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Raising EU Awareness in Ethnic Minority Areas - Following the One Example of a Jean Monnet Project “Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools” (TEESS)

ABSTRACT

In the context of European Integration of Georgia, great importance is attached to the knowledge and expectations of the population, including the ethnic minorities, regarding Georgia's integration in the EU and implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. According to the surveys taken by various organizations, the popular mood in Georgia is positive where the EU-integration is concerned. Although the interest towards the association is substantial it does not rely on the specifics and dynamics of the bilateral relations. Mostly, the information the people get from the TV is superficial. One option to raise the popular awareness is to implement the Caucasus University Erasmus + Jean Monnet “Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools” (TEESS) project and share the university knowledge of European Studies with public schools. The project aims at raising awareness of the European integration, the Association Agreement and DCFTA in the regions densely populated by the IDPs, namely, the school children, teachers and their families. The workshops staged in the Georgian, Russian, Armenian and Azeri public schools in the capital Tbilisi and the towns of Akhaltsikhe and Marneuli partly attended by the IDPs made the scarcity of the information and the interest evident. The discussions showed that most of them realized the importance of the EU support to Georgia. However, some of them were still skeptical. We suggest a different planning of the information campaign targeted at sharing the European values and generally the EU-Georgia relations, on the one hand and better instruction in the Georgian language in the regions populated with the ethnic minorities. The outcome of the project made it clear that supply of more comprehensive information on Europe at the history and civic education lessons to the school children could be a good option. That is what “The European Association Process in Georgia”, a quadri-lingual textbook published within the frameworks of the Caucasus University “Erasmus +” Jean Monnet project funded by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia is targeted at. We suppose stepping up the project activities by adding elements of informal education and last but not the least, closer involvement of public agencies and institutions.

Keywords: *EU, TEESS, ethnic minority, awareness, public schools, handbook for history and civic education teachers.*

Introduction

Georgia declared European Integration as a priority in its foreign and domestic policy from 1996. Following the successes in various areas, in 2014, Georgia and EU signed the Association

Agreement and the one On the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA). Fulfillment of the obligations under the said Agreements, calls for substantial changes in

nearly all the fields, the public support to the progress towards the EU and raising popular awareness of the European values. Every citizen should know how important the European integration and association are, and the prospects they open up.

There are ideological obstacles on Georgia's way to Europe created by the Russian Media propaganda, especially effective where the ethnic minorities, with their insufficient knowledge of the official language are concerned. The Internally Displaced People (IDPs) from Abkhazia and Samachablo (South Ossetia) are also prone to the Russian disinformation campaign.

The Georgian people, including the ethnic minorities should be well informed about the EU and implementation of the Association Agreement, so that they have a clear picture of what is in store for them. According to the surveys taken by various organizations, the popular sentiment is pro-European (www.epfound.ge); Although the interest in the association process is keen enough, the people are not fully aware of the specifics of the EU-Georgia relations and the dynamics thereof. It is mostly from TV that people get the information, which is far from sufficient.

Within the frameworks of Jean Monnet Project: “Triangle Effect of European Studies at

Schools” (TEESS), we suggest introduction of European learning experience to public schools as a means of raising awareness of the European Integration, the Association Agreement and DCFTA among the IDPs students, teachers and their families by the professors of Caucasus University European Studies BA program, as well as the students and graduates.

On the Caucasus University Erasmus+ Jean Monnet “Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools” Project (TEESS)

In order to enter the competition, the Caucasus University Erasmus+ Jean Monnet project “Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools” (TEESS) was uploaded to the EC website in February 2019. In late July of the same year, we were supplied the information on the selection process and funding, and the formalities having been settled, the Project was launched on 14 November 2019.

Among others, TEESS involves workshops at the public schools. The target group is made up of the basic and secondary stage ethnic minority and IDP pupils of the public schools, their parents and teachers. The workshops mainly involve the teachers of history, civil education, geography, Georgian language and literature and

foreign languages etc. interested academic staff. Each working meeting involved 55 students, teachers and parents. The workshops have been conducted in the public schools of Akhaltsikhe and Marneuli, as well as public school #3 in Tbilisi of predominantly the IDPs pupils. All in all, over 500 beneficiaries have participated in the workshops.

TEESS was developed by the academic staff of the Caucasus University, BA Program of the European Studies of Caucasus School of Humanities and Social Sciences: Prof. Ekaterine Kardava and Prof. Guranda Chelidze. As to the training module, it was developed by the Project authors and experts, including Dr. of History, Prof. Zurab Bragvadze of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Apart from raising awareness of the European association process, the workshops aim at motivation of the ethnic minority students to improve their proficiency in the Georgian language, so they are conducted in Georgian. Even more so, those after workshops, the students are supposed to enter “I Saw Europe in Georgia” essay competition; so sufficient knowledge of the official language matters a lot. In their essays to be written in the Georgian language, the students are going to impart their opinions on the significance of AA/DCFTA for the progress of the country, their personal

development and the part they may play in creating a democratic society built on the European values. According to the Project curriculum, the competition is to follow the workshops, so that in the meantime, the non-Georgian students could improve their writing and communication skills.

We believe that the printed training materials handed out to the students and teachers are going to be helpful in terms of preparation to the essay competition. The same is true for “The European Association Process in Georgia” handbook for history and civic education teachers supported by the Georgian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports. To make it more accessible to the ethnic minorities, apart from Georgian and English, the handbook was translated into the Armenian and Azeri Languages (cu.edu.ge, 2021). The softcopies of the handbook were uploaded to the Caucasus University and the Project websites and posted on Facebook. The handbook was shared by several organizations also working on the European integration and association issues. The National Center for Teacher Professional Development, which reviewed the said manual approved and recommended it for instruction. The Center posted the relevant information in the Georgian and English languages (tpdc, 2021) on its web-portal. The handbook sets out the training

materials, which meet the national curriculum standards of citizenship: student's knowledge of the public he/she is a member of and the local, national and global developments, as well as their implementation in practice. The workshops are going to help the students in terms of generating the sense of true citizenship, motivate them to take care of the country they live in, teach them the ways of civil involvement, make them realize that they can and should make a difference where the country (community/municipality or the state) is concerned; develop their collaboration, conflict settlement, entrepreneurial and financial management skills, make them focus on the human rights, tolerance, rule of law etc. democratic principles and motivate them for closer involvement in the public and political affairs (Citizenship – basic stage Standard). The handbook made up of three parts deals with the issues such as formation of the EU, its goals and tasks, European values, the EU expansion, progress of the EU-Georgia relations, the results of AA/DCFTA where the judiciary, labor relations, introduction of the EU market standards, food safety etc. issues are concerned. The authors of the handbook also speak about the cultural heritage issues within the frameworks of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (Textbook, 2021).

The workshops have made it evident that the purpose of the project has been achieved: the teachers and pupils of the public schools in the regions densely populated by the ethnic minorities, as well as those of the IDPs schools have developed a new vision of association with the EU and importance of AA/DCFTA. The students realize how to get involved in building the society they are a part of and more of them support the national European Integration and Association policy. The number of Georgia's European integration supporters has increased. The ethnic minority school children are trying to improve their knowledge of Georgian.

However, the problems remain and we are going to touch upon them based on the trainings held at the public schools. We believe that meetings with school children and not infrequently with their teachers and parents for promotion of the EU and Georgia's integration in it are very important. Not only do those three groups get more comprehensive knowledge about Europe by listening to the trainers and doing exercises, but they also communicate and, sometimes, voice criticism at the seminars. All in all, it is a good way in terms of assessment of the environment they find themselves in.

TEESS in Akhaltsikhe Public Schools

We will start by saying in the first place that we found it quite difficult to implement the project in cooperation with other institutions.

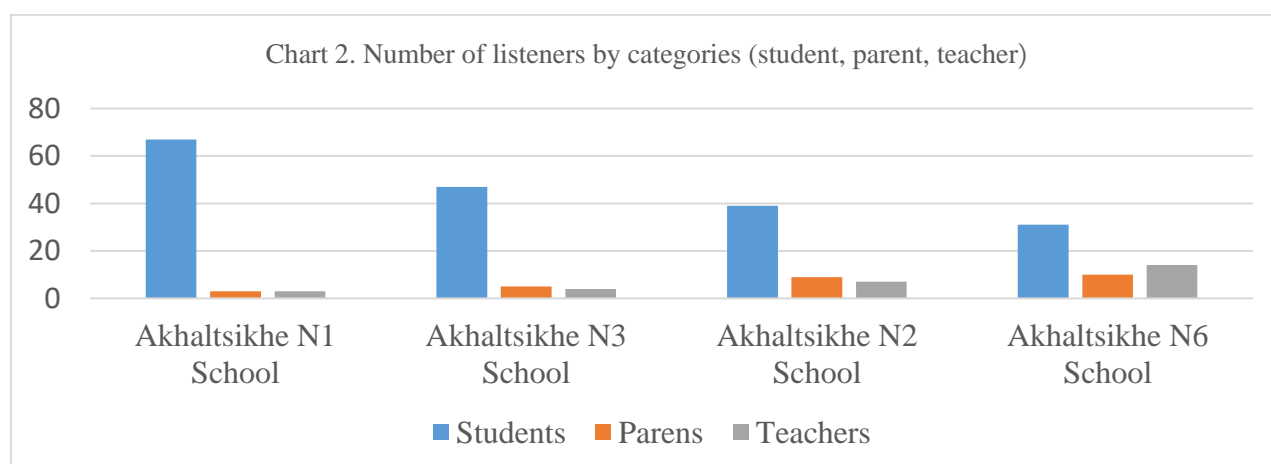
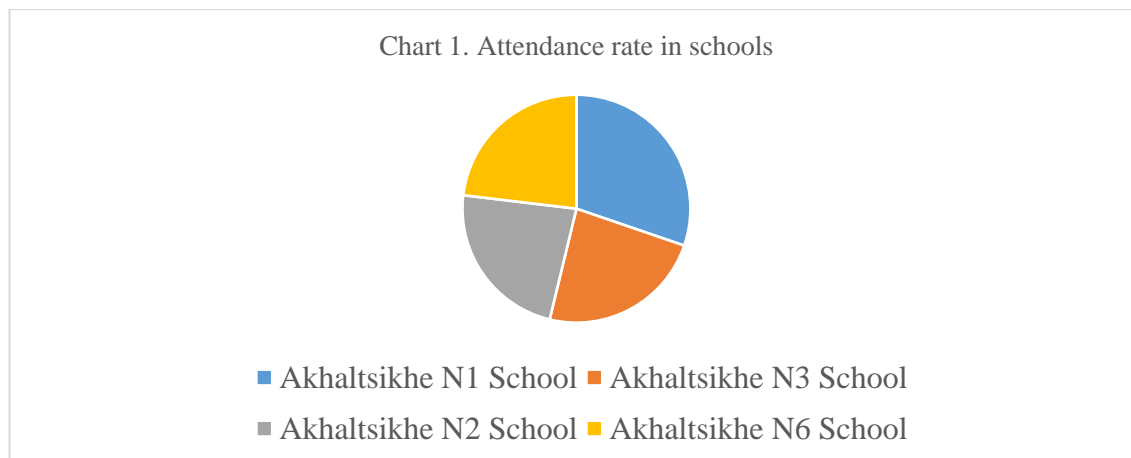
The project was acknowledged with a high contest evaluation (88 points) by European Commission, but clearly stated goals and objectives in the project, the content of the planned workshops were not sufficient for starting practical activities in public schools without the relevant permission from the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Affairs of Georgia. We would like to express our gratitude to National Department of Educational Plans, the management and experts of the Office of Assessment of National Educational Plans and Resources who exercised high consideration toward our project, provided their immediate support in acknowledgement of urgency and importance of teaching / promulgation of information about the European Union, the EU Association Agreement and the EU-Georgia Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, although we had to rework the training module for admission to schools with consideration of the rules and requirements existing in Georgia. It is quite logical that it required a certain amount of time to learn, discuss, analyze and assess the module for the reason of which we received permission

for its introduction to schools only on February 18, 2020. The process of negotiations with the local educational resource centers and school managements was started for agreement upon the time terms for the project implementation, but from March 2, 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic caused suspension of the educational process in public schools in Georgia to last till October. Even if the process resumed in the regions of Georgia where ethnical minorities form a part of the population, the educational resource centers, despite their sharing the opinion that conduction of the training was important, avoided admission of foreign persons into school buildings and conduction of similar activities. We, on our side, naturally treated this attitude with understanding, although on the other side, in view of the project time frames and the plan we had, were willing to start the process of the project practical implementation. On October 19-22, 2020, with the support provided by Akhaltsikhe region educational resource center, we were given the possibility to conduct four meetings in N1 Georgian, N6 Georgian, N3 Armenian and N2 Georgian-Russian public schools of Akhaltsikhe. The meetings were held in full compliance with the regulations of the Ministry of Healthcare of Georgia.

It should be underlined that the students of these schools and their parents as teachers

showed great interest toward the training. In some of the schools the number of attendees even outnumbered the figures we had estimated

which requires appreciation on our side. If we look at the statistics, the figures look as follows:



We should say that side by side with the public schools we held one meeting in a private school as well. It should be mentioned here that the level of the involvement of teachers in the workshops was even higher in the private school the proof of which is the number and quality of the works of the participants in the essay competition.

The workshops bore an interactive character although we had some separate time allocated for the question-and-answer session as well during

which we provided answers to all the questions asked by the attendees. We should also mention it here that the workshop module was detailed down considering various activities within its scope, but the regulations imposed upon schools for the pandemic (the social distance to be kept between the students, prohibition of using the same things) excluded conduction of any group activities.

Upon the completion of the workshop the attendees filled up the questionnaire given to them for the training evaluation:

1. What was most important for you at the training?
2. About which of the issues would you like to deepen your knowledge?
3. Will you be able to use the knowledge acquired through the training in practice?
4. Please write your opinion concerning the training and the trainers. Any opinion will be accepted and appreciated.

Filling out the questionnaire was not mandatory. In case of Akhaltsikhe the workshop, attendees, as different from other regions, had no additional views in connection with the questionnaire filling up. Most activity in answering the questions asked by the questionnaire was shown by the students, parents and teachers of the Armenian school. At the same time, we had cases in other schools when a part of the training attendees refused to fill up the questionnaire, the other part demonstrating a scrupulous attitude toward answering on the questions meanwhile. When working on questionnaires after the completion of the workshops the trainees provided sincere answers to the questions given to them and underlined that the information on the process of

European association in Georgia was new to them. Judging from the great interest the students as well as their parents and teachers showed toward the issue during the workshops clearly and vividly demonstrated the same. The beneficiaries express their willingness to put the knowledge obtained by them to use, for instance, to set up micro-enterprises complying with European standards for their family undertakings. Moreover, they link their future education to the prospect of benefiting from the share programs. Judging from this it is evident that the majority of the attendees of our workshops acquired the right understanding of what the EU support means for Georgia. On the side though, summing up the process and its outcomes from all points of view, we should mention the skeptical attitude demonstrated by a smaller part of the participants in the process believing that the EU is acting within its own interests willing to bring Georgia under its influence. It is a sad reality to respond to which actions are to be taken not only at the level of schools. Notwithstanding our project as well as the intense activities performed in the region by the information center concerning NATO and European Union, more information campaigns are required with the media taking an active part in them. Speaking of this, we will say it here that our work in Akhaltsikhe was broadcasted by both the local press (<http://sknews.ge/ka/old/>

29872) and the local TV channels (tv9news, 2021). We are going to speak about the aforementioned problems in light of the goals and objectives of the “Triangle of European Studies” project as well as the results achieved in it. We see it reasonable that European studies become more active within the scope of the history and civil education lessons at school in order to ensure raising the awareness among the pupils. The supplementary reference material prepared within the frameworks of our project “The Process of EU-Association in Georgia” will have its good share in this. Immediately after the completion of the workshops, we heard the participants express their willingness for holding more of such meetings more frequently. Both the teachers and the students expressed their readiness for participation of similar type workshops in future. What we think in this respect is that side by side with all this it would be desirable to activate project designing working in schools and introduce the elements of informal education to get acquainted with the local undertakings set up with the EU-support, learn the specifics of their working and the existing benefits in their own region. This all would raise the level of knowledge/awareness as well as the sense of responsibility calling on them to take part in the introduction and implementation of the EU-association processes in Georgia. At the same time, we want to state it

that while pursuing achievement of certain specific goals, it is not enough to just implement projects developed with the financing from various donor organizations. Despite the fact that the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia provides its due support to us, their involvement in school activities in regions should be of a higher degree not in terms of the European Integration-related teachings but also in settling such issues as equipment of these schools with the required technical devices and technologies, ensuring the internet access for them, raising the teachers’ skills of practical usage of information technologies which is partly in deficit in the schools we visited. There is one more very interesting issue that we want to speak about and that calls for attention indeed: when sending the contest essays receiving the materials from non-Georgian schools took a relevantly longer time. The reason was not the students’ unwillingness to participate in such contests – on the contrary, the willingness expressed by them is quite high; the reason for this turned out to be that the students of these schools speak the Georgian language but their conversational language is not enough to let them write freely and due to the difficulties in their written communication these children commonly happen to be among the outsiders when it comes to different contests. This fact once again proves the necessity of teaching the state language in the

non-Georgian schools on one side and at the same time shows the necessity to break the stereotype that if a student does not have the required competence in the writing skills he or she cannot freely demonstrate his/her opinions and judgments to the public. Such attitude on our part triggered some stimulus in these students and some of them are already writing their contest essays while the latter will on their part will further their knowledge and raise the level of their awareness in the EU-Georgia relations.

And last but not least, we want to deal with one more issue that was not envisaged by the introduction part of the training. The first part of the reference material and the training module prepared by us deals with the chronology of the EU-Georgia relations though the emphasis here is made on the major events having taken place in the course of preparing the Association Agreement. A part of the attendees of our workshops and meetings identified certain issues that were of interest to them and this should be necessarily taken into account when modifying the training modules in future. The issue deals with the role of the European Union in the 2008 Georgia-Russian war concerning which, the training attendees unfortunately have incorrect outlook. Therefore, we see it reasonable to enrich the material regarding this topic.

TEESS in IDP's Abkhazia N3 Public School

As said above, inadequate knowledge of the Georgian language is the main reason behind the scarcity of information available to the ethnic minorities in Georgia. A number of surveys taken in Georgia say that to fill the gap, they mostly rely on the Russian Media (Mikashavidze, 2016). Understandingly, it makes it difficult for them to comprehend what Georgia's association with Europe is all about and ultimately support the European integration policy. It is necessary to intensify strategic communication for better awareness of the issue. The ethnic minorities are now the target groups of various awareness raising projects. However, the prevalent mood regarding the European integration among the IDPs from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region (South Ossetia) displaced as a result of the Russian occupation and armed conflicts has not been duly investigated, as yet. The IDPs speak Georgian, so getting information is no problem. The IDPs living in close knit communities and mostly marginalized. They get social allowances and humanitarian aid and are the target groups of the so-called integration projects (womenfundgeorgia, 2021).

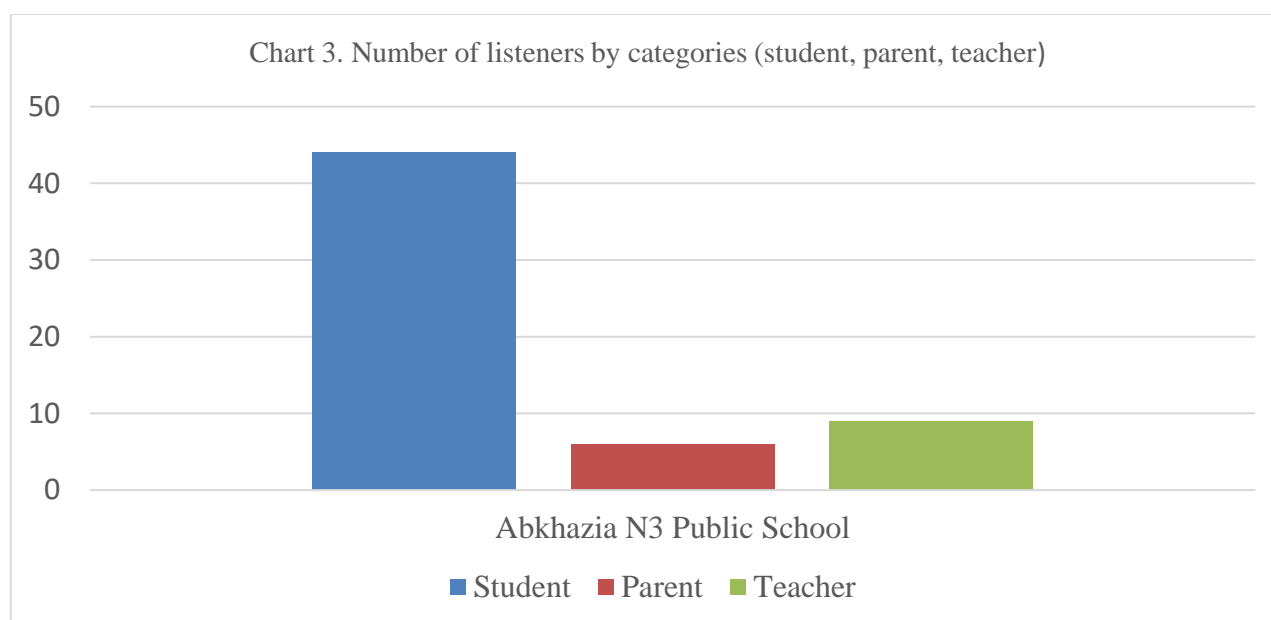
Public school #3 in the capital Tbilisi with a large number of IDP pupils was made the target group of the "Erasmus +" Jean Monnet "Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools" (TEESS) project. As the head master said, 100 IDP pupils

and their families, mostly the Georgian displaced from Abkhazia live and study in the school facility.

44 pupils, 9 teachers and 6 parents attended the seminars. The atmosphere was charged with their memories of the war, the loved ones and the property they had lost and the inadequate living conditions and social allowance they have to come to terms with. Therefore, it is to no wonder

that some of them, the teachers and even pupils, who had never lived in the USSR, sounded nostalgic about the Soviet Union where they were much better off. It shows that the pupils are largely influenced by the stories the adults tell them.

The participants agreed that the EU is Georgia’s partner, but what they don’t understand is why it has taken over 20 years for them to feel the benefits.



The strategies the trainers pursued was not denying or disregarding the concerns or anti-European mood of the participants but demonstrating the contrary facts, sources and statistics instead. For instance, when someone claims that the EU imposed single sex marriages on Georgia, the adequate answer is not the rhetoric about the personal freedom but neutralizing false information on Europe by referring to the Constitutions of several European states stating that the family is a

registered union of a man and a woman. Only after a listener admits that he has been subjected to false information and believes what the trainer says, can we proceed with breaking down the other stereotypes.

The information on the EU support to Georgia is especially scarce. The people ask why they cannot feel the EU support in their daily lives. The meager technical equipment of the school housing such a vulnerable group is another

problem creating obstacles in terms of the development of the younger generation.

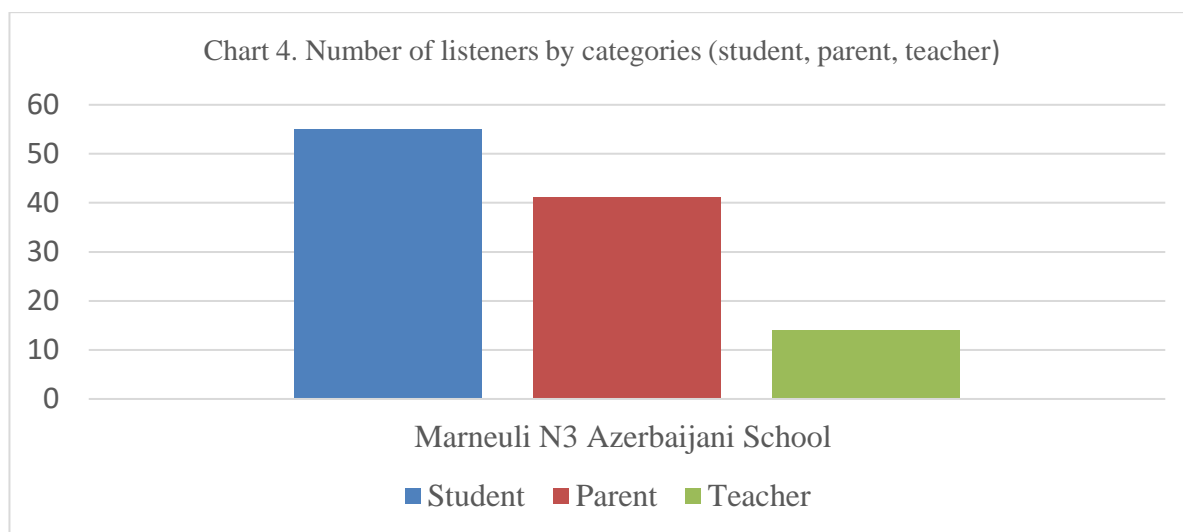
For all the contrary views and heated discussions, even the most radical participants, both the teachers and pupils acknowledged that they had not known the truth about the EU, which is a positive indicator. It should be said though that this type seminars have to be staged regularly. Promotion of the EU-Georgia ties and trust-building will take continuous information supply and retraining of teachers. Hi-tech is to be available to the IDPs and namely, the schools they study at. And, that is the task of the Georgian Government and the authorities exiled from the breakaway regions, who retain their

powers since the violation of the country's territorial integrity.

TEESS in Marneuli Azerbaijani and Georgian-Russian Public Schools

Working in Marneuli region densely populated with the ethnic Azeri proved to be especially interesting. The workshops supported by the Education Resource Center were held at Georgian-Russian public school #2 and Azerbaijani public school #3.

The one at Azerbaijani public school #3 was attended by 55 pupils, 14 teachers and 41 parents. Incidentally, the parents, mostly mothers were the most active among the participants.



In terms of the pandemic regulations and the technical equipment except for a projector, the school is fit for appropriate instruction. Although the Georgian language and literature is taught and the teachers have a good command of the Georgian language, some of the pupils and most of the parents do not speak and understand it. So

we had to hold the training in Russian or some of the pupils took on the part of the interpreters. However, on one occasion it was the other way round: the pupils did not understand Russian either, so we had to do the translation into Azeri language.

At Azerbaijani public school #3 in Marneuli, they know next to nothing about the EU and its member states. To them the EU, NATO and the USA are about the same, something concerning. They believe that Georgia should maintain close ties with Azerbaijan, Russia and Turkey. To our question: “Turkey is a NATO member and an EU aspirant state, so, what about Georgia’s relationships with it?” they retorted that Turkey was never going to be admitted to the EU and it was all a part of the Western propaganda campaign! They think that the Western countries are against the Azeri-Turkish progress, and it was Turkey and Russia that were instrumental in the settlement of the Azeri-Armenian conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and supported Azerbaijan in restoration of its territorial integrity.

