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## РАСПРОСТРАНЕННЫЕ ТРУДНОСТИ ПРИ ОСВОЕНИИ СЛОВАРНОГО ЗАПАСА АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА (на примере Узбекистана)

Аннотация

В данной статье исследовательница провела исследование с целью выявления общих проблем и факторов усвоения английской лексики узбекскими студентами. Исследовательница использует описательные качественные и количественные методы для сбора и анализа данных. Исследовательница собирает информацию посредством тестов и интервью. Объектом исследования являются студенты и преподаватели факультета Английской Филологии Узбекского Государственного Университета Мировых Языков, г. Ташкент.

**Ключевые слова:** Проблемы изучения языка, словарный запас английского языка, правописание, произношение, словосочетание, омофоны, идиомы, фразовые глаголы, L1, узбекские студенты.

## INGLIZ TILI SO'Z LUG'ATINI O'ZLASHTIRISHDA KO'P UCHRAYDIGAN QIYINCHILIKLAR (O'zbekiston misolida)

Аннотация

Ushbu maqolada tadqiqotchi o'zbek talabalarining ingliz tili lug'atini egallashdagi ko'p uchraydigan muammolari va ularni keltirib chiqaruvchi omillarini aniqlash maqsadida tadqiqot olib bordi. Tadqiqotchi ma'lumotlarni to'plash va tahlil qilish uchun tavsiflovchi sifat va miqdorga oid metodlardan foydalandi va u ma'lumotlarni testlar va suhbatlar orqali to'pladi. O'zbekiston Davlat Jahon Tillari Universiteti, Ingliz Filologiyasi fakulteti talabalari va o'qituvchilari tadqiqot subyektlari sifatida ushbu tadqiqotda qatnashishdi.

**Kalit so'zlari:** Til o'rganish muammolari, ingliz tili lug'ati, imlo, talaffuz, birikma, omofonlar, idiomalar, frazemalar, L1, o'zbek talabalari.

## THE COMMON DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARY (as the example of Uzbekistan)

Annotation

In this article, the researcher conducted a study to identify the common problems and factors in acquiring English vocabulary for Uzbek students. The researcher uses descriptive qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze the data. The researcher gathers the information through tests and interviews. The subjects of the research are the students and teachers of English Philology faculty, at Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Tashkent.

**Key words:** Language learning problems, English vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, collocation, homophones, idioms, phrasal verbs, L1, Uzbek students.

**Introduction.** Vocabulary is essential for language learning; hence it is the primary cause of difficulty in learning the target language. Most students utilize inadequate strategies to improve their vocabulary, such as carrying a bilingual dictionary, which can lead to boredom and dissatisfaction. Students also frequently ask teachers to explain unfamiliar phrases, which limits their use in real-world situations. Thus, English idiomatic idioms, collocations, pronunciation, and spelling complicate the learning process. In the research article, the researcher outlines the common challenges of teaching and learning English vocabulary to Uzbek students.

**Literature review.** Language is a collection of meaningful words, and to learn any language, students must first understand the target language's vocabulary; otherwise, they would be unable to master grammar or other parts of the language. Renandya and Richards emphasize the importance of vocabulary in language proficiency, claiming that it serves as the foundation for speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Without a large vocabulary and appropriate strategies, learners may struggle to reach their full potential and take advantage of language learning opportunities.

Types of challenges in vocabulary learning. The first step in properly teaching vocabulary is to identify the issues that the students encounter. Thornbury (2004) suggests that the following variables contribute to the difficulty of some words:

a. Pronunciation. According to the research, difficult-to-pronounce terms are harder to learn;

b. Spelling. Sounds-spelling mismatches are likely to be the source of errors, whether in pronunciation or spelling; there are some apparent inconsistencies. Words with silent letters are especially challenging: *change, comb, debt, handsome, etc.*

c. Grammar. If the target language's grammatical structure differs from the L1 corresponding grammar, learners may have several difficulties in learning the vocabulary;

d. Meaning. When two words have similar meanings, learners are more likely to confuse them. *Make* and *do* are a case in point: *you make a profit and make friends, but you do business and do research;*

e. *Range, connotation, and idiomaticity.* Words with a broad range of applications are typically seen as easier than synonyms with a more specialized use.

