

PROBLEMS OF TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN UZBEKISTAN AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the problems encountered by B1-B2 level learners studying Turkish as a foreign language, specifically related to language learning skills. The data was collected through open-ended questions and analyzed using content analysis. The results of the study identified problems in reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills, as well as difficulties in learning grammar rules and new words. This research contributes to the understanding of the challenges faced by TFL learners and can inform the development of teaching materials and approaches to address these issues.

Keywords: grammar rules, vocabulary, language, competence.

The study found that B1-B2 level learners studying Turkish as a foreign language encountered difficulties in all aspects of language learning, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Additionally, they struggled with learning grammar rules and new vocabulary. This suggests that there may be a need for targeted teaching materials and approaches to address these challenges and support the language learning process for TFL learners at this proficiency level. As Genç (2017) stated, knowing a foreign language is not solely expressing self and/or understanding others, but integrating these with listening, reading, and writing skills.

Competence in a language is evaluated by the use of reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills (M. I. Hossain 2015). Lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge prevents the full use of language skills. Grammar and vocabulary knowledge that is not put to use with language skills cannot be learned thoroughly. Learners state that they mostly know the rules but fail to use them in language learning. Language is based on a set of structures or rules, which could not be worked out simply by imitating individual utterances. The mistakes made by children reveal that they are not simply imitating but actively working out and applying rules. (Coulson, S. 2000.) stated, functional language knowledge considers the functions of semantic, morphemic, and phonemic items in terms of their contributions to language. In order to achieve functionality, language items should be handled as a whole with their semantic, morphemic and use of language aspects (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Activities for

language use should be included in teaching process particularly for preventing what is learned from being forgotten (Kara, 2010). Communication competence has become a focus in higher education over the past couple of decades as educational policy makers and advocates have stressed a “back to basics” mentality (McCroskey, 1984). Nonetheless, vocabulary learning enhances learners to pass the threshold level which enables them to take part in real communication and to develop high L2 reading comprehension (Clarke, 1980). Nyikos and Fan (2007) emphasize that vocabulary has a crucial role in both receptive and productive skills that are interrelated with effective communication. Additionally, Nyikos and Fan (2007) explain that VLS research has been instigated by the fact that the academic and interpersonal vocabulary needs of learners surpass their ability to learn and effectively integrate newly learned vocabulary.

According to Schmitt (2000), VLS are categorized as “(1) strategies that are useful for the initial discovery of a word’s meaning, and (2) those useful for remembering that word once it has been introduced.” He further classifies the strategies into five. Determination strategies (DET) contain strategies used by an individual in situations that require discovering the meaning of a new word without resorting to others’ help. Social strategies (SOC) occur during interaction with other people with the aim of improving language learning. Traditionally known as mnemonics, Memory strategies (MEM) are about associating words to be retained with some previously learned knowledge, through various forms of imagery, or grouping. Cognitive strategies (COG), based on Oxford are defined as strategies that “exhibit the common function of manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner.” Metacognitive strategies (MET), on the other hand, are the ones that “involve a conscious overview of the learning process and making decisions about planning, monitoring, or evaluating the best ways to study” (Schmitt, 2000).

Nacera (2010) explored vocabulary size and vocabulary learning strategies of 46 English major students and found that meta-cognitive strategies were used the most frequently. Besides, wider vocabulary suggested a tendency to use predictions from the context alike Altan’s study (2003). However, interaction with native speakers, using a visual to recall a word, getting help from others were also distinguishable for higher and lower learners in that the first group favoured these more than the second group. It was also suggested that higher learners employed strategies that necessitated more diligence and attempt when compared to the lower learners.

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