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**An initial stage of preparation of study material
(For the purpose of teaching Russian monologue speech)**

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the preparation of study materials in Russian as a second foreign language in Georgian schools for the purpose of teaching monologue through the inductive method. The development of speaking skills in Russian in Georgian schools is one of the most acute problems due to the fact that Georgian textbooks are traditionally built in grammatical order which hinders the development of speaking skills, and the new requirement of the state standard - to compose teaching and learning materials and textbooks according to the thematic principle becomes only formal. To solve this problem, we offer tips and principles for preparing training materials through consistent teaching of speaking topics.

The requirement of the State Standard - to construct the textbook according to the thematic principle - is not easy to meet due to the flexional nature of the Russian language. Based on this problem, this article discusses the ways a) to develop a working scenario for a speaking monologue at class, b) to select new learning speaking items based on the qualitative and quantitative indicators of grammar and vocabulary items, and c) to compile samples of mini-monologues similar to which students are expected to be able to compose after practice.

Keywords: *Russian as a foreign language, teaching monologue by the induction method, preparation of study materials, scenario, selection of units for speaking*

Introduction

As is known, the purpose of teaching a foreign language in school is to teach the language for communicative purposes and not as an academic language. This determines the development of language skills in the following order: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Muriel

Saville-Troike, 2016. p.154). Teaching of speaking skills in Georgian schools, unfortunately, leaves much to be desired and this was further confirmed by a survey of Russian language teachers teaching at Georgian schools conducted

on the Internet in 2020.¹ The survey was conducted in the most active open group of Russian language teachers on Facebook entitled "Russian language teachers of Georgia". Teachers were expected to rate their students' performance concerning speaking skills using a 4-point system. The numbers indicate the following: 1 – The students mastered the given skill poorly, 2 – they master the skill more poorly than well, 3 – they master the skill better than poorly, 4 – They master the skill well. According to the data of 55 participants, the average arithmetic assessment of all skills looks like this: reading – 3.2 points; listening - 2.9 points; writing – 2.3 points; speaking - 2.1 points

Such a low rate concerning teaching speaking skills can be explained by the fact that Georgian textbooks are still constructed following only linguistic principles.

In 2018, following the new Standard, the State published the certified

textbooks of the following authors for the 5th and 6th grades of Georgian public schools (elementary level): (Barsegova, V and VI, 2018; Lortkipanidze, Chkheidze and Chimakadze, V and VI, 2018; Shoshiashvili, Lutidze and Khomeriki, V and VI, 2018). The set of these textbooks includes a student book, a teacher's book and a workbook. The analysis of the given textbooks concerning the development of speaking skills revealed the following main shortcomings: 1) None of the textbooks offers the teaching of monologue speech (monologues which would include several sentences); 2) Speaking largely is presented as a means of teaching and not a goal. Oral assignments are usually employed as a tool to answer control questions semantically attached to the texts and are given as a listening or reading exercise; 3) The lexical-grammatical constructions offered within the learning topic do not correspond to the overall communicative

¹. The survey was conducted on the Facebook page "Russian language teachers of Georgia" on 22.07.2020 [https://www.facebook.com/groups/583409495041914/3102092459840259/?co](https://www.facebook.com/groups/583409495041914/3102092459840259/?comment_id=3102420566474115&reply_comment_id=3102432053139633¬if_id=1595416040661883¬if_t=group_comment)

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goals of the topic; 4) Lexical-grammatical constructions to be acquired are mainly practised through language exercises, which is manifested, amongst other factors, by the excessive use of meta-language. Pasov's remark can be considered relevant in our case: "Unfortunately, functionality and situationality as the most important principles concerning the mastering of the grammatical aspect of speech are often overlooked. As a result, students know how to reproduce this or that grammatical form, but cannot use it correctly in speech. Why? Because we do not connect the grammatical form with its functional aspect - the speaking task" (Pasov & Kuzovliova, 2010, p. 410).

In this article I will focus on two main reasons concerning building textbooks of the Russian language on linguistic principles by Georgian authors, namely:

1) When compiling Russian language study materials, the authors of Georgian textbooks are oriented on Russian methodological and practical literature. Despite the gradual establishment of the communication approach in Russia

during the past decades, reflected in a number of methodological books or textbooks (Galskova & Gezi, 2006; (Lebedinsky & Gerberik, 2011; Chesnokova, 2015; Fedotova, 2016 amongst others), based on the flexional, synthetic nature of the Russian language, the development of linguistic competence while teaching remains one of the leading directions: "Methodological research has revealed that it is necessary to introduce a new component into the term "communicative competencies". This component is a linguistic component" (Kriuchkova & Moshchinskaya, 2009, p. 21). Teaching an additional linguistic component in Georgian schools with two 40/45 minute lessons per week will lead to making and currently has made the goals of communicative language proficiency remain unattainable.

