of dyslexia and the way in which foreign languages are taught at school (Schneider, 2009. Lina Knudsen, 2012).

The grammatical structures of a foreign language are often abstract and require a metalinguistic awareness of the language.

- Morphological difficulties: Students with dyslexia have difficulty recognizing and using morphological rules (e.g., suffixes, prefixes), affecting both vocabulary comprehension and spelling (Carlisle, 2000).
- Syntactic Processing: Processing long, complex sentences, while learning a second language, presents additional difficulty, as the student has to decipher new vocabulary and complex structure at the same time.

For multilingual children with dyslexia, a fundamental change in teaching methodology is necessary. Researchers emphasize that students with dyslexia who receive structured literacy-based instruction improve interlanguage interchangeability and enhance those phonological skills that are impaired by dyslexia (Torgesen, 2005).

That is why the integration of the principles of structured literacy into the process of learning a foreign language is the only effective way to overcome methodological conflict and promote multilingual learners with dyslexia in complete literacy.

Structured Literacy

Structured literacy is based on the notion that reading is learned, not an innate process. As **Seidenberg (2017)** and **Moats (2020)** argue, effective reading instruction should make invisible linguistic structures obvious.

Structured Literacy is an evidence-based learning approach that is recognized as one of the most effective approaches for the prevention and management of dyslexia in multilingual learners. It is an evidence-based approach (Brady, 2011; Fletcher et al., 2007; Foorman et al., 2016; IDA, 2018; NRP, 2000; TKI 2020a), which is based on the science of teaching reading and how the brain acquires and processes information (Reyna, 2004; Seidenberg, 2017).

Structured Literacy encompasses explicit, systematic, and coherent instruction based on the thorough teaching of language structure: phonology, grapheme-phonemic matching, morphology, syntax, and semantics (Spear-Swerling, 2019). It employs multisensory strategies and considers the cognitive processes that become necessary in teaching reading and writing. All elements of language (sound, letter, morpheme, etc.) It is taught in a pre-planned sequence - from simple to complex.

Studies conducted in the USA have shown that as a result of the use of structured literacy programs, the reading skills of students at risk of dyslexia improved by an average of 67% within 6 months (Torgesen, 2005). It has also been proven that in bilingual children, a structured approach significantly reduces reading lag and enhances vocabulary and grammatical development.

According to the IDA (International Dyslexia Association), structured literacy is the gold standard for dyslexia. They state that this approach should be used for both English-speaking and multilingual children, especially if the two languages differ phonologically and graphically. (IDA, 2019)

A study conducted in Israel found that Hebrew-English multilingual children diagnosed with dyslexia were successful in learning with a structured literacy approach when paying attention to the specific difficulties of both languages: the consonant-grammar system of Hebrew and the dysphonetic characteristics of English (Katzir, 2015). Research conducted on English-Spanish multilingual children also shows that multilingual children with dyslexia respond better to methods that clearly reflect phonemic and morphological structures in both languages. Structured learning is effective for them (Kovelman, Baker, & Petitto, 2008)

The Essence of Structured Literacy

The term "structured literacy" was coined by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) in July 2014. The IDA Board of Directors has chosen "structured literacy" as an umbrella term that encompasses all reading teaching approaches that align with the IDA's Standards of Knowledge and Practice for Reading Teachers (KPS). IDA developed KPS in 2010. It specifically outlines and identifies the knowledge/skills that teachers must have in order to teach their students how to become competent readers. Structured literacy does not rely solely on the natural principle of language development (natural reading acquisition), but also intentionally teaches language structure, which is especially important for children at risk of

dyslexia. Unfortunately, popular reading approaches such as directed reading or balanced literacy, which think that reading develops naturally through exposure, are not effective for readers who have reading problems, as they do not focus on the decoding skills these students need to succeed in reading. Structured literacy not only helps students with dyslexia, but there are important things to consider. Structured literacy not only helps students with dyslexia, but there are important ones. Evidence that it is effective for other readers as well.

Structured Literacy is a research-based approach that includes explicit, systematic, and coherent instruction based on the thorough teaching of language structure:

- Phonology
- Grapheme-phonemic correspondence (sound-symbol correspondence)
- Teaching grains.
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Semantics

Structured literacy prepares students to decode words in a clear and systematic way. Decoding and understanding the structure of language are at the core of structured literacy. Teaching structured literacy is characterized by several elements:

Phonology. Phonology is the study of the sonic structure of spoken words, which is a critical element of structured language teaching. An important aspect of phonological awareness is phonetic awareness, that is, the ability to divide words into their constituent sounds, which are called phonemes. Understanding the individual speech sounds (phonemes) that make up words is a critical foundation for learning reading and spelling. A phoneme is the smallest unit of speech that can change the meaning of a word. It can differ from other sounds of the same language. In Georgian, for example, the word "road" has three phonemes (g-z-a). Phonological awareness includes the ability to understand a rhyme, count words in a sentence, and clapping to distinguish syllables - in words.

Correspondence of sound-symbol (phoneme-graphene). Sound-symbol association. Once students have developed an awareness of the phonemes of a spoken language, they should learn to correspond to phoneme symbols or printed letters. Teaching and mastering the association of sound-symbols should take place in two directions: from visual to auditory (reading) and from auditory to visual (spelling). In addition, students should master combining sounds and letters into words, as well as dividing whole words into separate sounds. Teaching is called phonetics. The basic code for written words is a system of correspondence between phonemes and graphemes. This system is often referred to as an alphabetic code or a system of

written characters. The correspondence between letters and speech sounds in English is more complex and variable than in some languages, such as Spanish or Italian. Nevertheless, conformities can be explained and taught through systematic, explicit, cumulative instruction, which can take several years to complete.

***Teaching syllables*.** A syllable is an oral or written language unit with a single vowel. Instruction includes teaching on the types of syllables. Knowing the types of syllables is an important organizational idea. With knowledge of the type of syllable, the reader can better identify the vowel sound in a syllable. The rules for dividing syllables raise the reader's awareness - a long, unfamiliar word can be divided - into syllables, to read the word accurately. Through explicit instruction and practice, students with dyslexia can learn to understand and remember the rules for using letters in the writing system. Recognizing the patterns of written syllables helps readers break down long words into readable parts and understand spelling rules.

Morphology. Morpheme is the smallest but most important unit of language. In the structured literacy approach, morphemic awareness is considered one of the key important components for effective reading learning. A structured literacy curriculum involves the study of key words, roots, roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Children with developed morphemic awareness are more likely to understand the meaning of unknown words because they are divided into parts (Carlisle, 2000). Structured literacy relies on morphemic structure so that children can easily convert phonemic knowledge (sounds) into graphemic knowledge (writing). The morphemic structure helps the child to perceive words more steadily and accurately while recording, as he follows language as a systematic and logical unit (Gillon, 2017).

Syntax. Syntax is a set of principles that define the sequence and function of words in a sentence to convey its meaning. Learning syntax involves understanding parts of speech, grammar rules, and the use of words in sentences. This is essential for the correct development of writing, reading, speech, especially in cases of foreign language learning and/or reading specific problems (e.g., dyslexia). Knowledge of syntax improves the accuracy of communication, the construction and interpretation of texts. Also, through syntax, the child learns the function of words in a sentence, which makes it easier to create grammatically correct texts.

Semantics. Semantics is an aspect of language that deals with meaning. Meaning is conveyed both in individual words and phrases and sentences. Understanding of both oral and written language develops through learning to interpret the meanings of words (vocabulary),

phrases and sentences, and to understand the organization of text. Reading comprehension is a product of both word recognition and language comprehension. Throughout the teaching of structured literacy, students should have support in working with different types of texts – stories, informational text, poetry, drama, etc.., in understanding the meanings (vocabulary) of foreign words, even if this text is read aloud to students who cannot yet read it independently. Reading valuable texts that stimulate deep thinking is a critical component of structured literacy.

With all this in mind, the explicit and systematic instruction offered by structured literacy at all levels of language structure (phonology, spelling, morphology, syntax, semantics) ensures that:

1. Phonological deficits can be overcome by teaching clear phonological awareness and grapheme-phonemic conformity.
2. Enhance linguistic comprehension through in-depth, structural analysis of morphology, syntax, and semantics.

Principles and Methods of Teaching Structured Literacy:

Obvious. Teaching structured literacy requires "explicit teaching"—targeted teaching of all concepts, with continuous student-teacher collaboration. In teaching structured literacy, the teacher explains each concept directly and clearly. Lessons include an instructional routine, and the student uses each new concept in reading and writing words and text, under the direct supervision of the teacher, who gives immediate feedback. Students are not expected to discover or intuitively understand language concepts simply by reading.

For students to grasp a large, new concept, it must be broken down into smaller parts, where each part is taught systematically and explicitly. Explicit learning is carried out through the "I do, we do, you do" framework. When teachers support students' ability to sort out information, this acquired knowledge is transferred to long-term memory and frees up working memory to engage in the next "new steps."

Systematic and cumulative

The teaching of structured literacy is systematic and cumulative. Systematic means that the organization of the material follows the logical sequence of the language. The sequence should start with the simplest and most basic concepts and elements and methodically move on to more complex concepts and elements. Cumulative means that each step must be based on previously learned concepts. The goal of systematic teaching is to use language knowledge

automatically and fluently to incorporate what is read into the content. A consistent learning routine reduces confusion and provides students with a foundation for new knowledge.

Practical, engaging, and multimodal

Structured literacy teaching should be enriched with multisensory strategies to incorporate visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic sensations into learning to improve memory. Methods often involve hands-on learning, such as using cards, hand gestures to establish the memory of associations, constructing words with magnetic letters, assembling sentences with words written on cards, color-coding sentences into paragraphs, etc. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are often paired together to promote new learning.

Diagnostic and responsive

The teacher must be skilled in individual teaching. This is teaching that meets the diverse needs of the learner. Teaching is based on careful and continuous assessment, both informally (e.g., observation) and formally (e.g., with standardized measurements). The content presented must be assimilated to the degree of automation. Automation is critically important to free up the learner's attention and cognitive resources. The teacher uses students' response rates to determine the pace in the lesson, the volume and content of the presentation, and the number of practical tasks. The teacher monitors progress through observations and short quizzes that measure the recall of what has been learned.

Thus, structured literacy is a comprehensive theoretical framework that explicitly and systematically links the structure of language with the ability to comprehend reading, making it the most effective tool for preventing reading difficulties.

Research Results

More than two decades of empirical evidence and international findings confirm structured literacy as the most effective model for reading disorders. It also demonstrates that for multilinguists, key elements of structured literacy require thoughtful adaptation. Practitioners should assess phoneme-graphemic relevance in different languages, consider spelling depth (i.e., transparency and opacity), and use bilingual assessments to ensure that second language proficiency is not associated with dyslexia.

Torgesen (2005) showed that at-risk learners who receive structured literacy-based interventions improve reading accuracy by an average of 67% over six months. Similarly, the

National Center for Literacy Improvement (NCIL) and other leading research organizations have identified the crucial role of structured literacy in multilingual populations:

- Strictly systematic and explicit instruction in structured literacy reduces the risk of Cross-Linguistic Interference, which often confuses second language learners. Structured literacy clearly teaches what elements are different between the first and second languages, thereby preventing misuse of the rules of one language in another.
- Structured literacy not only enhances phonological processing but also teaches morphology clearly (e.g., stems, prefixes, suffixes). This approach is particularly important because morphological awareness is one of the most transferable skills among languages (Bialystok, 2018).
- These findings are validated across diverse linguistic settings, suggesting that structured literacy is not limited to the spelling of one particular language, but rather is based on universal cognitive principles (Spear-Swerling, 2019).

Cross-linguistic interference is particularly problematic in the context of dyslexia. Due to the phonological deficiency, they have difficulty recognizing the sound system of a new second language independently, therefore, they often resort to guessing and the use of first language norms, which increases the number of errors and hinders the accuracy and speed of reading.

Structured literacy is effective precisely because it explicitly teaches the student what differences exist between languages (thereby reducing negative interference) and how to use common linguistic skills (morphology learned in the mother tongue) in favor of the second language.

A meta-analysis conducted by **the International Dyslexia Association (IDA)** and **the National Reading Panel (2000**) further confirms the advantage of structured literacy over exposure-based methods. Structured literacy instruction provides a double gain in deciphering and comprehension compared to *balanced literacy* (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Impact on Georgia and the Multilingual Context

Integrating structured literacy into Georgian education can dramatically change national literacy outcomes. To achieve sustainable impact, implementation must take place in several dimensions:

1. Introduce structured literacy modules in universities and give teachers access to resources and lesson plans for this approach.

2. To develop a national curriculum for literacy development, considering the principles of reading science and in accordance with the specific Georgian phonological and orthographic content.

3. To establish bilingual and culturally sensitive screening tools for the early detection of reading difficulties in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani-speaking populations.

Through these efforts, Georgia can establish itself as a regional leader in the field of structured, evidence-based reading teaching that supports both literacy and social inclusion.

It is worth considering the fact that despite the strong evidence, the implementation of structured literacy requires systemic transformation. Teachers need specialized training to interpret language data, provide multisensory instruction, and monitor progress.

The Ministry of Education can pilot structured literacy programs in multilingual regions to assess outcomes and scalability.

Conclusion

As part of my desk research, significant concurring evidence indicates that explicit, systematic, cumulative learning—key features of structured literacy—improves decoding, word reading accuracy, spelling, and reading comprehension in students with dyslexia.

Therefore, it should be assumed that in Georgia, the introduction of an evidence-based approach to structured literacy, especially in multilingual education, will not only help prevent dyslexia, but also improve the quality of literacy as a whole.

The introduction of structured literacy will not only improve individual outcomes but also strengthen the national culture of literacy, ensuring that no child's potential will be limited by fewer reading abilities or different learning outcomes.

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Critical Cultural Awareness through a Japanese "Hysterical Construction" and the "Karen Meme" in ELT

ABSTRACT

This study explores how integrating gendered discourse analysis into English language education can foster critical cultural awareness among Japanese learners. Focusing on two culturally embedded representations—the Japanese "Hysterical Construction" and the "Karen meme" in American English (e.g., Armstrong, 2021; Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2022)—the research examines how social ideologies and emotional expressions are intertwined. Following Kramsch and Hua's (2020) notion of language as a social semiotic system, this paper employs qualitative data from TikTok videos as an example of the analysis that can serve as heuristic cues for students. Particular attention is given to how hysterical emotion is discursively constructed (Boiger et al., 2013; Mesquita, 2022): while American discourse often frames emotion as a form of individual expression and entitlement, Japanese discourse tends to emphasize a self-other inseparability. The analysis reveals how socio-cultural norms shape these discourses and contribute to their reproduction. The findings suggest that incorporating such comparative discourse analysis into a four-week cycle of classroom activities can foster cross-cultural reflection and deepen learners' interdiscourse communication (Scollon, & Scollon, 2001).

Keywords: *critical cultural awareness, gendered discourse, hysterical emotions, ELT.*

Introduction

This study explores how integrating gendered discourse analysis into English language education can foster critical cultural awareness among Japanese learners. Focusing on two culturally embedded representations—the Japanese "hysterical construction" and the "Karen meme" in American English (e.g., Armstrong, 2021; Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2022)—the research examines how social ideologies and emotional expressions are connected across two languages. Van Doorn et al. (2012) also argue that emotional expressions not only convey information about others but also shape how people interpret the social context itself. Their findings suggest that emotional responses may function at broader social levels and raise the possibility that habitual emotional patterns contribute to forming and maintaining cultural identities. This pragmatic perspective also facilitates the understanding of language as a social

semiotic system (Kramsch and Hua's (2020).

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to propose practical classroom activities entwined with critical cultural awareness, employing theoretical approach to examine the discourse-based analysis to propose practical and effective classroom activities. Note that this study adopts a theoretical and qualitative orientation, rather than a data-driven approach, with the dual aims of:

1. comparing the rhetorical construction of hysterical anger in Japanese (Hisu-construction) and U.S. contexts (Karen meme), and
2. proposing a classroom activity design for English language teaching (ELT) that fosters critical cultural awareness through emotional discourse analysis.

To address the two points above, I formulated the following Research Questions (RQs):

RQ1. How is "hysterical anger" rhetorically constructed in Japanese and U.S. discourse? Are there any differences in the commonality?

RQ2. How can this comparative analysis be pedagogically applied in ELT to develop learners' cultural awareness?

By answering these questions, language learning moves beyond superficial skill acquisition and becomes an opportunity for cultural and self-analysis. It shifts the focus toward examining how emotion expressions—shaped by one's cultural background and individual disposition—can be articulated in the target language.

In what follows, this paper is organized into five sections. Section 2 reviews the literature on emotions as socially constructed categories and provides a socio-cognitive overview of both the Japanese hysterical construction and the Karen meme. Section 3 outlines the methodology, detailing procedures that teachers can adopt through rhetorical analysis (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Section 4 presents two illustrative examples that demonstrate how these frameworks can be introduced in classroom design. Section 5 describes the four-week cycle of classroom activities based on a sample syllabus, and Section 6 offers concluding remarks.

Literature Review

Emotion as a cultural and discourse practice

Emotion is a combination of cultural products and one's inner feelings (Barret F., 2006). As Littlemore et al. (2023) posit, human beings are emotional beings grounded in physiological changes and experiences, but how they express their emotions differs across cultures. It is also

tied to taking a stance as discursive practice (Jaffe, 2009): emotion is discursively constructed rather than fixed (Barret, F., 2006). In this paper, the expression of emotion is regarded as a social practice (Fairclough, 1993), showing their position or attitude with emotion. In general, people constitute a psychological construct that resorts to language and its use (Eiser, 2014, p.59).

Boiger et at (2013) investigate how situations afford emotional experiences and what a culture condones and condemns. They reveal that emotions are fluid; cultures shape the likelihood of emotional experiences under certain conditions. In this respect, Mesquita (2022) proposes two types of models: MINE and OURS.

Table 1 Two types of models (Mesquita, 2022, p.51)

MINE	Mental (Feelings are important) Inside (Inward focus; emphasis on the individual) Essence (Inward-out: emotion seeks expression)
OURS	Outside (Outward focus; emphasis on the social) Relational (Acts are important) Situated (Outward-in: emotional acts seek to meet social norms; suppression helps to cultivate the appropriate feeling)

As the table shows, the MINE model underscores the deep inner feelings within us, identifying emotions grounded in individual feelings. On the flip side, individuals in cultures with the OURS model focus on emotions arising from situated circumstances in interpersonal relationships. Broadly, Japanese culture tends to reflect the OURS model, while U.S. culture aligns more closely with the MINE model. As this is a general cultural model, every phenomenon can necessarily be explained by a clear-cut distinction. The distinction is instrumental in identifying differences in emotional reactions to a given situation between two cultures.

Hysterical feelings are usually accompanied by anger. A natural kind of emotion, like anger, was thought to be behavioral and psychological changes (Barret, F., 2006). For instance, Blood pressure will rise, a scowl will form on the face, and there will be an urge to hit or yell (Barret, F., 2006). Lakoff (1987, p.382) posits that these kinds of physiological effects stand for emotion. Contrary to popular belief, contemporary theories of emotion propose that bodily reactions co-occur with a cognitive awareness that one is experiencing a feeling (e.g., fear), and it is this simultaneity that allows individuals to link the two. From this perspective,

contextual cues—rather than physiological changes alone—play a central role in how emotions are identified and experienced (Littlemore et al., 2023, p.3).

Moreover, Mestuita (2022, p.85) contends that demonstrating angry feelings is a form of taking a position in a relationship. More specifically, anger is dovetailed with the representation of power or status. This notion accords with hysterical outbursts, even if the feelings might be considered to be immature. Being hysterical or angry amounts to a rhetorical and legitimization strategy regardless of the cultural differences. Yet, the comparative analysis can yield what attributes and entitlements (social status, race, position, etc.) are the cornerstones for each culture, which will be discussed later.

The stance taking by expressing one's emotions is associated with shared communal ideologies. For example, traits such as warmth, emotional responsiveness, and empathy are typically attributed more to women, whereas men are more often associated with agentic qualities like assertiveness, ambition, and aggression. Women are also socially expected to display emotions such as joy, calmness, and modesty. Consequently, in many cultural contexts, the range of behaviors considered socially acceptable for women tends to be considerably narrower (Eagly & Wood, 1991). In the case of being angry with hysterical tone could be seen as such deviation of the socially embraced image for women in Japan and the U.S.

Japanese hisu-construction

Japanese "hysterical construction" (hisu-kobun, HK) has sparked an interest among younger generations since 2023. Initially, a Japanese comedian, Laland, created the HK as a joke, mocking the hysterical aspect of Japanese women (mothers). Many people started using the construction on platforms like YouTube or TikTok. According to Laland, there are several types of construction: 1) logical leap, 2) bold conclusion, 3) topic shift, 4) self-denial, and 5) verbal barrage. These categories are not entirely separated because they share the same quality, the hyperbolic description of the situation.

The logical leap is a pattern in which a speaker overinterprets someone's remarks and makes a logical jump to accuse or corner them. In the second type, the speaker abruptly draws a bold conclusion or proposes an absurd solution to end the discussion forcibly. The topic shift type is a pattern in which the speaker introduces a different issue unrelated to the current topic to gain the upper hand in the argument. In the self-denial type, the speaker excessively criticizes or denies themselves to elicit a reassuring response like "That's not true (That's not what I meant)." The last type is a pattern in which the speaker fires off a flood of words at once, losing

control of the conversation. From these observations, Laland defines the HK as follows: a construction that mothers employ to make the third party (kids) feel guilty through far-fetched argumentation and hysterical outbursts. Thus, the prototypical users of this construction are Japanese mothers.

All of the patterns draw our attention to hyperbole as a rhetorical strategy and to the OURS cultural model. For instance, Burgers et al (2016, pp. 164-65) summarize how one should define hyperbole: (1) scalar, (2) a specific shift between the propositional and the intended meaning, and (3) includes a specific reference (4) to real-world knowledge about the specific event. These hyperbolic elements explicitly in conjunction with the HK and the Karen meme.

Since the comedian created the HK, it might not be as academically significant. However, this paper argues that the HK is more than just a joke and that it reveals the unwritten norms and social expectations in Japanese society. In other words, the joke's exaggerated element is central, as humor functions not only to reinforce interpersonal bonds but also to assert power through mechanisms of control and aggression. (Goatly, 2012, p.131). A question arises about the kinds of power structures emerge those popular tropes. To answer this question, the following two sections cover the fundamental features of the Karen and the legitimacy of the comparative analysis, focusing on the background of this research.

Karen meme

Although the origin of the Karen meme is murky, there are some expositions on how it spread among people (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2022). Some argue that Karen was coined by comedian Dane Cook in 2005, or it can be associated with the movie *Mean Girls* (Greenspan, 2020). A common notion from various views on stereotypical Karen is that she has short haircuts ('the speak to the manager haircut'), showing entitlement as being white, when something gets in their way. It was mid-2020 that Karen's identity was widely shared on social media when Amy Cooper, known as Central Park Karen, was involved. According to the *New York Post*, she was filmed shouting at science and comic-book writer Christian Cooper, who was just a birdwatcher and unrelated to her, and phoning the police to report that an "African American man" was "threatening" her as she walked her dog in Central Park's Ramble area. The video went viral, and the incident seems to be the driving force behind the Karen meme's hype.

Essentially, the term "Karen" refers to a stigmatized social identity and a pejorative label applied to specific individuals. The definition and key characteristics of Karen include: a

woman "thought to be misbehaving, rudely or in an entitled manner." The identity is attributed to a group of (mostly) American women, who are stereotypically middle-aged and white. While the attribution of the identity is clearly gendered: 84% of incidents involved women in the studied corpus, the male counterpart is sometimes referred to as Ken or Kevin (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2022).

Consequently, "Karen" has morphed into a catch-all name for entitled white women who demand to speak to the manager, whether it's the manager of a store, a restaurant, or, in the case of that Texas teacher, the president of the United States (Abcarian, 2020). The Karen behavior generally emerges in public spaces (e.g., roads and streets, stores, near home, parking lots, restaurants, parks, sidewalks, etc). Within the United States, the Karen social persona is viewed as emerging from offline encounters in which people reacted to perceived threats to their face in environments that normatively require courteous and civil behavior.

The background of the comparative approach from socio-cognitive approach

As Adams et al., (2014, p.2) argue, a researcher can use "deep careful self-reflection—typically referred to as 'reflectivity'—to name and interrogate the intersections between self and society, the particular and the general, the personal and political." In this sense, a teacher's self-reflection—grounded in their own teaching experiences and socio-cultural awareness—is crucial for improving instructional design. I chose to focus on HK construction because it appeared in the 2023 Kyōtsū Test (standardized test) for Japanese university admissions. In fact, many Japanese high school students who took the exam pointed this out on social media (e.g., Twitter/X), which sparked my curiosity and eventually led me to watch a YouTube video by Laland. I not only enjoyed the content but also realized that the comedian captured how stereotypical Japanese women (especially mothers) express hysterical emotions remarkably well. Although the HK is framed as a joke, it provides valuable insights into the social norms and expectations embedded within Japanese gendered discourse.

This personal awareness naturally leads to further questions: *What if I compare the hysterical construction with an English counterpart that closely mirrors it? What can such a comparison teach us about English as a second language and about cross-cultural emotional expression?* This self-awareness is important as a Japanese teacher of English in that we have to conduct classes unique to Japanese identity. In this respect, Takaesu and Sumo (2019) contend that some Japanese students see Japanese English teachers as less qualified than native speakers. In Japan, some people still hold the idea of native worship, so much so that it is

required for Japanese teachers to have their uniqueness linked to significant critical cultural awareness.

Moreover, there is an issue of the distance between Japanese and English. It is safe to say that English is considered to be a low common ground for Japanese people (Zhu et al., 2025, p.29). In that scenario, language awareness brings us new insights about the target language, reflecting our own language and culture. As such, the comparative can be beneficial to grasp the importance of language awareness (Svalberg, 2016). They both highlight the hyperbolic nature of a particular attribute ingrained in each culture as a cognitively heuristic attribute (Maillat & Oswald, 2011).

As the counterpart of the HK, I chose a widely circulated meme because it is "an amusing or interesting item (such as a captioned picture or video) or genre of items that is spread widely online, especially through social media" (*Meriam-Webster*) It is fair to say popular words, constructions, or memes are socio-cognitive representations and social semiotic systems that reveal power structure, gender/racial issues, and many other multifaceted social representations (e.g., Potter, 1996; Van Dijk, 1998; Koller, 2011; Kramsch & Hua, 2020). The analysis allows us to observe cultural differences across the same themes, topics, and social issues. In other words, the comparative analysis of the Karen meme and the hysterical construction (HK) can facilitate learning by helping one reflect on oneself while simultaneously gaining exposure to a different way of thinking.

The prominent commonality between them is their hyperbolic nature, which includes at least five similarities: entitlement, selfishness, a desire to complain (being hysterical), and a victim mentality. However, cognitive models of social stereotypes (Lakoff, 1987) enable us to examine different socially expected norms. As Lakoff (1987, p.81) argues, "normal expectations play an important role in cognition, and they are required in order to characterize the meaning of certain words." The social stereotypes are also dovetailed with the frame and idealized cognitive model (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff, 2004; Hart, 2014). For instance, Lakoff (2002) proposes a strict father morality, where there is a Metaphor of the Moral Order based on Great Chain of Being: Men are naturally more powerful than women, men have more authority over women, men have a responsibility for the well-being of women (Lakoff, 2002, p.82). These fundamental moralities seep into both U.S. and Japanese societies, a situation in which a male-dominated structure is widely distributed.

Despite the emphasis on diversity in Japan, Japanese society is mainly for Japanese people who speak Japanese. A racial issue in Japan is not as prominent as in U.S. culture, to the point that being entitled has different meanings. In the Japanese context, a socially expected

behavior for women—"A mother, drawing upon the presumed source of maternal affection, is expected to accept her child unconditionally and to provide care and emotional support in a self-effacing and self-sacrificial manner" (Kuriyama, 2016, p.24)— might construct a social norm. Indeed, many women felt pressure from the socially constructed idealized image of motherhood.

In the U.S. context, too, such hierarchy is coupled with a socially shared standard, and racial hierarchy involves an additional layer (Harp, 2019). Exploring the overlap between White identity and male gender revealed a sophisticated comprehension of how hegemonic masculinity is sustained through dominance, hierarchical power, and intersecting social structures (Harp, 2019, p.38). This view is no exception for white women who consider themselves socially high status in confronting racial minorities.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, theoretical approach grounded in rhetorical analysis. The primary aim is not to conduct a large-scale corpus study, but to identify typical rhetorical patterns of hysterical reactions in Japanese and U.S. contexts, and to propose a classroom design that enables learners to engage with these patterns critically. To illustrate these patterns, a small number of representative examples were collected from TikTok and other social media platforms using the hashtags related to the Hisu-construction and the Karen meme. These examples are treated as pedagogical materials, not as systematic datasets. TikTok is better suited for pedagogical use, given that its algorithm constantly refreshes content, making it challenging to ensure reproducibility in data collection. I took the following steps to collect data to show an example of the analysis to students:

1. Enter the keyword—"ヒス構文" and "Karen meme—in the search box.
2. Click "For you" and review the top ten videos, respectively.
3. Check each influencer's number of followers and select the top two for the HK.
4. Identify the most viewed videos related to the Karen meme.
5. Compare how people express their hysterical emotions, paying attention to their rhetoric (e.g., metaphor, irony, etc), facial expressions, gestures, and other features.

As noted earlier, the HK serves primarily as a humorous construction, and the influencer created the joke by drawing on the prototypical HK pattern discussed in Section 2. For this study, I selected an influencer (michaela_sato佐藤ミケーラ倭子 (604.1K) with the largest follower counts, on the assumption that a higher number of followers generally corresponds to greater social influence.

Karen memes are often recorded by third parties who witness the so-called "Karen moments." On TikTok, however, the circulating clips tend to be those filmed by the individuals targeted by the Karen, and influencers typically upload edited compilations ranked by popularity. As a result, a single uploaded clip may contain multiple original videos. For this reason, I selected an example based on the influencers' rankings.

In socially significant discourse (e.g., political, gendered, and educational discourse), a rhetorical analysis plays a vital role in understanding the interrelation between language and discourse (Semino, 2008; Musolff, 2016). As the HK and the Karen memes intersect with gendered and racial discourse, a metaphor analysis can be indispensable. Metaphors are not mere linguistic decoration; they govern our thoughts and actions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). To analyze metaphors in detail, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was adopted to examine pragmatic functions within a socio-cognitive framework (Charteris-Black, 2018).

CMT views linguistic expressions as evidence of the systematic metaphors. For example, love is oftentimes conceptualized as a journey, phrases such as "our relationship has hit a dead-end street" "keep going the way they've been going," "It's been a long bumpy road," showcase the elements of a concept journey (source domain) is mapped on a more abstract, intangible concept love (target domain) (Lakoff, 1993, p.206). This general principle, or conceptual system, governs a language: understanding one domain of a particular concept in terms of a very different domain at the conceptual level. Importantly, recent studies (e.g., Hart, 2014; Steen, 2023) apply this theory to analyze discourse-based metaphors, which involve a crossover of conceptual and social dimensions. This study considers how metaphors are used in the HK, as the Karen meme involves more direct, spontaneous emotional outbursts than the indirect verbal attacks found in the HK.

In addition, I analyzed how speakers use gestures, gaze, and facial expressions (Andersson, 2024). For instance, gestures include throwing up your hands or arms, deictic pointing, head tilts, and lying on the floor. Gaze involves an angry/scornful stare and bugged-out eyes. Facial expressions include a look of disdain, a frown or scowl, and a sarcastic grin. The subsequent examples illustrate how these frameworks can be applied by students to analyze similar phenomena.

Examples

Example 1

Examples given in this section are not intended to determine whether my analysis is right or wrong. On the contrary, they are designed to give students heuristic cues to apply for their analysis, not for absorption learning. As Gergen (2015, p. 148) rightly argues, "Learning is an

integral part of taking action in matters about which one cares." With this in mind, the following analysis could be a model analysis for students. As an example of the HK, this section introduces Michaela Sato (佐藤ミケーラ倭子) 's video clip (00:37), in which she deploys a systematic animal metaphor to legitimize her position. The example below shows a conversation between the customer and the clerk.

Customer: I don't need the receipt.

Clerk: It has your pickup number on it, so if you could just—

Customer: No, it's fine.

Clerk: Oh, I see. So you mean the receipt I touched is too dirty for you? Then what, huh? Because you refuse to take your receipts, they'll pile up, and I'll end up buried in them and turn into a goat. Yeah, sure, I'll just survive eating nothing but receipts. Right? "A goat working the register at McDonald's." I'll be super famous, and they'll start selling meadow-burger or something and open an organic McDonald's. Is that what you want?

Customer: O-okay… I'll take it…

Clerk: No, it's fine. It's fine. I'll just go live my life as a goat now.

The excerpts start from the scene where the clerk asks the customer to receive the receipt. Once the clerk realizes her point does not get across, her attitude suddenly changes to hysterical, with the remark "e, nani (Oh, I see)," as shown in the following figure.

Figure 1 A McDonald's store clerk exhibiting the HK behavior.

This is the first stage of the HK, a cue for an emotional transformation from a serene state to a hysterical state. As the emotion changes, so does the speaker's posture; the head tilts for a moment as the speaker says, "Oh, I see." At the onset of the HK, she broaches the far-fetched idea of the cleanliness of her hand, saying, "The receipt I touched is too dirty." This made-up reason why the customer did not receive the receipt is apparently off the wall.

However, the hyperbole brings the customer into the speaker's mental space (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014), where exaggeration with metaphors creates the seemingly legitimate claim.

The extended animal metaphor plays a vital role in constructing her account of what is happening in the ad hoc situation. A conceptual metaphor, PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS, is underpinned in this context in which there is a mapping between the goat (source) to the clerk (target). The rudimentary mapping is extended as the conversation progresses: MEADOW-BURGER and ORGANIC MACDONALD'S correspond to THE RESULT OF CLERK EATING PILED RECEIPTS AS FOOD. The extended metaphor, using the words "meadow-burger" and "organic McDonald's," depicts the result when the customer refuses to take the receipt. Through the mapping from the source to the target, the speaker illuminates her view that plant-made McDonald's burgers are absurd and unthinkable. In this sense, the extended metaphor use significantly entrenches her lop-sided view that not taking the receipt is an absolute wrongdoing. This context-level interpretation also derives from epistemic correspondence, shown in the table below.

Table 2 The epistemic correspondence of the animal metaphor in context (K=knowledge)

source	target
K1: A goat is not a human being.	K1: The clerk is not a human being.
K1: A goat is an herbivore.	K1: The clerk is an herbivore.
K2: Herbivores eat plants.	K2: The clerk eats receipts.
K3: The clerk working at Macdonald's serves hamburgers.	K3: The clerk working at organic Macdonald's serves meadow-burgers.

The epistemic correspondence lays the foundation for the context-level correspondences that exist underneath it. These inferences create an extreme space that overwhelms the listener. Another essential rhetorical technique used in this HK is the rhetorical question: the speaker uses the question to take advantage, expecting the listener's answer to be 'no.' The speaker makes the listener bewildered with the fallacy of many questions. The systematic metaphor use and the rhetorical questions result in the ironic final remark, "I'll just go live my life as a goat now." This irony is not merely intended to attack the opponent as an individual, but it also embodies a victim mindset that invites pity by playing the sympathy card. The following section covers the typical Karen meme to compare with the HK.

Example 2

The section discusses the Karen meme video clip on "ranking the best Karen crashouts" (00:17). In this video, there is a brief conversation between the woman (the Karen) and the man, during which you can see the woman's extreme reactions, as in the following example.

A woman: Hey, Internet. This man and his doberman just attacked me and my chihuahua.

A man: It's not a doberman.

A woman: Aaaah!

A man: What are you doing?

A woman: Aaaah! Aaaah!He just bit me.

A man: No, he didn't.

A woman: Help! Police! I'm gonna call the police! Help!

The Karen's opening statement—the man and his dog attacked her—is entirely fabricated. She constructs a counterfactual space in which the man is the criminal and the woman the victim. After the man denies that the dog is a Doberman, she begins to scream, only further confusing him. At that moment, she placed her hand on her knee, performing the role of someone who had been attacked by them, as shown in Figure 2.

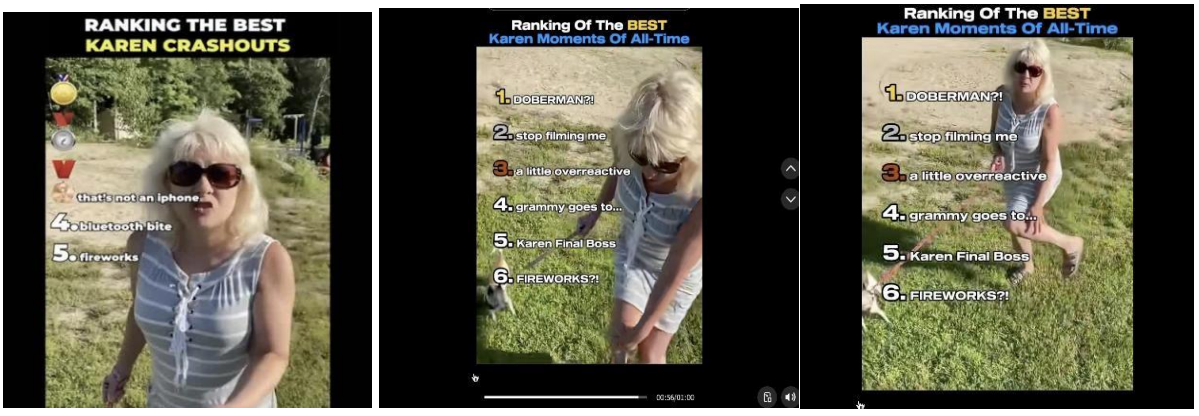

Figure 2 The Karen meme in TikTok (DOBERMAN?!)

Having been surprised, he said to her, "What are you doing?" which prompted her to scream more ("Aaaah!"), arguing that the dog bit her. Regardless of the man's denial, she broached the subject of calling the police. Indeed, the calling-the-police scenario is a typical tactic of Karens to legitimize their actions as if they are the right thing to do.

Note that they do not use ironic or sarcastic comments to claim legitimacy; instead, they express their emotions more straightforwardly toward the person. This characterization accords with the MINE model, which holds that emotions are individual inner feelings. Rather than involving others to make them feel guilty, they express their anger in their own way. In this type of accusation, there is no technical rhetoric to be found in the HK example. Taken together, the following features emerge:

- She constructed a counterfactual space, where the man and the dog attacked her.
- She screamed with a terrified facial expression, gestures (pointing a finger at a camera), placing her hand on her knees, leaning back a bit, etc, to show that she was the victim.
- She did not use complex rhetorical devices.
- She used her racial profile (being a white female)
- The fact that she thought the police could help her implies her unconscious superiority and entitlement.

The example above demonstrates that the Karen meme or behavior is deeply rooted in U.S. culture, unlike the Japanese hysterical construction. Nevertheless, they share the following features: entitlement, selfishness, a desire to complain (being hysterical), and a victim mentality.

Similarities and differences between the HK and the Karen

So far, we have discussed examples of the HK and the Karen behavior, respectively. We will observe prototypical stages in which they show their position. The following table demonstrates the HK process.

Table 3 The typical HK communicative strategy

Stage 1	A speaker holds a certain value, morality, and expectation.
Stage 2	A speaker's value, morality or expectation is violated.
Stage 3	A speaker uses bodily gestures, facial expressions and language to show that the speaker gets upset to clarify her stance and position.
Stage 4	A speaker uses the HK to construct an exaggerated space.
Stage 5	A speaker expands the space with rhetorical devices (metaphor, rhetorical questions) to make the listener feel guilty and overwhelmed.
Stage 6	A listener is forced to say "That's not what I meant."
Stage 7	A speaker concludes with an ironic remark based on the exaggerated space

The premise of the HK is that the speaker holds certain values, moral expectations, and assumptions formed through their subjective experiences. The construction is triggered when these expectations are violated, prompting the speaker to use gestures and facial expressions to signal their frustration. To draw the listener into her exaggerated emotional space, the speaker deploys rhetorical devices that overwhelm the listener, who eventually has no choice but to respond with, "That's not what I meant." At this stage, the speaker leverages the listener's resulting sense of guilt and concludes her remarks with irony.

The following table shows the prototypical characteristics of a Karen meme.

Table 4 The typical Karen's communicative strategy

Stage 1	A speaker holds a certain value, morality, and expectation.
Stage 2	A speaker's value, morality or expectation is violated.
Stage 3	A speaker uses bodily gestures, facial expressions and language to show that the speaker gets upset to clarify her stance and position.
Stage 4	A speaker constructs a counterfactual space.
Stage 5	A speaker starts to play the victim card, screaming to the person, lying on the floor, etc.
Stage 6	A speaker mentions calling the police.