Understandingly, they know but little about the EU projects implemented in the Georgia’s Lowe Kartli region, namely in Marneuli Municipality. Many of the parents, pupils and even teachers did not know anything about the Erasmus+ programs and as they learned that those are educational programs for young people, some of the pupils sounded willing to get involved apparently for purely practical reasons, such as employment and financial stability. It was during the trainings that the attendees learned about AA/DCFTA holding promise of export of agricultural produce from the Marneuli

region to the EU market. In their words, they would pay more attention to the opportunity and make a good use of it.

The most striking problem in the said and presumably the other ethnic minority public schools is poor knowledge of Georgia’s official language, scarcity of information on the political, economic and cultural developments in the country and total unawareness of Georgia’s foreign policy priorities and its strive towards the West. Many of them even do not know what the visa-free travel is and whether it is a benefit to the Georgian citizens. They were surprised to learn that the Georgian passport holders were free to travel in the Schengen area. Some of them even asked whether it was true. They made no secret that they watch only the Azeri and Russian TV channels.

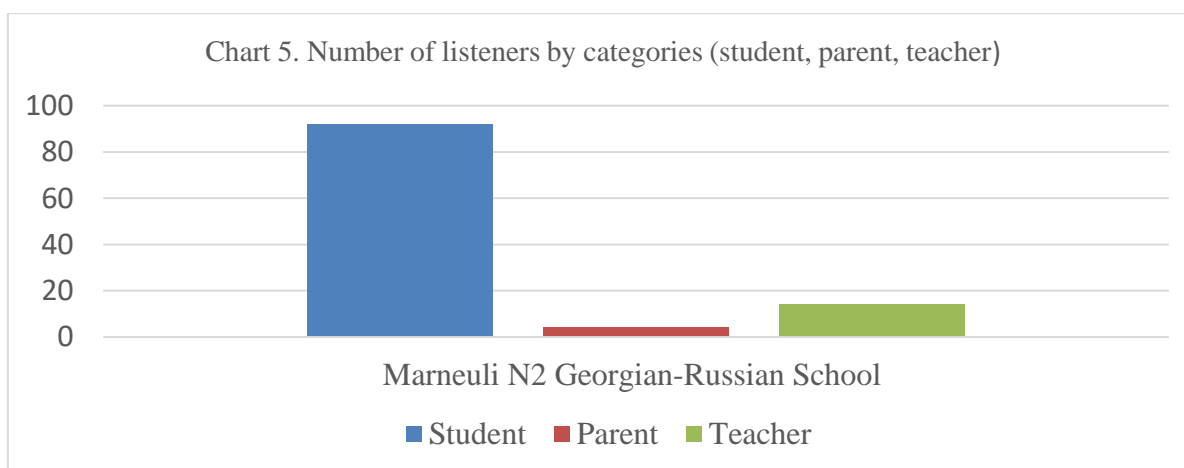
For all our efforts to provide them with as much information as possible on the EU and the benefits Georgia gets, they were skeptical. Some of the participants did not even sign the attendance register and refused give feedback. When we asked “Why”, they said the signature could be used for the Covid vaccination. The project team did their best to explain that it was wrong.

Regardless of the aforesaid difficulties, the trainings proved to be productive for dozens of children got the information on the EU and Georgia-EU relationships. The pupils promised

to look for more information in the Internet. The teachers realized they had to work harder in that direction. Some of the parents realized the prospects the EU opened up for their children. As to the trainers, we saw there still was a lot of work to do for the pupils to perceive themselves as truly Georgian citizens and realize the challenges facing the country. Also, it is clear that merely the trainings will not do and tackling the above problems calls for joint efforts of the NGOs and State agencies, such as the Education Ministry, local government (town hall, city assembly, educational resource center), as well as

more intensive communication between the Western Embassies in Georgia and the locals.

It should be noted that we got a somewhat different picture at Georgian-Russian public school #2 in Marneuli: the pupils are much better informed where the EU and the European values are concerned. The school maintains close ties with regional office of “The NATO and EU Information Center”. Moreover, the Office head teaches the Civic Education course there. Over 100 pupils, teachers and parents attended the TEES project workshops.



Several sessions were dedicated to the EU history, Georgia-EU Association Agreement etc. The answers to our questions showed the interest to the issues and support to Georgia's integration into Europe. Not only the history and civic education teachers but those of geography, Georgian and foreign language teachers voiced their readiness for the European studies at the school. They said that jointly with the BA students of the European Studies of the School of

Humanities and Social Sciences at the Caucasus University and the academic staff they would like to implement the projects involving the European values and, to this end, use the manual published within the frameworks of the project. Most of the pupils of the school are ethnic Azeri, have a good command of the Georgian language and associate Georgia's future with Europe. They showed keen interest to the issue and entered “I Saw Europe in Georgia” competition of essays. As

against their fellow pupils of the other school, they did not hesitate to fill out the training assessment questionnaire. We are ready to work harder where the Europe-related information supply to the residents of the Marneuli region is concerned. We hope that the public interest to the EU-Georgia association is going to be galvanized by the local Media: TV (facebook, 2021 (24news, 2021) coverage of the project in the Georgian and the Azeri languages.

After the trainings in Marneuli, the NATO and EU Information Center in Georgia (LEPL) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia showed interest to Jean Monnet **“Triangle Effect of European Studies at Schools”** (TEESS) Erasmus+ Project of the Caucasus University, and during “The 2021 European Days” jointly with the Project team, arranged the ZOOM presentation of the textbook “European Association Process in Georgia” for the teachers of the regions. At the presentation, the project team spoke in detail about the structure, content and application of the manual. It would be no overstatement to say that TEESS broke through the school and University limits and resulted in productive collaboration with the NATO and EU Information Center in Georgia and the National Center for Professional Advancement of Teachers, which on its part, arranged an online presentation of the said manual for teachers across Georgia. Also, at the Caucasus University,

the Project team met with the Civic Education Teachers’ Forum and members of the History Teachers Association. We suppose the collaboration is going to provide more opportunities in terms of implementation of the EU-related projects. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the Georgian-Armenian Union for its support to our work at the Armenian schools.

“I Saw Europe in Georgia” Essay Competition

“I Saw Europe in Georgia” competition of essays roused plenty of the pupils’ interest. Understandingly, not all the pupils entered the competition but most of them were eager to know more about Georgia’s aspiration for EU membership. Scores of pupils of the Georgian, Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani schools from across Georgia got involved in the competition. For all the concerns of the non-Georgian participants to write essays in Georgian, the results confirmed that the project team did the right thing by staging the workshops in the Georgian language. The pupils asked for the Georgian teachers’ consultations and ultimate the results were impressive enough: the essays of the pupils of the Armenian public school #3 in the town of Akhaltsikhe and Armenian public school #104 in the capital Tbilisi stood out in terms of their content and calligraphy. The essays were assessed by the senior BA students of the

European Studies of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Caucasus University. Checking the essays was a good hands-on work for the University students. Their arguments while picking out the best essays were well-grounded. The essays made the pupils' belief in Georgia's European prospects evident. The winners of the 6 competing schools were awarded with the certificates, books etc. The Project team acknowledged the teachers for their use of the manual in the instruction. On their part, they voiced their proposals as to how they are going to introduce the European values during the classes. We have the author of the best proposals. The practical implementation of the plan offered by the civic education teacher from Marneuli N2 Georgian-Russian School, will further ensure the sustainability and continuity of the results obtained by the project. The interest and participation of the Forum of Civic Education Teachers in project "Round table" can also be a guarantee of this.

Conclusions

Based on the project assessment, we suggest countering the increasing anti-Western propaganda by a regular, intensive public dialog to ensure creation of a positive popular mood

where Georgia's European integration is concerned. For all the problems created by the Coronavirus pandemic both in Georgia and the rest of the world, we managed to implement the project and achieved its objectives. There is a lot of work to do, though. Insufficient awareness of the European values and poor command of the Georgian language among the ethnic minorities is still a challenge. While carrying out the project, we saw clearly the interest in Georgia's integration into Europe not only at the beneficiary schools but the other secondary schools, as well. It was their independent decision to introduce a civic education manual. "Tsiskari", the Georgian-Italian school has come up as the frontrunner, which means that the text book is now available across the national educational system. The outcome of the project stimulates us to implement similar projects in various Georgian regions. To this end, the support of the Ministry of Education and Science and sharing the experience gained in the implementation of TEESS project is essential. We believe that the interest in Europe is going to be stimulated by a wider application of the EU Erasmus in Schools project and national competitions involving all-the-level pupils.

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Implications on applying the Web 2.0 software to teach a Chinese L2 learner online

ABSTRACT

The rise of information and communication technologies has increased people's access to educational resources and stormed the process of E-learners in the past decades. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic force more people to stay at home to do things via online. Of course, education is no exception. While numerous distance Chinese learning tools or websites are booming, not all these tools or websites are suitable because of E-learners' variations in Chinese language proficiency, computer literacy, or the complexity of the tools. Hence, being able to choose effective Chinese E-learning tools for Chinese learners is crucial for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers for Other Languages (TCSOL) as it affects not only learners' motivation and overall success as well as teachers' teaching pedagogy and performance. The present study analyzed a series of user-friendly, free Web2.0 digital tools for distance Chinese learners to study along with a textbook, Practical Audio-Visual Chinese 2, designed and carried out experimental teaching courses for Japanese participant with elementary Chinese proficiency, and lastly concluded with ST2D implications for TCSOL based the feedback from users.

Keywords: *Distance Chinese learning, digital tools, E-learning, modular teaching*

Introduction

Students of Chinese language learning programs mainly consist of non-native citizens and overseas Chinese. Early Teachers of Chinese to Speakers for Other Languages (TCSOL) had to travel abroad due to the reason that the majority of their students were across from the globe. However, in the age of rapid technological progress, education is no longer bound by the physical confines of classrooms; in fact, the online education has gained its popularity, and its accessibility has grown accordingly. Despite being miles apart from each other, instructors and learners are still able to attend classes online through the use of Chinese E-learning tools, effectively realizing the concept of transnational education. As to modern distant education, it can be broadly categorized into synchronous and asynchronous learning (Lin & Lien, 2010).

Synchronous learning refers to the online learning model that instructors and students interact in a specific virtual environment while asynchronous learning takes place while learners and instructors have no real-time interaction. However, the issue related to which digital tools are more advantageous to supplement Chinese language learning for TCSOL is rarely assessed and entails further investigation.

The present study aimed to explore the synchronous distance learning approach by employing digital tools to aid Chinese language teaching and further investigate which of these tools could maintain students' high level of motivation and achieve favorable results within a limited one to two hour of class period. The study participant was a full-time Japanese employee with intermediate English proficiency and elementary Chinese skills. With her previous experiences in

distance Chinese learning programs prior to participating in this study, it could reduce the time spent on such technical preparations as configuring headsets, microphones, video and audio levels and allow the lesson to commence with haste. This study utilized Skype and its PowerPoint integration as the primary platform for instruction, coupled with Studystack's mini-games to raise the student's learning interest and Dropbox as an online storage for both homework and course materials. Finally, the study organized a suitable combination of digital tools to aid in distance Chinese learning for elementary level learners, further hoping to help not only the learners with their strive for knowledge, but also give inspiration for future TCSOL's course design in distance Chinese language teaching.

Literary Review

Distance Learning

Wang and Chen (2003) states that distance learning is a teaching process that bypasses physical barriers using media to deliver systematically designed teaching materials to learners. According to Hsin (2002), interactionism is the most suitable linguistic teaching philosophy in terms of distance learning through video conferences, followed by functionalism and the least appropriate structuralism. As for educators of distance learning, Lin and Lien (2010) illustrated a necessity for educators to be equipped with basic abilities such as multimedia operation and typing. Huang (2010) found that the most significant feature of synchronous distance learning is the learning opportunities provided by the accessibility

of personal computers. Huang (2010) also points out that the fundamentals of synchronous distance learning using video conference are speaking interactions and appropriate integration of videos and worksheets. Based on the foregoing literature, the following features in distance learning are summarizes below:

1. Educational activities that bypass time and physical barriers.
2. Real-time interactivity.
3. Course design is centered around aural/oral education with internet learning resources.
4. Educators must have sufficient computer skills.
5. Learners can save time that would otherwise be spent on travelling.

The trend of applying technology in Chinese language learning

The advances in internet technology in recent years saw an increased amount of digital tools being integrated into language teaching. Many scholars have begun researching computer-assisted language education due to the machine's ability to provide both independent and cooperative learning models while making study opportunities seem omnipresent (Lan, 2009). Hence, using technological integration to assist Chinese language learners in their metamorphosis from interlanguage to mastery is a fundamental skill for TCSOL educators of the new era. Although technological integration in Chinese language learning might be an inevitable trend, teachers are still irreplaceable in terms of instructing. While designing a course, TCSOL must not focus on the integration of digital tools itself, but the necessity

and suitability of these multimedia tools in teaching while asking themselves these questions (Chen, 2011):

1. What language functions should the student perform? Will the course design or technological application suffice in helping student perform said function?
2. What are the instructional and learning goals? Will the course design or technological application suffice in helping student achieve those goals?
3. How should the students display their language skills to echo the course design? Can digital tools assist in this case?
4. What kinds of evidence can be used to prove or measure the student's performance? Can digital tools assist in this aspect?

Shuh (2005) also states that integrating technology into Chinese language learning is not simply replacing existing teaching materials with digital ones. Educators not only need to adapt their course to new teaching philosophies and systems, but also themselves in order to solve pedagogical problems using the most appropriate resources at hand.

The study summarizes the following points

from reviewing the statements above regarding applying technology in Chinese language learning.

1. Consider the audience
2. Adapt digital tools to the needs of the students
3. Educators should evaluate which digital tools can help students achieve the highest efficiency
4. Whether the learners be able to accept these tools and utilize them in after class practices.

Introduction to digital tools for distance Chinese learning

A common question many distance learning educators found asking themselves is "which digital tools can minimize the students' learning difficulties and maximize efficiency?" The biggest difference between traditional and distance learning is the ability for educators to solve students' problems face to face, and such problem is especially pronounced in teaching basic level students whose vocabulary are limited. Teachers usually have to build context and use repetitive exercises to help basic level students achieve better learning efficiency. Under this premise, the study has organized a list of digital tools based on researchers' teaching experiences and students' feedbacks.

Name	Description	Pros	Cons
Skype	Skype is a communications software widely used across the globe. It has more features, such as multi-person conference calls and screen-sharing, than MSN. Teachers can instruct multiple students at once	1. Supports up to 4-person conference call. 2. Screen-sharing feature.	Bad connection can impact teaching quality.

	while sharing course materials on their screen.		
IDroo	IDroo is a plugin for Skype that provides a digital whiteboard for users to draw or write on. Anyone can see and interact with the whiteboard as long as they are invited to the call.	1. Digital whiteboard provides a space to write and draw. 2. Can insert texts and images on the board.	Bad connection can impact teaching quality.
Go Animate	Go animate is a website for creating animations. Teachers can create short clips based on textbook model conversations using pre-existing assets, giving students an opportunity to practice listening skills before commencing the lesson.	1. Easy to use. 2. Teachers can voice characters on their own.	1. Free version has less characters, background assets and a limited word count. 2. Clips are only available for use on the site.
Toondoo	Toondoo is a website for creating comics. Students can practice oral language skills with teachers using custom-made comics.	1. Free. 2. Plenty of assets to use.	None at the moment.
Studystack	1. Can create vocabulary cards. 2. Offers many mini-game templates.	1. Free. 2. Easy to use.	Only available online.
Dropbox	Dropbox is cloud-based online service for file	1. Easy to use. 2. Files can be shared	Real-time updates only apply when the Dropbox

	storage, offering students a space to download teaching materials uploaded by the teacher. Free version offers 2GB space upon registration while the paid version can provide up to 100GB.	with specific users. 3. Real-time file updates.	app is installed on the computer.
Freez Screen Video Capture	Freez Screen Video Capture can be used to record course materials that are otherwise unavailable for download, such as videos or stroke sequence animations.	1. Easy to use. 2. Free to download.	1. Videos downloaded are only available for personal uses due to copyright issues.
Voki	Voki's main feature lies within its ability to create a virtual avatar that supports voice recording and comes with various designs, making distance learning more intriguing.	1. Easy to use. 2. Varied character designs.	1. Only supports one-way interactions. 2. No feedback options for students.
Audacity	Teachers can use Audacity to record pronunciations of the words students have the most trouble with into files and send them to the students for after class practice.	1. Easy to use. 2. Free to download.	None at the moment.
Picpick	Picpick is a screen capture software that is similar to the functions of the Print Screen key, albeit with higher image resolution and greater ease of use.	1. Easy to operate. 2. Screenshots can be edited in-app. 3. Free to download.	None at the moment.

Course Design with distance Chinese

E-learning tools

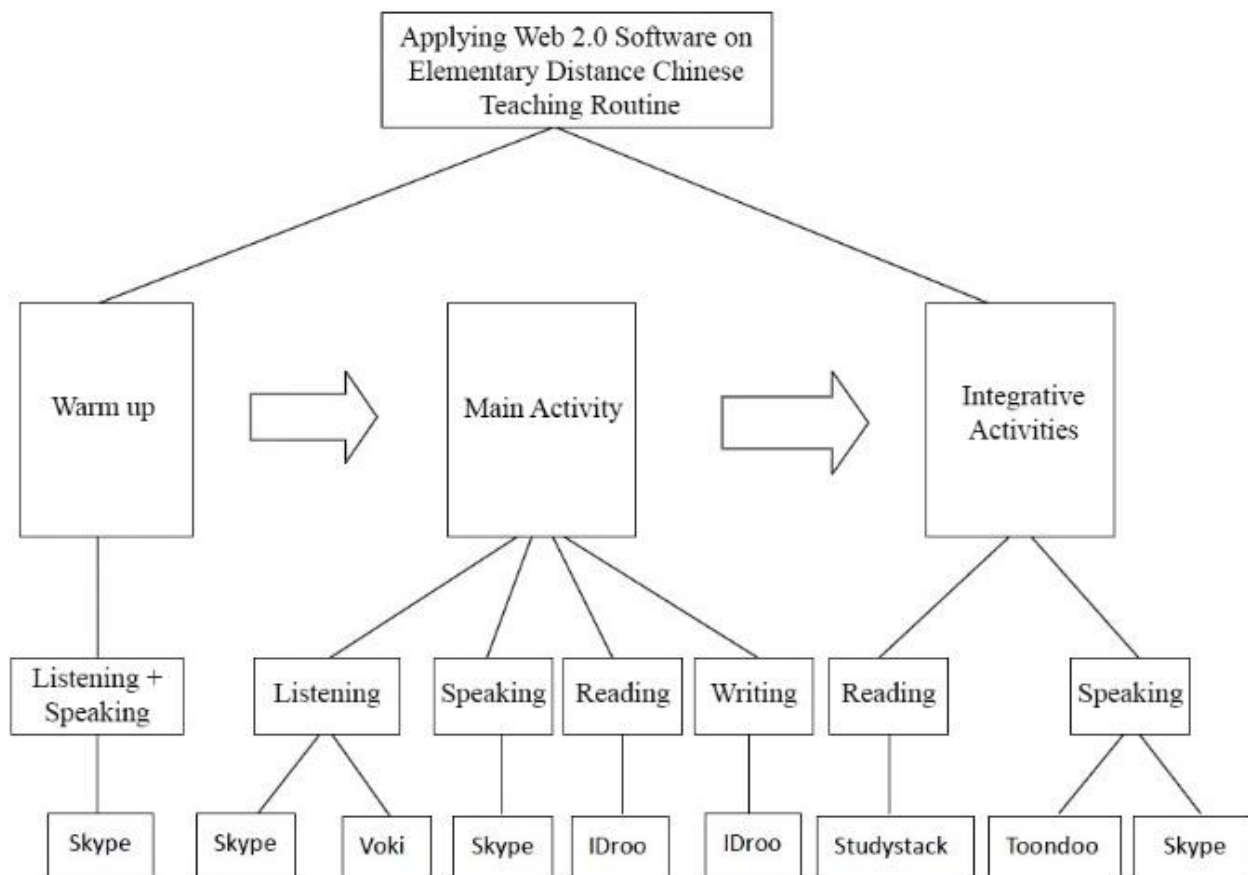
Due to the student's desire in improving her aural and oral skills, the courses were designed to

reflect said request. Clocking at 60 minutes per period, this course was based on *Practical Audio-Visual Chinese 2*, Lesson 1 with the incorporation of above-mentioned digital tools.

Lesson Plan					
Teaching goals: Teach the student how to describe common symptoms of sicknesses, share her experiences of being ill in Chinese, and enable her to perform the tasks while she needs to seek medical care in Chinese-speaking countries.					
Period		Activities	Target Language skills to be Trained	Duration (minutes)	User Guide for Teaching Tools
First Period	Preparation	Have the student install IDroo and make sure her headset and microphone are in working condition.	Listening & Speaking	10	1.Skype Make sure the student's audio and video feeds are clear. 2.IDroo Have the student install said app and login. Both parties can use the whiteboard.
	Warm up	1. Ask the student to share her experience being sick. 2. Have the student practice saying words regarding common sicknesses 3. Have the student watch a short animated video.	Listening & Speaking	10	1.Skype Make sure the student's video feed is on so that the teacher can pay attention to her mouth shapes in order to check pronunciations. 2.Go animate Create short animation based on the text.
	Main activity	Teach such Chinese words of common symptoms as coughing, runny nose, fever, diarrhea, and the like. Each word should be introduced along with pictures and example sentences. Explaining the words in English is discouraged unless necessary. Ask the student to write down the words on her notebooks with each vocabulary taught.	Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing.	20	1.Skype Show PowerPoint materials to the student via screenshare. 2.IDroo Teachers can write down the Pinyin of the words that the student has trouble pronouncing. 3.Voki After teaching a word for the first time, ask the student to repeat after Voki's teacher avatar for more exercises. 4.Picpick The student can use Picpick to screenshot and send any problem she might have in operating software to the teacher. 5. Freez Screen Video Capture The teacher can pre-record the stroke sequences of harder Chinese characters into clips, providing references for the student should the

					need arise.
	Integrative activities	1. Use vocabulary cards to review the words taught today and quiz the student on the pinyin of individual words. 2. Break the example sentences used in class into small phrases, randomize them and ask the student to restructure them. This exercise focuses on sharpening the student's language fluency 3. Ask the student to present a short story using the words taught in class and the 4-panel comic provided to them.	Reading	20	1.Studystack Make word cards and sentence reconstruction games for after class practices. 2.Skype Keep in touch with the student and provide help on the learning matter ASAP. 3.Toondoo Create a 4-panel comic for the student's oral practice.
Take-home Assignments		1. The teacher will send the pronunciation recordings of the words taught in class while asking the student to practice and record her pronunciations as homework. 2. Have the student download, finish, and upload the worksheets of the lesson taught today.			1. Audacity Ask the student to record and upload her word pronunciations for later feedback. 2. Dropbox Provides an online storage space for uploading homework and sharing files.

The foregoing lesson plan and the application timings of multimedia tools is modularized and plotted into the following flowchart:



Conclusion and Implications

The present study has been adapting the class period from 1 to 2 hours per week in accordance with the student's request since September, 2011 till present. Starting the class from Lesson 7 of *Practical Audio-Visual Chinese 2*, the study has been customizing the lessons around the student's performance while integrating the various abovementioned multimedia tools into the curriculum. Thus, the study concluded the lesson plan introduced in this study could be applied to elementary Chinese learners who wished to enhance their oral skills. Through the video call and digital whiteboard feature of Skype+Idroo, teachers could immediately correct learners' pronunciation errors and explain the problems they might have. Studystack, on the other hand, was mainly used for previewing and reviewing the lessons. It could also help create flashcards and language mini games to make student's learning venture more interesting. Additionally, the user interface of the website was written entirely in English, which made using it after class much easier for non-native students of Chinese.

Based on users' feedback, some pedagogical implications are concluded as the following.

1. Similar tools overlap in functions

Although a plethora of multimedia tools exist on the internet, many of their functions overlap with each other. Take Voki and Audacity as examples, the two both focuses on recording audio except that Voki comes with an extra feature to play sound files with virtual avatars of the user's choosing. With every new tool introduced in class, students will need to dedicate extra time in

familiarizing themselves with said tool, which is extremely inconvenient. Although starting the lessons with a wide selection of tools is acceptable, it is advised to narrow down the software used in class based on the students' affinities towards each in order to streamline the learning process.

2. The timings of using online animations

Using Go animate as a warm up session is well received by the student, remarking its benefit of aural skill training. However, the loading time for the animation is quite lengthy and the video itself is bandwidth-intensive, which can sometimes disconnect Skype's ongoing video calls. The student even proposed a solution to have the video link shared via Dropbox, so that she can practice on her own after class. It is generally advised not to play the animations unless the connection stability permits doing so.

3. Diversifying language mini-games

Although being an adult, the student still has a high acceptance for games. The language games used in class are mainly "connect phrases" and "sentence reconstructions". Despite finding them interesting, the student also noted the lack of variety in the games and inquired the study on the possibility of designing more language games for her as after-class practices.

4. Do not over-rely on multimedia tools.

Instead, teachers are the true leaders of the course

Although the myriad forms of multimedia tools are sure to draw the student's attention, the primary component of teaching still lies within human interaction. Despite acknowledging the integration of multimedia tools and their aid in

maintaining learning motivation, student A still mentioned the desire for more face to face interaction with the teacher, specifically the exchange of thought-provoking questions and

answers. It is evident that teachers are still irreplaceable to students, and that is what every aspiring TCSOL should keep in mind.

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Narrative as a method of studying the speech characteristics of bilingual children (On the example of Georgian bilingual and Greek monolingual juniors)¹

ABSTRACT

The present article: "Narrative as a method of studying the speech characteristics of bilingual children (On the example of Georgian bilingual and Greek monolingual juniors)" aims to study the nature of narrative and to establish narrative skills in school; also the purpose of the study is to define the importance of narrative as an effective method of research. The first part of the paper presents a brief overview of the theoretical material around the narrative. The second part of the article is based on empirical material. In particular, it is based on the analysis and results of my research which I have conducted at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece). The article presents a study of children's narratives and a comparison of narratives during bilingualism; In particular, the use of narrative-based research method in the case of Georgian bilinguals and Greek monolinguals, the use of which is quite common in the modern field of psycholinguistics.