2). The other important reason is the recent change of the State Standard and the fact that the compilers of the study material were not prepared for changes - the requirements of the new Standard were not met by any of the 7th grade textbooks submitted in 2019, and by

none of the 8th grade textbooks submitted in 2020.

To strengthen the communicative approach, based on the new Standard, the compilers of the textbooks were required to include thematic learning material. The elementary level Standard provides only a thematic framework (National Curriculum 2016-2024 D. Level), while the basic level Standard discusses, in more detail, the function of the thematic unity regarding textbook writing and its main purpose is considered to use a foreign language within this unity: “Outcomes, concepts, and functional speaking activities determined by the basic level Standard should be processed in meaningful contexts. These contexts are defined in the form of a thematic framework” (National Curriculum 2018-2024. Basic Level, p.2).

To solve this problem, this article offers principles and tips for teaching monologue speech using the method of induction, which will assist school teachers and textbook compilers to prepare study materials at the A1-A2 levels of knowledge (excluding the initial (alphabetical) level of knowledge).

Moreover, the article offers only the preparatory stage of building the study material, most of which is not directly reflected in it and therefore, remains behind the scenes.

Principles of building the study material concerning the speaking skills

The new State Standard requires the construction of a second foreign language textbook based on the method of "backward design": First, it should be ascertained what complex and functional tasks would be fulfilled by the student at the end of a specific thematic assignment. Next, the tasks should be broken into separate components of knowledge and skills, which the student will need to master” (National Curriculum 2016-2024. Basic Level, p. 9)

According to the "backward planning", if our goal is to teach a student how to produce a monologue, we first need to imagine the final product – the monologue and its constituent constructions. The main problem is that, due to the flexional nature of the Russian language, an average monologue usually includes < 8 – 10 morphologically variable

forms. Therefore, it is necessary to break the monologue down into even smaller components and divide them into mini-monologues based on similar study constructions. For example, if a teacher wants students to talk about a complex task concerning a certain topic, for instance when and with whom they were at the entertainment center and how long they spent there, when teaching Russian we will have to divide this complex task into smaller subtasks: first, we should teach (or revise with students) how to deliver mini-monologues about when (когда) and where (где) the participants of the monologue were; next we can teach them the phrases and constructs (БЫЛИ ВМЕСТЕ С КЕМ) that express the emotions associated with the given topic, and only after this students should be taught the conversational constructions typical of the topic: катались на чем, с кем общались. Next, students should practice the newly acquired constructions together with the already learned material.

Using the example of this topic, we have outlined superficially the content direction built on the linguistic

constructions of texts with mini-monologues. While preparing the study material we will need to perform more detailed tasks that are proposed in a certain sequence, although the boundary between the elements of the sequence is very subtle: 1) developing a working scenario based on the acquired and yet to be acquired speaking items, 2) selecting speaking items according to certain conditions and 3) compilation of variants of mini-monologues, similar to which we expect students to compile.

1. Compilation of a mini-monologue scenario;

2. Selection of speaking items:

2.1. Number of speaking items;

2.2. Number of grammatical patterns to acquire

2.3. Functional teaching of grammatical forms.

2.4. Lexical-grammatical unity;

3. Recording of the mini-monologue samples.

1. Compilation of a mini-monologue scenario

Compilation of a mini-monologue scenario enables us to outline the

language constructions the combination of which will help a student to build a mini-monologue. At this stage, we take into account the prior, background knowledge concerning the constructions students employ actively in speaking and the new constructions that we plan to teach. It is necessary to create a scenario which, filled out by the student utilizing the already acquired and new grammatical-lexical units, will enable him/her to produce not an already memorized text, but a mini-monologue compiled by him/her. The following conditions should be taken into account when making up a scenario:

- 1) The scenario should be as close as possible to the natural spoken language;
- 2) It should be short (within the limit of 5 - 7 sentences);
- 3) It is necessary for the scenario to include an opposition, for example, like / dislike, agree / disagree, possess / do not possess, often / rarely, etc. The very existence of these oppositions will give the student space to produce his own mini-monologue and not mechanically repeat the text already acquired through a number of exercises while practicing;
- 4) the scenario should

- include no more than 2 new morphologically variable forms;
- 5) The vocabulary should be typical of a given topic, and should take into account the level of knowledge and the age of the student;
- 6) The scenario should include connectors, parentheses, interjections, etc. characteristic of oral speech.
- 7) If during further work we consider it necessary to use more additional constructions, they should also be reflected in the scenario (I will talk about these principles in detail in the section dedicated to the selection of study items).