The first three stages help us identify the features shared with the HK. Although the exaggerated and counterfactual spaces may overlap to some extent, a subtle distinction emerges. The counterfactual space is where the speaker fabricates a scenario that clearly contradicts the mutually shared context, as illustrated in Example 2. Within this constructed space, the speaker positions herself as the victim, portraying the listener as someone who attacks her both physically and psychologically. That is why they usually use a more direct way to express their emotions, without resorting to complex rhetorical devices. This counterfactually constructed world enables the speaker to adopt a victim stance, ultimately legitimizing actions such as threatening to call the police.

From the discussion above, the general differences between them can be summed up in the following way:

- The HK targets the third party's guilt, making them feel sorry with ironic remarks.
- The HK employs various rhetorical devices (metaphors, similes, etc.)
- The Karen meme does not involve sarcasm or irony.

- Karen meme employs unidirectional emotional explosion, meaning that it uses directives. Unlike the HK, the third party does not feel sorry for the speaker; instead, they react negatively.

The subsequent section discusses how English learners and teachers can apply this type of comparison to classroom activities.

Discussion

Across this paper, I have argued that a language should not be viewed as a culturally empty code by demonstrating the two examples in the preceding sections. As Kramsch and Hua (2020) argue, ELT practitioners need to cultivate a deeper awareness of the historical and political forces that shape language use, together with greater reflexivity, so that learners can recognize the power relations embedded in intercultural communication and understand the historical and symbolic dimensions associated with what is termed "symbolic competence." One way to deepen such social and political awareness is through the comparison of the way one expresses their emotions. Overgeneralization of social stereotypes or group memberships should certainly be avoided; however, attending to the processes of meaning-making allows us to notice aspects of discourse that often remain outside our conscious awareness (Kramsch and Hua, 2020, p.42).

In this sense, even though the present study is theoretical, it offers implications for designing classroom practices tailored to developing critical cultural awareness beyond treating language merely as a tool for communication. Scollon and Scollon (2001) propose a discourse-based approach, "interdiscourse communication," through which analysts can examine how identities and meanings are constituted in interaction. According to Scollona and Scollon (2001), discourse systems comprise "generation, profession, corporate or institutional placement, regional, ethnic, and other possible identities." Accordingly, the comparative analysis in this study provides a suitable foundation for proposing practical ELT activities.

This paper proposes a hypothetical course titled "Introduction to Language and Culture," consisting of approximately 14–15 sessions, following a typical Japanese university semester structure (see Appendix A for a sample syllabus). Each session would last either 90 or 100 minutes. Since each class period at the current institution—Kobe Pharmaceutical University—is 100 minutes, the course design proposed here follows that format. The class size is relatively small, with approximately 15-20 students per class. The following steps outline how the instructional sequence can be implemented over a four-week cycle of classroom activities.

Table 5 The four-week cycle of classroom activities

WEEK 11 (Introduction) — 100 minutes
1 The instructor introduces the concepts of hysterical construction (HK) and the Karen meme.
2 Students read brief summaries of relevant research papers.
3 The instructor presents selected TikTok and YouTube video clips.
4 Based on Steps 1–3, each group synthesizes their observations regarding cultural similarities and differences.
5 The instructor presents examples (see Section 4) after asking students opinions based on the step 4.
5 The instructor poses additional thought-provoking discussion questions.
6 Students engage in group-based discussion activities.
WEEK 12 (Small Project-Based Activity) — 100 minutes
1 Students select one emotion from major emotional categories (e.g., happiness, sadness).
2 They identify Japanese and English expressions using dictionaries, reading materials, or social media sources.
3 Each group member conducts a brief pragmatic analysis of the expressions they collected.
4 Groups present an outline of their planned presentation.
WEEK 13 (Presentations) — 100 minutes
1 Each group presents the results of their analysis.
2 Question-and-answer session.
3 Instructor feedback.
WEEK 14 (Presentations & Wrap-up) — 100 minutes
1 Each group delivers a second presentation on their findings.
2 Question-and-answer session.
3 Instructor feedback.

In Week 11, the instructor introduces the foundational concepts of HK and the Karen meme by distributing a handout summarizing key findings from previous studies and reviewing

the content with students. In addition to the textual materials, the instructor presents selected TikTok and YouTube video clips. This introductory phase, corresponding to Steps 1–3, occupies approximately the first 50 minutes of the session. Following this, students are placed into groups of three or four, and asked to synthesize their observations of cultural similarities and differences and articulate their implications. This group work lasts for about 15–20 minutes. The instructor then poses additional discussion questions designed to encourage reflection on students' personal experiences:

Q1. Have you ever encountered someone behaving hysterically in Japan (e.g., a mother, friend, or acquaintance)? How did that person express their emotions?
Q2. Have you ever observed hysterical behavior in people from other countries? How were their emotions expressed?
Q3. How do you usually express your own emotions as a Japanese speaker?

These questions serve two purposes: (1) to encourage students to reflect on their own cultural backgrounds, personalities, gendered experiences, and personal histories; and (2) to provide opportunities for them to practice articulating their thoughts in English as a communicative tool. However, these questions alone are not sufficient for fostering critical thinking beyond personal opinion-sharing. To prompt deeper engagement with culturally embedded assumptions, the instructor introduces the following questions:

Q4. Apart from individual differences, do you think the contrast between Japanese and U.S. emotional expression is merely a phenomenon reflected in popular constructions and memes? Can we generalize patterns in how people express emotions in both contexts?
Q5. Do you think the "construction" and the "meme" not only reveal underlying stereotypes but also reproduce socially constructed and intentionally emphasized aspects of those stereotypes?

Question 4 encourages students to consider external factors that may shape cultural differences in emotional expression. In contrast, Question 5 prompts them to reflect on how their own behaviors may contribute to the reproduction of socially shared norms. The subsequent group discussion on the intersection of language and culture lasts approximately 15–20 minutes. Taken together, these activities enable students to gain a rudimentary understanding of the two cultural representations, reflect on their subjective experiences and contextual factors, and recognize how individuals participate in sustaining social norms.

As noted earlier, students develop a basic understanding of cross-cultural differences in emotional expression through reading materials and group discussions. On WEEK12, each

group undertakes a small project by selecting one emotion from basic emotional categories (e.g., happiness, sadness) (Eliot & Hirumi, 2019). Group members are assigned specific roles to gather examples using Instagram, dictionaries, YouTube, or other sources, which they then analyze from a sociocultural perspective. After collecting these resources, each student prepares an outline for the presentations scheduled for WEEK13 and WEEK14.

On WEEK13 and WEEK14, each group delivers a 10-minute presentation on their findings, followed by a 5-minute Q&A session. Because each group member approaches the topic from a different viewpoint, the presentations would be dynamic and diverse. The instructor provides feedback after each presentation. Finally, the instructor presents one of the comparative analyses of HK and the Karen meme discussed in the previous section as a concluding illustration. This four-week cycle of classroom activities affords several advantages:

- Students develop an understanding of the importance of "interdiscourse communication."
- Students learn to analyze linguistic expressions of emotion while connecting them to sociocultural dimensions, thereby engaging critically with both their own language use and the target language.
- Students can learn about the pragmatic aspects of how emotions should be expressed across cultures (e.g., the MINE and OURS model) and the dynamics of interaction.
- Students engage in self-reflection, connecting their identities and experiences while simultaneously practicing effective English communication.
- Students actively participate in project-based learning.
- Students learn practical presentation formats and, through receiving feedback, develop the ability to engage in academic communication with their peers.

Ultimately, these approaches can enhance the quality of English learning that would otherwise remain limited if teaching practices focus solely on grammar and the four skills. It is essential to critically examine both learners' and the target language through the lenses of identity, culture, and society.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore how a comparative analysis of the HK and the Karen memes can be pedagogically mobilized to foster cultural awareness in ELT. By foregrounding emotions as socially constructed categories rather than purely physiological reactions, the study

demonstrated how the OURS–MINE distinction broadly maps onto Japanese and U.S. sociocultural contexts. The HK, while framed through humorous performance, illuminates culturally embedded gendered stereotypes, and the Karen meme likewise provides a discursive site through which socially shared images and labels become visible. The incorporation of the rhetorical analysis using SNS-based examples was essential for capturing emergent patterns of socially circulated perceptions.

Drawing on this theoretical foundation, the discussion proposed a four-week cycle of classroom activities based on the comparative analysis. The instructor's analysis is not intended as a generalized claim but as a heuristic starting point that enables students to examine analogous phenomena independently. The pedagogical value of this approach lies in equipping learners with critical awareness of how language, culture, and identity intersect in everyday discourse.

The principal limitation of this study is its theoretical nature; empirical testing is necessary to assess the validity and pedagogical effectiveness of the proposal. To address this, I plan to adopt the syllabus in the appendix for the next academic year and collect students' responses as the empirical data for further analysis.

Although this study focused on Japanese and English, the approach presented here is replicable across other languages. By examining language and culture through a metacognitive lens rather than at a surface level, efforts to understand others ultimately deepen self-understanding, which in turn circulates back into enhanced understanding of others. This reciprocal cycle offers a valuable pathway for cultivating culturally grounded interpretive competence in ELT.

Declaration of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest. The analysis and interpretations were conducted independently, and no external influence affected the content or conclusions of this research.

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Appendix A

Table 6 Sample syllabus

WEEK1	Overview of course topics: • Cognitive linguistics and rhetorical analysis • Language and culture • Emotion-related expressions • Critical awareness of multi-layered discourse (e.g., power structures) • Social stereotypes (e.g., gender, race, etc.) Goal: Students will understand the overall structure of the course, grading criteria, and languages used (English & Japanese).
WEEK2	Introduction to cognitive linguistics: • Historical background and key concepts Goal: Students will gain a foundational understanding of the scope of cognitive linguistics.
WEEK3	Introduction to metaphor from a cognitive linguistic perspective: • Basic concepts of conceptual metaphor theory Goal: Students will understand the fundamental principles of conceptual metaphor theory.
WEEK4	Introduction to metonymy from a cognitive linguistic perspective: • Basic concepts of metonymy and related rhetorical devices Goal: Students will understand the fundamental mechanisms of metonymy and related rhetorical devices.
WEEK5	Cognitive model of "anger" (Part 1): • Basic understanding of emotion conceptualization based on Lakoff's (1987) analysis (Case Study 1) Goal: Students will understand how physiological reactions relate to emotion-related linguistic expressions.
WEEK6	Cognitive model of "anger" (Part 2): • Continued exploration of Lakoff's (1987) analysis (Case Study 1) Goal: Students will deepen their understanding of how physiological reactions relate to emotion-related expressions
WEEK7	Socio-cultural aspects of "anger":

	• Understanding emotions as socially constructed categories (based on recent research) • Understanding emotions as stance-taking, entitlement, and legitimisation strategies Goal: Students will understand the socio-cultural influences shaping emotional expressions.
WEEK8	Language and power in discourse: • How language functions within multi-layered discourse Goal: Students will understand the socio-cognitive relationship between language and power.
WEEK9	Introduction to social stereotypes: • Cognitive aspects of stereotypes from a cognitive linguistic perspective • How discourse constructs and reproduces social stereotypes Goal: Students will understand how social stereotypes are constructed through socio-cognitive processes.
WEEK10	Methodology for discourse analysis (metaphor analysis): • Basic understanding of metaphor analysis in discourse • Applying concepts from WEEK 1–10 to real data Goal: Students will understand how to conduct their own discourse analysis using cognitive linguistic tools.
WEEK 11-14	See Table 5

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Lateral Thinking to Develop Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

This article explores the potential of using Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" concept to develop students' writing, especially functional writing, competencies. Unlike traditional teaching methods, this paper proposes a lateral approach that involves personifying different modes of thinking and integrating them into a practical context. The object of the study is how Bono's hats method contributes to students' clear, logical, and structured expression of thoughts in Georgian, as well as their critical, creative, and analytical thinking.

The methodology involves the personification of de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" (white – facts; red – emotions; black – criticism; yellow – positivity; green – creativity; blue – management/summarization) using Georgian anthroponyms – Giorgi Tetradze, Mariam Chitava, Murman Shavadze, Elene Kvitelashvili, Nikoloz Balakhashvili, Tamar Glurjidze. This mnemonic model aims to present the concept in an intuitive and memorable format. The article discusses in detail a variety of formats of writing assignments, such as mini-scripts, official letters, presentation scripts, advertising materials, and problem-solving reports, in which the role and sequence of each "hat" is adapted to the specific functional writing goals. Special attention is paid to the impact of changing the order of the hats and multiple alternating repetitions on writing skills, which ensures the dynamism and flexibility of the thinking process.

The main results indicate that lateral approaches significantly improve students': 1) writing flexibility and stylistic adaptation to different genres and purposes; 2) dialogic writing and replica construction skills; 3) effectiveness of argumentation and counterargumentation; 4) integration of creative thinking into writing; 5) ability to analyze a problem from multiple perspectives; 6) lexical and grammatical diversity according to context.

In conclusion, the systematic use of personalized tasks from Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" represents a creative and effective pedagogical tool for Georgian-speaking students to develop not only functional writing skills but also to deepen critical, analytical, and creative thinking, which is invaluable for them in both academic and professional contexts.

Keywords: *Georgian Language, Writing Competencies, Lateral Thinking, Six Thinking Hats, Functional Writing, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Pedagogical Innovation*

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Introduction

Effective written communication skills are critically important in the modern academic and professional world. Of particular relevance to students is the development of functional writing competencies, which include the ability to convey ideas logically and structurally in a variety of formal contexts. However, traditional pedagogical approaches often fail to fully equip students with the skills

they need to complete complex writing tasks, especially when it comes to integrating critical, analytical, and creative thinking into their written products (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Göçmen & Coşkun, 2019; Oktaviani et al., 2024).

This paper proposes a pedagogical innovation in teaching writing skills, based on Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" concept (de Bono, 1985). De Bono's method, which promotes parallel thinking and multi-faceted problem analysis, is a lateral approach to learning (de Bono, 1970; de Bono, 1994). This approach allows students to systematize different modes of thinking (factual, emotional, critical, optimistic, creative, and organizing) and use them purposefully when completing writing tasks (de Bono, 1994; Bodur, 2018).

The significance of the work lies in the fact that it not only expands the existing knowledge about the methodologies of teaching functional writing but also offers a practical, adapted approach that has been introduced into the Georgian-language educational space. In particular, the personification of De Bono's hats with Georgian anthroponyms (Giorgi Tetradze, Mariam Chitava, Murman Shavadze, Elene Kvitelashvili, Nikoloz Balakhashvili, Tamar Glurjidze) contributes to a better perception and memorization of the concept, which is important for students who still have difficulty conveying thoughts correctly in a foreign language (Sweller, 1994). The use of this method at different stages of the development of writing competencies, including through changing the sequence and multiple alternating repetitions, strengthens students' complex thinking, flexible writing style, and solid argumentation (de Bono, 1992; Graham & Harris, 2005).

In this context, this article attempts to answer the following research question: How can the adapted use of Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" method, through the alternation of different writing tasks and thinking modes, contribute to the effective development of functional writing and critical thinking competencies of Georgian-speaking students?

Methodology

This paper is a qualitative study that aims to evaluate the adaptation and potential of Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" method for developing the written and functional writing competencies of non-Georgian speaking students. The study is based on a pedagogical approach that promotes the systematic use of different modes of thinking in the writing process (de Bono, 1985; Kivunja, 2015).

Research design

The research design involves adapting de Bono's lateral concept and integrating it into various types of writing tasks (de Bono, 1994). To assess the effectiveness of the method, a series of practical tasks will be used that will allow students to experience the function of each "hat" and their combinations (de Bono, 1985).

Participants

The students participating in the study were selected randomly (for example, from the functional writing groups that we taught ourselves). In the future, the selection area may be extended to the entire level of Georgian language training at the Faculty of Humanities of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. The number and detailed characteristics of the participants (e.g., course - functional writing, initial writing level - B2) will be specified before the start of the study, in compliance with ethical standards. The latter implies strict adherence to the principles and procedures that ensure the protection of the rights, safety, and well-being of the students participating in the study. This may include: informed consent, full transparency (purpose of the study, methodology, duration, expected risks and benefits), voluntariness, confirmation of understanding including written consent, confidentiality, etc.

Materials and tools

The main instruments used in the study included:

1. A personified mnemonic model of de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" concept (de Bono, 1985): each "hat" is named with Georgian anthroponyms to make it easier to perceive and remember (Giorgi Tetradze – white hat, Mariam Chitava – red hat, Murman Shavadze – black hat, Elene Kvitelashvili – yellow hat, Nikoloz Balakhashvili – green hat, Tamar Glurjidze – blue hat).
2. Set of writing tasks: A variety of functional writing tasks were developed, which were built based on the sequence and alternation of specific "hats" (de Bono, 1994). These included:
    - Mini-scripts and dialogues: focused on short, concrete expressions of emotions, facts, criticism, and creative ideas.
    - Formal/semi-formal letters and emails: Focus on formal presentation of arguments, problem justifications, and solutions.
    - Presentation scenarios/speech: aimed at developing structured thinking skills and practicing coherent argumentation.
    - Advertising/informational materials: Aimed at creating short, clear, and persuasive texts.
    - Problem-solving reports: focused on in-depth analysis of a problem and making decisions (Vedawala et al., 2024).
3. Evaluation rubrics (de Bono, 1992): Specific criteria for evaluating written assignments were developed, which included both linguistic accuracy and style, as well as depth of thinking, logic of argumentation, creativity, and problem-solving skills (Graham & Harris, 2005; Weigle, 2002; de Bono, 1992).

Procedure

The research was carried out in the following stages:

1. Introduction to the method: We introduced the students in detail to Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" concept, their functions, and the personified model (de Bono, 1985; de Bono, E./n.d.).
2. Initial Assessment: An initial assessment will be conducted to determine the initial level of students' writing skills (e.g., analysis of a standardized test. Weigle, 2002).
3. Assignment completion: Students completed writing assignments, where de Bono's hats were used as a tool to guide both the structure and the thinking process (Graham & Perin, 2007).
    - Shifting and alternating the order of thinking modes: The tasks included both the original sequence proposed by Bono (white → red → black → yellow → green → blue), as well as modified sequences (e.g., starting with the red hat, starting with the black hat, starting with the green hat) and multiple repetitions of the hats in turn (de Bono, 1985; de Bono, 1994). The experimental workshops allowed us to assess the impact of the sequence on the thinking process and the quality of the final product (de Bono, 1970; de Bono, 1992; Flower & Hayes, 1981).
4. Feedback and Discussion: After each assignment, students received detailed feedback on their work, as well as group discussions on the effectiveness and challenges of using the hats (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Zimmerman, 2002).
5. Final Assessment: At the end of the study, a final assessment was conducted to determine the improved level of students' writing skills compared to the initial assessment (Biber et al., 2011).

Data analysis

The collected data (written works, assessment rubrics, students' self-reflections, and discussion notes) were analyzed using qualitative methods (de Bono, 1970). Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring themes, patterns, and trends between students' thinking processes and written products (de Bono, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007). We compared the impact of different task formats and order of hats on individual aspects of writing competencies (argumentation, structure, creativity, linguistic flexibility. Torrance, 1974; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Results

The study revealed a significant positive impact of Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" method, especially its personalized tasks and adapted sequences, on the development of students' writing competencies. The analysis is based on qualitative data from writing tasks, assessment rubrics, and group discussions completed by students (Graham & Harris, 2005).

Writing flexibility and stylistic adaptation

Students who actively used the de Bono thinking hats method significantly improved their ability to adapt their writing style and tone to different genres and purposes. This was especially noticeable when writing formal letters, advertising materials, and problem-solving reports, where the role of each hat in shaping a specific section was clearly defined (Hyland, 2007). For example, using the yellow hat to highlight benefits in advertising materials or using the black hat to present risks in a problem-solving report helped students create targeted and effective texts.

Dialogical writing and constructing lines

Mini-script and dialogue tasks, where each hat represented a different character or mode of thinking, helped students improve their dialogic writing skills (Mercer & Littleton, 2007). They were able to more easily construct lines that reflected different perspectives of thinking (facts, emotions, criticism, positivity, new ideas). This improvement was especially noticeable among students who initially had difficulty conveying a variety of perspectives in written form.

Effectiveness of argumentation and counterargumentation

The consistent use of the black (critical) and yellow (positive) hats allowed students to strengthen their argumentation and counterargumentation skills (Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007). When analyzing a problem, they explored both negative and positive aspects in more depth, which made their texts more convincing and balanced. The black hat's "risk assessment" followed by the green hat's "new ideas", as described in the methods, proved to be particularly effective in refining arguments.

Integrate creative thinking

The active use of the green hat allowed students to demonstrate and develop creative thinking within the framework of writing assignments. They offered innovative solutions and non-standard approaches to solving problems, especially when they were given the freedom to alternate the order of the hats (as discussed in the fourth option). This contributed to the originality and diversity of the texts (Torrance, 1974).

Ability to analyze a problem from multiple perspectives

When writing problem-solving reports that used all hats sequentially (blue-white-red-black-yellow-green-blue), students demonstrated improved ability to analyze the problem in a multifaceted and in-depth manner. They were able to integrate both factual and emotional, critical, positive, and creative aspects of the problem into a single, coherent narrative (Jonassen, 2011).

Linguistic diversity and logical coherence

The multiple alternating repetition of the hats, as proposed in the fourth option, had a positive effect on the students' linguistic diversity and logical connection of thoughts. They were forced to frequently change the tone and style of their writing, and more actively used various types of linguistic clichés, template phrases, and lexical items, which made their texts more fluent and sophisticated (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987).

Table 1: Improving Writing Skills Using De Bono's Thinking Hats

Competence aspect	Task type where the most improvement was seen	Description
Writing flexibility/style adaptation	Official letters, promotional materials	Creating targeted and effective texts for different audiences and contexts.
Dialogical writing	Mini-scenarios, dialogues	Conveying a diversity of perspectives through replicas.
Argumentation	Problem reports, official letters	Balanced analysis of negative and positive aspects, convincing reasoning.
Creative thinking	Problem-solving reports, mini-scenarios	Offering innovative ideas and non-standard solutions.
Problem analysis	Problem-solving reports	Integrating factual, emotional, critical, positive, and creative aspects.
Linguistic diversity	All types of tasks (rotating)	Activation of various lexical items, clichés, and syntactic constructions.

Overall, the results confirm that de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" method, with its flexible adaptation and personification, is a versatile and effective tool for the complex development of writing competencies, especially functional writing skills, in students.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate the significant effectiveness of Edward de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" method, especially its flexible adaptation of personalized tasks and sequences, in developing students' writing competencies. The results obtained are consistent with the view that tools for visualizing and structuring thinking contribute to improving both cognitive processes and the quality of written products (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Amabile, 1996; Graham & Harris, 2005).

In particular, the lateral approach of the de Bono method - where each mode of thinking is personified and purposefully used in a specific writing context - was found to effectively break down the barriers of traditional, linear thinking (Flower & Hayes, 1981). The improvement in students' writing flexibility and stylistic adaptation to different genres and purposes confirms that the hats allow them to better mobilize writing strategies according to the addressee and communicative purpose (Hyland, 2003). This is especially important for functional writing, where the adequacy of the text to the context plays a crucial role (Nussbaum & Schraw, 2007).

Improvements in dialogic writing and line construction suggest that the personification of the hats helps students better understand and distinguish between different perspectives of thinking. This skill is essential for both academic discussions and effective communication in real-life situations. It also

enhances empathy, as students are forced to see a problem through the eyes of different "characters" (Elbilgahy & Alanazi, 2025).

The increase in the effectiveness of argumentation and counterargumentation highlights the critical role of the black and yellow hats. Their consistent use allows students to present balanced and comprehensive arguments, which is essential for academic writing and critical thinking (Burden & Fraser, 2005.82). The fact that students assessed risks (black hat) after generating new ideas (green hat) points to the cyclical nature of thinking, which is one of the main principles of Bono's lateral thinking.

The results of the study also confirm that the active use of the green hat significantly contributes to the integration of creative thinking into the writing process. This was especially noticeable in tasks that involved the flexible use of the order of the hats. This is consistent with the idea that creativity is not just a spontaneous process, but can be stimulated and managed with special techniques (Torrance, 1974).

Although de Bono's original sequence suggests a logical flow, our research has shown that changing the sequence and repeating multiple times in succession not only confuses students (especially high-level students) but also enhances the dynamism and flexibility of thinking. This approach more closely reflects the non-linear thinking processes that occur in real life, where people constantly jump from one mode of thinking to another, re-think ideas, assess risks, and seek new opportunities. As a result, students' linguistic diversity and ability to logically connect ideas improved, which includes more effective use of language clichés, formulaic phrases, and lexical items.

Research limitations and future directions

This study is qualitative and, therefore, the generalizability of its results is limited. The number of participants and demographic characteristics may have influenced the findings. Future studies could include larger-scale quantitative analyses, the use of controlled groups, and long-term monitoring of student progress. It would also be interesting to adapt this method to different courses and study its impact on different age groups.

Conclusion

Overall, Edward de Bono's personalized method of "Six Thinking Hats", with its flexible application and the possibility of changing the sequence, is a powerful pedagogical tool. It not only improves students' writing skills, especially functional writing skills, but also promotes the development of complex, critical, and creative thinking in them, which is necessary to cope with modern challenges. This lateral approach allows the education system to prepare students who do not think only in a "hat" but also think from the perspective of many "hats".

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Expressing volition, imposition and valency through causatives

ABSTRACT

The present study analyzes the different ways in which causative structures in these languages express the ideas of causation, volition vs imposition, and temporal sequencing of actions. The examples have been gathered from media discourse (written and spoken examples of news reports, articles or discussions from electronic media), and informal conversations with the native speakers of the languages during interviews and discussions.

The forms of expressing the concepts of *desire, wish, will* on the one hand, and the forms of *expressing imposition, request, incentive, order* or *involuntary action*, on the other, differ across languages from purely syntactic structures to morphological, or lexical-semantic means.

Key words: *causative, causation, volition, imposition, latency*

Introduction

Aims and research questions

The present research investigates the concept of causation and its expression in Indo European and non-Indo-European languages on the examples of Georgian (non Indo European), English, German and Russian (Indo-European) languages.

Causation is expressed through morphological affixation in the Georgian language and is constructed through syntax in most Indo-European languages, for instance, in German and English.

The forms of expressing the concepts of *desire, wish, will* on the one hand, and the forms of *expressing imposition, request, incentive, order* or *involuntary action*, on the other, differ across languages from purely syntactic structures to morphological, or lexical-semantic means.

Theoretical framework

Expressing causation across languages presents manifold interests from morphological, syntactic and typological standpoints. In grammar, the concept that is expressed through morphological derivation in one language (Georgian), can be expressed through syntactic structure in others (English). From semantic-pragmatic perspective, the interplay of precise semantic meaning of causation and pragmatic shades of meaning of imposition, request, incentive, voluntary or involuntary actions presents yet further points of interest.

Methodology

The main methodology used in the research is cross linguistic and typological analysis. Constructing and conveying the ideas of causation and causatives in different languages are the research issues that yield noteworthy findings in language typology, linguistic psychology, and cognitive processes involved in language acquisition. Hence, causatives present an interesting psycholinguistic and typological topic to be researched.

Georgian language, for instance, offers complex verbal forms and affixation for expressing the concept of causation, while English has a specific syntactic structure for stating the same idea, and German and Russian offer further specific syntactic constructions for expressing the same concept.

Hence, causation bears one more testimony to the typological difference between analytic and agglutinative languages.

Data

The present study analyzes the different ways in which causative structures in these languages express the ideas of causation, volition vs imposition, and temporal sequencing of actions. The examples have been gathered from media discourse (written and spoken examples of news reports, articles or discussions from electronic media), and informal conversations with the native speakers of the languages during interviews and discussions.

Empirical study and findings

It is well-known that causation entails in itself the primary meaning of imposition, responsibility, agency, and volition.

Examples:

a) I had the car repaired.

b) She had the letter published.

However, there are cases when involuntary causation occurs. This latter form is mainly expressed morphologically in synthetic and agglutinative languages (e.g. Georgian) and is transferred syntactically in analytical languages (e.g. English, German).

Example:

c) *ნამცხვარი შემომეჭამა.*

[Namcxvari šemomech'ama].

[I ate the entire cake without realizing it].

It literally means: *the cake was so delicious it made me eat it up without realizing*

the fact (or, *I only realized it upon the completion of the eating process*).

One interesting case of causation is the verb *methinks (*Georgian *mepikreba),* which is no longer or rarely used in modern English. It expresses the involuntary mental or cognitive activity that makes an experiencer feel or think in a certain way.

However, in Georgian such verbs that express involuntary mental or cognitive activity are in abundance, e.g.:

d) *მეეჭვება [meech'veba]* [*I doubt it*; literal meaning: *it makes me doubt*];

e) *მეადვილება [meadvileba]* [*it is easy for me*; literal meaning: *it makes me feel that it is easy*];

f) *მეწერინება [mec'erineba]* [*I write it*, literal meaning: *either inspiration or circumstances or my condition make me write something, say, a poem or a story*];

g) *მეჩვენება [mechveneba]* [*it seems to me*, literal meaning: *I might be seeing or feeling things*].

The complex affixation system of the Georgian language makes it possible to express the involuntary causation in one single word. The preverb *me-* in such verbs presents a particular interest for morpho-semantic analysis, in which the first-person singular is expressed. Other points of interest are the suffixes *-in* and *-eb* express the meaning of involuntary causation.

The same idea in Russian and German are expressed through dative cases:

h) Mn'e dumaets'a

i) Mn'e nravitsa

j) Mir gefällt.

Another interesting feature of the Georgian language is the presence of ergative constructions. The ergative case (or literally, the Narrative case, as it is referred to in Georgian) presents a particularly interesting instance for cross linguistic comparative and typologicl analysis.

For instance, an interesting case of ergative construct triggering causation meaning is demonstrated in the following causative structure, where the additional meanings volition/involution are intertwined:

k) *შიშმა გადამაწყვეტინა* [*šišma gadamac'q'vet'ina*], [*fear has made me make this decision*].

Conclusion

The present research makes a conjecture that not only do the ergative constructions denote the agent of the action but semantically they add extra shades of meaning of responsibility, intentionality, intentionality and in certain cases, causality to the entire statement.

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Some New Chemical Terms Of Polymer And Analytical Chemistry And Their Definitions In Georgian

ABSTRACT

For the full functioning of a state language, it is essential to develop specialized, field-specific terminology in education and scientific disciplines. One of the major challenges of the 21-st century is the technologization of languages, which entails the creation of electronic terminology systems and comprehensive term banks. This work is continuous, as the rapid advancement of science, healthcare, engineering and technology, agriculture, and ecology constantly poses new challenges for chemical terminology. In this context, polymer and analytical chemistry are particularly noteworthy. Since the 1950s, these fields have expanded to such an extent that they now constitute independent and well-established branches of chemistry. To date, numerous new polymers have been synthesized, innovative methods for their preparation and modification have been developed, and their chemical, biological, physical, and technical properties have been extensively investigated. These developments frequently necessitate the introduction of new terms and precise definitions. A similar situation exists in analytical chemistry, where technological progress and the emergence of new or modernized physicochemical analytical methods have also required the continual expansion of terminology.

Polymer and analytical chemistry are also developing rapidly in Georgia, where both research activities and practical applications are actively progressing. Consequently, it is of paramount importance to develop and standardize Georgian equivalents for terms in these fields, as there is a substantial risk that specialists working in different areas may adopt inconsistent or divergent terminological forms. The creation of an online dictionary encompassing all branches of chemistry contributes, on the one hand, to the advancement of electronic lexicography and, on the other, to the development of the Georgian scientific school of chemistry. Such an initiative ensures that scientific works authored in Georgian not only fully reflect the terminological potential of the Georgian language but are also harmonized with international standards. In this context, 3,000 new terms in polymer and analytical chemistry were added in 2023 to an English–Georgian and Georgian–English explanatory online dictionary of chemical terminology. This work was carried out in accordance with the recommendations and proposals of the IUPAC Standing Commission, the international body responsible for the standardization and global recognition of chemical concepts, laws, and definitions.

***Keywords**: Chemistry terms, Explanatory online dictionary, Field terminology*

Introduction

For the comprehensive and effective functioning of the state language, the development of specialized, sector-specific terminology within educational and scientific domains is essential. One of the key linguistic challenges of the twenty-first century is the technologization of languages, a process that entails the establishment of an integrated electronic terminological system and the creation of a structured term bank. According to the State Language Strategy (Strategy 2022), the standardization of terminology constitutes a central objective. Achieving this objective requires the elimination of sectoral terminological fragmentation, the preservation and systematic formation of Georgian terms in accordance with ISO terminology-management methodologies, and the alignment of Georgian linguistic standards with corresponding European frameworks.

Language constitutes a dynamic and evolving system, continuously shaped by internal developments and external influences. The emergence of new technologies and technological products inevitably gives rise to corresponding lexical units and terminological structures—many of which originate uniquely within the linguistic environment of the country where the innovation occurs, and therefore lack direct analogues in other languages. Furthermore, the rapid global expansion of natural science disciplines frequently results in the semantic transformation of existing terms or the creation of entirely new ones. The timely incorporation of such units into the relevant Georgian metalanguages represents a significant challenge and, in many cases, occurs only after considerable delay. For instance, the English chemical metalanguage, characterized by its high degree of technological refinement and accessibility, places Georgian specialists in a difficult position: how to provide accurate and functional Georgian equivalents for users engaged in the study or practice of chemistry.

Literature Review

In Georgia, the last comprehensive academic terminological dictionary of chemistry was published in 1977 in four volumes. However, the foundation for its terminology relied heavily on Russian terminological sources, which themselves were often not aligned with contemporary European standards. In subsequent decades, several independent groups attempted to compile technical - including chemical-terminological dictionaries, though these were produced in limited print editions and lacked broad accessibility. The effectiveness of any terminological resource depends not only on the accuracy of its entries but also on its ease of access and searchability. Meanwhile, the accelerating pace of technological advancement has

far exceeded the rate at which new terms can be collected, adapted, standardized, and disseminated through traditional printed formats. Consequently, the need for online terminological resources has become unequivocally evident. Although the creation of the online technical dictionary (www.techdict.ge), which includes a modest number of chemical terms, was a timely and valuable initiative, it remains insufficient in addressing the complex and rapidly evolving terminological challenges described above.

A significant initial step was undertaken by our research group, which, during 2022-2023 and with the support of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, developed an explanatory online dictionary of core chemical terminology. The dictionary was based on the collection of key chemical terms established by IUPAC (Compendium of Chemical Terminology, Gold Book). The online resource currently comprises 5,737 terms and is accessible via the following web address: www.chemistry.ge/dictionary/about.php (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Screenshot of the online dictionary of core chemistry terminology

Methodology

The permanent international commission of IUPAC is engaged in the continuous development of new terms and their corresponding definitions, applicable within chemistry, its specific sub-disciplines, and closely related adjacent fields. The commission's work is ongoing, reflecting the accelerating pace of advancements in science, healthcare, engineering, technology, agriculture, and ecology, which continuously present new terminological challenges for the field of chemistry. In this context, polymer chemistry is particularly noteworthy: since the

1950s, it has expanded to such an extent that it now constitutes an independent and self-contained branch of chemistry. Over the years, numerous novel polymers have been synthesized, innovative methods for their preparation or modification have been developed, and their chemical, biological, physical, technical, and other properties have been systematically investigated and characterized. These developments frequently necessitate the introduction of new terms and their precise definitions. A similar situation is observed in analytical chemistry, where technical progress, alongside the development and modernization of physicochemical analytical methods, has prompted the creation of additional terminology. The significance and lexical richness of these areas are further evidenced by the fact that in the multi-volume glossary of terms compiled by IUPAC, each of these fields has been allocated a dedicated volume (Jones & Union, 2009; Hibbert, 2019).

The terminology of polymer chemistry is compiled in the so-called "Purple Book: Compendium of Polymer Terminology and Nomenclature" (https://iupac.org/what-we-do/books/purplebook/), whereas the terminology of analytical chemistry is presented in the "Orange Book: Analytical Terminology" (https://iupac.org/what-we-do/books/orangebook/). The authors of these reference works have established a clear terminological methodology, emphasizing not only the specification of terms but also the necessity for precise definitions and comprehensive explanations. For instance, in polymer chemistry, two primary types of term definitions are recognized: one based on the molecular or structural characteristics of the polymer, and the other based on the process of polymer material formation. Accordingly, these definitions are classified as structure-oriented and process-oriented, respectively ("Basic Definitions of Terms Relating to Polymers 1974," 1974).

According to experts, the development of a unified terminology following such a methodological framework is essential not only for scientific research but also for practical applications, including litigation, patent acquisition and registration processes, and various applied fields. Discrepancies in terminology or inaccuracies in definitions may lead to misunderstandings and generate unnecessary costs (Luscombe et al., 2022).

Polymer and analytical chemistry are also rapidly advancing in Georgia, with ongoing research and practical initiatives. Consequently, it is of critical importance to develop and clarify Georgian equivalents for the terminology of these fields, as there is a substantial risk that new terms could emerge in inconsistent forms among specialists working in different sub-disciplines. The development of terms should adhere to widely recognized methodological principles, including transparency versus opacity, consistency, relevance, brevity (linguistic

economy), productivity, and linguistic correctness, with priority given to the native language (Kikvidze, 2022; *sakhelmts'ipo enis ertiani p'rograma (st'rat'egia),* 2022). At the same time, compatibility and harmonization with international terminology remain essential.

In creating a dictionary of polymer and analytical chemistry terms, our work has been guided by these methodological standards and documents, aiming to process terms in a manner that addresses both field-specific needs and the tradition of Georgian term creation, while also incorporating international best practices. In this paper, we address several issues related to the introduction and usage of new terms and their definitions in the Georgian language within these scientific fields.

Results and discussion

The Georgian literary language possesses a highly rich lexical resources, in contrast to the technical metalanguage, which reflects certain objective limitations. New technical terms often emerge at such a rapid pace that they cannot be immediately and accurately integrated into the Georgian language. This, in turn, can lead to the adoption of barbarisms or the establishment of inaccurately translated terms. In the following, several such phenomena will be examined.

A. Clarification of terms

In the English (international) language, the terms “sample” (a portion of a material taken for qualitative or quantitative analysis) and “specimen” (a specifically selected portion of a material taken from a dynamic system and assumed to be representative of the parent material at the time it is taken) are strictly distinguished. In Georgian, however, these terms have often been used as synonyms or, in some cases, interchangeably. Therefore, it is essential to establish a clear distinction in the Georgian language as well. Accordingly, “sample” should be in Georgian „nimushi“ (masalis nats'ili, romelits aghebulia tvisebiti an raodenobrivi analizistvis), whereas “specimen” should denoted as „sinji“ (masalis sp'etsialurad shercheuli nats'ili, romelits aghebulia dinamiuri sist'emidan da itvleba, rom ts'armoadgens dziritadi masalis asls misi aghebis dros)

In Georgian, the term “blank” is generally understood as aghnishnavs „tsariel“, „supta“, „sheuvsebel adgils (English-Georgian online dictionary: https://dictionary.ge). However, in chemical contexts, it is rarely used independently and typically appears as part of compound terms such as *blank materials, blank test, blank value, blank indication (background indication), solvent blank, reagent blank, matrix blank, procedural blank, field blank,*

calibration blank, instrument blank, spiked blank, and fortified blank. Clearly, a direct translation of “blank” as “empty” is inappropriate in chemical terminology. For instance, “blank materials” rendered as “„tsarieli masala“ neither accurately describes a tangible object nor possesses a meaningful physical essence, as a material cannot be truly empty. The same issue arises with “blank value” translated as “„tsarieli sidide“.

In languages with well-developed technical lexicons, “blank” is represented by terms such as „poni“, „nuli“, „puch'i“ ⴰ „k'ont'roli“. Both “puch'i” and “nuli” can be excluded because “nulovani masala” lacks real significance, and “„puch'i masala“ or „puch'i reagent'i“ does not correspond to the intended objects. In other compound terms, including „p'rotseduruli puch'i“, „savele puch'i“, „sak'alibro puch'i“, „khelsats'qos puch'i“, „sp'aik'iani puch'i“ ⴰ „gadzlierebuli puch'i“, a literal translation of “puch'i” generates semantically incorrect expressions. The lexical unit „ponuri” may be appropriate in some contexts, such as „ponuri chveneba“ and „khelsats'qos poni“, but it is semantically incompatible in combinations such as „ponuri gamkhsneli“, „ponuri reagent'i“, „ponuri mat'ritsa“, „p'rotseduruli poni“, „savele poni“ and „sakalibro poni“.

Therefore, the term “blank” should be standardized in Georgian as “„sak'ont'rolo”, resulting in the following equivalents: „sak'ont'rolo masala“, „sak'ont'rolo tsda“, „sak'ont'rolo mnishvneloba“, “sak'on¬t'rolo chveneba - ponuri chveneba“, „sak'ont'rolo gamkhsneli“, „sak'ont'rolo reagent'i“, „sak'ont'rolo mat'ritsa“, „p'rotseduruli k'ont'roli“, „savele k'ont'roli“, „sak'alibro k'ont'roli“, „khelsats'qos k'ont'roli“, „sp'aik'iani k'ont'roli“, „gadzlierebuli k'ont'roli“.