Keywords: *narrative and its meaning; Narrative as a research method in bilingual and monolingual juniors; A study of children's narratives; Comparison of narratives during bilingualism.*

Any scientific paper aims to study and analyse of a specific research theme. It is very important to select an adequate research method for the analysis of the problems raised around the research theme. In our case, we considered the study of children's narratives to be an effective method. Its use and comparison of narratives in bilingualism is quite common in the modern field of psycholinguistics. So, we consider the problem of bilingualism in general, and in this case the narrative as a research method in bilingual and monolingual juniors and the present thesis: **"Narrative as a method of studying the speech**

characteristics of bilingual children (On the example of Georgian bilingual and Greek monolingual juniors)" aims to study and analyse the children's narratives and comparison of narratives during bilingualism.

1. The meaning of the narrative

The phenomenon of narrative is studied in a wide range of disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, sociology, literature, history, and philosophy.

Different types of narrative offer a platform for exploring a wide range of linguistic

¹ The research was conducted under the Erasmus+ program at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece) (2019-2020 & 2020-2021 academic years).

possibilities in the context (compare with: Hughes et al., 1997). These capabilities relate to story structure, discourse features (e.g., consistency and interrelationship), morphosyntax, syntax, vocabulary, and uniquely bilingual phenomena such as code switching and cross-linguistic interference. Children's narrative is also an index of their cognitive, semantic, and social abilities (Liles, 1993).

The researchers considered the analysis of the narrative as a viable way to examine communicative competence (Botting, 2002) and which should be less biased towards bilingual children than the normative assessment tools (Paradis et al., 2011). Oral narratives provide a rich resource of data (source of information) about a child's use of language in a relatively natural context. Finally, narrative analysis allows researchers to evaluate many linguistic features in context - including macrostructure, story grammatical categories, objectives, attempts, and outcomes, as well as microstructure characteristics, e.g. vocabulary diversity, relational and referential apparatus - using relatively short language patterns (Heilmann et al., 2010a, 2010b).

Narrative skills are important for further success in school, e.g. in literacy and in understanding the language of mathematics (Bishop & Edmundson, 1987; Bliss et al., 1998;

McCabe, 1996; McCabe & Rollins, 1994; Walach, 2008; Westby, 1991). They form a bridge between the oral language and literacy, by providing exposure and a wide experience in the use of (extensive use of experience), as well as through the contextualized and cohesive discourse units and the abstract texts which children are suddenly faced with the written texts (Hadley, 1998; Westby, 2005).

Interventional studies have shown that teaching directly narrative skills improves comprehension and production of oral narrative as well as understanding, conceptualizing and interpreting reading (Hayward & Schneider, 2000; Swanson et al., 2005).

2. Research

The aim of my research at the University of Athens was to use a narrative-based method, which included the following: a) Georgian bilingual children have to describe pictures in Georgian and Greek twice, at one-week intervals; b) and a description of the same pictures by Greek monolingual children once, only in Greek. Meeting with each narrator was held individually. For the narrative I used the story "Frog, where are you?", from which I had 15 pictures selected for the description. For the visuals, a few episodes from the above story are shown in Picture 1 below:

Picture 1.



In this study Georgian junior bilinguals and Greek monolingual juniors of the same age living in the Attica region have participated. We need to compare the monolingual Greek and Georgian bilingual children's narratives. At this stage, our goal was to: a) identify and make further analyses what specific mistakes each bilingual child would make, namely: under the influence of the Greek language, what specific mistakes could be identified in the Georgian language; b) work out

the modern methods of language assessment (measurement) of each language.

Participants: The total number of narrators (TLD¹) participating in the study is 20. Of these, there are 14 Georgian bilinguals (namely, 11 boys and 3 girls) and 16 Greek monolinguals (namely, 9 boys and 7 girls) juniors. The bilingualism of Georgian children is conditioned by their living in Greece from birth, which is why the dominant language for them is the Modern Greek language.

¹TLD - typical language development (Walters et al., 2012: 11)

Only one child participating in the study was born in Georgia, who studied in one of the Public schools of the city Kutaisi (Georgia), until the age of 8. The parents of all fourteen bilingual children are Georgians. Their age range varies from 6 to 11 years and they are the students of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades of the public schools located in the central districts of Athens, in particular, in Ambelokipoi and Zografou. The mean age of the narrators in both groups is 8.5 years.

3. Analysis and research results

During the research analysis we used 2 approaches: *functional and structural*. The first refers to the content of how many episodes the narrative is divided by the child. The structural approach involves the lexical, morphosyntactic and code switching (CS) comparison.

1. The *lexical comparison* is defined by the formula Ttr , where the capital T is a total number of words in the text, the small t

is the sum of words used once, and the r is the comparison of these two (see Table 1 and Table 2).

2. The *morphosyntactic comparison* can be conditionally determined (defined) by several points:

a) the length of the sentences; b) N-V i.e. comparison of syntactic constructions; c) Whquestions - which are the interrogative sentences; d) tenses of the verb; e) number of pronouns; f) spatial relations (verbs derived from preverbs/verb prefix) (the relevant Table 3 see below, which presents only the indicators of Georgian bilingual children's narratives, which will be compared with Greek monolingual children's narratives in the next stage of the research).

3. *Code switching (CS)*, which refers to the number of involved words. That's how many times has a Georgian bilingual child included the Greek word (s) in the narrative?

Table 1. Lexical comparison with Georgian bilingual narrators

Ttr				
Narrative	Narrator	T - total number of words	t – the number of words used once	r – comparison of T and t
<i>Bilingual children (typical language development - TLD)</i>				
Georgian	Alex (8 ages)	211	24	187 (difference)
	Tazo (9 ages)	162	16	146 (difference)
Greek	Alex (8 ages)	244	10	234 (difference)
	Tazo (9 ages)	178	11	169 (difference)

Table 2. Lexical comparison with Greek monolingual narrators

Ttr				
Narrative	Narrator	T - total number of words	t – the number of words used once	r – comparison of T and t
<i>Monolingual children (typical language development - TLD)</i>				
Greek	George (8 ages)	199	14	185 (difference)
	Magia (9 ages)	257	20	237 (difference)

Table 3. Morphosyntactic comparison with Georgian bilingual narrators

Morphosyntactic comparison							
Narrative	Narrator	Length of sentences	N-V syntactic construction	'WH' Questions (interrogative sentences)	Tenses of the verb	Number of pronouns	Spatial relations (verbs with prefix)
<i>Bilingual children (typical language development - TLD)</i>							
Georgian	Alex (8 ages)	6-7 words	31	0	Present/Past 80%20	2	7
	Tazo (9 ages)	6-7 words	26	0	Present/Past 50%50	0	6
Greek	Alex (8 ages)	6-7 words	22	0	Present/Past 60%40	0	3
	Tazo (9 ages)	6-7 words	24	0	Present/Past 60%40	0	1

For our study, we compared the narratives of 2 Georgian bilingual children and, consequently, 2 Greek monolingual children. We defined 8-9 years old respondents as

comparable age. The total data on the number of children, their gender, age limit and average age are shown in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4: Georgian bilingual narrators

Language	Number of children	Gender	Average age by years and months
<i>Bilingual children (typical language development - TLD)</i>			
Georgian	2	Male	8 ages (104 months) 9 ages (117 months)
Greek	2	Male	8 ages (104 months) 9 ages (117 months)
Total	2		8.5 ages (110.5 months)

Table 5: Greek monolingual narrators

Language	Number of children	Gender	Average age by years and months
<i>Monolingual children (typical language development - TLD)</i>			
Greek	2	Male & Female	8 ages (103 months) 9 ages (112 months)
Total	2		8.5 ages (107.5 months)

4. Summary

As the above tables show, Georgian bilingual children did not use interrogative sentences at all during the narrative, and we have only 2 cases of using pronouns; As for the length of the sentences, there is an abundance of 6-7 word sentences; All four bilingual children have most of the narrative in the present tense, however, they use it in the past tense as well; In terms of morphosyntactic constructions, noun-verb (N-V) pairs are used more often by Georgian bilingual children during narratives in Georgian. As for the frequency of code switching (CS) with bilinguals, in the texts of the narrative we obtained there was recorded the only case of code switching with twice repeating.

As a brief overview shows, the results of the analysis of research data were mainly focused on monolingual-bilingual differences, however, we also focused on the similarities, which showed the following:

- In general, bilinguals are better able to convey their message in Greek than in Georgian;
- monolingual-bilingual differences are of course, confirmed in terms of vocabulary, but not in terms of comprehension of the story;
- there is a monolingual-bilingual similarity in terms of syntax (the length of the sentence), but not in terms of vocabulary and morphosyntax, in which the result of bilinguals was much worse than that of monolinguals;
- in small doses, but there is a side effect of bilingualism - Code switching (CS) with bilinguals;
- there are noticeable differences between the monolingual and bilingual narrative possibilities; With bilinguals - delayed narration, but clarity of content.

Finally, I would like to thank each child who participated in this study, their parents and my Greek friends for their contribution to the

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General linguistic aspects of borrowed Svan vocabulary

ABSTRACT

This paper presents general conclusions on all aspects related to word borrowing, taking into account the borrowing-adaptation of foreign-language lexical units assimilated into Svan from Georgian-Zan, as well as North Caucasus, Western European, Russian and Eastern languages (directly or indirectly), to determine the ways and chronology of borrowings, which is very important and interesting to present a general picture of the development of Svan phonological and lexical systems.

The study of borrowed material of Svan, as it has been said many times, will once again support the opinion recognized in Kartvelology for the great (sometimes decisive) importance of the grammatical phenomena of Svan in solving a number of linguistic problems.

Keywords: *Vocabulary, Phonetics, Semantics*

In Svan, as in any language (unwritten or written), words borrowing is one of the main sources of vocabulary enrichment. The possibility of making this conclusion was provided by the analysis of great illustrative material, which we conducted on the example of simple roots or composites according to the data of traditionally known dialects of Svan (Upper Bal, Lower Bal, Lashkhian and Lentekhian) and Cholur speech.

This paper presents general conclusions on all aspects related to words borrowing,

taking into account the borrowing-adaptation of foreign-language lexical units assimilated into Svan from Georgian-Zan, as well as North Caucasus, Western European, Russian and Eastern languages (directly or indirectly), to determine the ways and chronology of borrowings, which is very important and interesting to present a general picture of the development of Svan phonological and lexical systems. The study of borrowed Svan material, as it has been said many times, will once again support the opinion recognized in

¹ The research was conducted in 2019 within the framework of the young Scientist Research Project funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia – „**Phonetical-Phonological and Semantic Analysis of Loan-Words in the Svan Language**” (fundamental-applied research, appended with a dictionary)“.

Kartvelology for the great (sometimes decisive) importance of the grammatical phenomena of Svan in solving a number of linguistic problems.

As research has shown, borrowed Svan vocabulary includes many examples of North Caucasian (Kabardian, Circassian, Abkhazian, Ossetian ...), Western European (Greek, Latin), Russian and Eastern (Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Armenian) languages, which is due to certain contacts in time and space... Alongside, of course, there are borrowings related to Kartvelian languages (Georgian, Mingrelian, Laz), the common Kartvelian data of which is not always easy to separate, however, as it is known, the situation arising from language contacts differs substantially from the post-differentiation situation... As a result of borrowing and adaptation (interference) we do not get regular phonetic correspondence” Machavariani, 1965, 49). Since such correspondence, with a few exceptions, so far only deals with sibilants, Zan vowels transitions (Georgian **a** - Zan - **o**, Georgian - **e**, Zan **a**) can be used as a means of control. Here, of course, borrowing is out of the question, where so-called Zan vowels transitions are evidenced. At the same time, it should be taken into account whether this or that particular lexeme is represented in old Georgian written monuments. In case of a positive answer, probability of borrowing from Georgian into Svan are less confirmed, especially if the vowels correspondence will be revealed in Mingrelian.

It turns out that the roots of foreign language

lexemes are confirmed as phonetically- semantically unchanged in Svan (e.g.: **აბანო** **abano** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **abano**; **აგვისტო** **agwistʰo** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **agvisto** < Latin **augustus** “saint, divine, great”; **ალუბალ** **alubal** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **alubal-i**; **ანკეს** **ankes** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **ankes-i** < Pra-Indo-European ***ankes**; **კარტოფილ** **kartʰopil** (Lower Bal) < Georgian **kartopil-i** < Russian **Картофель** < German **kartoffel**; **სირმა** **sirma** (Lower Bal, Lentekhian) < Georgian **sirma** < Persian **sirmā**; **სპილო** **spilo** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **spilo** < Pahlavi **pīl**; **ფინო** **pint** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian (Gurian, Kartlian, Kiziqian) **pint-i** < Ossetian **fyd** “avi, tsudi” – “wicked, bad”; **ყარაულ** **qaraul** (Lower Bal) < Georgian **karaul-i** < Turkish – **karawul**; **ხალ** **xal** (Upper Svan) < Georgian **khal-i** – < Arabic **hāl**; **ჯიშ** **jish** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **jish-i** < Arabic **Jins** and etc.), so with different phonetic variants (e.g.: **ბარაქ** **barak** (Upper Bal, Lower Svan) < Georgian **baraka** < Arabic **baraq**; **პირობ** **pirob** (Upper Svan) < Georgian **pirob-a**; **სუფრ** **supr** (Upper Svan) < Georgian **supra** < Arabic **sufre**; **ფალანგ** **palang** (Upper Svan, Lashkhian) < Georgian (Lechkhumian, Rachian, Imeretian) **palanga** “a pole (for hanging something)” < Persian **palanga**; **რიყ** **riq** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **riverside rocks** < Persian **rīg** “gravel, small

stone”; **ჯიბ ჯიბ** (Upper Svan, Lentekhan) < Georgian jibe < Persian (< Arabic) **ج ب**; **თოქალთუ tokaltw** (Upper Bal) < Georgian tokalto < Persian **tukaltu**; **ოქრ okr** (Lower Bal) < Georgian okro < Greek **oxpos** “yellow”; **სამარხუ samarxw** (Upper Bal, Lower Svan) < Georgian sa-markh-o; **კემუხ kemux** (Upper Bal) “book cover” < Georgian kemukht-i “leather”; **მოახ moax** (Lentekhan) < Georgian moakhle; **ყუიჭ qwič** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) “cock” – Georgian kvinchila...) or in the context of data modified by semantic nuances (e.g. **კალმახ kalmax** (Upper Svan, Lashkhan)/**კალმახუ kakmaxw** (Lakhamulian) “fish” < Georgian kalmakh-i; **კერძ kerz** (Lower Svan) “friend, relative” < Old Georgian kerdz-i, kerdzo < Ossetian **kærd**; **კირაუ kiraw** (Lower Svan) “wattle building” < **karav-i**; **მასდიო masdik** (Upper Svan) “hurtful, offence, grief” < Georgian sisastike < Pahlavi “strong, firm, severe”; **მაიდან majdan** (Upper Svan) “the door of balcony” < Georgian moedan-i < Persian **maydān**; **საუდ saud** (Upper Bal)/**სეუდ seud/სეუდ sewd** (Lower Bal, Lower Svan) “miss, dream of seeing” < Georgian sevda < Arabic-Persian **souda**; **ჭირ čir** (Upper Svan, Lentekhan) “to work, to take some pains, heavy work” < Georgian chir-i and etc.).

Some borrowed roots are “Svaned”, it means they contain morphonological inventory

typical of Svan: palatal, veral or labial umlaut (e.g.: **ბან bän**, **ღარ yār**, **უფალ upāl**, **ყუითელა qwitelāj**, **დიდაბ didāb**, **ზირაბ zirāb**, **დუმაი dumāj**, **ჭალაი čalāj**, **ჭალ čalä**, **გინდუერ gindwer**, **გუირგუინ gwirgwin...**), long vowel (e.g.: **ზირებ zīreb**, **მაცხუარ macxwār**, **გზარობ gzārob**, **ბედნიერ bedniēr**, **ლადრაჯალ ladražāl...**), anaptyctic element (e.g.: **აკვლადამ akəldam**, **გემრ gəmr**, **გერზნეუილ gərznewil**, **კახემბალ kaxəmbal...**) and etc., which guides to clarify geographical direction of borrowings (e.g., **კალათ kalāt** entered in Upper Bal and Lentekhan dialects through Georgian, this is confirmed by the last vowel umlaut, which is the trace of the loss of nominative case morpheme; the original Greek **καλαζα** is preserved only in Georgian).

Sometimes the root borrowed from Georgian is so “Svaned” that quite complex phonological transformations are taken into account to restore the original version: e.g.: Upper Bal **ღაზირ lāxir** “spade” < ***ღა-ხუ-ირ lā-xw-ir** < ***ღა-ნ-ხუ-ირ lā-n-xw-ir** < ***ღა-ნე-ხუ-ირ la-ne-xw-ir** < Georgian **sa-nekhv-e**; for comparison Lower Bal **ლაუხი lawxi**, Lashkhan **ლადრ lāyīr**, Lentekhan **ლადერ läyer**. If we had only Lower Svan data, it would probably be difficult to connect this root to Georgian root “**nekhv**”. Upper Bal **ჩამსუალ čamswāl**, Lashkhan **ჩამსუალ čamswal** “duty of gunpowder” < Georgian

shemosaval-i, the presumable transformation of which in Svan is as follows: შე-მო-სა-ვალ-ი *še-mo-sa-wal-i* > შე-მო-სა-ჴალ *še-mo-sa-wäl* > *შე-მ-სა-ჴალ *še-m-sa-wäl* > *შა-მ-სა-ჴალ *ša-m-sa-wäl* > *ჩა-მ-სჴალ *ča-m-swäl*; Lower Bal ნწცემულ *näcemul*, to which had to go through a rather complicated phonological transformation from Georgian form *natlismtsemel-i*. Georgian *na-t-l-i-s-m-ts-em-el-i* > Svan *ნა-თ-ლ-ის-მ-ც-ემ-ულ *na-t-l-is-m-c-em-ul* > *ნა-თ-ლ-ის-ც-ემ-ულ *na-t-l-is-c-em-ul* > *ნა-თ-ლ-ი-ც-ემ-ულ *nä-t-l-i-c-em-ul* > *ნა-თ-ლ-ც-ემ-ულ *nä-t-l-c-em-ul* > *ნა-თ-ც-ემ-ულ *nä-t-c-em-ul* > ნწცემულ. The stages of phonological evolution of the relevant "soul mentioning" Svan term is particularly interesting in respect of the precedence-posterior of complex transformations: Georgian *sun/l-is mo-khsen-eb-a* > Svan *სჴინ-ო-მ-ო-ხსენ-ჴ *suin-iš mo-xsen-äb* > სჴინ-ო-მო-ხსენ-ჴ *swin-i-mo-xsn-äb* > სჴინ-მო-ხსენ-ჴ *swin-mo-xsn-äb* > სინ-მო-ხსენ-ჴ *sin-mo-xsn-äb* > სინ-ო-ხსენ-ჴ *sin-o-xsn-äb* > სინ-ო-ხსენ-ობ *sin-o-xsn-ob* or: სჴინ-მო-ხსენ-ჴ *swin-mo-xsn-äb* > სჴინ-ო-ხსენ-ჴ *swin-o-xsn-äb* > სჴინ-ო-ხსენ-ჴ *swin-o-xsn-äb* and etc.

One extremely well-defined tendency of auslaut nature of Svan names transformation open-syllables structures into closed-syllables ones is most often expressed in borrowed stems (წმინდ *čmind* (Lower Svan) < Georgian *tsminda*

< Pahlavi *spand*; ხელმწიფ *xelčip* (Lentekhian) < Georgian *khelmtsipe*; საწუთრ *sačutr* (Lashkhian) < Old Georgian *satsutro*; ამბა *ambä* (Lower Bal) < Georgian *ambav-i* < Pahlavi *hambav*; მოახ *moax* (Lentekhian) < Georgian *moakhle*; საბერჴამ *sabərčäm* (Lower Bal) < Georgian *sa-pir-is-tsaml-e* and etc., which implies simplification of forms.

in most borrowed Svan words there are the compensatory ones obtained as a result of the loss of consonants or the merging of vowels (e.g.: გზარობ *gzārob* (Lashkhian) < Georgian *m-gza-v-r-ob-a*; ლი-გა-ზდ-ილ-ე *li-gä-zd-il-e* < *ლი-გა-ზრდ-ილ-ე *li-gä-zrd-il-e* < *ლი-გა-ზარდ-ილ-ე *li-ga-zard-il-e* “to bring up well, to train” < Georgian *ga-zrd-a...*) or combinatorial length (e.g.: ზირებ *zīreb* (Lashkhian) < Old Georgian *ziareba*; მაცხჴარ *macxwār* (Upper Bal)/მაცხჴარ *macxwār* (Lashkhian) < Georgian *ma-tskh-ov-ar-i...*), deaffrication-spirantization (e.g.: ბზანება *bzaneba* (Upper Bal) < Georgian *brdzan-eb-a* (*dz* > *z*) < Pahlavi *frazān* “to get to know, to understand; თერზ *terz* (Lower Bal) < Georgian *terdz-i* (dressmaker); კინზ *kinz* (Upper Svan) < Georgian *kindz-i*; ღერზ *yerz* (Upper Bal) < Georgian *gherdz-i*; შიშლგ *šišlāg* (Upper Bal) < Georgian *chichilak-i...*), to make consonants voiced (e.g.: აზად *azād* (Lakhamulian) < Georgian *azat-i* “free peasant” < Persian *āzād* “free”; პრისდაჴ *prisdaw* (Lower Svan) <

Georgian *pristav-* *i* < Russian **пристав**; ყაჯ **qäḷ** (Upper Svan) < Old Georgian *kach-i...*), alternation of sonant consonants (e.g.: შაშალ **šašäl** (Lower Bal) “blow” < Georgian (Pshavian, Kiziqian) *sha-shar-i* “sword tip, edged on both sides; “sharp to be released blood” (Saba); ხანჯარ **xanḡär** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian)/ხანჯარ **xanḡar** (Lashkhian) < Georgian *khanjal-i*; შაურდელ **šawur-del** (Upper Svan) < Georgian *she-var-den-i*; მუზეინ **muzein** (Lower Bal) < Georgian *muzeum-i...*), reduction (ა **a**, ე **e**, ი **i**, ო **o**, უ **u** > გ **ə**) processes in light and hard forms (e.g.: მარგალიტ **margaliṭ** (Upper Svan) < Georgian *margalit-i*; კახემბალ **ḡaxəmbal** (Lashkhian)/კახემბალ **ḡaxəmbal** (Lentekhian) < Georgian *kakhambal-i* “thick cherry”; გემრ **gəmr** (Lower Bal), for comparison Lower Svan გმირ **gmir** < Georgian *gmir-i*; ლილუპატი **liywpäwi** (Upper Bal, Lentekhian)/ლილუპატი **liywpawi** (Lashkhian) < Georgian *daghupva...*), assimilation-dissimilation (e.g.: ართქილ **artkwil**/ართქილ **ärtkwil** (Upper Bal) < Georgian *ertgul-i*; წიმწარ **ḡimḡär** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian)/წიმწარ **ḡimḡar** (Lashkhian) < Georgian *dzir-m-ts-ar-a/e*; წუნწ **ḡunc** (Lashkhian)/წინწკუ **ḡinḡkw** (Lentekhian) < Georgian *dzunts-i...*), to add the sounds (e.g.: ბანჭ **banḡ** (Lower Svan) < Georgian *paich-i*; ბუხ{ტ}არ **bux{w}ar** (Upper Svan) < Georgian

bukhar-i < Persian **buxar**; დეპუტანტ **depuṭat** (Ushgulian) < Georgian *deputat-i* < Russian **Депутат**; სადათ **sayät** (Upper Svan) < Georgian *saat-i* < Turkish (Arabic-Persian) **saat**; ჭუმალმანდ **ḡwmalmänd** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian)/ჭუმალმანდ **ḡwalmänd** (Lashkhian) < Georgian *khomald-i* < Turkish **xumald...**), aspiration (e.g.: ჰარაყ **haräq** (Upper Svan) < Georgian *arak-i* < Arabic **arak**; ჰეშმაჲ **hešmäj** (Upper Bal) < Georgian *eshkma{k}-i* < Pahlavi **hēšmak**; ჰეგირ **həngir** (Upper Bal)/ჰინგირ **hingir** (Lower Bal) < Georgian *unagir-i* < Iranian **hunagīr...**), metathesis (e.g.: ბერტკილ **berwḡil**/ბერტკილ **berḡwil** (Upper Bal) < Georgian *bork-il-i*; თაკუ **täḡw** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian)/თეკუ **teḡw** (Lashkhian) < Georgian *tok-i* < Armenian **tok...**) and etc.

As the observation on the material showed, the borrowed material entered in Svan not only from the literary language, but also from dialects (e.g.: Lentekhian ბულტდან **buywdän** “fertile” < Georgian (Rachian) *bughdavan-i* “good accessible place”, (Lechkhumian) *baghdavan-i* “good, abundant place”; Lentekhian გუარჯილ **ḡwārḡil**/გუარჯილ **ḡwārḡil** “sulgun-i – “variety of hard cheese” < Georgian (Lechkhumian) *gvajil-i* “sulguni - variety of hard cheese”; Upper Bal ჩაბანა **ḡabānāy** “measure of cereals” < Meskhian *ḡanad-o* **ḡanay-i** < literary Georgian **chanakh-i** < Turkish **ḡanak** “crocery”; Cholur

წადაილნელაჲ *čwadilnelaj* < Georgian (Rachian) *mtsvadinela* "blue-flowered bulb plant of the lily family - Tsistvala" and etc.

In this regard, the abundance of data of western dailects of Georgia is especially noticeable. There is difference even within the dialects of Svan itself: In Lashkhian and Lentekhian there are much more Georgian borrowings than in Upper Bal dialect, while in Lower Bal Zan (Mingrelian-Laz) vocabulary is more prevalent (e.g.: Lower Bal *ბუყუინ buqwin* "wooden barrel for storing cheese for winter" < Zan (Mingrelian) *ბუყუნ-ი/ბუყუნ-ი bukun-i/buk'n-i* "wooden utensil, barrel made specially, which are used to pour milk, to make yogurt; often to store grain (maize), flour"; Lower Bal *კორკოც kōrkoc* < Zan (Mingrelian) *კორკოც-ე kōrkoc-e* "whooping cough; strong cough"; Lower Bal *ნახვაწა naxwaça* < Zan (Mingrelian) *ნახვაწა naxvaça* "crust formed on the bottom of the saucepan when making Ghomi (porridge), _ Ghomi crust"; Lower Bal *ჟოსხირ wosxir/ოსხირ osxir* < Zan (Mingrelian) *ოსხირი/ოსხერი osxiri/osxəri* "beam, foundation, basis, on which the wall of the house were built"; Lower Bal *ჩხუინდა čxwindä* (Lower Bal) "a man with a twisted nose or an ugly nose" < Zan (Mingrelian) *ჩხუინდა-ამ-ი čxwind-am-i* "big-nosed, long-nosed, pointed", Laz *ჩხუინდა čxvinda* "big-nosed" and etc.).

