

INFLUENCE OF NATIVE LANGUAGE ON UZBEK STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of the Uzbek native language on the English writing of Uzbek students. Structural and grammatical differences between the two languages often lead to errors such as improper word order, omission of articles, inaccurate use of prepositions, and literal translations. The research identifies and analyzes these common errors, providing illustrative examples. Additionally, it proposes strategies to enhance writing proficiency, including systematic practice and increased awareness of cross-linguistic differences. The results suggest that recognizing the influence of the native language contributes to clearer and more accurate English writing.*

Keywords: *Linguistic interference, Negative transfer, Error analysis, Uzbek learners, Word order, Language acquisition.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing in a foreign language is often influenced by a learner's native language. Ellis (1997) argues that linguistic interference occurs when a learner's first language impacts the organization of their second language, creating errors due to conflicting grammatical frameworks.³⁶ Uzbek students, for example, frequently transfer features of their native language into English, resulting in mistakes in word order, omission of articles, misuse of prepositions, and literal translations. These errors reflect the structural differences between English and Uzbek and show how native language interference impacts writing skills. Understanding the influence of the mother tongue is essential for developing effective teaching strategies. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the common writing mistakes caused by native language influence and suggest ways to improve English writing among Uzbek students.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative error analysis (EA) and contrastive linguistic approach. The research process involves identifying how the structural differences between Uzbek and English lead to specific errors. The methodology is categorized as follows:

1. Syntactic Structure Analysis (Word Order)

³⁶ Ellis, R. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford University Press.

Drawing on the theoretical framework of Odlin (1989), this research examines how learners shift from the Uzbek Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) structure to the English Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) model.³⁷

- Analysis: Learners often transfer their native SOV structure into English.
- Example: Instead of the correct SVO ("I read a book"), students may produce:
✗ "I a book read" (Subject-Object-Verb).

2. Morphological and Lexical Interference

Focusing on the absence of particular linguistic features in the Uzbek language, this methodology evaluates resulting errors through Sharwood Smith's (1981) concept of negative transfer.³⁸

• Article Omission: Since Uzbek lacks a definite/indefinite article system, the study categorizes errors where articles are missing.

✗ Example: "I bought book" (instead of "I bought a book").

• Prepositional and Literal Translation: The research identifies "negative transfer" where students translate phrases word-for-word or omit prepositions.

✗ Example: "I go school" (omission of 'to').

✗ Example: "I very like this" (literal translation of the Uzbek "Menga bu juda yoqadi").

3. Evaluation of Remedial Strategies

To conclude, the methodology investigates educational strategies aimed at reducing these linguistic inaccuracies. Drawing on the principles established by Lightbown and Spada (2006)³⁹, this research assesses the impact of:

• Input Flooding: Exposure to correct sentence patterns through reading.

• Contrastive Feedback: This involves educators directly highlighting the structural discrepancies between English and Uzbek. According to James (2013)⁴⁰, recognizing these linguistic contrasts is a fundamental requirement for successful instruction.

Results

The analysis of Uzbek learners' English writing identifies several recurring error patterns caused by native language interference. The primary findings are categorized as follows:

1. Syntactic Errors (Word Order): A significant number of sentences follow the Uzbek SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) pattern instead of the English SVO.

For example, students frequently produce structures like ✗ "I a book read" instead of ✓ "I read a book."

2. Morphological Omissions: Due to the absence of an article system in Uzbek, learners consistently omit "a," "an," and "the."

³⁷ Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer: Cross-linguistic Influence in Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press.

³⁸ Sharwood Smith, M. (1981). *Consciousness-Raising and the Second Language Learner*. *Applied Linguistics*.

³⁹ Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford University Press

⁴⁰ James, C. (2013). *Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis*. Routledge.

An example of this is ✗ "I bought book" instead of ✓ "I bought a book."

3. Prepositional and Lexical Errors: Errors in preposition usage (e.g., ✗ "I go school") and literal word-for-word translations from Uzbek (e.g., ✗ "I very like this") are highly prevalent.

These results indicate that students directly map Uzbek grammatical rules onto their English output.

Discussion

The results confirm that "negative transfer" is the leading cause of grammatical inaccuracy among Uzbek students. As theorized by (Sharwood Smith, 1981)⁴¹, learners unconsciously apply the internal logic of their first language to the target language. The word order errors specifically highlight the deep-rooted nature of the Uzbek SOV structure, which (Odlin, 1989)⁴² describes as a fundamental cross-linguistic challenge.

Furthermore, the omission of articles and prepositions suggests a lack of metalinguistic awareness. Since these categories do not exist or function differently in Uzbek, students fail to perceive them as essential components of English syntax. To mitigate these issues, (Lightbown & Spada, 2006)⁴³ emphasize that error analysis and contrastive feedback are vital. By explicitly comparing English SVO patterns with Uzbek SOV structures, teachers can help students develop the cognitive "filter" necessary to avoid literal translations and structural mistakes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the structural differences between English and Uzbek significantly influence the writing proficiency of Uzbek learners. The research demonstrates that "negative transfer" is the primary cause of frequent errors, such as Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order, the omission of articles, and literal translations from the native language. These linguistic interferences occur because students unconsciously apply the grammatical rules of Uzbek to their English compositions.

However, these challenges are not insurmountable. The study suggests that developing metalinguistic awareness through contrastive analysis is essential for academic success. By implementing strategies such as regular writing practice, extensive reading of authentic texts, and receiving targeted feedback, students can gradually reduce the influence of their native language. Ultimately, a better understanding of the fundamental discrepancies between English and Uzbek enables learners to write with greater clarity, accuracy, and confidence.

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⁴³ Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford University Press

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