In analytical chemistry, the terms “linear” and its derivatives, such as “linearity,” frequently occur in contexts such as the linearity of a measuring system, the linearity of calibration, and the linearity of calibration curves. Unfortunately, in some Georgian-language texts, these terms have been translated directly from “line” as “khazi” (“line”), which is not considered appropriate. In these contexts, the “line” referred to mathematically corresponds to a “straight line.” Therefore, the recommended Georgian equivalents for these terms are: “sazomi sist'emis ts'rpivoba” (“linearity of a measuring system”), “dak'alibrebis ts'rpivoba” (“linearity of calibration”), and “arats'rpivobis shetsdoma” (“nonlinearity error”).

According to major English-Georgian online dictionaries (https://dictionary.ge), the term “uncertainty” is generally translated as “gaurk'vevloba” (“uncertainty”) or “bundovaneba” (“ambiguity”). In chemical texts, however, “uncertainty” rarely appears as an independent term

and is primarily encountered as part of compound expressions such as *combined standard measurement uncertainty, definitional measurement uncertainty, examination uncertainty, expanded measurement uncertainty, instrumental measurement uncertainty, measurement uncertainty, relative standard measurement uncertainty, relative uncertainty, standard measurement uncertainty, and Type A and B evaluation of measurement uncertainty*, etc. A closer examination of each term's definition indicates that a literal translation of"uncertainty" into Georgian as "gaurk'vevloba" or "bundovaneba" is not appropriate. For example, the *combined standard measurement uncertainty* is defined as the standard measurement uncertainty obtained using the individual standard measurement uncertainties associated with the input quantities in a measurement model. Similarly, *examination uncertainty* is defined as the fraction of examined values that differ from a reference nominal property value among all examined values provided.

Based on the above considerations, we propose that the term "uncertainty" be established in Georgian chemical terminology as "ganuzghvreloba". Accordingly, the term combined standard measurement uncertainty would be translated as "k'ombinirebuli st'andart'uli gazomvis ganuzghvreloba" ("st'andart'uli gazomvis ganuzghvreloba, romelits miigheba gazomvis modelshi shemavali sidideebis individualuri st'andart'uli gazomvis ganuzghvrelobebis gamoqenebit"). The corresponding Georgian equivalents for the other related terms are as follows: definitional measurement uncertainty – "gazomvis gansazghvruli ganuzghvreloba"; examination uncertainty – "gamok'vlevis ganuzghvreloba"; expanded measurement uncertainty – "gazomvis gapartoebuli ganuzghvreloba"; instrumental measurement uncertainty – "inst'rument'uli gazomvis ganuzghvreloba"; measurement uncertainty – "gazomvis ganuzghvreloba"; relative standard measurement uncertainty – "pardobiti gazomvis st'andart'uli ganuzghvreloba"; relative uncertainty – "pardobiti ganuzghvreloba"; standard measurement uncertainty – "gazomvis st'andart'uli ganuzghvreloba"; and Type A and B evaluation of measurement uncertainty – "gazomvis ganuzghvrelobis A da B t'ip'ebis shepaseba."

A similar situation arises with the term "bias." According to major English-Georgian dictionaries, "bias" can be used as a noun, adjective, or verb, and is generally translated as "mik'erdzoeba", "midrek'ileba", "mimartuleba"/"gankhra", or even as "iribi"/"iribad gach'rili". In chemistry, however, the term appears in compound expressions such as *measurement bias* (estimate of a systematic measurement error*), instrumental bias* (average of replicate indications minus a reference quantity value), and *laboratory bias* (contribution to

measurement bias attributed to systematic effects on measurement results obtained in a laboratory).

From these definitions, it is clear that “bias” denotes a deviation associated with a specific object - whether a measurement, an instrument, or a laboratory - reflecting a systematic difference between the observed result and the true or reference value. In particular, laboratory bias refers to results that are unique to a specific laboratory and is intended to indicate the validation and general recognition of the obtained measurements. If a measurement obtained by a specific instrument, laboratory, or method cannot be replicated under other instruments, laboratories, or methods, the reliability of the result becomes insufficient. Consequently, repeated measurements using different methods or in different laboratories are often conducted, and the results are compared. Naturally, these results do not coincide with absolute accuracy but are expected to differ only within a defined (insignificant) range.

Therefore, instead of translating the above terms literally as “mik'erdzoebuli gazomva”, “khelsats'qos mik'erdzoeba” or “laborat'oriuli mik'erdzoeba”, it is preferable to adopt a Georgian equivalent that conveys „…shorisi gadakhra“. Accordingly, the terms can be rendered in Georgian as follows: “gazomvatashorisi gadakhra” (“measurement bias”), “khelsats'qotashorisi gadakhra” (“instrumental bias”), and “ laborat'oriatashorisi gadakhra” (“laboratory bias”).

In polymer chemistry, the term “strand” is widely used. In contemporary English, according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), it is defined as “a thin thread of something, often one of a few, twisted around each other to make a string or rope.” According to major English-Georgian online dictionaries (https://dictionary.ge), “strand” has several equivalents, including “narti,” “ts'na,” “tsalk'euli boch'k'o,” “bats'ari,” and “dzapi.” For example, a strand of wood - shalis dzapis tsalk'euli boch'k'o, a strand of cotton - bambis narti/dzapi.

In polymer chemistry, “strand” appears in multiple compound terms, such as *double-strand chain, double-strand copolymer, double-strand macromolecule, double-stranded deoxyribonucleic acid, multi-strand chain, multi-strand macromolecule, quasi-single-strand polymer, regular single-strand polymer, single-strand chain, single-strand macromolecule, single-strand polymer, and single-stranded deoxyribonucleic acid*. Notably, the term single-strand chain is defined as a chain comprising constitutional units connected in such a way that adjacent units are joined through two atoms, one on each constitutional unit („jach'vi, romelits moitsavs iseti sakhit dak'avshirebul st'rukt'urul erteulebs, rom mimdebare st'rukt'uruli erteulebi ertmanets uertdebian ori at'omis (tito at'omi titoeul st'rukt'urul erteulze) meshveobit“). In

contrast, a double-strand chain is defined as a chain consisting of two interconnected sequences of rings, where adjacent rings share three or four atoms, two of which belong to one chain and one or two to the other („jach'vi, romelits shedgeba ertmanettan dak'avshirebuli ori shemadgeneli jach'visagan. isini ertmanets uk'avshirdeba momijnave st'rukt'uruli erteulebis sami an otkhi at'omis meshveobit, romeltagan ori ganlagebulia ert shemadgenel jach'vze, kholo erti an ori - meoreze.“).

Based on these definitions and considering polymer structure, chemical composition, and connectivity, it is appropriate to adopt the Georgian equivalent “რიგა” for “strand” in polymer chemistry. Accordingly, the Georgian equivalents for the above terms are as follows: double-strand chain – “orriga jach'vi”; double-strand copolymer – “orriga tanap'olimeri”; double-strand macromolecule – “orriga mak'romolek'ula”; double-strand polymer – “orriga p'olimeri”; double-stranded deoxyribonucleic acid – “orriga dezoksiribonuk'leinmzhava”; multi-strand chain – “mravalriga jach'vi”; multi-strand macromolecule – “mravalriga mak'romolek'ula”; quasi-single-strand polymer – “k'vazi ertriga p'olimeri”; regular single-strand polymer – “regularuli ertriga p'olimeri”; single-strand chain – “ertriga jach'vi”; single-strand macromolecule – “ertriga mak'romolek'ula”; single-strand polymer – “ertriga p'olimeri”; and single-stranded deoxyribonucleic acid – “ertriga dezoksiribonuk'leinmzhava.”

In general, macromolecules that contain a single branching point with linear side chains attached to that point are referred to as “star macromolecules.” The nomenclature of such macromolecules is specified according to the number of side chains. For instance, a macromolecule with five attached linear fragments is called a five-star macromolecule, and one with seven fragments is called a seven-star macromolecule, and so on. While a literal translation of these terms into Georgian would yield “khutvarsk'vlaviani mak'romolek'ula” (“five-star macromolecule”) and “shvidvarsk'vlaviani mak'romolek'ula” (“seven-star macromolecule”), we consider it more precise to introduce the term “kimiani” in Georgian. Accordingly, the proposed Georgian equivalents are “khutkimiani varsk'vlavisebri molek'ula” (“five-armed star macromolecule”) and “shvidkimiani varsk'vlavisebri molek'ula” (“seven-armed star macromolecule”).

B. Definition of terms

In Georgian terminology development, a major challenge is the precise identification of equivalents and definitions for terms that are closely related in meaning. Due to similarities in meaning and the absence of rigorously defined definitions for each term, they are often

mistakenly used as synonyms, which is unacceptable. A representative group of such terms includes Accuracy, Precision, Repeatability, and Reproducibility.

The term Accuracy (“sizust'e”) should be used to indicate how close measurement results are to the true value of the quantity being measured, as well as to each other. Precision (“p'retsiziuloba”) should be applied when comparing multiple measurement results; it describes how close these results are to one another. When comparing measurement results obtained under the same conditions—by the same operator, in the same laboratory, using the same instrument—the term Repeatability (“ganmeorebadoba”) is appropriate. Conversely, Reproducibility (“gadamots'mebadoba”) refers to the comparison of results obtained under different conditions, such as different operators, instruments, laboratories, or at different times.

Accordingly, the definitions of these terms in Georgian should be formulated as follows:

sizust'e - gazomvis shedegis damtkhvevis sizust'e gasazomi sididis ch'eshmarit' mnishvnelobastan.

p'retsiziuloba - gansazghvrul p'irobebshi erti da imave an msgavs obiekt'ebze ganmeorebiti gazomvebit mighebuli chvenebebis an gazomili sidideebis mnishvnelobebis siakhlove.

ganmeorebadoba - erti da imave p'irobebshi (erti da igive op'erat'ori, erti da igive ap'arat'ura, erti da igive laborat'oria da/an drois skhvadaskhva int'ervalis shemdeg) ertsa da imave sagamotsdo masalaze erti da imave metodit mighebul damouk'idebel shedegebs shoris damtkhvevis khariskhi. ganmeorebadobis sazomi aris st'andart'uli gadakhra, romelits ganisazghvreba t'erminit „ganmeorebadoba“, rogorts ganmeorebadobis st'andart'uli gadakhra.

gadamots'mebadoba - skhvadaskhva p'irobebshi (skhvadaskhva op'erat'ori, skhvadaskhva ap'arat'ura, skhvadaskhva laborat'oria da/an drois skhvadaskhva int'ervalis shemdeg) ertsa da imave sagamotsdo masalaze erti da imave metodit mighebul damouk'idebel shedegebs shoris damtkhvevis khariskhi. aghts'armoebadobis sazomi aris st'andart'uli gadakhra, romelits ganisazghvreba t'erminit „gadamots'mebadoba“ rogorts gadamots'mebadobis st'andart'uli gadakhra.

According to older IUPAC recommendations, the definition of an atactic macromolecule was: “A regular macromolecule in which the configurational (base) units are not all identical” (“regularuli mak'romolek'ula, k'onpiguratsiuli (sabaziso) erteulebi ar arian mtlad ident'urebi”) (IUPAC, 1996, 68, 2287). This definition was revised in the 2009 recommendations, which state: “Regular macromolecule that has an equal number of the possible configurational base units in a random sequence distribution” (“regularuli mak'romolek'ula, romelsats shemtkhvevit

mimdevrobit ganats'ilebashi akvs shesadzlo k'onpiguratsiuli sabaziso erteulis tanabari raodenoba") (Jones & Union, 2009).

C. Term Formation

In the development of Georgian chemical terminology, priority should be given to finding or creating native equivalents, and the direct importation of new terms should be minimized. At the same time, considerable attention must be paid to the practicality, clarity, and correspondence with existing terms.

In English, suffixes such as "-and" and "-ant" denote different roles in chemical processes: the "-and" suffix indicates the object upon which an action is performed, while the "-ant" suffix indicates the subject that acts on that object. For example, a *titrand* is a solution to be titrated, whereas a *titrant* is the solution that performs the titration. Similarly, a *measurand* is the quantity to be measured, while a *measurant* is the means of measurement. The Georgian equivalent "gasazomi" is fully acceptable for measurand, accurately describing the object of measurement. However, the same cannot be said for titrand. Since the terms "t'it'ri" and "t'it'rant'i" have been widely used for a long time, we consider it appropriate to establish "t'it'randi" as the Georgian equivalent of titrand, replacing alternative forms such as "gasat'it'ri," "sat'it'ravi," and "sat'it'ri."

The method based on deoxyribonucleic acid hybridization, used to detect a DNA fragment with a specific nucleotide sequence, is named after its inventor and is known as the Southern blot. Later, analogous methods were developed for RNA (Northern blot) and proteins (Western blot). In the creation of these latter two terms, the inventors intentionally used "North" and "West" to indicate their conceptual relation to the original Southern blot method. In developing Georgian equivalents, if "Southern" is considered the scientist's surname, it should be preserved unchanged, and the method should be called "sauzernis blot'ireba" ("Southern blotting"). However, the same approach is not appropriate for Northern and Western blot, because in these cases "Northern" and "Western" refer to geographic directions rather than scientists' names. Furthermore, basing the Georgian equivalents on geographic terms - such as "samkhret blot'ireba," "chrdiloet blot'ireba," or "dasavlet blot'ireba" - would be misleading, as the methods have no relation to directions. Therefore, the recommended Georgian equivalents for these methods are: Southern blot – "dnm-is blot'ireba" ("DNA blotting"), Northern blot – "rnm-is blot'ireba" ("RNA blotting"), and Western blot – "tsilis blot'ireba" ("protein blotting").

Polymer chemistry is developing at a very rapid pace due to technological progress. Today,

numerous new polymers with specific compositions, structures, and properties have been created. Naturally, these new materials require appropriate names and technological equivalents. In some cases, the nomenclature of polymers is based on their resemblance to familiar or widely known objects. Consequently, contemporary polymer terminology has introduced terms such as:

- **switchboard model - k'omut'at'oris modeli** (k'rist'alurobis modeli, romelshits mak'romolek'ulis k'rist'alizebuli segment'ebi miek'utvneba imave k'rist'als, tumtsa gheroebi shemtkhvevitad aris dak'avshirebuli.
- **shish-kebab structure - shish-kababis st'rukt'ura** (boch'k'ovani k'rist'alebisgan shedgenili ormagi st'rukt'uris p'olik'rist'aluri morpologia ep'it'aksiurad gamozrdili lamelaruli k'rist'alebit, romelta gheroebi boch'k'ovani gherdzis p'araleluria).
- **ladder macromolecule - k'ibisebri mak'romolek'ula** (orriga mak'romolek'ula, romelits shedgeba uts'qvet'i tanmimdevrobis shemtsveli birtvebisgan, sadats mimdebare birtvebs gaachnia erti an met'i saziaro at'omi).
- **comb macromolecule - savartskhlisebri mak'romolek'ula** (dziritad jach'vshi mravali sampunktsiuri gansht'oebis ts'ert'ilis mkone mak'romolek'ula, rodesats titoeul gansht'oebis ts'ert'ilshi dak'avshirebulia khazovani gverditi jach'vebi).
- **worm-like chain - ch'iismagvari jach'vi** (hip'otezuri ts'rpivi mak'romolek'ula, romelits moitsavs uts'qvet'ad dakhveul usasrulod ts'vril jach'vs. dakhvevis mimartuleba titoeul ts'ert'ilshi shemtkhvevvitia. modeli aghts'ers jach'vis sikhist'is skhvadaskhva donis mtel sp'ekt'rs khist'i gherodan dats'qebuli shemtkhveviti khviebit damtavrebuli, da gansak'utrebit, sasargebloa khist'i jach'vebis gamosakhvisatvis. lit'erat'urashi aset jach'vebs zogjer uts'odeben p'orod-k'rat'k'is jach'vebs).
- **salami-like morphology - saliamisebri morpologia** (mravalpaziani morpologia, romelshits erti p'olimeris disp'ersiuli pazis domenebi sheitsavs da mtlianad aertianebs meore p'olimeris pazis mraval domens. meore p'olimeri sheidzleba iqos imave shedgenilobis, rogorisats uts'qvet'i pazis domenia).

As observed, in the development of Georgian equivalents, two primary models of term formation have been employed. The first model is based on derivation from related roots combined with a limiting element, for example: “k'omut'at'oris modeli” and “shish-kababis st'rukt'ura”. The second model utilizes derivational suffixes that indicate a property, such as“-

ebr" or "*-magvari"*, applied to a root combined with a limiting element. Examples of this approach include: "saliamisebri morpologia" ("salami-like morphology"), "k'ibisebri mak'romolek'ula" ("ladder-like macromolecule"), "savartskhlisebri mak'romolek'ula" ("comb-like macromolecule"), and "ch'iismagvari jach'vi" ("worm-like chain").

D. Term Borrowing

In some cases, it is not possible to find a fully developed Georgian equivalent for new international terms, or for certain practical reasons, direct borrowing is more appropriate. Examples of such terms include:

- **permeate** - p'ermeat'i: p'enet'rant'ebis shemtsveli nak'adi, romelits gamodis membranidan.
- retentate stream - ret'ent'at'is nak'adi: membranastan p'irveladi k'ont'akt'is shemdeg shek'avdeba membranuli daqopis shedegad.
- **pervaporation** - p'ervap'oratsia: membranebze dapudznebuli p'rotsesi, romelshits nedleulisa da ret'ent'is nak'adebi orive tkhevadi pazaa, kholo p'ermit'i membranis zedap'irze gamodis ortklis sakhit.
- **perfusate** - p'erpuzat'i: saekst'raktsio pazis nak'adi, romelits shedis dializis modulshi.
- **impinger** - imp'injeri: minis mart'ivi barbot'azhuri k'amera akroladi analit'ebis vak'uumuri nimushis asaghebad. k'amerashi airis nak'adi gaivlis saekst'raktsio khsnars, romlis danishnulebaa samizne analit'ebis dach'era da k'ontsent'rireba.
- **sublation** - sublatsia: plot'atsiis p'rotsesi, romlis drosats erti an ramdenime analit'i adsorbirdeba khsnarshi modzravi airis busht'uk'ebis zedap'irze da grovdeba ts'qaltan sheurevadi gamkhsnelis zeda penashi an sorbent'ur damch'ershi.
- **avidity** - aviduroba: reaktsiis gansazghvrul pizik'ur-kimiur p'irobebshi ant'ishrat'shi arsebuli ant'iskheulebis qvela damak'avshirebeli ubnis jamuri apinuroba.

Conclusion

In this article, we have discussed issues related to the development of Georgian equivalents for polymer and analytical chemistry terminology, including the identification of precise equivalents, clarification of existing terms, differentiation of closely related terms based on contextual definitions, the formation of terms with specific derivational patterns, and term borrowing. All of these efforts serve a central goal: to establish a unified Georgian terminology for chemistry and its subfields that accurately reflects international terms while respecting the rules of Georgian word formation and the experience of term creation.

The creation of an online dictionary covering all fields of chemistry will support, on the

one hand, the development of electronic lexicography, and on the other hand, the advancement of the Georgian scientific school of chemistry. This will ensure that Georgian-language publications by local authors not only demonstrate the terminological potential of the Georgian language but are also fully harmonized with international standards.

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Indexicality and Identity: Understanding Russian Cultural Practices in a Global Context

ABSTRACT

This article explores the concept of indexicality as it pertains to linguistic and cultural practices among Russian-speaking migrants. Indexicality is understood as the way linguistic forms and cultural behaviors signify social identities, relationships, and contextual meanings beyond their literal interpretations. Through an analysis of online discussions, interviews, and a survey of Russophones living abroad, the study reveals how everyday habits, grooming practices, and cultural norms serve as markers of Russianness in diverse contexts. Drawing from digital, oral and written resources, it highlights the dynamic interplay between individual identity, cultural memory, and material possessions, illustrating how migrants negotiate their cultural identities through a blend of inherited traditions and local influences. Russophones usually identify each other by the way they dress up, how they speak, and what they are interested in. The findings underscore the complexity of Russian identity in a globalized world, challenging essentialist stereotypes and emphasizing the importance of context in understanding cultural practices.

Keywords: *Russian identity, migration, cultural practices, linguistic forms, cultural hybridity, social meaning, heritage language.*

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Introduction

Indexicality refers to the ways linguistic and cultural forms point beyond their literal meaning to social identities, stances, relationships, and contextual frames. In research on multilingual and migrant communities, this perspective helps illuminate how speakers use particular linguistic features—accent, code-switching, lexical choice, forms of address, or conversational routines—not merely to transmit messages but to position themselves within families, peer groups, and broader cultural environments. In the sociolinguistic and anthropological tradition, indexicality describes how linguistic and semiotic forms point beyond their literal meanings to evoke social identities, stances, and relationships.

Beyond language use, indexicality also illuminates how people relate to material objects. Certain possessions—heirlooms, souvenirs, photographs, books, or everyday items—attain a special status because they serve as physical traces of personal history or evidence of lived experience. Their value lies not in material rarity but in their capacity to connect individuals to moments, relationships, and

identities, offering a tangible link to the past. Even mass-produced objects can become deeply meaningful when they anchor memory, authenticity, or emotional attachment. The interplay of materiality, memory, and identity becomes especially significant in migrant contexts, where objects often serve as bridges between places, cultures, and life stages.

In our study, indexicality operates as a vital mechanism through which Russian-speaking migrants articulate their identities and navigate cultural landscapes in host countries. The findings reveal that everyday habits, grooming practices, and material possessions serve as significant markers of Russianness, enabling individuals to maintain connections to their heritage while adapting to new environments. The analysis underscores the importance of context in shaping perceptions of identity, challenging essentialist stereotypes that often reduce Russian identity to simplistic traits. Language thus not only communicates information but also performs social work, signaling who speakers are, how they align with others, and how they understand the situation they inhabit.

The study highlights the dynamic nature of cultural memory and emotional attachment to objects as critical components of identity formation among migrants and continues our previous research (Protassova & Yelenevskaya, 2024; Yelenevskaya & Protassova, 2023). As individuals negotiate their cultural identities, they blend inherited traditions with local influences, creating a specific hybrid cultural expression that reflects both personal and collective histories. The experiences shared by participants indicate that identity is not a static construct but rather a fluid and relational process shaped by interactions, memories, and the material culture that surrounds them. Speakers' repertoires are fluid collections of mobile, historically shaped resources that may be deployed strategically or habitually.

Our research questions are:

- How do linguistic forms and cultural practices among Russian-speaking migrants index social identities and relationships?
- In what ways do everyday habits and grooming practices serve as markers of Russianness in diverse cultural contexts?
- How do Russian-speaking migrants negotiate their cultural identities through material possessions and domestic spaces?
- What role does cultural memory play in shaping the identities of Russian-speaking migrants living abroad?
- How do perceptions of typical Russian behavior differ among migrants and locals in host countries?

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The materials include: (1) Analysis of comments and narratives from various

online platforms regarding perceptions of Russian identity and cultural practices. (2) An online survey, focusing on the Russophone experiences related to clothing styles, social norms, and cultural practices. (3) Conducting group discussions with Finnish-Russian bilinguals to explore their experiences of cultural negotiation and identity formation in a new context. (4) Examination of historical documents and guidelines related to the identification of non-Russian individuals speaking a perfect Russian, particularly during the Soviet era, to understand the ideological constructions surrounding Russian identity. Data from these sources are analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and insights regarding the role of indexicality in the construction of identity among Russian-speaking migrants.

Theoretical Background

Indexicality can be understood very broadly, ranging from mathematical models to semiotics and from phonological features to choices of goods in a store. Indexicality describes how linguistic forms point to social meanings, identities, and relationships beyond their literal content (Silverstein, 2003; Ochs, 1993). In other words, language not only says things—it does social work by signaling who speakers are, how they align with others, and what kind of situation they believe they are in. In heritage language research, it helps explain how speakers use language not only to communicate but also to position themselves within family, community, and broader sociocultural contexts. According to Lehtonen (2016: 69), people's linguistic repertoires are not made up of whole, bounded "languages," but of smaller, mobile linguistic resources—"bits of language" (here, she is quoting Blommaert, 2010), and this is an ideological and historical process. Linguistic features index specific cultural practices, social personae, relationships, or stances (Agha, 2007). Humans use pointing and linguistic deixis to coordinate shared attention and cooperation—key capacities that define our species (McElvenny, 2026). Bucholtz & Hall (2005) outline a framework for analyzing identity as something created through linguistic interaction, emphasizing that identity emerges from linguistic and semiotic practices and is fundamentally social and cultural; identities range from broad demographic categories to momentary stances, roles, and locally meaningful positions; they are indexed through labels, implicatures, stances, styles, and linguistic forms; they are relationally constructed through contrasts such as similarity versus difference or legitimacy versus delegitimacy; and they arise through a mix of intentional choices, habitual behaviors, interactional negotiation, others' interpretations, and broader ideological forces, as demonstrated through diverse examples of interaction.

Linguistic forms acquire social meaning in social contexts and refer to specific social identities and typical social contexts (Chernyavskaya & Nefedov, 2021). Relativism develops out of classic semantic theories of indexicals—challenging them much like a rebellious successor—while sharing

the basic view that indexical expressions can only be interpreted relative to appropriate contextual parameters. Relativist semantics, unlike classic non-relativistic approaches, offer a better framework for understanding how meaning relates to truth-conditions by treating context and parameters of interpretation in a way that more accurately reflects their role in determining truth (Predelli, 2012). Natural language creates person indexicals in several distinct ways, as shown by imposter constructions and their pronoun patterns, which reveal that person indexicals cannot be treated as a single uniform category, or by temporal indexicality (Podobryaev, 2017; Yanovich, 2011). Corazza (2004) argues that indexical and quasi-indexical expressions are fundamental, irreducible tools for representing perspectives in thought, language, and social cognition, showing that quasi-indexicality plays a cognitively primary role in how we understand others' self-referential states and thus revealing both notions as complementary aspects of a theory of direct reference. Davies (2024) thinks that truth in every context does not entail knowledge of the fact expressed, and descriptive analyses already predict that statements. Wassink & Dyer (2004) demonstrate that phonological variants in both Corby and Kingston carry changing indexical meanings, with younger speakers adopting features of historically stigmatized varieties to signal local identity and pride, highlighting how language ideology shapes socially embedded interpretations of variation.

Stereotypical images of what constitutes "typical" national communication—such as ideas about directness, emotionality, or conversational behavior—often simplify a far more diverse reality. Stereotypes about what counts as "typically Russian" are continually reproduced in textbooks and in research on the communicative behavior of Russian speakers (e.g., Larina et al., 2017; Morozova, 2019; Prokhorov & Sternin, 2011). These representations often rely on simplified cultural generalizations—such as assumptions about directness, emotional expressiveness, or particular conversational norms—which are then transmitted to new generations of learners and scholars. As a result, complex, heterogeneous linguistic practices become reduced to stable cultural "traits," even though actual communicative behavior among Russian-speaking populations is highly diverse, context-dependent, and shaped by factors such as age, region, social class, mobility, and multilingual experience. Moreover, once these stereotypes enter pedagogical materials, they gain additional authority: students encounter them as facts, and teachers may reproduce them uncritically. Academic studies can unintentionally reinforce this process when they rely on essentialized notions of national communication styles or overlook internal variation within Russian-speaking communities. Thus, what is presented as "typical Russian behavior" often reflects ideological constructions rather than empirical social reality. A more nuanced, critical approach would recognize the plurality of Russian-speaking identities and communicative repertoires, and examine how so-called "typical" features emerge,

circulate, and become socially meaningful in specific historical and interactional contexts.

Indexicality also plays a central role in how people interpret gestures, emblems, and other nonverbal cues, especially in encounters where participants have to negotiate differing expectations or alien forms of expression. Militello (2023) examines how people interpret and respond to unfamiliar or differently indexed social signals (emblems) in encounters, showing that tracking these processes—through interviews or real-time negotiation—reveals how language shapes social meaning and identity in interactions. The study by Storm et al. (2022) shows how youth use indexical cues in classroom discourse to build and navigate hybrid interpretive communities, revealing how affect, navigation, and evaluation shape their literary reasoning; it argues that analyzing youths' deictic markers helps educators understand and better support students as they move across and transform different interpretive communities. Bochmann (2023) argues that translation in ethnographic and multilingual research is always context-dependent, open to interpretation, and shaped by social and institutional factors; because meanings shift through indexicality, translations inevitably remain approximations influenced by researchers, participants, writing practices, and audiences, making translation an interactive, indexical process that continually creates a "third space" of difference rather than a faithful reproduction of an original. According to Doreleijers & Swanenberg (2023), media content, like music videos and TikTok spinoffs, gains new meanings as it is recontextualized across different social and digital settings, showing that meaning is dynamic and context-dependent. Remixing and the strategic use of local dialects allow users—especially young people—to express identity, social stance, and local belonging while engaging creatively with media. These practices exemplify glocalization, combining local cultural elements with global digital forms, and illustrate how online media circulation enables ongoing meaning-making and community signaling.

Kupske and Perozzo (2023) argue that language conveys social cues and that social indexicality significantly shapes L1 and L2 development, including speech acquisition. While sociolinguistics and sociophonetics have long incorporated social factors, psycholinguistics and SLA research have lagged, leaving a gap in theoretical approaches. They propose using Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) to integrate cognitive, social, and contextual influences on language learning, emphasizing that L2 speech is shaped not only by cognitive abilities but also by social identities, interactions, and environmental factors. Recognizing these dynamics allows for a more nuanced understanding of bilingualism and the interplay of cognitive and social processes in language acquisition. Grammon (2024) examines how an L2 learner developed sociolinguistic perception and interpretive abilities regarding dialectal Spanish forms and social indexicality during her study abroad experience in Peru. Findings suggest that her sociolinguistic development was a social process influenced by language

ideologies, leading her to connect specific dialectal features with social traits and moral values, highlighting the need for critical pedagogies in L2 education to enhance learners' understanding of language's social implications. It seems that L2 learners in a study abroad context develop sociolinguistic competence by linking target language variation to social meanings, initially through perceptual categorization and indexical associations, and later via language ideologies that interpret and justify these links, highlighting the role of indexicality in understanding social attributes and supporting targeted pedagogical approaches. Friedrich (2024) discusses the relationship between skills and language, particularly focusing on the concept of deixis, which is inherently context-dependent and practical, much like skills themselves. She argues against the notion of "tacit knowledge" as an underlying factor behind skills, instead emphasizing that skills should be understood as concrete acts performed under specific conditions, because indexicality is a fundamental characteristic of all linguistic signs, not just deixis, while also highlighting the challenges of analyzing these concepts due to their inherently non-observable nature. Yip & Catedral (2021) show that new immigrants' Cantonese in Hong Kong carries complex, multi-scalar indexical meanings that reflect both local and national affiliations, illustrate socially constructed notions of standardness, and highlight how immigrants' personhood intersects with language ideologies. This suggests a fractally recursive model for analyzing fluid, context-dependent sociolinguistic and indexical dynamics of language varieties.

Because indexicality links linguistic form to social interpretation, it also shapes language learning. Fabricius (2020) acknowledges that the global presence of English is shaped by local sociolinguistic and semiotic contexts, and calls for moving beyond the term "Global English" to recognize the indexical and culturally grounded meanings of English in diverse settings. Nagy (2024: 192–205) indicates that heritage speakers using a minority language alongside a dominant one, may consider elements such as accent, code-switching, word choice, and conversational patterns as communicating feelings of belonging, authenticity, nostalgia, or detachment. They can play with traditional forms of address, and their "foreignized" accent suggests assimilation into a different culture. Indexicality operates on several levels: first-order indexicality connects linguistic forms to social patterns, second-order links these patterns to social judgments or ideologies, and third-order involves speakers intentionally using language to negotiate their identity. Through these indexical cues, heritage speakers manage the conflicting expectations of family, community, and society, shaping their hybrid and transnational identities while employing language as a means of identity construction. Kroo (2024) mentions that speaking styles in conversation reveal how broader social and gendered ideologies shape perceptions of "good" and "bad" speech even as these linguistic styles are reinterpreted.

Day (2021) suggests that rather than viewing documents as faithful representations of experience, documentality should be understood through an indexical epistemology, emphasizing the performative links between text and world and showing that attempts to produce "living documents" reflect misconceptions of representation rather than actual gaps between experience and documentation. Grayson & Shulman (2000) show that consumers perceive irreplaceable possessions as distinct due to their indexicality, linking them to factual reality and providing a sense of authenticity and verification, regardless of age or life stage. Even mass-produced objects can serve as indexical anchors, allowing individuals to connect experiences and identity to the real world, countering trends of hyperreality and commoditization. Some possessions are more indexically meaningful than others, and different types of signs (indices, icons, symbols) interact; these sign functions influence memory, nostalgia, and consumer evaluation. Grayson & Martinec (2004) explore the nuanced concept of authenticity in consumer behavior, distinguishing between two types: indexical and iconic authenticity. They identify the cues that inform consumer assessments of authenticity at two tourist attractions, revealing that these cues influence not only perceptions of authenticity but also the benefits derived from authentic experiences, such as a sense of connection to the past or perceived evidence of truthfulness. The study highlights the importance of understanding how consumers deal with the complex interplay between reality and fantasy in their consumption of authentic market offerings.

In sum, indexicality provides a powerful lens for examining how linguistic forms, communicative practices, and material objects come to signal identities and relationships in everyday life. It highlights the fluid, dynamic nature of meaning-making and identity formation, especially among migrants and multilingual speakers whose lives unfold across multiple cultural and linguistic worlds. This perspective informs the present study, which investigates how Russian-speaking migrants understand and negotiate cultural identity through language, behavior, and material practices, and how these indexical processes shape their sense of belonging in new sociocultural environments.

Attitudes toward a "Typical" and "Untypical" Russian on the Internet

1. The internet article "7 Signs That Give Away a Russian Tourist Instantly Anywhere in the World" (Adme 2021) names subtle features in Russophones' appearances, remarking that Russia is home to representatives from over 190 ethnic groups, each possessing distinct facial features and body types. Despite this diversity, foreigners often manage to identify Russians by subtle characteristics that set them apart from others. For instance, light-colored eyes are more common among Russians than Europeans, and in 75% of cases, Russians have a straight facial profile. One traveler notes, "I have been to Russia at least 10 times. Many Russian women really look like models. They are lucky with

their genetics: they have fuller lips, pronounced cheekbones, and a chin line that many would envy. Beauty is very important here, and they know how to emphasize it. Cosmetics are sold everywhere, even at airports. I know a Russian woman who usually spends a whole 2 hours buying cosmetics; she has over 200 makeup products at home."

Another individual living in China shares their experience: "I have lived in China for many years. I look very different from the local population: light hair, fair skin, huge green eyes. Throughout these years, one local feature has really annoyed and baffled me. As soon as they see me, the Chinese people loudly discuss: 'Oh, look, a foreigner,' 'White skin,' 'Definitely Russian.' Can't they even consider that I might understand everything they are saying?! I hear everything in the elevator!" An Italian traveler reflects on their experience: "In Italy, they immediately recognized me as Russian. I was surprised: why, how? I asked Italians. They said they didn't know how they could tell. It kept baffling me until I asked our Russian tour guide. She said: 'Look in the mirror and look at the local men.' I see myself all the time: height — 194 cm, weight — 120 kg, light hair. I looked closely at the locals: short brunettes. The question was resolved."

The author of the post notes that "Russian women may have attractive facial features that seem exotic to Westerners, such as round faces and light eyes." Moreover, they observes that "most young Russian women really look like models. I have seen many women with perfect posture, beautiful facial features, and confident walk. They tend to possess this incredible beauty: healthy, almost innocent. Moreover, they masterfully wield the art of makeup."

This post has 104 comments, and the discussion shows readers' disagreement and irony toward the idea that Russians are so easily recognizable abroad. Many commenters reject the article as a "greeting from the 80s–90s", calling it outdated and based on stereotypes. Others argue that Europeans are often more "well-groomed and stylish," and that appearance depends less on "the amount of makeup and perfume" than on "neat hair and tasteful clothing." Several participants remark that they are often mistaken for locals in southern or northern Europe — "I'm taken for a Spaniard, Greek, or Portuguese," one writes; another says, "I look Russian (I hope!), but in the Maldives, a German couple was surprised when they found out." Many emphasize that behavior, not looks, reveals nationality: "In 90% of cases, you can tell by behavior, not by clothes," or "only Russians have that uptight, anxious face abroad." What these commenters overlook is that self-confidence or its lack is not so much a question of nationality but of socio-economic status, experience of crossing borders and proficiency in English and other languages.

Some authors share humorous or ironic experiences of being mistaken for Italians, Poles, or even Latin Americans and emphasize how diverse Russian appearances have become: "We're anyone but

Russian — maybe we've become too Canadian", one discussant jokes. Some point out generational change: young travelers, "speaking two or three languages and dressing appropriately," are no longer distinguishable from Europeans. Overall, the commenters ridicule the idea of a "typical Russian tourist," viewing it as an outdated generalization. As one sums up: "There is no 'average representative' of any country, stop spreading this nonsense."

Many countries are known for their culinary traditions, and what seems ordinary in Russia may look unusual elsewhere. For example, in much of Europe, soups familiar to Russians are rarely found on everyday menus. Travelers often notice how even global chains vary: Russians abroad are surprised when cheese sauce is unavailable in McDonald's, something Europeans recognize as a distinctly Russian preference. Even gestures of politeness can reveal origins: Russians tend to check both directions when crossing one-way streets, enter cafés without greeting the staff, or travel with cash "just in case." Many shopkeepers and hoteliers appreciate this last habit, as Russian clients often pay in cash and in advance.

Tourists also notice, that warning signs in Russian appear in unexpected places—from hotel restaurants to thermal baths—because certain behaviors (taking food out, jumping into pools) are assumed to be "special Russian habits." In fact, vendors in popular tourist destinations often switch to Russian instantly, having learned to recognize Russian customers long before they speak.

Adme (2020) describes several everyday Russian habits that often surprise foreigners. These include saying "С лёгким паром!" after bathing, fearing drafts, eating almost any food with bread, and sitting down and stayin silent for a moment before a trip. Other surprising customs are addressing strangers as "young girl" or "young man", using brackets as smiley faces online, bringing large amounts of food on train rides, drinking birch sap, and celebrating the "Old New Year", according to the Julian calendar. Although these practices may seem unusual to outsiders, they are deeply rooted in Russia's history, climate, and cultural traditions.Commenters point out that fears of drafts stem from precautions taken by people living in a cold climate. Others note cultural contrasts, for example: "In France, it was surprising how much time people devote to eating. I could finish the amount of food served at lunch in about 20 minutes, while they stretched the meal to an hour and a half or even two." Many emphasize that "every nation has its own quirks and customs." Additional observations highlight that many foreigners rarely use indoor slippers and often move around their homes in shoes used outdoors. Some comments frame traditions such as wishing "*S legkim parom*" after bathing or sitting briefly before a trip as symbolic practices that preserve intergenerational continuity. Others recall childhood experiences of being encouraged to eat everything with bread, or criticize excessive concern about drafts and overbundling children. A contributor from Kazakhstan adds that some customs are

tied to climate or local history—for instance, draft avoidance in sharply continental regions. They also comment on habits such as using brackets instead of emoticons, eating certain foods with bread, drinking birch sap, or observing the Old New Year, noting that these traditions vary widely across post-Soviet cultures.

2. On the Finnish websites, participants discuss various perceptions of Russian identity and cultural interactions, particularly in the context of living in Finland or other foreign countries. One author notes that Russians often take care of their appearance and dress elegantly. For example, men are described as gentlemen who exhibit courteous behavior, such as offering a handshake or opening doors for women, while women are portrayed as stylish and well-groomed. One participant emphasizes the importance of beauty in Russian culture; however, others contrast these observations with the notion that stereotypes about Russians are often outdated and overly simplistic. They reflect on personal experiences, noting that in southern countries like Spain and Greece, they are often mistaken for locals due to their appearances. This highlights the variability in how Russians are perceived abroad, suggesting that assumptions based on stereotypes do not always hold true. The comments also address the impact of socio-economic changes in Russia, noting that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, class disparities have become pronounced. This shift has led to a complex interplay between nostalgia for the past and present realities. The author mentions that Russians abroad are often recognized by their behavior rather than their appearances, with specific traits such as "the peculiar way they carry themselves" being telltale signs. Additionally, some commenters reflect on the challenges of cultural integration and the lingering effects of historical trauma. They discuss that some Russians carry a burden of shared past grievances which may affect their interactions with others. They conclude with a recognition that while there are negative heterostereotypes of Russians, there are also many positive experiences and interactions that challenge these perceptions.

Comparing these auto- and heterostereotypes, it is evident that they are extremely similar, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of Russian identity shaped by a variety of personal experiences and broader socio-cultural dynamics, and suggesting that understanding this complexity requires moving beyond simplistic stereotypes. Clearly, this is a healthy approach, although it may be challenged by the political events that may create new stereotypes affecting popular perceptions.