According to Gower, Philips, and Walter (1995), a vocabulary item's complexity is determined by several factors:

a. *Similarity to L1.* The complexity of a vocabulary item is typically determined by how comparable the words are in the native language, and English can be deceptive rather than helpful;

b. *Similarity to English words already known.* Once students have learned some English, a word linked to an English word they are already familiar with is easier than one that is not. For example, if students have already heard the word *loyal*, they should be able to guess the meaning of *loyalty*;

c. *Spelling and pronunciation.* The spelling of many English words might be difficult for pupils who speak languages with fairly regular spelling systems. Spelling patterns can also be confusing in terms of pronunciation. For example, it is easy to understand why many students misinterpret the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation of the following words: *flu, flue, and flew*;

*d. Vocabulary Range and Depth.* Because of the huge number of words in the language, as well as their various meanings, complexity, and collocations, which make them difficult to use in a range of situations, English vocabulary frequently presents challenges for learners;

*e. Appropriate use.* Understanding how language is used in various settings is essential for efficient communication, but learners may struggle to comprehend idiomatic expressions, collocations, and phrasal verbs due to linguistic and cultural differences.

**Research methodology.** The researcher used vivid qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the data. The researcher collects the data through tests (from students) and interviews (from teachers). The subjects of the research were 90 students and 15 teachers of English Philology faculty, at Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Tashkent.

According to Bryman's research, a quantitative method focuses on vocabulary acquisition, to understand the experiences of research subjects, while incorporating qualitative methods to understand their language learning difficulties. The data collection steps involve (1) collecting the information through interviews and (2) testing. From the theory above, the techniques that the researcher used in this study are as follows:

**1. Interview** The researcher collected data on difficulties in teaching vocabulary by using teacher interviews. They are 15 teachers of Uzbekistan State World Languages University, they were interviewed about the difficulties faced by them when teaching English vocabulary;

**2. Test.** In this observation, the subject of observation is 90 students of Uzbekistan State World Languages University. It focuses on the teachers' difficulties in teaching and learning English vocabulary to L1 Uzbek learners.

**Analysis and results.** In analyzing the data, the researcher used the descriptive method. The data reduction is done during research activities. In this case, the researcher would reduce the information during the research activities if the data is unimportant or does not support the data researchers needed.

*The results of the interview are as follows:*

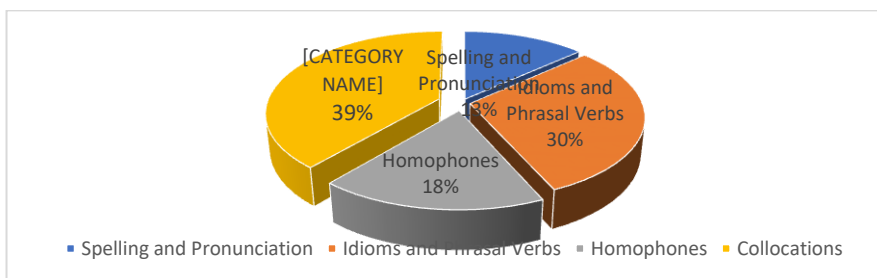
According to the findings of the teacher interviews, almost all of the students struggle with pronouncing certain words, writing and spelling, and using grammatical patterns correctly. Inflections, or multiple grammatical versions of a word, were one of the reasons why pupils struggled to absorb vocabulary. Thus far, it has been maintained that mastering grammar is inseparably linked to learning a foreign language. Learning a foreign language is challenging because the target language uses a different system than the first language.

The interview data confirmed the questionnaire results. Various variables made acquiring vocabulary more complicated. Initially, learners had difficulty spelling the terms due to variances between spoken and written English. Some words with silent letters are exceptionally difficult, particularly for Uzbek students.

Furthermore, the students faced problems in identifying the suitable meaning of the phrases, such as the use of *do* and *make*. Students are still unsure how to use the word in different contexts. In this case, the students look for the word in their minds and do not know the exact collocation. Another cause for the difficulty is a lack of exposure to English. Learners who have little familiarity with the English language outside of the classroom may struggle to develop a diverse vocabulary. A lack of opportunity for real-world language exercise might stifle vocabulary growth. Moreover, students were still perplexed when they saw words or expressions that were idiomatic. (a piece of cake, a bite to eat....). It was caused by idioms that were difficult because of the lack of cultural background. It will generally be more challenging than terms whose meanings are unambiguous. (easy, meal). Students think that their cultural background affects their understanding of idiomatic expressions. According to the responses gained from the test, if the participants or students could not recognize the meaning of the words in the whole expression, they were not able to denote the meaning of the whole expression.