Example: Suppose while teaching the topic "My Family (Моя семья)", the students have already been taught a mini-monologue containing the constructions: у меня (тебя) один брат/одна сестра; два/(две), три, четыре брата/сестры, у меня (тебя) нет брата/ сестры) and the set phrase: я (не) единственный ребёнок в семье . In addition, the students have revised both the infinitive phrases: смотреть телевизор, делать уроки, готовить обед, убирать комнату and the use of verb phrases in the present tense: мы вместе играем, ужинаем, гуляем, etc.

In the scenario of the new mini-monologue, together with the already acquired constructions, we introduce the new speaking elements, which have been outlined in italics:

Scenario 1: У нас большая семья – я, мама, ..., (СКОЛЬКО) брата и (СКОЛЬКО) сестры. *Наша семья дружная и веселая. Мы вместе проводим время*, иногда мы вместе (что делаем). *Мы всегда помогаем друг другу. Я помогаю (кому?)* (делать что?), а сестра *помогает мне* (делать что).

Below there are two more mini-monologue scenarios that differ concerning thematic and grammatical materials, but we will not discuss them in detail in this article:

Scenario 2: Думаю, человек в 23 веке изменится, потому что *у людей (детей) (не) останется больше времени на (ЧТО и ЧТО)*. *Вместо нас будут работать машины. Людям/ детям (не) нужно будет (ДЕЛАТЬ что и что)*, поэтому *они станут более (какИМИ)*. (In the construction „больше времени на ЧТО“ only the nouns of the 2nd type of declension are employed).

Scenario 3: Мне нравятся такие *учителя, которЫЕ ((не) делАЮТ* что и что) ... *нам*, и мне очень не нравятся учителя, *которые ((не) делАЮТ* что и что) ... *нас*. Это всегда обидно! Кстати, у меня есть *учитель, которЫЙ ((не) делАЕТ что)*, и еще *((не) делАЕТ* что). *И это здорово!* (Only the productive verbs of class 1 are used in the lesson).

2. Selection of speaking items

The following are the basic conditions that assist us in the correct selection of the new speaking items within the scenario in 2 directions: 1) quantitative - how much new material should be selected for learning and 2) qualitative - which lexical-grammatical constructions should be used to “fill” the mini-monologue. In order to achieve this goal, the following selection principles have been outlined in the article:

2.1. Number of grammatical patterns to acquire

It is impossible to teach a student the grammatical diversity characteristic of a given topic for speaking in one lesson; therefore, some "sacrifices" have to be

made. Theoretically, within one lesson it is feasible to teach grammatical material which includes 3-4 and more morphologically varied forms. As a result, our students may be able to complete test tasks with some success, but it is impossible to automate 3-4 grammatical forms in one lesson. Students will mix these forms while the stages of substitution and transformation will take up the entire lesson and actually turn it into a mere grammar practice lesson. In order for this not to happen, we need to limit ourselves to teaching 1 or 2 grammatical, mostly morphological patterns.

Scenario 1. Discussion: We teach only I and II types of noun declension - *советовать сестре (маме, бабушке, папе, дедушке) и брату (отцу, деду)*. Despite the common root, in this particular case I avoided the use of the reflexive verb «советоваться», as it requires a noun in the instrumental case. In order not to overload the learning process with grammatical material, we teach the phrase *помогает мне* as a ready-made, set unit and thus do not focus on form

variability of other personal pronouns in the dative case.