Attention must be paid to the chronological flatness of the borrowed words. The situation is especially difficult when dealing with ancient borrowings, which may have been represented by sounds correspondence in Kartvelian languages: Although Georgian *სპილენძ-ი - spilendz-i* and Svan *სპილენჯ spilenž - spilenj* at first glance reveal the regular phonemes correspondence (*dz _ j*), we still can not consider them as later data after the differentiation of the Pre-Georgian language, because in ancient Georgian *პილენძ-ი - pilendz-i* (<Middle Persian **pirinz* _ Andronikashvili. 966, 16-18, 168, 186, 202, 262, 361-365) was more common than *სპილენძ-ი - spilendz-i*; the latter seems relatively late and therefore, naturally, could not give correspondence in Svan. The same can be said about the stem *ვერცხლ-vertskhl*, which is only found in old written monuments of the 11th -12th centuries, and in ancient sources this lexeme without sonant is represented in inlaut (*ვეცხლ-ი - vertskhl-i*). According to special literature (Z. Sarjveladze, H. Fenrich, G. Klimov), Svan *ჟარჩხილ warčxil - varchkhil* is considered to be borrowed from Mingrelian *ვარჩხილ-ი' - varchchkhil-i'*.

Adding sonoant in inlaut, is common phenomenon for Mingrelian. Since Georgian form *ვერცხლ - vertskhl* is late, obviously, we consider this stem to be derived from the common Kartvelian level. Also, despite the fact that in Svan "black colour" is conveyed by the suffix *შხ-*

shkh (for comparison Georgian „ნა-ხშ-ირ-ი“ - “na-khsh-ir-i” - coal or „ცხ-ობ-ა“ - “tskh-ob-a” - to bake) expressing the root “burning” after the differentiation of the Pre-Kartvelian language, at least in relatively late borrowings (Upper Svan შაუბედ *šawbed* “black fortune”; Upper Bal შაუგურმალ *šawgurmäl*, Upper Svan შეგურმან *šegurmän*, Lashkhian შეტუტრემან *šewgwreman*, Lentekhian შაუგურმან *šawgurmän* “swarthy”; Lower Bal შაურახ *šawrāx* “dark-complexioned”; Lashkhian შაუტსხალაჲ *šawpsxalaj* “pear variety, black pear”, Shavmskhala) შავ - **shav** is confirmed.

We have specially studied as borrowed religious (mainly Christian) vocabulary (e.g.: აიაზმა *aiazma* (Upper Svan) “saint, sanctified (water)” < Georgian *aiazma* < Greek *ἁγιασμός* (*agiasmos*) “sanctify”; ბარძიმ *barzim* (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Old Georgian *bardzim-i* “church utensils having feet made of silver (or other precious metal) for eucharist” < Pahlavi *Barzīn* “tall”; ზირაბ *zirāb* (Upper Svan)/ზირებ *zīreb*/ზიარებ *ziareb* (Lashkhian)/ზირაბ *zirab* (Lentekhian)/ძიარება *ziareba* (Ushgulian) < Old Georgian *ziar-eb-a*; კრისდე *krisde* (Upper Svan, Lashkhian) < Georgian *kriste* < Greek *χριστός*; მაცხუარ *macxwār* (Upper Bal)/მაცხუარ *macxwār* (Lower Bal, Lentekhian), for comparison Lashkhian, Cholur მაცხუარ *macxwār* 1. “Our Savior”, 2. “the church of Our Savior” < Old Georgian *ma-tskh-ov-ar-i...*), as

well as foreign-language toponymic material assimilated from Georgian-Zan directly or indirectly (e.g.: ასტმელდ *astmæld* (Upper Bal) “shrubbery”; pasture (exactly ასტამ-უკა-*astam-uka*)” < Old Georgian *astam-i*; ორლობ *oryob* (Lashkhian) “pasture (exactly ორ-ღობე - *or-ghobe*)” < Georgian *orghobe*; ტეურ *teur* (Lentekhian) “vineyard (exactly ტევრ-ი - *tevri-i*)” < Georgian *tevri-i* “dense forest, tickets”; ბულონ *bulon* (Lentekhian, Lakhamulian) “mountain, summer pasture of the Mingrelians (exactly ბალ-ნ-არ-ი - *bal-n-ar-i*)” < Mingrelian *bulon-i* “a place where many cherries (trees) stand”; ტყაბედნიერ *tqabednier* (Lakhamulian) “cornfield (exactly ტყე-ბედ-ნ-იერ-ი - *tke-bed-n-ier-i*)” < ტყაბედნიერ-ი *tqabednirer* - *tyabednirer-i*; წყურგინ *čqurgin* (Lakhamulian) “way (exactly წყარო გრილი - *tskaro grili*)” < Mingrelian წყურგილი *čqurgili* “spring”; კანოლ *kanol* (Lower Bal) “hay meadow; legislative place (exactly - კანონ-ი - *kanon-i*)” < Georgian *kanon-i* < Greek *kanōn*; ლათთუნუარ *lattunwar* (Lentekhian) “pasture (exactly სა-თუთუნ-ე - *sa-tutun-e*)” < Georgian *tutun-i* < Turkish *tutun* “tobacco”; ჭაბგუანი *čabgwāni* (Lower Bal) “arable (exactly - სა-ჭაბუკ-ე - *sa-čabuk-e*)” < Georgian *čabuk-i* < Persian *čāpūk*; ლაშერბათილ *lašərbätıl* (Upper Bal) “spring (exactly სა-შარბათ-ო-უკ-ა - *sa-*

sharbat-o-uka)” < Georgian **sharbat-i** < Arabic **Sarbat**; ლერანგ **leräng** (Lower Bal) “hay meadow (exactly სა-რანგ-ე - **sa-rang-e**)” Georgian (Rachian), Mingrelian **rang-i** “drink made of honey, honey wine” < Ossetian **rong**...), most of them are presented for the first time in Kartvelological linguistics. it was interesting to study Svan hybrid (resp. crossbreed) toponyms containing borrowed anthroponyms. One of the components we have identified in most of the basic models of hybrid toponyms (mostly the first, or in this case anthroponym), as a result of a considerable amount of illustration material, as expected, turned out to be borrowed from different languages (directly or indirectly). It is known from special literature that foreign anthroponyms are found next to national names in almost all languages, and, obviously, Svan is no exception in this respect, where besides the Svan material itself, it is often foreign, mainly borrowed from Turkish (e.g.: ბექერბი **bekərbi** < Karachay-Balkar **bij** < Turkish **beg** (/bej) “mister”; რადიმხან **dimxan** < Turkish **radim** + the oldest Turkish rank **xan**; ყარბეგ **qarbeg** < Turkish **kara** “black”, “brave” + **beg** (/bej) “mister”...), anthroponyms are also confirmed, most of which are considered to have been assimilated from Karachay-Balkar in Svan (Jikia, 1973, 213).

Exactly the language absorbed these anthroponyms and used as forming a geographical name, although along with Turkish anthroponyms

we often find anthroponyms borrowed from Greek (e.g. ანტიმოზ **äntimoz** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian) < Georgian **antimoz-i** (< Greek) “florid”, blossoming”; პეტრე **petre** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **Petre** (< Greek) “rock, large rock”...), from Hebrew (e.g.: იესებ **jeseb/ესებ eseb** (Lower Bal) < Georgian **Ioseb-i** (< Old Hebrew) “reproduction”, “increase”; აბრამ **abram** (Upper Svan, Lower Svan) < Georgian **Abram-i** (< Old Hebrew) “father of heights”, “raised up”...), from Russian (e.g.: მეხ **mexä** (Lower Bal)/მიხე **mixe** (Iakhamulian) < Georgian **Mikheil-i** < Russian **Михаил** < Greek **Μιχαήλ** < Old Hebrew **Miqael**...), from Ossetian (e.g.: სოსლან **soslan** (Lower Bal) < Georgian **Soslan-i** (< Ossetian < Ingush) “the name of one of the heroes of the epic of the Narts” ...), from Iranian (e.g. არჩილ **ärçil** (Upper Svan, Lentekhian)/არჩილ **arçil** (Lashkhan, Cholur) < Georgian **Archil-i** (Iranian) “correct”, “sincere”, “right”, “bright”, “merciful”, from Old Slavic (ლადიმერ **lädimer** (Upper Svan) < Georgian **Vladimer** (< Old Slavic) “owner of the country), from Arabic-Persian (მურზაყან **mirzaqan** (Upper Svan) < Georgian **Mirza** < Arabic-Persian **Amirzade** “Emir’s son” + Persian suffix **xan** (**Mirzakhani**)...) and etc. Borrowed anthroponyms, most of which are currently found only in toponyms and in names denoting family-branch names. Most of the foreign-language anthroponyms have been preserved by the names

denoting family-branch names and, as M. Kaldani indicated, they saved them from eventual oblivion (Kaldani, 1987, 304). Obviously, most of the mentioned anthroponyms are assimilated into Svan from Georgian-Zan (directly or indirectly).

Conclusion

Clearly, our main area of interest is to determine the geographical direction of the borrowing and, if possible, the chronology, which, of course, is associated with great difficulty. Determining the chronological boundaries of borrowed words is usually difficult, especially when dealing with ancient borrowings, which may have been represented

by sound correspondence in Kartvelian languages (Sagliani 2005: 218). The anthroponyms that have survived in Svan toponyms and family-branch names are of ancient formation and most of them, as already mentioned, have been preserved by toponyms and family-branch names. In addition, early proper nouns of Svan have undergone phonetic-semantic adaptations over time, that makes it difficult to restore the original form of analytical forms and makes it even difficult to define both chronological boundaries and the geographical direction of borrowing.

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Subordinate clause with simple object hypotactic constructions in Svan¹

ABSTRACT

The paper presents such hypotactic constructions in Svan, where the subordinate clause is a simple object and plays the role of simple object to any member of the principal clause, explains and clarifies the meaning of the simple object expressed by the pronoun. There is no comprehensive research on this issue in the scientific literature, where the data of all four dialects (Upper Bal, Lower Bal, Lentekhan, Lashkhan) would be considered. In our study, samples of Cholur speech are also presented, which provides a basis for making quite interesting conclusions. Research has shown that in Svan there is a lot of evidence of subordinate clause with simple object complex sentences and no significant difference between dialects is observed.

The results of our research are also important in terms of teaching Svan.

Keywords: *Svan language, Syntax, Sentence, Construction*

One group of subordinate clauses perform the syntactic function of some member, and therefore their classification and naming are identical to those members. It is in this group that subordinate clause with simple object is also considered.

Subordinate clause is a simple object if it refers to and explains the simple object expressed by the pronoun in the principal clause and presents its broad version.

As it is known, simple (unmarked) object, like in Georgian, is found in four cases of Svan – in dative case, in genitive case, in instrumental case and in adverbial case (with or with no postposition), accordingly subordinate clause with simple object also explains unmarked object inserted in above mentioned cases, which is presented by pronoun in the principal clause.

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Let us discuss the correlation words presented by both with and with no postposition taking into account the data of all Svan dialects, including the Cholur speech, since according to the latter, nothing has been said in the scientific literature on this issue:

ტუფ ი თხტიმ ეჩწ ლ'ე, ჟერუწა
ჩუადგარი... *ṭup i txwim eč'ṣ l'ē, jerwāj*
čwadgäri... (Upper Bal, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 124) – “the skin and
head are the one's who kills”...

ალის ეჯნოშ კედნის გუდ, ერე
ჩინირ ლიყლეს ჩუ როქ ქუცე *alis*
ežnoš qednix gud, ere činir liqles ču rok
kuce... (Lower Bal, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 180) – “they
understand it by the fact that chianuri stops
playing”...

ალ მაროლ მეუარ ლეწხუაჲე
ეჩოჲშ, ერ ნადარიბოშ ოჯახ ქა
ლახაცუირ... *al marol mewar læcxwawe*
ečowš, er nayariboš ožax ka laxewir...
(Lentekhian, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 321) – “this man
{was} very upset that he left his family
because of poverty”...

ეჩაშდ ხუეთხელი ქიპარს, სი ერ
სუიტრ ემგელგერ დინარს *ečašd xwetxēli*
kipars, si er swiṭr emgəlēr zinars...

(Lashkhian, speaker O. Jankhoteli) – “I am
looking for the threads for you have torn
my sweater in the morning”...

ამდ ხოდროლ დესმა მაძენა,
ლადი ერ მეყარ *amd xodröl desma*
majēna, ladi er meqar... (Cholur, speaker
Ts. Kvastiani) – “I have not witnessed
anything worse than this (“as this”) that
happened to me today”...

We should also pay attention to the
fact that in Svan there is simple object
twice being in case and unmarked simple
object, which is expressed by former
genitive adverbial case with no
postposition having the semantics of
postposition *თვის tvis* – “for”, also
sometimes the meaning of Georgian dative
case with postposition *-ზე -ze* “on” is
expressed by dative case with no
postposition of simple object, which was
also shown in the words indicating the
principal clause:

ჯუინალ დტრედსა მარე ერ
იქუნატალნოლ, ეჩშუტდ ხეკუეს
ახოკიდანხ ბაპ ჯwinal dwrejsa mare er
ikunawalnol, ečāšed xekwes axoqidanx
bap... (Lentekhian, The Svan Prose,
volume III 1967, 54) – “in ancient times,
when a man was fighting with the death,
a priest had to be brought for him”...

დარმოშ იყდგდა ამდ ხოჩილს, ნად
ერ ელყიდედ ლადი dārmoš iqdəde
amd xočils, naj er elqided ladi... (Cholur,
speaker T. Chegiani) – “no one could have
bought better than this (“as this”) we had
bought today”...

Sometimes in Lentekhian pronoun
explaining the semantics of former
genitive adverbial case simple object with
no postposition has truncated the adverbial
case mark, although in Georgian it
expresses the meaning of the postposition -
თვის -*tvis* “for”:

ერტად ალ დენად ჟახეს ლექნა,
ერწმ ხეკტეს ათოყენანხ ალ დენა
ეხეტდ jerwäj al denäj žāxes lekna, ečāš
xeḳwes atogenanx al dena jexwd...
(Lentekhian, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 327) – “whoever
would say this girl’s name, they should
have followed this girl for him”... ერეჟუნ
ლოქ ერე ძღვდ ბჰჰ შრი, ერწმ ლემესკ
ლოქ ლახომტა ečēčun lok ere zyəd bāč
äri, ečāš lemesḳ lok laxošwa...
(Lentekhian, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 336) – “there to be
big stone, he lit the fire for it”...

As it is known, unlike Georgian, in
Svan postposition is added to noun only in
dative case and genitive case, accordingly
unmarked simple object also has the same

cases with postposition. Postpositions are
also added to the correlation words in
subordinate clause with unmarked simple
object complex sentence:

ჯ’ესერ ერცახან მერდე მამ ლი,
დერტადს ესერ დემგუაშუ ხაჰუდობ
ჯ’ēser ečcaxān merde mām li, jerwājs
eser demgwašw xahwdix... (Upper Bal,
speaker T. Bediani) – “I will not stay with
him to whom is given nothing”...

ლექუსირ ერ ნამურყუამ ლი,
ერქესკა ლემარდ დადიან lekwsir er
namurqwam li, ečējsḳa ləmārd dadian...
(Lentekhian, The Svan Prose, volume III
1967, 90) – “in ruined tower that is in
Leksura, Dadiani had been in”...

დარსრ ათხტინეს ჯილაფს, ერწმოე
ლოქ ღვრის ლაქედვდ jarsi atxwīnex
žilajs, ečāšte lok yərix lakejpd... (Cholur,
speaker G. Zurabiani) – “to whom they
give the pebble, they go to him/her for
fun”...

In Svan, a correlation word in the
principal clause of to be discussed
construction is mostly presented, however,
there are cases when it is omitted and the
subordinate clause acts as unmarked
simple object:

დესამა ხომჟერან [ერა], მიჩ მაფ
დენ ხნდაფ ალდარ dēsama xomqerān
[eča], mič maj yen xādax aljar...

(Lashkhian, The Svan Prose, volume IV 1979, 81) – “he/she knew nothing about him/her [his/her] who they were to him/her”...

ჩოთადრწლნეხ ამეჩუ აღმასკომს [ეჩა] მოთხოუნა, ერე ქემქედელხუჲს ამრხ ჭ'otajrāl nex amēču aymaskoms [eča] motxowna, ere k'ēmqedelxwās amōx... (Cholur, Sakdarian, speaker G. Gvidiani) – “they made the Executive Committee to write (its) demand that I would have come over here”...

In subordinate clause with simple object complex sentence one of the subordinating conjunction ერე/ერ ere/er “that” and relative pronouns with the subordinating conjunction function are used as means of connection: დერუჲ/დარ ჯერwāj/jarī “who”; ნა māj “what”; იმუჲ imwāj “what”; ხედუჲ/ხედ xedwāj/xedi “who/which”; იმნრუჲ imnōwši “with/by what”; იმნარდ imnardi “for what”; იმდ/იმად imdi/imäjd “in what”... with different phonetic variants:

ალეს ეჯნოჲმ ხოშამ იჯრუჲ, დერბი ფიფა ერ სწუტენე ლეთუჲ ტეტრისკა ales ežnowš xošam ižräwi, jerbi pipa er äšcwene letwš ƭewriskā... (Lentekhian, The Svan Prose, volume III

1967, 73) – “he believes this more that he saw two shadows in dense forest at night”...

დერუჲ ზორს ხოჲდე, ეჩა ყორუი ეჯა ჟი ხამზერი ეჯ მეზგემ ნაშდობახენ jerwāj zors xoqde, eča qōrzi eža ži xamzəri ež mezhgem nāšdobaxen... (Lower Bal, Svan Language Chrestomathy, 1978, 178) – “who brings him/her an offering, he/she will pray at the door of that family for the sake of peace”...

ეჯდარგნეა დარს ათბედუჲლნრხ, დარ გუემდახუ ათბეჲ ežjarənka jars atbedwāl nīsx, jarī gwejmaxw atxēj... (Cholur, speaker V. Xabuliani) – “whom they will let dare except for those, who still enmities us”...

ალ დინას ეჩრთეჲ წუტრლე, ხედუჲ მურყუმა შდურთეჲი ნესყა ცხემნდს ქა ხაჲდა al dīnas ečīšte ācwīlē, xedwāj murquma šdurteži nēsqa cxemāds ka xaqda... (Upper Bal, Svan Language Chrestomathy, 1978, 167) – “he/she will marry this girl to him (“to him”), who would shoot the arrow at the needle on the merlon of the tower” ...

As it is known, relative pronouns are form-changing words and therefore the relative pronouns presented in a subordinate clause with simple object are

also confirmed in the form of different cases:

ძარსო ჩიგარ ხეგუნებლდა,
ერწმენქა იმჟი ხეხონოლ დაგრა?!
jarsī čigar xegwnēbālda, ečāšxenska imži
xexōlnōl dagra?!... (Cholur, speaker Ts.
Kvastiani) – “to whom he/she attended
carefully forever (“always”), how he/she
deserved the death from him/her?!”...

ერქანლო ეშტაშდ ლეშხი ხადხ,
ერ ჭიშხი ნაზიმდ ჟაცბურახ ečkanyo
ješwāšd lešxbi xādx, ečī čīšxi nazimd
ž’acburax... (Upper Bal, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 138) – “then whom
they had to sew for, they would cut it to
the size of his foot”...

იმად მეკუდი, ეჯდ ასუასიპი
imäjd mekwedi, ežd aswasipi...
(Lentekhian, The Svan Prose, volume III
1967, 224) – “what I want I will turn into
it” ...

As it is known in Svan particles
ჟა/ჟა **wāj/wāj**, **o/ō j/ī** (-tsa) give
interrogative words the meaning of
relativity, the cases of using of which vary
according to dialects. The particle **ჟა**
wāj is most often confirmed in Upper Bal
and Lentekhian and more or less
frequently in other dialects, including
Cholur. The particle **ō** is more productive
in Lashkhian and Cholur.

The reviewed material showed that in
relative words presented by different form
of case the case mark mostly added to the
particle **ჟა wāj** joined to stem (**ეერთაშ**
jerwājs “whom/to whom”, **ეშაშ**
ešwājš “whose”) and the particle **ō ī** is
preceded by the case mark (**ძარსო jarsī**
“whom/to whom“, **ეშაშ ješāī**
“whose”...).

In Cholur we have cases in relative
words with postposition, when despite the
adjoining the particle **ჟა wāj** of relative
pronoun, which precedes the postposition,
at the end the particle **ō ī** is also added to it
and we get double particle forms
(**ეერთაცახანო ešwājcxanī** “with whom”,
ეერთაშთერ jerwājštēj “to whom”,
where the particle **ჟა wāj** without **ō ī**
must have the advantage of expressing
relativity. Such forms are typical for
Cholur.

As for the subordinating conjunctions,
in the constructions to be discussed in
Georgian subordinating conjunction **თუ**
tu – “if” is found, in Svan **ერე ere** “that”
conjunction is predominant, although in
Svan dialects (except Lower Bal) there are
cases when the relative pronouns are
accompanied by an indefinite particle **ღენ**
yen ghen (with different phonetic

variants), which would have a certain function.

This particle has different functions and semantics in Svan “...the main function, as it appeared from the analysis of various materials, is the command, to strengthen the command. It should also be noted that in most cases, even according to the context, it is difficult to understand the function of the analytical lexeme”(Sagliani 2016, 261).

The particle *ghen* must also has a function of subordinating conjunction, as evidenced by the Cholur speech patterns, where in complex sentences the particle *ღენ yen ghen* at the same time is added to the interrogative and relative pronouns and have the semantics of *თუ tu* – “if” in both case:

თელ ლეთ გაგზედახ [ეჩეჟი],
პასუხდ იმ/იმნ ღენ ხეკუნახ მორატს
tel lēt gagzədax [ečēži], pasuxd **im/imī**
yen xēkwnax mōraws... (Cholur, speaker
V. Xabuliani) – “they were talking
unceasingly the whole night about {on
that}, {if} what they would say to the
mediator”...

გუმგუეურ მაი/მან ღენ ორიხ,
აშიშტ ლეგგრგლიდ ეჩეჟ gušgweur
maj/maī yen īrix, ašišt lejgərglid ečēži ...
(Cholur, speaker T. Chegiani) – “{if} what

they are without us, we will talk about it
soon”...

ჟახას დემ ჯატულო [ეჩა],
დარ/დარნ ღენ მინჟარ žaxas deš žaṭūli
[eča], **jar/jarī yen** minqār... (Cholur,
speaker J. Xabuliani) – “I can’t say the
name, {if} who was with me”...

As for the other dialects, the situation is similar there, however, when checking with the respondents, when questioning, for example, in Lashkhian the understanding and semantics of the conjunction *თუ tu* – “if” is lost and the forms - *იმნღენ ხაშდბა imīyen xašdba/იმნ ხაშდბა imī xašdba* are explained by them in this way - “what he/she/it does” since the difference between them is no longer distinguishable by addition of **ghen**, however, it is noteworthy that in subordinate clause with simple object we have relative adverbs in subordinate clause accompanied by the particle **ghen**. It seems that it was **ghen** that had the function of subordinating conjunction of *თუ tu* – “if”, since in this case the relative adverbs could not be considered as member-conjunctions of the unmarked simple object:

ეჩრმ დესამა მიხ'ე, ისგუა ქესშ,
იმუშდღენ ჯირი ečīs dēsama mix'e,
isgwa kesāš, imwājyen žiri... (Upper Bal,

The Svan Prose, volume I 1937, 276) – “I do not know anything about it, eh, your purse, {if} where you have it”...

იმთელენ ხარ ლეზი, ეჩა მამ
ხოხალ imtēyen xār lēzi, eča mām
xoxal... (Lashkhian, Svan Language
Chrestomathy, 1978, 283) – “he does not
know {of that}, [if] where he has to go
("he has a way to go")”...

There have been cases when the
conjunction **ერე** *ere* “that” and relative
adverbs or relative pronouns with **ენ** *yen*
ghen are also found in subordinate clause,
however in this case the function of the
conjunction is clearly performed by **ერე**
ere:

მახელტაჟარ ...უმხტარ ხემქარალხ,
ერე ხედრდენ ხომა ჯრდიად
ადკუნნე ბეჩს maxeywažar... ušxwār
xemkarālḥ, **ere** xediḥyen xošyen xoša
žōdiad adḡwānne bečs... (Lashkhian, The
Svan Prose, volume IV 1979, 141) –
“young people are competing in that
which one will throw the stone farther”...

გიგა მაგრაფს დესმა ხახლენა ეჩა,
ერე იმთელენ ოთწურლახ მერბამდ
მიჩა დი giga magraps desma xaxlēna
eča, **ere** imtēḡyen otḡwīlax mērbāmd
mica di... (Cholur, G. Zurabiani) – “aunt
Magrap did not know anything about, that

where they had married her mother for the
second time”...

The tendency of dividing up of
subordinating conjunctions and member-
conjunction is very interesting. It should
be noted that the means of connection
create a homogeneous picture and can be
found at the beginning or middle of the
subordinate clause on both positions,
although the difference is that member-
conjunctions are always presented and
subordinating conjunction **ერე** can be
missing, although it is assumed and easily
restored:

ჩოლირ [ერ] კუბ ოხტაბახ,
ეჩხატესგ'ესტდახ ჯიჯტარ čōlir [er]
ḡub oxṡābax, ečxāwtēsḡ'eswdax žižwar ...
(Upper Bal; Svan Language Chrestomathy,
1978, 106) – “in Cholur [that] they cut out
the coffin, they put bones in”...

In going to be discussed complex
sentences principal and subordinate
clauses can be found as follows: principal+
subordinate; subordinate + principal and
principal+ subordinate + correlation word:

აშხუნდო სორთმანს გუი
ლოჰოდა, **ერე** მიჩა ფამლი
მადარობჟიმდ ხომა ლუწხტაჟე
ლეძარ ašxunyo sortmans ḡwi lohoda,
ere mica pämlī mājdarobžīšd xoša
luḡxwawe ləmār... (Lower Bal, The Svan

Prose, Volume II 1957, 8) – “after a long time, Sortman noticed that his slave was more anxious during the starving time”...

ხედისნ ერე თეთრ ოთბაცე,
ეჩაცხან ახცხენე ლიზი ამნემდო xedisī
ere tetr otbace, ečacxan axcxēne līzi
amnēmdī... (Cholur, speaker G.
Liparteliani) – “whom {that} he/she
promised money, he/she preferred to go
with him/her”...

ალე მაღ ლი, მი ერ გემ მაყა,
ეჩაცხან ale maj li, mi er gem maqa,
ečacxan... (Lashkhian, The Svan Prose,
volume IV 1979, 71) – “what it is, that I
have a ship, (compared) with it”...

