

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN RUSSIAN AND UZBEK-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Students in Russian-language instruction classes perform better than students in Uzbek-language instruction classes. The answer to the question “why is that” many people would like to know. Obviously, every year the number of parents who want their children to go to the former is on the increase because the graduates of the former are totally different in many aspects from the latter. In this article, I will make an effort to describe the differences in two types of language instruction classes and give reasons for students performing better in Russian-only instruction classes.

Keywords: Russian-language instruction, Uzbek-language instruction, mixed Russian-Uzbek-language school, ethnic Uzbek, ethnic Russians, language of instruction

INTRODUCTION

There are some factors for students' better performance in language classrooms. Qualitative data from the interviews indicate that significantly more students who had studied in Russian language instruction schools do better and are seemingly quite successful than those who did not. In Uzbekistan schools can have two types of classes. One with Uzbek language instruction while another with Russian language instruction. Normally, the former outnumbers in many schools because firstly a majority of population are ethnic Uzbeks and secondly some parents are afraid of their children inheriting Russian way of upbringing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

After the decline of Soviet Union, the president did his best to limit the influence of the Russian language in the mid-1990s (Bekmurzaev, 2019). There are no purely Russian-language schools in Uzbekistan. There are only Uzbek-language schools and mixed Russian-Uzbek-language schools (Khalikov, 2006). One cannot find exclusively Russian-language schools if not private-led schools. Exception can be those Russian-only schools where the language of instruction is exclusively Russian.

Recently, the number of parents who opt for Russian as the language of education for their children has been increasing as they believe that Russian gives their children a priority over their peers in their future career. Gul (2019) states that students in

Kyrgyz university preferred Russian for the same reason as they would call it “concern for the future”. According to Khalikov (2006), ethnic Uzbeks desire their children to go to Russian-only instruction classes.

Another factor can be that their parents studied in Russian language instruction schools. Parents speak and write fluently in Russian. From my experience, parents would prefer to speak Russian with their children though they are ethnically Uzbek. They want their children to speak Russian than Uzbek.

RESULTS/INTERPRETATION

Twenty-five teachers were interviewed to answer these two questions. The collected data was analyzed and interpreted. The findings are categorized into main themes (see Table 1):

- 1) what are the main differences in students’ performance in two types of language classes they conduct lessons
- 2) how do students behave in the classroom in each type of class?

Students in Russian-language instruction classes

The qualitative data (see Table 1) taken with the help of the interview from teachers working at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy show that teachers characterize students in Russian-language instruction classes as being more organized and disciplined. They tend to behave in an organized and controlled way. They possess competitive skills. Educators hold a variety of competitions to encourage learners to compete, learn and obtain knowledge from one another. Also, they are independent and democratic. In other words, students are not affected or controlled in no way by other people, events or things. From my personal classroom experience, they have higher IQ. This can be explained by school authority focusing more on Russian language, literature and culture.

Table 1. Qualitative data from the interview: Teachers’ views

Students in Russian-language instruction	Students in Uzbek-language instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organized and disciplined - possess competitive skills - independent and democratic - punctual (submit assignments on time) - are taught using different teaching styles - higher IQ - more focus on Russian language, literature and culture - have more job opportunities at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - follow strict rules - experience strict upbringing - not welcome mistakes - more desire for English - Parents’ speak rudimentary Russian

Students in Uzbek-language instruction classes

Learners who choose Uzbek as the language of instruction tend to follow strict rules at home and at school. They normally experience strict upbringing from their parents. As a result, they do not seem happy to hear mistakes or criticism from other parties. Their parents do not speak Russian well so they would love their children to learn English as a foreign language.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the above-mentioned views have limited reliability since the number of respondents who were interviewed were very few which is not enough to generalize to the whole population. In the future research studies, it is recommended to interview more teachers from other public universities which can be generalized to the whole population. After all, students' performance is not only evaluated on the basis of whether they went to Russian or Uzbek language of instruction. The upbringing and the way of teaching are also main factors.

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