

Russian Language Teaching in Uzbekistan, Status and Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The Russian language plays an important role in Uzbekistan. In connection with the adoption of the "Law on state language" in 1989, Russian lost the status of an official second native language; it unofficially consolidated as the language of international communication.

If we consider the evolution of changes in the status of the Russian language, we can observe the following: from 1860 to 1930s, Russian language in Uzbekistan functioned as an official language of office work and education in schools with Russian as the language of instruction. From 1930 to 1989, Russian and Uzbek had the status of official languages. In Soviet times, there were complete verticals of pre-school, school, and higher education in Russian and Uzbek in the republic. This situation has survived to this day, but the proportional representation of languages during the years of Independence changed sharply in favor of Uzbek.

As of 1 October 2022, there were 6 schools with Russian as the language of instruction and 28 in the Bukhara and Bukhara province system of public education, where there were classes in both Russian and Uzbek. There are 20,198 students studying in Russian-language classes from grades 1 to 11. This trend is improving every year, and the number of pupils in Russian-language schools is increasing.

There are currently more than 10,130 general education schools in Uzbekistan. All Uzbek- and other language schools have two hours of Russian language instruction per week as a compulsory subject.

Uzbekistan recognizes that language and language education are an essential tool for successful human life in society and part of a multi-ethnic culture.

This, in turn, involves the search for different modern approaches and linguodidactic foundations

for language teaching. Since 2021, Russian has been taught as a foreign language in schools with Uzbek and other languages of instruction.

In view of the new realities of Russian language functioning and solving problems of scientific and methodological nature, a lot of joint work of Russian scientists and methodologists of Russia and Uzbekistan is carried out.

In particular, a striking example of such cooperation is the joint Russian-Uzbek project "Class!" ("ZUR"), designed for 10 years. The first phase of the project started in September 2020. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of teaching Russian as a foreign language and Russian as a native language in Uzbekistan. In the framework of the project experts of the Russian State Pedagogical University named after A. I. Herzen conducted a large-scale diagnostics to determine the level of Russian language proficiency of teachers and schoolchildren. During 2020 and the first half of 2021 more than 13 thousand teachers and students were tested and interviewed on the Russian language and took specialized competence tests. More than one hundred Russian teachers worked in 70 rural schools in 14 regions of the republic. The result of this work was the creation of a Russian language textbook for the 2nd grade in Uzbek schools by a joint Russian-Uzbek team of authors. In September of this year in the framework of the project began approbation of new textbooks of Russian language from third to seventh grade and from eighth to eleventh grade in the new year. At the same time, textbooks and methodological complexes are being developed for schools with the Russian language of instruction, which will take into account the peculiarities of the multinational composition of students.

Uzbekistan is currently in the process of establishing a new education system aimed at integrating into the global educational space.

The overall strategic goal of Russian language teaching at schools with the Uzbek and other languages of instruction is to create an educational system that provides language acquisition (in its basic functions) as a means of communication, cognition, planning and organizing activities, emotional, aesthetic and moral impact and education, while giving priority to developing communicative competence. [2. C.19.]

The main objectives of teaching Russian as a foreign language are:

- formation of speech competence, the development of skills to use Russian in the process of communication to continue activities in the professional sphere and everyday life of students;
- formation of linguistic competence aimed at the development of oral and written literacy of students;
- Formation of key competences aimed at the development of students' self-education, as well as the ability to use the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities in their activities. [2.c.16.]

In Uzbekistan a Draft National Program for teaching Russian language has been developed, where this subject is considered as a foreign language. According to the project, the content of teaching Russian as a foreign language is aimed at the gradual and systematic formation of students of all types of speech activity in an interconnected way. Thematic and content component of the learning content (topics, spheres and situations of communication) reflects the peculiarities of everyday life, culture and traditions of the Uzbek people, as well as the history and culture of the language being studied. The selection of language material is based on the functionality and systematicity of the Russian language, and accessibility for students. Requirements for the level of training are determined, suggesting that the results of the RLI training correlate with the requirements for certification of the language level achieved (in accordance with the international certification scale). In the National Program, the principle of taking into account the peculiarities of one's native language in the process of mastering Russian

as a foreign language is considered one of the leading methodological statements. Consideration of the peculiarities of the native language and native culture of students implies the following structure of teaching material:

- speech skills of students should be transferred to the new language material and actualized;
- Skills formed in the native language, should be corrected during the study of the Russian language;
- skills formed in the native language should be corrected in the Russian language;
- Skills should be formed anew. [3.c.9.]

Thus, teaching Russian as a foreign language in Uzbekistan requires a comprehensive assimilation of all language aspects (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, spelling), the active development of all types of speech activity and cultural and ideological components (historical, artistic, moral and aesthetic thinking) based on general didactic principles of developmental, educational and enlightening learning.

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