OBSERVATION OF PHONETIC ERRORS IN FRENCH PRONUNCIATION IN THE SPEECH OF UZBEKISTAN STUDENTS AND METHODS OF ELIMINATING THEM

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Abstract: *This article systematically analyzes phonetic errors that occur in the process of learning French by Uzbek students. The study aims to identify the fundamental differences between the phonetic systems of the French and Uzbek languages, to consider the causes of errors from a linguistic and psycholinguistic perspective, and to develop effective pedagogical methods for their elimination. The article provides specific recommendations on practical exercises, comparative analysis methods, and the use of modern technologies.*

Key words: *phonetic error, French pronunciation, Uzbek students, interference, phonemes, articulation, phonetic exercises, comparative analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, the study of foreign languages, in particular French, is becoming increasingly important in Uzbekistan. As part of the educational reforms of the Republic of Uzbekistan, French is taught as a compulsory or optional subject in many higher education institutions. However, in the process of mastering French, Uzbek students face many

phonetic problems, since the sound systems of these two languages are fundamentally different from each other.

French phonetics is known for its complexity: nasal vowels, front rounded vowels, syllabic stress, and liason phenomena - all of which pose great difficulties for Uzbek students. The phenomenon of interference, that is, the influence of the native language on the pronunciation of a foreign language, is the main source of phonetic errors.

The relevance of this study is that currently, special phonetics textbooks and methodological guidelines for students who speak Uzbek as their native language have not been sufficiently developed. In addition, French teachers often do not know the typology of phonetic errors and do not apply systematic methods for their elimination.

The purpose of the study is to systematically analyze phonetic errors in Uzbek students' French speech and develop a scientifically based methodology for their elimination.

DISCUSSION

There are 16 vowel phonemes in French, which differ in place of articulation, position of the lips, and involvement of the nasal cavity. In Uzbek, there are 6 vowels (a, e, i, o, u, o'). This quantitative difference already poses difficulties for Uzbek students.

The French nasal vowels ([ã], [ɛ̃], [ɔ̃], [œ̃]) are completely absent in Uzbek. When pronouncing these sounds, air passes through the mouth and nose at the same time. Uzbek students often try to pronounce these sounds with simple vowels or by adding nasal consonants: for example, they pronounce the word "enfant" as [anfant] instead of [ɑ̃fɑ̃].

The French front round vowels [y], [ø], [œ] also do not exist in Uzbek. To produce these sounds, the tongue must be in a forward position (as in [i]) and the lips must be rounded (as in [u]). Uzbek students often replace these sounds with [u] or [i].

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There are more than 20 consonant phonemes in French. Among them, the majority are sounds that are absent in Uzbek or have different articulation characteristics. For example, the sound [r] in French is produced with the tip of the tongue (uvular r), while in Uzbek [r] is produced with the tip of the tongue (apico-alveolar).

The difference between the sounds [v] and [b] in French also poses a challenge for Uzbek students. Also, the fact that consonants at the end of words in French are often not pronounced is a particular source of difficulty.

Uzbek is a word-stressed language, meaning that the stress falls on a specific syllable in each word. French, on the other hand, implements stress at the level of word combinations - the stress usually falls on the last syllable of a word group. This fundamental difference causes constant rhythmic errors among Uzbek students.

French and Uzbek also differ significantly in terms of intonation. French has a characteristic rising intonation for interrogative sentences, which is fundamentally different from the intonation patterns in Uzbek.

Substitution errors are the replacement of French sounds that exist in the Uzbek language with other sounds that are close to Uzbek. This is the most common type of phonetic error.

Observations show that Uzbek students often pronounce the nasal [ɑ̃] sound in French as [an] or [am]. They often replace the [y] sound with [u]: "lune" → [lun] (instead of [lyn]). There is a strong tendency to replace the sounds [ø] and [œ] with [o] or [e]: "feu" → [fo] (instead of [fø]).

Uzbek students often replace the uvular [ʁ] sound with a [r] produced with the tip of the tongue. This significantly changes French speech.

In French, many consonants at the end of words are not pronounced even though they are written. For example, in the word "Paris", the final [s] is not pronounced: [paʁi]. In the word "Grand", the [d] is not pronounced: [gʁɑ̃]. This

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rule seems very inappropriate for Uzbek students, because in the Uzbek language the graphic and phonetic forms are more consistent with each other.

As a result, Uzbek students often try to pronounce the consonants at the end of words: "respect" → [ʁɛspɛkt] (instead of [ʁɛspɛ]). This mistake makes French speech sound artificial and incorrect.

Liazon is a phonetic phenomenon specific to French, in which a consonant at the end of a word (usually unpronounced) is combined with the initial vowel of the following word. For example, "les enfants" is pronounced [le-zãfã].

Uzbek students make two mistakes when mastering the rules of liaison: they do not use mandatory liaison or they try to liaise in inappropriate places.

When Uzbek students speak French, they often copy the stress and intonation patterns typical of the Uzbek language. As a result, each word is stressed separately, and incorrect pauses are made within groups of words.

Rhythmic errors are especially evident when reciting poetry. The isosyllabic rhythm of French (each syllable pronounced at approximately the same time interval) is foreign to Uzbek students.

