



## **RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. ELIMINATION OF PHONETIC ERRORS OF FOREIGN STUDENTS**

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### **Abstract**

The article is devoted to teaching Russian as a foreign language to foreign students. As the Russian language is a complex language, not only students, but also teachers may face problems when teaching it. The effectiveness of teaching requires a competent organization of the learning process, with the elimination of the difficulties that arise for foreign students. This article considers linguistic phenomena and their main difficulties in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language. The main difficulties of phonetic aspect are pointed out for foreign students. Exercises for mitigating and eliminating language barriers that arise for foreign students are given.

**Keywords:** teaching Russian as a foreign language to foreign students, Russian as a foreign language, relationship trend in RLF teaching methodology, auditory pronunciation skills.

### **Introduction**

Due to the constant enrichment of the sphere of international communication, the issues of theory and practice of teaching Russian as a foreign language become more relevant.

Russian is one of the most difficult languages in the world. When learning it, foreign students encounter certain barriers and difficulties. For effective language acquisition by foreign students, a lot depends on the teacher as well; he or she has to study in detail the various methods of teaching the RLI and the cultural peculiarities of the learners. This is a very interesting process, both for students and for the teacher.

Today, the improvement of the process of teaching Russian to foreign students in Uzbekistan has taken on special significance. The main task of teaching is to prepare students for academic or academic-professional communication.

Russian as a non-native (foreign) language has been taught in Uzbekistan since school years. Since in our country Russian is taught to children from school years, the theory of learning Russian as a foreign language can be attributed to one of the successfully developing linguistic trends in Uzbekistan.





Also, the number of foreign nationals wishing to study in higher education institutions in Uzbekistan is increasing every year, one example of which is the Samarkand Medical Institute. Today we have more than 400 foreign students, for whom Russian is an alien language. In this connection, Uzbekistan's higher educational establishments are introducing a trend towards mutual relations in the methodology of teaching Russian as a native, non-native and foreign language. This trend is particularly characteristic of language teaching in a multi-ethnic environment, in Uzbekistan. Russian as a native language has traditionally been taught to students who have spoken Russian since early childhood. Whereas Russian as a native language is based on descriptive grammar of the RL, RCT and its methodology includes communicative grammar 'additional comparative grammar'. (Kirov 2011:230), since RCT is studied by foreigners who, for one reason or another, learn a non-native Russian language.

Without departing from the opinion that foreign medical students are taught mainly by pronunciation skills, we have chosen the aim of this article to identify phonetic errors in foreign students' speech, to form skills of correct perception and pronunciation of letters and words, to correctly perceive relationship trends in Russian language teaching methodology. Teaching phonetic aspects of language is the basis for successful learning, further professional activity of the learners. In the process of teaching the Russian language, problems begin at a very early stage, when learning the alphabet and phonetics. It is important for students to remember the correct pronunciation of each letter and each sound. Students need to learn how to distinguish sounds by ear.

It is well known that the auditory and verbal activity of the normal brain is recognized as unified and indivisible in all its manifestations, but at the same time the existence of its separate sides is not denied. This implies an objective reality of the relationship and interaction between auditory and pronunciation skills, which are in a complex hierarchical relationship, as manifested in human speech activity. The phonetic skills can be defined as follows: they are automated auditory and speech-motor operations providing both perception and realization of units of different levels of the phonological component of a given language in accordance with its system and the norm. They are formed simultaneously with the phonetic base of the language, in which we can distinguish the articulatory and perceptual bases.

Articulation base. The concept of the articulatory base entered scientific literature at the beginning of the last century and appears in phonetic works of both theoretical and methodological nature. The subject matter of Lyubimov's discussion is the content of the concept of articulatory base, regularities of its formation depending on



the language system and its manifestation in the sound formation mechanism as well as its nature (social / biological) and conditionality of the language tradition. It should be noted that since the time of E. Sievers, whose name some researchers associate with the introduction of the terminological combination of the articulation base to scientific usage, the vagueness of the ideas about this phenomenon has been noted, which "does not allow their use for optimization of the process of teaching pronunciation of a foreign language". However, the role of articulation base is not limited to methodological needs. L. R. Zinder pointed out its importance for the development of the phonetic side of the language, as it "has a significant impact on the direction of its phonetic evolution ..., explains the stability of the sound composition, the process of sound development in the mixing of the two languages", which is important for solving the issues of comparative and historical phonetics.

In turn, S. I. Bernstein viewed the articulatory base as "the organic base of the language", which is "a set of pronunciation features underlying all or a significant part of the pronunciation work of a given language". His work for the first time draws attention to the national specificity of the articulatory base: it is stated that it "varies considerably among languages" and "forms a part of the phonetic base of the language".

In spite of the fact that views of researchers differ in comprehension of the articulation base, a common recognition is that it is a set of articulation types, patterns, characteristic for a given language and used by its speakers in sound formation of speech units: syllable, phonetic word, syntagmatic, phrase.

