

CHALLENGES FACED BY NON-NATIVE UZBEK WRITERS IN ACADEMIC WRITING

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Abstract: Academic writing is a critical skill for students and scholars worldwide, requiring a strong command of both subject matter and language. Non-native writers face additional challenges, particularly those writing in a language that is not their mother tongue. For non-native Uzbek writers, these challenges are compounded by a unique blend of linguistic, cultural, and institutional barriers that hinder their academic writing. Uzbek, as the official language of Uzbekistan, has distinct grammatical structures, vocabulary, and writing conventions that create difficulties when students and scholars write in foreign languages such as English or Russian. This work aims to explore the challenges faced by non-native Uzbek writers in academic contexts, focusing on linguistic difficulties, cultural influences, and institutional support. Additionally, it will provide strategies for overcoming these challenges and improving academic writing skills.

Key words: Academic writing, Uzbek writers, language proficiency, linguistic challenges, cultural influences, bilingual education, writing conventions, academic English, institutional support.

Аннотация: Академическое письмо является важнейшим навыком для студентов и учёных по всему миру, требующим глубокого владения как предметной областью, так и языком. Для пишущих не на родном языке этот процесс сопровождается дополнительными трудностями. Особенно это касается носителей узбекского языка, для которых академическое письмо на иностранном языке сопряжено с рядом уникальных лингвистических, культурных и институциональных барьеров. Узбекский язык, являясь государственным языком Республики Узбекистан, имеет свои особенности грамматической структуры, словарного состава и правил письменной речи, что вызывает затруднения в письменной речи на иностранных языках, таких как английский или русский. Данная работа направлена на изучение трудностей, с которыми сталкиваются носители

узбекского языка при письме в академических контекстах, и обращает особое внимание на языковые сложности, культурные влияния и уровень институциональной поддержки. Кроме того, работа предлагает стратегии преодоления этих трудностей и улучшения навыков академического письма.

Ключевые слова: академическое письмо, писатели-носители узбекского языка, языковая компетенция, лингвистические трудности, культурные влияния, двуязычное образование, нормы письменной речи, академический английский, институциональная поддержка.

Annotatsiya: Akademik yozuv talabalar va olimlar uchun dunyo bo'ylab muhim ko'nikma bo'lib, u predmet bo'yicha chuqur bilim va tilni yaxshi bilishni talab qiladi. Ona tili bo'lmagan yozuvchilar qo'shimcha qiyinchiliklarga duch kelishadi, ayniqsa o'z ona tillaridan boshqa tilda yozayotganlar. Ona tili o'zbek bo'lgan yozuvchilar uchun bu qiyinchiliklar lingvistik, madaniy va institutsional to'siqlarning o'ziga xos aralashmasi tufayli yanada murakkablashadi, bu ularning akademik yozuvlariga to'sqinlik qiladi. O'zbek tili, O'zbekistonning rasmiy tili sifatida, o'ziga xos grammatik tuzilmalar, so'z boyligi va yozuv an'alariga ega bo'lib, bu talabalar va olimlarning ingliz yoki rus tillari kabi xorijiy tillarda yozishida qiyinchiliklar tug'diradi. Ushbu ish ona tili o'zbek bo'lgan yozuvchilarning akademik kontekstdagi qiyinchiliklarini, xususan, lingvistik qiyinchiliklar, madaniy ta'sirlar va institutsional yordamga e'tibor qaratib o'rganishni maqsad qiladi. Bundan tashqari, ushbu qiyinchiliklarni yengish va akademik yozuv ko'nikmalarini yaxshilash strategiyalarini taqdim etadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Akademik yozuv, o'zbek yozuvchilari, tilni bilish darajasi, lingvistik qiyinchiliklar, madaniy ta'sirlar, ikki tilli ta'lim, yozuv an'analari, akademik ingliz tili, institutsional yordam.

Introduction

Language proficiency is one of the primary obstacles for non-native Uzbek writers. Many Uzbek students grow up in bilingual environments, with Uzbek as their first language and Russian or English used for academic purposes. As a result, students may struggle with mastering formal academic registers in both their native and foreign languages. While Uzbek is the official language of the country, its academic usage is limited, and many students are taught in Russian or English, which are the dominant languages in higher education. This linguistic duality often leads to a lack of proficiency in academic Uzbek, leaving students unable to express their thoughts clearly and persuasively in either language (Nizamova, 2018).



Swales and Feak (2012) emphasize the importance of mastering academic language conventions, noting that non-native speakers, particularly those from bilingual backgrounds, often face difficulties in achieving fluency in both formal writing and technical academic discourse. For Uzbek writers, these difficulties are further compounded by the need to write in foreign languages with different syntactic structures and vocabulary. Uzbek language learners often encounter challenges in articulating complex ideas in English due to a lack of equivalent academic terms (Jalilov, 2014).

