



Khalida AVILOVA

Senior teacher

Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

khalida72@mail.ru

DOES STUDENTS' NATIVE LANGUAGE HINDER IN LEARNING ENGLISH?

Мақола инглиз тилини ўрганишда интерференция сабабли талабалар йўл қўйиши мумкин бўлган грамматик ва фонетик хатолар таҳлилига бағишланган. Муаллиф тил ўрганувчиларнинг она тилини эътиборга олган ҳолда, улар томонидан йўл қўйилган грамматик ва фонетик хатоларни категорияларга ажратади ва бу хатоларнинг сабабларини аниқлайди.

В данной статье автор анализирует грамматические и фонетические ошибки студентов при изучении английского языка в процессе интерференции. Автор статьи разделяет грамматические и фонетические ошибки студентов на категории, принимая во внимание их родной язык, и определяют причины этих ошибок.

This article analyses some grammatical and phonetic mistakes of language learners due to the process of language interference. The author of this article categorizes the Uzbek language learners' mistakes and identifies some of the causes of these errors.

Калит сўзлар: фонема, интерференция, хато, нутқ органлари, ўрганилаётган хорижий тил, бир хил талаффуз, ўхшаш талаффуз.

Ключевые слова: фонема, интерференция, ошибка, органы речи, изучаемый иностранный язык, одинаковое произношение, приблизительное произношение.

Key words: Phoneme, Interference, Error, Articulation Organs, Target Language, Identical Pronunciation, Approximate Pronunciation.

Why do language learners are unable to pronounce some English words or build correct sentences in the target language? To find an answer to this question, teachers must pay more attention both to the phonemes of the learners' native language and sentence structure of either language. As it is commonly known, many English sounds do not exist in learners' primary language or these sounds do not transfer to other languages, so language learners have difficulty pronouncing them. These learners are not accustomed to positioning their articulation organs in a way the sound in the target language requires (5). Moreover, they often misuse the sentence structure because of the influence of the native language.

One explanation to this phenomenon is the interference of the native language in learning a foreign language. Extensive research has already been done in the area of native language interference on the target language. Interference or negative transfer is a general term describing the carryover of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning. In negative transfer – a previous item is incorrectly transferred or incorrectly associated with an item to be learned. It can occur when learner does not have a native-level command of a language. Negative transfer leads the learner to an error or inappropriate form in the target language(1, 95). For example, an Uzbek learner of English may produce the incorrect sentence “He reading book now” instead of “He is reading a book now” because of the transfer of the Uzbek language pattern. Usually Uzbek learners forget placing auxiliary verbs before the main verb in the Present Continuous tense at the beginning stage of language learning because of the fact that auxiliary verbs are not used in this language.

In language learning learners tend to make mostly grammatical and phonetic errors due to negative transfer(5). For example, a language learner may be able to pronounce the letter /n/ in the English word *nut*, but not the letter combination /ng/ in the word *long*. A language learner may also lack the ability to replicate the sounds [w], [r], [θ] in words such as *when*, *rise* or *thanks*. Phonics, word recognition, and spelling are influenced by what students know about the sounds, word structure, and spelling in their primary languages[5]. For example, English language learners who are unaccustomed to English consonant digraphs /ght/ in the words *light*, *bright* would pronounce these words wrong, as in the Uzbek language all the letters of the word are pronounced. When students practice these sounds more, they will start comparing and contrasting these two languages that will help them know more about target language rules. As the range of vocabulary of the language learners advances, the meaning of words leads students to the sound contrasts. For example, *think* and *sink* may sound alike initially, but later in the process of learning, students will be able to differentiate them. Students’ level of proficiency advances their word knowledge, subsequently, they will know when and how to use the required words correctly.

Having worked in the sphere of teaching English for many years, I gathered information about our learners’ pronunciation mistakes. This chart shows common mistakes that Uzbek learners make when they transfer sounds from their native language into English. This symbol (✓) identifies a positive transfer (identical pronunciation). “Approximate” indicates that the sound is similar. This symbol (-) indicates a negative transfer.

Sound transfers	Positive (✓)	Approximate	Negative (-)
[b] as in ball	✓ (bola)		
[k] as in cake		Approximate	
[d] as in day		Approximate	
[f] as in farm	✓ (farq)		
[g] as in give	✓ (gilam)		
[h] as in holiday		Approximate	
[j] as in jungle		Approximate	
[l] as in live		Approximate	
[m] as in mother	✓ (mato)		
[n] as in never		Approximate	
[p] as in pencil	✓ (parvoz)		
[kw] as in question		Approximate	
[r] as in role		Approximate	
[s] as in city	✓ (sado)		
[t] as in tongue			–
[v] as in very	✓ (va)		
[w] as in wind			–
[ks] as in mix		Approximate	
[j] as in yes	✓ (yaproq)		
[z] as in zebra	✓ (zargar)		
[tʃ] as in check	✓ (chodir)		
[ʃ] as in show	✓ (shamol)		
[θ];[ð] as in thus, myth			–
[ŋ] as in bring		Approximate	

Vowel Sound Transfers

Sound transfers	Positive (✓)	Approximate	Negative (-)
[æ] as in glad			–
[e] as in pen	✓ (men)		
[i] as in kid	✓ (iz)		
[o] as in lot	✓ (ot)		
[ʌ] as in cup	✓ (chaft)		
[ei] as in lake	✓ (ey)		

[ai] as in kite, tie,	✓ (aytmoq)		
[ou] as in home		Approximate	
[u:] as in fruit		Approximate	
[a:] as in farm		Approximate	
[o:] as in born		Approximate	
[ə:] as in bird			–
[eə] as in air			–
[iə] as in deer			–
[ə] as in doctor		Approximate	

To read and speak fluently in English, language learners need to master a wide range of phonemic awareness and word usage rules. As it is seen in the table some sounds cause difficulty for learners to pronounce, in these situations educators should help learners anticipate and understand possible student errors in pronouncing or perceiving English sounds. Teachers might follow the following recommendations in their lessons:

1. If the pronunciation of the sound transfers from the student’s native language to English, it is advisable to state that during the lesson [5]. An English language learner should know which sounds do and do not transfer from their native language with the help of the teacher.

