

## ON THE ISSUE OF TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article examines one of the most important aspects of teaching Russian as a foreign language. The purpose of the article is to reveal the role of mastering skills that affect the process of communication and mastering the Russian language in general. During the research, comparative and descriptive methods were used. The author reveals the purpose of the introductory phonetic course, where the foundations of speech hearing and pronunciation are laid. It is indicated that an introductory phonetic course can be built with or without taking into account the native language of students; when teaching pronunciation, a special technique is needed, focused not only on correcting, but also on preventing errors. The groups of exercises used to develop the skills of correct pronunciation are highlighted. The author also reveals the main difficulties faced by foreign listeners. The orthoepic norms of the Russian language associated with the pronunciation of vowels and consonants, staging of stress and intonation are considered. Recommendations are given on the organization of work on practicing pronunciation.*

### **KEYWORDS**

*Introductory phonetic course, spelling, pronunciation, phonetics, phoneme, articulation, intonation, stress, vowel sound, consonant sound.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Foreign students from China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea and other countries study annually at Tashkent State University within the framework of international cooperation. At the same time, they have different levels of proficiency in Russian and different goals of learning it. Mastering the correct pronunciation, "striving for perfect phonetic design of students' speech" is one of the conditions for the development of skills in all types of speech activity. Teaching pronunciation in the process of teaching any language as a foreign language involves taking into account the phonetic features of the language systems of the native and target languages. At present, this means the principle of selection and organization of material, highlighting the most difficult phenomena in the study of the Russian language and the phenomena necessary for listeners [Костомаров 5, 80]. Working on pronunciation is an integral and important part of teaching foreign languages, including Russian. According to the

linguistic dictionary, pronunciation is the features of the articulation of speech sounds, a set of orthoepic norms inherent in a particular type of language [Розенталь 7,342]. The traditional system of teaching the pronunciation of Russian as a foreign language was described in the methodological and teaching aids of S.I. Bernshtein, T.V. Buzanova, N.B. Karavanova, V.G. Kostomarov, A.A. Leontyev, O.D. Mitrofanova, L.V. Moskovkin, Yu.G. Ovsienko, A.N. Shchukin and others. In our work we rely on the achievements of pedagogical science and practice, as well as our many years of teaching experience.

Practicing pronunciation depends on the goals and objectives of the training. So, when the task of mastering written speech is highlighted in order to read and understand special literature, deep and accurate knowledge, automatic skills in the field of pronunciation are not required. If the listener is faced with the need to communicate with native speakers or acquire professional skills as a teacher of Russian as a foreign language, then mastering adequate communication with native speakers by pronunciation becomes of paramount importance. At the initial stage, serious attention is paid to working on pronunciation, which is due to the goals and objectives of the course. Students need to communicate with native speakers, as well as receive education in Russian.

The formulation and correction of pronunciation is carried out at three stages of training, which are designated as an introductory phonetic course in phonetics, an accompanying course in phonetics and a corrective course in phonetics. In each of the sections of the course, the study of sounds, sound combinations and rhythmic patterns of words is combined with the study of intonation structures. Teaching the Russian language to foreign students begins with an introductory phonetic course. The goals and objectives of this course are that it acquaints the listeners with the system of phonetics of the Russian language, the articulation of sounds; features of stress and its implementation in various types of words, the main types of intonation structures. It is advisable to work out, first of all, phonetic features in accordance with their real functioning in Russian speech and relevant for communication, and in the system, for example: [d] together with [t], [t] together with [t'], etc. From the point of view of the methodology, it is not the very fact of comparison that is important, but the forecasting on its basis of phonetic errors and the choice of optimal options for eliminating them.

As part of the introductory phonetic course, the skills of speaking, reading and writing are also developed. Foreign students should be able to read syllables, words, phrases, sentences and short texts based on the studied vocabulary; ask questions on the topic covered and answer them; write syllables, words and short sentences; compose a short text (4 – 5 sentences) on the studied situations. It should be noted that

the selection of vocabulary and grammatical phenomena in the introductory phonetic course is subordinated to the tasks of teaching pronunciation. Each word is entered, as a rule, after all the sounds that make up it have been worked out. A similar condition is met with respect to accent patterns and intonation structures. The vocabulary should be common, specific and uncomplicated in terms of grammatical interpretation. Of course, work on setting the pronunciation continues in the future. This is due to the fact that the introductory phonetic course does not cover all, even essential, phonetic features of the Russian language. Correct pronunciation skills cannot be practiced and automated in a short time.

We conduct the basic part of the course on the basis of the manual by N.B.Karavanova "Correction course of the phonetics of the Russian language", the purpose of which is to ensure the correction of auditory-pronunciation skills in the field of sounds, word rhythm and intonation in the process of teaching various types of speech activity. In addition, the course aims to develop students' phonetic hearing, automate pronunciation skills, reading skills and speech perception. To this end, students perform various types of exercises that develop practical skills, and also focus on a specific phonetic phenomenon [3].