2.2. Number of speaking items - 5 - 7

In order to be able to present, practice and use all the planned speaking items in one (or as a maximum two) lessons, it can be considered optimal to teach on average 6 items per lesson. However, within one lesson, 3 - 5 or 9 - 10 items can be taught. It all depends on the novelty, complexity and variety of the selected speaking items. Specifically, the maximum number of speaking items can be outlined if 1) we teach only one construction with a minimal amount of grammatical variability, 2) the students are relatively familiar with the vocabulary of the items; 3) there are no additional issues related to phonetics; 4) complex parentheses, characteristic of oral speech are not used: *Я только что говорил/а о своей подруге, /Я только что рассказывал/а о своей однокласснице / сестре (маме, папе, дедушке, соседке)... Я говорил/а о нашей поездке, /Разумеется, я не рассказывал/а о нашей ссоре /(встрече, /дружбе, /поездке, /переписке). И еще я (не) рассказывала о ...*,

НО

As can be seen, the study units are selected in such a way that only type I declension forms of nouns are taught, but not the use of prepositions and verb paradigms. Compare the variety of vocabulary and grammatical forms dealt with in the topic of "Rainy Weather": *Сегодня пасмурный день. С утра на небе серые тучи. Я (не) люблю дождливую погоду. В дождливую погоду я (не) всегда сижу дома. В дождливую погоду я (не) люблю (делать что)*. In this case, we should limit ourselves to about 5 new items (phrases) for speaking.

1.3. Functional teaching of grammatical forms

Students find it very difficult to use the acquired grammatical forms with different speech functions, especially in the case of the negative grammatical interference. For example, knowledge of the variability of the instrumental case of the construction "Кто хочет стать (каким) КЕМ" cannot be automatically transferred to the construction "жить, учиться, играть и т.п. вместе с КЕМ",

since, in this case, the instrumental case performs 2 different speech functions, and we are also dealing with grammatical interference - one case in Russian corresponds to 2 different case forms in the Georgian language. Therefore, when selecting grammatical material, it should be borne in mind that although students have already acquired certain forms of declension, the same case form employed in a different speech function in the learning material should be singled out as a new study item for speaking and not as one already acquired.

In addition, when selecting study items, the starting point should be the frequency of their use in speaking exercises within a particular topic as, due to the low frequency, students will soon forget them. Every speaking situation is characterized by its own lexical-grammatical construction, for example, in the speaking situation "Дружба" the instrumental case forms are frequently utilized to denote the joint action: дружить, подружиться, общаться, познакомиться с кем, мы (с кем) большие друзья. We can also revise the already acquired construction мой друг

какой и какой, and the use of the Present tense.

In the topic "«Моя будущая профессия» or "Хобби" teaching the forms of instrumental case will be relevant, although in this specific case, with the function of naming the object: «Кем я хочу стать» or «Чем я увлекаюсь» etc.

The grammar of the Russian language is inexhaustible. As well as this, the starting point should be not the grammatical regularity, but the functionality of grammatical forms, which makes the grammar material even more "abundant". At such times, we find that compilation of a school textbook through strictly consistent teaching of grammatical patterns proves to be ineffective from the point of view of the purposes of teaching at school, especially if the Georgian school's weekly schedule (two 40/45 minute lessons per week) is taken into consideration.

2.4 Lexical-grammatical unity

The starting point for selecting speaking material should be the complex use of vocabulary and grammar and not

the teaching of separate vocabulary and grammatical forms. Sadly, in all the Russian language textbooks written in Georgia, grammatical forms are mainly taught based on the vocabulary items which are not related semantically. On the other hand, thematic lexical units are taught with different grammatical forms, which ultimately makes it impossible for the teacher to employ the communicative approach. Such tasks often take up the whole lesson and, as a result, the main purpose of teaching (to teach students to use vocabulary and grammar structures in speech) fails to be achieved.

In order to maintain lexical-grammatical unity while teaching monologue speech, it is necessary to provide the students with new lexical and grammatical items in the form of speaking items within the planned scenario. In order to observe this goal, 1) It is necessary for the learning vocabulary to be at least a phrase and not a word. This will make it easy for a student to employ properly forms characterized by grammatical variability ; 2) New vocabulary (including phraseological units, parentheses characteristic of

spoken language, connectors, etc.) should be included in the learning grammatical constructions as much as possible; 3) When presenting learning vocabulary, the words should be provided in the grammatical form relevant to the given topic; 4) If the student needs to know certain phrases within the given topic, but the grammatical material of these phrases overloads the grammatical component of the lesson, then they should be provided as ready-made, fixed speaking items.

In terms of lexical-grammatical unity, let us consider **Scenario 1** in detail. In the new lesson we have identified 6 new speaking items: 1) *наша семья дружная и весёлая*; 2) *мы вместе проводим время*; 3) *я помогаю брату готовить уроки*; 4) *мама помогает сестре убирать комнату*; 5) *мы помогаем друг другу*; 6) *Папа помогает мне*.