The analysis of online discussions surrounding the image of a "typical Russian" uncovers a complex interplay between identity, appearance, and public perception. Respondents' narratives illustrate the diversity of Russophone experiences, informed by personal histories, migration trajectories, and socio-economic changes. While some continue to value traditional ideals of beauty

and elegance, others resist such norms, prioritizing natural and sincere behavior, openness, and adaptability over external markers. Clothing choices, in this context, serve as tangible expressions of cultural negotiation — a balance between nostalgia, self-assertion, and the desire to integrate but not to assimilate. Perceptions of "Russianness" are increasingly plural and situational. Instead of being defined by appearance alone, they are negotiated through everyday practices, language use, and interactions that blend local influences with inherited traditions.

3. On Facebook, SZ (originally from Moscow, now living in Yerevan) reflects on material things indicating the former life in Russia, their meaning and value.The following thread revolves around memory, nostalgia, and the emotional weight of possessions left behind after emigration. The author describes receiving an old Indian vase from Moscow but realizing he cannot remember where it came from—"but I forgot about the vase"—which leads him to list many antique items still scattered "across storage units and friends' homes," each linked to a personal history. Commenters share similar experiences: one has been paying for a storage unit for years because "for some reason we hold on to these things," another notes that old furniture and heirlooms now belong to a "different new life," while others mourn the loss of cherished items—"it's all so heartbreaking!" One participant says, "the only thing I truly miss is my library," especially art books that cannot be transported, and another one recalls sorting through a home "with someone else's hands," grieving over possessions that no longer fit any future space. Some cling to warm winter clothes for imagined returns—"what if someday Russia becomes free and we come back?" Collectively, these voices reflect how displaced people remain tied to belongings that hold memories, identity, and the hope for "another life," even when preserving them becomes emotionally or practically impossible.

This publication prompts a broader meditation on furniture and antiques still scattered across storage spaces in Moscow—each item carrying individual history and nostalgia. Commenters share similar experiences: paying for long-term storage of inherited objects, losing treasured belongings during moves, grieving over furniture, books, and heirlooms left behind, or struggling with the difficulty and cost of transporting antiques abroad. Others describe letting go of their pastpossessions without regret, or holding on to symbolic items in hope of a future return. Overall, the discussion becomes a mosaic reflection on migration, memory, emotional attachment to objects, and the complex mix of nostalgia, loss, and practicality that accompanies leaving one's former life.

4. On the internet, one can encounter a document called "Signs characteristic of a hostile clandestine agent due to his prolonged stay abroad. KGB instruction for identifying foreign spies in

the USSR." It reads: Knowledge of a foreign language. (Explained by various reasons: studied at a university, traveled abroad, etc.) Use of maxims, expressions, or phrases not typical for residents of our country. Pronunciation of foreign city names, firms, surnames of well-known foreign figures with a foreign accent (not "*Bradvei*," but "Broadway," etc.). Incorrect pronunciation of Russian words, especially consonants that sound similar to foreign ones (telegram, telephone), a lack of Russian dialectal features. Mistakes in writing Russian letters when filling out documents, writing (*m–t, в –w, y–u, u–i,* etc.). Unusual awareness of details of life abroad and a lack of knowledge, or weak knowledge, of current realities and local customs. Knowledge of the state structure of the USSR, activities of Soviet authorities, our laws to such an extent as no ordinary Soviet citizen would know, and at the same time misunderstanding common Soviet everyday expressions (e.g., common abbreviations, words like "zhirovka," "sharashka," etc.). Appearances: always neat, well-groomed; displays qualities of a cultured, unusually polite, courteous person especially in relation to women (he consistently rises when a woman enters, tips his hat as a greeting, and seldom extends his hand for a handshake). Ability to make cocktails and a manner of drinking them with "mixers." Tendency to avoid medical help, self-treatment, or a wish to pay a doctor for the visit. Preference for certain foods unusual for this area and ability to prepare them correctly. Search for rare types of meat and sea food (lamb, lamprays, oysters, etc.). Rare use of bread with food, diluting alcoholic drinks with ice or water, and drinking them in small sips, as if savoring them. When using the telephone, the person may demonstrate unfamiliarity with local dialing conventions, as telephone systems abroad often work differently. They might even offer to pay for using the phone, following common practice in some other countries. In social situations, such an individual may rest their feet on elevated surfaces or chew gum when visiting someone's home. They may also smoke in places such as buses, cinemas, or shops, reflecting norms that are customary in many countries but unacceptable in the USSR.

This document seems to represent a typical internal KGB guideline from the Soviet era, designed to help security officers identify so-called "enemy illegals"—individuals suspected of being foreign intelligence operatives who lived abroad for extended periods. Such manuals circulated within the Soviet security apparatus from the late Stalinist period through the Cold War and reflected ideological anxieties about "foreign influence." The list of indicators included linguistic, behavioral, and cultural traits believed to reveal foreign exposure or training. Linguistically, the document treats knowledge of foreign languages, the use of idioms not typical of Soviet Russian, and "foreign-sounding" pronunciation as suspicious. This reflects the Soviet association of linguistic deviation with political unreliability. Even orthographic mistakes—such as writing Russian letters incorrectly—were interpreted as potential traces of non-native or foreign-affected literacy practices.

Culturally, the text assumes that long-term exposure to life abroad inevitably reshapes everyday habits: familiarity with foreign brands, table manners, clothes, or social etiquette is framed as evidence of espionage rather than normal cosmopolitan experience. Such features were "indexical"—they were understood to point to underlying social identities (e.g., a foreigner, a returnee, a spy), regardless of the speaker's actual intentions. Anyway, the document thus illustrates how Soviet security services institutionalized a semiotic ideology in which language, behavior, and appearances were treated as diagnostic signs of political loyalty. It offers a revealing artifact of Cold War surveillance culture, where even mundane habits—ordering cocktails, avoiding doctors, or recognizing foreign company names—could be reinterpreted as markers of espionage.

In Brezhnev's time, there were also questionnaires that Soviet Intourist guides had to fill out reporting on the tourists' behavior. They were worded in such a way as to reveal possible ideological influence on the guide, fear that foreign tourists would make acquaintance with Soviet citizens and in this way undermine security of the country. Courses training professional guides included lectures dictating how to behave and how to dress in order not to let down the image of a "Soviet personality."

Findings from a Survey

Results of our online survey conducted in 2025 include 90 answers of the Russophones living abroad in 27 countries.The differences between Russophones living abroad and people in Russia, as well as the locals in their current countries, are quite pronounced, particularly in terms of clothing style, social norms, and attitudes towards appearance. Many Russophones noted that clothing styles in their host countries tend to be more relaxed and practical compared to Russia. For instance, one individual stated, "In Israel, it is much more convenient and simpler." This reflects a preference for comfort and practicality in daily wear, contrasting with the more formal and sometimes extravagant styles seen in Russia.

In Finland, the style is described as "more practical and sporty," with an emphasis on comfort over formality: "Finns wear more relaxed, less formal clothing." This contrasts sharply with the Russian norm, where there is a societal expectation to dress stylishly and elegantly, as one person mentioned, "In Russia, women pay much more attention to their appearance and dress stylishly." In Russia, there is a strong societal pressure to look presentable, with expectations that one should be well-dressed even in casual settings. A respondent highlighted this by saying, "In Russia, there is a social norm for women to 'look respectable.' If not stylish and expensive, then at least clean, well-pressed, with makeup and preferably a proper hairstyle. In Finland, one is expected to look this way only if required by one's professional position or economic class. Many people there do not worry

much about their appearance, and there are also 'city eccentrics' dressed in retro, quirky, handmade, or all-at-once outfits. I like this." This contrasts with the more relaxed attitudes found in many Western countries, where there is less scrutiny regarding everyday attire. For example, people do not iron their clothes.

The perception of how others dress can also differ significantly. One person noted, "In Russia, people pay much more attention to how others are dressed and may make negative remarks," indicating a culture of judgment that is less prevalent in their host countries. The influence of local culture on clothing choices is significant. For instance, in Spain, one individual noted, "you can wear whatever you like, and no one will pay attention," highlighting a sense of freedom in personal expression through clothing that may be less common in Russia. In contrast, a Russophone who moved from Moscow to a remote area in the USA observed that people dress more freely, "without looking back at what people will say," indicating a cultural shift towards individual comfort over societal expectations.

Gender norms around clothing also appear to vary. For example, in the Nordic countries, women reportedly wear less formal attire, with "girls almost never wearing dresses, only for very formal occasions." This contrasts with the more feminine and often elaborate styles observed in Russia, where "Russian women are noticeable even in language classes: grooming, style, shoes (more daring, interesting looks)." In some institutions (like schools), it is even forbidden to wear trousers. Many Russophones mentioned a change in their personal style since moving abroad. One respondent reflected, "I have become more relaxed and simpler in how I dress," suggesting that living in a less formal environment has influenced their fashion choices towards comfort and simplicity.

In summary, the experiences of Russophones living abroad reveal a significant shift in clothing style, social expectations, and personal expression when compared to both their homeland and the local cultures they are now part of. The overall trend points towards a preference for practicality and comfort in their current environments, contrasting sharply with the more formal and scrutinized fashion culture of Russia.

Findings from the Group Discussions

When analyzing the linguistic and cultural behavior of bilinguals who speak Russian at home, we can observe that for them time flows primarily according to the calendar of the country in which they live. This applies to habits, traditions, gestures, and intonation. However, if a person has not fully mastered the surrounding language and seeks communication in Russian, earlier habits may persist. Here are some results of the group discussions with Finnish-Russian bilinguals (about 10 meetings with 3 to 10 people).

The discussion reflects how Russian-speaking families abroad negotiate cultural identity at home, balancing Russian traditions with local Finnish minimalism. Many participants describe interiors filled with books—"A friend's child once came in and said: your home feels Russian—probably because of all the books". Others emphasize the absence of stereotypical symbols: "No matryoshkas or Zhostovo trays… only one Gzhel teapot, and it's for real tea, not decoration". A common theme is a shift toward functional, Nordic aesthetics: "Our home is basically typical Finnish housing—minimalism in moderation".

At the same time, small objects and habits still carry emotional weight, such as homemade ceramics or old samovars restored as a hobby: "When you see a restored 150-year-old Tula samovar… there is something special about it". Food culture also emerges as a subtle identity marker—"Guests have to be shown the fridge with ryazhenka and the cupboard with buckwheat".

Participants describe their homes as repositories of memory, where objects associated with childhood, family history, and early migration stages acquire profound emotional significance. These objects often transcend utilitarian function, becoming mnemonic devices and carriers of identity. One speaker emphasizes that "the most cherished things in the house are my children's creations—drawings and crafts… family photographs, and dishes associated with stories and memories of places I have been." Others highlight heirlooms: "Some items have accompanied me throughout my life, like my baptismal cross." Books are particularly central, symbolizing intellectual continuity and emotional grounding: "Books, of course, move with me from place to place, and I remember each one… I cannot let these books go—they were part of my life and my growing up." Objects from family elders—postcards, letters, or suitcases—carry intergenerational memory. One participant reflects: "My grandfather wrote me a card for every holiday… I have kept all of them; not one is thrown away." "I still have my grandfather's suitcase… with a satin-lined interior. It seemed extraordinary—almost like something from Mars." These objects serve not only as sentimental keepsakes but as material anchors of cultural continuity.

Homes are described as transitional spaces where Russian and Finnish cultural aesthetics mix, producing what one speaker calls "neither fully Finnish nor fully Russian." Domestic style becomes an arena for negotiating cultural identity. Participants describe the tension between Russian abundance and Finnish minimalism: "On the one hand, I want many things; on the other, I long for minimalism. I recognize this contradiction in myself." "I feel most comfortable when surrounded by many colorful objects—that is the Russian part of me. The Finnish part is the light, uncluttered space with everything stored away." Material elements reflect this hybridity: Gzhel and Khokhloma coexist with Finnish furniture inherited from local relatives. Yet, participants often reject the idea that material culture alone

defines a "Russian home": "My home cannot be called a typical Russian home… But when guests arrive, then it becomes unmistakably Russian: a laid table, hospitality, doors open to all." Here, cultural identity is performed relationally and socially, rather than through objects themselves.

Migration and traumatic experiences such as theft lead participants to re-evaluate what they consider valuable. One participant recounts a burglary that transformed her understanding of possessions: "After the burglary my sense of value changed. I realized I can live without many things; what matters is that the family is safe." "They stole all the jewelry… Before I could have listed many precious items, but now I cannot." This shift underscores how attachments are dynamic and responsive to life events. Even so, certain irreplaceable objects remain deeply symbolic: "I would be devastated to lose what remains from my grandmother, and two soft toys belonging to my children. I want to preserve them as long as possible." Such objects, often fragile or valueless in monetary terms, represent emotional continuity and familial lineage.

Across narratives, domestic objects emerge as key symbolic resources through which Russian-speaking migrants in Finland articulate belonging, continuity, and cultural identity. While material culture expresses a hybrid aesthetic shaped by both Russian abundance and Finnish minimalism, emotional attachments remain centered on memory, family, and intergenerational transmission. The interviewees' reflections demonstrate how home is constructed not simply through "things," but through relations, memories, and culturally informed practices of hosting, keeping, and caring for objects.

Conclusions

Foreigners claim they can often identify Russians by subtle features—light eyes, certain facial proportions, or height differences. Comments from travelers describe Russian women as especially striking, with expressive features and careful grooming. Others note cultural habits: discussing strangers aloud (like in China), wearing distinctive winter hats (noticed in Italy and Western Europe), or keeping children carefully protected from the sun (as observed in Bulgaria). Small practices—bringing slippers to a friend's house or asking for a toilet brush in hotels—also stand out as recognizably Russian. Beauty routines are another marker. Russians abroad are said to be well-groomed from morning on, make use of affordable cosmetic services at home, and favor particular hair colors that locals quickly identify.

Because humans rely heavily on pointing, deixis, and shared contextual cues to coordinate interaction, indexicality is central not only to linguistic meaning but to cooperative social life. Taken together, these anecdotes illustrate how everyday habits—from grooming and clothing to manners and

small domestic preferences—become cultural signals. What feels natural to Russians may stand out abroad, making them unexpectedly easy to recognize. “Russianness” at home is less about obvious symbols and more about books, memories, everyday practices, and personal objects that quietly sustain cultural continuity across borders. In multilingual settings, these essentialized notions of national style become particularly limiting, obscuring the plurality of identities, experiences, and linguistic repertoires that characterize diasporic and migrant communities. A more nuanced view recognizes that “typical” features are not inherent properties of cultural groups but ideological constructs that emerge and circulate through specific historical, pedagogical, and interactional processes.

Social meanings attached to linguistic forms are always context-dependent. The survey and group interview data offers insight into how Russian-speaking migrants construct belonging, memory, and identity through domestic objects and home environments. Three major themes emerge: (1) material memory and emotional value, (2) cultural hybridity in domestic space, and (3) shifting attachments and the re-evaluation of possessions after migration and loss.

Linguistic forms and cultural practices among Russian-speaking migrants index social identities and relationships by serving as markers of cultural affiliation and belonging. For instance, specific phrases, accents, and dialectal features can signal a speaker's heritage and community ties, while cultural practices—such as grooming habits and social etiquette—reflect shared values and norms that connect individuals to their Russian identity. These elements become social signals that convey not just individual identity but also relational dynamics within migrant communities and their interactions with locals.

Everyday habits and grooming practices serve as markers of Russianness through distinctive behaviors that are recognized by both migrants and locals. For example, the emphasis on personal grooming and fashion among Russian women can be perceived as a cultural trait that stands out in less formal settings abroad. These practices become visible cues that not only signify the individual’s background but also foster a sense of community among Russian speakers in foreign environments. Russophone migrants negotiate their cultural identities through material possessions and domestic spaces by curating environments that reflect both their Russian heritage and the influences of their host culture. Items such as books, heirlooms, and traditional decorative objects serve as tangible connections to their past, while the overall aesthetic of their homes often blends Russian and local styles. This negotiation is evident in the emotional significance attached to these objects, which act as mnemonic devices that preserve cultural memories and familial connections, allowing individuals to assert their identity in a new context.

Cultural memory plays a crucial role in shaping the identities of Russian-speaking migrants by

providing a framework through which they understand their past and present. The memories associated with specific objects, family traditions, and cultural practices help individuals maintain a sense of continuity and belonging, even in the face of displacement. These memories are often tied to personal narratives and collective histories, enabling migrants to connect their experiences with broader cultural narratives. As they navigate new environments, these memories inform their identity construction and influence their interactions with both fellow migrants and the local population.

Perceptions of "typical" Russian behavior differ significantly among migrants and locals in host countries, often reflecting a mix of stereotypes and lived experiences. Migrants may feel that the stereotypes about Russian behavior—such as notions of directness or emotional expressiveness—are outdated or overly simplistic, particularly as they adapt to diverse cultural contexts. Locals, on the other hand, may rely on these stereotypes to interpret Russian behavior, sometimes overlooking the nuances and variations that exist within the Russian-speaking community. This disparity highlights the complexity of identity and the need for a more nuanced understanding of how behaviors are contextualized and interpreted across different cultural settings.

Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how indexicality informs the social meanings of language and cultural practices in a globalized world. It calls for a more nuanced approach to the study of identity, one that recognizes the complexities and diversities of Russian-speaking experiences and acknowledges the interplay between individual agency and broader sociocultural dynamics. By doing so, we can better appreciate the rich tapestry of identities that emerge from the intersection of language, culture, and migration.

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Specificity of translation of Svan tales[1]

ABSTRACT

The article provides an analysis of the challenges encountered when translating Svan fairy tales into Georgian and English. It discusses various methods and solutions to address these challenges, focusing on the specific aspects of Svan tales, such as the translation of titles, beginnings, endings, and other significant issues. Fixing unwritten Kartvelian languages, especially Svan materials, as mentioned many times, is an especially important task. The frequent interactions in the modern era lead to rapid changes in any language, especially unwritten ones, contributing to the gradual forgetting of the ancient Svan traditions. Therefore, preserving such languages is not just a task for the present but also for future generations. Modern civilization poses a great danger to Svan, which is now classified in the list of endangered languages by UNESCO, like thousands of other minority languages.

The preservation of Svan folklore is important because it contains elements of the ancient language, old grammatical forms, and phonological transformations. Providing Georgian and English translations of Svan tales is crucial for preserving and popularizing these cultural works. This effort will be valuable to linguists, historians, ethnographers, and folklorists. Moreover, the research results will have significance for Svan teaching and university students taking Kartvelological dialectology or Svan lecture and seminar courses.

Keywords: *language, fairy tale, translation, specificity, equivalence.*

Introduction

Folk wisdom has given rise to the enduring popularity of tales, an ancient and beloved genre that emerged during times when literacy was not widespread. The precise origins of these tales remain shrouded in mystery. Over the centuries, the oral tradition has played a significant role in the transmission and perpetuation of tales from one generation to the next. This mode of storytelling has enabled tales to evolve with the addition of new characters, heroes, and elements. Each storyteller offered their interpretation of the tales they had heard,

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resulting in various versions of the same story within the folklore of different cultures.

The purpose of the fairy tale evolved as writing developed and society's needs changed. It gradually took on various functions such as education, entertainment, fostering imagination, offering new perspectives on events - like a child, seeking creative ways to overcome challenges, promoting virtue, and condemning wickedness. Ultimately, it formed as the separate genre.

Literature Review

The literature of experts provides various interpretations of the tale. One of these clarifications defines a fairy tale as a poetic creation, a storytelling piece derived from a fantastical narrative linked to reality, featuring concepts, themes, motifs, plots, linguistic elements, and national characteristics. The tale encompasses both prose and poetry and belongs to the genre of the epic, closely resembling a story (Tale, 2023).

According to the Georgian definition dictionary, tale has two meanings: 1. "An artistic work based on an invention; a fantastic story, which has a good ending - a folk tale, magical tales. 2. A metaphorical lie, an unbelievable story." He spoke tales; No one will believe this tale" (Linguistic Technologies Group, Georgian dictionary).

The "Svan dictionary" compiled by V. Topuria and M. Kaldani defines a tale as ცⷆინ (UB.)/ციგინ (LB., Lash., Lent.) which, like Georgian, also has two definitions: 1. "Tale", 2. (US.) "Cunning; uninformative, useless talk; to say something deceitfully." In As. Liparteliani's "Svan-Georgian Dictionary" compiled according to the speech of Cholur is found an analogous root word _ ცⷆგ ლ-ბ ⷆგ ⷆლ that means "baseless talk." In the scientific literature, the first component of the above-mentioned stem-doubled composite may reflect the root of the ც ⷆინ lexeme (Babluani, 2009, 3).

In English, the definition of a tale is as follows: a) a traditional story written for children, usually involving imaginary creatures and magic; b) particular, attractive, beautiful" (fairytale).

The Svan language and its dialects are facing a threat of extinction due to the rapid pace of modern life and increased population mobility, both within the country and beyond, which has led to the influence of various related and unrelated languages on the Svan dialects. Consequently, it is crucial to translate the diverse Svan tales into Georgian and English and subsequently make them accessible to the public. The translation utilized the content from all four volumes of "Svan Prose Texts" (1939; 1957; 1967; 1979) collected and published by

renowned scientists (A. Shanidze, V. Topuria, M. Kaldani, Al. Oniani...), "Chrestomathy of the Svan Language" (1978), as well as a collection of tales of different genres obtained in the filed condition of the villages in the Mestia and Lentekhi districts by the Svan research group of the Kartvelian Languages Department of TSU Arn. Chikobava Institute of Linguistics (M. Saghliani, N. Shavreshiani, L. Giglemiani...), which, in our view, holds significant value from dialectological, folklore, and ethnographic standpoints.

The specificity, diversity of genres, and archaic nature of Svan tales have motivated us to focus on the translation of these folk tales into Georgian-English languages. It is crucial for intercultural dialogue to ensure a highly artistic and accurate translation that conveys the specific linguistic elements and preserves the national colour and unique narrative style as much as possible.

To perform these activities, as already mentioned, various research methods will be used (descriptive, comparative-contrastive, typological, qualitative, quantitative, etc.) which is due to the multifaceted nature of the approach to the problem.

Translation has been practised for about twenty centuries. Nevertheless, translation study as one of the disciplines of philological science is relatively new. The theory of translation emerged soon after the establishment of the practice of exchanging cultural values between nations to foster literary relations. This theory has undergone several steps of development. In the early stages, translation was loose and did not demand fidelity to the original text. The translator often created his original poems or texts based on their impression of the original work (Nateladze, 2016, 26).

The understanding of "translation", as well as the principles and requirements associated with it, has evolved over time. In Georgian special literature, multiple viewpoints have been presented regarding translation by various authors such as Vl. Agniashvili, K. Gamsakhurdia, G. Gachechiladze, R. Cholokashvili, A. Gelovani, E. Gordeziani, D. Gotsiridze, G. Tsibakhashvili, E. Takaishvili, M. Chikovani, L. Taktakishvili-Urushadze, V. Kotetishvili, V. Luarsabishvili, M. Odzeli, I. Merabishvili, q. Zagnidze, N. Sayvarelidze, D. Panjikidze, T. Kurdovanidze, etc.

Discussion

The folklore story, being a culturally specific and localized narrative, is more resistant to being translated due to its heavy reliance on ethnic context. The process of translating a folklore story involves not only converting it from one language to another but also

conveying it from one cultural environment to another. Furthermore, the translator should make every effort to maintain the distinct national characteristics of the folklore story as much as possible, as the translated version must accurately represent the culture of the original nation (Nateladze, 2016, 43).

The translator's role is to ensure that the text is accurately translated and produced. The following article will address specific markers discovered during the translation of Svan folk tale, among other topics.

Translating tale titles presents a significant challenge during the translation process. An investigation showed that Svan tale titles vary in structure and composition, including simple one-word titles, complex compound titles with two or more words, and titles with modifiers such as numeral, adjectives, subjects, and conjunctions, etc.

The provided examples of simple titles are found in tales such as "Jarmama", "Shekhemurza", "Adlakhani", "Anna", “Aleksandre", etc. These titles consist of people's proper names (Jarmama, Shekhemurza, Adlakhani, Anna, Aleksandre) that remain unchanged in translation.

Examples of complex composite titles are: "The Four Brothers and Tserodena". We leave Tserodena's name unchanged and indicate its definition and description (thumb-sized, tiny (child, adult) in the footnote; "The Three Brothers and the Kajebi", like Tserodena, "Kaji" remains unchanged with its explanation in the footnote (evil spirit, demon; race of spirits who are often portrayed as magic-wielding, demonic metal-worker); Devi, who typically represents an evil power but occasionally intervenes to aid humanity, is another popular hero in Svan tales. With the definition provided in the footnote, his name is transliterated in the same manner as Tserodena and Kaji in the English version (Devi is also a popular character in Georgian folk tales, a fantastic human-like creature, large and powerful, sometimes with many heads. Mainly represents an evil force. The devi abducts the beauties and hides them in the underworld or the heaven. Many fairy tale heroes kill devis), e. g. “The Man and The Devi"; In addition to the mentioned fairy tales, the following titles also belong to complex composite: "The Husband and the Wife and Two Devils", "The Three Brothers and the Old Man", "The Fortune teller and Three Brothers", "The Bird and the fox", etc.

There are quite a lot of titles where a numerical noun is used as a determinant: "The Two Sons", "The Three Brothers and the Sisters”, "The Husband and the Wife and The Two Devils", "The Three Brothers and The Old Man", "The Fortune Teller and The Three

Brothers".

There are common nouns that have equal importance and are connected to each other by coordinating conjunction “and” - "The Man and The Devi”, "The Man, the Bear and the Fox", "The Husband and the Wife and the Two Devils,” "The Fortune Teller and the Three Brothers", “Siko and His Youngest Son”, “The Mother and the Child”, and so on.

We also have an attributive modifiers such as “The Old Wolf”, “The Rope and the Poor Man”, “Three Brothers and the Old Man”, etc.

The title of a tale is typically based on the name, social status, activities, meaning, personality, and ambitions of the main character. Translating such titles can be challenging when they aim to portray the character, behaviour, and appearance character. However, the mentioned fairy tales are straightforward in their content, and their titles do not serve a functional purpose (exception: Tserodena), making them easier to translate. Finding their equivalents in the language was also not difficult when using numerical and descriptive nouns as determinants and coordinating conjunctions for subjects of equal importance.

Another important fact that attracts attention in Svan tales is the chaotic period/time. The speaker does not adhere to a specific time frame to convey the entire text. When narrating, the speaker seamlessly transitions between present, past, and future tenses without a consistent pattern. In these instances, to indicate the logical progression of events, the English translation follows the simple past tense, and at times, the past continuous tense, past perfect tense is used based on the context. As for direct speech, we use present tenses (mostly- present simple) - based on the content of the text, e. g.

ამეჩუ ისიპანელ: „მ□ჲ ესერ ჩ□ემნეს, იმთ’აჩეს?!“ ულტეხ□ ცხეკთეისგ’ □თჴედ□ნ. სემი დ□□ □რიხ ამეჲსგა. ხაყ ლ□ენი, მარე სგა ღალ აჩად. ალ □რ იცლა□ელხ ი უშხ□არ ხედგ□რიხ” (Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 226) / „დადის აქ აქეთ-იქით: „რა ვქნა, სად წავიდეო („აქ ტრიალებს: „რაო ქნას, საით წავიდეს?!“)?!“ {ამასობაში} ერთ უღრან ტყეში შევიდა („უსიერ ტყ{ის}კენში *მიენასვლა“). ამ ტყეში სამი დევია („სამ-ი დევ-ი არიან ამაში“). ეშინია, მაგრამ მაინც შევიდა („ეშინია, მაგრამ საცოდავი შევიდა“). ესენი {რაღაცას} ვერ იყოფენ და აკვდებიან ერთმანეთს („ესენი ცილ-ა-ობ-ენ და ერთმანეთ{ს} აკვდებიან“) / “He walked around and thought, "What should I do? Where should I go?" {Meanwhile}, he went into the dense forest. There were three devis in the forest. He was afraid but entered anyway. They could not share {something} and were disputing.”

ჩუი □დლეთან ხოჩამდ, ჩუსკურ საფლ□□ჟი ი ხეწად თ□ეთ□ენე რ□შ□ (Lent., Topuria & Kaldani, 1857, 148) / „კარგად დაღამდა, ეს კი ზის სასაფლაოზე და დაინახა თეთრი რაში („ქეც დაღამდა კარგად, ქვე ზის საფლავ-ზე და შეხედა თეთრ რაშ-ს“) / “Night fell. He was sitting at the cemetery and saw a white steed.”

ასხრი ი თ□ელაკან აშხვ გის□ ღუნვ რს □ (Lent., Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 314) / „მიდის და ერთ ადგილას გადააწყდა ხბოებს” / {He} left and came across the calves at one place.”

The Georgian folk tale places special emphasis on the consistent beginning and ending formulas, as highlighted by T. Kurdovanidze. There are two types of opening formulas outlined by Kurdovanidze. The first type of formula is connected to the content of the fairy tale while serving a specific function. This function includes capturing the listener's attention, setting the mood, and creating an atmosphere for storytelling, e. g. „იყო და არა იყო რა, ღვთის უკეთსი რა იქნებოდა” / "There was, and there was not (of God's best may it be!)" This type of beginning seamlessly integrates with the fairy tale. The meaning of this expression suggests the pre-Gods world and the idea of "existence" or "non-existence" before the world's creation, along with the presence of "unknown infinity." Upon hearing this phrase, a tale atmosphere is immediately evoked, instantly transporting one to a "fairytale world."

In both the Georgian and English folk tales, the phrase "There was, and there was not," "once upon a time" marks the beginning of the action, signifying the arrival of another world. In Georgian tales, phrases such as "God is our Merciful", "What would be better than God" and "There was a fisherman" typically follow this solidly traditional beginning, establishing a primary semantic and structural foundation for the content that follows (Shiukashvili, 2016, 9).

The examination showed that the English tale, like Georgian, follows the figurative formula with the common beginning phrase "Once upon a time" and its variations. The past tense forms of the verb "to be" such as "was" and "were" are utilized. The expressions "there was a miserable man," "there were once three brothers," and "there lived two brothers" are frequently used interchangeably, indicating the existence of real subjects and characters in the past, e.g.

“Once upon a time, in a very far-off country, there lived a merchant... ” - „ერთხელ, ძალიან შორეულ ქვეყანაში, ცხოვრობდა ვაჭარი..." (Andrew Lang, 1989).

“There were formerly a king and a queen...” - „ოდესღაც იყვნენ მეფე და დედოფალი...” (Andrew Lang, 1989).

“Once there was a gentleman who married, for his second wife...” (Andrew Lang, 1989).

Svan tales, unlike Georgian and English ones, do not contain symbolic formulas as a defining characteristic. Typically, the story starts with blessing or appeal, e.g. ჯამზ□რას ღერთემ! (Lash. Shanidze, Kaldani, Chumburidze, 1978, 273) / „დაგლოცოს ღმერთმა” / “God bless you!”

Preserving the national flavour of the original tale when translating the beginning and ending into another language requires careful attention. Accurately conveying the specific linguistic realities of Svan is crucial for an authentic representation of Svan. This is why, in the English translation, the fairy tale starts with a blessing formula (such as "God bless you! Be blessed! May we all be blessed!" instead of "There was, and there was not").

მაგ ლგმზგრ□□ ლიდ ი ლგმ□რ□ლიხ ეშხუ ჲეხ□-ჭაშ „ყველანი დალოცვილები ვიყოთ და ყოფილან ერთი ცოლ-ქმარი („ყველანი დალოცვილიმც ვართ და ყოფილან ერთი ცოლ-ქმარი”)/ “May we all be blessed, and there were a husband and a wife” (Chol., speaker D. Gvidiani, 2007).

ა□სამეზრა ღერთემდ! (Lent., Topuria & Kaldani, 1967, 124) / „დაგლოცოს ღმერთმა!”/ “God bless you!”

მაგ ლგმზგრ□□ლიდ! (Chol., speaker D. Gvidiani, 2007) / „ყველანი დალოცვილები ვიყოთ („ყველა დალოცვილიმცა ვართ!”)” / “May we all be blessed!”

აღო, ხოჩემიშ გარუ ლამშ□ალ ლი, იმეგ□რიხ სემი ლახ□ბა (LB. Davitiani, Topuria & Kaldani, 1957, 50) / „აბა, მხოლოდ კარგი იყოს სალაპარაკო, სადღაც (სად) არიან სამი ძმა”/“Well, let it be only good to talk about. There were three brothers somewhere.”

Observation has shown that, mainly in the beginning formulas of Upper Bal tales, the predicate is often omitted and assumed, and the connection is made with or without a conjunction:

ლ□მზ□რ□□ ხი ი სემი ლახ□ბა (UB., Shanidze & Topuria, 1939, 102) „დალოცვილი იყავი („ხარ”) („დალოცვილიმც ხარ”) და სამი ძმა” “Be blessed and

three brothers.” In this instance, in both Georgian and English translations, we reestablish the predicate using the appropriate symbol for restoration {} and adjust the verb to the past simple tense, e.g.: „დალოცვილი იყავი და {იყო} სამი ძმა,” /“Be blessed, and {there were} three brothers.“

The beginning of the next fairy tale called "The Fortune Teller and and the Three Brothers" is similar, e.g. ლ□მზ□რ□ზი ი სემი ლახ ზა (UB., Shanidze & Topuria, 1939, 104) / „დალოცვილი იყავი და {იყო} სამი ძმა („დალოცვილიმც ხარ და სამ-ი ძმა“)“ / “Be blessed, and {there were} three brothers.”

ლ□მზ რ ხიშდ ი ანა (UB., Shanidze & Topuria, 1939, 134) / „დალოცვილი იყავით და {იყო ერთი} ანა („დალოცვილიმც ხართ და ანა“) / “Be blessed and {there was} Anna.”

The speaker's blessing formulas are addressed to the listener, helping to create direct contact with the speaker and readying the listener to hear an amazing story. Simultaneously, it represents a relationship with God, highlighting the divine inspiration of stories.

Apart from the blessing formulas, the story starts with the narration of the tale itself. Here, the verb "to be" is prevalent in various tenses. As previously stated, if the verb is in the present tense we changed it to the past simple, past continuous, past perfect tenses in the English version, e.g.

ეშხუ ხეხ□ჯ შ რიხ (LB. Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 225) / „ერთი ცოლ-ქმარი არიან” / “There were a husband and a wife.”

ლგმ□რდელი ეშხუ მეჩი თხერე (Lent., Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 314) / „ყოფილა ერთი ბებერი მგელი” / “There was an old wolf.”

ეშხუ □ეხ□-ჯაშ ლ□მ□რ□ლიხ ძღ□დ მდიდარ (Lash. Oniani, Kaldani & Oniani, 1979, 74) / „ყოფილა ერთი ძალიან მდიდარი ცოლ-ქმარი“ / “There were very wealthy husband and wife.”

არდახ ეშხუ დადა ი ბაბა ი ხორდახ ნაღ□ჟურგეზალ (LB., Davitiani, Topuria & Kaldani, 1957, 187) / „იყვნენ ერთი ბებია და ბაბუა, რომელთაც ჰყავდათ ვაჟიშვილი („იმყოფებოდნენ ერთი ბებია და ბაბ-უა და ჰყავდათ ნა-ვაჟ-ევ-ი შვილი“)“ / “There were grandparents who had a son.”

ლ□შარდ ლი ხოჩა მეთხ ი□რ (Lent., Topuria & Kaldani, 1967, 126) / „ყოფილა კარგი მონადირე” / “There was a good hunter.”

ეშხუ მ□რეს ცხეკისა ლე□ნი დაბ ხუ□ნ (Lash., Oniani, Kaldani & Oniani, 1979, 70) / „ერთ კაცს ტყეში სახნავი მიწა ჰქონდა („ერთ კაცს ტყეში სა-ხნ-ავ-ი ყანა ჰქონდა“) / “A man had arable land in the forest,” etc.

As is known, the ending of the Georgian fairy tale is diverse, often featuring poetic and blessed phrases or details about the hero's destiny, e.g.

„ჭირი იქა, ლხინი აქა,

ქატო იქა, ფქვილი აქა”

”Famine there, feast here,

Sifting there, flour here” (Georgian Folk tales, 2015, 14);

“ჭირი – იქ იყოს, ლხინი – აქ,

ნაცარი – იმათ, ფქვილი ჩვენ,

დღეისთვის ესეც ვიკმაროთ,

ხვალე გიამბობთ დანარჩენს

“Famine be there, feast - here,

Ashes to them, flour to us,

That's enough for today.

I will tell you the rest tomorrow” (Georgian Folk tales, 2015, 350);

„ელასა, მელასა,

ჭიქა მეკიდა ყელასა,

მსმენელსა და გამგონესა

ძილი გაამოთ ყველასა”

Elasa, melasa,

The jug hung on me,

To the teller and the listener

Sweet sleep to you and to me” (Folk Poetry, 1972, 153).

The ending of English fairy tale gives us information about the happy life of the characters or the successful completion of a dangerous adventure:

And they lived happily ever afterwards „და ცხოვრობდნენ ისინი ბედნიერად ამის შემდეგ”

Ali Baba were rich to the end of their lives „ალი ბაბა მათი სიცოცხლის ბოლომდე მდიდარი იყო"(Andrew Lang, 1989).

as for Svan, like in the beginning, we find the blessing formulas at the end as well. Additionally, the conclusion includes information about the protagonist's successful resolution of their challenges through wealth acquisition and marriage to the king's daughter or another attractive woman, which remains unchanged in the English translation, e.g.

სგა ან□დხ გი□თე ი ხოჩა ლირდე დ□ ი□დხ ი ჯ□შზ□რახ ღერთემ! (UB., Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 168) / „მოვიდნენ სახლში და ბედნიერად იცხოვრეს და დაგლოცოთ ღმერთმა („შემოვიდნენ ალაგ-{ის}-კენ და კარგი ყოფა გადაიხადეს და დაგლოცოთ ღმერთ-მა!“)!“ / “They came home and lived happily ever after and God bless you.”

□ოდ ეჯ□რს ლეწედ, ეჩქადუ ლ□რიდ! (LB., Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 227) „სანამ ისინი ვნახოთ, მანამდე ვიცოცხლოთ („სანამ იმეებს შევხედოთ, მაშინადმცა ვართ/ვიმყოფებით!“)!“ / ”Let's live until we see them.”

ე, ეჯ ლადელ□ღო ხოჩა ლირდე-ლიზგე ოთ□ □ახ ი სგა ლ□მზ□რ ხი□დ □□ ი იშგენ □! (Chol., speaker D. Gvidiani, 2007) / „ე, იმ დღის მერე ბედნიერად ცხოვრობდნენ და თქვენც დალოცვილი იყავით და სხვაც („ე, იმ დღ-ის მერე კარგი ყოფა-ცხოვრება გადაუხდიათ და თქვენც დალოცვილიმც ხართ და სხვაც!“)!“ / “After that day, they lived happily, and be blessed you and others too!”

ამ□ღო სერ ალ□არდ ხოჩა ლირდე ედ□იდხ ი ჯამზ□რახ ღერთემ! (Lash., Oniani, Kaldani & Oniani, 1979, 76] / „ამის მერე უკვე ბედნიერი ცხოვრება ჰქონდათ და უფალმა დაგლოცოთ („ამის მერე უკვე ამათმა კარგი ყოფა გადაიხადეს და დაგლოცოთ ღმერთ-მა!“)!” / “They lived happily ever after and God bless you.”

At the end, there is also a double formula of blessing, a difficult ending, because not two, but several figurative expression are collected. in such cases, the formulas containing the blessing prevail, which we think is determined by the environment in which the text was written. The narrator, naturally, prays the recorder after the end of the tale, because the latter is right there, next to him (Babluani, 2009, 52), e.g.

ხინ ამეჩუ □მ□□და, ჭირ ეჩხა□ აგ□ია. ლ□მზ□რ□□ ხიშდ ამეჩუ მერდე მ□გ! (UB., Shanidze & Topuria, 1939, 103) / „ლხინი აქა, ჭირი იქა („ლხინ-ი აქეთ მომიტანია, ჭირ-ი იქით წაგვიღია“)“. ყველანი უფალმა დაგლოცოთ („დალოცვილიმც ხართ აქ მყოფი ყველა!“)!“ Feast here, famine there. God bless you all here!”/ “I brought feast here, we took away famine there. God bless you all here!”

Some tales end simply with some information about the main character, without blessings or symbolic formulas, e.g.

აგის ჩ□დგარხ ი ლეღ □ი ჩ□ედყ□ილხ ისგდ ი ქონ□ (Lash. Oniani, Kaldani, Oniani, 1979, 70) / "სახლში მოკლეს და ხორციც და ქონიც შუაზე გაიყვეს („ალაგა-ს მოკლეს და ხორციც გაიყვეს შუა და ქონ-ი-ც"). "They killed {the bear} at home and divided the flesh and fat in half."

ეჩუნღო მ□რას დე ზექ ხეკლი□ლ ი დე ლეზოზ (Lash., ibid., 74) / „მას მერე კაცს არც შეშა აკლდა და არც საჭმელი / "Since then, the man lacked neither firewood nor food."

ეჩანღო მიჩ ი მიჩა დის ლეზ□ ებ-ლეთრე მე□ არ ხ□ღ□ენახ (Lent., Topuria & Kaldani, 1967, 133)/ „მას შემდეგ დედა-შვილს საჭმელ-სასმელი არ მოკლებიათ („შემდეგ მას და მის დედა-ს საჭმელი-სასმელი ძალიან ჰქონიათ") / "Since then, he and his mother had a lot of food and drink."