The main goal of acquiring the correct pronunciation is knowledge and corrects use in practice of orthoepic norms, as well as the development of the ability not only to hear, but also to understand the speech of a native speaker. "It depends on the teacher's attention to the phonetic and intonational aspects of speech at the initial stage of learning whether in the future the students' speech will be characterized by an accent, to correct, to eliminate which turns out to be very difficult at subsequent stages" [5, 39].

Phonetics, as a science that studies the sounds of speech, the methods of their formation and alternation, syllables, stress and intonation, is one of the aspects of the linguistic competence of foreign students. Phonetics teaching assumes that students have theoretical knowledge and practical skills. To master the pronunciation of the Russian language means to master its articulatory base, that is, a set of pronunciation skills characteristic of it. The way of speech organs, necessary for sound production, in each language has its own characteristics: the degree of tension, the force of exhalation, the nature of the work of the vocal cords, etc. are different.

To achieve correct pronunciation, it is necessary to form not only pronunciation, but also auditory skills, although in practice both processes are carried out in parallel. Exercises for consolidating pronunciation skills are usually divided into two large groups: exercises in listening and exercises in reproduction. Both of them are interrelated and are necessary for the development of both auditory and pronunciation

skills. Control over the level of formation of phonetic skills is carried out in listening, speaking and reading aloud. The number of types of phonetic exercises proper in listening is relatively small (the improvement of auditory skills is carried out when performing exercises in listening), they are mainly aimed at the development of phonetic hearing and the establishment of differential signs of repeated phonemes and intones. Listening should be active and always accompanied by a task that concentrates the listener's voluntary attention on a specific characteristic of a phoneme or intonem. The exercises can be performed only by ear or using a graphic support (handout with words / sentences / text).

Correct literary pronunciation in Russian corresponds to its orthoepic norms. Literary pronunciation depends on the phonological system of the language: the inventory of phonemes, the rules for their distribution, alternation, compatibility, functional load. For example, in Russian, one of the features of the phonological system is the alternation of voiced consonants with voiceless consonants at the absolute end of a word: *drug* – *dru[k]*, *zub* – *zu[p]*. Students need to explain the rules of vowel pronunciation depending on the stressed or unstressed position in the word. For example, in an unstressed position, *o* is pronounced as [a]: *voda* – *v[a]da*, *tvoya* – *tv[a]ya*; *e*, in some cases *ya* / *a* are pronounced [i]: *prepodavatel* – *pr[i]podavat[i]l*, *umenya* – *u m[i]nya*, *chasi* – *ch[i]si*. The orthoepic norm of pronunciation of vowels of the Russian language is characterized by reduction (weakening of pronunciation) in an unstressed position: *horosho* – *h[ʊ]r[a]sho*. The tasks that are given to listeners when working on pronunciation reflect these features of the phonetic system of the Russian language, the vocabulary in them is selected taking into account the compliance with certain orthoepic norms, frequency of use, and the stage of training. Along with this, tasks are performed to practice the pronunciation of paired voiceless / voiced, soft / hard consonants; combinations of consonants.

The requirements for pronunciation are very high, because the violation of the phonetic aspect of sounding speech in the target language complicates the communication process. The abundance of blunders reduces the interest in communication not only on the part of the listener, but also on the part of the speaker himself, experiencing discomfort due to articulation difficulties. A stable, sufficiently intelligible pronunciation that does not hinder verbal communication is provided by automated, stable skills that guarantee the correct sound, accent-rhythmic and intonation design of the utterance. The importance of teaching phonetics in the course of Russian as a foreign language is dictated by its role in the linguistic structure, since "the linguistic form is the way of existence of the human language." The main task of phonetics is "the development of articulatory automatism, sufficient to ensure a

particular type of speech activity" [Бернштейн 1, 113]. At the same time, the main goal of teaching phonetics is to develop associations between grammatical and phonetic categories of the language in the minds of listeners. It is also advisable to practice pronunciation in the listening course, which is usually highlighted in a separate aspect, just like writing. The perception of the text by ear is associated with overcoming a number of difficulties, among which one can note the phonemic ones, caused by the discrepancy between the graphic and acoustic appearance of the word in conditions of an incomplete pronunciation style; rhythmic and intonation features that complicate perception; lexical difficulties caused by the recognition of homophones, homonyms, ambiguous words, paronyms, proper names. Listening begins with speech perception. But correct vocalization to oneself is possible only if the listener has developed pronunciation skills in external speech. Therefore, at the initial stage, listening should develop in close connection with speaking, reading aloud, which not only ensures the formation of clear pronunciation skills, but also contributes to the establishment of strong connections between articulatory and auditory sensations.

Awareness of articulatory movements is especially necessary when studying sounds that are absent in the students' native language or that differ significantly in the nature of articulation. When studying similar articulations, it is possible to use imitation, which should be entered after explaining the pronunciation of a sound. At the same time, the formulation of the word should be combined with complex work on the sounds: in the process of including the correct articulations of sounds in monosyllabic words, the smoothness of the adjoining of consonants to vowels, the pronunciation of consonant combinations, their stunning and voicing, switching articulation from a hard consonant to a soft one and vice versa are practiced. The work with rhythmic models begins from the moment the practiced sounds are included in two-syllable words. First, you need to teach the student to pronounce all intonational constructions correctly, and then consolidate their use when reading various sentences. As for stress, when pronouncing stressed syllables in Russian, it is necessary to draw students' attention to the change in the duration, tension of stressed and unstressed vowels, to a clearer articulation of the stressed vowel.

