

ზრდილობა-თავაზის ქართული ლექსიკის სწავლების რამდენიმე ასპექტი

(მოზოლოგიის ლექსიკური ფორმულები)

POLITENESS – SEVERAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING GEORGIAN LEXICON

(LEXICAL FORMULAS FOR APOLOGIES)

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 <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-4643-2173>**საკვანძო სიტყვები:** ქართული, ჰოგოც უცხო ენა, ქუე, თავაზიანი ლექსიკა, მოზოლოგიის ლექსიკა**Keywords:** Georgian as a foreign language, GFL, polite vocabulary, excuse formulas

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to explore the semantic nuances of polite forms in the Georgian language within the context of teaching Georgian as a foreign language. Scientific literature indicates that “in modern Georgian, expressions related to apologies, as well as the verb “forgive me” and the adverb “excuse me” are common” (Zekalashvili, 2022, p. 5). This issue is relevant because foreign speakers often struggle to understand the appropriate contexts for using polite forms due to the semantic confusion surrounding “sorry” and “excuse me”. From the perspective of integrating into Georgian society, foreign language students must consider the etiquette characteristic of various social strata in our country. For instance, it is considered unacceptable for Georgians to refer to an unknown or older person as “man” or “woman”, as these terms carry negative connotations that may be perceived differently in other linguistic cultures. In Georgian, terms like “ma’am” and “sir” are necessary when addressing a boss or stranger. When a foreign speaker hears “sorry,” they may attempt to determine which context is appropriate from four possible options: “sorry,” “if possible,” “excuse me,” and “please.” This distinction is crucial, as in teaching, these forms can sometimes share a meaning, while individually they have distinct semantics. These lexemes can be encountered in various situations, such as in transport or at a shopping center: “Excuse me,” or “Sorry, could you give me a ride?”; “Excuse me, is it ‘cash’ or card?” In such cases, they serve as polite expressions (excuse me) rather than apologies (sorry). In other contexts, these words have specific meanings: “sorry” conveys forgiveness, as in “I’m sorry, I’m late,” while “excuse me” does not imply forgiveness, as in “Excuse me, take this.” Saba’s dictionary defines “sorry” as a way to thank a person through words and actions, while “excuse me” is defined

as inappropriate for human interaction. In the Georgian language, “sorry” is described as expressing regret and seeking forgiveness for one’s inappropriate behavior or speech, while “excuse me” conveys an apology. There are instances when “sorry” and “excuse me” both imply forgiveness, but they also have independent meanings depending on the context. The intonation factor, indicated by a punctuation mark (!), is significant as it can convey a command. The phrases “if possible,” “please,” and “excuse me” should also be noted, as in certain contexts they can share meanings with “sorry” and “excuse me.” For example, “if you can/sorry/excuse me,” or “please/excuse me.” Clearly, these analytical forms serve as expressions of politeness. It should be emphasized that “if possible,” when taken alone, can imply the semantics of possibility (i.e., it can be understood as “if it is possible”). The phrase “if possible” may also appear in some texts as “please.” The question of which form to choose arises naturally: which is acceptable? Depending on the situation, when asking someone for something, one might say, “Please...” and to convey politeness, one could add a phrase like “if possible,” e.g., “I will pay by card if possible.” In this report, we will analyze “excuse me,” “sorry,” and “forgive me,” contrasting these forms while considering their historical context, orthographic norms, and intonation patterns. In conclusion, it can be stated that throughout its history, the Georgian language has developed unique words that share common meanings in specific contexts, while also possessing distinct meanings when considered separately. This complexity poses challenges for learners, and it is essential that we account for all aspects and clarify each word-form according to its context, thereby alleviating difficulties for foreign learners.

For foreign speakers of older or younger age who have come to Georgia over the years, from one or another country for a more or less long period of time, it is basically necessary to study the Georgian language. For this contingent, when teaching Georgian, a context (discourse) that is difficult to understand from a cultural point of view often appears. In this regard, the issue of using forms expressing politeness also creates a problem.