2. In most lessons, especially in Listening and Speaking, Vocabulary and Integrated Skills modules, it is better to preteach the sound and spelling. Teachers are supposed to focus on articulation, and try to provide the minimal contrast activities (comparing the sounds in both languages). If the skill does not transfer from the student’s primary language into English, the student will need more time and practice mastering the sound and spellings[5].

3. In the lessons it is better to give description of sounds if many learners fail pronouncing the sounds, e.g. the sound of “a” in “map” is called short [æ]. It is a vowel. The tongue is behind the lower teeth and the sound is made at the front of the mouth. It is necessary to position the tongue behind the bottom teeth. Afterwards, one should open their mouth wide and pull back lips in a partial smile. When the explanation is given learners ought to be encouraged to follow the steps as it is required

4. Opportunities to interact with proficient users of English or having more listening tasks with native speakers’ speech provide easy access to language

models and give English learners practice using English. In any classroom, teacher sensitivity to pronunciation differences contributes to a more productive learning environment(2).

Apart from phonetic mistakes, language learners make grammatical errors due to interference from their native language. Students may know the grammatical rule, but they can not apply it into practice at the initial stages of language learning.

This chart shows common mistakes that Uzbek learners make when they transfer grammatical forms from their native language into English.

Grammatical form	Transfer mistakes in English	Cause of Difficulty
Plural marker of nouns –s	Forgets plural marker –s My brother has 4 book.	The native language does not use a plural marker after numbers.
Articles	Constantly omits articles She reads book. They like white car.	There is no article in the native language.
Negative sentences	Omits auxiliary verbs in negative statements He not writing now.	The native language does not use helping verbs in the negative form.
Pronouns	Uses pronouns with the inappropriate gender I have a sister, he is a nurse.	There is no gender in the pronouns.
Pronoun one	Omits the pronoun “one” I have two books, and I like the small.	Adjectives can stand alone in the native language.
Relative pronoun who/which	Confuses relative pronouns This is my sister which works at school.	Relative pronouns are not used in the native language.
Verb tenses	Omits –s in Present Tense She like banana.	Verb forms don’t show the number in the native language.
Linking verbs	Omits the linking verb He angry.	There are no linking verbs in the native language.
Adverbs	Confuses adverbs and adjectives He can play the piano good.	Adjectives and adverbs have the same form.
Degrees of adjectives	Misuses the rules of forming degrees of adjectives This task is much more easier.	Adjectives form the degrees adding the same suffix to all adjectives.
Word order	Puts the predicate at the end of the sentence My father usually fruits buys.	The position of the predicate is at the end of the sentence.
Helping verbs in Passive voice	Omits the auxiliary verbs in the passive voice Many houses built last year.	The native language does not use helping verbs in the passive voice.
Phrasal verbs	Confuses phrasal verbs She is looking at her book under the table. (look for)	Phrasal verbs are not used in the native language, and there is often confusion over their meaning.
-ing and –d Endings	Confuses –ing and –ed forms He is boring.	Adjectives in the native language do not have active and passive

		forms.
Prepositions	Omits prepositions or confuses them I went Samarkand last year.	Prepositions are not used in the native language.

The main focus of this table has been with the observable features of interference of native language on target language and what its effects are on the grammatical structure of written and oral tasks of a second language learner. The learners have used L1 structures interchangeably with L2 structures, producing inappropriate L2 responses, indicating an interference of L1 on L2. To successfully learn L2 requires the L2 learner to often preclude the L1 structures from the L2 learning process, if the structures of the two languages are distinctly different(3).

In conclusion, language transfer has been regarded as a natural fact in the process of learning a second language. It may be seen as constructive way of approaching students efficiently(4). So, to help language learners master English grammatical forms, and pronunciation as well, teachers should analyze their responses and understand possible students mistakes in oral and written speech. When teachers are familiar with their students' sources of mistakes, they must provide additional language for them to overcome these errors, help them use contrastive analysis. Moreover, educators should always focus on the meanings of sentences in all activities, and work with students on basic comprehension of spoken and written English. Language interference of negative transfer disappears when the language learner comprehends the target language structure very well.

REFERENCES

1. Brown H. Douglas. Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. – Harlow, UK.: Addison Westley Longman, 2000. – 299 p.
2. Learner Strategies: Definitions, Assumptions, from <http://www.linkedin.com/pulse/learner-strategies-definition>.
3. Native Language interference in learning a second language, from <http://www.flinders.edu.au/education/iej/articles/v1n1/bhela/begin.HTM>.
4. How to Deal with Language Transfer in the English Classroom, from www.eduinova.es/mar2010/how_to_deal.
5. Language Transfers: The Interaction between English and Students' Primary Languages, from <http://tesoros.macmillanmh.com/assets/extras/0001/3620/LangTransPOST>.