As can be seen, the grammatical material employed in the scenario includes the nouns of the I and II types of declension employed with the addressee-oriented function, which is presented in various forms in two speaking items (# 3 and 4). The content of the speaking

situation scenario does not require teaching the use of personal pronouns used in the dative case, therefore no special practice concerning the use of these pronouns is required, although we will still need to use the first person pronoun in the phrase *помогает мне*, which should be provided in a ready-made form. The rest of the phrases are included in the scenario not as grammatical but as lexical items, as ready-made items, and students will be actively trained in using them in the future. As for the vocabulary, in this case even at the substitution stage, we should try to use only the items relevant for this scenario or for a given thematic unit and not include words such as «друг/подруга, сосед/соседка, директор, etc.

Other scenarios:

Scenario 2: 1) у людей останется много времени на общение; 2) у детей останется больше времени на занятие спортом; 3) дети станут более занятыми; 4) люди станут более счастливыми 5) люди станут более несчастными; 6) вместо нас будут работать машины; 7) людям не нужно будет ходить на работу.

Scenario 3: 1) учитель, который постоянно делает нам замечания; 2) учителя, которые отчитывают нас перед всем классом; 3) учитель, который помогает нам учиться; 4) учителя, которые уважают нас; 5) Это всегда обидно! 6) Это здорово!

3. Recording of the samples of mini-monologue variants

Elementary and basic school students are often given a task to make up a mini-monologue or dialogue in a production assignment, not all components of which have been practiced in speaking, so that only a language-savvy student can fulfill the assignment successfully (over time, this becomes one of the main reasons for student-centered lessons oriented on only on good students).

At the elementary and basic levels it is quite possible to predict what phrases our students will be able to use to make up a mini-monologue. It is advisable for us (and not necessarily for the learner) to present and record the samples in the form of a mini-monologue by repeating the speaking units outlined according to the principles listed above. The following

conditions need to be considered when compiling such samples:

a) The sample must be understood according to the scenario; b) the majority of the learning items should be constantly repeated in the samples; c) the samples should not include a speaking item the practice (or revision) of which is not planned; d) it is necessary to record 3 - 4 samples. Experience has revealed that it is relatively easy to create 1 - 2 samples, but the process of creating each subsequent sample becomes more complicated. Teaching students speaking skills in 1 - 2 samples of mini-dialogues may lead to memorizing the text prepared in advance, while our goal is for the learner to create a mini-monologue through their own experience using the acquired speaking items.

For example, 3 samples of Scenario 1 are given below:

- У нас большая семья – я, мама, папа, два брата и две сестры. Наша семья дружная и веселая. Мы вместе проводим время, иногда мы вместе гуляем в парке. Мы всегда помогаем друг другу. Я помогаю сестре

готовить уроки, а сестра помогает мне есть конфеты.

- У нас маленькая семья – я единственный ребенок в семье. Наша семья дружная и веселая. Мы часто помогаем друг другу – я помогаю маме есть шоколады, а папа помогает мне делать уроки.
- Я не единственный ребенок в семье. У меня два брата и две сестры. Наша семья очень дружная, мы вместе проводим время, вместе гуляем и ходим в кино. Я помогаю маме готовить обед, а папе помогаю смотреть телевизор, но мама не помогает мне есть суп.

Compiling such samples of mini-dialogues has the following practical advantages: a) it enables us to present the learning material in perspective; b) examples allow us to follow the principle *goal = result / result = goal*; c) the examples will act as a guide for us at all stages of the practice; d) at the stage of conditional - educational production, if we deem it necessary, we will have a ready-made sample, based on which students will be able to compose their own mini-monologues; e) prepared mini-

texts can be used as examples to develop other aspects of speaking skills.

Conclusion

In order to be able to teach a mini-monologue in Georgian schools at the elementary and basic levels through the inductive method, first of all, it is necessary to change the principle of building the textbook. Instead of compiling a book in a strictly grammatical order, the textbooks should be based on the principle of thematic construction. In order to implement this principle at the initial stage of preparation of the Russian language study material, we need to divide the presented above study monologue into mini-monologues and compile a separate scenario for each of them, selecting grammatical constructions and teaching speaking items according to a number of conditions. It is important to limit the number of grammatical forms by introducing ready-made speaking items which will make it easier for the student not to limit themselves to the acquired grammatical forms and compose a more “enriched” mini-monologue than to

produce a couple of grammatically correct sentences. When preparing the study material, it is also important to compose several (<3) samples containing the speaking items to be acquired, selected

within the given scenario. This can be considered to be a prerequisite for creating a production space for the student.

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