Perceptual base. At his time, S. I. Bernstein (1937), guided primarily by considerations of methodological nature, proposed, along with the articulation base, a more general concept - the phonetic base. He justified this by the need to take into account "phonetic signs", which "are assessed more by the ear than by the motor sense, and therefore do not fit into the concept of an articulation base as a set of pronunciation skills". The phrase "phonetic features", which our hearing operates on, requires clarification here. It is now known that in hearing a sound signal we rely on its categorical, phonological features, encoded in our consciousness in accordance with the system of a given language. Speaking of phonological language we can figuratively say that we hear phonemes (phonological hearing, phonological sieve) and pronounce sounds - physical correlates of phonemes. Therefore, S. I. Bernstein believed that in learning pronunciation the above phonological features "play the role of a key that opens up a whole phonetic category at once". Note also that S. I. Bernstein distinguishes between the concepts of phonetic signs and pronunciation (articulation) skills, which reflects the attribution of the phonetic base not only to speech, but also



to language. Currently, linguistic and methodological works habitually use the concept of articulation base, which is to a certain extent facilitated by the fact that S. I. Bernstein did not give a name, a definition of the other side of the phonetic base. However, nowadays it is common to distinguish between phonetic skills and auditory skills for methodological purposes. Listening skills, like articulation skills, are formed according to the system and the norm of a given language. By using them, a person performs a linguistic interpretation of the acoustic characteristics of the perceived speech signal. In speech in his own language, a representative of, for example, phonemic language is able to identify physically different sounds as the same linguistic unit, a specific phoneme, because his perceptual abilities are conditioned by the phonological relations in this language. On the other hand, he is able to distinguish a greater number of sounds than the number of phonemes in his language, as evidenced by experimental phonetic studies. The latter seems to be the cause of the incorrect identification of phonemic features and phonemes in general in the perception of the sounds of another language. With imperfect mastery of another language, a person makes phonemic decisions based on incorrect associative similarities between the physical correlates of "alien" and "own" phonemic features, aided by the fact that physically the same distinguishing feature has different objectively physical characteristics.

It can be assumed that auditory skills belong to the so-called perceptual base, a generally accepted exact definition of which does not yet exist in linguistics. Psychologist Z. N. Dzhaparidze suggests that it is a "system of linguistic means used by speakers of a given language in the perception of a sound speech stream". As is clear from his concept, linguistic means are the standards of sounds stored in a person's memory and the rules of comparison with them. Hence, we can speak about the formed perceptual base only when a man is able to distinguish the sound composition of all words of a given language, which, in turn, indicates the formation of his phonetic system of perception of the sound text. The latter, it seems, must also necessarily imply the adequate interpretation of the accentuated-rhythmic and intonational design of a speech signal, which, in turn, is provided by auditory accentuating, rhythmic and intonational skills. Despite the attractiveness of the above statements by Z. N. Dzhaparidze, the question of the specificity of perceptual processing of the speech signal in the native language and even more so in another language is still in the search for solutions. Nevertheless, the experimental data of phonetic research indicate that the system of sound correspondences at the segmental and suprasegmental levels, arising in the conditions of action Lyubimova N.A. Russian as a foreign language and the methodology of its teaching. The inter-lingual





phonetic interference, does not allow a person to reproduce correctly the sound image of a particular word in the production of speech and adequately perceive the word, based only on its objective characteristics, corresponding to the system of the language. The fact that at a certain level of proficiency in a non-native language a person with phonetic impairment still correctly perceives the semantic content of the speech of the interlocutor who is a native speaker of that language, does not mean that by decoding the sound signal he uses fully the system of linguistic features of that language. Obviously, in this case, we should distinguish between perception as a process of recognition of meaningful units, which uses the whole volume of linguistic and extra-linguistic information, and perception as a linguistic procedure of interpretation of the sound signal, which may result in the identification of the lack of auditory skills and perceptual base in a non-native language.

In the sphere of teaching the phonetic side of Russian as a foreign language it is relevant to distinguish the universal, typological and specific in the problematic of the sound structure of foreign language systems, and more specifically of the native languages of the students. Usually only typological and specific features of the foreign accent are distinguished. As for the typology of the foreign accent, practice shows that there are almost no universal features of the accent, but there is phonetic interference in some parts of the phonetic system of the Russian language.

The material we studied and all observations showed pronounced errors of foreign students in the field of Russian pronunciation. Thus, the pronunciation of such sounds as vowel [ы] and hissing [ш], [ж] is very difficult for non-native speakers. Most foreign students at our university change the sound [ы] into the vowel [и], for example, foreigners pronounce "ви" instead of "вы", and "мить" instead of "мыть". In place of the above hard sings the semi-soft or soft anterior fricatives are pronounced most often. Using the helper sounds [к] and [д] we can strain the back of the tongue and pronounce the [с] sound correctly, for example, we can repeat the syllables with them several times: ык, ыг, кы, гы, ыкы, ыгы...