Conclusion

As the discussed material has shown, in the traditionally known dialects of Svan as well as in Cholur speech many subordinate clause with simple object complex sentence is confirmed. No significant difference is observed between the dialects, except the subordinate clause containing ghen particle, which has the semantics of the subordinating conjunction “if” in contrast to Upper Bal, Lentekhian and Lashkhian (the particle mentioned in Lower Bal, as already mentioned, is not confirmed), where its function has been concealed over time.

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Invisible Traces of Islam in the Urban Space of Rustavi: Interpreting the religious diversity in post-Soviet Georgia¹

ABSTRACT

The article discusses the revelation of the religiosity of the Azerbaijani community in the post-Socialist city of Rustavi and their visibility in the urban space. The subject of research is how their religiosity is expressed in the city space. The article pinpoints the attempt by the Muslim community to build a mosque in the city. This unsuccessful try is forgotten by both members of the community- the Azerbaijani and the Christian population. Everyone has forgotten about it and the topic has become a subject of taboo. In the article, the search for the invisible traces of Islam in the urban space of the city can be linked to two pasts of the city, one is the experience of the Soviet multi-ethnicity and the more distant, historical past of the city interpreted by the Communists. It is also influenced by the peculiarities of the region, the ethno-confessional composition, and the state's attempt to control religious groups and their activities, which has a corresponding impact on the self-perception and self-representation of the Azerbaijani community in the city.

KeyWords: *Muslim community, public visibility, diversity, religious in urban space*

Introduction

Post-soviet Georgia inherited ethnic conflicts and ethno-confessional confrontations from the Soviet past. The experience of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism of the Soviet period in Georgia creates its paradox and at the same time a kind of regularity. Post-socialist Rustavi interestingly reflects the general opposition to the process of civic

integration and understanding of diversity in Georgia. To talk about these issues, I will discuss Rustavi as an exemplary city, a city of “Forty Brothers”, which was returned to the history of Georgia by the Communists. It is interesting how Rustavi manages to deal with diversity in modern reality and to seek roots in history through Orthodox Christianity to re-establish its identity.

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The Azerbaijani community is the largest ethno-confessional minority of Rustavi, at the same time the most well-integrated with the Georgian society. Nevertheless, the Azerbaijani community remains religiously invisible in the city space. It is interesting what determines the self-perception and the position of the Muslim community and how it relates to the city's historical experience.

To present the city, built in the second half of the twentieth century, the Communists offered the public its national and international image, with its supportive narratives. The Soviet experience of Rustavi should be linked to the process of revival of religiosity in the post-socialist period and the position of the dominant religious group, determinant of ethics and civic boundaries, both inside and outside the city.

As in all of Georgia, the construction of Orthodox churches in Rustavi was linked to the national idea and became an exclusive opportunity to present the past. The national narrative created by the communists was to return to orthodox Christianity or it to appear in the city space. How did the multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism of the city emerge after the collapse of the Soviet Union? How is it possible to connect the international image of the city with religious pluralism and diversity? How was religious diversity formed in the city and how do different

religious denominations coexist in the urban space of Rustavi?

The arguments and conclusions presented in the paper are based on the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Rustavi in 2019-2020, which aimed to research the representations of religiosity in the urban space of the city.

In this paper, I will discuss the example of Rustavi - how the issue of religiosity was related to the understanding of ethnicity and nation building in the post-Soviet period (Serrano, 2018; Dragadze, 1993; Pelkmans, 2002). To discuss this issue, I will analyse the construction of the Orthodox church building process in Rustavi and their connection to history and interpretation of the past; how the national narrative was linked to the international representation of the city; how multiculturalism was represented in the urban space of Rustavi. In the next part of the paper, I will also touch on the issue of how labor migration affected the formation of the ethnic composition of the city in post-Soviet time. The question is, what is left in Rustavi from the spirit of friendship between forty brothers and peoples? To discuss these issues, I will discuss the situation of religious minorities in Rustavi and their efforts to establish themselves in the urban space of the city and become part of it. More specifically, I will talk about the Azeri speaking community. I

will attempt to find out what it is like to live in a double minority status in an industrialized, post-communist city. What kind of strategy they have adopted to live peacefully in Rustavi?

Thus, in this article I will present the position of the Muslim community in Rustavi, regarding religious visibility in the public space and their position to keep themselves invisible, which is due to the Soviet interpretation of the past on the one hand, and the fear of new Islamic movements such as Wahhabism and Salafism on the other. A certain factor may be the ethnic and religious composition of the region Kvemo Kartli. Rustavi, as the central city of the region, unites the Azerbaijani villages and districts, where the Islamic religious buildings are presented. Not far from Rustavi, Islamic shrines in Azerbaijani villages are located, where the Muslim population of Rustavi can easily go for worship. Despite the fact that Islam is invisible in the urban space of Rustavi, its factor creates significant characteristics and is transformed in different perceptions and attitudes in both the Azerbaijani and Georgian communities.

Religious Revival in Rustavi

In the deindustrialized city, which has become the bedroom area of Tbilisi, production and industry is practically nonexistent. Most of the population of

Rustavi have found a job in the capital and commutes to Tbilisi every day. The city population also migrated in search of work outside the country. Moreover, the city population in the Soviet period exceeded 200,000, while today it is almost halved (Geostatic, 1978/2014). The major problem for the population is unemployment. In terms of production, Rustavi experiences a serious crisis. Against this background, the massive nature of the construction of Orthodox temples is striking. According to the Georgian Patriarchate web-site, there are 23 functioning churches and 10 churches under construction in Rustavi. It is noteworthy that in Rustavi we find several cases when a chapel was built in a kindergarten building, which was followed by some resistance, as we learn from a conversation with an employee of the city municipality. Due to the fact that the church occupied the considerable space of the kindergarten, both inside and outside, than, it was difficult for the kindergarten to obtain a license because it did not meet the standards (employ of municipality, 2021). Despite the urgency of the issue, the representative of the news agency operating in Rustavi, infoRustavi, said that all news outlets refrained from covering the problem, adding that the issue was quite delicate (2020).

It became quite trendy to capture small video about Rustavi. The image clips

of Rustavi depict the church construction in the city and present it with Christian symbols mostly ².

In addition to the mass construction of Orthodox churches in Rustavi, there is a tendency to arrange chapels in the yards of Rustavi, which is kind of position expressed by the Christian Orthodox population and may indicate domination and hierarchy in public space. Yard chapels best express the iconicity and symbolism of religion. Yard chapels are organized at the expense of mobilized by the neighborhoods and are in the nature of private initiatives. From a functional point of view, it is conditioned by the aesthetic and security side and is not related to any specific ritual practice. It should be noted that yard chapels have become a phenomenon in Rustavi that are less common in other cities. The Rustavi yard chapels can be considered as a tool for the struggle for public space and as a peculiar manifestation of the new order and hierarchy, which to some extent, meets the social and civic demands of the post-socialist city society.

² We can see some such clips on YouTube, all of them start with panoramic views and a giant iron cross on Iaghluji Mountain, then there is a monument of Shota Rustaveli and the view of the city, as well as a historic castle and Orthodox temples.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6Nn5gEWIfU>

Exploring Ideas of the Diversity in Rustavi

The city of “Forty Brothers”, one of the most “brand” names of socialist Rustavi, expresses well the communists’ attempt to put the historic city in the service of new values. The idea of multinationalism and internationalism, along with the use of the Russian language, was also promoted by the street names. For example, the name of the streets of Rustavi was echoed in the idea of the friendship of peoples, which Vladimir Kobakhidze talks about in the newspaper article “Brotherhood City”. In his opinion, it was the friendship of peoples that revived Rustavi, one of the oldest and, at the same time, new cities. Here we read about the symbolic expression of this fact:

“How symbolic it is that one of the central squares of Rustavi is called the Friendship of Peoples. Here, a new alley was built this year, which the people of Rustavi call the Alley of Friendship of Peoples” (Kobakhidze, 1973).

Thus, the central space of Rustavi was occupied by the Friendship of Peoples' Square, Friendship Street and also Friendship Alley.

We find the widest propaganda of the Soviet system in the print media. Political texts that became a template were often repeated without an alteration in various newspapers.

Many other newspaper articles are devoted to the discussion of Rustavi streets, such as Rem Davidov's "Streets of Friendship" and the newspaper "Village Life". According to the author, just listing the streets will be enough to present their content. He pinpoints the Square of Friendship of the Peoples of the USSR, the streets of Peace, Labor, Young Specialists and First Builders, among others. He also mentions the street of Donetsk Metallurgists, which is distinguished by its beauty and shows the friendship with the Ukrainian people from the recent history of the city. The names of Sumgait Metallurgists and Cherkasy Streets are also a reflection of the city's recent past, that time.

Correspondent of the newspaper *The Communist*, Z. Merkviladze, in his newspaper article "Friendship City" recalls the history of the founding of the city, which coincides with the course of World War II. He notes that modern Rustavi is called the City of Friendship and this truth is reflected in the fact that the city is represented by 40 different nationalities. The article goes on to give a detailed description of which echelon came from which city for the respective mission. He cites one document to illustrate the involvement of people in the Rustavi construction:

"One interesting document is kept in the Transcaucasian Metallurgical Archive.

The passing of time has yellowed and faded it, but you can still read the surnames. This is the salary list of the first builders in Rustavi. The surnames listed in this document are a clear confirmation that Azerbaijanis and Russians, Ukrainians and Armenians, Belarusians and Moldovans, Kazakhs and Lithuanians came here together with Georgians on the scaffoldings of the new city" (Merkviladze, 1967).

In this case, it is noteworthy that the author of the article bases this "widely" accepted information on the international nature of the city with a document that has already become historical, which he offers as a historical source preserved in the archives. He completes the article with a description of Rustavi, which is expressed by the noise of the factory pipes and the deafening aggregates. This picture, for the author, best expresses the heartbeat of friendship between the peoples of industrial Rustavi.

The November 10, 1972 issue of the newspaper "Socialist Rustavi" is entirely dedicated to the celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution. The first page shows an article with the caption: "In a United, Brotherly Family", which describes the solemn procession held in Tbilisi, where, of course, Rustavi, with its considerable representation, also took part. In this case, the focus is on the title of the article, which refers to the

closest form of human relations - the family, which is at the same time united and fraternal. This article is followed by a description of a similar event in the city of Rustavi, entitled “Celebrations in the City of Brotherhood and Friendship.” In the same issue we find the article: “The City of Peace and Friendship”, where the texts that have already become chrestomathy are repeated many times about the united efforts of the people, who performed a “miracle”:

“It is the tireless work of these enthusiasts and their colleagues that has made Rustavi the pride of the Republic, space for workers of more than forty nationalities, a city of peace and friendship ...” (Ghvaberia, 1972).

Thus, Rustavi is presented as a place for labor, the ultimate goal of which is peace and friendship between peoples. This narrative is so well formulated that it is found axiomatically in virtually every text about the city.

As for the post-socialist period, the disintegration of the industrial profile of the city was followed by the massive migration of the population from the city. Especially the outflow of ethnic non-Georgian population should have taken place, which is also indicated by the census 3. This process naturally influenced

the ethnic composition of the city and the region, and perhaps it is this factor that mostly influences the modern religious processes of the city as well. The population of the city was practically halved, the main part being the representatives of different ethnic groups, which created the multicultural environment of the city. What we are observing in Rustavi, the national narrative of the city created by the communists lost its urgency, and its international image lost its credibility (Kamushadze, 2018). In the post-socialist period, we see some attempts to present the multicultural face of the city by arranging a square of friendship dedicated to Heydar Aliyev and the People. However, the public attitude towards this event showed that the mentioned presentation of the city is irrelevant and the government looks weak as an interpreter of the resent past of the city.

Muslim communities in Georgia

Georgia has been surrounded by the Islamic world since the day of its existence. Despite the fact that this religion has a great influence on Georgian culture, its perception is still formed as a “cultural other”, which, in my opinion, is based on the interpretation of the Soviet period. The

³ In 2014, a general census was conducted, according to which 91% of the population in Rustavi is ethnic Georgian, followed by the

Azerbaijani community, which does not exceed 4%, the rest of the population are Armenians, Russians, Ossetians, Yazidis and Ukrainians, Kists, Greeks and others.

icons seen as a permanent adversary of Islam were formed during the Soviet period. It is noteworthy that the beliefs formed on the basis of the historical films made during the Soviet period, whether it will be kidnapping or the oppression of the people, are still relevant today. It was the visual icons that had to help people differentiate the enemy from a friend. As part of the same narrative, we can consider the story “Black Monday” by an archaeologist Gogo Lomtadze. The author led archeological excavations in Rustavi and later was the director of the Rustavi Historical Museum. He tried to revive the most tragic day in the history of the city based on the discovered archeological material. The author’s main aim was to make the last day of the city as memorable as possible by describing the scenes with fictional characters and cruelty characteristic of the epoch. As we know from history, Rustavi was completely razed and burned by Berka Khan, a Muslimized Mongol. To further symbolize this fact, the author chose the biggest Christian holiday, the day after Easter, Monday, the day of the dead. It is on this day that a fierce enemy attacks the Christian city, mercilessly destroys it and burns it down.

“They did not get a lot of loot, but there were several bigger, richer cities ahead, and now their greedy and ruthless minds were running there.

Rustavi was burning and turning into ash. There was nobody left to put out the fire and save anything” (Lomtadze, 1975).

Thus, the demolition of Rustavi as a medieval city is at the hands of the historical enemy, which is marked in the Soviet and post-Soviet period on the basis of religion, Islam. The modern discourse of Rustavi also stands on this dichotomy, we are Georgians and they are infidel, Muslims. “Georgian city” creates and shapes the ethno-demographic picture of the region. The former, communist functionaries of the city explain the importance of an industrial city in post-socialist Rustavi by the Georgian ethnic component of the city, which affects the overall picture of the region. The former editor of the newspaper *Metalurg*, in 2013, when talking to me about Rustavi, shows the merit of the communists on the grounds that this region more Georgian by the construction of Rustavi (Jakhua, 2013). Those who view the activities of the communists differently, blame the concentration of Azerbaijanis on the communists, who additionally brought them from Russia and settled them here (a 45-year-old woman). On the whole, the question is what role Rustavi plays in the Kvemo Kartli region and what factor it creates, how it presents itself to the Georgian society, which is also reflected in religious beliefs.

The Azerbaijani community is the most densely populated in the Kvemo Kartli region. Their layout and Soviet experience, when the language of communication in the country was Russian, created a significant barrier to their post-Soviet civic integration. Despite state-sponsored measures to teach the state language to its citizens, alienation and barriers still remain to be a problem, including on the religious grounds. It should be noted, however, that Azerbaijani civic activists place the least emphasis on religion and are more focused on establishing and protecting their cultural identities. To illustrate, they try to celebrate Novruz Bayrami with the most special emphasis, which for them is not a religious but a cultural-traditional holiday. We have also seen attempts to declare this day as a bank holiday, etc. We can also observe their attempt to show their own identity as well as being a part of Georgia while protesting the image clip of this region. The clip prepared by the Kvemo Kartli Governor's Administration presented the culture of the region homogeneously. In response, they produced an alternative video clip that this group considered to be more inclusive and better reflected the existing reality (Arjevanidze, 2020).

Recently, from 2018-2019, civic activism and interesting cases of self-organization of youth groups have been

observed in the Azerbaijani communities of Kvemo Kartli. Such is the case with the platform "Salami", which aims to strengthen and protect the culture and language of the Azerbaijani community in Georgia. They try to present issues that are aimed at the necessary changes in the community, such as early marriage, kidnapping of a woman, etc. It is noteworthy that they actually have little or no religious issues (Hacıyeva, 2020).

Unlike the youth of the Azerbaijani community of Kvemo Kartli, most of the youth of Pankisi are marked with a religious identity. The marker of their religiosity also finds physical expressions such as wearing the hijab. It is also noteworthy that the Kist population of Pankisi is fully fluent in the Georgian language and in this regard, there is no problem with their integration into Georgian society. The problem is that a large proportion of Pankisi youth are turning away from traditional Islam and attributing themselves to Salafism or Wahhabism. A very big problem a few years ago was their interest in Islamic State and their going to Syria (Barkaia & Janelidze, 2018).

Today, Muslims make up 10% of the total population of Georgia. They do not represent a homogeneous group in the country. Muslims differ from each other in ethnicity and religious practice. Muslims living in Adjara are ethnic Georgians and

followers of Sunni Islam, while Azerbaijanis living in Kvemo Kartli are mostly followers of the Shiite tradition, although some of them also recognize Sunni and Salafi Islam. Part of the Kists living in Pankisi are followers of traditional Sufi Islam, the other part, mostly young people, follow Salafi and Wahhabi tradition. However, the updated data and the number of followers of each branch of Islam in Georgia is difficult to determine, because we do not find a differentiation in the general census, unlike Christianity (Abuladze 2021).

The issue of Muslims in Georgia is closely linked to the idea of nationalism and the issue of “Georgianness” and citizenship. Accordingly, state policy is changing in the wake of developed processes. Matthias Pelkmans, who has been researching the religiosity of the population of Adjara since the early 2000s, speaks of re-Christianization as a painful process of returning to the ancestral faith. In the article published in 2014, he tells us about the paradox that followed the collapse of the Soviet system and freedom of religion on the example of Adjara and Kyrgyzstan. The freedom of post-Soviet religion has shown that “freedom” creates constraints and inequality with new possibilities.

„In 2001, the imam of a small town in Ajara, a predominantly Muslim region of Georgia, told me, “During communism we

had more freedom; we still had our own lives. Now, we are losing everything.” (Pelkmans 2014)

According to Pelkmans, the selective nostalgia and memory of the imam of Adjara is related to the fact that in the Soviet era they remained Muslims and after independence when they were given the opportunity to pray in public, the devil plays their game, Islam diminishes. Here we are talking about the fact that “Georgianness” has been defined by Orthodox terminology since the 90s. The Georgian Orthodox Church significantly determines the understanding of Georgians and Georgia, it also marks it in the physical space, which is part of the interpretation of the past and the cultural heritage of the country. According to Serrano, we cannot explain the self-confidence of the Georgian Orthodox Church only by the communist experience, after a long wait to occupy the public space after the private one, it is still mainly political will and the strategic goal is to define the connection between religion and the national identity. It is also determined by the will to mark the territory of the country as Christian. Consequently, the construction of new temples is not merely the opening of a chapel, but is linked to the creation of a national landscape that reflects the important convergence of the religion and the national identity (Serrano, 2010).

The equalization of Orthodoxy with Georgia and the marking of Georgian land with this sign was associated with the greatest severity and resistance by the demand of the Adjara Muslims for a place of worship. Since 2012, there have been several instances of controversy on religious grounds where covert opposition has escalated into open confrontation and has highlighted the shortcomings of state-produced or unproduced policies. It should be noted that open religious controversies in Georgia were related to Adjara Muslims, who are known as eco-migrants in different parts of Georgia. The high-profile religious controversy involves the attempt to set aside a place of worship for the Muslims that the Christian population opposes. Any attempt by Muslims to build a shrine or mark the site is counterproductive. Similar cases occur when the population of a town or village is mixed. Although all conflicts leave room for the theory of conspiracy on religious grounds, the complexity of the issue also points to its depth (Khutsishvili, 2013).

Any controversy on religious grounds leads to an interpretation of history. The most popular issue related to the permit to build a religious building is the construction of a new mosque in Batumi. The mosque needed to be built back in the 90s, however, the decision has not been reached yet and the dispute has even become a topic of legal deliberation.

Sophio Zviadadze, who talks about the fading of Islam in Batumi, discusses the topic in a broad historical context. Part of this public discussion is the dispute over the restoration of the Aziziye Mosque. This issue was the subject of negotiations between the Georgian and Turkish states in the context of caring for cultural heritage⁴. The essential issue that the researcher is talking about is the issue of interpretation of how the community approaches this or that heritage site. The Aziziye Mosque, the restoration of which would have eliminated the problem of a deficit of shrines in Batumi, on the other hand, could have become a historic site where Georgian Muslims made an unwavering decision to stay within Georgia. Instead, the reconstruction of the historic mosque was linked to expectations and fears and was rejected by the state (Zviadadze, 2021). In order to regulate these and other issues, the state tried to have more control over religious processes and especially Islam. Davit Abuladze calls the support of the state for various Islamic groups since 2011 “Statification”, which facilitates its division into traditional and non-traditional Islam. Part of the continuation of this policy is the

⁴ According to the negotiations between Georgia and the Turkish state in 2011, the Turkish side would allow Georgians to participate in the rehabilitation of the Khazhti, Oshki, Ishkhani and Otkhtavi churches on its territory. The negotiations failed due to the position of the Georgian Patriarchate.

establishment of the State Agency for Religious Affairs, the work of which is highly criticized by non-governmental organizations (Parulava, 2016) (Liberali, 2018) (Dumbadze, 2018) (Mikeladze 2020).

Muslim Community in Rustavi

The appointment of an Azerbaijani-speaking citizen of Georgia as a representative of the Agency for Religious Affairs in Kvemo Kartli may indicate the tendency and the policy of the state. Abai Pashayev, who speaks good Georgian, sits in a modest room inside the Rustavi City Hall. I asked him for a meeting on the phone, to which I received a generous consent. He politely met me in front of the Rustavi City Hall and invited me to his still unfinished office. After a short conversation, it turned out that he could not answer my questions either formally or informally. Questions related to the activities of the agency and the religious situation in Rustavi, could only be asked formally in writing. When I sent an official letter on his behalf, it turned out that the addressee of the letter must have been not him but the head of the agency, from whom I would receive a reply. Moreover, the printed letter was to be delivered to the building of the State Chancellery. As it is clear from the details of this small meeting, the appointment of an ethnic Azerbaijani citizen was only symbolic and,

in fact, he does not participate in the decision-making, he has no authority to speak on behalf of the agency, or delegate anything. It is noteworthy that he symbolically participates in religious events in the city and represents the agency, however, only on a nominal level. This fact as a whole reflects well the state's attempt at the formal level to make its approach to religious issues inclusive, nevertheless, devoid of real content.

The majority of Azerbaijanis living in Rustavi are followers of Shiite Islam, although many of them associate religious rituals only with the basic stages of the life cycle, such as birth and death. A religious servant, therefore, only appears in such moments. As I learn from Rustavi Akhund, there was a case when he had served Sunni Azerbaijanis as well. The line between Sunnis and Shiites of the Azerbaijani community has become increasingly blurred since the emergence of Wahhabis in the city. As Rustavi Akhund tells us, now a representative of the Azerbaijani community will tell you that he/she is a Muslim and that's it (Muhammad 2020).

The main challenge for modern Rustavi and its interpretation is to find a Muslim community and a place of worship for them in the urban space of the city. The largest ethnic and at the same time the religious minority in Rustavi is the Azerbaijani community. According to GEOSTAT, they amount to about 4% of

the city's population. According to these data, they are the largest minority in the city⁵.

There are no mosques or shrines in Rustavi at the moment. Searching for Muslim traces in the city is a serious difficulty as they can be said to be invisible. Moreover, the construction of a Muslim shrine is a taboo. Neither the majority, Orthodox Christians, nor Muslims want to talk openly about this issue. One cannot come across any publicly stated demand for the construction of a Muslim shrine. The Chairman of the State Agency for Religious Affairs, to my question whether they have ever received the request of the Muslim community to build a shrine, answered as follows: "At this stage, no request has been received from the Muslim community of Georgia regarding the construction of a religious building" (Vashakidze, 2019).

Only from personal conversations do we learn that a Muslim shrine was opened in one of the private houses on Sanapiro Street, although it is not registered as such and obtaining information about it is a serious challenge. Its existence is only at the level of rumors and most of the city population has no information about it. Only a few Rustavi residents have confirmed its existence in the past time.

An Azerbaijani girl from Rustavi says that during her school years, she went there several times 7 years ago and she does not even remember which building it was. She says: "I am not a believer and, therefore, I am less interested in such issues. My parents are not active believers either, we celebrate religious holidays in the family. As a teenager, I was more religious, I fasted, I was interested in relevant literature ... My father was a little nervous about it, my family was more concerned about me being very religious rather than about not being interested in religion at all (Salome, 2019).

The information about the attempt to build a Muslim shrine and the triggered resistance cannot be found in either the electronic or print media. Neither the representatives of the Azerbaijani community nor the Christian population of the city wants to remember it. In this regard, the city architect responds that he has never heard anything like this, recalling only one case when the New Islamic group members asked to put a sign on the facade of the house, but due to the protest of the local population, they later changed their mind (Architect, 2021).

An Azeri young man who considers himself a devout Muslim and is a akhund in the Shiite hierarchy, says that there was indeed a gathering place for Muslims near the Sanapiro street in Rustavi, which was rented, but no information is available about it today. He says that believers

⁵ Official GEOSTAT data vary, as the city's Akhud told us the population of Azerbaijan should exceed 10,000.

gather in different places, in private dwellings, to pray.

“A few days ago, we had some important days for us Shiite Muslims. We remembered Muhammad's grandson for 10 days. Since we do not have a meeting place, we rented a small restaurant and paid 100 GEL a day, what else could we do?” (Muhamed, 2020).

He listed three problems that he thinks the Azerbaijani community has been facing in Rustavi for a long time: the issue of a cemetery for Muslims, a mosque, a place of worship and the lack of a school building. The problem of the cemetery has just been solved; the City Hall allocated a plot of land for this a one year ago.

As for the mosque, he recalls when its construction failed due to the activity of the Orthodox population, they collected signatures and submitted them to the City Hall. It is impossible to find information about this fact, as it has not been widely reported. This fact is remembered by only the part of the population of Rustavi that was a direct witness of the developments. A young student from Rustavi comments on it:

“Rustavi is a colorful city, its diversity is expressed in ethnic and religious variety. There are not a lot of problems, though one was related to the mosque. There is an uninhabited area near my apartment, it is a swampy place and they wanted to build a mosque there, but the Christian population of the surrounding

areas protested. The residents of the apartment collected the signatures of the apartments, on the basis of which the City Hall decided not to give permission to build a mosque, thus ending the issue. It would have been 2009 or 2010” (Nino, 2019).

Appearing in public in this way for Muslims is associated with a number of problems. Despite their large numbers, the position is not or cannot be expressed publicly, which may be related to the stereotypical perception of history and the peculiarities of the region. The absence of a Muslim shrine in Rustavi can be explained by several factors, one of which is the high rate of integration of Rustavi Azeris into Georgian society- unlike Marneuli, Dmanisi or Bolnisi Azeris, Rustavi Azeris speak Georgian flawlessly. Second, there are many Azerbaijani villages near Rustavi, where you can find Muslim shrines, and, consequently, the believers living in Rustavi mainly go there. Rustavi Azerbaijanis also take into account the negative environment created by the erection of a monument of Heydar Aliyev in Rustavi in 2013. The placement of the monument to Heydar Aliyev on Old Rustavi Friendship Avenue was interpreted by the authorities as a continuation of the tradition of friendship between the people that the city had during the Soviet period, however, it was perceived differently by the population. All in all, the lack of a Muslim shrine in Rustavi does not cause particular anxiety

and open resistance among the Azerbaijani population.

