SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE OF RUSSIAN-MEDIUM 7TH GRADE LEARNERS IN TASHKENT: PEDAGOGICAL AND ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract: *This article presents a sociolinguistic profile of 7th-grade learners receiving Russian-medium instruction in a public school in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The study explores sociolinguistic aspects influencing English language learning, including linguistic background, cultural diversity, assessment practices, and pedagogical implications. Findings highlight the role of multilingualism, socio-economic context, and gender in shaping learners' motivation and performance. The paper further discusses formative and summative assessment methods aligned with CEFR and IELTS frameworks, emphasizing fairness, inclusivity, and ethical considerations in language education.*

Keywords: *Sociolinguistics, multilingualism, assessment, ESL, Uzbekistan*

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the sociolinguistic profile of 7th-grade public school learners who receive Russian-medium instruction in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The research focuses on understanding sociolinguistic factors influencing English learning, including implied assessment, learning environment, and pedagogical implications. It contributes to understanding how language, culture, and education intersect in multilingual contexts.

Sociolinguistic Profile of a Group of Learners

The class consists of 17 multilingual students. Nine are native Uzbek speakers who frequently communicate in Russian at home. Their English proficiency is around A1 level. Although bilingual, they face difficulties in learning English, often due to low parental emphasis on education. The remaining eight students are native Russian speakers with English proficiency between A2 and B1. They demonstrate stronger motivation and linguistic awareness. Gender also plays a role; cultural expectations often affect girls' motivation, aligning with Cameron's (2005) argument that language use is socially conditioned by gender.

Sociolinguistic Profile of the Learning Context

The classroom reflects the multicultural and multilingual composition of Tashkent, where Uzbek serves as the mother tongue, Russian as the medium of instruction, and English as a foreign language. Teachers are encouraged to employ translanguaging and acknowledge non-standard dialects to promote inclusivity. The diverse ethnic background of students, including Kazakh and Russian minorities, requires culturally responsive pedagogy. Urban environments provide linguistic exposure, but socio-economic disparities can impact performance (Persell, 1997). Educators should therefore ensure equal opportunities and respect students' cultural identities.

Context Where English Will Be Used

Uzbek learners typically study English for educational and professional advancement abroad, necessitating proficiency in Standard English and cultural literacy. Teachers must

integrate cultural instruction to enable students to navigate cross-cultural communication effectively. Code-switching and translanguaging help link prior linguistic knowledge to English acquisition. Exposure to varied English registers prepares students for academic and professional environments (Ferreira, 2006).

Pedagogical Implications

Effective pedagogy for multilingual learners involves explicit instruction in English structures distinct from Uzbek and Russian, vocabulary expansion, and pronunciation training (Levis & Grant, 2011; Nation, 2021). Instructional materials should reflect cultural and linguistic diversity (Chamot, 2012). Collaborative learning, formative assessment, and differentiation enhance inclusivity and engagement (Dixson & Worrell, 2016). Summative assessments, including written and oral tasks, should evaluate both content and linguistic competence, aligned with CEFR and IELTS frameworks.

Assessment Implications

Assessment practices must ensure fairness, validity, and reliability (Tsagari & Banerjee, 2014). CEFR and IELTS frameworks provide transparent criteria for tracking progress (Fulcher, 2016). Ethical assessment requires cultural neutrality and sensitivity (Puspawati, 2014). Teachers should mitigate test anxiety and promote supportive evaluation practices that uphold equity and social justice.

Conclusion

Language educators play a pivotal role in supporting learners from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. Teachers must recognize students' multilingual repertoires, advocate for inclusive policies, and design equitable assessments. For 7th-grade Uzbek learners in Russian-medium settings, a culturally responsive, assessment-informed pedagogy fosters both linguistic and academic success, preparing students to engage confidently in global contexts.

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