Inflections, or multiple grammatical versions of a word, were also one of the reasons why pupils struggled to absorb vocabulary. Affixation is one method for creating new words from existing ones, and it includes prefixes and suffixes. It is difficult for kids to understand the meaning of words because adding prefixes and suffixes might change the word class. The change in word classes can alter the meaning of a term.

Here, the researcher observed the teaching-learning process to know the reasons for the difficulties in teaching vocabulary. The observation has the purpose of finding out what are the implementations of difficulties by the teachers. Based on the interview with teachers, the researcher created tests with 4 sections: Spelling and pronunciation, collocation, homophones, idioms and phrasal verbs. The following pie chart shows the results of the test:



*The pie chart shows the results of the test that the students have taken. The test has 4 sections (Spelling and pronunciation, collocation, homophones, idioms, and phrasal verbs) and each section has 10 questions.*

Teaching English vocabulary can present certain difficulties for both learners and teachers. According to the findings, 13% of the mistakes or problems belong to spelling and pronunciation, and a huge quantity of the mistakes go to collocations (39%). Here are some common challenges encountered in teaching English vocabulary:

**Spelling and Pronunciation:** English spelling and pronunciation can be inconsistent and challenging for learners. Many words have irregular spellings and multiple pronunciations, making it difficult to predict how a word should be pronounced based on its written form.

**Idioms and Phrasal Verbs:** When teaching English, students may struggle to understand idiomatic idioms and phrasal verbs due to their metaphorical connotations and particular words. (30%)

**Homophones:** English has many words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings (e.g., "flower," and "flour"). It might be difficult for learners to distinguish between homophones because they have to know the context to use the right term. (18%)

**Collocations:** It can be challenging for Uzbek students to comprehend the subtle meanings of English words and use appropriate collocations. (39%)

Teachers can use a range of tactics to overcome these challenges, such as giving students plenty of exposure to real English materials, introducing vocabulary-building exercises and games, utilizing multimedia resources, and promoting frequent practice and revision.

Based on observation and interview in October 2023, the researcher found that among the four universal the most common problems (*Spelling and pronunciation, collocation, homophones, idioms, and phrasal verbs*) in learning English vocabulary, L1 Uzbek learners are mostly struggling with English collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs due to structural difference of their first language.

**Conclusion.** When teaching English vocabulary to Uzbek learners, there are some common challenges that teachers may encounter. Here are the most frequently encountered problems:

*Pronunciation:*

Uzbek learners may struggle with English pronunciation due to differences in sound systems and phonetic patterns between the two languages. English has a wider range of vowel and consonant sounds, as well as different stress patterns, which can pose difficulties for Uzbek learners in accurately pronouncing English words.

*Vocabulary Acquisition:*

Uzbek learners may face challenges in acquiring a wide range of English vocabulary. English has a significantly larger lexicon than Uzbek, and learners may find it overwhelming to learn and retain a large number of words. Additionally, the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom can hinder vocabulary development.

*Idiomatic Expressions:*

English is rich in idiomatic expressions, which can be difficult for Uzbek learners to understand and use correctly. Idioms often have figurative meanings that cannot be deduced from the individual words, and learners may struggle with comprehending and using these expressions appropriately in context.

*Collocations and Word Usage:*

Uzbek learners may encounter difficulties in using English words in inappropriate collocations and understanding their nuanced meanings. English has numerous collocations and subtle differences in word usage that may not have direct equivalents in Uzbek. Developing a strong sense of collocation and appropriate word choice requires extensive exposure and practice. To address these challenges, teachers can employ various strategies:

- Explicitly teaching English pronunciation, highlighting important contrasts between English and Uzbek phonetic systems;
- Implementing various vocabulary-building activities, including word games, contextualized exercises, and authentic reading resources, to improve vocabulary learning;
- Applying context, real-life examples, and visual aids to teach Uzbek learners about idiomatic phrases and collocations;
- Create a language-rich environment by exposing students to authentic English resources like books, movies, and music to improve vocabulary and cultural awareness.

Encourage active communication and involvement in English by giving Uzbek learners opportunities to practice employing language in real-life situations and encouraging frequent vocabulary review and reinforcement. Educators may help Uzbek students acquire a strong foundation in English vocabulary and improve their overall language ability by addressing these common issues and using efficient teaching tactics.

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