The highest religious official in Rustavi, Muhamed, tells us that at the moment he does not think it is right to raise the issue of building a mosque in Rustavi, because there is no time for that yet. However, what he is asking from the government is to control the Wahhabis and Salafis flow and to protect them from their influence. He draws an interesting parallel between Jehovah's Witnesses and the Wahhabis, arguing that just as the Jehovah's Witnesses are a threat to Christianity, the spread of Wahhabism and Salafism is a threat to traditional Islam in Georgia (Muhammad, 2020).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the most interesting issue in Rustavi, still remains to be how the representatives of this or that religious community perceive the existing reality in post-socialist Rustavi, where and what they see as the problem and how these issues are articulated. What kind of spaces are created for conversations and narratives, where we can observe certain demands for Muslims whether or not they should appear in the city? What we can see in the city today is, on the one hand, the high integration of the Azerbaijani community, which is due to their fluency in the Georgian language, and the weak articulation of their position, on the other. Although they are the largest religious and

ethnic minority in the city, their attempts to appear in public are less or almost non-existent. This may be related to the perception of Islam in general in the society, as well as to the peculiarity of the region, more precisely, the ethnic and religious composition of Kvemo Kartli. The research showed that part of the young Azerbaijani community living in the city no longer feels the importance of religion, for others it is related to the new Islamic movement, which can be considered in the context of the self-identification of the Azerbaijani community as a whole and the process of civic integration. The Soviet and post-Soviet experience of the city, where the understanding of diversity is different, naturally plays an important role in the self-realization of the Azerbaijani community. Despite the fact that the construction of the city was linked to the joint efforts of the "Forty Brothers" by the communists, in the post-socialist era, the friendship between peoples is still perceived as an unbelievable value and is associated with more fears and dangers. The sense of danger and resistance for the clergy of the Muslim community of Rustavi is not related to the non-dominant religious group and the Christian population of the city, but to the new radical movement of Islam and their expansion. The emergence of this problem can be considered as a manifestation of state policy as the State Agency for Religious Affairs cooperates and funds

only religious groups traditionally considered in Georgia. Thus, it is practically impossible to search for the manifestation of Islam in Rustavi, but its

ghost is an important factor for both Georgian and Azerbaijani communities in the city.

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Some important factors hindering the civic integration of ethnic minorities

ABSTRACT

An important aspect of civic nation-building is to integrate minorities in country's political, economic and cultural life. The main problem is related to 2 particular regions of the country: 55% of ethnic minorities in Georgia live in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti (except, of course, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, where, unfortunately, the jurisdiction of the Georgian state does not extend for obvious reasons). Civic integration is hindered by deep-rooted ethnic-nationalist tendencies rooted in the majority of the population and stereotypes (often deliberately formed by external forces). These national mythologies and notions play one of the crucial roles in the formation of national self-identification. Ethno-nationalist tendencies are strong both in minorities and in ethnic Georgians. There are several factors behind the emergence of the ethnonationalism in Georgia. First of all, it is the legacy of Soviet totalitarianism, as well as the result of the current socio-political situation. Understanding these two factors will give us a better answer as to why ethnic-nationalist sentiments are still prevailing in Georgia and why the integration of the ethnic minorities is hindered, despite being repeatedly declared by the state. The language barrier of ethnic minorities is also an important problem in the process of integration into society. The education system should make the knowledge of the state language accessible to ethnic minorities and, at the same time, ensure the protection of minority languages. To do this, the state must maximize and encourage local staff; The general system of education should ensure the upbringing of the citizen of the country and not put any group (even the majority) in an advantageous situation. show the advantage of any (even the majority) group

Keywords: *Ethnic minorities, civic integration, stereotypes, State language.*

Introduction

Georgia is a multilingual and multi-ethnic country. According to the 2014 census, ethnic Georgians make up 86.83 % of the total

population, while other ethnic groups - 13, 17% (see Figure 1); 6.3 % of them are Azerbaijanis and 4.5 % are Armenians (Census Results, 2014).

As a result of the Soviet ethno-linguistic policy, both, Georgians and ethnic minorities found it difficult to view themselves as members of one, united civic nation.

Methodology

The purpose of the present article is to highlight the main obstacles to the integration of minorities based on existing research and to suggest appropriate state and non-governmental organizations to address them.

Attitudes of minorities and existing harmful stereotypes

Ethnicity in the Soviet Union was institutionalized and language policy was a central issue of ethno-national policy, which excluded minorities from the titular nationalities of the union republics. Titular nations considered the union republics as their possessions and treated other ethnicities with discrimination. After the collapse of the USSR, newly independent Georgia faced a challenge of the construction of a civic national identity. Despite the fact that all the residents of Georgia obtained Georgian citizenship, minorities could not fully participate in state life and before the Rose revolution often were regarded as fifth column (Kachkachishvili, 2019, 86-89).

Unlike ethnocentric approach of Gamsakhurdia and genuine neglect of Shevardnadze, Saakashvili often spoke about political dimensions of nation. His government

understood the importance of language policy for minority integration, but implementation of policy proved to be very difficult.

The difficulty of the problems in the given field is that the minorities living in Georgia significantly differ from one another in terms of number, type of residence (compact or dispersed) and degree of integration into the social life of the country (Gabunia, Odzeli, Tabatadze, 2008, pp. 5-15).

There are four regions with minority compact settlements in Georgia: Abkhazia, South Ossetia (Shida Kartli), Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti. Kists are settled in Kakheti (including the Pankisi Valley) but in total, they compose only 7% of the region's population. Some minority groups have compact settlements or are dispersed in the inner territories of the country. These groups are Russians, Greeks, Kurds and Yezidis, Assyrians, Jews, Ukrainians etc. (Gabunia, 2014, pp. 3-20).

Even internally these groups are not homogeneous. For example, the Greek Diaspora consists of two groups: one speaking the Turkish language and the other – Modern Greek. Azeris living in Kvemo Kartli and Shida Kartli also differ from each other. The fact that they receive secondary education in different languages (in Georgian in Shida Kartli and in Azerbaijanian in Kvemo Kartli) plays a big role.

It is important to mention that Georgian

regions compactly resided by ethnic minorities border their historical motherland. For example, the region of Kvemo Kartli, which is mostly resided by ethnic Azerbaijanis, borders Azerbaijan. The region, Javakheti, mostly resided by ethnic Armenians, borders Armenia. This fact increases the possibility of separatism and non-loyalty toward the Georgian state (Svanidze, 2002, Tabatadze, 2008). On the other hand, minorities feel as second class citizens. They fear assimilation as a threat to their identities (Kachkachishvili, 2019, 86-89).

Another important issue is the ethnic Georgian population settled in the compact residences of ethnic minorities are minorities themselves (the so-called “majority in the minority” - Tabatadze, 2016, 35). For instance, ethnic Georgians are a minority in several municipalities in Kvemo Kartli (Marneuli, Gardabani, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tsalka, and Samtskhe-Javakheti (Ninotsminda, Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe).

An important aspect of civic nation-building is to integrate minorities in country's political, economic and cultural life (Kachkachishvili, 2019, 86-89).

Although Georgia has made some progress in building a democratic state in the last two decades, the foundations of sustainable democratic institutions are still weak. Amidst such democratic institutions, the formation of ethnic minorities into a single civil society

becomes difficult. This process is hindered by several factors: on the one hand, the distrust of the minority community towards state political institutions and, on the other hand - the weakness of these institutions. All of these factors lead to alienation and isolationism of different groups of society (not just ethnic minorities). Also, many Georgians express their identity by their ethnicity rather than in civic terms.

This alienation and isolationism are further exacerbated by the existing underdeveloped economic market and low-intensity economic cooperation. Therefore, the interrelationship of existing ethnocultural groups is largely based on group superstitions and stereotypes formed in the Soviet period.

The main problem is related to 2 particular regions of the country: 55% of ethnic minorities in Georgia live in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti (except, of course, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, where, unfortunately, the jurisdiction of the Georgian state does not extend for obvious reasons).

Azerbaijanis live mainly compactly in different parts of Georgia (Kakheti, Shida Kartli). However, the majority of Azerbaijanis living in Georgia are settled in Kvemo Kartli. Armenians live mainly in Samtskhe-Javakheti region and Tsalka municipality, as well as in big cities (Tbilisi, Rustavi, Batumi, etc.). (Gabunia, Odzeli, Tabatadze, 2008, pp. 5-15).

The institutional approach to the process of

civic integration of ethnic minorities was established in 2005. Georgia, in line with the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, developed an approach to respect the ethnic identity of minorities and to create appropriate conditions for the realisation of their rights. In 2009, "the National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration and the Action Plan for 2009-2014" was prepared, defining the state's approach to civic integration. In 2015, the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and the Action Plan for 2015-2020 was approved. The Action Plan is one of the most crucial tools of the country's civil integration policy. the National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration and the Action Plan for 2009-2014", ("the National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration... 2009, 2015, 2021).

It is worth mentioning that the implementation of the Action Plan for Tolerance and Civic Integration was monitored annually and interested persons (including minorities themselves) had the opportunity to get acquainted with it and express their views on shortcomings and issues of the process.

In the context of the weak democratic institutions, there are frequent cases when the law "remains only on paper" and the mechanisms for enforcing laws are either weak or do not exist at all. Therefore, even if the law is "perfect" and "ideal", its execution and enforcement still remain questionable. Civil

social activity is needed to trace and track shortcomings and flaws (developing recommendations, active cooperation with responsible executive / legislative representatives/decision-makers, regular informing of international institutions).

Civic integration is hindered by deep- rooted ethnic-nationalist tendencies rooted in the majority of the population and stereotypes (often deliberately formed by external forces). These national mythologies and notions play one of the crucial roles in the formation of national self-identification. Ethno-nationalist tendencies are strong both in minorities and in ethnic Georgians (Kachkachishvili, 2019, 86-89).

There are several factors behind the emergence of the ethnonationalism in Georgia. First of all, it is the legacy of Soviet totalitarianism, as well as the result of the current socio-political situation. Understanding these two factors will give us a better answer as to why ethnic-nationalist sentiments are still prevailing in Georgia and why the integration of the ethnic minorities is hindered, despite being repeatedly declared by the state.

The perception of Georgia as a homeland by minorities and their loyal attitude is evidenced by numerous studies in the field; for instance, in a 2009 study (Dundua, Abashidze, 2009), to the question,, "What does it mean to be a citizen of Georgia"? The answer: "Live in the homeland" is quite high among Azerbaijanis

(83.6%) and Armenians (87.3%), i.e. - the majority of minorities living in Georgia consider Georgia as their homeland. However, the situation is drastically different when the question is about the involvement in the state and political life of the country. Azerbaijanis have the lowest rate on this question (0.7%). This once again proves the isolation and exclusion of Azerbaijanis. The rate of political involvement is quite high among ethnic Armenians.

The answers to the question "Do you face problems on the public and political arena because of your ethnicity and religion?" are quite promising. A number of respondents who do not work in the public or state service do not face the problem due to their religious or ethnic affiliation. The perception of Georgia as a homeland by minorities and their loyal attitude is evidenced by numerous studies in the field (Dundua, Abashidze, 2009, p. 125.); However, we cannot say that the survey results reflect the real picture: other types of in-depth studies reveal numerous facts of discrimination; It is plausible that minorities are reluctant to talk about existing problems due to their closed community.

One of the important factors in the field of civic self-identification is the specific geographical location of densely populated regions. As discussed in the introduction, it is important to mention that Georgian regions compactly resided by ethnic minorities border

their motherland. For example, the region of Kvemo Kartli, which is mostly resided by ethnic Azeris, borders state of Azerbaijan. The region, Javakheti, mostly resided by ethnic Armenians, borders the state Armenia. This fact increases the possibility of separatism and non-loyalty toward the Georgian state. It should be noted that part of the population considers themselves citizens of Azerbaijan / Armenia, despite having Georgian ID and Passport. There is an interesting trend in Samtskhe-Javakheti that most men travel to Russia during the summer season and work there; Consequently, a large part of the population of Javakheti has both Georgian and Russian passports. In addition to this, a high number of the population owns an Armenian passport as well. Naturally, the phenomenon of "three-passport" means that people are bypassing the law, which indicates the existence of corruption schemes at both the local and central levels. In addition to this, this fact indicates a not-so-favourable level of loyalty to state institutions from one part of the population.

It should be noted that there are far less "more-than-one-passport" precedents in Kvemo Kartli.

For their part, the majority (ethnic Georgians) still do not "recognise" minorities as full members of this country. Studies (Dundua, Abashidze, 2009; Future of Georgia, 2021) show a rather low level of intercultural

sensitivity and attitudes towards ethnic, religious or other types of minorities; There is a similar attitude on the part of minorities as well: the fear of assimilation (especially in the Armenian community) leads to the search for a supporter, a helper (which, unfortunately, they do not see in Georgians) which they "find" in their historical homeland (Kachkachishvili, 2019, 86-89).

Awareness of ethnic minorities about the national priorities and goals of the state

One of the main issues hindering the civic integration is the so-called information vacuum which is a post-Soviet phenomenon. The Soviet Union has caused numerous problems in Georgia, many of them still affecting the country, including inter-ethnic relations. Despite its official status (Georgian was declared as the state language during the Soviet Union), Russian has been the language of communication within minorities for decades. The 30 years of independence have not brought us a significant breakthrough in this regard; It can even be said that the situation has worsened: in the past, Russian was spoken by both the majority and the minorities. Today, the situation is different – the fields of using Russian is gradually narrowing since the 90, it has not been possible to replace it with any other international language (English) or the state language (Georgian). The reason behind it is complex and requires separate consideration

(see below).

It is obvious that we have serious shortcomings in obtaining information about the current socio-political or economic processes in the country: Georgian was named as the main language on which people obtain information in Kists (100%), Ossetians (99.6%) and ethnic groups living in urban settlements (89.5%). The practice of receiving information in Georgian is much lower among Armenian (48.9%) and Azerbaijani (60.9%) respondents. Overall, 78.9% of Kist respondents, 75.2% of Ossetians, 56% of urban minorities, 29.2% of Armenians and 29.1% of Azerbaijanis obtain socio-political information about Georgia in Georgian (Census Results, 2014).

Mass media has a significant role in this direction. We should highlight the role the First Channel (Public Broadcaster), which is obliged by “the Law on Broadcasting” to “reflect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, age and gender diversity of the society in the programme” (“the National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration... 2015).

Several steps have been taken in this direction: the Public Broadcaster has provided the news program "Moambe" in five languages on its own air, as well as through additional regional media outlets. Since 2016, it has been possible to access the news programme Moambe has been in Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian languages. The Public Broadcaster also offered daily programmes (26-minute) in

Abkhazian, Ossetian and Russian on Channel 2; However, this project was halted in 2017. The reason may be the launch of the seven-language (Georgian, Abkhazian, Ossetian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, English and Russian) web portal www.1tv.ge under the Public Broadcaster in September 2017. In 2017, the Public Broadcaster developed a special media strategy to increase access to media for ethnic minorities ("the National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration... 2015). The main aims of the media strategy and action plan are, on the one hand, to provide comprehensive information about the current events in the country to the representatives of ethnic minorities in a language they understand, and on the other hand - to popularise the culture, traditions and values of ethnic minorities; In addition to this, they aim to show the importance of their participation in the life of the country.

Ethnocentric attitudes towards minorities in the dominant ethnic group

A number of interesting studies have been conducted in Georgia (especially interesting studies in educational institutions - public schools and universities) in terms of intercultural relations. Studies have shown a stereotypical and degrading attitude of the majority towards ethnic minorities. For instance, the most obvious and alarming trend was observed in Bolnisi. Children spoke about

the incidents, where ethnic Azerbaijani students were bullied and abused. For example, some students refer to Azerbaijani students and "Tatars" and mention other abusive attitudes and behaviours, such as excluding and separating them from students of other nationalities (because the student had a speech problem in Georgian). A clear trend is observed schools and universities do not teach them to accept and recognise minorities. Instead, they teach them how to adapt to this existing reality (Salome Dundua, Zviad Abashidze, 2009).

Parents talk about the low self-confidence of ethnic non-Georgian students, which is due to the very low representation of minorities in the public sphere. They believe that when students see that no member of his/her ethnic group is in the parliament, in the ministry, in various public organisations, they form a certain idea about their own future perspectives and such perspectives are neither diverse, nor desirable. Consequently, students from the very early years subconsciously link their future plans and careers to the countries of origin (the so-called "historical homeland" – Svanidze, Tabatadze, 2011, p. 39).

In general, students have a positive attitude towards other nations and races. Even if the information they have contains only negative events and examples about a particular nation or country, students always try to emphasize the fact that "there might be good people among them". Perceptual expectations that exist for

different countries are actually based on scanty, fragmented information. Students realise that it is impossible that there are countries with only “good” or “bad” people. They also understand that the place of residence does not determine a person’s characters or actions. However, such attitudes are based more on one's own, small experience and thoughts rather than on the reasoning in the classroom and the conclusions drawn from various examples.

Parents of ethnically non-Georgian students discuss distinctive approaches of teachers towards the students. They believe that some teachers treat non-Georgian students unfairly and value their knowledge less than Georgians. It is noteworthy that ethnic segregation emphasises not only a negative but also a positive context and discrimination. For instance, if an ethnically non-Georgian student performs an activity well, the teacher emphasises and encourages the student to perform a Georgian dance. In fact, teachers usually highlight minorities’ achievements but emphasise their ethnic background as well. By doing so, teachers separate ethnically non-Georgian from Georgian students (Dundua, Abashidze, 2009).

Cultural alienation between the minorities and the majority

Different ethnocultural groups have coexisted in Georgia for centuries. In addition to this, there are many historical cases of active

involvement and participation of minorities in important socio-political processes for the country. It should be mentioned, however, that the situation is not as favourable today: these groups have little or no knowledge about one another’s cultural values and achievements.

Perceptions of each other's cultures by ethnic groups (this applies to both minorities and majorities) are often based on stereotypes and prejudices rather than on rational communication.

The structure and nature of intercultural relations should not be understood as simple relations of cultural nature. It has much more serious dimensions. The current situation is due to the environmental conditions in which minorities had to live. The fragile formal-institutional context (and heavy Soviet legacy) of the Georgian public-political space plays a crucial role in the exclusion of minorities.

When it comes to the field of culture, the most important challenge for the government is to protect the cultural heritage of the minorities and, at the same time, fully integrate it into the Georgian cultural space. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports is funding and implementing a number of practical projects aimed at preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities, including Diverse Georgia, Multi-Ethnic Art festival - "Under One Sky - Dialogue of Cultures", "All cultures are different but equal" etc.

However, much more effective and efficient steps are needed, which is related to the field of **Problems in the field of education of minorities**

There are 208 non-Georgian language public schools in Georgia. In addition to this, there are non-Georgian language sectors in Georgian public schools with Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani languages of instruction (total of 89 such sectors. A total of 51,737 students study in non-Georgian language schools and sectors.

As mentioned above, the language barrier for ethnic minorities is a significant problem in the process of integration into society. According to the Law on Public Servants, administrative proceedings in public institutions are conducted only in the state language, which is a significant barrier for minorities in terms of employment in public services. However, the lack of / low degree of state language knowledge is only **one link in the chain of problems** that emerges in the field of minority education.

The situation is quite difficult in terms of pre-school institutions: the enrollment rate of children in Georgia (69.5%) is much lower than the European target (95%). Drastic measures should be taken by the state in this regard. Preschools are funded by the local self-governments and are not directly subordinated to the Ministry of Education. This inherently reduces the quality and effectiveness of

education and PR.

teaching. In addition, some municipalities have a rather small budget, which hinders the opening of preschools on the basis of the actual needs.

Due to the existing situation, the introduction of bilingual education at the preschool level is hindered. Bilingual education at the preschool level is of great importance and should be promoted by both the central government and the municipalities. Unfortunately, even the pilot kindergartens that try to introduce a bilingual model face many bureaucratic issues by kindergarten agencies (redistribution of hours, reduction of salaries in professional development programmes, inability to split groups, language redistribution according to days or days of the week, etc.).

As for the schools, the main issue is the qualification of teachers. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a very specific situation developed in terms of training and retraining of non-Georgian language schools. It can be said that after the 90s, schools are no longer staffed with new, qualified personnel. There are practically no teacher training programs in Georgian higher education institutions that train teachers for non-Georgian language schools (due to the linguistic specificity of these schools). Consequently, the average age of teachers is very high and more than 60% of teachers are already of retirement age. Of

course, this factor affects the quality of education in non-Georgian schools and Georgian public schools. A separate issue is a discriminatory approach towards teachers of non-Georgian language schools in terms of involvement in teacher development schemes.

Another problematic aspect is learning resources. Until 2018, there was a question of the quality of the translation of school textbooks. This problem has been solved at the elementary level since 2018, however, the issue of translating the lower-secondary and intermediate level textbooks is still to be solved. In addition to this, the existing textbooks for Georgian as a second language do not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The government should take effective and drastic measures in terms of teaching the state language. All local and international surveys show extremely low levels of Georgian language proficiency among non-Georgian language school graduates. The Ministry of Education has been implementing various projects since 2005 to support the teaching of Georgian as a second language in non-Georgian language schools. However, the success rate of such projects is quite low and need to be modified and refined. In this regard, we should again mention preferential policy (1 + 4 programme) and define it as an exception among these projects. This programme has been implemented by the Government of Georgia since 2010, which has had a positive

impact on the rates of higher education received by minorities in Georgian higher education institutions: The trust in state higher education institutions has increased and there is hope that young people will be employed in Georgia after receiving higher education; 2) The number of young people who can continue their education in the Georgian language has increased; 3) The change in the law to pass the general skills test in the mother tongue has given more motivation to young people to get higher education; 4) The level of awareness of the non-Georgian speaking population about the changes in the law has increased; 5) There are successful examples of participants in the programme, who are already studying in Georgian higher education institutions.

In 2015-2018, within the quota system, more than 5,000 students were enrolled in Georgian higher education institutions. Over 3,000 were Azerbaijani-speaking, 2,000 Armenian-speaking and 10-Ossetian-speaking (In 2016 and 2019, Abkhazian-speaking students were enrolled at TSU, however, they were unable to complete their studies). The available data unequivocally indicate the increase in enrollment in Georgian higher education institutions.

Increasing state interest in multilingual education is of great importance in the process of reforming non-Georgian language schools: with the support of the OSCE HCNM, a pilot project was launched in 2017 in 20 pilot

schools, where a separate model of bilingual education was introduced. Within this project, natural sciences are taught in the state language in the third and fourth grade. The project is implemented by the Center for Civic Integration and Interethnic Relations in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, with the financial support of the OSCE High Commissioner Office for National Minorities.

Within the framework of the project, proper teaching resources were developed, which are used in the pilot classes, the principals of the pilot school were trained, as well as the teachers of the primary school and teachers of Georgian as a second language. Various obstacles emerged during the implementation process, making it difficult for schools to adapt to different model due to inflexible curriculum, schedule issues, salary issues, and formal side of the scheme or some other reasons. Therefore, drastic measures have to be taken in order to effectively implement similar experimental projects or general multilingual education reform. Improvements must be introduced both in terms of learning content, and its organisation and management (Tabatadze, 2008).

Since 2015, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University has launched a multilingual teacher education programme. Samtskhe-Javakheti University implemented this program in the form of a module in the integrated bachelor-master program of primary education

teacher training. Taking into consideration the age distribution of teachers in non-Georgian schools, it is clear that this programme does not fully provide and replace teachers in non-Georgian schools, especially given the fact that these graduates are only primary school teachers and the deficit of teachers is traceable in lower-secondary and intermediate levels.

In summary, despite the important priorities set out in the State Strategy and Action Plan, the Ministry of Education and Science has not been able to respond adequately to the challenges and has not made any drastic changes in the education of minorities, which we believe is necessary.

Conclusion and recommendations

Ethnic minorities declare and consider Georgia as their homeland and are not alienated from the idea of Georgian statehood in general. Naturally, this is a positive phenomenon, but at the same time, it is a fact that the participation of minorities in public and political spheres is extremely limited.

The language barrier is often considered as the main catalyst in the alienation of ethnic minorities; Of course, knowledge of the state language is a powerful tool of communication, although language proficiency alone is not enough to eradicate ethno-isolationism. Perhaps the most important is the development of **sustainable democratic institutions**. The country must achieve an environment in which the interests of each individual are taken into

consideration and the principle of meritocracy is better protected.

The education system should make the knowledge of the state language accessible to ethnic minorities and, at the same time, ensure the protection of minority languages. To do this, the state must maximize and encourage local staff; The general system of education should ensure the upbringing of the citizen of the country and not put any group (even the majority) in an advantageous situation. Show the advantage of any (even the majority) group.

Intercultural educational projects should be encouraged to represent the positive and influential role of minorities in the historical development of Georgia.

In regions densely populated by minorities, **it is important to ensure the development and support of the region-specific fields and sectors.** It is also advisable to promote / develop industrial centers in those regions, which will create jobs and encourage the economic activity of citizens.

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From The Panther Skin to the Translations of the Holy Books by Georgian Jews - Linguistic Parallels

ABSTRACT

In the present paper, we will discuss some of the linguistic parallels that exist between the panther and these translations. Of course, such parallels can be inferred if the above assumption about the timing of the translation is correct and, on the other hand, given the immeasurable impact both of these monuments had on their readers. We will touch on some interesting linguistic parallels that emerge when comparing texts.

Keywords: *Vocabulary; translation, Georgian-Jewishw linguistic relations; linguistic parallels*

For centuries, Georgian Jews have preserved translations of the holy books and some other fundamental religious books, which have been translated into their vernacular and are known as "Tavsili" (translation, commentary). For the last ten to fifteen years, little was known about these translations in scientific circles. In 2008, a translation of the book of Genesis was published in Israel (Genesis, 2008) in three different editions, followed by an extensive study of the text a year later, and in 2014 a translation of the Passover Legend (the Feast of Tabernacles) was released to the public (Feast of Tabernacles, 2014). These translations were passed down from generation to generation orally among Georgian Jews. The spiritual leaders of the community have been

teaching them for years (there were also special terms - „თავსილზე დგა“ - "stand on the head").

Nowadays, when the vast majority of Georgian Jews live in Israel, the area of use of these translations is greatly reduced, their fragments are mainly used in the preaching of the so-called "Dibra Torah" ("Torah is said").

There is no direct document as to the time of the creation of the translations. According to indirect data, this date is estimated to be the 11th-12th C. (Enoch, 2009, 8). One of the proofs is the language of translation, which is close to the language of Georgian secular monuments of that time.