Interference is a psycholinguistic phenomenon that refers to the negative influence of the native language on second language acquisition. Phonetic interference is a major problem, where Uzbek students unconsciously transfer Uzbek sound patterns to French.

The interference mechanism works as follows: when a student hears a new sound in French, his brain equates this sound with the closest sound in Uzbek and produces that sound.

The Uzbek language is based on the Latin alphabet, and the relationship between graphic and phonetic form is much more regular than in French. When Uzbek students try to read French, they try to read the letters as they do in Uzbek.

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For example, the French combination "ou" should be read as [u], but an Uzbek student tends to read "o" and "u" separately. Reading the combination "eau" as [o] also seems illogical at first.

In some cases, the persistence of phonetic errors is due to teachers not paying enough attention to phonetic exercises. Many courses focus more on grammar and vocabulary, leaving phonetics as a secondary issue.

Also, teachers themselves sometimes do not pronounce the language perfectly enough or are not strict in correcting phonetic errors.

Articulatory gymnastics plays a special role in teaching difficult sounds. The teacher should first explain in detail how the sound is produced, and then direct students to practice in front of the mirror. For example, when teaching the sound [y]: "First say [i] and round your lips as if saying [u]."

When teaching nasal vowels, it is effective to teach students to say [a] without closing their noses, and then to feel the resonance of the nasal cavity. It is also recommended to practice with phonetic minimal pairs.

For correct pronunciation, it is first necessary to be able to hear sounds correctly. Therefore, it is advisable to distinguish between the reception and production stages in phonetic teaching. In the first stage, students only hear and distinguish.

Exercises in distinguishing between familiar and unfamiliar sounds, dictations, and sound sorting exercises - all of these help develop phonemic hearing.

In the choral recitation method, all students repeat the same text or sequence of sounds at the same time. This method reduces the students' self-focus and helps to overcome shyness.

In the phonogram method, students listen to their own voice recording and compare it to a sample. Modern computer programs simplify this process.

The comparative-contrast analysis method involves a systematic comparison of the phonetic systems of the French and Uzbek languages for

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students. Through this method, students clearly understand which sounds are common in both languages and which are unique to French.

This method is especially important in the context of the Uzbek language, as it helps students with different language structures to anticipate potential contrastive errors.

The use of modern technologies plays an important role in current pedagogical practice. Phonetic analysis programs (Praat, Speech Analyzer) provide spectrographic images of sounds. Language learning applications (Duolingo, Babbel) make phonetic exercises interesting with gamification elements. Online speech programs allow students to practice with native French-speaking partners. Video tutorials and podcasts allow you to listen to real speech samples at different tempos.

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RESULTS

At the initial stage, it is recommended to conduct phonetics lessons in the following structure. First 5-10 minutes: review of the phonetic material of the previous lesson and short articulatory warm-up exercises. Next 15-20 minutes: introduction of a new sound or group of sounds. Last 15-20 minutes: reinforcement with various exercises.

It is advisable to combine phonetics lessons with grammar and vocabulary lessons. Each new lexical unit should also be studied from a phonetic perspective.

For nasal vowels: students place both hands on their faces and try to feel the vibration of their nose. They practice with sequences of words such as "bon", "vin", "son". They practice discriminating minimal pairs.

For the uvular [ʁ]: students first pronounce the sound [x] and then try to make it vibrate. Repeating these exercises for 10-15 minutes every day will be effective.

The teacher should follow several important principles when correcting phonetic errors. First, one should not try to correct all errors at once. Second, it

is advisable to prioritize the correction of errors that interfere with the communicative purpose of the speech.

Error correction methods: 1) recasting; 2) metaphonic cueing; 3) guiding self-correction; 4) explicit correction. Students can also be taught to correct each other.

An observational study conducted with 150 students in French language courses at Uzbek universities showed the following results. The most common phonetic errors were: (1) incorrect pronunciation of nasal vowels – 89%; (2) apico-alveolar [r] instead of [ʁ] – 85%; (3) pronunciation of consonants at the end of words – 78%; (4) [u] or [o] instead of [y], [ø], [œ] – 72%; (5) violation of the rules of liason – 65%.

By incorporating the above methods into the course, the number of phonetic errors made by students decreased by an average of 47% after the 12-week experimental training program. These results prove the importance of paying special attention to the phonetic component.

The study also showed that the time spent on phonetic exercises did not negatively affect grammar and vocabulary acquisition - on the contrary, students who had a solid grasp of phonetic fundamentals also acquired new lexical units faster.

CONCLUSION

Phonetic errors in Uzbek students' French pronunciation are not accidental, but a legitimate phenomenon arising from fundamental differences in the phonetic systems of the two languages. Predicting these errors in advance and taking targeted pedagogical measures against them is one of the main tasks of a French teacher.

Based on the analysis presented in the article, the following conclusions can be drawn: firstly, phonetics teaching must be carried out systematically from the initial stage; secondly, Uzbek-French contrastive phonetic analysis

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should be an integral part of the curriculum; thirdly, the rational use of modern technologies makes phonetic exercises more effective.

Future research should focus on quantifying the effectiveness of these methods through large-scale experimental programs involving a larger number of students. The creation of a special French phonetics textbook for Uzbek students also remains a pressing task.

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