In all three examples (Georgian, English, and Svan), the tale finishes with good triumphing over evil. The narrator functions as an observer.

In addition to the fact that tales of the Upper Bal dialect sometimes lack the verb "to be" at the beginning, sentences, and words are also omitted in other dialect tales. It can be not only the verb "to be", but also any word expressing any action, or any part of speech. These words are usually assumed. Based on the context, we restore the omitted sentences and words in the Georgian and English translations indicating with the corresponding symbol {}, e.g.

მელთერდ „ეშხ□ესერ ლექ□ერ გ□ეში ჯ□ჱდუ ანტუსეხ (LB. Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 225) / მკითხავმა {ურჩია}: „ერთი წისქვილი სავსე ცვილი დაწვითო („მკითხავმა: „ერთიო წისქვილი სავსე ცვილიმც აკმიეს")" / The fortune-teller {advised}, "Burn a mill of wax."

ულტეხ□ ცხეკთეისგ' □თჴედ□ნ (LB. Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 226) / {„ამასობაში} ერთ უღრან ტყეში შევიდა („უსიერ ტყ{ის}კენში *მიენასვლა") / {"Meanwhile, he entered the dense forest."

ათხე ღალ ჩ□ბდირმხ ალი ი სპელენჯიშ ლარდილთეისგ'ადგენეხ. ქა ლაზ დემთე ხარ (LB. Shanidze, Kaldani & Chumburidze, 1978, 226) / "დაიჭირეს ეს საცოდავი {ბიჭი} და სპილენძის პატარა ოთახში ჩაკეტეს („ახლა საწყალი

დაიჭირეს ეს და სპილენძ-ის სამყოფუკა{ს}კენში და-დგ-ე-ს“). {ამ ოთახს} გასასვლელი არსაით აქვს („გასასვლელი არსაითკენ აქვს“) / “They caught the poor {boy] and locked him in a small copper room. {That room} had nowhere to exit.”

ანჯად ათხე ალ მუგულდ ალ□რთეისგა ი: „იმღ’ესერ იჩოხ?“ (LB. Davitiani, Topuria & Kaldani, 1957, 87) / „მივიდა ეს მტრედი ამათთან და {ჰკითხა}: „ამას რატომ აკეთებთო?”/ ”The dove flew to them and {asked}, “Why are you doing this?”

ეჩქას ამფხ□სიმაქდ ს□პდა (|| ესსიპდა): – ჯ’ესერ ლი მიჩა ლე□ხური (LB. Davitiani, Topuria & Kaldani, 1957, 50) / „სახლში რომ მოვიდნენ, მაშინ ბაყაყი გოგოდ გადაიქცა და {უთხრა} – მე ვარო შენი საცოლე („სახლ{ის}კენ მოვიდნენ, მაშინ ბაყაყი ქალიშვილად გადაიქცა: – თვითონო არის მისი საცოლე“)“ / “When they came home, then the frog turned into a maiden and {said to him}, "I am your bride-to-be."

ხეწ□დ ალ მახეღ□□ჟ სიმაქს ქა: – მიჩ ესერ მიჩა კალთა□გ’ათსედა ქ□წ.ედ ესეროღ□ ლ□ს□ჯიმილ-დაჩ□ირ, მადე□ ხეხ□-ჭ□შ (LB. Davitiani, Topuria & Kaldani, 1957, 188) / „ამ ბიჭმა დაინახა მზეთუნახავი {და უთხრა}: – მეო შენ კალთაში დამრჩა სული, ან და-ძმა ვიყოთო, ან ცოლ-ქმარი („დაინახა ეს ახალ-ვაჟ-ი ქალიშვილს: – მასო მის კალთა-ში დარჩენია სული, ანომცა იყვნენ ძმა-და, ან ცოლ-ქმარი“)” / “That boy saw the beauty {and said}, I have left my soul in your lap, either we should be a brother and a sister, or a husband and a wife.”

In Svan tales, the speaker often uses the verb "to say", while the content may mean "to ask, advise, answer, declare, shout, repeat, offer, continue", and so on.

According to the principle of choosing the right word, in such places where the speaker uses "to say" instead of the above-mentioned words, we write the appropriate word out of context in English translation, “to ask, advise, answer, declare, shout, repeat, offer, continue", and so on.

ბაპდ ხ□ქ□ე: _ სი ერ ნაკიჭ□ლ ემზ□ზ, ეჯი მა□ ლას?” (Lash., Oniani, Kaldani & Oniani, 1979, 74) / „მღვდელმა უთხრა: _ შენ რომ ქსოვილის პატარა ნაჭერი გამომიგზავნე, ის რა იყო?” / “The priest asked, “What was the small piece of cloth you sent me?”

ეშხუნ □ლექსანდრე ერ □მეჩედლი ლ□ხ ი□რხო, ეჩქა დ □□ს ხოქ□ა: „ერ ლოქ ან□ეს □ლექსანდრე, მიჩემ თხ□იმ ლეგდ ლოქუ ლ□□რდ□ნე ი

□ლექსანდრეს ლოქუ ხ □ქ□ ერე ლ ჩ□იშ□ნანღ ელ□ლოქუ ახო იდ“ (L□ent., Topuria & Kaldani, 1967, 142) / „ერთხელ, როცა ალექსანდრე სანადიროდ წასულა, მაშინ დევს უთქვამს: „როდესაც ალექსანდრე დაბრუნდება, შენ თავი მოიავადმყოფეო და ალექსანდრეს უთხარიო, რომ ირმის ნაღველი მოგიტანოსო („ერთხელ ალექსანდრე რომ წასულა სანადიროდ, მაშინ დევ-ს უთქვამს: „რომო მოვიდეს ალექსანდრე, თვითონ თავი ავადმცა *იმყოფოს და ალექსანდრე-ს-ო-მცა უთხრა, რომე ირმის ნაღველ-ი-ო-მცა მოუტანა“) / Once, when Aleksandre went hunting, the devi advised her, "When Aleksandre comes back, pretend to be sick and ask to Aleksandre to bring you deer bile," etc.

Conclusion

The Svan folklore is rich with various elements, identifying both commonalities and distinctions, selecting suitable parallels, and preserving an authentic appearance is crucial for cross-cultural communication, particularly for a language at risk that retains numerous ancient forms and reflects aspects of early existence.

A fairy tale, as a sample of oral speech, and property of humanity, has common features. In addition to common aspects, Svan tale is distinguished by its specific features, which lead to its unique place in world folklore.

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Formulas of Space and Time in French and Azerbaijani Fairi Tales

ABSTRACT

French and Azerbaijani fairy tales were created based on the traditions of past universal cultural heritage, and over time, national nuances were added to these traditions, resulting in the formation of national fairy tales. Therefore, the texts of French and Azerbaijani fairy tales can be considered an ancient part of the global national landscape, while the phraseological units used in the texts of French and Azerbaijani fairy tales can be regarded as an ancient and relatively unchanging part of the global linguistic landscape.

In the texts of French and Azerbaijani fairy tales, there are numerous formulas of time and space, which are reflected both in the plot of the tales and in the description of similar archetypes. As in the fairy tales of many peoples around the world, French and Azerbaijani fairy tales are divided into three main parts: the beginning, the main part, and the end of the tale. French and Azerbaijani fairy tales begin with an introduction, which consists of similar and different traditional fairy tale formulas. The main purpose of opening formulas is to arouse the audience's interest in the story. For this purpose, various means are used in opening formulas. As a rule, these sentences provide readers and listeners with information about the time and place where the story takes place and create curiosity and intrigue to capture their attention. In French and Azerbaijani fairy tales, introductory sentences indicate both the place and time in which the tale takes place. In French and Azerbaijani fairy tales, there are two types of introductions: simple and complex.

Both languages compared have complex structured opening formulas. The rich semantics of these sentences and the stylistic devices used are of great interest. Medial formulas are used in the midst of the tale. In Azerbaijani tales, these formulas are used to further increase the listener's interest, while in French tales, they are used to test the listener's concentration. Both French and Azerbaijani fairy tales, as a rule, end with closing formulas. The introductory and closing formulas are repeated from tale to tale and gradually become part of the phraseological stock of the languages we are studying as phraseological units.

The primary objective of the research is a comparative-typological study and analysis of time and space formulas in French and Azerbaijani fairy tales.

Key words: *French fairytales, Azerbaijani fairytales, space, time, comparative-typological analysis, formulas*

Introduction

A fairy tale is one of the most ancient and widespread epic genres of oral folk literature, reflecting the historical traditions of the people, their outlook on life, their way of life and customs, their lifestyle, national traits, and noble human qualities such as patriotism and heroism through optimistic artistic fiction. Fairy tales remain an important tool in the study of religious, national-spiritual and

multicultural values, as well as historical past. The plot of fairy tales is traditional. This traditionality is most evident in the formulas. Fairy tale formulas are not just means of artistic description, but also components that make up the poetic system of the fairy tale. Since they are formed based on the poetic requirements of the genre, in each group of tales they acquire a unique character and reflect the creative power of the storytelling tradition.

Methodology

The formula types of fairy tales have always been one of the controversial issues in both world and Azerbaijani folklore. There are also enough studies on the formula types of fairy tales in world folklore. These studies create a wide opportunity for the comparative study of French and Azerbaijani fairy tales. In order to compare the fairy tales of these peoples, it is first necessary to determine their structure. The researcher O. Aliev believes that a comprehensive study of fairy tales is only possible after their systematic study. By "study," the researcher means the separate and systematic examination of various parts of the plot (10,17). Indeed, it is precisely through these methods that one can determine the similar and different features of various folklore genres and distinguish them from each other based on genre characteristics.

The plot lines used in the fairy tales of both peoples differ from each other with their specific characteristics. For example, the strong fiction in fairy tales, the manifestation of allegory in animal tales, as well as events related to the depiction of real truth by the hero in household tales, have created the basis for a somewhat broader and more developed plotline in these tales. In this regard, the similarities and differences between the formulaic index of fairy tales in French folklore and the systematization in Azerbaijani folklore are of interest.

Literature Review

N. Roshianu considers that works of the folklore genre, including fairy tales, have a stereotyped structure and that such works contain certain “common places” which have over time become stable word formulas. [11,53] The “common places” mentioned by N. Roshianu also include special expressions used at the beginning and end of the fairy tales of the French and Azerbaijani peoples.

Many linguists, notably K. Simonov, P. N. Boratav, V. Eberhard, and V. Isgandarova, refer to these expressions as "formulas." We believe that this term is fairly consistent and would be appropriate to use.

The researcher V. Iskenderova notes that traditional formulas have a stylistic nature. [5, 4] The author considers them an important component of fairy tale narratives and ancient traditions.

Such formulas were formerly seen by Yusuf Vezir Chemensheminli as the adornments of fairy tales, which serve as repositories of national memory. He stated that "... what adorns fairy tales is their linguistic composition and sentences." According to this viewpoint, when studying folk literature, this aspect should always be kept in mind. It is impossible to draw any conclusions otherwise. [1, 277-278].

Discussion

When we talk about the formulas in the French and Azerbaijani tales, we see that the formulas in most of these tales are the identical and parallel. Therefore, the events in the tales are related to the main character. In general, most of these works present the good versus the evil. Let us also emphasize that the depiction of different animal species in these tales has not only an aesthetic character in the poetic system of fairy tales from a descriptive point of view, but also stems from ancient mythological thoughts and beliefs.

In terms of the classification of formula types, the studies by P. N. Boratav and W. Eberhard also attract attention. In their work "Types of Turkish Folk Tales," the authors addressed very important points regarding formulas in the introductory part of the tales. [9,88] They note that the introductory formula, which begins with the phrase "once upon a time...", can continue with the device of "nursery rhymes or repetition." P. N. Boratav and V. Eberhardt emphasize another characteristic feature of the opening formula of fairy tales. "Usually, before moving on to the events of the main plot, fairy tales may present small details describing the hero's situation, life, birth, and youth." [3,11-12]

K. I. Simonov calls the phrases at the beginning of a folklore text "initial formulas." According to the scholar, these formulas determine the action in time. [12,253]

Romanian scholar Nicolae Rosianu, in his work "Traditional Formulas of Fairy Tales" published in 1974, studied the style of fairy tale narration using folklore materials of European and Asian peoples and divided fairy tale formulas into 3 large groups:

1. Initial formulas;
2. Medial formulas.

The researcher divides the initial formulas into two parts:

1. Time;
2. Space. [11,295]

The time formulas seen in French and Azerbaijani fairy tales express that the events took place in the distant past. Time formulas are expressed either using the formulas “əyyami sabiqdə”, “keçmiş zamanda” or using past tense suffixes. In fairy tales where time formulas are not used, the time of

events is expressed using the suffixes "idi" and "imish". In fairy tales, time is not specified precisely; events usually occur in an indefinite time. Therefore, opening formulas are utilized to emphasize that the events take place in the distant past. The narrator recognizes that the fairy tale's chronological period differs from the present. Therefore, he often uses phrases like "*o vaxtı", "o vaxtlar", "keçmişdə"* [1] to emphasize the differences in narrative time. The storyteller expresses the time when the events occur as "in the past times," "in old days," "in former times ," "in ancient times," "in bygone days", thereby indicating that the events in the story take place in the distant past. When we pay attention to the formulas expressing time, we see that there is no significant difference in meaning between them; they are all composed of synonymous expressions. The first part of the formula consists of synonymous words such as "keçmiş", "qədim", "sabiq" while the second part consists of expressions that are close in meaning to each other, such as "zaman", "qərinə", "əyyam". In the example of time formulas, we see that formulas are not fixed expressions or set phrases, but can change in form while maintaining their function and main content. Moreover, there are also time formulas such as "günlərin bir günündə" as "one fine day," which differ from the previous formulas. Some formulas, such as " Əyyami-sabiqdə" are given with an ezafe[2].

Time formulas are also used to create connections between episodes in the text, to introduce a new character into the storyline. In this type of fairy tale, certain formulas are used to create connections between different biographical times, to transfer events from one place to another. These formulas create links between different biological times and ensure the transition from one biological time to another. Either narrative formulas or time-expressing formulas like "one fine day" or "one day", "once" are used to generate this transition. *Once, at night Alimardan came to agreement with his wife so that he could earn a living in the city [6, 21]; One day, in the morning, news came that the padishah's son wanted to go to Mecca [7, 108]; One day, Nardankhatun went to gather some different edible greens to prepare food for her brothers [7, 196]; Having lived like this for some time, one day a barber came to Bakhityar to shave his head [7, 75].*

K.I. Simonov writes that "fairy tale narrators use 'impossible formulas' that reflect the unreality of events occurring in everyday life" [12, 47]. This idea of the scholar is confirmed by opening formulas used in French fairy tales: "*Au temps où les poules avaient des dents et où les chiens n'en avaient pas…- In the time when hens had teeth and dogs didn't have any..." …; du temps où les bêtes parlaient…* - Since the animals started talking: *« Du temps que les bêtes parlaient, les Lions, entre*

[1] "at that time," "back then," and "in the past"
[2] a grammatical particle found in some Iranian languages, as well as Azerbaijani, Ottoman Turkish and Hindi-Urdu, that links two words together.

autres, voulaient être admis dans notre alliance » (Jean de La Fontaine)". These expressions indicate an unknown time in which the action of the story takes place.

In Azerbaijani fairy tales, opening formulas indicating time are also used. For example: "Once upon a time, there lived a bald man" ("Kechal"); "Once upon a time, there was a poor man" ("The Bald Merchant"); "Once upon a time, there lived a man" ("The Witch-Dervish").

As can be seen from the examples, none of the languages indicate an exact time, but rather show that the events occurred in the distant past or in an unreal period. These sentences are expressed in the imperfect past tense, which in French is called "imparfait."

The fairy tales of both compared peoples have complex structural initial formulas. The rich semantics of these sentences and the stylistic devices used are of great interest. For example, in this regard, the tale "Donkeyskin" by Charles Perrault can be cited as an example. In the introduction to the fairy tale, the importance of its lengthy and narrative storytelling for understanding is emphasized, and it is written that "even the wisest mind often tires of tales about Giants and Fairies, so forgive me, without fearing what I will do, without abusing my free time to satisfy your fair desire, I will tell you the story of Donkeyskin" .

Such expressions have been influenced by the etiquette adopted at the court of the French king during the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV. Considering that Charles Perrault, the most famous author of French fairy tales, was the personal secretary of Louis XIV and an academician of the French Academy, which established the norms of the French language, it is natural for such expressions to be commonly used in fairy tales.

In their thoughts regarding the ending or closing formula, P. N. Boratav and W. Eberhard point out that the evil forces are typically defeated at the end. In fairy tales, rituals commemorating the triumph of good are tied with forty days. Often, the wedding lasts forty days and forty nights. The victory of the positive heroes in the fairy tale also brings joy to the listeners. According to the writers, in fairy tales, which typically end happily, just as the protagonists achieve their goals, the listeners are likewise wished to achieve theirs. Some fairy tales end with jokes and humor. At the end of the tale, three apples fall from the sky as a reward. While each listener waits to see who will receive the apples, the storyteller claims that all of them belong to him.

Similar ending formulas have also been found in fairy tales written in French and Azerbaijani: *«Depuis lors, il vécut heureux...» - "Ömürləri boyu kefi kök, damağı çağ yaşadılar". -"Since then they lived their entire lives in a state of bliss and abundance.".*

"*Ils se marièrent et eurent beaucoup d'enfants". – "Onlar evləndilər və onların çoxlu uşaqları oldu" - "They got married and had many children.".*

“Ils vécurent désormais heureux avec leurs enfants pour ne plus se séparer”. – “O vaxtdan onlar uşaqları ilə xoşbəxt yaşadılar və heç vaxt ayrılmadılar”.- “They lived happily ever after with their children and never parted again.”.

The concept of epic space is one of the most relevant topics in folklore studies. Dozens of works have been devoted to the study of this topic, and such well-known researchers of the time as S.Y. Neklyudov, T.V. Sivyan, D.S. Likhachev, V.N. Toporov have conducted research in this direction. In most of these studies, epic space has been evaluated through the familiar and unfamiliar opposition. In Fuzuli Bayat's study dedicated to Azerbaijani fairy tales, space has been studied from this perspective. [8]

In the fairy tales of the French and Azerbaijani peoples, space is not just a passive backdrop or setting on which events occur; it also has a role and function in the structure of the tale. The presence of a spatial element in a fairy tale means that the function will be realized. There are also certain archetypes behind similar spatial elements that we find in French and Azerbaijani fairy tales: stepmother; king (prince, wealthy man) / poor man; magical evil forces (witch, sorceress, giant, dragon, old woman, etc.) / magical good forces (old woman, fairy, etc.).

In many fairy tales, the stepmother mistreats and tortures the child ("Cendrillion”, "Gracieuse et Percinet," "Sister and Brother," "The Tale of the Beautiful and the Yellow Cow"), the hero has nothing, faces difficulties, defeats evil forces, and ultimately achieves everything: marries the beloved, becomes rich and happy ("Le Chat Botte", "The Tale of the Homeland"). The hero sets out on a journey with specific goals, and along the way, he encounters various adventures ("Le prince lutin", “ Le petit jardinier aux cheveux d’or", "Le magician Marcou-Braz", “ Jean de l’ours”, "The Tale of the Homeland").

The main reasons of the journey are:

- finding an unreal place: *au pays inconnu, au hasard, à un certain endroit, dans un grand bois, au pays des étoiles* (in an unknown country, at random, in a certain place, in a large wood, in the land of stars)

- finding an unusual object in a familiar place: “*Au Sud du pays, sur le bord de la mer,se trouve un château et dans ce château fleurit une rose qui guérit*”.
(«La rose qui guérit»). (“In the south of the country, on the seashore, there is a castle and in this castle blooms a healing rose.” (“The Healing Rose”).

The hero does not leave his home of his own free will:

- they are misleading him from his home (“Le Petit Poucet“, “Vətənnən cəlayi-vətənin nağılı” and so on .);

- The stepmother (father) mistreats the hero and he is forced to run away from home. (“Peau d’âne”, “Les deux grenouilles d’or”, “Le toureau bleu”, “Göyçək Fatma” and so on).

The hero does not leave his home, the main events take place in the place where he lives (in the house, castle, city) («Le pauvre et le riche», «Cendrillon», «La belle au bois dormant», «Riquet à la houppe»,«Les petites grainesde bonheur»,“Ağıllı qoca», «Çıraxlı İsa» və s.).

Conclusion

In Azerbaijani fairy tales, spatial landmarks are structured according to opposites: sunrise-sunset, west-east, maghrib-mashriq, right-left, up-down, north-south, dog barking-light coming, and so on. When the hero comes to a crossroads, he normally follows the right path, and when seeking for Gulistan-i Iram[3], he usually heads towards the sunrise. These spatial features do more than just identify direction; they also serve certain roles. In fairy tales where space is created on the basis of opposite poles, the dawn, right, up, and qibla always represent good, and the person who goes in that direction finds good, whereas the one who goes in the opposite direction faces bad luck. For example, the father forbids his sons from going hunting in Garadag. Given the mountain's role in the tale, it is inevitable that a certain tragedy will occur if the ban is broken. Indeed, that is what happens. The older brothers who went hunting in Garadag are chasing a gazelle and there has been no word from them since. [13,53] As can be seen, the mountain is not only a place where events take place or setting of the story, but it is also a narrative device that affects the structure of the fairy tale. In other words, the setting is not only the backdrop where events occur in fairy tales, but also a part of the fairy tale's structure.

Overall, the fairy-tale space in both people's stories is indefinite. As a result, activities here are frequently not related to a specific location, but rather take place in ambiguous locations such as "in the city," "in the village," or "in the country." In fact, while the same spatial features appear in different fairy stories, their function is nearly identical in both French and Azerbaijani tales. The semantic description of spatial aspects in both people's fairy tales demonstrates that this genre is stable both morphologically and lexically. Fairy tales, regardless of who tells them, are organized around certain lexical units.The researcher T.V. Sivyan notes in this regard that fairy tales are not only identical but are also told in the same words. [14, 212].

[3] garden of Eden, paradise

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An Experimental Study on the Effects of Audio Assistance in Vocabulary Learning: The Role of Different Word Classes

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to assess the effectiveness of English vocabulary acquisition with and without audio support among first-year undergraduate students at Shenzhen University. Three core research questions guided the investigation: (1) How effective is vocabulary learning through audio assistance alone? (2) How effective is vocabulary learning without audio assistance (i.e., traditional instruction)? (3) To what extent does the relative effectiveness of audio-aided instruction versus traditional instruction for vocabulary acquisition differ across the four major word classes—nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners? This experimental study recruited over 100 participants, who were divided into an experimental group (receiving audio support) and a control group (without audio support). Results indicated that the control group achieved higher mean scores, 9.09 (phase 1) and 9.92 (phase 2), than the experimental group, 7.52 (phase 1) and 8.90 (phase 1), in both phases, suggesting that audio-only instruction is less effective for vocabulary acquisition than traditional methods.

Keywords: *Audio Aids, Traditional method (of vocabulary teaching), EFL Vocabulary learning.*

Introduction

Competence in vocabulary is crucial for language acquisition, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings (Takacs et al., 2015). Language proficiency enables learners to communicate effectively, comprehend texts, and express ideas with fluency. Acquiring vocabulary is frequently reported as difficult due to the extensive range of words and the requirement for sustained recall. Traditional vocabulary acquisition techniques, including rote memorization and repetition, have been widely employed but are frequently criticized for their monotony and ineffectiveness in fostering deep learning.

The incorporation of audiovisual components in language teaching has created considerable interest in recent years (e.g., Belenguer, 2024). Audiovisual aids, including audio recordings, pictures, and videos, are thought to facilitate vocabulary acquisition by activating multiple senses, alleviating cognitive load, and offering contextualized learning experiences. Studies indicate that multimedia technology enhances memory, motivation, and comprehension in learners (Bisson,

2014). The efficacy of these aids relative to conventional approaches, together with their distinct contributions (auditory versus visual), has not been adequately examined. According to Aufderhaar (2004), audio-based methods can improve pronunciation and word stress, resulting in statistically significant gains in recall of audio-sensitive word classes. However, there is still limited comparative data on how including audio aids compare to traditional methods, especially across different word classes like nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. For instance, we wonder if more concrete words (often nouns or verbs) are remembered more easily than less concrete words, such as adjectives and adverbs.

This research aims to analyze the impact of audio aid on vocabulary acquisition in an EFL context. We will compare the performance of students using audio aids with that of those employing traditional methods, with the aim of finding the most effective techniques for vocabulary acquisition.

Literature Review

Previous Studies on Teaching Vocabulary with Audiovisual aids

Research on the use of audio-visual materials has attracted increased attention in academic circles, as second language (L2) listening instruction has shifted from traditional audio methods to audio-visual techniques due to advancements in science and technology (Nafiah, 2023). Audio-visual aids are becoming increasingly essential instruments for engaging learners and enhancing language teaching, thanks to technological advancements and the growing availability of multimedia resources (Olagbaju & Popoola, 2020). The growth of technology and the extensiveaccessibility of multimedia resources have transformed language instruction and acquisition (Hermes & King, 2013). Videos, pictures, interactive presentations, animations, and digital resources exemplify audio-visual assistance. These aids offer visual and auditory stimulation to learners, facilitating a multimodal learning experience that engages many senses and improves comprehension and retention of linguistic knowledge (Papanastasiou et al., 2019).

The utilization of audio-visual aids in EFL training presents numerous benefits. More recently, Teng (2022) noticed that audio-visual aids can improve vocabulary recall by engaging auditory senses; however, their investigation did not differentiate the impact of audio alone or contrast it with standard text-only techniques. Lin & Lin (2019) also discovered variable effects of audio aids on vocabulary acquisition across studies, underscoring the necessity to investigate audio's performance in comparison with traditional methods and whether its effectiveness varies by word class (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs).

This study seeks to examine the influence of auditory assistance on vocabulary development in an English as a Foreign Language (ESL) setting. The study aims to compare the performance of students utilizing audio assistance with those employing traditional methods to identify the most effective strategies for vocabulary acquisition.

Studies on Teaching Vocabulary with Audio Aids

Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that language acquisition advances when learners engage with understandable input that surpasses their current ability in specific areas (Ellis, 2002). Audio aids offer natural language exposure and enhance the acquisition of new vocabulary in authentic contexts. Interacting with audio content allows learners to absorb pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary application. Previous studies (e.g., Papanastasiou et al., 2019) highlight the relative effectiveness of audio-only compared to audiovisual input.

To facilitate the acquisition of phonological components such as stress patterns, intonation, and connected speech—crucial for lexical retention and pragmatic competence—audio resources, including podcasts and recorded dialogues, provide realistic linguistic models. Empirical studies demonstrate that learner proficiency, age, and contextual factors significantly influence the efficacy of audio-only instruction. Ginther's study on advanced ESL students demonstrated that while audio resources alone were advantageous for improving listening comprehension, they did not influence vocabulary retention unless supplemented with textual or visual reinforcement (Al- Zahrani & Al-Ghamdi, 2025).

Cognitive Load Theory (CLT; Sweller, 1988) states that working memory capacity is limited, and instructional methods that introduce extraneous load (e.g., additional sensory information) can slow learning. This paradigm poses essential enquiries regarding auditory aids: might auditory input impose an unnecessary burden on EFL vocabulary learners, particularly in contrast to text-only techniques?

Although research such as Al-Zahrani & Al-Ghamdi (2025) acknowledges the necessity of textual support for audio, few studies explicitly examine whether audio alone induces cognitive load that hinders vocabulary retention, much less whether this load differs among word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs). This study examines whether there are differences in the effects of audio-assisted and traditional text-based learning, and uses CLT to analyze performance differences.

Methodology

Participants

This study involved around one hundred first-year students from Shenzhen University, evaluating one experimental group and one control group. A sample size exceeding 100 was determined through an a priori power analysis utilizing G*Power (version 3.1) for an independent samples t-test (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009), which served as the primary statistical method for group comparisons. The analysis showed that 98 participants gave us 80% power to identify a medium effect size (d = 0.5) for differences between the experimental and control groups. We recruited over 100 to account for potential participant loss, which is in line with comparable EFL vocabulary studies (e.g., Lin et al., 2022).

All participants were native Chinese speakers aged 18 to 20. The selection criteria included language proficiency level, previous experience with vocabulary acquisition methods, and willingness to participate in this study. Both groups were equivalent in terms of age, gender, and language competency to ensure that the results were not affected by these variables. The pilot test results demonstrated proficiency in English at the B2, C1, and C2 levels. Ethical considerations were acknowledged, and all participants provided informed consent before the start of the research.

Research Design

The study used a quasi-experimental crossover design to assess the effectiveness of audio aids and traditional methods in vocabulary development. The experiment was divided into two sections, each lasting four weeks (week 1- pre-test; week 2-3 procedure; week 4 – post-test).

Table 1. Research design

Week 1 Phase 1	
Group A (experimental group)	With audio aids
Group B (control group)	Without audio aids (traditional method)
Week 2 Phase 2	
Group A (control group)	Without audio aids
Group B (experimental group)	With audio aids

In Phase 1, Group A (the experimental group) was exposed to vocabulary learning utilizing audio aids, whereas Group B (the control group) utilized traditional methods (see Table 1. Research

design). In Phase 2, the methodologies were altered: Group A employed conventional techniques, while Group B utilized audio resources. This arrangement facilitated a direct comparison of the two procedures within identical groups, mitigating the influence of individual variances and enhancing the dependability of the results. The crossover design guaranteed that both groups encountered both learning circumstances, yielding a more thorough comprehension of the efficacy of each strategy.

Research Instruments

This study employed two principal research instruments to fulfill its objectives: experimental research and a student feedback survey. The initial instrument concentrated on evaluating the efficacy of audio aids vs traditional teaching techniques in vocabulary acquisition. The second measure was employed to gain insights into students' perceptions of the approaches utilized to improve vocabularyacquisition.

The initial instrument was an experimental study design involving two groups of students. The groups were randomly allocated into an experimental group and a control group, each comprising an equal number of individuals.

The audio assistance used pre-recorded MP3 files of each target word, pronounced in British English by a native speaker, accompanied by a brief contextual sentence (e.g., 'Converge: The routes converge near the park'). Each audio clip lasted 5 to 10 seconds, and participants accessed them through a university learning website, without the ability to modify playback speed. The control group utilized a traditional vocabulary instruction method without audio assistance. Instruction was delivered utilizing printed materials, including worksheets. Traditional techniques, such as word lists, direct explanations, and example sentences, were used to instruct vocabulary.

The second instrument involved gathering students' opinions to comprehend their viewpoints on the employed teaching strategies. This instrument aimed to enhance the quantitative data from the vocabulary exam with qualitative insights into the students' experiences and preferences.

Vocabulary List

This study utilized a vocabulary list of thirty carefully chosen terms to guarantee their relevance and suitability for the research aims. The vocabulary was sourced from two main sources: students' textbooks and the Oxford Vocabulary List. The selection approach aimed to incorporate new vocabulary for the participants, facilitating a more precise evaluation of the training methods' efficacy. To do this, only the vocabulary at the C1 and C2 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was selected, as these levels imply advanced

proficiency and were less likely to be familiar for with the participants. This methodology ensured that the research concentrated on real vocabulary acquisition instead of the reinforcement of previously acquired vocabulary.

The thirty words were split into two sets of fifteen words each, corresponding with the two weeks of the experiment. Each set was designed to include a balanced distribution of word kinds to investigate if the instructional methods exerted differing impacts on certain aspects of speech. Each set of four nouns, four verbs, four adjectives, and three adverbs. This distribution facilitated a detailed examination of the efficacy of audio aids vs traditional approaches in teaching various word kinds. It offered insights into the efficacy of visual aids for teaching nouns, typically denoting tangible objects, versus the advantages of auditory aids for instructing verbs, which generally convey action. The study sought to ascertain both the general efficacy of each approach and its particular strengths and limitations for word kinds by preserving this balance.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data from pre-tests, weekly evaluations, and post-tests were analyzed using standard statistical techniques. Paired t-tests were employed to evaluate the performance of each group before and after the method shift, whereas independent t-tests were used to analyze any variations between the two groups. Next, the written input was classified and examined. Recurring themes, including the most preferred and least favored aspects of each learning approach, were noted to enhancecomprehension of students' viewpoints. Conclusions about the relative efficacy of audio and traditional learning approaches were derived from the extensive data analysis and will be presented in section four.

Research Results

Phase 1 Results

The descriptive statistics indicate a notable disparity between the two groups. The mean vocabulary test score for the experimental group utilizing audio-assisted learning was 7.51 (SD=3.78), whereas the control group employing traditional learning methods without audio assistance had a higher mean score of 9.09 (SD=3.20) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of learning vocabulary with audio Aids

Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Experiment	54	7.5185	3.77550	.51378
Control	54	9.0926	3.19946	.43539

The data indicate that, contrary to the belief that audio aids increase vocabulary acquisition, the group that learned without audio help outperformed the others in the vocabulary assessment.

Table 3. Independent Samples t-test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	3.177	.078	-2.337	106	.021	-1.57407	.67345	-2.90926	-.23889
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.337	103.222	.021	-1.57407	.67345	-2.90967	-.23848

The independent samples t-test demonstrated a statistically significant difference ($t(106) = -2.337$, $p = 0.021$, Cohen's $d = 0.45$), suggesting a small-to-moderate effect favoring the control

group (see Table 3). This signifies that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant, indicating that the variation in scores is unlikely to result from random chance.

An analytical interpretation of these findings indicates that the inclusion of audio help may have affected the learning process in ways that were not wholly advantageous for vocabulary retention.

One potential explanation is that participants in the experimental group may have depended more on auditory inputs instead of fully interacting with the written form of the words, perhaps leading to lesser retention. On the other hand, the control group, which utilized traditional techniques without audio assistance, may have exhibited a greater concentration on the textual material, resulting in better recall and retention of vocabulary items.

Analysis by Word Classes with and without Audio Aids

This study also tested the effectiveness of vocabulary learning with and without audio aids, concentrating on distinct word types: **nouns, verbs, adjectives,** and **adverbs**. The experimental group acquired vocabulary with audio support, whereas the control group utilized traditional approaches without any audio input. Both groups were presented with the same collection of words, comprising an equal quantity of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Following the intervention, the participants' test results were evaluated according to word types to ascertain if audio-assisted learning affected vocabulary retention variably across different categories of words. The findings indicated a notable difference in word retention between the two groups, implying that the efficacy of learning strategies differed based on the type of vocabulary being learned (see Figure 1).

The findings indicated a distinct superiority of the control group across all categories of words. The overall scores for each word category were markedly greater in the control group compared to the experimental group. The control group attained the following scores: nouns – 159 (30%), verbs – 138 (26%), adjectives – 140 (27%), and adverbs – 89 (17%). Conversely, the experimental group achieved much lower scores: nouns – 32 (11%), verbs – 122 (40%), adjectives – 88 (29%), and adverbs – 60 (20%) (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). The data demonstrate that traditional learning without audio aids provided superior vocabulary retention compared to learning with audio assistance across all word categories.

Figure 1. Analysis by Word Classes with Audio Aids

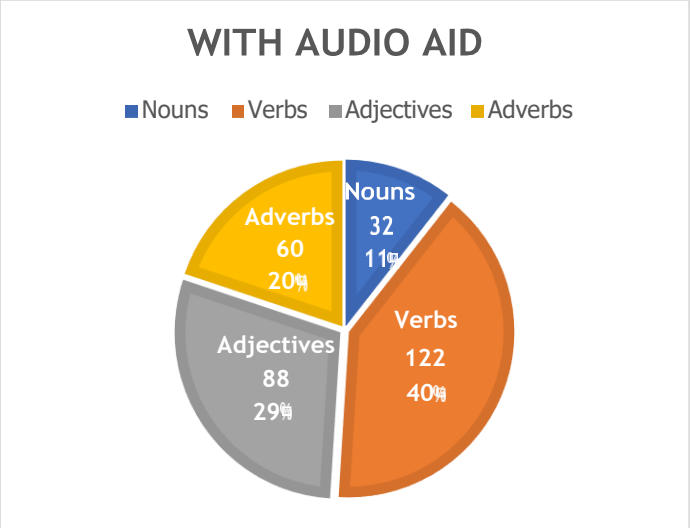

Figure 1 Analysis by word classes with audio aids

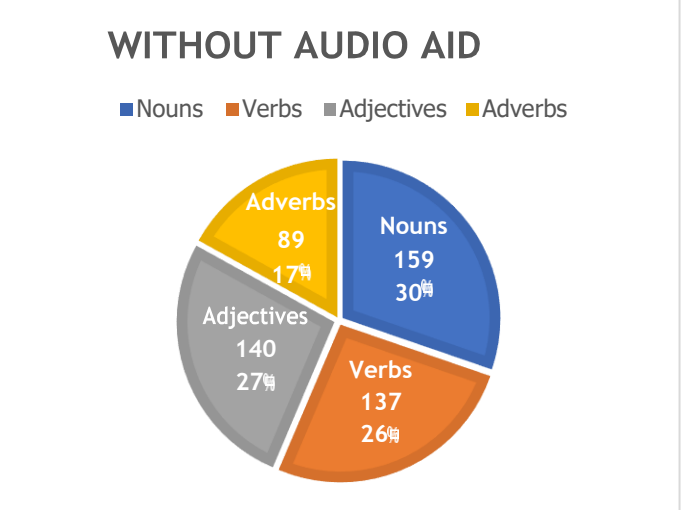

Figure 2 Analysis by word classes without audio aids

Below is an in-depth analysis of word types that provides important details on how students processed and memorized distinct word categories:

Nouns

The experimental group achieved a total score of 32 for nouns, compared to 159 for the control group. This striking difference implies that when audio aids were utilized, learners in the experimental group had a far harder time learning and remembering nouns. The result can be clarified by the intrinsic visual nature of nouns; learners often associate nouns with images or

concrete representations, which are more effectively reinforced through written or visual modalities than through auditory ones. In contrast, noun retention was superior in the control group that employed the traditional method. This outcome aligns with prior studies indicating that traditional association, rather than auditory association, is the most beneficial approach for acquiring concrete nouns.

Verbs

In comparison to nouns, verbs exhibited a smaller retention disparity between the two groups. The control group attained a score of 138, whereas the experimental group achieved a score of 122. The disparity was less pronounced than with nouns; yet, the control group still outperformed the experimental group. This finding implies that verbs may gain more from auditory support than nouns. Hearing verbs in context may help with comprehension and memory because they frequently entail actions. However, the traditional method still produced slightly greater recall, maybe as a result of the control group's students' increased engagement with the words' written form, which strengthened their memorization.

Adjectives

The experimental group scored 88, whereas the control group scored 140, indicating a significant difference in adjective retention as well. This implies that adjectives were better learned using traditional methods rather than audio aids, much like nouns. Adjectives frequently express features or attributes that learners may link more successfully with written context or visual aids than with only auditory input. It is possible that traditional teaching approaches improved recall by encouraging students to concentrate on spelling, sentence structure, and visual reinforcement.

Adverbs

Although the difference was not as great, adverbs showed a similar pattern. The control group received 89 points, whereas the experimental group received 60. This implies that while audio aids were not as successful as traditional strategies, they did offer some advantages in the learning of adverbs. Since they frequently occur in spoken language, adverbs—which modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs—may havebeen a little simpler to learn through aural exposure. However, the findings show that students in the control group were able to recall adverbs better, maybe as a result of their interaction with written materials and contextual signals.

Phase 2 Results

The independent samples t-test for Phase 2 indicated no statistically significant difference in vocabulary scores between the control group (traditional method) andthe experimental group (audio aid) (t (102) = 1.392, p = 0.167, Cohen's d = 0.27). The minimal effect size (d = 0.27) suggests that although the control group attained a marginally superior mean score (M = 9.92, SD = 3.92) compared to the experimental group (M = 8.91, SD = 3.50), the disparity was insufficient to ignore random variation, making it not practically significant for EFL vocabulary instruction (see Table 4).

Table 4 Descriptive statistics of learning vocabulary with audio aids

Group Statistics

Group Mean	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Experiment	51	9.9216	3.49767	.48977
Control	53	8.9057	3.92362	.53895

The *p*-value of 0.167 (see Table 5) indicates that the disparity between the two groups is not statistically significant. This indicates that although the control group had a higher mean score, the observed disparity is insufficient to assert that the traditional method is, in fact, more effective than the audio-assisted method. However, the findings suggest a trend that warrants further investigation with methodological refinements.

Table 5 Independent Samples t-test

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances Assumed Score									

Equal variances	.544	.463	1.392	102	.167	1.01591	.72987	-.43178	2.46360
Not assumed			1.395	101.417	.166	1.01591	.72825	-.42867	2.46048

The results suggest that audio-assisted vocabulary acquisition could be enhanced by increasing exposure duration, incorporating visual and textual elements, and offering greater flexibility in review options. Although audio learning may not serve as the most effective independent approach, it can be a great asset when integrated with other instructional strategies.

