

# International Young Researchers' Conference, 2020

Conference link: <https://zoom.us/j/95703686840>

## Conference schedule

### Live presenters

TIME	PRESENTER	ABSTRACTS
10.00	Opening	
10.15	Nato Pachuashvili	<p><b>English as a Foreign Language Students' Perception of Using Moodle-Based e-Learning Activities in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic</b></p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an inevitable rise in the use of digital technologies in education across the globe. Due to nationwide lockdown, the world has decided to shut down traditional face-to-face classrooms and to go completely online. In these tough times, educational institutions had to act quickly and adapt to the educational challenges induced by the pandemic. The implementation of online classroom instruction became a necessity in order to better meet the needs of those individual learners who were left with only one option - to study from home. The pandemic created lots of space of e-learning and gave teachers autonomy over creating online resources rather than relying solely on printed materials that appeared less appealing in this scenario. The present study describes the design of such e-learning language course through the use of Moodle with a particular emphasis on EFL students' perceptions of their engagement, learning, and course satisfaction in the time of the pandemic. In a survey-based approach, 28 undergraduate students were asked to participate and offer their experiences with elearning during COVID-19. The students' responses revealed that Moodle-based elearning activities created a very efficient learning environment with an emphasis on students' participation and engagement; it did not create any deficits in their learning as otherwise could have been possible if they had not been exposed to the abovementioned platform.</p>
10.30	Nino Avaliani	<p><b>Storium as a Tool for Academic Vocabulary Enrichment in EFL Classes</b></p> <p>Nowadays vocabulary acquisition is supposed to occur in a relaxed, motivating and enjoyable environment, where any learner will be able</p>

		<p>to focus on new words as well as on their contextual utilization within a sentence. At this point, technology implementation in the learning process turns into a necessity that helps teachers make the teaching process engaging. Lately, with the development of computer and mobile-based learning, and due to Covid-19 and its Pandemic situation, learners were given the opportunity to get the necessary knowledge online, while utilizing versatile digital devices. Games in general and online games in particular became a kind of a trend with language teachers in terms of vocabulary enrichment. In the present article, the online storytelling game is introduced, namely Storium (<a href="http://www.storium.com">www.storium.com</a>), which the researcher utilizes as a foreign language vocabulary enhancer within a Facebook English learning group consisting of 92 students (35 girls and 57 boys). A small-scale research findings are offered in the given article to underline the benefits of utilizing technology in terms of increasing learners' motivation and enriching academic vocabulary in English as a foreign language classes.</p>
10.45	Shorena Gogiashvili	<p><b>Developing a higher education student satisfaction questionnaire</b></p> <p>The goal of the research was to develop an effective tool for student satisfaction measurement. Student satisfaction is an important issue and should be considered in the evaluation of course and program effectiveness. First, literature analysis was undertaken to select the major factor groups of student satisfaction (teaching and learning, services directly dealing with education, administrative services, university / faculty / program name / image, building and campus, socializing and having a good time, safety, and financial factors). Then a questionnaire was developed. To assess the quality of the questionnaire, it was piloted – given to a group of respondents to assess whether the suggested “weight” for each factor was acceptable from their viewpoint. Concerning its content validity, 6 experts in the sphere were requested to assess the appropriate use of terminology and the covering of the issue in the questionnaire. The students with whom the questionnaire was piloted were also requested to mention whether in their opinion there was anything in the questionnaire that was not clear, had to be added or dropped. The developed questionnaire will be used in dissertation dealing with the impact of the assessment of learning outcomes by stakeholders on student satisfaction. It can be useful both for researchers in the sphere of education management and for educational decision makers.</p>
11.00	Nino Tsulaia	<p><b>Exploring the Opportunities and Challenges of Implementing DataDriven Learning in Georgian Context of English as a Foreign</b></p>

		<p><b>Language Teaching</b></p> <p>Recent technological advancements have brought about significant changes to the study of language. The prospect of having large amounts of language data in digital format has enhanced the development of a new branch of linguistics named corpus linguistics. Since the development of corpus linguistics new directions proceeded in language education. Corpus-based or Data-Driven learning has gained ground in foreign language teaching in recent years. It is a method of utilizing a corpus for foreign language teaching purposes in the classroom. The paper aims at reviewing general peculiarities of Data-Driven Learning in language teaching and presents the findings of focus-group discussions concerning Data-Driven Learning implementation, its opportunities and anticipated challenges in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context of Georgia.</p>
11.15	Ekaterine Tsuladze	<p><b>Effective Language Learning Process through Cognitive and Metacognitive Reading Strategies in English as a Foreign Language (A case of Georgian schools)</b></p> <p>The present study aims at finding out the ways for improving students' reading skills by using effective reading strategies. It is acknowledged that teaching reading strategies is a key element in developing students' comprehension. Thus, reading comprehension is one of the most important parts in the English curriculum at school. Language teachers sometimes mention lack students' reading strategies. Therefore, teachers need to enhance reading skills through the development of effective reading strategies. The main purpose of this study is to outline useful reading strategies, in order to make language learning process effective for schoolchildren. The sample of the study comprised of 100 schoolchildren, whose age ranged between 13 and 15, from two public schools in Gori. The result of the study specifies that the students who were taught various reading strategies had a significant improvement.</p>
11.30	Mariam Kuchava	<p><b>Staff Motivation in Private and Public Higher Educational Institutions (Case of Three Universities in Georgia)</b></p> <p>The study investigates for developing further recommendations the features of motivational factors in public and private sector of higher educational institutions based on the case of three universities in Georgia, with the major emphasis on the differences between public and private universities staff motivational constructs. Staff motivation is essential for the growth, development and success of higher</p>