The beauty of Rustaveli's eloquence (Glonti, 1961; Gigineishvili, 1975) has been studied in detail in scientific literature, including the peculiarities of the great poet's pronunciation of names.

In this regard, the form *ვექმარები* attracts attention: „*თუ შენ შენს ცოლს არ შევრთავ, მე ჩემსა არ ვექმარები*“ (*If you do not marry your wife, I do not marry mine*) (1466,4). It seems that this verb existed in Georgian at that time (or in any of its dialects) and Rustaveli used it so gracefully in the poem. The fact is that in the original text of Genesis, we find the form of the second series of this verb: „*მიდი იმათ ცოლს ძმის შენისას და დაექმრე მას*“ (*Marry your brother's wife*). In the modern translation of the Bible, we have the equivalent of it. Also in Shalom David's translation: *ექმრე*.

A different edition is presented in the translation of Abram Mamistvalov, Tamar Mamistvalov-Kezerashvili and Gershon Ben-Oren, where other lexical items are used: *შეირთე*. We see another edition in the old Georgian translation of the work - *ესიძე* (O, AKS), *დაესიძე* (CV). All these clearly indicate the diversity of Georgian vocabulary and to the fact that translators were not entirely sure which word would be more appropriate for the translated text. It is noteworthy that in both the text - in the panther skin and in the chapter we have the initial form of this verb:

1. „*შენგან ჩემისა ქმრობისა წინასცა ვიყავ მნდომია*“ (I thought I was before you in my manhood).;

2. „*და ის დარქმეული ქრმობითა*“ (20.3) (And he is called a virgin) (with a slight phonetic change), which literally means: because he is married. This is clearly seen in the old translation of the Bible: *ეგე შეყოფილ არს ქმარსა*. (CB: *იგი თანა-მკვიდრ ქმრისა*).

This form is discussed by Shalva Glonti, who thinks that it, like a number of other verbs, must have been coined by Rustaveli. Of course, no one doubts the unique mastery of the great poet, but in this case, Ivane Gigineishvili's view that Rustaveli was well acquainted with the possibilities of the Georgian language and skillfully used the existing forms should be more correct. In our humble opinion, the fact that these forms can be found in Tavsili, which should have been created slightly earlier than the genius poem, backs up Ivane Gigineishvili's opinion (Gigineishvili, 1975, 48; Ben-Oren, 1993). However, it should be emphasized that we are not discussing the case of influence here, but merely highlight that both Rustaveli and the anonymous creator of Tavsili use existing forms from the rich source of the Georgian language (Enoch, 2009, 191).

Both texts also confirm the *ხუკევა* form, which is explained as follows: "request, supplication": „*შენ გენუკვი მონახვასა*“ (128, 4). An interesting phonetic variant of this verb is presented in the chapter: *გენუკები*, which means

"I beg you". We must repeat that the use of such forms indicates their existence in the Georgian language.

One of the forms used in Panther's skin needs careful consideration, as it can be understood in a different way from the traditional definition. We have in mind the verb *ჰლაღავს*: „მათ უხმოზდა მხსნელად მათად, ტკბილად უჰკრეტს, არა *ჰლაღავს*“: 1646, 4. In the dictionary attached to the edition, this word is defined as: "does not quarrel." As it is known, Rustaveli's masterpiece was translated into Hebrew by Boris Gaponov (Gaponov, 1991) and this translation is recognized as congenial. It should be noted that in this case the translator does not follow the above definition and offers a different understanding: ויתקרא להם "ישענו" במשא ומענה. Translating this back to Georgian, we have the following situation: the primary meaning of משא is „*ხსოვნა*“ (memory); the word מענה has essentially the same meaning, but it has a secondary meaning as well "plan or action that gives a solution". We should roughly understand the translation like this: pays enough attention (does not show lack of attention). It is difficult to say with certainty which understanding is more acceptable, but in our view, Rustaveli's researchers should also look to the Gaponovian understanding.

We have an interesting word in one of the most beautiful stanzas of the Panther's skin, which is still used in some contexts in Georgian: „შენ ხარ მიზეზი სოფლის ასრე გასამსალუბისა“. According to the definition, this word is related to

"*სამსალა*" and is explained as follows: „*სამსალად ქცევა*“ (Becoming poison). It is interesting that even today, the modified version of this word is used by Georgian Jews: „*გასანსალუბა*“ (for example, in the materials collected in Kutaisi, the following sentence can be found: „რათ უნდოდა ამ ხენაგ ასე *გასანსალუბა*“ (Who and why made this Khenag dish (popular dish among Georgian Jews, made of wings and walnuts) so spicy/billet?). Of course, the meanings are very close, but for the sake of clarity, we point out that greed here means "bitterness" and maybe Rustaveli also had this meaning in mind.

Particular attention is paid to the form „*ხასი*“, which is confirmed several times in Rustaveli's poem with two different meanings:

1. "Person close to the king": „წიგნსა მოგცემ, გმორჩილობდენ, ვინცა იყოს ჩემი *ხასი*“ (164, 4);

2. Genuine, pure: „tarie;s udghvna gvirgvini, ver-„ტარიელს უძღვნა გვირგვინი, ვერ-დანადები ფასისა, იაგუნდისა მრთელისა, ყვითლისა, მეტად *ხასისა*“ (1438, 2-3). The word *ხასი* is often found in the speech of Georgian Jews, and according to this we could add other meanings - "true", "saint of saints". This can be clearly seen from the short verse that is very common among Georgian Jews: „შაბათი არი *ხასი*, რა არი მისი ფასი“ (Saturday is a "khasi", it is priceless). The words *დაახასებს*, *დაახასებინებს*, *ხასდება*, (characterizes) are

derived from *ხასი*. The translation of Tavsili uses this very phrase: „აკურთხა ღმერთმან იგი დღე მეშვიდე და *დაახასა* ის“ (God blessed him on the seventh day and made him a saint): (ენესის, 2008, 2-3). In one of the previous works I expressed an opinion that the word *ძი* was used as “saint” in the speech of Georgian Jews (Enouch, 2009, 87). Thus, we can conclude that lexical items of approximately similar meaning were developing in parallel in the speech of Georgian Jews and in the Georgian literary language.

Another "common" word between Tavsili and Rustaveli's poem is „*პაემანი*“ (in Tavsili), which means "promise": „*ესერა პაემანი ჩემი შენ თანა*“: Genesis, 2008, 17, 4). In the section 17,2-13, this lexical unit has been used several times. Sometimes the speaker left him unchanged, but in most cases he said "*პირობა*" instead. So for him these units are absolutely identical. The publishers of Panther's skin define the word “paemani” as agreement, pact, deadline. I think it should be clear that this lexical unit is used smoothly by both texts. Discussing any influence here does not seem justified. It is interesting in itself that Tavsil has preserved this archaic form.

In some cases, it is not so easy to bring the form confirmed in the translation of the poetic unit and the chapter to the "common meaning". For example, one of the most interesting forms of the poem is *გამეტადება* („*მან უბრძანა: აღარ გაჩყენ, აღარც სიტყვა გამეტადდეს*“), which is defined as: "more behavior, exaggeration." The

lexical unit attested in the chapter has the opposite meaning: „*გაამეთიადებს*“ (Divides into ten parts), and yet, in our opinion, it is not impossible to judge the common origin of these units not only because of external similarities, but also as a result of the so-called meaning in one text, replace with the opposite meaning.

It is very interesting the form „*ბრძნობა*“ (wisdom) attested in the panther skin: „*ხელი ვითა იქმს ბრძნობასა*“ (*The hand seems to make wisdom*: 886, 1). In Tavsili, in the translation of Agad we find a new word derived from this verb: „*დაუბძენდეთ მათ, არამც გამრავლდეს*“ (*We must act wisely so that they do not multiply*)... These examples once again show the great potential of Georgian vocabulary, which is used with true mastery by both the genius poet and the most talented translators of the Tavsili.

One of the most interesting lexical items in the poem is *დამართებით* (righteous): „*მან ბალოში დამართებით დადვა მას მზედ საქებარსა*“: 410,2. In this case, it really means "beyond", but there is no doubt that we are dealing with the same lexical unit. It is noteworthy that neither Ilia Abuladze (Abuladze, 1973) nor Zurab Sarjveladze's (Sarjveladze, 1995) old Georgian dictionaries have confirmed this lexical unit. With great caution, perhaps, we can say that it must have been the product of the time of the creation of the „Tavsili“ and „The Panther Skin“.

The word *ნასი*, which means "ugly, ugly", is often used in panther skin. It is a well-known

complaint of Fatman: „*მით არ ჯერ ვარ ქმარსა ჩემსა, მკლუ არის და თვალად ნასი*“ In the speech of Georgian Jews, a slightly modified phonetic version of this word is used: *ნარსი*. R sound development is a completely normal process in Georgian; But In none of the translations of the Tavsili is this word found without the consonant r. The poem also confirms the accusation taken from this word: *დანასვა*: „*ახალმან ფიქრმან დათოვა, ვარდი დათრთვილა, დანასა*“ (179,1), the explanation of which is "to become". Gaponov's (Gaponov, 1991) translation *לְבַיִתָּא יִפְרֵז* - sound and freeze, which indicates a different understanding of the text and offers a different meaning of the word.

In the text of the poem we have the form "*მოზაღდადენი*": „*ჰკადრეს: „ჩვენ ვართო მოზაღდადენი ვაჰარნი*“ (1031, 1). According to the dictionary, the meaning of this word is "Baghdadi ". Gaponov's translation is as follows: *מבגדד העיר אתינו*. With the translation: "We are coming from Baghdad". It is noteworthy that there is a similar form in the speech of Georgian Jews: „*მესტამზოლე*“. This is a merchant who trades in Istanbul (another similar form is „*მერუსეთე*“ - a merchant who trades in Russia). We think that in this context „*მოზაღდადენი*“ are the merchants who go to Baghdad to trade, and not the merchants from Baghdad anyway.

Every Georgian remembers the Rustaveli stanza from his childhood: „*ხატაეთს მყოფნი ყველანი ჩვენნი სახარაჯონია* (We pay the cost (contribution)). By definition, „*ხარაჯა*“ is a

contribution. It seems that in Georgian there was a term not only to denote a contributor, but also a tribute. This is evidenced by the testimony of the „Tavsili“: In A edition of the translation we read: „*მეზაუეები*“; In the B edition, the translation is corrected and the word is used as *მეხარაჯეები*. It is clear that the speaker here is influenced by a new Georgian. In the text of the 60s of the twentieth century, but in the text preserved by oral tradition, a completely re-Georgianized form appears: "supervisors of works". Of course, it is especially valuable for us to show the A and B editions, according to which we are talking about tax collectors. So, we can present the specification regarding the lexical item under consideration.

In some cases, with the parallel forms of „Panther Skin“ and „Tavsili“, we can also discuss the possible time for certain words to enter the Georgian language. For example, the poem confirms „*მოზაითი/ მუშაითი*“ forms: „*მგოსანი და მუშაითი უხმეს, პოვეს რაცა სადა*“ (119, 4); „*ჩემსა სიმცროსა გამზრდელნი სამუშაითოდ მზრდიდიან*“ (1394, 1). This lexical unit is not found in the passages published by the translation of the chapter, but is in the texts provided by the speakers. For example, Mrs. Eter Kezerashvili-Chikvashvili suggested a sentence from the speech of the Jews of Akhaltsikhe: „*მუშაითი გეგონება*“ This form is no longer found in the speech of the Jews today, and we may assume that it is a reminder of earlier eras.

We are sure that after publishing the rest of the chapter and comparing the texts, many more interesting materials will be revealed.

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A study on the growing tendency of students involved in the submersion program in Georgian schools and the effectiveness of its implementation

ABSTRACT

The article presents a brief overview of the introduction of bilingual education in Georgian schools. The main focus of the article is to study the issue of implementation and effectiveness of submersion classrooms. As a result of the qualitative research, the following main issues have been studied within this article: 1) What are the factors defining the choice of a Georgian-language school / sector by non-Georgian-speaking students / their parents? 2) What are the challenges and how can Georgian language schools and sectors manage school language diversity? 3) What are the different approaches and challenges in Georgian language sectors in schools where the majority of students are non-Georgian or completely non-Georgian? 4) How high is the involvement and support of parents in the learning process? The study examines the effectiveness and challenges of submersion classes from the perspective of teachers in target schools. The results of the qualitative research method are presented in the form of findings and tendencies which gives us a clear picture of the challenges of submersion education for more in-depth on the example of Georgian public schools.

Keywords: *submersion education, affirmative action policy, bilingual education, teachers, minority students.*

Submersion Bilingual Education Program and the Georgian Context

There are different models/programs in the field of bilingual education. Programs are divided into weak and strong, depending on whether the linguistic and educational goals

are language preservation and bilingualism, or language loss and monolingualism (Baker, 2010). The aim of implementing strong bilingual models of education is to master the majority language and bilingualism while preserving the mother tongue. Whereas, the

goal of weak bilingual programs is linguistic assimilation and monolingualism. Submersion is a weak program of bilingual education because it is characterized by a reducing context and monolingualism according to the principle of classifying bilingual education (Baker, 2010). A submersion is a form of education in which minority students attend schools where the majority language is used as the language of instruction and the minority language student studies with the majority students (Baker, 2010). The goal of submersion is to force immigrant or linguistic minority students to learn the majority language as quickly as possible (Baker, 2010). This goal is also related to the political goal since linguistic assimilation is more beneficial to the state where there are inhabitants with different linguistic backgrounds. For example, linguistic diversity was often perceived as a threat to the unity of a country in the United States. In this sense, one language is associated with a single system of values, attitudes, or goals (Baker, 2010). In addition, one of the most important determinants of submersion education can be considered the motivation of parents, to force their children to quickly learn the language

of the majority. This motivation originates from the belief of immigrant parents that quality education can only be obtained in the language of the majority, and is therefore associated with career advancement and social integration. (Tago, 2008).

It should be noted that the submersion education program does not provide any type of special educational support for language minority students in the teaching process, as it does for students with special educational needs, and the implementation of this program is accompanied by various challenges (Baker, 2010). In this sense, one of the most important issues in the implementation of a submersion program is parental involvement. Parental support is crucial to a student's academic achievement and plays a major positive role, as evidenced by numerous studies (Desforges, Ch. 2003), parental involvement is particularly important in supporting minority students' academic achievement when they are educated with a majority of students in a language that is different from their native language (Tago, Oats, 2010). Overall, increasing parental involvement in educational immersion is mainly problematic due to their unfamiliarity with the majority

language or low level of language proficiency. (Baker, 2010).

The issue of bilingual education in accordance with the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the population in Georgia is currently very relevant. The purpose of the present article is to study the dynamics, needs and challenges characteristic to the submersion bilingual education program in Georgia. In order to understand the issue, it is important to review the measures taken by the state of Georgia in terms of promoting social integration of ethnic minorities.

It should be noted that Georgia is characterized by ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity (Report of the Center for Tolerance, 2008). According to the 2014 census of Georgia, about 12% of the population are from different ethnic groups, the most numerous being the Armenian- and Azerbaijani-speaking population (Census, 2014). The State of Georgia considers an access to education as one of the important mechanisms for the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities and their integration into society, preserving the existing cultural and linguistic diversity and, at the same time, supporting the learning of the state language (National Concept of Tolerance and Civic

Integration, 2009; Law on General Education, 2005). In accordance with the existing ethnic and linguistic diversity in Georgia, one of the main directions of the national concept of state tolerance and civic integration is to promote the process of integration of ethnic minorities through education (National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration, 2009). This includes both pre-school and school and higher education levels for learning the state language and preserving the mother tongue and culture (National Concept on Tolerance and Civic Integration, 2009). Various events have been held in Georgia since 2004 to support the teaching of the state language to ethnic minorities (Mekhuzla.s, Roche.e, 2009). Moreover, the legal framework for bilingual education has been amended, and various bilingual/multilingual education programs have been introduced in pilot schools (Mekhuzla.s, Roche.e, 2009). Despite the amendments, however, the problem of knowing the state language in Georgia remains acute among ethnic minority youth as well as among the generation of parents. Most parents of non-Georgian speaking students do not speak the state language well enough to provide academic support to the

child in the learning process. The information provided by the Department of Statistics of Georgia on the language proficiency of Georgian citizens allows us to express this assumption, which indicates that 91.7% of the 3713,804 citizens of Georgia speak Georgian fluently, while the remaining 8.3% do not speak Georgian at all, or do not indicate it at all. The majority (about 95%) of the population who speak Georgian fluently indicate Georgian as their mother tongue (Universal Census, 2014). In light of the evidence, it is likely that parents of ethnic minority students are less able to participate and help their children in the learning process.

Cultural diversity and intercultural sensitivity in submersion education

In addition to parental involvement in the teaching process in a diverse classroom environment, including in the implementation of submersion education, one of the most important factors is the readiness of teachers in terms of identifying and developing subject and methodological knowledge as well as intercultural sensitivity (Valdes, 2010). Education researcher Guadalupe Valdes, who studies the process of

teaching a second language in schools, points out that teachers' intercultural competencies and expectations largely affect students' expectations in terms of their own abilities, which often determines the effectiveness of their learning (Valdes, 2010).

Also, education researcher Skutnabb-Kangas emphasizes the importance of intercultural competencies in the implementation of submersion education, noting that models of reductive bilingual education, as submersion model, use minority culture as a handicap adjusted by assimilation (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). Skutnabb-Kangas points out that it is important for a student's "native language, culture and social background" to be perceived by the school as a positive starting point (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). Skutnabb-Kangas also emphasizes that it may cost the country a great deal of money to integrate minorities, although the costs incurred are fully covered by the benefits and wealth that society derives from cultural diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995).

In accordance with the national goals of education in Georgia, it is important for the school to develop the skills and competencies defined by the national curriculum.

According to the national curriculum, “During teaching of subjects, school projects, sports, arts and club activities (involving students, teachers, parents) the school should promote: a) establishing respect, tolerance and equality between students, parents and teachers regardless their social, ethnic, religious, linguistic and worldview affiliation” (National Curriculum, Article 18). According to this document, the teacher should be a supporter of the process of integration of students in the school space (National Curriculum, Article 18). And for teaching in a diverse environment, it is especially important for the teacher himself to have a high intercultural sensitivity, which is mandatory for all categories of teachers according to the teacher professional standard (Teacher Professional Standard, 2020).

To assess teachers' intercultural sensitivity, skills, and readiness to work in a diverse classroom environment, an elementary education survey was conducted in Georgia in 2014; the survey showed that teachers viewed various issues in the classroom primarily from their own cultural perspective and showed low levels of respect for different cultures. (Tabatadze. Sh., 2014).

To measure intercultural sensitivity in schools and to understand its characteristics, we can consider Bennett's model for developing intercultural sensitivity. Bennett classifies six levels in the development of intercultural sensitivity, which are divided into two main phases, namely: I. Ethnocentric phase, which includes 1. Denial 2. Defense 3. Minimization II. Ethnorelative phase, which includes 4. Acceptance 5. Adaptation 6. Integration (Bennett, 2003). A person in the first phase of the Bennett model is characterized by low intercultural sensitivity, while a person in the ethnorelative phase is characterized by a high receptivity ability. According to the analysis of this model, the higher level a person belongs, the more intensive is his intercultural sensitivity, which is especially important for coexistence and cooperation in a diverse environment (Bennett, 2003). In Georgia, in 2014, the Center for Civic Integration and Interethnic Relations conducted another research in this field, which studied the intercultural aspects of teacher education programs in higher education institutions. In the framework of the study a survey was conducted with both undergraduate and graduate students and

compared their results. Overall, the study found that undergraduate education program students have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity than undergraduate students in the same program. However, the highest step observed according to the research results is the acceptance of differences, the fourth step of the Bennett model (Tabatadze, Gorgadze, 2014). As the reviewed studies show, the intercultural readiness of teachers is important for teaching in a diverse classroom environment. In this article, too, one of the important focuses will be to study the willingness of teachers to teach an audience of students represented in ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in submersion classrooms.

Development of bilingual education in Georgia

Earlier in this article I discussed the needs and context of bilingual education in Georgia; however, to understand the issue it is important to consider the stages of development of bilingual education in Georgia, which will be briefly presented in this subsection.

Currently, there are 208 non-Georgian public schools out of 2,085 public schools in

Georgia (Education Assessment Document, 2020), meaning that not only are Georgian citizens allowed to receive full general education in their native language, but it is also state funded and provided for the two largest ethnic minority groups (ethnic Armenians and Azerbaijanis) to receive general education in their native language.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the issue of the state language has become a very urgent problem in Georgia. At the same time a number of important ethnic issues became the subject of discussion. Russian was the language of communication for all ethnic groups living in Georgia during the Soviet period (Tabatadze, 2010). Consequently, knowledge of Georgian language was not a priority for the representatives of national minorities. School education was conducted in the mother tongue of ethnic minorities, and in higher education institutions the language of instruction was Georgian, although there were Russian-speaking sectors, therefore, lack of knowledge of Georgian was not an obstacle to career growth for ethnic minorities. For this reason, ethnic minorities spoke Georgian only at a low level or could not speak it at all (Mekhuzla, Roche, 2009). After gaining

independence, Georgia adopted a liberal approach to ethnic groups and granted Georgian citizenship to all. In accordance with this decision, promoting the integration of ethnic minorities has become an important task for the state of Georgia (Tabatadze, 2010).

The education system and the existence of appropriate approaches play an important role in the integrational process of national minorities into the Georgian-speaking community. The Ministry of Education considers the learning of the state language as a necessary and important factor for the integration of national minorities while maintaining their own linguistic and cultural identity (Education Policy Document, 2009). The Ministry of Education names multilingual education as the main tool to achieve this goal, which includes the introduction of approaches and models of education that will enhance the motivation and learning of the state language, as well as support the preservation and protection of national minority languages and cultures (Education Policy Document, 2009).

The basis for the implementation of bilingual/multilingual education is the Law of Georgia on Public Education. According to

Article 4 (3) of the Law on General Education of Georgia, "the language of instruction in general education institutions is Georgian, and in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia - Georgian and Abkhazian", but according to the third paragraph of the same article, "Georgian citizens for whom the Georgian language is not a native language have the right to receive a full general education in their native language, in accordance with the National Curriculum, in accordance with the rules established by law." This law protects the rights of national minorities to receive general education in their mother tongue and thus helps to preserve their language and culture. However, at the same time, the state status of the Georgian language has been strengthened, for example, according to Article 98 of the Law on Public Service, unsatisfactory knowledge of the state language may be the reason for dismissal of a civil servant. In addition, in any public institution, proceedings and court processes in Georgia are conducted in the state language (Law on Civil Service, 2004). In addition, Georgian as a state language is taught as a necessary subject in public schools, as an important intervention for the integration and professional success of

national minorities in society (Education Policy Document, 2009).

In 2005, the European Framework Convention was ratified by the Parliament of Georgia. This Framework Convention guarantees the protection of national minorities and their full integration through the provision of the right to education in minority languages and education systems (Education Policy Document, 2009).

In 2008, with the financial support of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, a policy document entitled "Integration of National Minorities through Multilingual Education" was developed and a strategy for the implementation of this document was planned for 2009-2014. Based on this action plan, in 2009 the Government of Georgia developed the "National Concept of Tolerance and Civic Integration". The document focused on the following areas for improving the education of national minorities: Preschool education, general education, higher education, raising the level of knowledge of the state language among minorities, and ensuring access to vocational education (Mekhuzla, Roche, 2009).

In August 2010, the Ministry of Education and Science approved the

provisions of the Multilingual Education Program, which is an important basis for access to quality education for minorities and the implementation of bilingual education. The document allowed non-Georgian language schools in Georgia to develop local needs-oriented programs of multilingual education, and submit them for approval. Schools started developing programs with the support of various NGOs and developed several types of multilingual education programs. The school's multilingual education program included the use of two or more languages for classroom instruction and the acquisition of relevant topics in two languages (Armenian / Azerbaijani and Georgian) (Grigule, L. 2010).

The implementation of the above-mentioned legislative changes and important initiatives, as well as the combination of measures taken by various international and local non-governmental organizations, have enabled the Ministry of Education of Georgia to implement bilingual education programs in non-Georgian schools since 2010. The Ministry of Education gave schools the opportunity to choose / or design the appropriate educational program for them, as well as presented several bilingual programs,

which could be selected and implemented by non-Georgian language schools within the program. These programs are Native Language Support Multilingual Education Program, Transitive Multilingual Education Program, Developing Multilingual Education Program, State Language Support Multilingual Education Program, Dual Language Immersion Multilingual Education Program, Mixed Multilingual Education Program (Tabatadze, 2011). The process of selection and implementation of these programs was more or less efficient, which was reflected in further researches (Tabatadze, 2011). At present, non-Georgian language schools have a Georgian language support program, which involves teaching Georgian as a second language with five weekly lesson hours (Basic Principles of Hourly Distribution of Lessons, Article 49, 2015).

In 2011, the Ministry of Education and Science launched more effective measurements to implement bilingual education, which was reflected in the implementation of the program "Georgian Language for Future Success" (www.mes.gov.ge). The aim of the program was to promote the process of learning

Georgian language and social sciences, also the subject Civic Integration and Georgian as a state language for national minorities living in Georgia within the framework of the Civic Integration of National Minorities Program.

Moreover, in 2012, amendments to the General Education Law of Georgia defined and established the professional standard for multilingual primary school teachers (Article 21/3), which created the basis for the establishment of a multilingual teacher preparatory bachelor program. This program was implemented for the first time in 2015 at the Faculty of Psychology and Education of Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University. The goal of the Multilingual Education Teacher Preparatory Program is to train highly qualified staff for the elementary school level in accordance with the Multilingual Teacher Professional Standard (Multilingual Education Program, 2015).

One of the most successful initiatives of the above-mentioned legislative initiatives, changes, and effective measures related to multilingual education was also the affirmative action policy/quota system introduced in 2010, which determines the quota for non-Georgian students enrolled in the universities. This means passing only one

exam on the Unified National Examination, the General Skills Exam in the native language (Azerbaijani or Armenian). Students enrolled in universities within the framework of the affirmative action policy study the Georgian language intensively for one year in the Georgian language preparatory program, and then are given the opportunity to continue their studies in the desired bachelor's program according to their choice. Affirmative action policy research confirms that the number of enrolled students in the Georgian language preparatory program has been increasing from 2010 to the year (Tabatadze, Gorgadze, 2020).

