

MAIN PROBLEMS IN TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TO UZBEK STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the main problems in the process of teaching English pronunciation to Uzbek students. The causes of phonetic errors in pronunciation, the influence of the native language, the phonetic competence of teachers, as well as the possibilities of using modern technologies are considered. Based on the research results, methodological recommendations for effective pronunciation training will be given. The role of interactive methods and multimedia tools in the formation of phonetic skills is also discussed. The article reveals the importance of innovative approaches aimed at developing phonetic competence.

Keywords: pronunciation, phonetics, phonetic errors, Uzbek students, English language, phonetic competence, interactive methods, influence of the native language, language teaching.

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, the English language is actively used as a means of international communication in various spheres of the world. Due to the growing need for learning English in Uzbekistan, the development of effective methods for its teaching has become a pressing issue. In the process of mastering English, pronunciation - that is, the ability to speak correctly and fluently - is an integral part of communicative competence. Unfortunately, the phonetic features and sound system characteristic of the Uzbek language create difficulties in mastering English pronunciation. Many students have problems pronouncing English sounds correctly, especially [θ], [ð], [ʃ], [ʒ], as well as the stress and intonation system. This negatively affects not only their conversational speech, but also listening comprehension and mutual communication. Moreover, these problems are exacerbated when the phonetic competence of teachers is insufficient or phonetics is not taught separately and systematically.

This article is dedicated to illuminating this very issue. It analyzes the main errors encountered by Uzbek students in pronunciation, their causes, and ways to eliminate them. At

the same time, special attention is paid to the role of effective methodological approaches, technological tools, and interactive exercises in the development of phonetic skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The problems of teaching English pronunciation have been studied by many foreign and domestic researchers. J.C. Wells (2000) emphasized the importance of pronunciation and stress issues in international English, while Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) suggests the need for an integrative approach to the development of phonetic competence. In their opinion, pronunciation exercises should be connected with the context of speech and serve a communicative purpose. Among Uzbek scholars, A. Juraev (2018) and D. Normurodova (2021) identified differences between the phonetic systems of the English and Uzbek languages and showed that these phonological differences cause errors in students. In their research, difficulties in pronouncing English sounds (for example, [θ], [ð], [v]) that do not exist in the Uzbek language are noted as the main problem. In addition, there are a number of studies on new pedagogical approaches, in particular, methods of teaching pronunciation using interactive platforms (such as Pronunciation Studio, ELSA Speak), visual and audio tools (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). According to their analysis, the use of technologies not only increases students' interest, but also creates opportunities for self-assessment and independent learning.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a comprehensive approach was applied, based on the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Initially, an analysis of oral speech samples was conducted among 1st-2nd year students studying English with Uzbek groups in order to identify phonetic errors. Pronunciation errors were classified based on transcription and phonetic analysis, relying on phonological criteria. Through surveys and interviews, the views, problems, and experiences of students and English language teachers on pronunciation were studied. Also, methods aimed at developing pronunciation using interactive lessons and mobile applications were tested in the experimental classroom, and their effectiveness was evaluated through practical results. The obtained data were summarized using statistical and thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results showed that Uzbek students face a number of problems in mastering English pronunciation. According to the phonetic analysis of the initial oral speech samples, the most common errors among students were observed in cases such as replacing interdental sounds, such as [θ] and [ð], with sounds [s] and [z], confusing the sound [v] with [w], and

replacing the sound [æ] with [e]. These phonological errors negatively affect not only the naturalness of pronunciation, but also the effectiveness of communication. As a result of the conducted surveys, it was revealed that students explained the main reasons for pronunciation problems by the differences in the sound systems of the English and Uzbek languages, the lack of phonetic exercises, and insufficient attention to pronunciation during the lesson. In particular, students noted the limited ability to practice pronunciation independently and the fact that teachers place less emphasis on phonetic exercises.

In the experimental classroom, as a result of classes conducted through mobile applications (for example, ELSA Speak and Sounds: The Pronunciation App) and interactive classes, positive changes in students' pronunciation were observed. For example, students who performed regular pronunciation exercises for a month began to demonstrate much more convincing speech in correct word stress and sound differentiation. These results demonstrate the effectiveness of technological tools and modern approaches in the development of phonetic competence. It follows from the discussion that an integrative approach is necessary for effective teaching of English pronunciation, in which phonetic knowledge should be applied in a communicative context, as well as opportunities for students to use multimodal tools. Increasing the phonetic competence of teachers, allocating time for studying pronunciation separately in lessons, and strengthening motivation to use independent learning tools - all these are important factors in reducing pronunciation problems for Uzbek students.

CONCLUSION

The research results showed that Uzbek students encounter certain phonetic barriers in learning English, especially in terms of pronunciation. These obstacles are mainly related to the phonological features of the native language, insufficient pronunciation exercises, and the lack of use of modern educational technologies. To overcome the problem, it is necessary to pay special attention to the formation of phonetic competence in English lessons, the use of interactive methods and mobile applications, and the strengthening of the phonetic training of teachers. An important factor is also the provision of resources that serve the development of pronunciation based on independent exercises and listening for students. Through the recommendations developed on the basis of this research, it is possible to further improve the learning process and improve students' pronunciation.

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