		<p>educational Institutions. Motivated staff are more productive, happy and highly committed to their job. Staff motivation promotes workplace harmony and increased employee performance. Motivation not only encourages a productive performance, but also shows employees how much the organization cares. The goal of the study was to indicate staff motivation by the several work-related factors and evaluate satisfaction of employees with the working culture of the university, to get the recommendations from employees about the improvement of top management's current strategy and to interpret the data gathered from the survey from different perspectives. Ninety HEI employees took part in this research from three universities in Georgia. The survey for this research was conducted in Tbilisi and Kutaisi where the selected universities are situated. The study has revealed that extrinsic motivation (in this case, increased salary) provided to the employees, is highly appreciated by them; however, this is not the most effective way of motivating staff in higher educational institutions. Recognition, appreciation and job features appeared as the most important factors of motivation for the absolute majority of the respondents. The findings of the study will be beneficial for the universities in case of proper interpretation and implementation by the top management.</p>
11.45	<p><b>Ekaterine Kvantaliani</b></p>	<p><b>Medical Students' Engagement Strategies in Online Learning due to COVID-19 Pandemic Spread</b></p> <p>Worldwide lockdown caused by the spread of COVID-19 pandemic led higher education institutions to rapidly transform from face-to-face to online learning mode. Most universities were not ready for such a rapid change and faced various problems. Medical education appeared to be the most vulnerable, as to develop practical and professional skills among medical students, contact with patients is essential. The study tried to use meta-analysis methodology. Despite the lack of pertinent literature, still it was managed to highlight those strategies which are essential to engage medical school students in online learning and thus expand their knowledge, develop skills and competences in medical field.</p>
12.00	<p><b>Kristina Pirtskhalaishvili</b></p>	<p><b>Developing metacognitive reading strategies in the young learners in the process of distance learning - international experience</b></p> <p>Learning strategies that help schoolchildren to improve their learning and increase their ability to read independently have recently been in</p>

		<p>the focus of researchers' attention. There are several factors that are known as facilitating in language learning process and these factors seem to be helpful for learners. Learning strategies can be taught or improved, thereby helping language learners to become more successful. This article investigates the metacognitive strategy practices and shares other researchers' experiences in the scope of different reading strategies and their usage to identify future learning opportunities. Accordingly, the article assesses the feasibility of benefits of metacognitive reading strategy awareness instruction for young learners in the process of distance learning. A fundamental purpose of e-school education is to help learners to develop self-study skills. Reading skill is important for knowledge, especially in case of distance schooling. When young learners come out of the process of studying elementary reading skills, they need to work out the skill of independent reading.</p>
<p>12.15</p>	<p><b>Guranda Khabeishvili</b></p>	<p><b>The Significance of the Transferable Skills Development: Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Revealed Skills Deficit among Students in Higher Education Institutions in Georgia?</b></p> <p>Nowadays there is an increased interest in promoting the development of transferable skills in higher education institutions worldwide. Transformation in labour market demands as well as the alteration of higher education institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders' expectations have recently made this issue the main target for HEIs. There is the need to adapt educational curricula to labour market needs as well as to facilitate dialogue between the labour market and the education sectors. In this regard, the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the need to enhance transferable skills. The question arises here: what has the pandemic changed on the skills agenda? Since the distance learning/elearning has become a reality for millions of people, the way we teach and learn have also been altered. Accordingly, the major issue that is being faced by HEIs is related not only to knowledge transmission, but also with the skills development. Consequently, this paper sheds lights on the importance of the skills development and the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper discusses the results gained from three different universities in Georgia. It reveals the teachers' perception regarding the skills possessed by students. Besides, it examines the impact of the COVID-19 on learning process and the issues connected to the skills deficit and development in Georgian context. This study revealed that the interest towards the</p>

		generic skills integration has become more important than ever before.
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**Recorded Presentations: 12.30**

