

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRONUNCIATION TRAINING IN IMPROVING SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF UZBEK EFL LEARNERS

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## Abstract

The main purpose of this article is to emphasize pronunciation training to improve speaking skills of Uzbek EFL(English as a Foreign Language) learners. It explains common phonetic difficulties caused by first language (L1) interference, presents effective pronunciation training techniques, and highlights the pedagogical significance of integrating pronunciation instruction into EFL classrooms. These suggest that targeted pronunciation training significantly improves intelligibility, fluency, confidence, and overall speaking performance among Uzbek EFL learners.

**Keywords:** Pronunciation training, speaking competence, Uzbek EFL learners, phonetic interference, oral communication.

## Introduction

Speaking competence is a core skill in English language learning. Uzbek EFL learners often face challenges in oral communication due to pronunciation problems caused by first language (L1) interference. Pronunciation training has long been underestimated in EFL instruction; however, recent studies show its crucial role in enhancing speaking skills. This article aims to analyze how pronunciation training contributes to developing the speaking skill of Uzbek EFL learners and to suggest effective instructional approaches.

## The influence of L1 in English Learning

Uzbek EFL learners encounter several pronunciation difficulties caused by Uzbek language interference. These challenges include:

- a) Vowel length difference, as Uzbek language lacks long and short contrasts (e.g., feet and fit)
- b) Consonant cluster, which is uncommon in Uzbek (e.g., happened, street)
- c) Unavailable sounds in Uzbek, such as /w/, /θ/, and /ð/.
- d) Stress pattern, which differ tremendously from Uzbek stress patterns
- e) Intonation patterns, particularly in questions and connected speech



These challenges often lead strong foreign accents and, negatively impacting speaking performance.

### **How to apply Pronunciation training techniques in classrooms**

There are a few instructional techniques considered as an effective in improving pronunciation among Uzbek EFL learners. First thing first is to teach segmental and supra segmental approaches in which the first refers to focusing practice on individual sounds, minimal units of phonetics and the latter is about teaching stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns to avoid articulation and unclear speech. Next important step to improve awareness using phonemic symbols, mouth diagrams, articulatory explanations of sound production. Significantly, it is noteworthy that technology-based training need to implemented during classes. Pronunciation apps, speech recognition tools, audio-visual materials provide learners with immediate feedback and opportunities for faster improvement. Moreover, it is strongly suggested to have communicative practice activities such as role-plays, debates, discussions, presentations.

Therefore, EFL teachers in Uzbekistan should integrate pronunciation training systematically into lessons rather than leaving it ignored. These training activities should be continuous, contextualized, learner-centered. Teachers should also receive trainings in phonetics to address learners' pronunciation difficulties.

### **Conclusion**

Pronunciation training plays a significant role in improving speaking skill of Uzbek EFL learners. By emphasizing both segmental and supra segmental features, pronunciation instruction enhances fluency, intelligibility and confidence in spoken English. Integrating these approaches into EFL classrooms can effectively improve learner's oral communication skills and general language proficiency. Hence, pronunciation ought to be regarded as a vital component of speaking instruction in Uzbek EFL context.

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