Methods

The grammatical differences between Uzbek and languages like English or Russian are significant and pose substantial challenges for non-native Uzbek writers. Uzbek follows a subject-object-verb (SOV) sentence structure, which contrasts with the subject-verb-object (SVO) structure used in English and Russian (Nizamova, 2018). This difference can lead to awkward sentence constructions when attempting to write in English, as non-native writers may inadvertently transfer Uzbek sentence structures.

Additionally, Uzbek is an agglutinative language, meaning that words are formed by adding prefixes and suffixes, which can complicate translation and sentence construction in languages like English. Flowerdew (2000) notes that non-native speakers often transfer their native grammatical structures when writing in a second language, resulting in syntax that may be unclear or grammatically incorrect. As such, non-native Uzbek writers frequently produce sentences that are not fully aligned with English or Russian sentence structures, affecting both clarity and flow.

Results

Vocabulary poses another challenge for non-native Uzbek writers. While some academic concepts in Uzbek are borrowed from Russian or English, there is often no direct equivalent in Uzbek. This lack of standardized academic terminology makes it difficult for non-native writers to express themselves with precision, particularly in technical fields like medicine, law, and science (Jalilov, 2014). Non-native Uzbek writers may either borrow foreign words, which can be confusing to readers, or create new terms, which may not always be understood or accepted in academic circles.

Leki (2007) emphasizes that the difficulty of finding equivalent academic terms is a common issue for non-native writers. In Uzbekistan, this problem is particularly pronounced because there is no standardized academic lexicon in Uzbek that mirrors those found in English or Russian. This gap can lead to



awkward phrasing or confusion when translating complex academic concepts into Uzbek. As Nizamova (2018) suggests, non-native writers must often grapple with linguistic and terminological limitations, hindering their ability to communicate their ideas effectively in both their native and foreign languages.

Discussion

Cultural norms and expectations significantly influence academic writing. Academic writing in English, for example, often values brevity, objectivity, and directness, while Uzbek academic writing may place greater emphasis on thoroughness, formality, and narrative style (Hinkel, 2004). In Uzbek academic traditions, there is a tendency to incorporate personal experience or illustrative examples to strengthen arguments, which contrasts with the preference for impersonal, evidence-based writing in Western academia (Jalilov, 2014). Non-native Uzbek writers may thus struggle to adapt their writing style to meet the expectations of international academic audiences, especially in fields like social sciences, where the personal voice is often discouraged.

According to Nizamova (2018), cultural differences in writing styles can create significant barriers for non-native Uzbek writers when they attempt to engage with global academic communities. These writers may inadvertently include subjective elements in their work, which may be considered unprofessional or irrelevant in Western academic contexts. As Hinkel (2004) notes, different cultural approaches to academic writing shape how ideas are presented, and for Uzbek writers, adjusting to more formal, impersonal styles of argumentation can be a challenge.

In addition to writing style, the cultural approach to argumentation also varies across academic traditions. In Uzbek academic writing, it is often common to build arguments indirectly, with the introduction of complex ideas through anecdotes or detailed background information (Jalilov, 2014). In contrast, English academic writing requires a more direct approach, where the main argument is presented clearly and concisely at the outset, followed by logical reasoning and evidence (Swales & Feak, 2012). This cultural difference can cause confusion for non-native Uzbek writers, who may find it difficult to adapt to the expectation of succinctness and clarity in Western academic contexts.

Conclusion

The educational system in Uzbekistan, while improving, still faces significant challenges in providing comprehensive academic writing instruction. According to Jalilov (2014), the Uzbek education system historically placed less emphasis on writing skills compared to other aspects of learning, such as rote



memorization or oral examination. Although there has been progress in integrating academic writing into curricula, many students are still not adequately trained in formal writing techniques, research methodologies, and citation practices. This deficiency in writing instruction makes it difficult for non-native writers to develop the skills necessary to write effectively in both Uzbek and foreign languages.

Moreover, as Nizamova (2018) points out, the lack of specialized training programs and writing support services, such as writing centers or peer feedback mechanisms, further exacerbates the difficulties non-native Uzbek writers face. This lack of institutional support makes it harder for non-native writers to improve their academic writing and meet international academic standards.

In addition to insufficient writing instruction, non-native Uzbek writers often lack access to essential resources such as academic journals, writing tools, and professional editing services. These resources are widely available in many Western institutions, but in Uzbekistan, access to these tools is limited (Jalilov, 2014). Without access to these resources, non-native Uzbek writers face additional hurdles in producing high-quality academic work.

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