Analysis by Word Classes with and without Audio Assistant

The findings indicated subtle variations in recall rates for each word type between the two groups, offering significant insights into the relationship among teaching methods, word attributes, and cognitive processing. The experimental group employing audio assistance achieved scores of 132 for nouns, 99 for verbs, 145 for adjectives, and 96 for adverbs (see *Figure 3*). Conversely, the control group, which utilized conventional techniques without audio assistance, achieved scores of 147 for nouns, 107 for verbs, 148 for adjectives, and 102 for adverbs (see Figure 4).

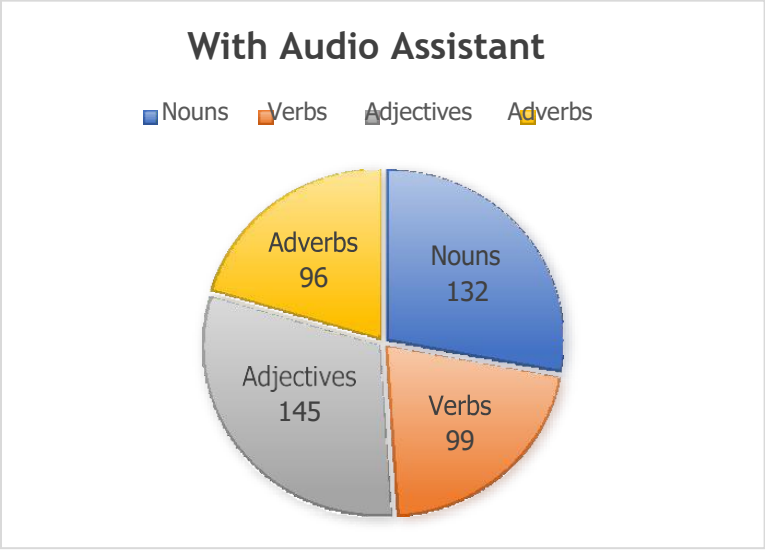

Figure 3 Analysis by word classes with audio aids

Figure 4 Analysis by word classes without audio aids

Although the control group outperformed the experimental group in three of the four word categories, the variations were insignificant, indicating that the efficacy of audio aids could vary based on the specific type of word being acquired.

Nouns

Nouns, often concrete and easily visualizable, demonstrated a slight advantage in the control group, scoring 147 against 132 in the experimental group. This research indicates that traditional methods may be slightly more effective for teaching nouns than those that use audio aids. The concrete quality of nouns enables learners to create vivid mental representations, which can be enhanced through repetition andcontextual illustrations in conventional pedagogical approaches. Audio aids, although they may improve engagement and pronunciation accuracy, cannot offer substantial advantages for the retention of nouns. The brain's capacity to visualize tangible objects and concepts diminishes dependence on auditory reinforcement. Nevertheless, the minor disparity in scores between the two groups suggests that audio aids may not hinder noun acquisition; instead, they may provide a less significant benefit compared to conventional approaches.

Verbs

Verbs, representing acts and processes, demonstrated lower memory rates in both groups relative to nouns and adjectives, with the experimental group achieving a score of 99 and the control group attaining a score of 107. The marginally superior score in the control group indicates that traditional techniques may be more efficacious for instructing verbs than approaches that integrate audio aids.

Verbs are organically more complex than nouns, as they frequently necessitate comprehension of tense, aspect, and syntactic frameworks. Traditional techniques, often characterized by repeating exercises, contextual illustrations, and direct instruction, may offer a more systematic strategy for understanding these intricacies. Conversely, audio aids, although beneficial for enhancing pronunciation and auditory recognition, may insufficiently address the semantic and grammatical subtleties of verbs. The abstract nature of several verbs may render them less receptive to aural reinforcement, as they lack the tangible imagery linked to nouns. This discovery underscores the necessity of customizing pedagogical approaches to address the distinct obstacles presented by various word categories, especially those that are more abstract and reliant on context.

Adjectives

Adjectives, which describe features and qualities, had essentially comparable recall rates in both groups, with the experimental group achieving a score of 145 and the control group attaining a score of 148. The small change indicates that the efficacy of teaching methods for adjectives is predominantly unaffected by the incorporation of audio aids. Adjectives, like nouns, are frequently concrete and visualizable, facilitating their encoding and retrieval. The descriptive quality of adjectives enables learners to connect them to specific nouns or circumstances, enhancing retention regardless of the instructional approach used. Audio aids may improve learning through auditory reinforcement; however, they do not appear to provide a substantial benefit compared to traditional approaches for acquiring adjectives. This discovery highlights the necessity of accounting for the intrinsic properties of word types in the development of vocabulary instruction, since certain categories may be less affected by the selected teaching approach than others.

Adverbs

Adverbs exhibited approximately comparable recall rates in both groups, with the experimental group achieving a score of 96 and the control group attaining a score of 102. The significantly superior score in the control group suggests that traditional techniques may be slightly more efficacious for instructing adverbs compared to approaches that utilize audio assistance. Traditional techniques, which prioritize repetition and contextual application, may offer a more systematic manner for acquiring the various meanings and functions of adverbs. Conversely, audio aids, although possibly beneficial for enhancing pronunciation and intonation, may insufficiently tackle the semantic and syntactic complexities of adverbs.

Results of Students' Feedback on Vocabulary Teaching Methods

The secondary research instrument (student feedback surveys) was designed to capture learners'

subjective perceptions of the two vocabulary acquisition methods indicated nuanced individual differences in participants' engagement with audio- assisted compared to traditional text-based learning. One student, Mia emphasized a distinct advantage of audio aids, stating: "Utilizing audio aids facilitated my acquisition of new terminology. Listening to their pronunciation and contextual usage facilitated quicker recollection and enhanced my confidence in speaking." We can say that audio can help with confidence in pronunciation and comprehending the context, even though Mia's pleasant experience is different from the experimental group's overall lower test scores.

The student Dragon, on the other hand, talked about the benefits of studying simply from text. He said, "Without audio help, I was able to focus better on understanding the definitions and practicing the vocabulary." Dragon's comment is in line with the Cognitive Load Theory framework that this study has referred to. It suggests that taking away auditory input made it easier to focus on vocabulary in a more semantic (definition-based) and practical (application-based) way. This is consistent with the control group's stronger objective performance in both phases. These two points of view show that while audio aids may help with certain learning goals (like pronunciation and speaking confidence), traditional text-based methods work better for focused comprehension and retention, which are both important for vocabulary acquisition in this EFL context. This supports the study's main finding that how well a method works depends on both objective learning outcomes and the learner's own priorities.

Comparison between Phase 1 and Phase 2

Traditional learning methods led to higher recall in Phase 1 across all categories— nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—when comparing vocabulary acquisition with and without audio aids for various word categories. Nouns were the area where learners in the experimental group struggled the most, indicating the biggest difference. Overall, the control group fared better than the experimental group in every word category, but verbs demonstrated some benefit from audio help.

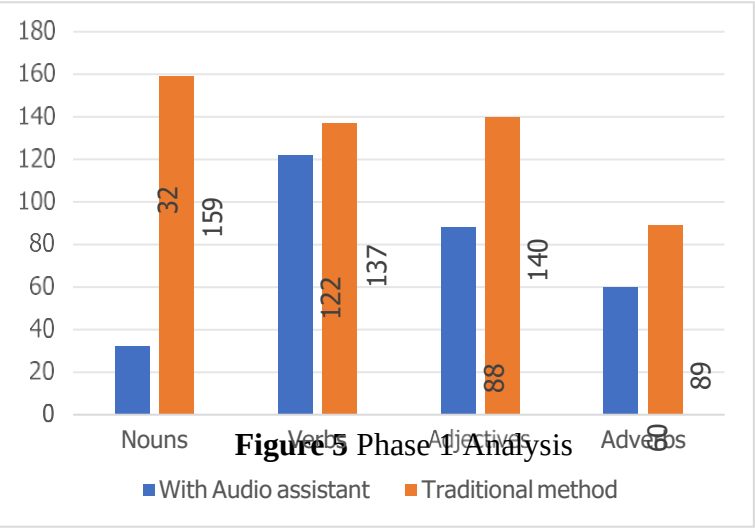

Figure 5 Phase 1 Analysis

These results emphasize how crucial it is to take word kinds and cognitive processing into account when creating vocabulary learning plans.

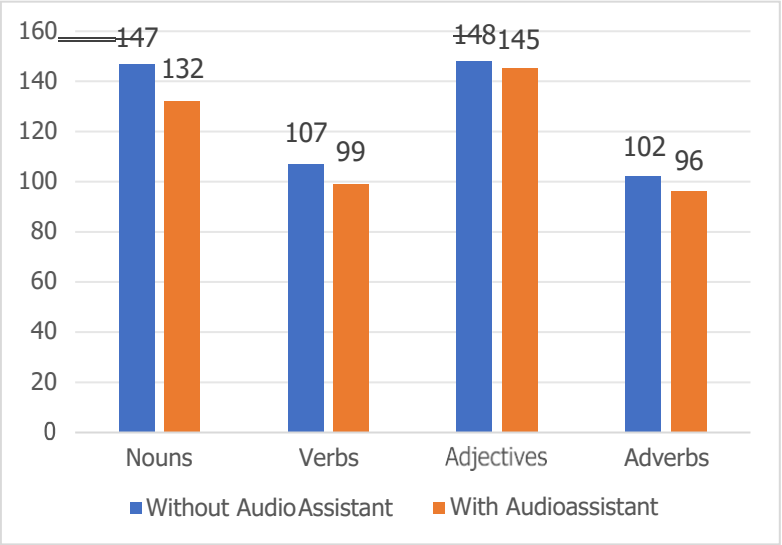

Figure 6 Phase 2 Analysis

A possible explanation for the disparities in memory rates between the two groups is the notion of cognitive load, which denotes the mental work necessary for processing and retaining information. Audio aids, although stimulating, may elevate cognitive load by adding extra sensory information that learners must concurrently absorb. For concrete word categories such as nouns and adjectives, this supplementary input may not considerably influence learning efficiency, as these terms are more readily visualized and linked to preexisting information. Nevertheless, for more abstract word categories such as verbs and adverbs, the augmented cognitive burden linked to audio aids may impede recall. Traditional techniques, emphasizing repetition and contextual practice, may alleviate cognitive load by enabling learners to focus on the semantic and syntactic dimensions of words without the interference of auditory inputs. This explanation corresponds with the marginally elevated scores noted in the control group for verbs and adverbs, indicating that conventional approaches may be more effective for instructing these categories of words.

Discussion

The main aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of audio-assistedlearning on L2 vocabulary acquisition, specifically regarding its varying effects on different word classes. The findings, derived from a two-phase experimental design, reveal an interesting as well as contradictory

context. In contrast to the dominant educational tendency favoring multi-modal learning, our findings repeatedly indicated that traditional, text-based learning approaches without audio accompaniment produced superior, or at least comparable, results in vocabulary recall and retention. This part will analyze the important findings, contextualize them within the current academic discourse, and offer theoretical explanations for the observed patterns.

Interpreting the Core Findings: The Superiority of Text-Based Learning

The most notable outcome from Phase 1 was the statistically significant benefit ($p = 0.021$) shown by the control group, which utilized traditional methods of learning. This group outscored the experimental group in all word categories—nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—with a notably significant difference in noun acquisition. Phase 2, however, did not produce a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.167$), had a consistent pattern of increased mean scores for the traditional learning group across three of the four word categories. The persistent tendency seen in both stages indicates that the incorporation of an audio element did not enhance, and may have even somewhat inconvenienced the vocabulary acquisition process in this particular learning environment.

A reasonable framework for interpreting these data is Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), Sweller (1988). CLT posits that working memory has a limited capacity, and learning is enhanced when instructional strategies avoid overloading it. Within the framework of this investigation, the audio-assisted approach can be construed as imposing an additional cognitive load. Participants in the experimental group were required to simultaneously process the auditory representation of a word and gits definition. This allocation of focus may have reduced the cognitive effort available for the basic task of establishing durable lexical representations in long-term memory. In contrast, the control group, concentrating exclusively on textual and semantic aspects, might focus their whole cognitive resources on establishing and reinforcing associations between the written word and its meaning, resulting in enhanced encoding and recall.

Although CLT discusses the extraneous auditory load, another potential reason is the participants' familiarity with text-based learning; as Chinese EFLlearners, they may possess greater experience with traditional vocabulary acquisition methods (e.g., textbook memorization), resulting in superior performance in the control group.

These findings possess immediate implications for EFL application developers: Features such as 'auto-play audio' for flashcards may not improve vocabulary memory and might be discretionary rather than obligatory, permitting learners to select based on their preferences.

Differential effects on word classes: A nuanced perspective

An in-depth examination shows notable differences in the effectiveness of audio assistance among various word classes. In Phase 1, the experimental group exhibited the lowest scores on nouns, a result that seems paradoxical considering that nouns often represent tangible, highly visualizable notions. It might be posited that audio would facilitate the anchoring of these tangible referents. This significant disadvantage for nouns in the auditory condition corresponds with the notion of "desirable difficulties" (Bjork, 1994). The demanding retrieval process necessitated by the text-only approach—where learners must actively produce the phonological representation from the orthographic form—may foster a more profound and enduring memory trace. The auditory group, possessing the given phonological form, was exempt from this arduous procedure, likely resulting in superficial processing and reduced retention, especially for high-frequency, concrete nouns when such effort is most beneficial.

On the other hand, the findings from both phases indicate a less detrimental and occasionally slightly advantageous impact of audio on the acquisition of verbs and adverbs. This discovery can be compared with the study of Kelly et al. (2017), which indicated that sound symbolism and prosodic characteristics contribute to verb acquisition. They contend that the acoustic characteristics of specific words can discreetly indicate their meaning or grammatical category. Although our study did not explicitly examine sound-symbolic pairs, it is conceivable that the prosodic elements in the audio (e.g., stress patterns, intonation) offered supplementary, non-redundant syntactic cues for the processing of verbs and adverbs, which are inherently more abstract and relationally defined than nouns. Consequently, for these word classes, the audio may have transitioned from a source of extraneous load to offering a moderate degree of relevant load, facilitating syntactic categorisation and integration.

However, it is necessary to acknowledge that the traditional strategy proved to be equally or more effective for verbs and adverbs. This suggests that any possible advantage of audio is subtle and likely dependent on various factors, including learner proficiency, the phonological distance between L1 and L2, and the particular learning task, a complexity emphasized in the meta-analysis by Lin et al. (2022) regarding multimedia learning in vocabulary acquisition. Their integration of multiple studies demonstrated significant variability in impact sizes, highlighting that the effectiveness of audio is not universal but influenced by a range of internal and external learner characteristics.

Limitations and methodological reflections

This study has basic limitations. The learning treatment was short, and the assessments evaluated immediate or near-instant memory. The dynamics of long-term retention may vary, and the initial "desirable difficulty" associated with the text-only strategy could potentially result in enhanced lasting vocabulary knowledge. The audio was presented in a static, non-interactive style with a predetermined tempo. The outcomes may vary with self-directed audio or interactive audio activities that necessitate a response from the student. Ultimately, individual variations in learning styles and auditory processing capacities were not assessed, potentially explaining some of the differences among the groups.

Conclusion

This study aimed to carefully evaluate the assumed advantages of audio-assisted vocabulary acquisition. The results clearly indicate that, for adult L2 learners in this environment, conventional text-based methodologies were more effective for adult EFL learners at Shenzhen University (CEFR B2–C1). The statistically significant findings from Phase 1 and the constant performance trend in Phase 2 challenge the uncritical adoption of audio as a universal learning aid.

This study's theoretical contribution is its comprehensive use of Cognitive Load Theory to vocabulary acquisition. It indicates that for literate adult learners, audiomay serve as a source of insignificant cognitive load, hindering the effective encoding of new vocabulary. The varying effects on word classes enhance our comprehension, suggesting that the grammatical and semantic attributes of target vocabulary interact intricately with the mode of training. Although audio provided little benefit for tangible nouns, its slightly reduced negative impact on verbs and adverbs suggests a possible function in conveying syntactic information, necessitating further research.

From an educational perspective, these findings highlight the importance for material designers and language educators. Although multi-modal techniques are valuable, they are not a universal solution. The automatic incorporation of audio assistance in digital flashcards or educational applications warrants reevaluation. Instructors should support practices that facilitate effortful retrieval and profound textual engagement, particularly during initial vocabulary acquisition. Audio may be more effectively utilized in advanced phases for listening comprehension enhancement, pronunciation improvement, or as part of more intricate, integrated tasks rather than merely serving as a basic aid for first form-meaning association.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies are expected to expand upon these findings in several directions. First, longitudinal

studies are required to examine the long-term retention effects of audio-assisted learning compared to text-only learning. Second, studies should include assessments of individual characteristics, such as working memory ability and auditory learning preference, to identify which learners, if any, may authentically benefit from audio help. Third, research might investigate more interactive and dynamic applications of audio, such as sentence-level dictation or variable-speed playback, to determine if they minimize the unnecessary cognitive strain noted in this study. Lastly, conducting this study again with learners of lower proficiency or with languages that have clearer spelling rules could help us find critical limits on how these results can be used in other situations.

In conclusion, this study advocates for a more analytical, evidence-driven methodology in pedagogy. It proposes that, at times, the most efficacious route to learning is through increased cognitive resistance, wherein silent, concentrated interaction with text cultivates a stronger and more flexible vocabulary.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors state that they have no known financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work presented in this paper.

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Interlingual and Intralingual Error Analysis of Georgian EFL Learners

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the types of linguistic errors made by Georgian learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), focusing on a structural classification of these mistakes and their underlying causes. Drawing on written samples from intermediate- to advanced-level university EFL learners, the research categorizes errors into morphological, lexical, and syntactic types. Employing an error analysis framework rooted in Corder (1971) and refined by James (1998), this study distinguishes between errors in morphology (e.g., tense-aspect marking, article misuse), syntax (e.g., subject-verb inversion, constituent order), and lexis (e.g., collocational deviance, semantic overextension).

The analysis further distinguishes errors by source: interlingual (L1-included) and intralingual (non-L1-related). Interlingual errors are attributed to negative transfer from Georgian, such as article omission due to the absence of articles in the L1, or confusion between English perfect tenses and Georgian aspectual systems. In contrast, intralingual errors, including overgeneralization of rules (e.g., “comed”, “cutted”, instead of “come”, “cut”), analogical creation, or simplification strategies, reflect internal developmental processes common among EFL learners regardless of their native language.

Qualitative data analysis involves typological classification of the collected errors, including analogical creation, overgeneralization, etc. The findings reveal that while L1 influence significantly shapes morphological and syntactic errors, lexical and pragmatic errors are more often rooted in the complexities of the target language itself. Out of 300 written assignments, we found 51 interlingual (syntax – 20, morphology – 16, and other – 15) and 69 intralingual errors (syntax – 29, morphology – 22, other – 18):

***Keywords**: EFL learners, error analysis, interlingual errors, intralingual errors, structural classification, second language acquisition.*

Introduction

From an inductive teaching perspective, mistakes are no longer the proper way to name students’ L2 flaws. In his book on mistakes and correction, Julian Edge (1989) suggested that we can divide mistakes into three broad categories: “slips” – mistakes, which students can correct themselves once the mistake has been designated to them; “errors” - mistakes which they cannot autocorrect and which,

therefore, need explanation; and "attempt" – it means when a learner attempts to say something but does not yet know the correct way of saying it. This study uses errors, since the other two terms— 'slips' and 'attempts' — are primarily associated with spoken discourse.

To learn is to err, predominantly in foreign-language learning. Especially in the past, but sometimes even today, language teachers considered their students' errors undesirable. Moreover, they diligently sought to prevent them from occurring. During the past 15 years, however, researchers in applied linguistics have come to view errors as evidence of a creative process in language learning. With the help of errors, learners employ hypothesis testing and various strategies in learning a second language. For the language teachers, errors demonstrate their learners' progress in language learning. They are also crucial for language researchers, as they provide insight into how languages and errors are significant to the language learner during hypothesis testing.

The analysis of learner errors has long been an essential concern in second language acquisition research. Pioneering works by Corder (1967, 1974) established that learn errors are not mere signs of linguistic deficiency, but rather a systematic indicator of interlanguage development. According to Corder, error analysis (EA) provides insight into the internalized rules that learners construct as they progress towards target-like competence. James (1998) further refined this framework by proposing a detailed taxonomy of error types in compensating linguistic, cognitive, and communicative dimensions. Within this tradition, Selinker's (1972) interlanguage theory posits that second language (L2) learners develop a transitional linguistic system distinct from both the first language and the target language. This system is shaped by processes such as language transfer, generalization, and simplification, all of which contribute to systematic errors.

Given that Georgian and English belong to distinct linguistic families and exhibit minimal structural correspondence, substantial divergences naturally occur across all linguistic levels in the written discourse: morphological, syntactic, and lexical. Consequently, the instances of facilitation or positive transfer are exceedingly rare. Accordingly, the present study focuses on errors arising not only from interference or negative transfer, which typically reflect linguistic principles or inaccuracies, but also intralingual errors students make in the process of learning a foreign language. The paper investigates errors attributed to structural classification. The presented results are derived from 300 essays by Georgian learners collected throughout the year. The article concludes with general guidelines for teachers on correcting errors in second-language learning.

It is anticipated that this focus on interference-induced errors will offer valuable insights for educators and learners engaged in the study and instruction of English as a foreign language.

Types of Classifications

Recent research in applied linguistics underscores the significance of learners' errors in second-language learning. In this paper, the major classifications of errors in second-language learning are briefly outlined. Error analysis traditionally distinguishes between different types of errors according to their linguistic structure, surface strategy, and source (Corder, 1974; Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982; James, 1998). On the one hand, interlingual errors due to the influence of the native language, and on the other hand, intralingual and developmental factors, including error causes, should also be considered in the analysis.

Error typology in EA research often follows two main principles: source-based and structural classification. Structurally, errors can be grouped into morphological, syntactic, lexical, and pragmatic categories (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982; James, 1998). Morphological errors typically involve tense-aspect marking, pluralization, or article use, while syntactic errors concern word order and clause structure. Lexical errors include collocational deviations or inappropriate word choice, and pragmatic errors relate to illocutionary force or register. From a source-based perspective, Richards (1971) distinguishes between interlingual errors, resulting from negative transfer from L1, and intralingual errors. They spring from developmental processes within L2 itself. This dual classification is essential for ascertaining whether a given error reflects specifically Georgian linguistic structures or universal strategies of second-language learning.

In addition to L1-induced transfer, intralingual arrows arise from internal learning processes. These could be overgeneralization, simplification, and analogical reasoning. For example, forms such as 'goed' for go or 'more funnier' for funnier illustrate the learner's tendency to overapply rules or combine morphological markers redundantly. These errors are not L1-dependent, but indicative of the learners' evolving internal grammar. Ellis (1994) and Lightbown & Spada (2013) note that such developmental phenomena are universal across L2 contexts, highlighting the cognitive dimensions of SLA.

Errors can be classified according to the linguistic level at which they occur:

1. **Phonological Errors** – mispronunciations resulting from phonemic differences between Georgian and English. For instance, difficulties with English interdental fricatives (/θ/, /ð/) often lead to substitutions like 'tink' or 'sink' for 'thing' and 'I think'.
2. **Morphological Errors** – errors in word formation and inflection. Common examples include tense and agreement errors (*he go yesterday*), pluralization errors (*informations*, *advices*, *childs*, *mens*), and misuse of articles (*he bought book*), the latter strongly influenced by Georgian's lack of an article system.

3. **Syntactic errors** – deviations in sentence structure, such as in correct word order (*I very like it*), omissions of auxiliaries (*he going home*) or misplacement of adverbs (*she always is late*). These reflect both transfer from Georgian's flexible word order or incomplete acquisition of English clause structure.
4. **Lexical Errors** – misuse or overextension of vocabulary items, including false cognates (actual for current), collocational errors ('strong rain' instead of 'heavy rain'), and literal translations from Georgian.
5. **Pragmatic errors** – misuse of language functions, or inappropriate register, such as overly direct requests, or failure to use politeness markers, reflecting differences in sociolinguistic conventions between Georgian and English.

Following surface strategy taxonomy, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), errors can also be described in terms of the learner's manipulation of linguistic form:

1. **Omission errors** – leaving out necessary elements (*She going school*);
2. **Edition errors** – adding unnecessary forms (*he didn't went*);
3. **Misformation errors** – using the wrong form of a structure (*he buyed it*).
4. **Missordering errors** – Incorrect sequence of elements (*What she is doing*?)

This taxonomy captures how errors reflect learners' hypotheses about the target language structure, showing gradual approximation towards correct usage.

Adopting only Structural classification and the surface strategy taxonomy is not enough to analyse learners' errors. Source-based classification, together with the previous ones, provides a broader picture of analysis. From a sociolinguistic perspective, errors can be attributed to different sources:

1. **Interlingual** (**L1 Transfer**) **Errors** – These arise from negative transfer of Georgian linguistic patterns. The most common examples include article omission, incorrect preposition choice, and non-target-like word order – all traceable to the Georgian morphosyntactic system;
2. **Intralingual** (**Developmental**) **Errors** – independent of L1 influence, they result from the internal processes of second-language learning. They include rule overgeneralization (*comed*, *childs*), simplification (*he go home*), and hypercorrection (*she didn't went*);
3. **Context-Induced** – errors caused by the learning environment or teaching materials, such as confusion due to insufficient contextual exposure or misleading examples in textbooks.

According to various researchers (Lado, 1957; Richards, 1971; Corder, 1974; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Tomas, 1983; Touchie, 1986; David & Han, 2004), this paper compiles the factors that account for learners' errors. Interlingual and developmental errors are due to the difficulty of the second/target language. Intralingual and developmental factors include the following:

- **Communication strategies** – errors made when learners try to express meaning beyond their current linguistic competence using approximation, circumlocution, and simplification. Deals with the grammatical rules and not only, for example, using the simple present instead of the present perfect.
- Overgeneralization – e.g., *-ed* past tense marker usage with all types of verbs in English, *go – goed*, *come – comed*;
- **Hypercorrection** – sometimes teachers' efforts to overcorrect their students' errors induce the students to make errors in otherwise correct forms. For example, learners avoid constructions in casual speech because they associate them with incorrectness (e.g., 'I am going to the store' instead of 'I'm going to the store').
- **Faulty teaching** – teacher-induced (pedagogical) errors, especially coming from non-native teachers' lack of target language competence.
- **Fossilization** – some errors, especially errors in pronunciation, persist for long periods and become pretty challenging to get rid of.
- **Avoidance** – some syntactic structures are tricky to pronounce for some learners. Consequently, these learners avoid these structures and use simpler structures instead.
- **Inadequate learning** – mainly caused by ignorance of rule restrictions, under differentiation, and incomplete learning. For instance: the omission of the third person singular 's', as in 'he want'.
- **False concepts hypothesized** – many learners' errors can be attributed to the wrong hypotheses they form about the target language. For example, some learners think that 'is' is the marker of the present tense, so they produce: 'he is talk to the teacher'.
- **Performance errors** – Temporary mistakes, slips in speaking or writing caused by lapses in attention, fatigue, or distraction, not by lack of language competence. An example of this is 'he come yesterday', when the speaker knows it should be 'he came yesterday' but accidentally says so.
- **Social, linguistic, and cultural factors** – errors arising from differences in cultural norms, politeness strategies, or pragmatic conventions between L1 and L2; for example, a Georgian learner might say 'give me water' instead of 'could I have some water please', a direct translation that sounds impolite in English.

The classification of errors across structural, surface, and source-based dimensions provides a comprehensive framework for understanding Georgian EFL learners' errors. The L1 chiefly stipulates syntactic errors, while lexical and developmental errors emerge from universal acquisition processes.

Recognizing these distinctions is crucial for designing pedagogical interventions that target specific error types and promote more accurate and fluent English production among Georgian learners.

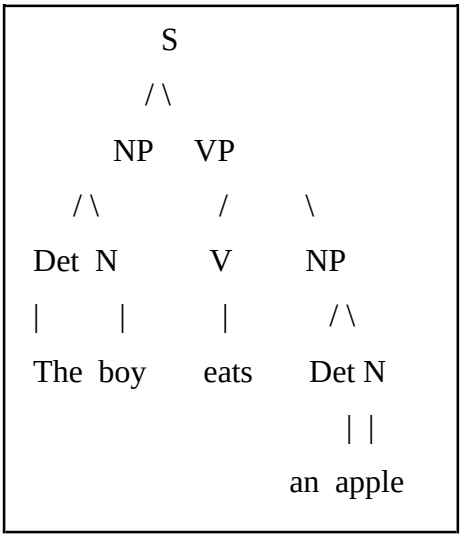
Research data and methodology

Georgian and English belong to distinct linguistic families and exhibit minimal structural correspondence; substantial divergences naturally occur across all linguistic levels in the written discourse: morphological, syntactic, and lexical. Consequently, the instances of facilitation or positive transfer are exceedingly rare. The syntactic characteristics of the English language refer to the structural rules that control how words are combined to structure phrases, clauses, and sentences. Here are some distinguishing features of English syntax.

1. **Word Order** (**SVO pattern**) – English is primarily a subject-verb-object (SVO) language. For example: She (S) eats (V) bananas (O). Word order is crucial because it determines meaning: the dog chased the cats is not the same as the cat chased the dog.
2. **Use of the function words** – Relies heavily on function words (for example, articles, prepositions, auxiliaries) to convey grammatical relationships. Examples: the, of, two, is, have, can. This compensates for the relatively limited use of inflectional endings compared to languages like Latin.
3. **Dependence on word order over inflection** – English is an analytical language. Like highly inflected languages, English syntax depends more on word order than on morphological changes. Example: *She loves him* vs. *He loves her* – The word order changes the meaning even though the verb form does not change much.
4. **Auxiliary verbs** – English uses auxiliary (helping) verbs to form tenses, questions, negatives, and modality. Example: *She can swim*.
5. **Complex sentence structure** – English allows coordination and subordination. Coordination: *she sang and he danced*. Subordination: *because it rained, we stayed home*.
6. **Use of phrasal verbs** – a distinctive feature is the use of phrasal verbs (verb + particle), for instance, *give up, look after*. Their meaning often cannot be deduced from the parts alone.
7. **Noun phrase structure** – a typical English noun phrase follows this pattern: (Determiner) + (Adjective) + Noun + (modifier). *The big brown dog in the yard*.
8. **Question Formation** – English uses inversion and do-support for questions. Example: ‘You are coming’ goes as ‘Are you coming?’.
9. **Use of relative clauses** – relative clauses add information about a noun using: who, which, that, etc.: ‘the man who came yesterday is my uncle.’

10. **Use of passive voice** – the passive construction is formed with be + past participle: ‘the play was written by Shakespeare.’
11. Use of a participle clause, which functions like an adverb in the sentence, makes sentences more concise and is common for formal writing.

Let's analyze the tree structure using standard phrase structure notation.



Explanation:

S (Sentence) split into:

NP (noun phrase) → the boy

VP (verb phrase) → eats an apple

Within VP:

The V (verb) = eats

The N (object) = an apple

Each NP consists of:

Det (determiner) + N (noun)

The table illustrates the hierarchical nature of English syntax: sentences are built from phrases, which are built from more minor constituents (words), all following predictable patterns.

The Georgian language is characterised by free word and constituent order. The neutral order can be either SVO or SOV. All other possible orders convey information structure (topic and focus). In neutral order, the modifier precedes the modified noun, although the reverse order is also possible. The subject and object agree with the verb in person and number. The noun is always marked with a case suffix.

In (X), the subject of the transitive verb *gatf’ra* “to cut”, *k’atsma* “the man”, is marked with the ergative case suffix *-ma*, which is indexed by the *-a* suffix in the verb (3rd person singular subject).

The object *tok'i* "the rope" is marked with the nominative suffix *-i*.

(X)	*k'ats-ma*	*ga-tʃ'r-a*	*tok'-i*
	man-ERG	PREV-cut-3SG.SBJ	rope-NOM
	'The man cut the rope.'		

In (Y), the subject of the transitive verb is marked in the same way as in (X), and the pronominal object (written in brackets, as pronouns are often optional) is cross-referenced by the *m-* prefix (1st person singular object).

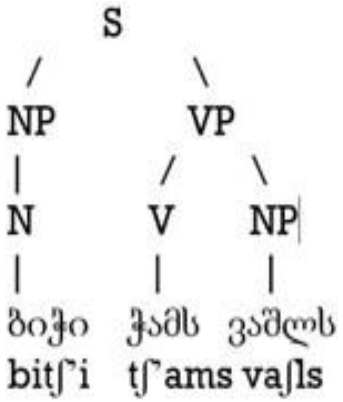
k'ats-ma	*da-m-tʃ'r-a*	(*me*)
man-ERG	PREV-1SG.OBJ-cut-3SG.SBJ	1SG
'The man wounded me.'		

The modifier precedes the modified noun, as in (Z). They agree in case (both are in the nominative case).

(Z)	*k'etil-i*	*k'ats-i*
	kind-NOM	man-NOM
	"A/the kind man"	

The reversed order is often found in texts when the author wishes or needs to express a difference from the neutral expression of ideas, especially in poetry.

The syntactic tree can be similar to English, but there are some differences. Like English, Georgian also has the NP and VP in the clause. The VP contains both a verb and a noun (the direct object). Unlike English, Georgian does not have an obligatory determiner, such as an article.



Bearing these distinctive features in mind, the paper dares to illustrate examples from the collected data. During a year, two semesters, we have collected 300 written assignments written by Students with the levels B1-C1. From almost 300 written assignments (including essays, articles, reports, bar charts, process descriptions, and map descriptions), we identified 120 errors. Out of which there were 51 L1-stipulated errors (inter-lingual) and 69 non-L1 (intra-lingual). The collected examples will be discussed in the next section of the article.

Results and Discussions

The section covers both interlingual and intralingual examples, with explanations. Out of 300 written assignments, we found 51 interlingual (syntax – 20, morphology – 16, and other – 15) and 69 intralingual errors (syntax – 29, morphology – 22, other – 18).

Here are some examples, which will be discussed below.

Classification of interlingual errors

In addition to illustrating the interlanguage errors produced in both directions by structural differences between English and Georgian, the above examples demonstrate the patterns of interlanguage errors (syntax: 20; morphology: 16) that result from the numerous structural differences between the two languages. Here are two examples of such structural differences. The sentence *This is so bad for country* exemplifies article omission, a morphological error caused by the fact that Georgian has no articles. The sentence *In the country are many poor people* demonstrates the absence of a fixed grammatical Subject-Verb-Object order, showing how Georgian's flexible word order leads to the omission of this order in English. In Georgian, word order is not determined by grammatical rules but rather depends on the topic and focus of the sentence, or on its neutral SOV/SVO options. Beyond grammatical structure, instances of calque (literal translation), such as *bread money* „პურის ფული", indicate that learners rely on L1 conceptualization when their L2 lexical repertoire is insufficient or when they lack knowledge of appropriate English idioms. The data therefore confirm that L1 influence significantly shapes the initial hypothesis testing and rule construction for Georgian EFL learners, particularly in areas where English depends on features (such as articles and fixed word order) that are absent or markedly different in the L1.

Example	Source of Error	Type (Error Cause)	Grammatical Classification
Not everything is how we want	Literal translation of „როგორც ჩვენ გვინდა“	Interlingual (Calque)	Sentence structure / Word order
I think all people wants to find a job, you know today you don’t have a job you don’t find a bread money too.	„პურის ფული“ directly translated All people want	Interlingual (Lexical calque) Subject verb agreement	Idiomatic / Vocabulary misuse Subject verb agreement
This topic has two sides, one good and one bad side.	„ამ საკითხს ორი მხარე აქვს...“	Interlingual (Literal structure)	Redundant / Word choice
They are working so hard, stressing in strange places...	„ნერვიულობენ უცნობ ადგილებში“	Interlingual	Word form / inappropriate lexical choice
In the country are many poor people.	,,ქვეყანაში ბევრი ღარიბი ადამიანია”	Interlingual (L1 structure interference)	Sentence structure/word order
They are starting to like lives there and forgetting about their country.	,,..იხსენებენ თავიანთი ქვეყნის შესახებ”	Interlingual	Verb + preposition misuse
This is so bad for country.	Missing article – influenced by Georgian (no articles)	Interlingual	Article omission
My name is Saba... I am 19 year	,,მე ვარ 19 წლის.”	Interlingual	Number agreement
High income help you surprise your	,,გააკეთო, რაც გინდა” → can what	Interlingual (Calque)	Verb phrase error

family and can what you want.	you want		
Teenagers... live like they want.	,,იცხოვრონ ისე, როგორც უნდათ”	Interlingual (Calque)	Clause structure error
I agree this opinion...	,,ვეთანხმები ამ აზრს”	Interlingual	Prepositional misuse (agree with)
It’s normal, because of they have something different ambitions...	Confusion between “because” and “because of” due to Georgian equivalents	Interlingual	Conjunction misuse
You have to get risk to grow your budget.	,,რისკი უნდა გასწიო”	Interlingual	Verb + noun collocation error
their responsibility is the clearest and make the biggest difference”	→ better phrased as “their responsibility is the clearest, and they can make the biggest difference.”	Interlingual	Subject ellipses
“handle this problems”	→ “handle these problems.”	interlingual	Determiner noun number agreement
Information previously accessible to the scientist or a researcher is now available to a regular citizen…”	could be streamlined to: “Information once reserved for scientists is now easily available to everyone.”	interlingual	Participle clause typical for academic English writing

Based on the comprehensive error classification, the study confirms a clear division in the sources of systematic errors among Georgian EFL learners. The influence of the Kartvelian language family, particularly its flexible word order, absence of articles, and rich inflectional system, accounts for the high frequency of interlingual errors, especially in the areas of English word order and determiner use. In contrast, the substantial number of intralingual errors, such as overgeneralization of the regular past

tense (*-ed*) and double comparatives, highlights the universal cognitive strategies learners use as they develop their interlanguage system, independent of L1 constraints. The prevalence of both interlingual and intralingual errors, with a slightly higher incidence of the latter (69 vs 51), indicates that while negative transfer is a significant factor, the inherent difficulty and complexity of the English grammatical system present a greater overall challenge to acquisition for these advanced-level students. These findings have direct implications for pedagogical practice.

Classification of Intralingual Errors

The table shows several common intralingual examples that might be regarded as universal for learners worldwide. Let us discuss some of them below. In addition to L1-induced transfer, intralingual errors arise from internal learning processes, including overgeneralization, simplification, and analogical reasoning. For example, forms such as 'comed' for come or 'more easier' for easier depict the learners' tendency to overapply rules or combine morphological markers redundantly. These errors are not L1-dependent, but rather reflect the learners' evolving internal grammar.

Overgeneralization, Simplification, and Analogy are the main ways in which intralingual errors are created. Learning overgeneralization occurs when a new linguistic rule is incorrectly applied to situations where it does not apply; this overgeneralization indicates that learners are trying to understand the target language systematically. For Georgian students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), this is shown through some morphological error examples, such as the use of regular past tense verb endings for irregular verbs (i.e., *He goed to school*) or combining morphological markers redundantly (i.e., *more happier*). Researchers such as Ellis (1994) and Lightbown and Spada (2013) have documented errors that occur in all L2 contexts. The presence of these errors indicates that the learner is not merely transferring the grammatical structures of their L1 to the L2 but instead constructing and testing their own hypotheses about how the grammatical structures of the L2 function.

Beyond overgeneralization, developmental errors often manifest as simplification strategies, in which learners reduce the complexity of L2 structures. Examples include the omission of obligatory functional elements, such as the missing infinitive marker ***to*** (e.g., ***it is best way improve yourself***) or dropping the possessive marker ***'s*** (e.g., ***Young people skills***). Conversely, a more advanced developmental process is **hypercorrection**, which may involve the double marking of features (e.g., ***Everything is depends on...***, blending the finite verb form *depends* with the copula *is*) or avoiding grammatically correct but perceived 'casual' structures. Collectively, these intralingual phenomena support Selinker's (1972) Interlanguage hypothesis, illustrating that the learner's temporary system is a dynamic, rule-governed entity that is distinct from both the L1 and the target L2.

