

Essential Problems of Teaching a Foreign Language in Modern School

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Abstract

Currently, there is a topical conversation about the search for new pedagogical technologies, methods, and teaching aids, which will contain updated content and special studies.

In our article, we will talk about the problems of teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL) in Georgian schools. Let us dwell in more detail on manuals and programs in English for senior classes, which, unfortunately, in themselves do not give quite positive results.

Sometimes it occurs that the purpose of learning foreign languages is to teach freely focused on a foreign language environment and the ability to adequately respond to various manifestations, that is, to communicate freely.

Let's talk about the main goal of teaching foreign languages, which is the formation and development of a student's communicative culture, teaching practical knowledge of foreign languages.

Keywords: Education, learning problems, Russian as a foreign language, textbook

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Introduction

For a long time, the Russian language in Georgia has had the status of a foreign language. New times and new conditions required a revision of both the general methodology and specific methods and techniques of teaching foreign languages. In a word, the methodology of a foreign language faces new tasks that are determined by the social order of society: the content of education must correspond to international status. In addition, economic, political, and sociocultural processes formed the basis for the development of the modern system of language education.

Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that history demonstrates the possibility of a dynamic change in the leadership of a particular language as a means of international communication. In the ancient world, Greek, then Latin in Europe and Arabic in Asia, French in the 19th century, and finally English in the 20th century. For example, it was Russia (and Georgia too) that gave such preference to the French language that in the educated circles of Russian society in the 19th century, the native language was relegated to the background. The level of culture and education of a person of that time was measured by the level of knowledge of the French language.

As for the spread of a foreign language in Europe, along with English, which is mandatory for study in all schools in Europe as the first foreign language, the languages of economically developed countries, primarily German, are the most studied, followed by French and Italian.

A study conducted in Germany showed that in order to work in 80% of European companies, knowledge of at least two foreign languages, primarily English and French, is required, and in 45% of companies, at least three languages (Spanish, Italian, Russian). Moreover, the most in need of knowledge of a foreign language are not so much exporting as importing firms.

Essential Pedagogical Principles for Early Language Teaching

It is interesting to read the European Commission report "Essential Pedagogical Principles for Early Language Teaching" of 2006 (Edelenbos, 2006), which gives a comparative overview of this report, according to which the strategy of the European Commission is to make Europe's education system the best in the world. To this end, 5 key principles have been identified:

- citizens of the EU countries must be able to speak another language in addition to their native language;
- all languages should be equal;
- everyone in the EU must be able to speak a common language;
- a single language for communication should be established in the EU countries;
- EU citizens must be able to speak two more languages in addition to their native language

These five principles reflect the official orientation of the language policy, and the formula "mother tongue +2" is the goal to which all citizens of the EU should strive (Edelenbos, 2006).

When developing the European Level System, extensive research was carried out in different countries. As a result, there are six major levels, which represent lower and higher sub-levels in the classic three-level system, which includes basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

The system of higher education today implies, in addition to student and teacher mobility, the reform of programs and curricula, cooperation in research through networks and associations, open and distance learning without borders, and other activities (Sadlak, 1998).

Mastering any foreign language does not present insurmountable difficulties and is even feasible in a relatively short time for a representative of any nationality. The study of foreign languages is included in the curriculum in almost all faculties. For example, at the International Black Sea University, English is the language of instruction. However, students can also master other foreign languages (*French, Russian, Spanish, German, Turkish, Arabic, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese*) of their choice.

Early learning of a foreign language, in which there is a lot of experience in Eastern Europe, should not be used to lengthen the terms of learning one language, but to provide an opportunity to study a second and third foreign language (according to psychologists, after 4 years of studying one foreign language, fatigue sets in and decreases interest in it). Therefore, if the first language starts in grade 1, then the second can start in grade 5, and the third in grade 10. At the same time, 3 - 7-year-old children immediately learn the phonetic system of a new language for them, 8 - 9-year-old - morphological, and older students - lexical and syntactic systems. Older students learn a foreign language faster than their younger brothers and sisters, while the latter quickly forget what they have learned. Thus, schoolchildren who began to study French in school conditions from the age of 12 and received 1,400 hours of language reached the same level of language proficiency as children who started learning it from the age of five and received 4,000 hours. Adults, on the other hand, have a significant advantage over children of any age in mastering the morphological and syntactic system of the language and experience difficulties in mastering its phonetic system (Бердичевский, 2011).

The official age at which learning a foreign language begins in European countries varies from 3 to 10 years. In some countries, the first foreign language is compulsory from the first year of study, and in some Spanish-autonomous provinces, the age to start learning a foreign language is even lower. In Estonia, this is the age from 7 to 9 years, in Sweden, the age is from 7 to 10 years. Spain has made great

efforts to introduce a foreign language from kindergarten (3 years of age). In the German-speaking part of Belgium, early language learning also starts at the age of three. (Edelenbos, 2006). The general trend is to learn a foreign language earlier and for a longer period. This is necessary "not to lengthen the terms of learning one language, but to provide an opportunity to study a second and third foreign language" (Бердичевский, 2011).