The implementation of the affirmative action policy for non-Georgian-speaking population and the opportunity to continue their education in Georgian HEIs has aroused more interest to learn the state language, which was reflected in the significant number of people wishing to continue their studies in Georgian HEIs (2010 - 247 ethnic minority students, 2019 - 1329 students) (Tabatadze, Gorgadze, 2020). In addition, according to the statistics of 2017-2019, the dynamics of the transition of students from non-Georgian schools to Georgian schools is

clearly observed (Gorgadze, 2019). More specifically, according to the Education Management Information Center in 2017-2019, 791 students transferred from non-Georgian language schools and sectors (Gorgadze. N, 2019). The most students transferred from Russian schools and sectors (417 students in total). The reason for this is the current political attitudes in the country and the initiative of the Ministry of Education, which is related to the change in the procedure for dividing the state grants for higher education (Gorgadze. N, 2019). According to this change, from 2017 the elective subjects for the Unified National Examinations will no longer be conducted in Russian, which puts Russian school / sector graduates at a disadvantage situation (Gorgadze, N, 2019). The rate of transfer of students from Armenian schools and sectors to Georgian schools is very low. However, the rate of transfer of students from Azerbaijani schools to Georgian schools is also high in the lower grades and decreases at the upper level of education, which is due to the high motivation to receive education in Georgian, which is considered an important prospect for integration into Georgian society (Gorgadze. N, 2019). As can be seen from

the reviewed studies and the overview of the historical context of bilingual education, observing the dynamics of the implementation of submersion education and studying its effectiveness is an important issue for the field of education. Therefore, I decided to look deeper into this issue and plan relevant research. While working on the article, I requested information from the Ministry of Education and Science and Educational Resource Centers about schools, language of instruction, and distribution of students in Georgia, as well as data provided by the National Department of Statistics. According to the 2014 census, 91.7% of Georgia's population is fluent in Georgian, for the majority of them (95.4%) Georgian is also their native language, only 1.3% who are fluent in Georgian are native Azerbaijanis (6, 7% of the population is ethnically Azeri) and 1.7% are Armenian speakers (out of 4.5% of the total population). The remaining percentage according to language proficiency is distributed among the representatives of Abkhazian, Russian, Ossetian and other languages). There are a number of ethnic minority villages and regional centers in Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and partially in the regions of Kakheti, which are

densely populated by ethnic minorities. In line with ethnic settlement, non-Georgian-language schools and sectors can be found in these regions alongside Georgian-language schools. Most non-Georgian-speaking students have the opportunity to receive a full general education conducted in their native language in a school located nearby. However, according to the information provided by the Ministry of Education and resource centers, the number of students in Georgian schools and sectors for whom Georgian is not a native language is highest in Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions. Because of this fact, we have selected the two regions mentioned above as the target areas of our research, as it is important to identify the motivating factors, why ethnic minorities choose Georgian-language school or Georgian sector, while they have access in nearby schools to full general education in the native language. As part of the research for this article, we also examined information provided by the Educational Resource Centers and the Ministry of Education on the distribution of students in schools in the Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions by native language. It should also be noted that we do not take responsibility for the validity of the

data collection methodology on students' linguistic affiliation and rely entirely on the information provided by the educational resource centers. According to the general data of the students of Kvemo Kartli and

Kakheti schools, the picture of non-Georgian students enrolled in the Georgian sector or in the Georgian schools is shown in the table below.

Number of Regions	Number of Municipalities	Number of Georgian language schools/sectors where non-Georgian language students also study	Percentage of non-Georgian speaking students / 2016-2017 academic year	Percentage of non-Georgian speaking students /2020-2021 academic year
2	12	119	38,48%	41,17%

Table N1. Reflects the distribution of Georgian and non-Georgian students in Georgian schools and Georgian sectors in the Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions. Source: Educational Resource Centers

It should be noted that from 2016-2017 academic year, the number of non-Georgian students in Georgian sectors / schools did not increase much compared to the data of the 2020-2021 academic year, the data increased by only 2.69%, but for both regions the general number of non-Georgian students wishing to study Georgian in Georgian schools is quite high (41,17%). It should be noted that from 2016-2017 academic year, the number of non-Georgian students in Georgian sectors/schools did not increase much compared to the data of the 2020-2021

academic year, the data increased by only 2.69%, but for both regions, the general number of non-Georgian students wishing to study Georgian in Georgian schools is quite high (41,17%). Furthermore, the analysis of statistical data of each school from the target regions identified specific schools in which the number of non-Georgian-speaking students wishing to receive education in the Georgian language is increasing year by year. For example, we can name the case of Kvemo Kartli region, Marneuli municipality. In particular, Marneuli municipality has the

highest percentage of non-Georgian-speaking students in Georgian schools and sectors. The number of non-Georgian language students in Georgian schools was 66% in 2016, and by 2021 this number

increased to 68%. The table below shows a picture of the distribution of non-Georgian and Georgian-speaking students in Georgian-language schools and sectors in the Marneuli region.

Year	Georgian language schools / Georgian sector, where non-Georgian language students also study	Total number of students	Non-Georgian speaking students Percentage	Georgian speaking students Percentage
2016	7	3119	66%	34 %
2020	7	3693	68%	32 %

Table N2. Shows the number of students in Georgian-language schools / sectors in Marneuli Municipality in 2016-2020 by differentiating students' native language. Source: Marneuli Educational Resource Center

The example of Marneuli municipality is similar to the situation in all municipalities of Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions. However, the exception is two Georgian schools in the Kakheti region (Badiauri and Gombori schools) that have both Georgian and non-Georgian students. The tendency to admit non-Georgian students has decreased from 2016 to 2021 in these two schools. This decrease differs from the growing tendencies in the target regions (In 2016, the total number of non-Georgian language students

in both schools was 62.2%, and by 2020 the total number in both schools has decreased to a total of 55%). It would be interesting to study such different tendencies and drastic changes from the region on the example of specific schools, especially when there is an increased number of students entering Georgian schools in Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions.

Due to the increased demand for enrollment of non-Georgian language students in Georgian schools in the target

regions, questions arise about the quality of education in non-Georgian language schools. As I mentioned above, in non-Georgian schools, students learn Georgian as a subject "Georgian as a second language", which is devoted to 5 contact hours per week in addition to receiving education in their mother tongue (hourly schedule, Ministry of Education, 2018-2019), however many students and parents still choose the Georgian school or sector, which makes it very important to study the effectiveness of submersion education in the target regions. Accordingly, a qualitative study was planned and conducted to research the issue in depth.

Research Methodology

The aim of the research is to study the effectiveness of the implementation of bilingual, submersion education in Georgia. For the study, I selected two schools in Marneuli Municipality (Saimerlo Public School and Marneuli 2end Public School) and two schools in Gardabani Municipality (Gardabani First Public School and Kesalo Public School). The sampling is based on data from the National Department of Statistics, and these municipalities are characterized by densely populated ethnic non-Georgians. In

particular, one Georgian-language school was selected from two schools in Marneuli, where the number of non-Georgian students exceeded a quarter (25%) of the number of students, and the second target school was a school with a Georgian sector mostly with non-Georgian students only. According to the same principle, one Georgian-language school was selected from two schools in Gardabani district, where the number of non-Georgian-speaking students exceeded a quarter (25%), and the second target school was a school with a Georgian language sector, with non-Georgian-speaking students only. A qualitative research method was chosen for the research, as the aim of the research was to study the issue deeper and to find ways to solve the problem. Accordingly, focus groups were held with school teachers, a total of 4 focus groups, the number of participants in each focus group was 7 teachers. Focus groups were conducted with teachers of elementary and basic grades (grades 1-9). Participants were selected on a random sampling basis. Gender balance was not maintained at the time of sampling, with mostly female teachers participating in focus groups. The research tool was a pre-designed protocol for the focus group.

In the framework of the research I analyzed the effectiveness of the submersion education program in Georgia, as well as the challenges in the teaching process, the motivation of students to learn the Georgian language and the involvement of parents in the learning process. The research hypothesis was as follows: The effectiveness of the ongoing submersion program in Georgian language schools in ethnic minority areas (Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti region) is low. The aim of the research is to study the efficiency, challenges and learning needs of Georgian and non-Georgian students in submersion classrooms. According to the purpose of the research, I will answer the following research questions within the article:

1) What are the factors defining the choice of a Georgian-language school / sector by non-Georgian-speaking students / their parents?

2) What are the challenges and how can Georgian language schools and sectors manage school language diversity?

3) What are the different approaches and challenges in Georgian language sectors in schools where the majority of students are non-Georgian or completely non-Georgian?

4) How high is the involvement and support of parents in the learning process?

Analysis of qualitative research results and findings

The following tendencies were identified through the teacher focus group, which I will review more detailed below:

1) Teachers use less modern teaching approaches in the teaching process, develop a labeling attitude towards non-Georgian language students, they don't possess management skills of diverse classroom and show low intercultural competencies;

2) The degree of social integration of non-Georgian language students in Georgian schools is relatively low, which is different in the case of students in Georgian sectors;

3) Different levels of language proficiency in Georgian schools prevent both Georgian and Georgian language students from achieving academic success;

4) In Georgian schools, the motivation of non-Georgian-speaking students to learn the state language for further study is low;

5) In Georgian schools, the motivation of non-Georgian language students to continue their post-school education in higher or vocational schools is low;

6) The Georgian schools are currently unprepared for the growing number of non-Georgian speaking students wishing to study in Georgian.

1) Teachers use less modern teaching approaches in the teaching process, develop a labeling attitude towards non-Georgian language students, they don't possess management skills of diverse classroom and show low intercultural competencies - The study showed that the teachers of the target school rarely and non-intensively apply modern teaching methods adapted to the diverse classroom environment in the teaching process. In the teaching process, teachers mainly use the following methods, approaches, or strategies: lecture method, working in pairs (pairing a Georgian-speaking student with a non-Georgian-speaking one), visualizing (mostly drawing on the board a subject that a non-Georgian-speaking student cannot understand). It is important to appreciate the fact that most of the teachers from the surveyed schools are trying to mobilize additional resources for non-Georgian-speaking students to make it easier for them to overcome the language barrier while mastering the subject. In

particular, teachers often draw on the board, make visual cards and try to use them to explain new words to children. Most of the teachers produce a dictionary for non-Georgian students, where Georgian lexical items (mostly everyday words) are translated into the language of ethnic minorities. Teachers noted that they let help students who understand both languages relatively well in the process of translation. Students who understand the Georgian language relatively well are also actively involved in working in pairs and try to translate the instructions for non-Georgian students who have difficulty understanding Georgian. It should be noted that the explanation of subject terminology and its translation remains a rather difficult and unresolved problem for the teaching process, because the meaning of terminology in even "supporter/translator" students do not know in both languages. It is also important to emphasize the fact that teachers also fail to verify the authenticity of the vocabulary translated with the help of students.

It should be noted that a few teachers pointed out the practice of using films as an additional resource in the learning process, but, as it was revealed during the focus group

interview, teachers only recommend that students watch films or cartoons that they chose and provide; although the practice of watching and reviewing films together rarely takes place. Teachers point out that they have to do complicated and time-consuming curriculum activities, as well as logistical problems, so they cannot implement the practice of discussing movies/videos together.

Teachers point out the lack of technical support as well as a lack of visual material, such as posters, cards, three-dimensional models, and others, as the most important impediments to the teaching process. Due to the fact that the perception of students at the lower stage of education is specific, it is very important to explain the concepts along with the introduction of significant (Gamkrelidze, 2008). Consequently, equipping classrooms with such visual resources is an important obstacle, especially in submersion classrooms, when teachers need more visibility in the process of subject and language teaching. In addition to textbooks, the main resource available in small numbers in schools is simple, thematic posters, most of which are created by the teachers themselves. Research has shown that in addition to posters, teachers

themselves create midterm quizzes, assessment rubrics, and various questionnaires for students. The practice of creating such materials is also an important positive approach on the part of teachers.

According to the focus group participants, they have been trained in modern teaching approaches, but in some cases, the technique/approach described by the teacher may not be used purposefully and effectively. For example, as mentioned above, teachers use the method of working in pairs at the lesson; however, the method described by most of them, does not differ much from the method of the independent working process of the student, because teacher involvement in this process is minimal, they did not monitor and manage the work of paired Georgian and non-Georgian students. The teacher is not able to effectively manage the class in this process and it remains unclear to him/her how equally students involve in the process of working in pairs. Furthermore, some teachers say that they use this method only to somehow involve non-Georgian students in learning activities.

The interviewed teachers agree on the benefits of using group work techniques in a diverse classroom, although they indicate

that they do not apply it often, as group work causes noise in the classroom, and also fails to involve Georgian and non-Georgian students equally. This attitude of teachers once again indicates the inefficiency of diverse classroom management. The focus groups also showed that teachers find it difficult to maintain balance and work on the principle of differentiated teaching so that, on the one hand, the lesson does not become too simple and boring for Georgian students, and, on the other hand, they need to devote much more time for non-Georgian students to explain topics.

Questions related to diverse classroom management during the focus group revealed teachers' preconceived notions about low expectations from non-Georgian students (labeling). It should be noted that this attitude is common to most Georgian school teachers, although similar attitudes are almost never shown with Georgian sector teachers. Presumably, this is due to the linguistically homogeneous composition of students in the Georgian sector (most of them are non-Georgian). In line with low expectations, some teachers from Georgian schools are in favor of dividing the class into "strong" and "weak" groups in all subjects

according to students' academic achievements and think that this approach will lead to more success with successful students and they will no longer be "oppressed" and with "weak students" they will be able to teach them with simplified learning materials, adapted to their needs.

The teachers noted that from the new academic year (2021-2022) they are involved in the implementation process of the "new school" model and suggest that learning with this model will be difficult to overcome for non-Georgian students. During the research, it was clearly revealed that the main reason for not using diverse, modern teaching approaches in the teaching process in Georgian schools, is the attitudes of teachers toward the non-Georgian students emphasizing their different levels of Georgian language proficiency.

"If they do not know Georgian, it is a problem that needs to be solved. We cannot solve this. That's why we cannot accomplish many educational activities", says one of the teachers.

As mentioned above, research has shown that teachers are unfamiliar with the principles of diverse classroom management and therefore they do not perceive diversity

in the classroom as a resource; Moreover, class diversity (cultural, linguistic, or religious) is often overlooked. This tendency was observed in the attitudes of almost all teachers in the target schools.

"No one discriminates them. We do not talk about their differences at all, we do not point it out whether you are Georgian, Azerbaijani, Muslim or Christian –" says a teacher. Teachers often misunderstand cultural and ethnic differences and the importance of managing classroom diversity and try their best to avoid talking about the issues related to ethnic, religious, and cultural differences or discussing historical facts and situations related to the historical homeland of Georgia's ethnic minorities.

"I find it very difficult to explain history. What can I do with the facts? sometimes I simply skip these historical facts, sometimes I don't go deeper, so that somehow not to offend non-Georgian students" (history teacher).

It is truly noteworthy that the teachers of all four target schools during the focus groups explained that they had no training or workshop on teaching in a diverse classroom environment and on intercultural education approaches. Only the teachers of the school

subject "Civic Education" were named to have attended such target training organized by the Ministry of Education or the Teachers' House.

2) The degree of social integration of non-Georgian language students in Georgian schools is relatively low, which is different in the case of students in Georgian sectors - A focus group conducted with teachers showed that the degree of social integration of non-Georgian students in Georgian schools is quite low, especially at lower stages of education. Teachers point out that the growing number of non-Georgian-speaking students in primary classes has led to their group gatherings during breaks communicating in their mother tongue and showing a low interest in interacting with Georgian students. This fact further hinders their linguistic/academic advancement and social integration at the elementary level. It should be noted that no additional measures are taken by the school/teachers for their social integration. However, as the teachers point out, the issue of their integration with Georgian-speaking students at the upper grades (basic level) is more or less improving, as non-Georgian students already have some

communicative skills in Georgian and no longer find it difficult to speak to Georgian classmates. It should be noted that this process itself takes place without special intervention from the school representatives, which is generally typical for a submersion education program. Also, the research showed that only a small part of Georgian-speaking students try to get acquainted with the language and culture of their non-Georgian-speaking classmates. Teachers noted that only a few number Georgian students have learned the minority language at the communication level.

Moreover, interviews with teachers revealed that teaching materials, additional resources, or learning activities do not reflect ethnic and cultural differences in the classroom and are not aimed at increasing the social integration of all students in the classroom. Teachers do not see the need and do not encourage students to present their own religious and cultural customs. It should be noted that in the target schools, along with Georgian students learn ethnic Azerbaijanis mostly. Teachers point to the sharing information of the Azerbaijani national holiday, Nowruz Bayram. Most of the teachers emphasize that they congratulate

the Azerbaijani students Nowruz Bayram, just as the Georgian students congratulate them on this holiday. However, the teacher of the subjects “civic education” and “art” point out that students are given the opportunity to prepare a presentation on Azerbaijani culture and their religion and according to the teachers this approach encouraged non-Georgian speaking students to introduce their culture and their identity enthusiastically. This approach showed that Georgian-speaking students were also involved in the lesson with great interest, asking questions about the culture and traditions of non-Georgian-speaking classmates, and the lesson was really interactive. However, despite this positive approach and its effectiveness, similar types of approaches are rare in Georgian target schools.

The exchange of information on cultures for students’ social integration is a more proven experience for the Georgian sector, unlike the Georgian submersion schools. They more often focus on sharing information about the culture and religious traditions of non-Georgian students, but the teachers themselves note that this is due to the more or less linguistically and ethnically

homogeneous composition of the students in the Georgian sector.

Overall, research has shown that each school allows ethnically non-Georgian students to engage in school activities and events, but the participation in extracurricular, educational activities demonstrates mostly sharing of the dominant culture. Teachers point out that they do not restrict to introduce the culture of minorities, however, they rarely name specific examples or cases when organizing and encouraging cultural diversity activities.

3) Different levels of language proficiency in the Georgian schools hinder both Georgian and Georgian language students from achieving academic success -

All the teachers participating in the research note that the low or zero level of language proficiency in Georgian minority students is the biggest obstacle in the teaching process for both ethnically non-Georgian students and Georgian students. In the course of the study, teachers identified their special challenge while teaching: teaching the students transferred from non-Georgian schools in Georgian schools and/or sectors at the upper level of school. The students enter

the Georgian school only at the basic level of the Georgian language. Teachers point out that it is not good that the school does not have the right to refuse to admit students who do not have a good level of Georgian language proficiency at the upper level of the school.

During the focus group interviews, the teachers noted that the students enter the Georgian school from the very first grade learn the language much easier and, consequently, they understand and learn the subjects too. However, according to the teachers, such students are only a few. Research has shown that in Georgian submersion schools students are admitted to both primary and upper grades without prior assessment of instructional language competence.

The teachers noted that non-Georgian students find it very difficult the comprehension of the reading or to complete the tasks in accordance with the given condition, and they try to simplify the content of the lesson as much as possible so that the non-Georgian student understands the issue. It should be noted that such a simplification process becomes quite boring for Georgian-speaking students and often

leads to a decrease in their involvement and interest during the lesson. The fact once again indicates that teachers are not able to balance the activities of the lesson process in such a way that it is interesting and useful for both Georgian and non-Georgian students, therefore, they are not ready for differentiated teaching. This issue is especially sharply expressed in Georgian schools, in contrast to the Georgian sectors.

4) In Georgian schools, the motivation of non-Georgian-speaking students to learn the state language for further study is low - The interviews revealed a tendency in Georgian schools that non-Georgian-speaking students are not highly motivated to continue their education in higher educational institutions or vocational schools. Teachers indicate that each student is more or less motivated to learn Georgian, although their motivation does not go beyond their daily communicational needs. Students mostly drop out of school after completing a basic level course. According to information provided by teachers, only a few of them try to get vocational education. The main motivation of non-Georgian language students to learn in a Georgian school is based

on the desire to learn the state language at a communicative level. They need language skills to communicate with the Georgian-speaking community and to establish business-type relationships. It is noteworthy that teachers see the motivation of students to learn in Georgian schools from their own, experience-based perspective, but further research can be based to assess the motivation and effectiveness of learning in Georgian schools from the perspective of students.

When asked why the non-Georgian population chooses to learn in a Georgian school only for the purpose of learning language at the communication level when they can receive education in their native language at a nearby school and at the same time learn Georgian, teachers name two main reasons: 1) The quality of teaching the Georgian language in non-Georgian language schools is low and the student cannot speak Georgian well after graduation. 2) Parents choose a Georgian school to create a "Georgian environment", just learning the language at the lesson is not enough for them, they want the children to be completely in a Georgian-speaking environment, to have more closed relationships with Georgian children.

The assumptions made by teachers regarding the choice of Georgian-language school or sector by students and parents indicate the motivation of them to integrate more into Georgian society, although as discussed above, the degree of social integration of non-Georgian-speaking students in school is still low.

The study participants emphasized that the low level of motivation to learn is due to the low level of parental involvement in the educational process and their low expectations, which also do not exceed the requirements for learning the state language. However, the situation is different in the Georgian sectors. For example, the teachers of the second public school in Marneuli noted the high motivation of students to continue their education in Georgian HEIs (The exact statistics of students enrolled in HEIs from this school are not available at this stage). However, as part of my research, I found that these students still enjoy the benefits of the affirmative action policy of Georgia. This policy envisages that ethnic minority students should pass only one entrance exam ("The General Skills Exam") in their native language and then they should be additionally studied in the one-year Georgian

language Preparatory program at the university. The situation is about the same in the Georgian sector of the Kesalo public school in Gardabani, where teaching is only at the basic level, while in the 10th-grade students return to the Azerbaijani sectors or move to one of the Georgian schools in the central Gardabani district. Teachers at Kesalo School also note that most of their students choose the offer of affirmative action policy to get a higher education, as they do not have enough language and subject knowledge to pass university entrance exams on a competitive basis with Georgian-speaking students. This fact points out that ethnic minorities in the Georgian school or Georgian sectors cannot learn the state language well enough to pass the exams in the subjects required for the Unified National Examinations. This indicates that the human and financial resources provided by the state-funded public school have not been utilized effectively, and the application of affirmative action policy further increases the financial costs to the state for financing the Georgian Language Preparatory programs at several universities.

5) The motivation of non-Georgian language students to continue their post-school education in higher or vocational schools is low in Georgian schools - Most of the teachers participating in the study agree on the common and one of the most important challenges for students related to submersion education and related to the low degree of parental involvement in the learning process. Research has shown that attitudes of the parents and the minimum level of their involvement in the learning process have a direct impact on the motivation of students to learn. Lack of knowledge of state language is mentioned as the reason for the low degree of parental involvement. Teachers of Georgian-language schools compare the involvement of Georgian-speaking and non-Georgian-speaking parents in the learning process. Teachers directly link the higher degree of involvement of ethnic Georgian parents to the success of their children. They also point out that those rare exceptions, a non-Georgian successful student are always supported by the parent. Non-Georgian-speaking parents use a variety of support mechanisms to help their child in the learning process and have high expectations, but the number of those parents and students

is very low. The children of such parents are distinguished by higher academic success than other non-Georgian speaking children whose parents are almost not involved in the learning process. While discussing the issue of parental involvement, also another problematic issue was identified, which is characteristic of submersion education, and we talked about it above in the context of lesson inefficiency for Georgian students. According to the teachers, the annual increase in the number of non-Georgian-speaking students in the classroom forces the Georgian parents to take the child to another, more distant Georgian schools, where most of the students are Georgian, or to apply for additional educational support, such as lessons with subject tutors. This supportive mechanism of education is an even greater financial expense for the parents. According to the study, no special efforts and support were made by teachers and school administrations to increase the degree of parental involvement of students. Teachers point out that they find it difficult to communicate with parents because of both the language factor as well as the interests of the parents and their low expectations of the children.

6) The Georgian schools are currently unprepared for the growing number of non-Georgian speaking students wishing to study in Georgian - During the interviews, teachers of Georgian-language schools confirmed that the tendency to admit non-Georgian-speaking students to submersion classrooms has increased significantly. As the school teachers point out, the school is unprepared for this in terms of lack of teaching experience in submersion classrooms, as well as material resources or other additional learning support. In addition, teachers point out that the total number of students admitted to the school is mostly filled by non-Georgian-speaking students, while Georgian-speaking students living near the school can no longer register at their school and have to travel long distances to other schools. At the same time, non-Georgian language students also go to the Georgian school from a distance, even if there is an Azerbaijani language school near their place of residence.

Teachers point out that despite organizing many sessions of training in different areas, which are offered by the Teacher Professional Development Center and by the Ministry of Education, they cannot cope with the current problems of the

submersion classroom. They have difficulty managing classroom diversity and fail to achieve the goal set for each lesson perfectly. According to the interviewed teachers, they need systemic support in case they have to work with non-Georgian and Georgian-speaking students in the same classroom environment on a daily basis. If supported appropriately, they include providing teaching resources, mobilizing teaching assistants, and organizing appropriate training sessions for all teachers. This issue is not so problematic and is distinctive for students and teachers in the Georgian sectors as the language composition of their students is more or less homogeneous and they are at somewhat the same level.

Conclusions

The findings of the study can be interesting for education researchers and decision-makers, although the results of the study cannot be generalized to the entire population due to sampling limits. The difficulties and challenges identified in the article should be taken into account to improve the quality of teaching in submersion schools. It is important that each posed problem should be explored in more

depth and in a representative selection to plan strategies for solving these problems purposefully.

One of the problems identified is the lack of teacher preparation for teaching a diverse classroom, which is one of the significant barriers to implementing a submersion program. Low intercultural sensitivity of the teachers, manifested in the form of preconceived negative expectations of students and minimization of cultural differences, contradicts the national curriculum and teacher professional standard, requiring teachers to be supportive of the school integration process and highly intercultural. It is important to take effective measures in this direction.

According to the research and literature review, student parental involvement and low educational expectations for their children are also serious barriers to learning, directly affecting the quality of academic success of students. When it comes to Georgia, as in the case of submersion education in general, the low level of parental involvement in the educational process is due to their lack of knowledge of the state language, which is a significant factor. Thus, it is important to plan activities to improve

parental knowledge in this area and to provide relevant information in a language they understand.

The findings of the study discussed in the article allow us to say that in the submersion schools can the non- Georgian students neither achieve academic success nor learn Georgian fluently. At the same time, the quality of education of their Georgian-speaking classmates also decreases significantly, due to the fact that the simplified curriculum for non-Georgian-speaking students leads to low interest and less involvement in the learning process. The mentioned reasons lead to mutual loss: 1) At the end of the study we get a non-Georgian graduate with low competence in the Georgian language and other subjects, who still need to enjoy the benefits of the quota system/affirmative action policy announced by the state and cannot compete with the Georgian language graduates. These students at the same time lost the chance to significantly develop language competencies in their native language and to receive an appropriate education; 2) We shall also get the Georgian-speaking students with low academic achievement who need support with additional human and financial

resources to receive a comprehensive general education.

The hypothesis developed herein, saying that quality of education in submersion classes in Georgian public schools is low was confirmed in light of the results presented in the article. This issue needs to be further explored in order to plan effective responses

to the findings, changes, and trends, taking into account the needs and motivations of ethnic minorities who teach their children Georgian as the state language, as well as the needs of the Georgian-speaking population and ensuring a quality school education for all citizens.

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