Example	**Source of Error**	**Type**	**Grammatical Classification**
beautifull	Overuse of suffix – spelling pattern	Intralingual (Overgeneralization)	Morphological / spelling
people who go abroad is independent	Confusion with uncountable “people”	Intralingual (Rule confusion)	Subject–verb agreement
Firstly, in Georgia go abroad to find a job is on a high level	Misused infinitive as subject	Intralingual (Misrule)	Syntax / subject construction
more happier	Double comparative	Intralingual (Overgeneralization)	Comparative structure
He goed to school	Rule generalization of -ed	Intralingual	Verb tense formation
Young people skills	Missing possessive ’s	Intralingual (Form confusion)	Possessive / apostrophe
This help them	Agreement (singular/plural)	Intralingual (Rule misapplication)	SV agreement
Everything is depends on...	Double marking	Intralingual (Rule blending)	Verb form / syntax
it is best way improve yourself	Missing infinitive marker “to”	Intralingual (Omission)	Infinitive construction
Job with good income improves young people skills and make them...	Tense & agreement	Intralingual	Verb form / plurality
In recent years, social media is a big part...	Tense agreement error	Intralingual	Verb tense consistency
negative affects	Confusion between affect/effect	Intralingual (Lexical confusion)	Word form error

The examples given cover common errors that foreign language learners can make, ranging from spelling errors to complex grammatical structures such as infinitives, gerunds, and participle clauses. Overgeneralization of grammatical rules and lexical misuse were the most topical ones. From a pedagogical perspective, these examples are typically collected and discussed as a task during the delayed error-correction stage. Students, through self-discovery, easily overcome their ambiguity towards the grammar and lexis of the foreign language.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Teachers should not and cannot correct all errors committed by their students. The error-correction process should combine mistakes that affect a large number of students and are frequent, as they interfere with the overall meaning and understandability of the context. Stigmatizing or irritating errors should be given greater attention, as students with different sociolinguistic backgrounds vary in their language use. Errors relevant to pedagogical focus should receive more attention from the teacher than other errors. That meant the lesson's grammatical focus should be explicitly addressed, even if the teacher decides to ignore the rest of the mistakes made by his or her students.

Therefore, there are two types of errors: global and local (cf. Burt and Kiparsky, 1974). The local errors do not hinder communication or the understanding of the utterance's meaning. Global errors, however, are more serious than local errors because global errors interfere with communication and disrupt the meaning of the utterances.

The research categorizes the errors into morphological, lexical, and syntactic types. However, morphological and syntactic were in the majority.

Employing an error analysis framework rooted in Corder (1971) and refined by James (1998), this study distinguishes between errors in morphology (e.g., tense-aspect marking, article misuse), syntax (e.g., subject-verb inversion, constituent order), and lexis (e.g., collocational deviance, semantic overextension).

The analysis further distinguishes errors by source: interlingual (L1-included) and intralingual (non-L1-related). Interlingual errors are attributed to negative transfer from Georgian, such as article omission due to the absence of articles in the L1, semantic overgeneralization (e.g., “bread money”), and syntactic-word-order errors.

In contrast, intralingual errors, including overgeneralization of rules (e.g., “comed”, “cutted”, instead of “come”, “cut”), analogical creation, or simplification strategies, reflect internal developmental processes common among EFL learners regardless of their native language.

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Developing Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Classroom: A Discourse-Based Strategy

ABSTRACT

Pragmatic competence—the ability to interpret and produce language in socially, culturally, and contextually appropriate ways—is a crucial component of communicative proficiency, particularly in EFL contexts where learners often have limited access to authentic interaction. While grammatical and lexical knowledge provides a structural foundation for language use, pragmatic competence enables learners to perform speech acts, manage politeness, interpret indirect meanings, and navigate discourse effectively. Despite its importance, pragmatic skills are frequently underdeveloped in EFL classrooms due to the focus on structural accuracy and the scarcity of natural communicative opportunities.

This study investigates the effectiveness of discourse-based instructional strategies in fostering pragmatic awareness among intermediate EFL learners. Drawing on interlanguage pragmatics and authentic discourse analysis, the research examines how learners interpret and employ pragmatic features—including speech acts, politeness strategies, epistemic modality, and discourse markers—across various social contexts. Participants engaged in role-plays, metapragmatic reflection tasks, and corpus-informed activities that highlighted contextual cues, interactional negotiation, and native-like discourse patterns.

Findings reveal that discourse-based instruction not only enhances learners' ability to recognize and produce pragmatically appropriate language but also strengthens their interactional competence, metapragmatic awareness, and confidence in real-life communication. The study underscores the pedagogical value of integrating explicit instruction on pragmatic norms into EFL curricula, demonstrating that effective language teaching must address both linguistic and pragmatic dimensions. By linking theoretical insights with classroom practice, the research provides practical guidance for teachers seeking to develop learners' pragmatic and intercultural communication skills, thereby promoting holistic communicative competence.

Keywords: *Pragmatics; EFL Classroom; Discourse; Discourse-based learning; Pragmatic competence; Interactional competence*

Introduction

Pragmatics has long been recognized as a key component of communicative competence, encompassing the ability to interpret and produce language in ways that are socially appropriate and contextually sensitive. While grammar and vocabulary form the structural foundation of language

learning, it is pragmatic competence that enables learners to use linguistic forms effectively in real-life communication. This includes managing politeness, interpreting indirect meanings, performing speech acts, and responding appropriately in a variety of social interactions.

In EFL environments, learners often struggle with pragmatic competence because classroom exposure is generally limited to simplified dialogues and controlled tasks. Authentic communicative opportunities are rare, and textbooks tend to focus on structural accuracy rather than contextual nuance. At the same time, discourse—the level of language where interaction and meaning co-occur—plays a central role in shaping pragmatic behavior. Discourse reveals how speakers negotiate meaning across turns, organize their talk, and use subtle cues such as hedging, mitigation, or discourse markers.

Developing learners' pragmatic competence remains both essential and demanding in second language education. Pragmatic instruction plays a crucial role because it equips L2 learners with the ability to interpret and use linguistic forms appropriately across functions and contexts. In doing so, learners also gain insights into the social and cultural norms that shape communicative behaviour. Mastery of pragmatic conventions enhances real-world language use, fostering greater confidence and communicative self-efficacy among learners. Despite its importance, pragmatics is notoriously difficult to teach: unlike grammar or vocabulary, pragmatic features are often implicit, highly context-dependent, and variable across speech communities. Consequently, instructional pragmatics has become a central concern in L2 pedagogy.

Despite growing interest in pragmatic pedagogy, significant gaps remain. While many studies document the importance of explicit instruction, fewer explore **how discourse-based strategies can actively develop pragmatic awareness in intermediate EFL learners**, particularly through the use of authentic materials such as transcripts or classroom interactions. This study addresses this gap by investigating the role of discourse-based instructional approaches in fostering pragmatic competence.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does discourse-based instruction influence intermediate EFL learners' pragmatic awareness?
2. In what ways do learners respond to instructional activities that emphasize context, interaction, and metapragmatic reflection?
3. Which types of discourse-based tasks are most effective in promoting pragmatic competence?

By addressing these questions, the study contributes to a better understanding of how instructional pragmatics can be integrated into communicative language teaching to enhance learners' real-world language use.

Given this interdependence, discourse-based instruction provides a promising route for developing learners' pragmatic competence. By analyzing authentic discourse, learners can observe how language functions in context. Through guided practice, they can internalize pragmatic norms and apply them in their own interactions.

This study explores the role of discourse-based strategies in raising pragmatic awareness among intermediate EFL learners. The purpose is not only to measure change in learners' performance, but also to understand how they respond to instructional activities that foreground context, interaction, and metapragmatic reflection.

Literature Review

Pragmatics: Theoretical Background

Pragmatics is often viewed as a framework that addresses the limitations of syntax and semantics by offering systematic explanations for implicit meanings and intentional communicative behaviour. In this sense, pragmatic competence represents a fundamental aspect of language knowledge, enabling individuals to interpret information derived from contextual cues even when meaning is not overtly expressed (Levinson, 1983; Thomas, 1995; Yule, 1996).

Pragmatic study is generally divided into two major branches: cross-cultural pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics. Cross-cultural pragmatics examines communicative practices and behavioural norms within speakers' native languages and cultural environments, allowing for comparisons across cultures. The concept of *interlanguage* refers to an evolving linguistic system governed by its own internal rules. Within this framework, interlanguage pragmatics investigates how L2 learners approximate target-language norms, the extent to which their first language shapes their pragmatic judgments and performance, and how their pragmatic competence develops over time (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

Pragmatics, broadly defined, concerns the study of meaning in context and the ways in which language users produce and interpret utterances beyond their literal semantic content. Classic works by Levinson, Thomas, and Yule emphasize that pragmatic meaning is shaped by situational factors, speaker intentions, cultural conventions, and interlocutors' mutual assumptions. Within applied linguistics, pragmatics is understood as a central component of communicative competence, as it determines the appropriateness, politeness, and interactional effectiveness of language in real-world communication (Levinson, 1983);

Key dimensions of pragmatic knowledge include mastery of **speech acts** (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), **Gricean implicature**, **politeness strategies** (Brown & Levinson, 1987), contextual inference,

and discourse structuring. These elements interact to enable speakers to perform actions such as requesting, refusing, or mitigating disagreement, while maintaining socially appropriate interpersonal relations.

Pragmatic Competence in Second Language Acquisition

In second language acquisition (SLA), *pragmatic competence* refers to learners' ability to understand and use target-language forms appropriately in diverse sociocultural contexts. Kasper and Blum-Kulka established the field of interlanguage pragmatics, showing that L2 learners often rely on L1 pragmatic norms, leading to pragmatic transfer, pragmatic failure, or unintended rudeness. Unlike grammatical competence, which can be acquired implicitly, pragmatic competence frequently requires **explicit instruction**, particularly in foreign-language environments where learners have limited exposure to authentic interaction (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

Empirical studies indicate that pragmatic development is gradual and highly sensitive to input quality and quantity. Learners may master linguistic forms before understanding the pragmatic constraints governing their use, and high grammatical proficiency does not automatically result in pragmatic proficiency (Taguchi, 2015; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 2005). L2 learners' pragmatic competence reflects their ability to interpret and produce language in ways that are socially and culturally appropriate, requiring an understanding of target-language norms and communicative conventions.

In EFL classrooms, pragmatics has become a priority due to the increasing demand for graduates who can communicate effectively in multicultural and professional contexts. Effective teaching of pragmatics raises learners' awareness of how meaning is shaped by context, how politeness and power influence interaction, and how discourse markers and tone affect speech interpretation. Integrating pragmatics into communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning provides opportunities for contextualized practice, enhancing learners' ability to apply pragmatic norms in authentic situations (Roever, 2015; Nguyen & Gu, 2020).

Discourse-Based Approaches to Pragmatic Instruction

Discourse-based instruction emphasizes the analysis of authentic language use to develop learners' pragmatic competence. By engaging with real-world texts, transcripts, or classroom dialogues, learners can observe how language functions in context and internalize norms through guided practice. Pragmatic markers such as *well*, *you know*, *I mean*, *so*, *actually*, and *right* play crucial roles in signaling stance, organizing information, managing hesitation, and mitigating face threats. Discourse-based

approaches help learners develop fluency, coherence, and interactional competence, while promoting metapragmatic awareness that reduces negative transfer from the first language (Trosborg, 2010; House, 2017).

Recent studies in applied and forensic linguistics highlight the importance of pragmatic markers and discourse strategies in institutional settings, including courtroom interactions, academic discourse, and professional communication. Analyzing authentic interactions allows learners to understand subtleties of epistemic commitment, turn-taking, and politeness strategies—skills that are essential for real-world language use (Culpeper et al., 2017; LoCastro, 2021).

Recent research highlights the central role of **pragmatic markers**—such as *well, you know, I mean, so, actually,* and *right*—in achieving natural and coherent discourse. These markers perform textual, interpersonal, and cognitive functions: organizing information, signaling stance, managing hesitation, mitigating face-threats, or guiding interpretation. Studies in forensic linguistics and applied pragmatics show that such markers are crucial in institutional discourse, including courtroom interaction, where they can index politeness, epistemic commitment, and the speaker's control of the floor.

Teaching pragmatic markers in the EFL classroom helps learners develop fluency, coherence, and interactional competence. Discourse-based analyses—comparing how English and learners' L1 use markers—enhance metapragmatic awareness and reduce negative transfer. Integrating corpus extracts, authentic transcripts, and classroom discussion expands learners' exposure to varied pragmatic environments and promotes the internalization of native-like interactional norms.

Overall, the literature demonstrates that pragmatic competence is a fundamental component of communicative proficiency and an essential goal of EFL instruction. While learners often acquire grammar more easily than pragmatics, targeted, data-driven, and context-rich instruction substantially improves their ability to use English appropriately. A discourse-based approach—drawing on pragmatic markers, speech acts, and authentic transcripts—has been shown to be among the most effective strategies for developing pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom. Given that this paper aims to address the challenges and pedagogical implications of teaching pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics is discussed first to illustrate why explicit pragmatic instruction is necessary. Understanding how learners' interlanguage systems generate gaps in appropriateness, politeness, and contextual inference is crucial for shaping pedagogical intervention. The subsequent section therefore provides an overview of the core areas of pragmatic inquiry that underpin this discussion and establish the rationale for integrating instructional pragmatics into EFL teaching.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a **qualitative classroom-based design** to investigate how discourse-based instruction influences the development of pragmatic awareness among intermediate EFL learners. A qualitative approach was selected because it allows for an in-depth examination of learners' spoken interactions, interpretive processes, and reflective engagement with pragmatic features in authentic communicative contexts. This design enabled the researcher to capture the nuanced ways in which learners notice, interpret, and evaluate pragmatic choices within discourse, providing rich insights into both observable behavior and cognitive awareness.

Participants

The sample consisted of 60 intermediate-level EFL learners, aged between 18 and 25, drawn from [name of institution or program]. All participants had received prior English instruction and demonstrated intermediate proficiency through standardized placement assessments. The participants shared a similar linguistic background, ensuring consistency in group interactions and the applicability of discourse-based tasks.

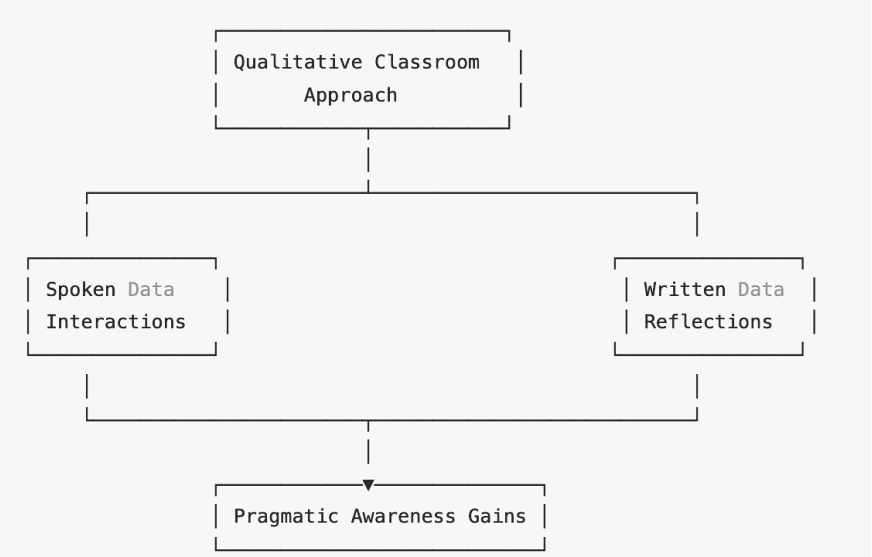

Figure 1. ***Qualitative classroom-based design***

Instruments and Instructional Activities

To explore how discourse-based instruction contributes to the development of pragmatic awareness, several complementary instruments and activities were employed:

Role-plays based on authentic transcripts.

Learners engaged in structured role-plays adapted from real-life communicative exchanges,

including courtroom discourse, service encounters, everyday conversations, and institutional dialogue. These tasks provided opportunities to practice pragmatic features such as turn-taking, politeness strategies, mitigation, and context-appropriate speech acts in simulated yet realistic communicative environments.

Pragmatic awareness tasks.

Analytical tasks were designed to help learners identify, interpret, and evaluate pragmatic choices in context. Activities required learners to *examine implicature, politeness markers, discourse markers, and sociocultural norms embedded in the transcripts*. These tasks encouraged learners to compare alternative formulations, detect inappropriate or overly direct responses, and articulate reasons for pragmatic success or breakdown.

Reflective discussions and self-evaluation.

Following each instructional activity, learners participated in guided classroom discussions. These discussions encouraged metapragmatic reflection as students shared their observations, explained their interpretive decisions, and evaluated their use of pragmatic strategies. Written reflective entries were also collected to deepen learners' awareness of how their pragmatic choices evolved over time.

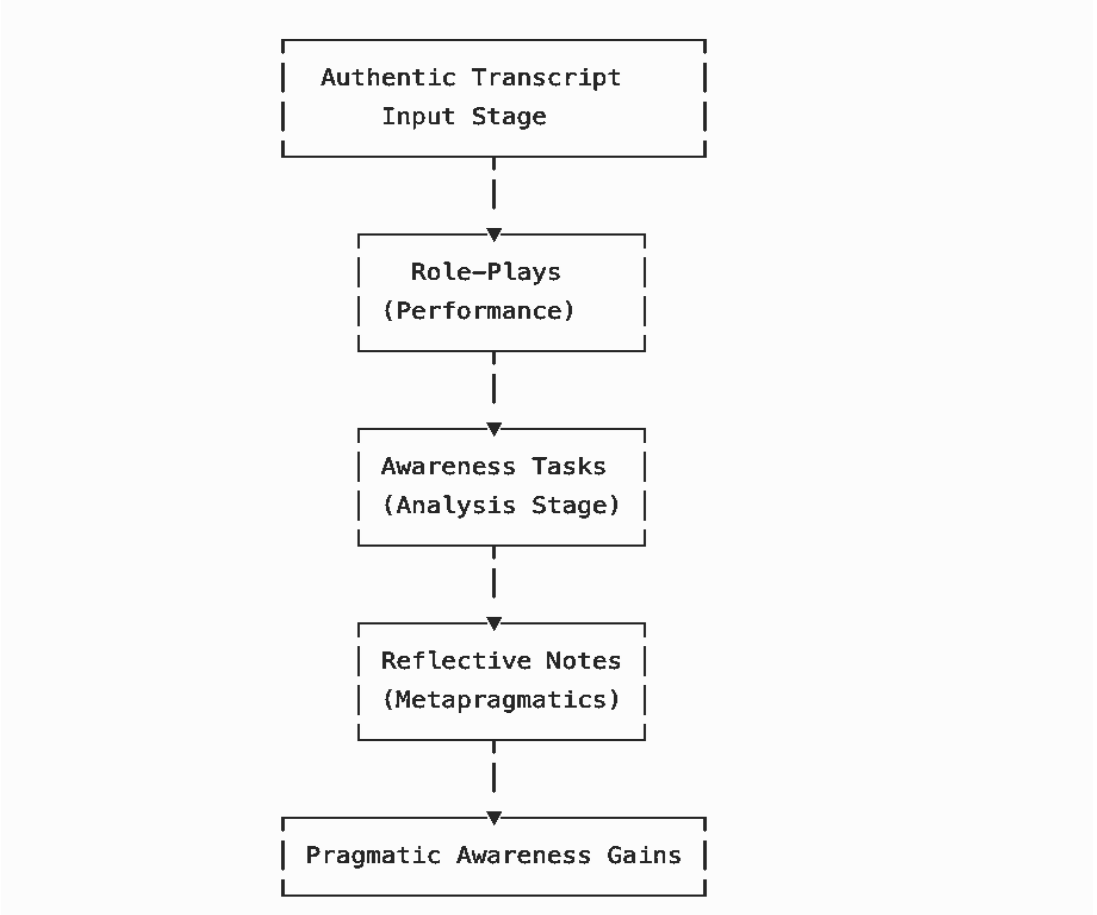

Figure 2.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected from **two primary sources** to provide a comprehensive picture of learners' pragmatic awareness:

1. **Audio-recordings of spoken interactions:**
   - Learners' role-plays, group discussions, and task-based exchanges were recorded.
   - These recordings offered rich data for analyzing how learners negotiated meaning, employed pragmatic markers, and adapted their speech to situational demands.
2. **Written reflections:**
   - Learners documented their self-evaluations, explanations of pragmatic decisions, and perceptions of the instructional activities.
   - These reflections provided insight into internal cognitive processes, including learners' awareness of context, politeness, and pragmatic appropriateness.

The combination of **spoken and written data** allowed for **triangulation**, enhancing the credibility of findings and supporting a deeper understanding of both observable pragmatic performance and internal metapragmatic processes.

Research Results

The analysis of learners' spoken interactions, written reflections, and observation notes revealed substantial developments in both **pragmatic awareness** and **pragmatic production**. Findings are presented thematically to illustrate how discourse-based instruction shaped learners' understanding of contextually appropriate language use and their ability to employ pragmatic strategies effectively.

Development of Pragmatic Awareness

One of the clearest outcomes was a measurable increase in learners' ability to notice and interpret pragmatic features in authentic discourse. At the beginning of the study, most learners evaluated communication primarily in terms of grammatical or lexical accuracy. Reflections frequently included statements such as *"I didn't know the right word"* or *"I forgot the grammar rule"*, indicating limited attention to contextual factors like speaker intention, power relations, or politeness conventions.

As the study progressed, learners gradually shifted their focus. **Pragmatic awareness tasks** using authentic transcripts played a key role in this transformation. By the third week, reflections increasingly highlighted sensitivity to indirectness, presupposition, hedging, politeness markers, and sequential organization. Examples included:

- *"The speaker used 'I was wondering' to sound more polite."*

- *"He softened the disagreement by adding 'maybe' before his opinion."*

These observations suggest that learners were internalizing the functional purpose of pragmatic markers, moving beyond perceiving them as optional fillers. Audio-recordings of classroom discussions further revealed learners' growing capacity to identify subtle pragmatic violations—for instance, recognizing that a direct request sounded "too strong" or an abrupt topic shift seemed "rude." This demonstrates **enhanced metapragmatic knowledge**: learners could articulate why certain linguistic choices are appropriate or inappropriate in context.

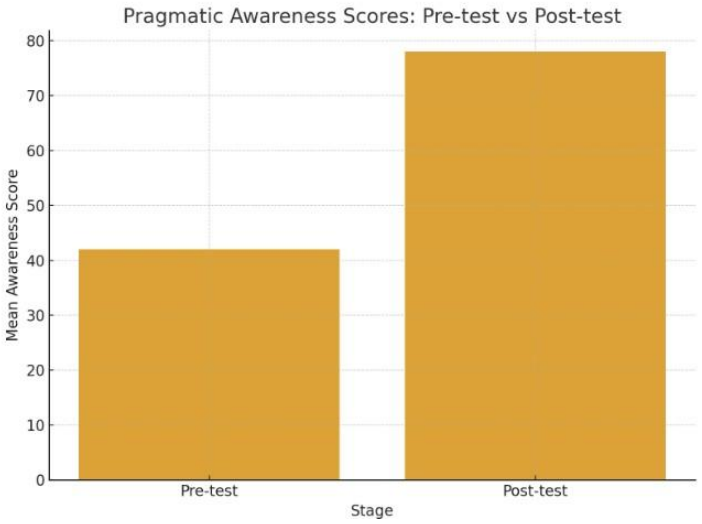

Figure 3. *Pragmatic awareness scores before and after discourse-based instruction.* Learners' pragmatic awareness showed a marked improvement from pre-test to post-test. As illustrated in **Figure 1,** mean scores increased from 42 (SD = 6.8) to 78 (SD = 7.4), indicating substantial gains in learners' ability to interpret pragmatic functions and context-dependent meanings.

Written reflections also showed a shift from surface-level observations (e.g., noticing politeness forms) to deeper analyses involving illocutionary force, mitigation strategies, and discourse management. Several learners explicitly noted that working with authentic courtroom and conversational transcripts helped them understand *"why speakers choose certain expressions"* rather than merely memorizing formulas.

Overall, the results indicate that **pragmatic awareness is highly responsive to instruction** when learners are exposed consistently to authentic discourse and guided to notice interactional cues.

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This improvement was also reflected qualitatively: learners' written reflections demonstrated a shift from superficial observations (e.g., noticing politeness forms) to deeper analyses involving illocutionary force, mitigation strategies, and discourse management. Several learners explicitly noted that exposure to authentic courtroom and conversational transcripts enabled them to understand "why speakers choose certain expressions" rather than merely memorising formulas.

The degree of improvement suggests that pragmatic awareness is highly responsive to instruction when learners are consistently exposed to authentic discourse samples and guided to notice interactional cues. The effect size implied by the score difference is considerable and aligns with previous findings that awareness-raising is most effective when learners are required to compare pragmatic choices across speakers and contexts.

Improvement in Pragmatic Production

Evidence from role-plays demonstrated that learners were able to apply their developing awareness to real-time interaction. At the beginning of the project, their performance was characterized by directness and literal expression, with limited use of mitigation or strategic politeness. For instance, requests often took the form *"Give me…"*, *"You must…"*, or *"I want…"*. Refusals were similarly abrupt, frequently lacking justification or softening devices.

By the end of the six-week instructional cycle, learners demonstrated notable progress. Their speech began incorporating:

- **Hedging:** *"I was wondering if…", "Maybe we could…"*
- **Stance expressions:** *"I think that…", "Actually…"*
- **Indirect requests:** *"Would it be possible…?"*

Tone modulation also improved, with learners adjusting formality depending on the context. Additionally, repair strategies became more common, including expressions such as *"Sorry, let me rephrase that"* and *"What I meant was…"*, reflecting increased confidence in managing misunderstandings—a skill rarely addressed in form-based instruction.

Another important development was the emergence of repair strategies. Learners increasingly used expressions such as *"Sorry, let me rephrase that"*, *"What I meant was…"*, and *"I'm not sure if I said it clearly"*. This indicates growing confidence in managing misunderstandings, an essential component of communicative competence that rarely appears in form-based instruction.

Several learners also developed greater control over discourse markers such as *well*, *so*, *actually*, *you know*, and *I mean*. These markers helped them organize discourse more naturally and signal shifts

in stance or perspective. Their use suggests movement toward more fluent, interactionally appropriate communication.

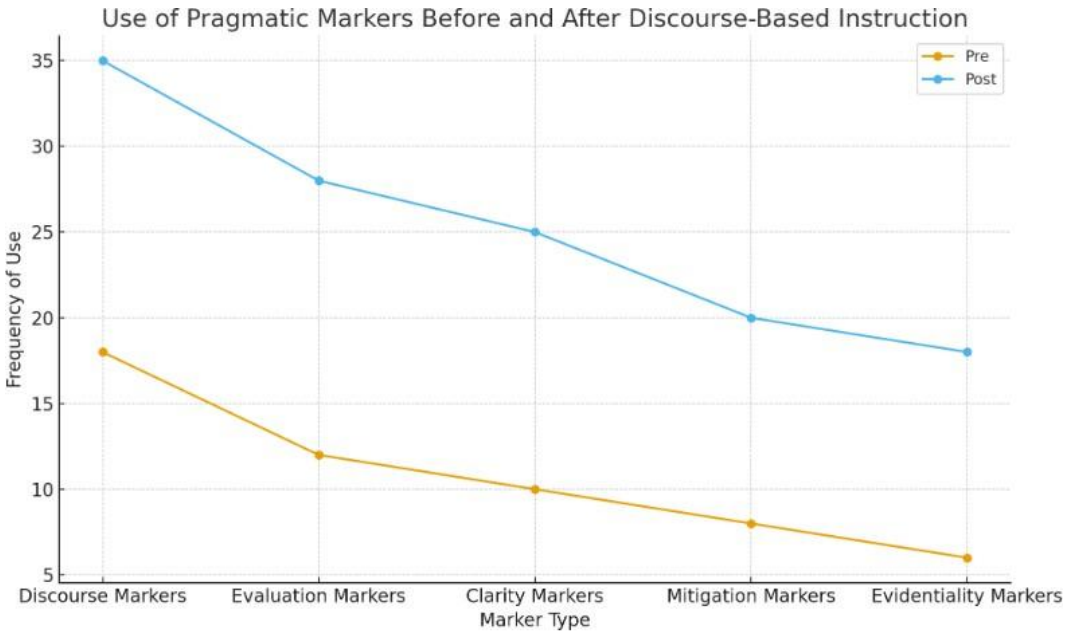

Figure 4. *Use of pragmatic marker categories before and after instruction. The line graph demonstrates noticeable increases across five functional categories of pragmatic markers, with discourse and evaluation markers showing the largest gains.*

Quantitative analysis of role-play data demonstrated notable increases in the **frequency and sophistication** of pragmatic markers employed by learners. As shown in **Figure 2**, the use of all marker categories increased significantly after instruction.

The most substantial growth was observed in:

- **Discourse markers** (from 18 to 35 uses), indicating improved ability to structure turns and maintain coherence.
- **Evaluation markers** (from 12 to 28), reflecting greater sensitivity to stance-taking and interactional alignment.
- **Clarity markers** (from 10 to 25), suggesting enhanced awareness of listener needs in extended responses.
- **Mitigation and evidentiality markers**, both of which doubled, indicating learners' developing control over facework, politeness, and degrees of certainty.

These results point to significant growth not only in quantity but also in **functional appropriateness.** Transcribed interactions showed that learners began to use markers such as *you know, I mean, actually, as far as I understand,* and *from what I've seen* to perform specific discourse functions—managing hesitation, signalling stance, clarifying information, and softening claims. This reflects a shift from formulaic reliance on memorised expressions to intentional, context-sensitive use of markers that support interactional coherence.

Engagement and Affective Responses to Discourse-Based Activities

Learners' written reflections revealed strong engagement with discourse-based activities. Many stated that working with authentic transcripts made English feel "real", "alive", or "less like a textbook language". Several reported that awareness tasks were challenging but "eye-opening", as they highlighted aspects of communication they had not previously considered.

Role-plays were consistently described as motivating and enjoyable. Students appreciated the opportunity to apply strategies in dynamic communicative scenarios and noted that performing spontaneously helped them think more carefully about tone and politeness. Some learners who initially felt anxious about speaking reported gaining confidence over time, attributing this change to having a clearer understanding of pragmatic expectations.

The reflective discussions further suggest that learners perceived the instruction as practical and transferable to real life. Many reflections included comments such as *"I can use this in my workplace"*, *"I never knew how to politely refuse before"*, or *"This helped me understand why native speakers sometimes use indirect language"*. These observations indicate that the instruction had relevance beyond the classroom and contributed to learners' broader communicative development.

Learners' role-play responses were evaluated based on appropriateness to context—considering tone, politeness, formality, and social norms - **Context-appropriate responses improved from 38% to 74%.** Major gains were observed in:

- choosing *indirect* vs *direct* speech acts
- managing disagreement politely
- producing culturally fitting requests and refusals

Learner Reflections:

Analysis of 180 written reflections (3 per student) revealed three dominant themes:

Theme 1: Increased Awareness of Implicit Meaning

- 82% of learners reported that they became more sensitive to tone, intention, and indirect meaning in English.

- Many noted that they previously focused only on grammar, not pragmatics.

Theme 2: Better Understanding of Social Norms

- 74% reported clearer understanding of formality levels, politeness strategies, and culturally appropriate expressions.
- Learners frequently referenced role-plays as the most impactful activity.

Theme 3: Improved Confidence in Real-Life Communication

- 68% noted increased confidence to communicate with foreigners or in professional settings.
- Students reported more willingness to use English spontaneously.

Overall, the data indicate that discourse-based instruction had a **strong positive impact** on learners' pragmatic development. Combining authentic transcripts, awareness tasks, and reflective activities resulted in:

- higher pragmatic awareness (+36%)
- improved strategic communication (up to +50% gains)
- more contextually appropriate responses (+36%)
- enhanced metapragmatic reflection

These findings support earlier research suggesting that explicit, discourse-level instruction is essential for developing pragmatic competence in EFL contexts.

Persistent Difficulties and Areas for Further Growth

Despite overall improvement, certain challenges remained. Some learners continued to struggle with interpreting implicit meanings, particularly in cases of indirect refusals or sarcasm. Others had difficulty distinguishing fine-grained differences between formal and informal register, suggesting that these areas may require more extended exposure or explicit cultural explanation.

Additionally, although learners improved in producing mitigated requests and polite refusals, a smaller subset still relied heavily on direct structures, especially under time pressure. This aligns with findings from other research showing that pragmatic control is often the last component of proficiency to automatize.

Nevertheless, even when pragmatic choices were imperfect, learners increasingly recognized the existence of pragmatic alternatives—a critical step in the development of communicative flexibility.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that discourse-based instruction can substantially enhance EFL learners' pragmatic awareness, confirming—and in some respects extending—current theoretical

understandings of L2 pragmatics development. The qualitative analysis of classroom interactions, learner reflections, and post-instruction pragmatic-awareness tasks revealed a clear shift from surface-level recognition of linguistic forms to a deeper, contextually grounded understanding of communicative intent. This transformation underscores the premise that pragmatics, unlike grammar, cannot be acquired through decontextualized exposure alone; rather, it requires structured engagement with authentic discourse (Taguchi, 2015; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010).

A central pattern to emerge from the data is learners' increased sensitivity to the functional motivations behind pragmatic markers and speech acts. Initially, many learners exhibited a literal, form-oriented orientation to meaning, frequently misinterpreting indirectness, mitigation, and evaluation markers in authentic transcripts. Following the instructional sequence, however, students began to articulate reasons for pragmatic choices by appealing to contextual variables such as power, distance, institutional norms, and degrees of certainty. This shift aligns with sociocognitive models of pragmatic development, which emphasise the interaction between linguistic input, cognitive noticing, and social reasoning (Kasper & Rose, 2002). The learners' improvement was therefore not limited to recalling formulas but extended to constructing their own contextually appropriate interpretations.

Another significant finding relates to the role of authentic courtroom discourse as the primary instructional input. While previous studies have relied heavily on daily conversational data, the present research shows that high-stakes, institutional discourse offers unique pedagogical advantages. Courtroom transcripts foreground pragmatic features that are often less salient in informal speech—such as evidential markers, clarity markers, and discourse-management strategies—forcing learners to attend to the pragmatic consequences of even small linguistic choices. This supports recent arguments that pedagogy should integrate "high-density" pragmatic environments to accelerate awareness of subtle discourse cues (Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011). The students' reflections confirm this: they frequently noted that courtroom discourse made pragmatic functions more visible and analyzable, even if cognitively demanding.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of guided metapragmatic reflection. Learners who engaged most actively in reflective discussions and role-plays demonstrated the greatest gains in noticing, interpretation, and evaluation of pragmatic phenomena. This supports the claim that explicit reflection, when scaffolded appropriately, amplifies the effectiveness of input enhancement (Takahashi, 2010). Notably, the integration of both Georgian and English discourse examples seemed to facilitate deeper understanding by enabling cross-linguistic comparison. Learners repeatedly drew parallels between the two languages' pragmatic markers, which suggests that contrastive

metapragmatic tasks may leverage learners' existing pragmatic repertoires rather than viewing L1 influence solely as interference.

The role-play activities also revealed a shift in learners' willingness to experiment with pragmatic choices. While initially hesitant, students increasingly tried out mitigation, stance markers, and indirect acts in their own interactional performances. This behavioural evidence reinforces the theoretical position that pragmatic competence develops not only through comprehension but through production, rehearsal, and social negotiation in classroom interaction (Taguchi, 2019). Although the study did not quantitatively measure production accuracy, qualitative evidence indicates that discourse-based role-play likely contributed to learners' internalisation of pragmatic routines.

Despite these promising outcomes, the study also exposes several challenges. Some learners struggled to generalise pragmatic insights from institutional discourse to everyday communication. This suggests that while courtroom transcripts are pedagogically rich, supplementary materials representing diverse communicative contexts may be needed to ensure transferability. Additionally, learners with lower overall proficiency demonstrated slower gains, reminding us that pragmatic instruction must remain sensitive to cognitive load and linguistic readiness.

Overall, the findings provide compelling evidence that discourse-based pedagogy—grounded in authentic, complex discourse and supported by structured metapragmatic engagement—can meaningfully enhance learners' pragmatic awareness. By linking learners' interpretations to broader theoretical constructs such as contextual variability, illocutionary force, and epistemic stance, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on how best to operationalise pragmatics instruction in EFL classrooms. The results underscore that pragmatic competence is not merely an add-on to communicative proficiency but a central component of learners' ability to participate in socially and institutionally meaningful interactions.

Conclusion

The present study demonstrates that discourse-based instruction can play a decisive role in developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence, particularly when learners are systematically exposed to authentic, interactionally rich discourse. Across six weeks of instruction, learners showed substantial gains in both pragmatic awareness and pragmatic production, moving from form-focused interpretation to a more nuanced understanding of contextual meaning. The quantitative results—marked increases in awareness scores, improved context-appropriate responses, and higher frequencies of functional pragmatic markers—were reinforced by qualitative evidence from reflections, classroom discussions,

and role-plays. Together, these findings indicate that learners not only recognised pragmatic features more accurately but also began to use them strategically in their own communication.

A central contribution of the study lies in demonstrating the pedagogical value of courtroom transcripts as "high-density" pragmatic input. These materials highlighted interactional norms, evidentiality, facework, and discourse-management strategies more explicitly than everyday conversational data, helping learners attend to features that normally remain implicit. The integration of guided metapragmatic reflection and contrastive analysis between English and Georgian further strengthened learners' interpretive skills by encouraging them to articulate reasons for pragmatic choices rather than merely internalising formulas.

While the instructional intervention proved effective overall, the study also revealed areas requiring continued pedagogical attention. Difficulties with interpreting indirect refusals, sarcasm, and subtle register differences indicate that certain aspects of pragmatic competence develop more slowly and may require longer-term exposure and practice. Moreover, a small subset of learners continued to rely on direct structures under time pressure, suggesting that automaticity in pragmatic production is a gradual process.

Despite these limitations, the findings offer meaningful implications for EFL pedagogy. They suggest that pragmatic instruction benefits most from authentic discourse, explicit noticing tasks, performance-based activities, and opportunities for reflective comparison across languages. Future research could extend these insights by examining long-term retention of pragmatic skills, testing the effectiveness of diverse discourse genres, or exploring how learners transfer pragmatic knowledge to real-world interactions beyond the classroom.

Overall, this study affirms that developing pragmatic competence is not incidental but achievable through intentional, discourse-oriented instruction. By foregrounding contextual meaning, interactional norms, and functional language use, discourse-based pedagogy equips learners with the communicative resources necessary for participating effectively in socially and institutionally complex environments.

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The Two Years of *MAMI*: A Complex Multicultural and Hungarian as an L2 Kindergarten Programme

ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is examining a unique multicultural and Hungarian as a foreign language pedagogic programme offered in the eleven kindergartens of the 8th district in Budapest, Hungary. In the academic year of 2023/24, the kindergartens of the 8th district of Budapest known as *Józsefvárosi Óvodák*, which serve more than 120 children with foreign background, launched the development of a complex multicultural and Hungarian as L2 programme, titled *MAMI*[1]. This programme is examined by three research questions from the aspect of multicultural education: *What elements does this programme possess*? *How do the pedagogues inside this programme evaluate it*? and *How easily can it be adapted to other institutions*? First, the programme and its initiatives are presented in both institutional and group level. The results for the evaluation of the programme were obtained by a qualitative way by conducting interviews with pedagogies and filling a questionnaire by those kindergarten professionals who conducted playful Hungarian as a foreign language lessons for almost 100 children in small groups every week between October 2024 and May 2025. The present article also reflects on a vocabulary test that was fulfilled in October 2024 and in May 2025 to record and statistically measure the improvement of the children. Finally, the overall evaluation of the MAMI programme is provided including the necessary refinements and the limits of its adaptability both within and beyond Hungary.

Keywords: *kindergarten programme, multicultural education, Hungarian as a foreign language, migrant children, pre-school children*

Introduction

Historical Background

The concept of Hungarian as the first language has undergone a profound change during the 20th century. Around the turn of the 19th-20th century, being the essential part of the multiethnic and multicultural Habsburg Monarchy, Hungarian Kingdom was a multicultural and multiethnic land where only 54,4% of the population spoke Hungarian as the first language according to the census of 1910 (Romsics 2010: 49). German, Slovak and Romanian communities were the largest minority

[1] The first year of this programme can be read in the article of Kajdi 2025 in Hungarian language (the manuscript was submitted in August 2024).

groups. After Hungary lost the First World War, in 1920 the Treaty of Trianon was signed resulting a new political, economic, social, and cultural situation. Hungary – excluding the data about Croatian – lost more than 50% of its population and 66% of its territories (Romsics 2010: 147; Bereznay 2020). From linguistic perspective the newest period of Hungarian language started with a broadly homogenous Hungarian-speaking country and many Hungarian-speaking territories outside the borders.

After the Second World War in the communist era (with the forced eviction of e.g. Germans), then in the socialist era migration was strictly controlled and practically prohibited (the only notable gap was during the 6 months after the revolution of 1956 against the Soviet regime when 200.000 people fled). Even though in the late socialism international students could arrive in higher education from other Socialist states, Hungary became a monolingual and monocultural country over the decades. The political situation changed between 1989 and 1991: Hungary became an independent, democratic country with free elections and market economy. Later, in 2004 Hungary became member of the European Union and in 2007 member of the Schengen Area. These contracts not only have been ensuring the freedom of movement and residence for Hungarian and other EU-citizens but have increased the attractiveness of moving to Hungary among people arriving from further countries, as well.

Today 13 historical minorities – including different Roma groups – can be listed with special rights (e.g. the right to establish their own educational institutions). According to the census of 2022, the population of Hungary in 2022 was 9,603,000 and 6.6% of the population confessed minority identity while 99.5% of them speaks Hungarian as their first language (HCSO). There was a separate question referring to the citizenship: in 2022 almost 220,000 people had foreign citizenship, and this number has been growing since that time. The estimations vary between 255.000 and 355.000 based on the methodology (Soltész & Kovács 2022), that that contributes to 2.7% – 3.7% of the population and in most of the families Hungarian language is not used for communicative purposes.