Presenter	Topic
<p><b>Ana Gadakhabadze</b></p>	<p><b>The Necessity of English Public Speaking Course at Higher Educational Institutions (Case of a Georgian HEI)</b></p> <p>Higher educational institutions (HEIs) in Georgia deliver a great many courses that enable to develop various skills, but do they offer a course which helps students develop public speaking skills? That is the primary question for the survey and this article tries to analyze the issue from students' perspective, whether they feel and see the need for those skills and what their attitude towards public speaking is, especially public speaking in a foreign (English) language. The researcher conducted a survey with the help of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire at one of the private HEIs in Georgia and the results are described and analyzed in the article. The results prove that the students at the University are quite aware of the need to perform well during their public speech. They do analyze and confirm that much practice in specific details at preparation level will decrease their anxiety level while giving a speech in foreign language.</p>
<p><b>Tamta Mshvidobadze</b></p>	<p><b>Materials Development and Lexis Focus in English Language Teaching</b></p> <p>Teaching materials are increasingly becoming a vital factor in education and are widely considered to be a significant issue for teachers. Designing and adjusting the materials to textbooks are recognized as being most challenging for teachers all over the world. The article will show how often teachers have to design materials for vocabulary activities and if they consider the designed tasks successful, as successful materials encourage and determine an effective lesson. The aim of this research is to identify how often English language teachers design materials for the learners to focus on vocabulary and how often they design contextualized tasks. This research illustrates if personalized and contextualized tasks are designed. Data were gathered through a survey conducted in four private universities in Georgia. English language teachers answered mostly Likert Scale, multiple-choice and some</p>

	<p>open questions in the survey. This survey was sent through online platforms. A conclusion was made that materials should be adapted to the students' interests, thus, the learners will be more involved in the educational process and motivated. Textbooks are written for 'an average student', so they cannot be well adjusted to students' needs, especially in terms of language input and personalized / contextualized tasks. Teachers have to design tasks to make learning more interesting.</p>
<p><b>Irina Chikovani</b></p>	<p><b>The Impact of Inquiry-Based Teaching on Primary Years Programme Students' Reading Accuracy and Comprehension Level (a case of Georgian Private School)</b></p> <p>Second or foreign language teaching is an area which is in constant development and is filled with innovations. Over the last century language teaching methods have undergone fundamental changes. Different sets of approaches have appeared in response to the ineffectiveness of traditional teaching methods. Inquiry-based learning (IBL) approach is among the most contemporary teaching approaches, which perfectly corresponds to the 21st century demands while fostering interest in students. It improves students' reading performance and develops an interactive learning environment where discovery, reflective and creative learning are highly supported. A quantitative method was applied to the present study, which explores the significance of inquiry-based teaching in facilitating students' reading accuracy and comprehension after implementing appropriate activities and observes the effects of IBL on students' reading accuracy and comprehension level in Primary Years Programme. The study was quasi-experimental and involved 24 students in the experimental and 26 students in the control groups. Raz-Kids' Leveled Passages were used to compare the control and treatment group students' Instructional Reading Levels through pre-test and post-test analysis, while students' comprehension level was measured using Raz-Kids' Comprehension Quiz. The quantitative study revealed that inquiry-based reading activities have a positive influence on students' reading accuracy and comprehension and increase students' final learning outcomes.</p>

**Emine Bala**

### **English Language Improvement with Out-of-class Learning**

The present study aims to reveal the impact of the engagement in out-of-class learning on the foreign language students' language proficiency for second language acquisition. Accordingly, the relationship of private university EFL students' involvement in English language activities outside the classroom with their language proficiency is investigated. The researcher designed the study based on a descriptive quantitative research method utilizing a questionnaire comprising 25 items and administered it to the freshmen from English language teaching, biology education, physics education, and mathematics education departments in the education faculty of a private university in Erbil. 87 participants responded to the questionnaire. The statistical analysis of data was performed through SPSS 25 data editor. The results show that the most frequent activities in which English is practiced are entertaining activities like watching movies, videos, and surfing on the Internet, and the level of the students' involvement in English language activities outside the classroom is positively associated with their language proficiency. This research could be beneficial for the language teachers to show how to encourage their students to start practice outside the classroom, for the students to offer some ways to augment their language proficiency with the application of English in authentic environments, and for the educational administrators to give some ideas for curriculum design including out-of-class learning.

**Keywords:** English as a Foreign Language, English Language Activities Outside the Classroom, Language Proficiency, Out-of-class Learning, Second Language Acquisition

**Ali Bala**

### **Motivational Tools on Screen Reading for Primary School Students**

The present study aims to investigate whether the student incentives and awards have an impact on private school students' reading motivation in foreign language classrooms. A quantitative research methodology was preferred to collect numerical data to reveal the extent of incentives and awards features in digital libraries on students' reading attitudes, and the researcher designed a questionnaire to collect the data correspondingly. Later, the attitudes of the students towards incentives and rewards and the number of the books that students have read were correlated to investigate if there is a relationship or not. The sample of the study consisted of 41 grade 5 students from two private primary schools in Erbil. The obtained data analysis was performed through SPSS 25 statistical data editor. The findings have discovered that incentives and rewards in digital library systems influence the students' attitudes towards reading positively. Furthermore, the number of books that the students read in the 2019-2020 academic year, and the effect of incentives and rewards on students' reading motivation are correlated significantly. This research might be beneficial for school teachers to see how students can be positively motivated to read and enhance their reading skills utilizing technological tools, also for curriculum designers to consider the effectiveness of digital libraries on students reading skill development.

**Keywords:** Awards, Digital Library, Foreign Language Classrooms, Incentives, Reading Attitudes, Reading Motivation