It is indicated in the scientific literature that: *“in the new Georgian, expressions related to sorry are widespread, as well as the verb “pardon” and the adverb “sorry” (said for a relatively minor mistake or unacceptable behavior). Forgive me belongs to the elevated style and is used to emphasize politeness. The word “sorry” is derived from other Lexical units as well: Apologizes ... (in the sense of polite and courteous).”* (Zekalashvili, 2022, p. 5). The issue is relevant, as foreign speakers often do not understand the area of using polite / polite forms due to the semantic confusion of the forms **“Sorry”** and **“Excuse me”**. Sometimes they think, for example, if the two words “sorry” and “excuse me” are used in the same way, they have the same meaning, why is it necessary to study both forms?! The use of the words **“please”** and **“if possible”** is also a cause of confusion. These two words are often interpreted in the same way in Georgian dialogues, as in English. **“Please”**, sometimes - Eng. **“If possible”**. It is necessary to have an exact definition of each word and discuss it in different contexts, which I think eliminates the difficulty in language teaching.

It should be noted that in terms of integration in Georgian reality, a foreigner needs to take into account the etiquette that is characteristic of different social strata in our country. It is unacceptable for Georgian society to use such addresses for an unknown and older person - “man”, “woman”, for example: “Take me, man”; “Take it, man”; “Take it, woman”; “Call me, man”; “Call me, woman” ... in dialogue, these two forms have a negative connotation, they are offensive word-forms to some extent, which is not the case in Russian and English.

What is polite speech? As Sh. Apridonidze notes: *“First of all, this means respect for the other person, as the addressee of the appeal. For this reason, let’s remember the so-called Addressing with “you” as one of the visible expressions of polite speech.”* With polite language units, we can establish communication with another, stranger/stranger or older person, and with these word-forms we show respect for him, for example: “You, Ms. Nino, do you understand?”; “No, Mr. Giorgi, this is a new book”... (and not: “You, woman Nino, do you understand?”; “No, man, Giorgi, this is a new book”...)

In the Georgian language, there are such polite, polite forms, without using which, in fact, it is unacceptable to call and address an older and unknown person, these forms are: **“Ms.”**, **“Mr.”**.

In Georgia, a foreign-speaking person can easily understand the word “sorry” and know why they say it to

him, but he should understand why the words: **“Excuse me”**, **“if possible”**, **“sorry”**, **“forgive me”** (“please/ forgive me”), **“please”**. The named lexemes can be heard in different situations, for example, on the street, while traveling by transport or shopping in a shopping mall: “Excuse me, give me a ride” / “Sorry, give me a ride”; “Excuse me, what time is it?” / “Sorry, what time is it?”; “Excuse me, is this your car?” / “Sorry, is this your car?”; “Excuse me, you dropped it” / “Sorry, you dropped it”; “Excuse me, drive me, I’m getting off” / “Sorry, drive me, I’m getting off”; “Excuse me, leave the card” / “Sorry, leave the card”; “Excuse me, do you pay with cash or with a card?” / “Sorry, do you pay with cash or with a card?” “Excuse me” and not as an expression of forgiveness Eng. **“Sorry”**.

In other sentences and contexts, each of these words has its own, independent meaning: **“Sorry”** expresses a request for forgiveness, for example, in the following sentences: “I’m sorry, I’m 10 minutes late”; “Sorry, I couldn’t call you yesterday”; “Sorry, I can’t talk now”; “I’m sorry for my words like that”; “Sorry for being careless”; “Sorry, I misrepresented this to you”; “Sorry, it was a mistake, I hope you understand me”; “Sorry, I got the number wrong”; “Sorry, I wrote by mistake, I will correct it”; “I’m sorry, but I have to go, I’m in a hurry...”

The word **“Excuse me”** here does not express the meaning of forgiveness at all: “Excuse me, take it (coffee)”; “Excuse me, come on”; “Excuse me, do you understand?”; “Excuse me, get ready”; “Excuse me, answer me”; “Excuse me, I don’t understand”; “Excuse me, repeat again”; “Excuse me, where are you?”; “Excuse me, whose book is this?”; “Excuse me, who are you?” “Excuse me, do I know you?”; “Excuse me, you’ve been taken elsewhere” ... it indicates politeness, is used in a specific environment to avoid embarrassment, as in Eng. **“Excuse me”**.