Migrant Children in Hungarian Pre-schools

In the Hungarian education system, most of the institutions from nurseries to secondary schools are state-founded and controlled (*Educational Authority*). Even though in the capital and in some bigger cities some private institutions offer bilingual programmes (typically in world languages, and sometimes in minority languages), in most of the institutions Hungarian language is used as the language of instruction. According to the Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education kindergarten is compulsory in Hungary: every child above the age of 3 (typically from the next September) is

obliged to attend kindergarten after 3 months of residence with various legal statuses (e.g. refugee, EU-citizen, sheltered, registered asylum seeker). Enrolling to primary school is also compulsory from the first September after the child's sixth birthday. Remaining in kindergarten above the age of six is a long and complicated procedure even for Hungarian families (e.g. the request should be submitted before the middle of January). Because according to Hungarian laws the lack of proper Hungarian language skills does not automatically entitle the child to repeat a year and the administration is time- and energy consuming, many children with foreign background start the primary school without reliable knowledge of Hungarian, although that would be an essential requirement both for their social and educational success (Bognár-Hetzer 2022).

In the educational year of 2024/25, 3317 children with foreign citizenship were enrolled in kindergartens (Kajdi 2025). Naturally, possessing a foreign citizenship is not equal to the lack of Hungarian knowledge and there are even more children who would need specific language support but are not registered officially e.g. because they have double citizenships or speak Hungarian as heritage language or are Hungarian citizens born here in e.g. a Vietnamese family. Although the number of 3317 do not seem high comparing to the overall number of kindergarten children (324,872), as migration tends to be social network-based (Stuart & Taylor 2021), there are some institutions that are heavily affected. While certain legislative acts provide some support concerning the inclusion of children from foreign backgrounds, (e.g. involving the methodology of preschool-aged children in the university programmes for future teachers of Hungarian as a foreign language), kindergartens possess relative autonomy in recognising and reacting to the need for multicultural education and teaching Hungarian as L2. It means that if a kindergarten has children with migrant background, it depends on the teacher, the director, the local government, or another maintaining organisation whether the linguistic disadvantage of these children is neglected, or some help is offered for them.

Kindergartens of Józsefváros

Kindergartens of Józsefváros as a joint organisation

In Hungary pre-school aged children with migrant background tend to live in bigger cities and in the inner districts of Budapest especially in Józsefváros, which already had the fame of being the melting pot of diverse cultures (dominantly Roma ones). Nowadays Józsefváros, the 8th district of Budapest, has the highest the number of foreign residents with 9920 people (within the population of 70.000).

It is worth noting that the term *Kindergartens of Józsefváros* refers to and umbrella-like joint

organisation with eleven member institutions and unified management[2]. The management includes the main director (the leader of all the eleven institutions), three deputy-directors and the directors of the 11 kindergartens. This organisational structure has certain benefits (Kajdi 2024):

- Equal opportunities are granted for all the children to access programmes (e.g. English lessons, special gym lessons).
- There are no significant differences among the units in equipment or human resources.
- Every member of the institutions shares and represent the same values.
- Strong effort has been made to prevent spontaneous segregation.
- Continuous communication between member kindergartens is ensured, so that comprehensive programmes are developed and implemented uniformly, considering local needs.

The organisational structure that the Kindergartens of Józsefváros represents is not widespread in Hungary, where the institutions dominantly function individually, but serves as a solid starting point to introduce pedagogical innovations.

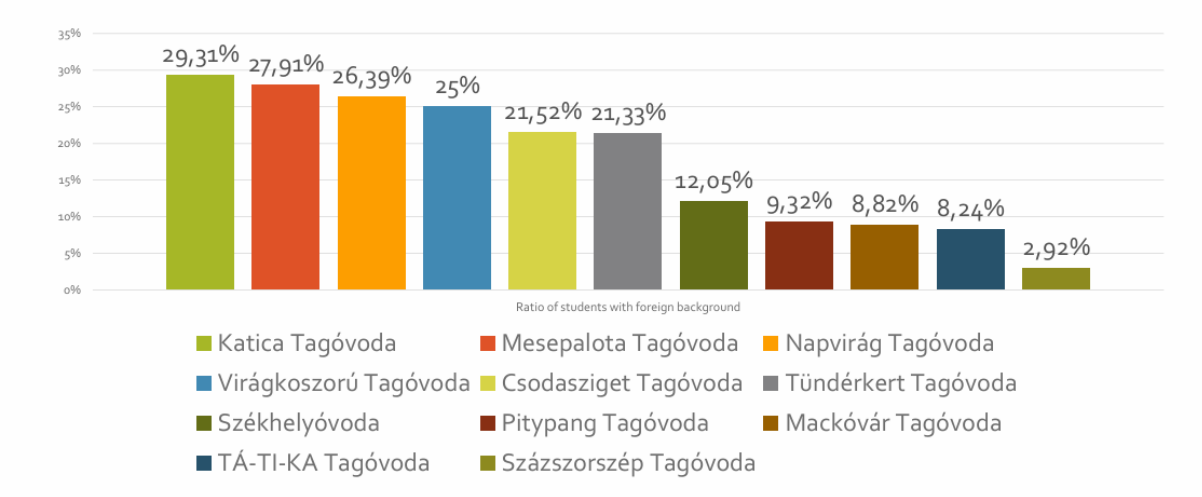
Children with foreign background in the Kindergartens of Józsefváros

It was already recognised in the educational year of 2019/20, that certain children with migrant background needed extra support. Consequently, in some institutions a school preparatory programme started with the intention of helping these 5–6-year-old children who were supposed to continue their studies in Hungarian primary schools. After reopening the kindergartens in the post-Covid era and the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the numbers of children with foreign background started to increase which caused a growing challenge in most institutions. The management recognised the necessity of comprehensive measures, and the preparation year of MAMI, a complex multicultural – Hungarian as a foreign language began in the educational year of 2023/24 following recommended principles and good practises from the European Commission (INEDU 2019).

In that year, according to the data in January 2024, approximately 120 foreign-background children attended the kindergartens (3–22 per unit). In the following year, the numbers were similar: 171 children were listed with foreign background and among them 148 children had foreign citizenship (Diagram 1.)

[2] Note, that this organizational structure is not widespread in Hungary, kindergartens tend to function as single units with own management relative independence.

Figure 1.



The ratio children with foreign background in the eleven kindergartens in 2024/25

The linguistic and cultural backgrounds of these children are diverse. Among the countries of origin Vietnam, China, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Mongolia, India, Nigeria, Syria, Poland, Kazakhstan, Venezuela, Argentina, Pakistan, the Netherlands, and Azerbaijan, Spain and Romania can be found among other countries. Some children arrive from the surrounding countries from partly Hungarian-speaking communities[3]. The legal status of the children also vary: they are refugees, recipients of temporary protection (from Ukraine), EU citizens with registration certificates, or third-country nationals with residence permits.

Considering their linguistic background, most children are monolingual, while some come from mixed-language families and speak several languages. Even foreign-background children who speak some Hungarian often has lower competences that their native-speaking peers. Their progress depends on many factors (Kajdi 2025): Hungarian proficiency and the attitude towards the language of their family members, the long-term plans of the family, their social network, the presence of other children with a shared language in the kindergarten group, whether they have got school-age siblings, etc. And in most of the cases it is beneficial for them to be in an environment attentive to their cultural background and receiving Hungarian as a foreign language lessons combined with the development of other skills e.g. auditory perception skills, visual memory, visual perception, motor skills, understanding part-whole relationship, spatial orientation (Schmidt & Nagyházi 2020).

[3] It must be acknowledged that even those children who speak Hungarian as L1 might need extra support as their language competence can be below of their age mates if they did not attend kindergarten in their home countries.

Methodology

To examine what characterises the MAMI programme, how the professionals being part of it evaluate it and its adaptability three research questions were formed[4]:

1. What elements does this programme possess?
2. How do the pedagogues inside this programme evaluate it?
3. How easily can it be adapted to other institutions?

To answer the first question, the programme is analysed according to three levels (upper/management; level of the institutions; level of the groups) with the help of documents, interviews by the pedagogues and experiences gained during fieldwork. For the evaluation part interviews and a quantitative survey were conducted with 6 teachers of the MAMI lessons. The final research question goes beyond the scope of the *Kindergartens of Józsefváros* and attempts to name the elements of *MAMI* that can be adapted to other institutions and the requirements needed to make a similar program successful in other kindergartens.

Description of MAMI programme

Elements 1: Upper/Management level

The work on the management level started in the educational year of 2023/24 with hiring an expert on multicultural education and Hungarian as a foreign language. Beginning with that year the creation of background materials, translation works and building a closer relationship with other organisations has started.

The central background material is titled *First Day in Kindergarten* and offers guidance on what to learn about a child's background, which are the most necessary administrative steps, how to ease communication with the families, how to prepare the group for a new foreign child, what kind of multiculturally-rooted conflicts can happen and how to handle them, how to create a welcoming multicultural environment. Other related documents offer sample Hungarian as a foreign language kindergarten lessons and practical recommendations supporting the language development of children with foreign background. Translation works include creating multilingual summaries (e.g., house rules), signs, and forms in languages such as English, Vietnamese, and Ukrainian. Consequently, the linguistic landscape became more colourful in many institutions. Also, the management contacted organisations with the desire to maintain partnership: NGO-s dedicated to migrant people, religious organisations, embassies, and the local government (who runs the kindergartens).

[4] Luca Szatzker in her MA thesis partly investigated the first and the third hypotheses based on data before March 2025 under my supervision.

Figure 2.

World map in Napvirág Kindergarten with pins showing the countries of origin and points of interest about those cultures in Hungarian and English language.

Level of the Kindergartens and the MAMI workgroup

At the development phase the needs assessment was conducted by the consultant and the management through visits, interviews, and observations. Workshops were organised in all units on intercultural competence (Byram 1997), trauma-informed integration (UNESCO 2019, 2023; WHO Guide 2020) cultural differences, conflict resolution, language-focused games (), and practical language development strategies.

The heart of the programme is the MAMI workgroup, established in autumn 2023, involving 1–2 delegates from every kindergarten unit. Its members include kindergarten teachers, speech therapists, special educators, assistants, and the previously mentioned multicultural- Hungarian as a foreign language consultant. In the preparatory year of 2023/24, the members participated in inner trainings (e.g. on early (second) language acquisition, basics of Hungarian language, how to conduct language lessons). They also created a shared digital repository of practices, a sample curriculum for

detailed vocabulary and grammar progression for 36 weeks, and by the head of the workgroup and a speech therapists 160-page-long lesson plans were written for two language/age groups with nursery rhymes and printable pictures.

In almost half of the eleven kindergartens the Hungarian as a foreign language lessons started in the spring of 2024, while in the other institutions the teaching began in the fall of 2024. At the educational year of 2024/25, the workgroup continued having monthly meetings with the plan to exchange experiences and analyse together their voluntarily recorded lessons. The lessons themselves took place in the kindergartens where the delegated MAMI-member, the Hungarian teacher collected the children from different groups based on their Hungarian skills and took them to a different place to learn Hungarian once or twice a week dominantly with the help of the materials discussed or born in the MAMI workgroup meeting. The answers of a survey[5] showed that in four kindergartens children had 2 Hungarian lessons/week, and the typical group size includes 4-5 children (Figure 3.)

Figure 3.

The Hungarian as a foreign language sessions in 2024/25

[5] Only six MAMI members answered this question.

Group level

Children with foreign background are supported outside of the Hungarian lessons, as well. The consultant visits all the eleven kindergartens to observe how these children behave in their own surrounding, in the integrated groups. Beside watching the groups and mentoring the group teachers, the consultant is available to hold sample lessons for the whole group highlighting the elements of conscious language development and the points where these children can be more involved into the activities if the language of instruction is Hungarian.

Follow-ups are also essential; hence the improvement of these children is documented by different professionals including the heads of the groups, the consultant, and the MAMI-member. To help communication in the first days after the arrival of the children 'survival' cards were drawn, so the child can lift the card to show how he/she feels or what happened to him/her (see Figure 4).

Figure 4.

A survival card depicting conflict, drawn by Elisabeth Fodor, teacher assistant and MAMI-member in 2023/24.

Moreover, as the programme is multicultural, the need to build a landscape that reflects the culture of the children appeared. Therefore, child books in different languages (to foster early literacy skills in their first languages), diverse toys, culturally representative images were collected – partly by donation from the embassies and cultural centres (Figure 5). And in two kindergartens multicultural days were organised with the involvement of both the Hungarian and non-Hungarian families.

Figure 5.

Donation from the Ukrainian Embassy

These steps not only expand the knowledge of Hungarian children about other cultures, they also increase openness, raise empathy and promote intercultural skills that are essential in the 21st century. It is worth adding that the reaction from the Hungarian parents were also dominantly positive.

Evaluation of the programme

The directors of the Kindergartens of Józsefváros

The idea of creating a multicultural and Hungarian as L2 programme was strongly promoted by the previous director of the Kindergartens of Józsefváros, who also gave Hungarian as a foreign language lessons for children by herself. The name of the programme, *MAMI* is also her creation, reflecting that although these children already have a mother tongue, Hungarian still can be their 'second mother' (*mami* in Hungarian refers to mom or grandmother).

Despite the change in the management in 2024, the current director continued this legacy and with the help of the local government even more resources were dedicated to this programme. MAMI appeared in the official brochure about the 8th district kindergartens and a video was directed to promote this programme among the families inside and outside of the district with English subtitle (https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1396505795058086)).

By the second year of the programme, the management faced much positive feedback. The

following quotes are from the current director, who was talking about the growing number of children with foreign background and the positive effects of the language lessons[6].

> *'(about migrant children) in increasing numbers, and we also notice that there are kindergartens that are popular among them, so there are kindergartens where more children go than in other kindergartens. This is probably because they take each other there, so where children of a certain nationality or ethnicity feel comfortable, they take their peers there too. But otherwise, it is typical in all our member kindergartens that it is increasing […].'*
>
> „*The feedback from all member kindergartens was that the children's vocabulary, first their vocabulary, and then their overall speech, had improved dramatically.*' (Éva Kocsisné Juhász)

Even though these answers emphasize the benefits, the director also mentioned some challenges – these will be discussed together with the experiences of the MAMI-members in the following section.

Evaluation by the MAMI Workgroup

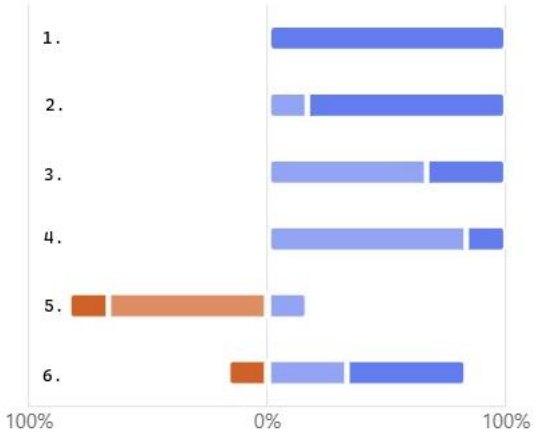
6 MAMI-members filled a questionnaire in June 2025 about their year. The form consisted of both fixed and open-ended questions about their position in the kindergartens, previous knowledge about second language teaching, the date since they started to give Hungarian lessons, the duration of the lessons, the number of children, the materials they use, the challenges and positive experiences and their future plans. From the answers it can be seen that:

- Half of the MAMI-members worked as kindergarten teachers.
- 66% had conducted English or German as L2 lessons before or helped migrant children.
- half of them already started the Hungarian lessons in the spring of 2024.
- The teachers use varied materials to fulfil the needs of their specific group.

Among the positive experiences they emphasized the willingness of the children to learn, the love towards the lessons and the Hungarian performance (Figure 6.) It is worth noting that the feedback from the parents is typically missing and even though these teachers had been doing the Hungarian lessons for months their self-confidence is still not high.

[6] The interview was conducted and recorded by Luca Szatzker in March 2025, while the translation is mine.

Figure 6.

1. The children happily went to the lessons. 2. They participated more actively in the games as time went by. 3. I observed they expressed more things (and/or for longer) in Hungarian. 4. I heard from the group teachers that the child opened up more in the group, too. 5. I received motivating feedback from the parents. 6. I felt increasingly confident and purposeful.	

The positive experiences of the MAMI workgroup members (who hold the Hungarian lessons)

The questionnaire also asked about the negative experience and the challenges of the Hungarian lessons. Based on the results the four most typical problems are the following (the % shows how many teachers identified it as a problem):

- logistical challenges: 50% (e.g. there is no fixed empty room for the sessions)
- schedule: 33% (difficult to find the right time when both the children and the teacher is available)
- overlapping programmes: 33% (when the children cannot go to the session due to an extra event)
- absence of children: 33% (when children miss many lessons due to illnesses or travels)

There are also other challenges that only one person mentioned. These are: the need of more material support (e.g. copying); the behaviour of the children (passive or aggressive); fluctuation (new children arrive during the year and some children leave the country); the timing is not perfect (e.g. before lunch the children are hungry and cannot concentrate); there is huge difference between the children (including personality differences). Nobody confessed communication problems or complained about the lack of rich, stimulating educational materials, toys.

Beside from these, in the interviews many members mentioned the need to modify the vocabulary test (see next section) and the stronger cooperation with the parents. In those institutions where the multicultural days/week was not part of the kindergarten routine, the MAMI members were eager to start it. More pedagogues emphasized the privileged position of this programme (extra salary

is provided for the MAMI members from the local government) and expressed hope for the continuation of the programme. Even though some self-developed education materials existed, they sometimes face challenge finding the best resources (e.g. easy or simplified songs and nursery rhymes). And the last problem that the director also mentioned is the fluctuation of teachers: even two MAMI members changed during one educational year.

Vocabulary Test

In September 2024, the idea of some sort of testing arose not to measure the added value (as there was no control group), but to help the planning and to provide some quantifiable feedback for the conductors of the Hungarian lessons. Although certain standardised tests are available to measure the language skills of pre-school children (Juhász & Radics 2019), there is no tool for measuring the vocabulary of children whose first language is not Hungarian. Therefore, a test was created by a speech therapist, a special education teacher and a Hungarian as a foreign language teacher that contained 8-8 words belonging to 10 topics about kindergarten life (e.g. colours, clothes, vehicles). The basic principle was to involve only those words (typically nouns) that appear in the daily life in September-October with representative image (e.g. a Hungarian type of pasta instead of the Chinese one). The test measured both the active and passive (perceptive) knowledge of these words like the Hungarian *LAPP Test* (Lőrik et al 2015) and the *Peabody Test.* The test was taken twice by the own teachers of the participants: 94 children, between the age of 3-6, were tested in October 2024 and 89 children in May 2025. The results were analysed according to different variants: active and passive knowledge; time; language levels (6); age/group; recallability of the words. Among other findings[7] the results statistically proved the development of Hungarian knowledge by paired T-tests for both in the active (3,84324E-18), and passive (8,27006E-13) vocabulary between autumn and spring. Although the results did not measure the added value, they had positive impact on the confidence of the teachers that was necessary (Figure 6 implies that some still lack confidence). With the educational year 2025/26 the test will be modified by adding a grammar component for those children who fall into the highest category according to their vocabulary skills.

Adaptability: Limits of this good practise

The final research question aimed to investigate the elements and practices of MAMI programme that can be adapted to other kindergartens and the requirements needed to run a similar programme successfully (see Figure 7).

[7] The detailed results will be first presented in the conference *Nyelvfejlődés csecsemőkortól kamaszkorig 4*. in February 2026 in Budapest.

Figure 7.

Requirements needed for the MAMI programme

The first requirement is the supportive staff: a committed director, deputy directors and all the members not only of the MAMI but the institutions contribute to the success of multicultural education and the inclusion of children with foreign backgrounds. The organizational structure, the fact that all the individual institutions have shared management fosters the implementation, the reception and the standard of any programmes including MAMI. Running this programme needs logistics including:

- extra time from the kindergarten professionals (to prepare for the lessons)
- the possibility of substitution (if a kindergarten teacher conducts a MAMI lesson another professional should help in her/his group)
- rooms for the language lessons
- tools for the language lessons (e.g. toys, flashcards)
- education materials (e.g. detailed lesson plans[8])

The financial component is also essential: the programme is currently financed by the local government and hopefully this will continue no matter of the political background of the district mayor and district council. As in Hungary the income of the districts correlates to the income of its residents, only wealthier local governments can afford funding any extra pre-school programmes. Starting any new programme also needs connections and background knowledge: in the MAMI programme the management has good relationship with cultural centers, embassies, NGO-s and university professionals[9]. And gaining the support of the local communities is also vital including Hungarian and non-Hungarian families[10].

[8] Beside the lessons plans developed by the MAMI members the book *Anya-nyelv-játék* is used whose work title had been *Hungarian as a Foreign Language Games* (Kajdi 2021).
[9] Currently Kindergartens of Józsefváros has official connection with the Department of Hungarian Language at ELTE University, but cooperation with the Institute of Intercultural Psychology and Pedagogy is also under negotiations.
[10] In recent political discourse of the Hungarian Government terms like ‘migration’ and ‘NGO-s’ has strong negative connotation and this has serious consequences in the inclusion of foreigners in Hungary.

Conclusion

The MAMI-programme in the Kindergartens of Józsefváros is more than a simple language course: it offers complex support for children with foreign backgrounds to help their inclusion in the Hungarian kindergarten life. While certain elements can be adapted more easily (e.g. paying attention in the multicultural decoration, translating the signs and texts for the parents in the kindergartens), other components need more time and effort (e.g. the training of the future Hungarian lesson teachers) and certain requirements are essential outside the kindergarten life (e.g. financing the programme). To sum up, this unique programme can serve as the model for other kindergartens that wish to support children with foreign backgrounds but must be adapted to the needs and opportunities of the other institutions and the children within those pre-schools.

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The vocabulary test was measured in each kindergarten by the own MAMI teacher of the children.

The interview with the director was conducted by Luca Szatzker in March 2025 as part of her MA thesis.

I hereby confirm that my article is original, the research of the 2nd year has not been presented at any conferences before SeLTAME2025 (I only had spoken about them in a roundtable session in the IAIE Conference in June 2025) and the only publication that I wrote about this topic was 1,5 year ago, therefore could not include the results of 2024/2025 (interviews, questionnaire and the vocabulary test). This article was written from my own research interest; I received no financial support from the Kindergartens of Józsefváros to write it and no version was sent to the management for approval.

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Methods and Approaches to Electronic Teaching of the Abkhaz Language (Level A1)[1]

ABSTRACT
In today's globalized world, the development of online language learning courses is becoming increasingly significant. This article presents an analysis of an e-learning course in the Abkhaz language (A1 level), which aims to design a contemporary model of distance education tailored to this language. This article describes, for the first time, the methodology for developing an electronic course in the Abkhaz language aligned with the A1 CEFR level and adapted for Georgian-speaking students. The course establishes a foundation for digital instruction in Abkhaz and, at the same time, illustrates the broader prospects for the digitalization of minority languages within educational contexts. The importance of such an online initiative is further underscored by the limited number of qualified Abkhaz language teachers available beyond the Enguri River, a factor that continues to hinder effective language acquisition. In designing the Abkhaz language course, particular attention was paid to the linguistic complexity of the language – including its phonemic structure and grammatical categories – while ensuring that the learning materials are presented in a clear and gradual manner. The course incorporates a rich multimedia component, featuring audio materials recorded by native speakers and diverse visual resources that facilitate language acquisition. A variety of interactive exercises enhance cognitive engagement and promote more effective learning outcomes. Given the electronic format of the course and the limited digital representation of the Abkhaz language, it remains challenging to fully integrate the speaking component into the program. Further development in this area is planned for the next stage of the project. Within the course framework, learners are able to track and save their progress, while also having the option to reset their results should they wish to restart the course from the beginning.

Keywords: *Abkhaz language, e-learning, distance education, minority languages, digital instruction, language acquisition*

Introduction

Abkhaz is one of the unique languages whose study carries significant cultural and linguistic value. According to the Constitution of Georgia, Abkhaz holds the status of a state language in the

[1] This work was supported by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG) [SL-24-218, Abkhaz Language Electronic Learning Course – A1 Level].

Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, alongside Georgian. Accordingly, Georgia bears the responsibility to ensure the functioning, development, protection, and promotion of the Abkhaz language – at least within the territories under its control. To achieve this, it is essential to implement programs for teaching and popularizing the Abkhaz language, which, in the modern era, can be most effectively and conveniently accomplished through online courses.

The Abkhaz language has been designated by UNESCO as *potentially endangered* (UNESCO, 2010). In the modern world, the development of electronic resources is crucial not only for endangered languages but also for those that are well protected, as the integration of technology into language learning and teaching – particularly through online courses – is becoming increasingly relevant.

Although there exist Abkhaz phrasebooks, dictionaries, certain electronic resources, and several textbooks, there remains a strong need for the creation of new, accessible, user-friendly, and effective electronic learning courses in the Abkhaz language – especially given the shortage of qualified Abkhaz language instructors.

Against the backdrop of globalization and the advancement of digital technologies, the preservation of languages and the promotion of language learning require new approaches. The development of an electronic learning course for the Abkhaz language represents a significant step both in promoting the language and in aligning its teaching with modern educational standards.

For this reason, the NGO *Enagram* and *The Institute of Abkhazia* of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University are implementing a one-year project titled **"Electronic Abkhaz Language Course – Level A1"**, funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia. This initiative aligns with Georgia's ten-year State Language Strategy, one of the key objectives of which is to support the functioning and promotion of the Abkhaz language (USLP(S), 2021, p. 18).

The aim of the present article is to analyze the methods and approaches applied in the development of the **A1-level electronic course for the Abkhaz language**. The paper discusses the structure of the course, the technological tools employed, and the teaching principles that ensure its effectiveness and flexibility. The research findings highlight innovative approaches that may serve as a foundation for the further development of an electronic platform for teaching the Abkhaz language.

Literature Review

In the modern era, electronic learning represents one of the most flexible, accessible, and effective means of language acquisition, as it removes geographical barriers. However, this form of instruction is still not available or widely implemented for many languages, particularly for those that are low-resourced. This scarcity is especially striking given the growing body of evidence demonstrating the

strong pedagogical potential of digital learning environments. Recent empirical studies further reinforce this point.

Grgurović, Chapelle, and Shelley's research suggests that computer-assisted second or foreign language teaching proved to be at least as effective as traditional, non-technology-based instruction, and in studies with strong methodological design, learners in CALL environments actually surpassed those in conventional classrooms (Grgurović, Chapelle & Shelley 2013, p. 165). Building on this evidence of CALL's effectiveness, Stockwell underscores that, at a minimum, any theory of CALL must account for two fundamental dimensions: the process of language learning itself and the nature of the learner's interaction with the technology through which that learning occurs (Stockwell, 2012, p. 6).

The use of technology can improve learners' motivation and interest. Technology provides language learners with target language input, output, and feedback. Findings indicate that researchers placed greater emphasis on language output – specifically writing and speaking skills. One explanation for this trend is that traditional classrooms prioritize input much more heavily than output, typically focusing on listening and reading through conventional tools such as textbooks and notebooks. Consequently, scholars sought to strengthen language output through technology, as it can effectively support learners in producing written and spoken language. Another explanation is that writing and speaking tasks are generally easier to implement within technology-enhanced environments (Shadiev & Yang, 2020, p. 14). It is important to note that the course under discussion is designed to support the development of all four language skills to the greatest extent possible.

Alongside the impact of technology on specific language skills, researchers have also examined how digital environments reshape the learner's role. Learner autonomy in digital settings is underscored by Reinders and White, who argue that as everyday technologies increasingly serve as natural environments for language learning, autonomy is both expected and developed in ways that researchers are only beginning to fully understand (Reinders & White, 2016, p. 152). This finding validates our decision to implement flexible pacing and comprehensive progress monitoring in the Abkhaz e-learning platform. These theoretical insights become particularly relevant when examining the current state of Abkhaz-language digital resources.

When considering the existing landscape of Abkhaz-language digital resources, these methodological insights highlight both the need and the relevance of developing more robust e-learning solutions. At present, there exists one online course in the Abkhaz language, which is based on the Russian-language textbook *Self-Study Course of the Abkhaz Language, Part 1* by Jonua and Kiut (Jonua & Kiut, 2003). The materials from this book have been translated into English and Turkish,

making the course available in all three languages. Both the textbook and the online course consist of 22 lessons; However, the online version currently offers only 18 lessons in Russian, English, and Turkish, with the rest still undergoing development (Learn Abkhazian).

The aforementioned textbook primarily contains grammatical rules, verb conjugations, and exercises, along with occasional phrases. The conjugation forms and phrases are accompanied by audio recordings.

In addition to the aforementioned course, there are several paid learning, phrasebook, and translation applications available for Russian-speaking users on iOS and Android platforms (Rodnoy yazyk; Stepik).

For Georgian-speaking users, an electronic self-study program titled *"Let's Learn Abkhaz"* was developed at the initiative of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (Osia, 2018).

There are also printed textbooks (Shinkuba, 2003; Ajiba et al, 2011; Avidzba & Kokoskeria, 2017; Kvarchelia, 2014; Gvantseladze et al. 2018; Machavariani & Margania-Amichba, 2018). However, none of the aforementioned books, courses, or applications are structured according to proficiency levels, and therefore they tend to be challenging for learners.

The course under discussion constitutes an attempt to address this very gap, whereas the present article seeks to delineate the methodological and structural framework of an electronic course designed for the teaching and learning of the Abkhaz language. Such an initiative aligns with a substantial body of research highlighting the pedagogical value of technology-enhanced language instruction.

Methodology

The adoption of digital methodologies in language education represents a fundamental paradigm shift from traditional classroom-based instruction, offering unprecedented opportunities for personalized, accessible, and effective language acquisition. In this respect, the Abkhaz language course incorporates a set of evidence-based digital learning principles tailored specifically to the needs of Georgian-speaking learners and to the linguistic complexity of Abkhaz.

A central component of the course design is the multimodal learning enhancement approach, which simultaneously engages visual and auditory channels. Native-speaker audio recordings offer authentic pronunciation modeling; visual associations support vocabulary retention, and interactive exercises integrate immediate feedback. This multisensory approach is particularly beneficial for mastering the phonemic intricacies of Abkhaz, including labialized and palatalized consonants absent in Georgian.

Complementing multimodality, the digital format enables adaptive pacing and personalization

unavailable in traditional classroom settings. Learners may progress at their own speed, revisit complex sections without social pressure, and access the platform at any time and from any location. Automated analytics ensure continuous monitoring of individual progress, a feature especially valuable for adult learners balancing multiple responsibilities and for students in regions where qualified Abkhaz instructors are scarce.

Immediate feedback mechanisms further strengthen the learning process. The platform validates responses in real time, reinforcing correct patterns, preventing the fossilization of errors that often arises from delayed correction, and sustaining learner motivation. In addition, the system integrates spaced repetition algorithms that optimize long-term retention by scheduling reviews according to each learner's performance profile – an evidence-based method known to increase memory consolidation.

These methodological choices also contribute to broader language preservation efforts. By removing reliance on physically present instructors, the platform democratizes access to Abkhaz language education for learners in Georgia, diaspora communities, and even residents of the occupied territories. The scalability of digital infrastructure allows thousands of learners to receive standardized, high-quality instruction without proportional increases in teaching resources. Moreover, the platform's data-driven architecture supports continuous course improvement through the analysis of aggregated learner performance.

Given that the electronic course is still under development, the present research adopts a qualitative approach. The ongoing nature of the project currently precludes the collection of quantitative data. Since no established CEFR-aligned proficiency description exists for Abkhaz, the A1-level content and thematic scope were defined according to international standards specifying the expected linguistic competences at this level.

As the course under analysis is designed for Georgian-speaking learners, its development takes into account the linguistic specificities of both Georgian and Abkhaz. The course endeavors to make the study of Abkhaz more accessible for Georgian speakers by facilitating the comprehension of its complex phonemic system (including labialized and palatalized phonemes absent in Georgian) as well as its intricate grammatical structure (such as the person–class agreement system and interrogative forms). Furthermore, the course constitutes a synthesis of textual, visual, and audio materials and encompasses all four key components of language acquisition – listening, writing, reading, and, to the extent possible, speaking. The content of the course has been positively assessed by native Abkhaz experts.

In preparing the theoretical component of the course in Abkhaz, the following sources were used: T. Gvantseladze's *For Learners of the Abkhaz and Georgian Languages*; the two-volume *Grammar*

of the Abkhaz Language by a collective of authors (Aristava et al., 2014; Aristava, 2021); Sh. Aristava's *Grammar of the Abkhaz Literary Language* (Aristava, 1996); and the *Rules of Abkhaz Orthography* (RAO, 1997). For the selection and verification of lexical material, the following dictionaries were consulted: the two-volume *Dictionary of the Abkhaz Language* compiled by a collective of authors (Shakryl & Konjaria, 1986; Shakryl, Konjaria & Chkadua, 1987); V. Kaslandzia's two-volume *Abkhaz-Russian Dictionary* (Kaslandzia, 2005; Kaslandzia, 2005a); T. Gvantseladze's *Abkhaz-Georgian Dictionary* (Gvantseladze, 2000; Gvantseladze, 2012); the three-volume *Russian-Abkhaz Dictionary* by V. Kaslandzia and B. Jonua (Kaslandzia & Jonua, 2016; Kaslandzia & Jonua, 2016a; Kaslandzia & Jonua, 2016b); and N. Machavariani's *Abkhaz-Georgian Dictionary with an Index and a Grammatical Overview* (Machavariani, 2018).

The development of instructional materials was guided by principles of pedagogical effectiveness, learner engagement, motivation, and platform flexibility. To support these goals, the technical implementation of the platform relies on modern web technologies that ensure stability, scalability, and a seamless user experience across devices.

The visual layer of the platform is developed using React, one of the most widely adopted technologies for creating modern web applications. This enables rapid transitions between lessons and exercises without the need for page reloads, a feature particularly important for maintaining a continuous learning experience.

The interface design is built with Tailwind CSS, which ensures that the platform appears equally well-structured on both large screens and mobile devices. To provide intuitive navigation for users, specialized icons and visual elements are employed throughout the interface.

On the server side, the platform employs Microsoft's ASP.NET Core framework to ensure security and reliability. User authentication and progress tracking are implemented through protected mechanisms, safeguarding personal data and preventing unauthorized access.

The database is built on Microsoft SQL Server and stores both the course content (lessons, exercises, audio materials) and user information along with their learning progress. The system allows each user to save their achievements and, when needed, continue learning from the point at which they previously stopped.

Results

As noted above, the CEFR A1 level descriptors served as the methodological framework for defining the expected learner outcomes by the end of the course. Consequently, the course content is functionally aligned with the CEFR A1 level, enabling learners to understand and use familiar

everyday expressions and very simple phrases, while simultaneously supporting the acquisition of the fundamental structural features of the Abkhaz language.

The course comprises thirty lessons, each of which includes theoretical content, thematic vocabulary, and, where appropriate, texts and dialogues. Every lesson is supplemented with exercises developed in accordance with the respective topics. Both individual lexical units and entire dialogues or texts are audio-supported, while the majority of vocabulary items are accompanied by relevant visual materials.

In the introductory section of the course, learners receive concise information on the Abkhaz language – its area of distribution, dialectal variation, and present sociolinguistic status. Thereafter, learners are gradually acquainted with the complex phonetic inventory of Abkhaz and, through clearly articulated theoretical explanations, progressively begin to construct simple phrases.

The course encompasses the following thematic areas: greetings; personal belongings; occupations and professions; countries, cities, languages, and nationalities; family; numerals; the names of days, months, and seasons; telling time; colors; descriptions of habits and daily routines; weather; food and beverages; fruits and vegetables; parts of the body; shopping; kinship terminology; the home and its rooms; clothing; holidays; health and illness; as well as hobbies and personal interests.

The course incorporates the following theoretical components: phonetic composition; grammatical categories; personal, demonstrative, and possessive pronouns; cardinal and ordinal numerals; interrogative words and question constructions; the formation of plural nouns; basic adjectives and their comparative and superlative degrees; derivational patterns; the instrumentalis; static and dynamic verb types; the present, past, and future tenses; imperative and continuous forms; negative constructions; conjunctions; prepositions; and adverbs of place and time.

Since stress in Abkhaz is phonologically contrastive and mobile rather than fixed, the course indicates stress on the appropriate syllables in both the vocabulary and all Abkhaz-language texts, thus easing the learner's acquisition of the language.

The course features a range of exercises aligned with the theoretical content, including listening comprehension (repeating or typing auditory material), word matching, linking words to visual materials, identifying objects or actions depicted in images, categorizing words (e.g., animate vs. inanimate nouns), constructing simple phrases, translation exercises, and reading comprehension activities (text interpretation, true/false questions, or written responses to prompts). Additionally, the course comprises three quizzes.

Within the framework of the course, a website featuring an Abkhaz virtual keyboard was developed. At present, a partial segment of the course content has been uploaded to this platform,

which functions in a test mode. During exercise completion, the system indicates correct responses in green, incorrect responses in red, and simultaneously provides the learner with the correct answer.

Discussion

The thematic coverage reflected in the results demonstrates that the A1-level electronic course for Abkhaz effectively aligns with the international standards for this proficiency level.

The course is designed to support the development of learners' lexical and grammatical competence. The content is presented in a clear, step-by-step manner to registered participants, who are also afforded the flexibility to proceed at their own pace.

Owing to the complex phonemic system of Abkhaz, the first four lessons focus on phoneme familiarization: the first lesson presents phonemes common with Georgian, along with **ə** and **f**, and each of the following lessons is devoted to labialized, velarized, and palatalized consonants. In all four lessons, words containing the target phonemes are provided with corresponding audio support.

As Georgian lacks grammatical classes, the topic is initially presented in a simplified form, with only third-person pronouns and the third-person forms of the verb *to be* explained, while all other forms are introduced in later stages. In the following lessons, interrogative words pertaining to human and object classes, along with numerals, are gradually incorporated.

Owing to its person–class agreement system, the Abkhaz verb is considered one of the most complex in the world's languages. Within the course, the complete paradigms of all verbs are provided, mainly in the present tense, with selected verbs also illustrated in the aorist, continuous, and future forms.

The formation of interrogative constructions is notably complex; accordingly, interrogative forms for human and non-human classes are introduced gradually across separate lessons.

After successfully completing the course, learners will be able to communicate on topics including greetings, self-introduction, characterizing a person, conveying possession, describing places, giving directions, outlining daily routines, telling time, expressing preferences, and describing basic actions.

The course offers a diverse set of exercises aligned with the thematic content, incorporating straightforward and modern feedback, including quizzes. Upon correctly completing an exercise, learners receive positive reinforcement in Abkhaz via a "like" button accompanied by appropriate audio feedback.

The website developed as part of this course will be freely accessible to all Georgian-speaking users. It is suitable for secondary school students, university students, and individuals of diverse ages and social backgrounds with an interest in the language. The course will be especially valuable for

students learning Abkhaz in Georgia's public schools and universities, as it offers a means to consolidate the knowledge acquired in formal education. Through this course, learners gain access to a new, technologically advanced resource that is both practical and engaging for the younger generation.

Thus, the platform is designed with flexibility and ease of navigation in mind. Its structure facilitates uninterrupted learning and the systematic organization of content, which is particularly crucial for foreign language acquisition at the beginner level.

The platform's architecture is based on a three-tier structure – visual layer, business logic, and database – each operating independently. This design ensures system flexibility and supports future development and scalability.

Special emphasis has been placed on the platform's responsiveness: the course functions equally well across various browsers and devices. The system is also optimized for operation under low-bandwidth internet conditions, which is particularly important for users residing in remote regions.

Such technological solutions ensure the platform's accessibility for a broad audience and provide a reliable foundation for the continued development of electronic learning in the Abkhaz language.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the A1-level electronic course for Abkhaz successfully combines contemporary educational technologies with fundamental principles of language teaching. The course analysis further indicates that the distance learning format provides considerable potential for the study, maintenance, and promotion of low-resource languages.

Access to an electronic resource strengthens a language's cultural sustainability and supports the maintenance of global linguistic diversity.

Beyond providing a highly convenient and effective method of language learning in the technological era, unrestricted by time or location, the course will be freely accessible to all interested learners. Participants will be able to study Abkhaz at the A1 (beginner) level at no cost, using either a computer or a mobile device, at times and places most suitable for them. This approach to teaching Abkhaz is both innovative and unprecedented within the field of Abkhaz language education.

Beyond assisting learners of the language, the course aims to raise awareness of the Abkhaz language, people, and culture, provide Georgians with a deeper understanding of the Abkhaz and their language, promote positive attitudes toward them, and contribute, to some degree, to elevating the prestige of the Abkhaz language.

The electronic resource under discussion will be available to learners of Abkhaz residing in the

occupied territory of Abkhazia, as well as to members of the Abkhaz diaspora abroad seeking to preserve their native language, and to Georgians living in the diaspora who wish to acquire the native language of the related Abkhaz community.

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Appendices

Abkhaz Language Course Website (Test Mode):