The pronunciation of vowel letters of the Russian alphabet causes difficulty for foreign students due to their denotation of several different sounds, for example: the letter E can denote [э], [йэ], [и], and in some cases even this letter can denote the sound [ы] after consonant letters ж, ш, ц in the unstressed position: masterpiece, kiss, wife. Also, the sound [й] is difficult to use, it is found in the Russian speech more often than the letter й and has a peculiarity in usage. The letters е, yo, yu, ya after vowels, after ь and y sign and at the beginning of the word indicate two sounds, these are the sounds [йэ], [йо], [йу], [йа]: [йа]блоко, [йу]ла, каль[йа]н и т.п. Mistakes also occur when the letter [й] is used at the end of a word. A foreign student may say мои instead of



мой or красивии instead of handsome. In cases where they can not distinguish the sound *i* and it is necessary to explain that the sound [й] is pronounced very briefly and the sound [и] can be pronounced elongated.

Most often, there is difficulty in pronouncing the soft lips at the end of a word, whereas the opposition of hard and soft lips at the end of a word is a specific feature of the phonetic system of the Russian language, for example: всем – в семь, кров – кровь. Accordingly, in most foreign language systems one senses the optional nature of the positional shift in voicing/voicing before the following noisy consonant, and the positional regularity is not respected: ло[d]ка, [s]бор. In the accent of speakers of languages with a rigid syllable structure, such as Korean or Chinese, the phonetic words sound the same: топь - топи, кровь - крови, etc., and respectively in these accents the mutes and voices in these words are pronounced with a subsequent vowel insertion.

In favorable conditions, the specific features of the foreign accent are related to the specific characteristics of the sound system of the students' native language, and are easily transferred to the language being studied.

Thus, the transfer to the target language of positional regularities characteristic of the native language, creates in the accent "exotic" sounds alien to the Russian phonetic system: nasal vowels, interdental, lip-lip slit consonants, etc., For example, a nasal vowel is found at the end of a word instead of a combination of vowels with a nasal consonant: покл[о']-поклон, зак[о']-закон или межзубный [d̥] на месте [д]-по[d]арок-по[д]арок, заднеязычный щелевой [g] на месте [г]- за[g]орать-за[г]орать.

In our opinion, when explaining the phonetic side of the Russian language, we should start with correct phonemic hearing, as many Russian sounds sound the same to foreigners. For example, a student might say «деВушка», instead of «деДушка» and for him the words have no distinction. In order for the student to be able to distinguish the meaning of each letter we recommend the following: take two sheets of paper and write on them the sounds that we are going to practice. For example, on one sheet of paper we write Д, and on the other – В. Give these cards to the foreign student. The teacher pronounces the sounds [d] and [v] in a random order, and the foreigner has to pick up the corresponding card. In this way, the foreign student will distinguish both sounds and letters of the Russian alphabet. Then you can pronounce syllables, for example: ва - да, ду - ву, ава - ада, etc., and the foreigner should pick up a "Д" card or a "В" card. After these practice exercises, the student will find it easier to distinguish Russian sounds by ear.



When pronouncing the consonant [п], the tip of the tongue is tensed by the air jet vibrates at the alveoli. When the foreign student pronounces [п], the tip of the tongue is slightly bent upwards, touching the cusps above the teeth and tense, but we will need to get the tip of the tongue to vibrate. By referring to the helper sounds [t] and [e], the student can achieve the right position at the alveoli: dr-dr-dr...

Another letter which is equally difficult for foreign students is G. When this sound is pronounced correctly, the tip of the tongue is raised towards the alveoli and the tongue is pulled back. To get the buzzing [г] right, you can turn to the helper sounds again: consonant [р] which helps pull the tongue back and vowels [о] and [у] which help pull the tongue forward and round off the lips.

Learning any foreign language has a pragmatic basis - to understand, communicate, convey and translate information. Thus, quality learning Russian as a foreign language comes with some kind of barriers, which presents certain difficulties in the learning process. Consequently, these problems can be solved by studying in detail not only linguistic features, but also cultural values, their similarities and differences. When organizing the learning process, foreign language teachers should take into account possible difficulties in the learning process of foreign students and pay special attention to each problem. In this way, foreign students will be able to make full use of all the material they have learnt in the communicative sphere.

A teacher of Russian as a foreign language should not only support learners in their educational tasks, but also help them to better adapt to a foreign culture, understand and accept their new social patterns. The RLI teacher should be an open and friendly person who is able to positively influence and interest learners. International learners particularly notice the teacher's behaviour in his/her professional pedagogical sphere, namely in the classroom, during which he/she reveals his/her creative personality most clearly. Educational work with students and extracurricular communication with them are of great importance in mastering the Russian language by foreigners. Non-traditional classes (absentee excursions, discussions, games), excursions and cultural events dedicated to significant dates contribute to a quick adaptation of students to the language environment.

Thus, when organising work on the phonetic aspect of foreign students' speech, the teacher's task is to choose effective ways of working on the Russian phonemic system. Susceptibility to learning Russian by foreign students also depends to a large extent "on their age, personal characteristics, level of education, etc." ( ) One of the necessary approaches in forming skills to correctly and quickly navigate the process of communication is a vivid expression of the success of the systematic approach in learning phonetics of the Russian language.





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