In Georgia, a foreign language is studied from the first grade. At the same time, English is taught in Georgian schools from the first grade. From the fifth grade, schoolchildren begin to study a second foreign language of their choice, many schools choose Russian. Basically, the Russian language is considered a variant of the second foreign language. Previously, a second foreign language began to be studied from the seventh grade, but there was a lot of dissatisfaction among teachers and parents, therefore, from the 2014-2015 academic year, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia decided that the study of a second foreign language would begin from the fifth grade, and the third one by choice students from tenth grade. Corresponding changes have been made to the National Curriculum for the 2014-2015 academic year. In this regard, the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Georgia Lia Gigauri made a statement: "Analytical work, research results, consultations with international organizations and experts in the field of education formed the basis of the activities carried out in the general educational direction".

The problem of managing educational activities is multi-valued, and diverse, and has philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, methodological, and other aspects.

We are trying to touch upon learning the Russian language in Georgian schools. For a long time, textbooks have been used in educational institutions, which the Ministry of Education and Science stamps. Stamping is the first stage in the creation of textbooks, during which experts from the state commission assess their quality. It is they who

determine which books meet the requirements of the National Curriculum of the country, and which do not (News Georgia, (2022).

Isn't it time to review Russian language textbooks for schools? From year to year, they do not change, but everything around them changes both life and style. We think that the texts should be modern and have a lot of colloquial practice. The principle of novelty is especially important in teaching foreign languages.

At the initial stage of learning, books on the Russian language are interesting, diverse in content, and able to give the right direction and deep knowledge of the language. However, already, starting from the 9th, including the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades of a general education school, the program begins to become more complicated. At first glance, the program in them is developed according to the European standard, but it is obvious that the material itself becomes voluminous and less interesting; it seems that the texts are addressed to such students who are native Russian speakers.

Once again, it is worth thinking about the fact that the main path to education lies through the language - one is native and foreign. In addition, the main source of mastering a foreign language is not in the development of skills and imitation of textbook texts, but in creativity and understanding of authentic, natural texts that people encounter in life. Therefore, in order to develop such an ability, it is necessary to give the student the opportunity to perceive as much as possible natural, undated speech with all its inherent characteristics: emotional coloring, natural tempo, etc.

Today, schoolchildren come to school with different levels (zero) of training in a foreign language. If you pay more attention to such a student in the classroom, the learning process will slow down. Moreover, the teacher has a program in accordance with which he must build the learning process. Education in the middle and senior classes does not aim to teach from scratch but to continue learning, already having a basic level of knowledge acquired in elementary school.

These questions about problems in teaching the Russian language have been around for a long time. The most urgent problem is the need for a qualitative improvement in the knowledge of a foreign language with a small number of hours allotted for the study of this subject by the school curriculum. This is far from enough. Let us dwell on some of the problems of teaching in general education schools:

➤ The first problem. Students in the English and Georgian sectors study the Russian language. It is clear that foreigners can study it from scratch, but students from Georgian schools study in the Georgian sector, where they studied Russian from the first, third, or fifth grades. After graduating, the majority read, and translate, but cannot speak at an elementary level. Why? Because there are no practical classes and conversational practice in the Russian language lessons. This section is not included in textbooks. In textbooks, texts that are practically not used in life, because. Modern youth are not interested in them.

➤ The second problem is the lack of qualified personnel. A random set of teachers (or teachers change every year) leads to a violation of the system and systematic knowledge, making it difficult to manage the educational process. After all, the task of a foreign language teacher is to form students' communication skills in order to achieve mutual understanding, which is confirmed by A. Potebnya: "Understanding is an unattainable ideal, which, nevertheless, must be strived for" (Кашкин, 2016). The teaching of foreign languages is directly related to the innovative processes taking place in the world, and in society. Modern communication technologies are being developed, the main mission of which is to optimize interaction and mutual understanding in human society. Today, a new approach to teaching foreign languages is needed. The formation of foreign language communicative competence of the younger generation, the education of morality, respect for a different culture, successful communication, and mutual understanding between peoples depend on the

professional competence of schoolteachers and university professors and their skills.

➤ The third problem is the lack of contact hours. Russian language teachers can argue that the hourly workload is very small and it is impossible to fully teach this subject. It is worth emphasizing that such a set of hours (2 hours per week) is minimal for a foreign language. The hourly workload should be especially satisfactory in subjects that are taken at the unified national examinations.

➤ The fourth problem. Large groups (classes) of 30 or more students.

Conclusion

Although there are many other problems. In addition, in all types of educational activities, most students have limited knowledge, unwillingness to overcome passivity and laziness, and minimalism in work.

Do not forget that knowledge, skills, and abilities allow a person to carry out any activity with the help of language means. Speech activity is carried out

in various areas of education: social, personal, educational, and professional.

Thus, the main goal of teaching foreign languages is the formation and development of a student's communicative culture, teaching practical mastery of foreign languages.

Willingness to learn foreign languages, as well as the ability to communicate with other people, is a condition for mobility, as well as the key to mutual understanding, to peaceful development in our interconnected world (Уве Томас, 2000).

Based on the foregoing, multilingualism is an integral part of the present and future Europe, and the possession of several foreign languages is due not only to economic but to general educational moments, as a factor in the general, political and cultural development of the individual.

It remains to wait and hope that the general educational situation with regard to a foreign language in the country will change for the better in the near future.

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