

WHY UZBEK LEARNERS STRUGGLE WITH SPEAKING ENGLISH

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Abstract. This article analyzes the challenges that Uzbek language learners face when speaking in English and provides practical and reliable solutions to overcome these difficulties. In many cases, learners possess sufficient grammatical knowledge and vocabulary; however, they encounter significant obstacles when attempting to communicate orally. These challenges are often related to psychological, linguistic, and environmental factors.

Keywords: English language learning, Uzbek learners, speaking skills, language barriers, fluency development, second language acquisition, communication skills, language environment, error correction, language practice.

Аннотация. Данная статья анализирует трудности, с которыми сталкиваются узбекские учащиеся при устной речи на английском языке, и предлагает практические и надежные способы их преодоления. Во многих случаях учащиеся обладают достаточными знаниями грамматики и словарного запаса, однако испытывают значительные затруднения при попытке выразить свои мысли устно. Эти трудности, как правило, связаны с психологическими, лингвистическими и средовыми факторами.

Ключевые слова: изучение английского языка, узбекские учащиеся, навыки разговорной речи, языковые барьеры, развитие беглости речи, усвоение второго языка, коммуникативные навыки, языковая среда, исправление ошибок, языковая практика.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchi o'rganuvchilarning ingliz tilida gapirish jarayonida duch keladigan qiyinchiliklarini tahlil qiladi hamda ushbu muammolarni bartaraf etish uchun amaliy va ishonchli yechimlarni taklif etadi. Ko'pgina hollarda o'rganuvchilar yetarli darajada grammatik bilim va lug'at boyligiga ega bo'lsalar-da, og'zaki nutqda fikrlarini erkin ifodalashda sezilarli

to'siqlarga duch keladilar. Ushbu muammolar asosan psixologik, lingvistik va muhitga oid omillar bilan bog'liq.

Kalit so'zlar: ingliz tilini o'rganish, o'zbek tilini o'rganuvchilar, nutq qobiliyatlari, til to'siqlari, ravonlikni rivojlantirish, ikkinchi tilni o'zlashtirish, muloqot qobiliyatlari, til muhiti, xatolarni tuzatish, til amaliyoti.

Introduction. Nowadays, students all over the world are increasingly focusing on learning foreign languages. Among them, the English language holds a dominant position due to its global importance in education, business, science, and communication. As a result, Uzbek language learners are also highly motivated to acquire English and improve their proficiency.

However, despite their strong interest and effort, many Uzbek learners face significant challenges, especially in speaking. While they may perform well in reading, writing, or grammar exercises, expressing their thoughts fluently in English remains a major difficulty. These problems often arise from differences between the Uzbek and English languages, as well as from limited exposure to real-life communication in English.

This article aims to analyze the main difficulties faced by Uzbek learners in speaking English and provide clear explanations for these challenges. Furthermore, it offers practical and effective strategies that can help learners overcome these barriers and improve their speaking skills in a more efficient and confident manner.

Main body

One of the most noticeable challenges Uzbek learners face is the habit of thinking in their native language and then translating their thoughts into English. This process often leads to grammatical, structural, and cultural mismatches between the two languages. As a result, learners may produce slow, unnatural, and sometimes confusing speech. Literal translations can reduce the clarity of communication and increase the likelihood of misunderstanding.

To address this issue, learners need to develop the ability to think directly in English. One effective way to achieve this is by increasing exposure to English

through reading books, articles, and other authentic materials. Additionally, using monolingual English dictionaries instead of English-Uzbek dictionaries can help learners better understand meanings within the context of the English language itself. Over time, these practices can reduce dependence on the native language and improve fluency.

Another important difficulty is related to pronunciation, particularly consonant and vowel sounds that do not exist in the Uzbek language. Uzbek learners often experience consonant issues with the English “th” sounds /θ/ and /ð/. Since these sounds are not present in Uzbek, they are frequently replaced by more familiar sounds such as /s/, /z/, or /t/. For example, the word “think” may be pronounced as “sink,” which can lead to misunderstandings in communication. This type of substitution reduces pronunciation accuracy and may affect listeners’ comprehension.

In addition to consonant problems, vowel distinctions also create significant challenges. Many learners find it difficult to distinguish between long and short vowel sounds in English. For instance, words like “ship” and “sheep” may sound similar to Uzbek learners, even though they have different meanings. This confusion occurs because vowel length and quality play a more important role in English than in Uzbek. As a result, incorrect pronunciation of vowels can change the meaning of words and negatively impact effective communication.

To overcome pronunciation-related difficulties, learners should engage in focused listening and speaking practice. Activities such as repeating after native speakers, using phonetic transcription, and practicing minimal pairs (e.g., “ship” vs. “sheep”) can significantly improve pronunciation skills. Moreover, modern technologies such as language learning applications and speech recognition tools can provide immediate feedback and help learners correct their mistakes more efficiently.

Another significant problem is the lack of a proper speaking environment. In most cases, Uzbek learners use their native language in daily life and have very

limited opportunities to practice English. Speaking English for only a few hours a week is not sufficient to develop strong speaking skills. Language learning, especially speaking, requires consistent practice and interaction.

To overcome this barrier, learners should actively try to create an English-speaking environment around themselves. This can be done by communicating with friends who are also learning English or by finding native or fluent speakers to practice with. Moreover, learners should try to use English in as many daily situations as possible, such as thinking, writing notes, or even talking to themselves. Such immersion can significantly improve their confidence and fluency.

Fear of making mistakes is another important challenge that prevents learners from speaking freely. Many students hesitate to express their ideas because they are afraid of being judged or criticized by others. This fear creates psychological barriers that limit their participation in conversations and slow down their progress.

However, it is important to understand that making mistakes is a natural and essential part of language learning. No learner can achieve fluency without practicing and making errors along the way. In fact, mistakes provide valuable learning opportunities and help learners improve their skills. Therefore, students should focus on communication rather than perfection. Practicing speaking regularly, recording their speech, and analyzing their mistakes can be effective strategies for improvement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Uzbek learners face several challenges when speaking in English, including thinking in their native language, lack of a speaking environment, and fear of making mistakes. These factors significantly affect their fluency, confidence, and overall communication skills. However, with the right strategies and consistent effort, these difficulties can be overcome.

Developing the habit of thinking in English, creating a supportive language environment, and adopting a positive attitude toward mistakes are essential steps

toward improving speaking proficiency. Both learners and educators should work together to create more opportunities for practical communication. By doing so, learners can gradually build confidence and achieve greater success in mastering spoken English.

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