PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN TEACHING UZBEK AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Avezova Anajon Ko'paysin qizi
Department of Pedagogy, Psychology and Languages
Tashkent Medical Academy
Anajonavezov9309@mail.ru

A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
Challenges in teaching Uzbek as a second language have been discussed, and some solutions have been explained in this article. Moreover, the number of foreign students who are willing to learn how to speak in Uzbek, has been increasing in Tashkent. This encourages the development of teaching Uzbek as a second language.	Teaching languages, Uzbek as a foreign language, grammar, vocabulary, suffixes, prefixes.

Introduction

Teaching Uzbek as a foreign language has been a subject that is more spoken and worked on when compared to the past, both in Uzbekistan and abroad, especially for the last 20 years. The issue takes on a far different dimension when the case of Uzbek as a foreign language, which has been neglected for years, is compared to the cases of other languages as foreign languages. The practice of teaching Russian and English as a foreign language began a very long time ago, has gained usefulness recently, and is now recognized globally as a science language. Parallel to this, teaching German, Spanish, and French to non-native speakers has a long history. The preparation and development of programs and materials required in the process of teaching languages to foreigners has accelerated, even though trials based on purposeful and modern approaches began in the early 1980s. [1. Ümit Yıldız]These trials coincided with the beginning of teaching languages like English, German, and French as foreign languages. In Uzbekistan, teaching Uzbek as a second language has not been developed as well as other languages.

Teaching Uzbek as a foreign language can present several challenges due to various linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical factors. Here are some common issues encountered in teaching Uzbek:

1. Limited Resources: Compared to widely taught languages like English, French, or Spanish, resources for learning Uzbek as a foreign language are limited. This includes textbooks, online courses, language-learning apps, and other instructional materials. Even though some materials have been created over the last decades, such as "Uzbek language for foreigners" (for level A1) and "Uzbek language for foreigners" (for level A2), the quantity of those resources is not yet adequate. These textbooks have been published in very rare copies in Uzbekistan. Apart from that, other countries have been paying attention to creating a system to teach Uzbek.

In South Korea, there is a standard curriculum for the Uzbek language supported by Korea's Critical Foreign Language Education Act (enacted since 2017). The standard curriculum for the Uzbek language consists of a total of four levels, with A1 indicating the lowest level as an introduction to the Uzbek language and up to B2 as the highest level. [2. Lee, Ji-eon]

2. Lack of qualified instructors: Finding instructors proficient in both Uzbek and the target language of instruction (such as English) can be challenging. This scarcity can hinder the quality of instruction and the ability to offer Uzbek language courses in educational institutions.

3. Complex grammar: Uzbek grammar can be complex for learners, especially those who are not familiar with agglutinative languages. The extensive use of suffixes, prefixes, and infixes to convey grammatical relationships and nuances can be daunting for beginners. For instance: bola+jon+lar+im+ga, be+chora+gina+m, tulki+voy+ning.

4. Limited exposure to authentic materials: unlike widely spoken languages, there is a lack of authentic materials, such as books, movies, TV shows, and news sources, available for learners of Uzbek. This limits opportunities for exposure to real-life language usage and cultural context.

5. Different script: Uzbek is typically written in the Latin script, but historically it has also been written in Arabic and Cyrillic scripts. Learners may find it challenging to adapt to a new writing system, especially if they are not familiar with the Latin script. The Cyrillic alphabet is still being used despite the fact that the government introduced a law on the transition to the Latin alphabet in 1993. This is also a big problem for the younger generation, who are native speakers in Uzbekistan.

6. Cultural Context: Understanding Uzbek language and culture go hand in hand. Teaching Uzbek effectively requires integrating cultural elements into language instruction. However, cultural differences and nuances may be unfamiliar to learners from different cultural backgrounds.

7. Motivation and interest: As Uzbek is not widely spoken outside of Uzbekistan and neighboring regions, learners may lack motivation and interest in learning the language compared to more globally relevant languages.

8. Limited language exchange opportunities: Finding opportunities for language exchange or immersion experiences in Uzbek-speaking environments can be difficult, especially for learners outside of Central Asia.

To address these issues, it is essential to develop tailored curriculum and teaching materials, train instructors proficient in both Uzbek and the target language, utilize technology for language learning, establish partnerships with institutions in Uzbek-speaking regions, and promote cultural understanding alongside language proficiency.

Learning Uzbek as a second language can present certain challenges, but it can also be a rewarding experience. Here are a few difficulties that learners may encounter when learning Uzbek:

Language Structure: Uzbek has a subject-object-Verb (SOV) word order, which may differ from the word order in the learner's native language. For example: Men kitoblarni yaxshi ko'raman.

Phonology: Uzbek has distinctive sounds and phonemes that may not exist in the learner's native language, making pronunciation and phoneme recognition challenging. Most of the students who are learning Uzbek find it difficult to pronounce sounds such as x (they tend to pronounce this sound as iks or kh), g(they tend to pronounce this sound as g or gh), o(they tend to pronounce this sound as o or a), and u (they tend to mispronounce this sound as well).3. Vocabulary: Vocabulary acquisition can be challenging due to the unique words and expressions in Uzbek that may not have direct equivalents in the learner's native language. For example: do'ppi, chopon, atlas, adras…

To address the difficulties that learners face while learning Uzbek as a foreign language, it is important to implement strategies and resources that can help overcome these challenges. Here are some ways to solve problems that learners may encounter:

Comprehensive learning resources: To address the issue of limited resources, efforts can be made to develop and expand learning materials for Uzbek. This may involve creating more textbooks, online courses, multimedia resources, Youtube channels, and websites designed specifically for learners of Uzbek.

Specialized language instruction: Learners can be better prepared to negotiate the complexity of the language by providing specialized language instruction that focuses on the distinctive features of Uzbek grammar, phonology, lexical resources, and script.

Opportunities for language immersion and exchange: It can be very beneficial to give students the chance to participate in immersive events where they can practice speaking, listening, and understanding Uzbek in authentic contexts, or in language exchange programs like Tandem, Lingbe, and Duolingo.

Supportive language communities: Establishing online communities such as Linguaholic, Fluent in 3 Months, Omniglot (which are created for English), and forums where learners can connect with native Uzbek speakers, fellow learners, and language experts can provide valuable support and resources for overcoming challenges. Unfortunately, there are not any learner communities for Uzbek as a second language.

Cultural Integration: By incorporating cultural elements into language instruction, learners can better comprehend and value the cultural context of the language they are learning, which will increase the impact and engagement of the learning process. Furthermore, teaching Uzbek depending on its culture is one of the best ways to master the language as it motivates teachers to teach many parts of Uzbek culture to overseas pupils, reflects the learner's interest Uzbekistan, as well as the lifestyle of native speakers, and generates circumstances for becoming proficient in Uzbek in its cumulative function. [3. Madrakhimova N]

By addressing these areas and providing tailored support, learners can be better equipped to navigate the challenges of learning Uzbek as a foreign language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is a reality that more effective and scientific methods of teaching Uzbek as a second language are required, both in Uzbekistan and elsewhere. It is obvious that the necessary and urgent actions on this matter cannot be postponed any longer. Curriculum specialists, subject matter experts, teachers with prior experience teaching Uzbek as a foreign language, and other cycle share holders should collaborate to create a curriculum model that best satisfies the requirements and expectations of each cycle share antecedent to the opening of departments dedicated to teaching Uzbek as a second language. It is necessary to conduct requirements analysis research in order to build such a program model.

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