The Impact of Uzbek Phonetic Features on English Pronunciation Acquisition

Topvoldieva Dilbarkhon, Master's student of
Uzbekistan Journalism and Mass Communications University
Scientific advisor: **Ikramova Saida**

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this article to analyze the influence of Uzbek Phonetic features on English pronunciation acquisition. By comparing the phonological systems of both languages, the article identifies key areas of challenges and provides pedagogical solutions to enhance English pronunciation competence in Uzbek EFL learners.

Keywords: Uzbek phonetics, English pronunciation acquisition, L1 interference, Uzbek EFL learners, Pronunciation improvement, Second language phonology

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqolaning asosiy maqsadi – ingliz tilidagi talaffuzni o'zlashtirish jarayoniga o'zbek fonetik xususiyatlarining ta'sirini tahlil qilishdan iborat. Har ikki tilning fonologik tizimlarini taqqoslash orqali maqola asosiy qiyinchilik sohalarini aniqlaydi hamda o'zbek ingliz tili o'rganuvchilarida inglizcha talaffuz kompetensiyasini rivojlantirish uchun pedagogik yechimlarni taklif qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: o'zbek fonetikasi, inglizcha talaffuzni o'zlashtirish, birinchi til interferensiyasi, o'zbek ingliz tili o'rganuvchilari, talaffuzni yaxshilash, ikkinchi til fonologiyasi.

Introduction

Pronunciation is an important aspect of second language (L2) acquisition, especially for learners whose native language (L1) differs significantly from the target language. Uzbek, a Turkic language with unique phonetic and phonological characteristics, affects the way Uzbek learners perceive, produce English sounds. Understanding these impacts helps the teachers design targeted interventions to develop learner's pronunciation and fluency.

Phonetic Aspects of Uzbek Language

a) Vowels-the Uzbek alphabet consists of six stable pure vowels. These are a, e, i, u, o, o'. Unlike English, Uzbek does not have long or short vowels, nor it does include reduced vowels such as schva /ə/. As a result, Uzbek speakers tend to pronounce all vowels equally in the same length.

b) Consonants-Uzbek language does not have some common consonants in English. Notably, the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are not available in Uzbek. Furthermore, Uzbek does

not clearly differentiate between the English sounds /v/ and /w/ which triggers a huge problem in their pronunciation.

c)   Stress and intonation-Stress in Uzbek is fixed and usually falls on the final syllable of meaningful words. Intonation patterns are typically flat compared to English, which relies heavily on stress-timing and intonation for meaning and emphasis.

Influence of Uzbek Phonetics on English pronunciation

a)   Vowels difficulties- distinction between English long and short vowels is one of the major difficulties for Uzbeks. For instance, pairs such as ship and sheep or for and four are often pronounced identically. In addition to, the absence or reduced vowels leads learners to pronounce unstressed syllables unclearly, resulting in unnatural rhythm and incorrect word stress. English diphthongs also present challenges, as Uzbek learners tend to simplify them into monophthongs. Words like face, time may therefore be mispronounced.

b)   Consonant difficulties-the absence of dental fricatives causes learners to substitute /θ/ and /ð/ with familiar sounds such as /t/, /s/, /d/, or /z/. Confusion between /v/ and /w/ is also omnipresent, affecting intelligibility.

Uzbek learners often delete sounds or add additional vowels to simplify pronunciation.

c)   Suprasegmental difficulties-Uzbek speakers mostly transfer stress patters to English, placing stress on the final syllables regardless English stress rules. This results in mispronunciation like *worKED* instead of *WORked.* These in questions and sentences can affect communicative effectiveness.

Pedagogical solutions

In order to solve these problems caused by Uzbek phonetic interference, explicit pronunciation instruction is important. Educators should concentrate pair exercises, phonetic transcription, and listening discrimination activities. Very specific attention should be given to vowel length, reduced vowels, consonant contrasts and stress patterns.

It is important to use technology tools like pronunciation apps and AI tools as they support learners in error-correction. Moreover, teaching supra segmental features through shadowing, rhythmic drills, and authentic listening materials can significantly enhance pronunciation competence.

Conclusion

Uzbek phonetic features have a significant influence on English pronunciation acquisition. Differences in vowel, consonant, stress systems cause predictable pronunciation challenges among Uzbek EFL learners. Recognizing these challenges make educators design according strategies to improve learners' intelligibility and confidence in spoken English. Effective pronunciation teaching should be conducted using explicit instruction, technological support,

continuous exposure to authentic English input.

References

1.   Kaplan, R. B. (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

2.   Khayitbaev, O. (2024). An analysis of Uzbek students' difficulties in pronouncing English consonants and vowels (Master's thesis, Chonnam National University).

3.   Swan, M., & Smith, B. (2001). *Learner English: A Teacher's Guide to Interference and Other Problems*. Cambridge University Press.

4.   Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., & Goodwin, J. M. (2010). *Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

5.   Askarov, Khurshid, & Ismatullaev, D. (2001). *Uzbek Phonetics*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences.

6.   International Journal of Advanced Scientific and Academic Research. (2024). Pronunciation Problems of Uzbek EFL Learners.