The definitions of the mentioned polite and polite words are interesting: **In Sul Khan-Saba’s dictionary**, the word sorry is interpreted as follows: *“Sorry (courtesy.) This is for a man to be thanked by words and deeds.... Sorry - the act of saying sorry”* [<http://www.nplg.gov.ge/gwdict/index.php?a=term&d=8&t=4068>]; *“Unfortunately unforgivable – unworthy of a man... deplorable – correct behavior”* [<http://www.nplg.gov.ge/gwdict/index.php?a=term&d=8&t=43646>].

In the **“Dictionary of the Georgian Language”** the word sorry is presented as follows: “sorry - expressing regret, asking for forgiveness for one’s inappropriate behavior or speech.” Examples are given for more visibility: “Sorry to bother you at such an untimely time. I’m sorry to interrupt you Goodbye, goodbye, sorry and thank you very much for the respect!” (A.Bel.) ... “Mamamze apologized to hear Melchizedek and left the hall” (K. Gams.). “I’m sorry I’m with you, mother, I’m sorry!” (Sh. Aragv.). “If I said a rude word, I apologize.” (D. Kld.). “I’m sorry, I apologize!” (L. Kyach.)” [<https://www.ice.ge/liv/liv/ganmartebiti.php>].

In the same dictionary we read about the word **“Excuse me”**: *“The included word expresses an apology.” Examples are given: “... called me: **“Excuse me, my master, please forgive us for our ignorant act!”** (Akaki). **“Excuse me, neighbor, for bothering you!”** (T. Razikashvili.) **“If I’m not Excuse me, if I’m not sorry, if you’re not sorry! If possible, if you don’t consider me a crime. “If you don’t excuse me, tell me, haven’t the boys arrived?”** (Akaki). **“If I’m not Excuse me, explain to me”, I asked (Ek. Gabashvili). “Giorgi, ... if we are not Excuse me, you must first give us an oath not to expose us”** (E. Ninoshvili).” [https://www.ice.ge/liv/liv/ganmartebiti.php]*

It seems that there are cases when **“sorry”** and **“Excuse me”** are words expressing forgiveness, they both mean the same thing, but taken separately in a different context, they take an independent meaning in another sentence, and one cannot take the place of the other: for example, **“Excuse me! Fix your broken work yourself!”** In this sentence, the word “Excuse me” uttered by the first person is a kind of indication, a hint, not an expression of a request for forgiveness, an apology to the second person. It is significant here the intonation factor expressed by a punctuation mark (!), which expresses a command.

You might think, in this sentence, the word “Excuse me” cannot be replaced with the word “Sorry”? And let it be: “Sorry, fix your broken work yourself!”. No, it cannot, because we are not considering them in the same sense here, sorry cannot take its place in this sentence due to its meaning, since it implies forgiveness as an independent entity.

Regarding words that express politeness, such as ‘If possible,’ ‘Please,’ and ‘Sorry,’ it should be noted that in some contexts, they convey similar meanings to ‘I’m sorry’ or ‘Excuse me.’ For example, ‘If you can, take me,’ ‘Sorry, drive me,’ ‘Please drive me,’ or even ‘Excuse me (sorry), drive me.’ In these cases, these words serve as forms of politeness. It is also important to note that when used separately, the phrase ‘if it is possible’ can take on the meaning of ‘if possible,’ which can be understood in English as ‘If possible.’ In some texts, ‘If possible’ is even used in a similar way to the English ‘Please.’ Which form is more appropriate in different contexts? If in a certain situation, in the Georgian reality, we ask someone to perform this or that action or something, naturally we will say the word “please”, for example: “Please bring me a glass of water”; “Please / please call me”; “Please / please turn down some music”; “Please help me”, “Please give me an outline”, “Please give me a pen”; “Please / please and tell me”; “Please give me this book”; “Please/please let’s go together” ... (in these sentences the word “please/please” will be used as English “Please”). However, when we do not ask for something from the other person and simply want to express politeness, we use the phrase ‘if possible.’ For example: ‘If possible, I will pay by card’; ‘If possible, answer me’; ‘If possible, I will take it’; ‘If possible, I will call’; ‘If possible,

let’s call now’; ‘If possible, order’; ‘If possible, speak quietly’; ‘If possible, repeat, I don’t understand’; ‘If possible, explain’; ‘If possible, I will open the door’; ‘If possible, I will provide the information; are they here?’; ‘If possible, let them come in.’ In these cases, it’s used similarly to the English phrase ‘If possible.