When setting the vowels [a], [e], [o], [y], [i], the main task is to teach students to distinguish between these sounds and not mix them. Some students do not distinguish between sonorous [l], [r], mix the sounds [i], [b] - [v], [z] - [g]. Careful work is required to formulate the correct pronunciation of the sounds [k], [g], [h], [sh], [j], [ch], [z]. Chinese students most often mix and confuse the sounds [r] and [l] For Japanese and Korean students, it is difficult to distinguish between sonorants; sounds [b] - [v]. Practicing pronunciation is not limited to simple repetition. It is advisable in



such cases to use a visual explanation - to show the position of the language when pronouncing a certain sound.

When setting the pronunciation of consonants, it is difficult to pronounce soft consonants. In this situation, a peculiar principle of "support" is used, which is the sound [i]: *li - mi - di - ti - vi - pi* etc., as well as a number of consonants when practicing pronunciation [r]: *tarelka, doroga, vorota, trava, karandash, koridor, horosho, poradok* etc. Such consonants before the sound [r] provide support for the repulsion of the tongue and the correct positioning.

Difficulty for some students causes the distinction of consonants by voicing / deafness, which leads to errors such as: [b]eremena (*peremena*), [b]a[b]ka (*papka*) and vice versa, gru[b]a (*gruppa*), m[unoka] (*mnogo*), [B]e[g]in (*Pekin*), etc. In this case, students mix words that in Russian differ only in the deafness/voicedness of one or several consonants: *dom - tom, dochka - tochka* etc.

At each employment, phonetic "exercises" are usually carried out, both group and individual. She doesn't take long and needs to date. This warm-up includes exercises for articulatory gymnastics, the development of phonamatic hearing, and working out intonation. Here they often choose: from repetition after teaching rare sounds, words, sentences to more complex tasks - the choice by ear of one sound from the text. To practice the definition of sound, you can pick up the tongue twisters in which it is most often found. The rhyme itself should be quickly memorized and interesting. To master the system of vowel backgrounds, exercises are performed to separate audible words into syllables.

There are many phonetic exercises, and the task of the teacher is to see the problem and choose tasks that will help solve it. It is also necessary to pay attention to intonation, since sentences in Russian and native languages may sound different. The effectiveness of communication involves the listener guessing the intentions of the interlocutor. In this case, a special role is played by the intonation of the message, with which the speaker can express agreement or disagreement, motivation, statement, question. It is necessary to clearly and clearly distinguish Russian sentences with descending and ascending tones, to explain the concept of the "semantic center of the utterance". The semantic center of the utterance or the core of the utterance is distinguished by a special intonation: descending or ascending. The core of the utterance is also distinguished by phrasal stress. The teacher should point out that there are different types of sentences in the Russian language: narrative, interrogative, motivational. The intonation depends on the type of sentence for the purpose of the utterance. For clarity, you can use a table that indicates the type of tone in a particular sentence. For example, affirmative sentences (*Yes, this is my friend*), constructions

containing interrogative words (*Where is the book?*), motivation (*Close the window!*) they are pronounced with a descending tone. Interrogative sentences/general questions are pronounced with an ascending tone (*Is this your brother?*). Such a classification will allow listeners to understand where it is necessary to raise or lower the intonation of the utterance. For effective memorization, various exercises are offered for the development and automation of rhythmic-intonation skills.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the task of mastering the Russian language cannot be successfully solved without knowledge of its pronunciation norms. And this is especially important at the first, initial stage of training. Difficulties at the phonetic level are a serious obstacle not only for communication between foreigners and native speakers of the target language, but also for learning the language in general. Correct pronunciation contributes to the rapid perception of oral speech, facilitates the process of communication between people. Therefore, the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language in its phonetic and intonation aspect should be based on teaching the specific features of its phonetic system, in contrast to the phonetic system of the students' native language and the intermediate language. This approach helps to determine the reasons, typology, degree of admissibility and ways of correcting pronunciation errors in Russian speech. It is necessary to work out phonetic features that are really relevant for communication in accordance with their real functioning in Russian speech. Teaching pronunciation is based on the conscious mastering of the articulation of Russian sounds, rhythmic patterns, and intonation systems. The task for the listeners is to understand the articulatory movements in unity with their sound correspondences, to understand the difference in the pronunciation of the sound in the native and Russian languages. It is imperative that students master the ability to analyze their pronunciation of sounds in both their native and target languages. Pronunciation of a foreign language sound should become a conscious operation, which later becomes an automated skill. Working on intonation is a very important part of working on correct pronunciation. It facilitates and accelerates the process of language acquisition, makes it more conscious, gives a good phonetic effect, since it concentrates all phonetic aspects of learning: the sound and rhythm of a word, the unity of the pronunciation of words in a syntagma, melodic voice movements in a sentence. Work on pronunciation and development of rhythmic and intonation skills should be carried out at all stages of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

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