How is forgiveness defined?! In the “Dictionary of the Georgian Language” we read: *“He forgives (forgave, unforgiven) for the committed crime, he does not punish for the sin, he does not ask for the crime, the sin - he forgives, forgives.” They forgave molasses, but it bitten them (proverb). If I did something unintentionally, I apologize to you and please forgive us! (E. Ninoshvili.). To this day, my husband has not forgiven Chiladze.). Sir, if a small piece of bread fell on us, me for such a choice (T. we would kiss it with begging, to forgive our carelessness (R. Inanishvili.). Excuse me! Expressing regret, asking for forgiveness for inappropriate behavior or speech is the same as sorry!”* [https://www.ice.ge/liv/liv/ganmartebiti.php].

It appears that the words ‘forgiveness’ and ‘sorry’ share a similar meaning: both express a plea for forgiveness. These forms can even be used together in one sentence, for example: “I’m sorry, I’m late, please forgive me.”

As for the word taken separately - **Please**; asks, it means begging, for example: “Please, let’s go to the concert, it will be very good!” / “I beg you, let’s go to the concert, it will be very good!”; “Please give me my book”/ “I beg you, give me my book”; “Please, don’t leave me alone”/ “I beg you, don’t leave me alone”; “Please, call him.”/ “I beg you, call him”; “Please tell him this story”/ “I beg you, tell him this story”...

In Sulkhan-Saba’s dictionary we have **“Please”** as: *„I am asking - a request to be given... a request to be given. Here it is interpreted as a please for giving, for something to be given.”* [http://www.nplg.gov.ge/gwdict/index.php?a=term&d=8&t=16805]

“In the definition dictionary of the Georgian language” it is explained as follows: *“asks (asked, asked) addresses, tells (tells) to give something”* [https://www.ice.ge/liv/liv/ganmartebiti.php].

In the Georgian language, there are also cases when **“please”, “if possible”** have one meaning, for example: “Please, leave me alone!”, “If possible, leave me alone!”, “Please don’t talk to him!”, “If possible, don’t talk to him!”, “Please tell him to leave!”, “If possible, tell him to leave!”, “Please call him to come in!”, “If possible, call him to come in!”, “Please come soon”/ “If possible, come soon”...

In the texts, the words - **“very”, “big”,** and the interjection **“very big”** are often found before polite words, for example: “I’m sorry” / “I’m very sorry”; “Please/please”... by adding them these words do not change their meaning. The speaker thereby expresses his attitude, concern for a specific behavior/incident... It is noted in the scientific literature: **“Indirect means of apology are used when**

expressing concern for what has been done (I'm sorry, I'm sincerely sorry, I'm very sad, I'm very sorry) and thus emphasize that it's not intentional They acted like this, it happened to them accidentally, unintentionally, and they are trying to correct the situation with these phrases."

In addition to teaching the semantic nuances, we must also pay attention to orthographic norms and punctuation (e.g., 'Sorry': 'I'm sorry I'm late,' 'I'm sorry, we can't go,' 'I'm sorry, I didn't hear you'; **'Excuse me'**: 'Excuse me, let me have the coffee,' 'Excuse me, let me go,' 'Excuse me, we're leaving'; **'If possible'**: 'If possible, we'll get a new one,' 'If possible, I'll call,' 'If possible, call...'). **More-**

over, intonation plays a crucial role ('I'm sorry?', 'I'm sorry?!', 'I'm sorry!', 'Excuse me?', 'Excuse me?!', 'Excuse me!...')

Thus, it can be said that the Georgian language has developed and preserved unique word forms throughout its long history, which hold the same meaning in different contexts and also carry a distinct meaning when used separately. This is a natural phenomenon in the Georgian language, and in teaching, we should address the existing polite forms both independently and within various contexts. This approach will clarify the meaning of each word and help a foreigner better understand the nuances of Georgian communication culture.

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